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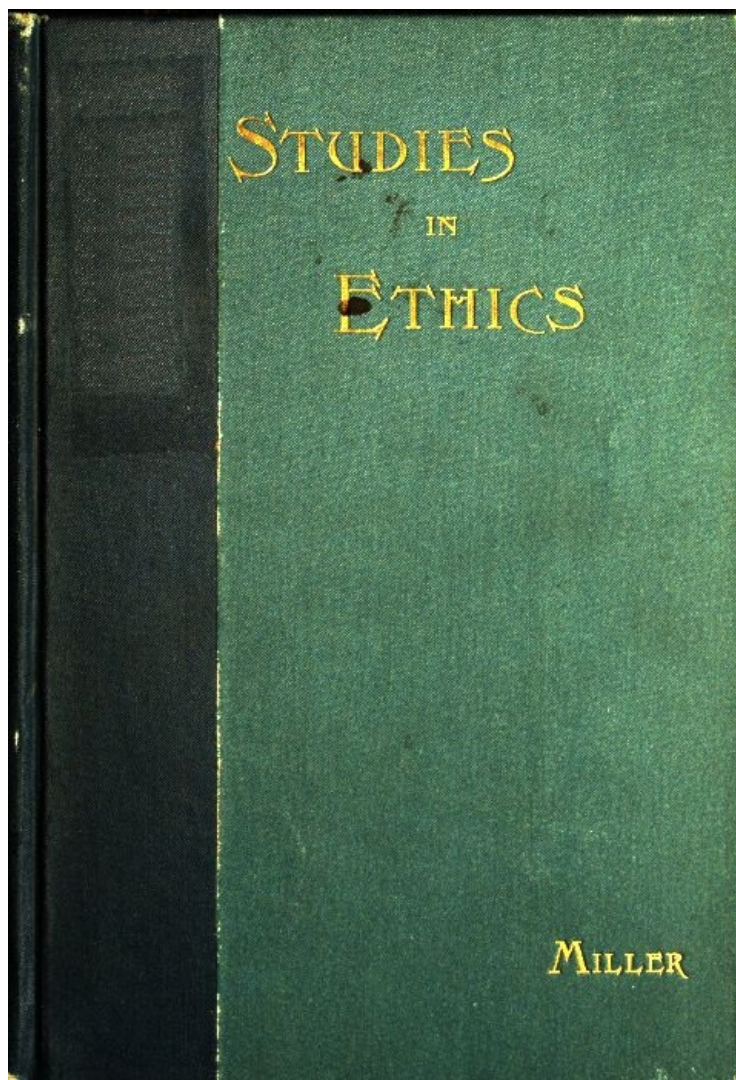
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK SHORT STUDIES IN ETHICS: AN
ELEMENTARY TEXT-BOOK FOR SCHOOLS ***



**SHORT
STUDIES IN ETHICS
BY**

REV. J. O. MILLER, M.A.,

Principal of Bishop Ridley College

TORONTO:
THE BRYANT PRESS
1895

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PREFACE

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This little book has grown out of periodical addresses to my own pupils. An experience of over ten years has convinced me of the necessity of teaching systematically the fundamental principles of Morality. The scarcity of books suitable as elementary texts is a sufficient proof that the subject is neglected in our schools. It cannot be right that children should be left to master so wide a subject from incidental instruction and from example.

I should be sorry if any one thought, from glancing at the topics I have treated, that I seemed content to put lessons in practical Morality in place of instruction in the Scriptures and definite religious teaching. Nothing can take the place of the Scriptures. But I feel convinced that these two aspects of Truth must go hand in hand. The young mind requires the truth to be presented to it from all sides, and nothing appeals to it so strongly as a modern example.

My own idea as to the use of such a book as this is that it should supplement Bible instruction. The lessons are short enough to be taught in half an hour. If one topic is taken up each week, and thoroughly explained, and enlarged on by fresh examples from current life and history, the whole book can be easily mastered in the school year, and leave ample time for review and examination. If it should prove helpful to other teachers, my labour will be amply rewarded.

*Bishop Ridley College, St. Catharines,
Feb. 28th, 1895.*

Μέγας γὰρ ὁ ἄγων, μέγας, οὐχ ὅσος
δοκεῖ, τὸ χρηστόν ἢ κακὸν γενέσθαι.

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—*Plato.*

[Greek: Megas gar ho agôn, megas, ouch hosos dokei, to chrêston ê kakon genesthai.]

No. I. DUTY

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Duty is something which is due, and which, therefore, ought to be paid or performed. It is something owed by everybody, to God, to self, or to others.

No other word is more disliked by the slothful than the word Duty. The mention of the word itself causes weariness to a boy or man of that kind. We can only get to like the word and the thing itself by accustoming ourselves to perform it regularly, a little at a time. A boy or girl with a fine ear and a natural talent for music hates, at first, the daily practising and the uninteresting lessons; but, as soon as the difficulties are mastered, playing an instrument becomes a delight. Duty, in itself, is not a distasteful thing; it is because we hate anything which gives us trouble

that it seems unbearable. We can teach ourselves to like taking pains.

Duty is, in one sense, the great law which governs the universe. The planets revolving about the sun, the moon encircling the earth, even the erratic comets, in fulfilling the laws of their being, perform the duties which they are set. So, too, the plants and animals of the lower creation obey the laws under which they live. Even of inanimate things, pieces of human mechanism, may this be said. The pendulum of the clock will tick until it is worn out, if it receive the care necessary for its work. We see what wonderful things a machine can be made to do for man in Edison's marvellous inventions of the kinetoscope and the kinetograph.

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Human duties differ from those of the lower creation and of the inanimate world in this, that in the latter the duties are performed by virtue of the great law of necessity, whereas man is free. That is what makes human duties moral—that is where the *ought* comes in. If we love idleness, and most of us do at first, we naturally hate the idea of Duty. If we give way to our feelings and desires, we shall only hate Duty more intensely, and we are in danger of becoming not much better than the brutes around us; in fact, we are giving way to the brute part of our nature. Human nature differs from brute nature in having a Conscience, which continually whispers in our hearts, "I must not," and "I ought." It is our first duty to listen to Conscience.

The longer we practise doing duties the easier they become. A great man once said: "A man shall carry a bucket of water on his head and be very tired with the burden; but that same man, when he dives into the sea, shall have the weight of a thousand buckets on his head without perceiving their weight, because he is in the element, and it entirely surrounds him." After running two miles for the first time, a boy feels great stiffness, but after he has done it twenty times he feels nothing but the pleasure of good health arising from pleasant exercise. In the same way, he translates a single sentence in his Latin grammar with great difficulty at first, but when he can translate Cæsar's campaigns without trouble the task becomes a delight.

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Most people think they are entitled to great credit for doing their Duty, and even to reward. If some one owes you a dollar, is he entitled to a reward for repaying you? Is he entitled to any special credit? If a father sees his son drowning and jumps into the water to rescue him, is he entitled to any special credit, as a matter of right? Duty is something *due*; therefore, it is a debt. "When ye have done all the things that are commanded you, say, We are all bondservants; we have done that which it was our duty to do."

(1) Duty is something owing to ourselves. Character is made up of duties, and by our character we must stand or fall. We owe it to ourselves to take the greatest care of our bodies. They should be cleansed and exercised every day of our lives. Many a man, who would feel outraged if his favourite horse were not thoroughly groomed and otherwise cared for daily, neglects his own body, which needs "grooming" quite as much as that of the horse. We owe it to ourselves to be careful as to what we eat, and as to the right quantity. If we give a dog too much meat or a horse too much grain, we know the result. We are not so careful about ourselves as about our animals.

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We owe it to ourselves to be true in all things. "First to thine own self be true," says the great poet. We owe it to ourselves to be honest in the very smallest things as well as in the great; to be afraid of nothing except evil; to be clean in our thoughts and words; to be modest; to be kind; to be gentle to the weak; to be generous; to be charitable; to be modest about ourselves; to be temperate.

(2) Duty is something owing to others. We owe our parents a return for their love and care for us at a time when we should have perished without it. The return that is due them is that we should be a credit to them instead of a disgrace, so that the world may say, "Those parents have reason to be proud of their children." God has said: "Honour thy father and thy mother." We owe it to them to be diligent in our lessons, so that we may prepare to earn our own living, and not to be dependent upon them all our days. A boy may say: "I am not going to bother my head about this work. My father is rich, and I shall never have to work unless I like." A few years hence, men will say: "Look at that idle fellow! He is a disgrace to his parents. He is fit for nothing; he is going to the bad already."

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We owe it to others to owe them nothing. "Owe no man anything." It is our duty to pay every debt in full, at the earliest moment possible. We owe it to others to keep as sacred every confidence reposed in us. We owe it to others to say no evil of them. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* was a proverb of the Romans. It is wiser to speak evil of no one at all.

"He slandereth not with his tongue,
Nor doeth evil to his friend,
Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour."

(3) Duty is something owing to one's country. The names of the patriots will be the last to die from men's memories. Every man owes to his country his name, his influence, his strenuous labour, his liberty, his life itself, should that be needed. When Nelson, on the day of Trafalgar, gave to his ships the signal, "England expects every man to do his duty," he spoke for all nations, in all ages, under all circumstances. When Pompey's friends tried to dissuade him from setting sail for Rome in a storm, telling him that he did so at the peril of his life, he said, "It is necessary for me to go, it is not necessary for me to live." Perhaps the greatest example of patriotism shown in a love of Duty of modern times is that of Wellington. His greatness lay in doing thoroughly every duty that came in his way. For that he would sacrifice everything else. Late in his life he

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was content to suffer a temporary loss of popularity through devotion to what he believed to be a duty. He was even mobbed in the streets of London, and had his windows smashed while his wife lay dead in the house. The great motive power that underlay his whole career was whole-hearted devotion to Duty. He himself said that Duty was his watchword. "There is little or nothing in this life worth living for," said he; "but we can all of us go straight forward and do our duty." Nelson's last words were: "I have done my duty; I praise God for it."

Some years ago a troop-ship called the *Birkenhead* was wrecked off the coast of Africa. The officers and men saw the women and children safely into the boats, which sufficed for them alone. Those brave soldiers and sailors fired a salute as the ship went down, and thus cheerfully gave up their lives to the watery grave. Upon which a great writer said: "Goodness, Duty, Sacrifice—these are the qualities that England honours. She knows how to teach her sons to sink like men amidst sharks and billows, as if Duty were the most natural thing in the world."

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(4) Duty is something owing to God. The highest act of duty is to acknowledge that we owe everything to God, except evil. We owe our lives to God, for from Him they came. We owe it to God that man is a human being, and not merely a higher sort of lower animal. God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living *soul*." We owe to God all that we have, and especially all happiness that we enjoy. It is from Him that comes all the love that enters into our lives. He is the great source of love to the human race. That is why we call Him our Father; He is the personification of the love of which our earthly parents' love is an example. We owe to God gratitude for His love to us, manifested at every step of our lives, and we ought not merely to feel that gratitude, but also to express it to Him daily. It is our duty, therefore, to pray.

The highest form of prayer is that God's will may be done in our lives. If we are sincere in that, and pray it with our hearts, and not merely with our lips, it will be found sufficient to cover every request that we can make, because our supreme duty is to do God's will in every act and desire of life. Arising out of that prayer come the principal duties of life, viz., thankfulness for God's goodness to us, the fight against evil in every form, the showing to others by example how God's will may be done, and, lastly, perfect trust in God in every circumstance of life.

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No. II. OBEDIENCE

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Obedience is doing promptly and cheerfully what is commanded by those in authority over us.

Obedience is the first great law of life. No nation could continue to exist if its citizens were not law-abiding. The most highly civilized nations are those whose citizens yield loyal Obedience to the laws, and strive to make all men obey them. Every society has its rules which the members agree to obey, and it can only exist so long as that obedience is observed voluntarily and faithfully. No army could be successful against the enemy if the soldiers did not obey their officers. Unquestioning obedience to the commands of the captain is necessary for the safety of the ship and of the lives of the passengers. Those who are employed in business must obey the instructions of their employers if the business is to succeed. The first lesson that a schoolboy is set to learn is the lesson of Obedience. What happiness could there be in our homes if the children did not obey their parents?

The greatest part of life is Conduct, and Conduct can only be attained by practising Obedience. The little child learns it from its mother, the boy from his father, and from his master at school. The young man must practise it at college, or at business. The older man continues to obey some one all through his life. If he wish to govern others, he must first obey himself. If he will not obey himself, he cannot rule others. There is only One who is above Obedience—that is God.

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At the battle of Balaklava, a small brigade of cavalry was ordered to attack an immensely strong battery. The order was a mistake, as every one knew that such an attempt would mean certain death. Yet the officer commanding the cavalry did not hesitate for a moment to carry out the orders, though he well knew what the result would be. Not a single soldier among those six hundred refused to obey.

"Theirs not to reason why;
Theirs but to do and die."

And so the charge was made, and out of the six hundred only one-quarter returned.

Boys sometimes think it a manly thing to question the orders given them, and even to assert their independence by refusing to obey. Brave men think it childish to stop to reason about the commands of those in authority. The wisest men believe that disobedience is one of the strongest signs of radically bad character. Experience teaches us that disobedience will, in time, destroy the character altogether. He that will not submit to authority must become, in time, not merely a

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useless, but a dangerous, member of society.

Obedience, to be worth anything in building up conduct, must be given *promptly and cheerfully*. Obedience which is tardy, or yielded through fear, is not right Obedience at all. If a boy's father desires him to do a piece of work which is not agreeable, or not very easy, there is often a great temptation to put it off, and do other things first. A boy is told to cut the grass when he comes home from school. He returns home, and finds the afternoon warm, and the prospect of grass-cutting uninviting, and so he first feeds his pigeons; and that reminds him that he is very anxious to make them some new nest-boxes. The afternoon has nearly gone when he, at length, drags himself unwillingly to the lawn-mower; and he has barely finished the work, when he sees his father coming in at the gate. Perhaps the edges of the grass plot have not been clipped, as a finish to the work, because he did not begin soon enough. That is a case of tardy Obedience—not real Obedience. The work was done because the boy knew he must do it, and not because he loved to obey his father. Real Obedience is *prompt* Obedience.

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Real Obedience is always cheerfully given. He who grumbles at an order, and only does it through fear, is not obedient. A boy who will not cheerfully give up a game, in order to carry out a command from one in authority, must always be looked upon as one who is at heart disobedient. If the officers of the cavalry, mentioned above, had chafed under the order to put their lives in peril, and had sent the messenger back to find out if they were really to make the attack, they would have lost their claim to our admiration as truly brave men. If the troopers had grumbled when the order was given to advance into the valley of death, and had made the attack in a half-hearted way, they would never have gained the undying glory that is theirs, and they would probably have sacrificed the lives of the few who did at last return in safety. Their Obedience gained them immortal fame because it was prompt and cheerful.

He who would become a good citizen, and a really useful member of society, can only do so by practising Obedience, with great patience, and with all his heart, throughout the whole of his life. To attain excellence in it, as in many other things, it must be begun very early in life. Above all, it must be willingly given. Real Obedience is prompt, cheerful, and from the heart.

No. III. TRUTHFULNESS

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Truthfulness is speaking and acting in a perfectly straightforward way, without any attempt to add to, or take from, the facts. Its opposite is Lying or Deception.

If Lying were the rule and Truthfulness the exception, society would soon be destroyed. Men could not do business with each other if they could not be trusted to speak the truth, and to keep faithfully a promise once made. Instead of trusting, they would fear one another; every time they were assured of anything they would doubt, and perhaps suspect a trap. If all men resorted to lying, they would soon begin to destroy each other, because it is an instinct of human nature to preserve one's self from the attack of enemies. The liar is the enemy of mankind. A great man was once asked: "Do the devils lie?" "No," was his answer; "for then even hell could no longer exist."

(1) Regard for Truthfulness forbids us to tell, as truth, what we know to be false. This is the worst form of lying. Only the most hardened will lie deliberately; no one who has not had long practice in this vice can tell a deliberate falsehood without despising himself. That can only be done when the Conscience is at last asleep, and when the character has become vicious.

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(2) Another form of lying is telling, as truth, what we do not know to be true. People often assert things which they cannot possibly know to be true; for instance, the motives of other persons. There are also things which are only probable, and of which we cannot be certain. To state as absolutely true what we cannot know to be true is falsehood. Again, there are things which are merely matters of opinion, and upon which vastly different opinions may be held. If we would be strictly truthful, we must be careful to state as true only what can be proved to be facts.

(3) Another form of deceit is telling what may be true in fact, but telling it in such a way as to convey a false impression. This may be done by (a) exaggerating, or adding to, the facts; or (b) by withholding some important part of the facts. Many a character has been ruined by some enemy who wilfully overstated, or understated, facts of the highest importance to the person's reputation. Many a man has ruined his own character by allowing himself to acquire the habit of exaggeration.

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(4) Untruthfulness shows itself in other ways. A lie may be acted as well as spoken. For example, when a boy allows himself to be praised for some action he never performed and does not give the praise to the right person, or at least disown it for himself, he acts a lie. The boy who tries to make his master believe him to be obedient and studious when he is not acts a lie. The boy who brings up as his own work an exercise which he has cribbed, or in which he has been assisted,

acts a lie.

(5) Concealment of the truth may be an unspoken lie. There is an old Latin motto which says: "The suppression of the truth is the suggestion of an untruth." By keeping back a necessary part of the truth one may give a totally wrong impression of the facts, and this is just as much a lie as absolute misstatement.

(6) Trickery, or underhand dealing of any kind, is a kind of lying. A London merchant had business with another in a foreign country. The latter asked the former to send out certain packages of goods marked less than the real weight, so as to escape the customs duty. "I can't do it," said the English merchant. "Very well," said the foreigner, "if you won't, there are plenty of others who will, and I shall take my business away from you"—which he did, causing the other firm a heavy loss. A few years afterwards the foreigner wrote to the English merchant: "Enclosed is a draft for so much, which please put to my credit. I am sending my son to England to learn your way of business. There is nobody in whom I have such confidence as I have in you. Will you take him into your office and make him the same sort of man that you are yourself?"

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(7) Truthfulness lays upon us the most solemn obligation to keep our promises, no matter how small may be the matter concerned. He who makes a promise, not intending to keep it, is guilty of gross deception. In making a promise it is our duty to express our *intention* in the plainest terms, and we must then consider ourselves under obligation to carry out that intention faithfully and fully. When Blücher was hastening with his army over bad roads to the help of Wellington at the battle of Waterloo, he encouraged his troops by calling out frequently, "Forward, children, forward." "It is impossible; it can't be done," was the answer. Again and again he urged them. "Children, we must get on; you may say it can't be done, but it must be done! I have promised my brother Wellington—*promised*, do you hear? You wouldn't have me *break my word!*"

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Lord Chesterfield once said: "It is truth that makes the success of the gentleman." Those words should be taken to heart by every boy who wishes to honour truth. Clarendon said of Falkland, one of the noblest and purest of men, that he "was so severe an adorer of truth that he could as easily have given himself leave to steal as to dissemble." Shakespeare said:

"This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow as the night the day
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

No. IV. COURAGE

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Courage is that disposition which enables us to meet danger or difficulties firmly and without fear. There are two kinds of Courage: Physical and Moral; and it has two aspects: Fearlessness and Boldness.

The opposite of Courage is Cowardice, and no greater insult can be offered a man than to call him a coward. Courage has always been looked upon as one of the greatest virtues. Men may be willing to forfeit purity, truth, and honour, but they cling to Courage to the very end. Courage is a quality that boys love and respect, because it is a manly virtue.

Physical Courage appeals most to the young. Nothing so excites their admiration as a feat of daring. Physical Courage is a splendid thing, a thing to be prized by every one. As a rule, it is something that every one may possess a good share of. Physical Courage depends very largely upon bodily vigour and strength of muscle. It is when we are nervous and feel our limbs to be weak that our Courage is small. The boy or man who exercises his muscles regularly is sure to store up a large amount of physical Courage—enough, at least, to develop its first stage—Fearlessness.

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He who possesses a good constitution and a body whose strength he has tested by repeated trials is not apt to turn tail at small fears, as are the weak and delicate. He is able to present to difficulties, or, it may be, to danger, a steadfast mind and a calm exterior. It is this sort of Courage which makes the English soldier renowned in war. Had it not been for the dogged persistence of his soldiers in holding their ground, in spite of a hurricane of shot and shell, Wellington could never have held Napoleon at bay at Waterloo. But, while this Fearlessness is much to be admired, it is, after all, the least heroic form of Courage, because so much of it is purely physical.

Fighting, as a test of Courage, is greatly overestimated. Experienced soldiers tell us that it requires a good deal of Courage to go into battle for the first time. "You look pale," said one officer to another, as he came within range of the enemy's guns for the first time; "are you afraid?" "Yes," answered the other; "if you were half as much afraid, you would turn tail." But, with most soldiers, the feeling of fear soon wears off, and where there is no fear there is not

much trial of Courage. The physical Courage that we all covet is that which leads a man to do what others dare not. In 1892, a young clergyman, on a visit to this country, was crossing the foot-bridge at Niagara Falls. When about one-third of the way across, he saw a lady stepping up from the carriage path to the sidewalk. She caught her toe against the edge, stumbled forward, and fell through the open iron work at the side of the bridge. She happened to be over the place where the broken rocks line the edge of the water. In her swift descent, she struck her head against one of the girders and was stunned; her body then turned over and fell across another girder. At this moment the clergyman came up. Looking over, he saw her body swaying gently, and evidently about to drop very soon to the awful rocks, over two hundred feet below. Without a moment's hesitation, he sprang out over the edge of the bridge, and, seizing one of the iron rods that supported the girder, he slid down, and then crept along the narrow girder till he reached the lady. Bracing himself with immense difficulty, he kept her from plunging into the abyss until help arrived, death beckoning to him from below, if he should lose his head for a single moment. At length a rope was lowered to him, and they were soon drawn up. That is a splendid example of physical Courage.

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A higher type of Courage is that which enables us to endure pain. Endurance is a rarer quality than dashing Fearlessness. It was said that in the Franco-Prussian war, in 1870, the French soldiers were more brilliant in the on-rush than the Prussians, but they lacked endurance, and could not stand for long before artillery fire. This type of Courage is best seen in bearing pain. When Epictetus was a slave, his master was one day beating him. The poor slave said: "If you do not look out, you will break my leg." Presently the bone snapped. "There," said Epictetus, as *calmly* as before, "I told you you would break it." One of the most remarkable instances of the Courage of endurance is that of the defence of Cawnpore, in the days of the Indian Mutiny, by a handful of English troops, with their wives and children. For twenty-one days they endured untold agonies of exposure by a never-ceasing fire, of hunger, of thirst (sharpshooters picking off any one who dared approach the single well in the camp), of the midsummer sun, of sickness, and of the unutterable foulness of their surroundings. The soldiers' wives showed even greater endurance than the men. Women generally have greater courage than men in the matter of bearing pain.

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The highest type of Courage is that which is called Moral Courage, and is exercised about matters of right and wrong as they affect us individually. "It is shown by the man who pays his debts, who does without when he cannot afford, who speaks his mind when necessary, but who can be silent when it is better not to speak. It requires Moral Courage to admit that we have been wrong." It requires Moral Courage to stand being laughed at, although it is the sign of a wise man to be able to enjoy a laugh at his own expense. It requires Moral Courage to run the risk of losing one's popularity. Socrates was the greatest teacher of ancient times, and he was beloved by many of his pupils; but because his lofty teaching ran beyond the attainments and spirit of his age, he was condemned to drink the deadly hemlock. He died calmly, even joyfully, discoursing to his judges of the immortality of the soul. Galileo was imprisoned when seventy years of age, and, probably, tortured. He was content to suffer it, and refused to retract what he had proved to be scientific truth.

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When we are laughed at or threatened with persecution of any kind, Courage bids us stand by our principles.

"As the crackling of thorns under a pot,
So is the laughter of a fool,"

said Solomon. It is the part of wisdom to disregard being laughed at. When a boy lacks backbone, we say he is easily led, which means, easily led wrong. How we pity such a boy!

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The highest Courage is that which leads men to sacrifice their lives of their own free will. Such was the courage of the soldiers and sailors of the *Birkenhead*. In one of the battles of the Peninsular War, a sergeant named Robert M'Quaide saw two French soldiers aim their muskets against a very young officer, sixteen years old. M'Quaide pulled him back behind him, saying: "You are too young, sir, to be killed," and then fell dead, pierced by both balls.

Courage is a very different thing from Recklessness, or Foolhardiness. An old proverb says: "Courage is the wisdom of manhood; foolhardiness the folly of youth." And Carlyle said: "The courage that dares only die is, on the whole, no sublime affair.... The Courage we desire and prize is not the courage to die decently, but to live manfully."

No. V. PURITY

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By Purity we mean that state of mind which is possessed by him who fights against foul thoughts, drives them away, and who never allows himself to perform an unclean action, or to use filthy, or obscene,

language.

Purity involves three things: (1) Clean language, (2) clean thoughts, (3) clean actions. They are put in this order because it generally happens among the young that impurity begins with hearing unclean language, and by imitating it. A little boy hearing others use foul language soon begins to use it himself, though he may not know its real meaning. Alas! it does not take long for him to learn the meaning of it also; and it is but a short step from foul language to impure thoughts and filthy actions.

Purity is one of the three heroic virtues; the others are Truth and Courage. In the age of chivalry men valued Purity above all things except Truth and Courage. Tennyson makes his hero say:

"My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure;
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure."

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Purity is one of the most manly virtues. Impurity marks the coward and the sneak, because it is nearly always directed in thought or action secretly against those weaker than ourselves. In "Tom Brown at Oxford," one of Tom Brown's friends says: "I have been taught ever since I could speak that the crown of all real manliness is Purity." You may ask: "Why is it manly?" It is manly because it cannot be got without a hard struggle; the temptation to be impure in thought, if not in language, is one of the hardest temptations to overcome. A little boy may not feel it, but the older he grows the harder he has to fight against impurity in his heart, and in his life.

We must, first of all, guard against unclean language. There are some words which are merely filthy, without being immoral; both are bad, and the one leads to the other. Little boys often long to have other words to put into their language than they have learned at home, because they think the home language not strong enough or manly enough. In order to satisfy themselves that they are no longer children, they begin at school to copy the strong words of the boldest and most reckless of the boys they meet, and they quickly add to their vocabulary unclean and even immoral words, because such words seem to be the mark of manliness, and of personal independence of character. By the time that a boy begins to realize what such words really mean, he has already formed the habit of using unclean language, and a bad *habit* is the hardest thing in the world to get rid of.

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Any one who thinks about the matter for a moment will admit that filthy language is not only not manly, but that it is degrading to the mind and character. One of the most manly characters of modern times was Coleridge Patteson, Bishop of Melanesia, who died in 1874, by the clubs of savage islanders, who, when he was dead, placed him in a boat with his hands crossed, and set him adrift upon the Pacific. We are told by an old schoolmate of his that once, when he was captain of the cricket eleven at Eton, some boys at the cricket dinner began to sing a coarse song. "Coley" Patteson had said that he would leave the room if such a song were sung, and as soon as they began it he quietly got up and went out. The result of his action was that the bad custom was stopped entirely. The old poet of Israel sang: "O Lord, keep the door of my lips." We all need to make that request. Another of the most manly men of modern times was General Grant, President of the United States. We are told of him that on one occasion, when a number of gentlemen were dining together, some one began to tell an indecent story. He commenced by saying: "I have a first-class story which I may tell, seeing that there are no ladies present." "No! but there are *gentlemen* present," said General Grant, and the story was not told.

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The use of unclean words leads to impure thoughts and to filthy actions. It is difficult to speak plainly about this matter of personal Purity. Every boy when he reaches a certain age is tempted by the Devil in the way of impure thoughts. These are first presented by unclean things which come into the imagination. If they are not fought against, and driven out by force of strong will, in a short time the imagination, naturally one of the purest and most beautiful faculties of the human mind, will become tainted, and at last foul and degraded. Unclean words do harm, first, to the individual character, by destroying its early purity and delicacy, just as we spoil the beauty of a grape by rubbing off its bloom; and, secondly, to those who hear and may learn to use them. But unclean thoughts, the evil imaginations, injure the *soul*, and the *mind*, and the *body*. They injure the soul by making it take delight in that which is foul and base, and which belongs to the brutes. They hurt the mind by destroying its power to concentrate itself on work, or on anything that lies outside of self. They injure the body, because he who is given up to foul thoughts soon becomes capable of nothing else. He avoids companions, he desires to be *alone*, that he may take delight in foul images of the mind, and so the body is neglected and loses its strength.

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There is even a worse stage, when the foul imagination results in *secret* acts of filthiness, which eventually will destroy body, mind, and soul. The poor wretch who has learned such horrible habits may live on, but not many years can pass until he shall become an idiot, and must be confined in an asylum, away from his fellow-men. Terrible, indeed, is the fate of such a person. How significant are the words of the great Teacher, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God!" Another great teacher once said that pure religion was: "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself *unspotted* from the world."

No. VI. UNSELFISHNESS

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Unselfishness is the giving up personal gain or advantage. It is the desire to do the will of another rather than our own. It is making a sacrifice to please some one else.

Truth, Purity, and Courage are called the heroic virtues; Unselfishness is greater than any of them. It is like the Christian virtue of Charity or Love; it makes people forget their own interests for the sake of others. Unselfishness is the great lesson we learn from studying the life of Jesus; He is the great example to the world of absolute self-forgetfulness. We admire notable examples of this virtue. One of the members of the Light Brigade tells us that in that terrible charge he was wounded in the knee, and also in the shin. He could not possibly get back from the scene of the fight. Another soldier passing by said: "Get on my back, chum." He did so, and then discovered from the flowing blood that his rescuer had been shot through the back of the head. When told of it, he said: "Oh, never mind that; it's not much, I don't think." But he died of that wound a few days later. The brave fellow thought not of his own wound, but only how he might help another, though he belonged to a different squadron and was unknown to him.

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Unselfishness is one of the hardest things to learn. A boy may be naturally brave and even generous, but no one is naturally unselfish. We are apt to confuse generosity with unselfishness; really they are quite different. A generous person gives out of his abundance, liberally; an unselfish person of what seems necessary to his happiness. A generous boy shares his weekly purchases with his friends; an unselfish boy, out of pity at some distressful case, gives away all his allowance for that week, and cheerfully goes without. The selfish boy spends his money upon himself alone. It is hard to neglect Self.

Even the selfish make sacrifices occasionally. But there is not much virtue in being unselfish now and then, if, in the meantime, we think of nothing but gratifying our own desires. Real Unselfishness is a habit, and needs to be acquired as does any other habit. We have to begin practising it, and to go on practising it, in the little things of life as well as the great, for a long time before we are finally able to forget self and think of others first. It is perhaps impossible to forget self altogether; but Unselfishness aims to that.

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A boy is going down town for some amusement. His sister asks him to take a parcel for her to the house of a friend, who lives considerably out of the way. He says he can't be bothered, or that he will miss some of his fun; he is selfish. Another boy is next at bat, and the "Pro." is going to bowl. A friend asks him to exchange places on the list, as he has to meet his father at the train later on, and he is near the foot of the list. The first boy consents, though he knows he will not get nearly so good a practice; he is unselfish. The unselfish person is constantly trying to lighten the burdens of others.

If you wish to tell a thoroughly selfish person, watch his conversation. He talks constantly of himself, of what he has done, or will do, or can do. His belongings are better than those of another, merely because they are his. He loves himself more than any one else; and it is natural to talk of what we love best. Lord Bacon said: "It is a poor centre of a man's actions, *himself*. It is right earth." He also said: "The referring of all to a man's self is a desperate evil in a citizen of a republic." "Wisdom for a man's self is, in many branches thereof, a depraved thing. It is the wisdom of rats, that will be sure to leave a house before it fall. It is the wisdom of the fox, that thrusts out the badger who digged and made room him. It is the wisdom of crocodiles, that shed tears when they would devour."

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An old proverb says: "Love thyself, and many will hate thee."

Unselfishness is hard to practise, because it brings no reward in this life. The unselfish man, indeed, is often imposed on by the self-seeking, and more often still simply because he is unselfish, and never ceases to think of others. A Christian man in the city of Toronto, widely known for his charities, subscribed \$500 to a deserving object. The committee in charge of the matter appointed collectors to go about and ask help from the public. A lady called upon this gentleman, not knowing that he had already given largely. He was about to tell her of his first subscription, when he noticed her face fall at the expected refusal. He immediately took her little book and put down his name for a second amount. He could not bear to send her empty away. His first subscription was generosity; his second, Unselfishness. There *is* a reward here for Unselfishness—the approval of one's own Conscience, and, after all, that is of greater permanent value than the praise of men.

In an age when there is so much grasping after personal gain, it is refreshing to read of great instances of forgetfulness of self. When the *Victoria*, after her collision with the *Camperdown*, was found to be sinking, Admiral Sir George Tryon ordered the sick and the prisoners to be brought up from below, and then gave the usual order, always the last to be given on a ship: "All hands for themselves." Not a man broke ranks until that order was given. Even then the chaplain stayed to help the sick, and so lost his life. The Admiral himself went down, standing on the bridge; and, most notable of all, young Lanyon, a junior midshipman, refused to leave the

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"He that loseth his life shall find it."

No. VII. HONESTY

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Honesty is Truth practically applied to questions about the property of others. It is the principle of dealing with others as we would desire others to deal with us. The sole guide in fulfilling this obligation is not what the Law may be, but what our Conscience tells us.

(1) Honesty is a form of Truthfulness. It is that form of it which is concerned with our dealings with others, especially as to their possessions. The opposite of it is called Dishonesty, and the worst form of Dishonesty is Stealing. The thief is hated, and feared, and despised more than any other sort of criminal. Men fear him as they do poisonous snakes; because the thief is a creeping creature, hiding himself and his actions from the light of day. He watches you until you feel secure, and are less careful than usual of your possessions; then he sneaks about, waiting for a favourable moment when no one is near to observe or suspect him before snatching your property. A man may commit a very grievous offence against another in a moment of passion; and, though we acknowledge the justice of his punishment, we do not hate him. But men hate a thief because he is a sneak, and because his offence is done in cold blood, not in the heat of anger; in an underhand way, not openly and above board.

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The confirmed thief is one who has yielded his soul to the Devil. He deliberately sacrifices his character; he surrenders himself of his own free will to a life of evil. Stealing inevitably leads to lying, and these two things degrade the character more quickly than any other evils that touch it. Not only does he destroy the purity of his soul; before long he must yield up his body for punishment. Not one thief in a hundred goes long unpunished.

(2) There are other forms of dishonesty not so open as stealing, and, in some cases, not so harmful, but generally degrading and destructive of high character. One of these is Cheating. If a coal dealer is paid for a ton of coal and delivers only nineteen hundred pounds, he is guilty of stealing. If, however, he gives full weight, but sells the coal as first-class, when it contains shale or other impurities, and is really of a cheap grade, then he is cheating. The schoolboy who copies his night-work from another, or gets help, and then presents the exercise as his own, is guilty of cheating. This form of cheating is made worse when it is done in examinations, because the result affects not only the standing of the person who cheats, but deprives others of fairly won advantage.

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(3) Another form of dishonesty is that by which one person takes advantage of another in a bargain, through his ignorance or helplessness, even though nothing is actually misrepresented. For example, A. asks B. to lend him ten cents for a month. B. knows that A. is in a tight place, and must have the money; and so he offers it on condition that A. will pay him twenty cents at the end of the month. B. is dishonest, because he takes unlawful advantage of A.'s necessity.

(4) There is a kind of cheating not referred to above—that is cheating in games. Apart from the effect of this kind of cheating upon the character, the game itself is spoiled. There is a tendency, nowadays, to play games for the sake of the victory alone, and to take no interest in games that one cannot win. We should play the game for its own sake, and frown down all attempts to win it by going just a little outside of what we know to be the rules. He who allows himself to cheat at games is forming a habit which will lead him to cheat later on in serious business.

(5) Another form of dishonesty is that relating to property lost and found. A boy finds a sum of money in a room, or hall, or playground, or even on the street. Money is a thing not easily identified, and there is, therefore, a temptation to pocket it and say nothing about it. This is dishonest. The duty in such a case is plain, to try to find the owner, and, if that cannot be done, then to put the money to some useful or charitable purpose, and not into one's own pocket.

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(6) Still another form of dishonesty is that in which one person takes to himself the praise belonging to another; or allows another to bear blame belonging to himself. We often see boys letting others suffer, in one way or another, for what they have done. Nothing can be meaner or more contemptible. It is not uncommon to see people eager to take the credit, or praise, or even rewards, which properly belong to others, who have been thrust aside, or forgotten, for the moment. It is a form of dishonesty.

Honesty has another side also. When practised according to the voice of Conscience, without regard to what the law may be, it is the sign of a noble character. A young man's father fails in business, and dies suddenly, leaving many debts behind him unpaid. The young man makes a solemn resolution that he will save and save, and work his hardest, to pay off those debts, though

he did not make them; that is the Honesty of the truly noble character. A very striking example of this sort of Honesty is that of Sir Walter Scott, who applied himself, though nearly sixty years of age, to the enormous task of paying off, by the sale of his stories, a debt of \$600,000, which he did not actually incur, and from which he could have got free, according to the letter of the law. But his inflexible Honesty forced him into making an effort which doubtless shortened his life.

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No. VIII. FAITHFULNESS

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Faithfulness is being true to our word, and to our friends, fulfilling our obligations, and doing what we see is our duty, at all costs.

Of the honest man we say: "His word is as good as his bond." Of the faithful man we say: "He was never known to desert a friend or neglect an important duty." Faithfulness is one of the strongest evidences of fine character. The boy who is sent on an errand by his mother, and resists the temptations of some playmates he meets on the way, to stop and have a game, is Faithful. Two boys going for a walk in the country decide to cross a field of ripe grain, and run the risk of being seen by the farmer in the next field. They are seen and chased. One can run much faster than the other; in fact, he can escape if he likes to leave the other. But he doesn't; and both are caught, and have their ears cuffed. That is an example of the Faithfulness of a friend. As the gentleman's psalm puts it,

"He sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not";

or, as it is otherwise translated,

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"He sweareth to his friend, and changeth not."

In the history of Napoleon we are told that, after his burial at St. Helena, his household sadly embarked for Europe. One of their number, however, Sergeant Hubert, refused to abandon even the grave of the Emperor. For nineteen years he continued at St. Helena, daily guarding the solitary tomb, and when the remains were at length removed to France the faithful old servant followed them home. How often we see people professing the utmost friendship and loyalty to one who has wealth and influence; but as soon as his money is gone, his faithless friends depart also. Is not that the case sometimes, even with schoolboys?

We should be faithful in performing obligations. It is said of Thomas Brassey, who has been called a great captain of industry, and who was one of the first to undertake great railway contracts, that the reason of his success lay in the fact that he was faithful in all obligations, and trusted his men as they trusted him. On one occasion, when he was building a railway in Spain, a man who had agreed to make a cutting through a hill found that it turned out to be a rock cutting, though the price was to be for a sand cutting. If there had not been perfect trust between the two men, the work would have stopped, and Mr. Brassey would have lost a large sum through delay. The sub-contractor went steadily on with the work, and had it almost finished, when Mr. Brassey arrived from England to inspect the works. When he came to the hill, the sub-contractor told him what he had done. Some men would have taken advantage of the sub-contractor; but Mr. Brassey allowed him double the price agreed upon, and kept a faithful servant by practising Faithfulness himself.

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A merchant fails in business. He agrees with his creditors to pay them fifty cents in the dollar, and they then discharge him from his liabilities, and he begins business again. In a few years he makes a good deal of money. He determines to pay back to his old creditors the other fifty cents in the dollar, from payment of which they had released. That is a case of Faithfulness to one's obligations. The moral obligations to pay back everything remained, though his creditors had let him off. There are such men in the business world, and all honour to them! Horace says: "Fidelity is the sister of Justice."

We should be especially careful to be faithful in the performance of our promises. A promise is a sacred thing. It is an obligation undertaken of our own free will, and for which we have pledged our honour. That is what the sacred poet means in saying: "He sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not." Nothing can turn him from his promise, even though he is sure to suffer by it. There is a proverb which says: "Promises may get friends, but it is performance that must keep them."

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Faithfulness is most difficult in the daily round and common task of life. Yet it is precisely there that Character is formed and built up. A reputation for Faithfulness cannot be made by being strictly faithful a few times, or in a few important things. We have to practise at it, and grow into the character of a faithful man after years of effort. A boy is given ten words to parse for next

day. He does five carefully; and then, longing to get out to play, he does the others anyhow, just to be able to show the exercise, and escape detention; he is unfaithful. Or, he is given four stanzas of poetry to learn. He learns three, and takes his chance of being asked one of the three, and not the fourth; he is unfaithful. He is expected by his parents to watch over his younger brother who goes with him to school, but he lets the little fellow fight his own way; he is unfaithful. He listens without protest, or without moving away, to bad, or, perhaps, obscene, language. He is unfaithful to God, and to his father and mother.

The late Czar of Russia, Alexander III., was many times in danger of his life, and his father had been assassinated by Nihilists. Yet he refused to flinch from the path of duty. He was faithful to his great position and responsibilities, and was called the Peace-keeper of Europe. When he was fresh from a hair-breadth escape from the hand of an assassin, he said: "I am ready; I will do my duty at any cost."

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The highest examples of faithfulness are to be found in the history of the Christian martyrs, who gave up their lives joyfully, rather than be found unfaithful. In the terrible persecution of the early Christians in A.D. 303, a young Roman noble, named Andronicus, was brought before the governor of the province. He was very bold in professing his faith in God. The judge said: "Youth makes you insolent; I have my torments ready." Andronicus replied: "I am prepared for whatever may happen." He was tortured upon the rack, scraped with broken tiles, and salt rubbed into his wounds, but remained immovable. Three times the torture was repeated. But with seared and scarred flesh, members cut off, teeth smashed in, and tongue cut out, he maintained his fidelity to the end. At last he was thrown to the wild beasts in the amphitheatre of Anazarbus.

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

No. IX. PROFANITY

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Profanity is using the name of God, or of anything sacred, in a disrespectful or light and careless way.

There is no vice which has so little excuse for existence as the vice of Profanity, commonly called swearing or cursing. Every other vice we can think of has some appearance of reason in it. Thieving is done because of the temptation to gratify some desire. In the case of the young thief, who is just learning the evil practice, this desire completely overcomes him. The enjoyment which he thinks he will get from the coveted thing forms an overwhelming temptation. Lying is generally resorted to by the young in order to get them out of scrapes, or to avoid immediate punishment; and we might thus enumerate other vices, and the reasons for their existence. But Profanity can plead no excuse whatever. It is merely a vicious habit acquired without sense or reason. Boys learn it from each other, and in many cases from men, who are doubly guilty in allowing the young to overhear evil words. Boys think it manly to swear because they hear their elders doing it. But there is nothing manly about swearing. The things that are truly manly are such things as Fearlessness, Moral Courage, Endurance, Steadfastness, Loyalty, Honour, Faithfulness. Profanity cannot rank with any of these. Placed beside them, it is at once seen to be low and vicious.

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(1) The worst form of Profanity is that which is made use of when any one uses God's name in a disrespectful way. We see this when one person curses another in the name of God. This worst form of Profanity generally arises from giving way to ungovernable passion.

(2) A less evil form of it arises from allowing one's self to form the habit of swearing; not from a bad motive, but because of the tendency in most of us to imitate others, or from carelessness in watching the words we use. Boys should be as careful of their words as young ladies are of their steps. It is easy to acquire a habit; it is exceedingly difficult to get rid of it.

(3) A little boy asks: Is it Profanity to say *damn*, or to use lightly the name of the *Devil*? It is just as profane to use either of these words as it is to use the name of God carelessly. The power of *damn*, as we now understand that word, belongs to God alone; it is a sacred thing; therefore, it is profane to speak of it lightly. The devil is the ruling spirit of evil, and of the souls of those who are entirely given up to evil. The destiny of the human soul in such a state is one of the most solemn thoughts that can come to men; to speak lightly of the matter is to profane it.

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(4) To scoff at religious things is Profanity. If a boy so behaves in church as to show that he has no respect for the reading of the Bible, or for the singing of sacred songs, or for the act of prayer, he is guilty of Profanity. If one person wilfully interferes with another when engaged in any sacred exercise, meaning to bring the person or the act into disrepute, he is guilty of Profanity. We see, then, that Profanity covers a much wider field than the mere disrespectful use of God's name, with an evil purpose in the mind.

The use of profane words is the mark of a coarse and vulgar mind. Many a man has been weaned of the habit which he learnt as a boy solely on account of its coarseness and vulgarity. That is not a very high ground on which to give up a vice; yet it is sufficient to show us that Profanity tends to degrade him who practises it. The man who prides himself on being a gentleman, and yet uses bad language, is by no means altogether a gentleman. The use of coarse language destroys the fine and delicate texture of the mind, and blunts the finer perceptions. He who would keep his very highest faculties uninjured cannot afford to indulge in any habit which tends to coarseness.

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Washington once asked a number of his officers to dine with him. In one of the pauses of conversation, he heard one of them at the far end of the table utter an oath in a voice loud enough to be heard by everyone. The General looked quietly at his guests, and then said: "I really thought I had invited none but gentlemen to dine with me."

Plutarch said: "If any man think it a small matter to bridle his tongue, he is much mistaken."

St. James said: "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body."

No. X. JUSTICE

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Justice is the principle of awarding to all men, including ourselves, what we believe to be their just rights. We are morally bound to be just even to our enemies, not only in our actions, but also in our words and thoughts.

Justice is said to be truth in action, that is, truth carried into practical operation. Two brothers at school have a hamper sent them from home. It is directed to the elder, but the letter says it is for both. The elder takes charge of it, and, while enjoying its contents freely with his friends, has the power to allow his brother to partake of the good things very sparingly, and only occasionally. But he allows his brother free access to the basket, that both may share alike. That is a simple case of Justice.

A boy going out to steal apples from an orchard forced a younger and smaller boy to accompany him for the purpose of keeping a lookout. While the bigger boy was in the middle of the orchard the younger lad was caught, and taken back to school to be punished. The real thief, having escaped, returned in time to see the little boy punished for the offence. Instead of bravely coming forward to take the place of his companion, who was really his victim, he laughed it off, and promised him some candy at the end of the week. That is a case of gross injustice. The converse of this form of injustice is also common; when one person takes the praise, or reward, that is really due to another. We see injustice of that kind in business, and, indeed, in every walk of life. It has happened over and over again that the maker of some great invention has been obliged to sell it for bread, while the man who bought it has taken advantage of his fellow-man's distress and made a fortune, and the other was left in poverty. "Render, therefore, to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."

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The Thebans represented Justice as having neither hands nor eyes; their idea being to picture the just judge, who would neither receive a bribe, nor respect persons from their appearance. For a similar reason the English people picture her with eyes bandaged, and having a sword in one hand and a pair of scales in the other. The Emperor Maximilian's motto was *Fiat justitia, ruat cœlum*; "Let justice be done, though the heavens fall." Mahomet said: "One hour in the execution of justice is worth seventy years of prayer."

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"Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all."

Though man's justice fail, God's justice can never fail in the end.

Grievous injustice is often done by the exaggerations of enemies, or careless busybodies. Two friends fall out, and one, feeling bitter against the other, repeats something which the other has confessed in confidence, taking care to add a little—just enough to save the story from absolute misrepresentation, but enough to do his former friend an injury which, perhaps, can never be undone. Gossip about the failings of others almost always ends in injustice.

"Let every man be swift to hear; slow to speak; slow to wrath," if he wish to become a just man. One of the most harmful of the smaller sins, and most difficult to get rid of, is the sin of exaggeration. It is fatal to the growth of Justice in the character. If we would be just to others, it is well to practise the rule of silence unless we have something favourable to say. The love of Justice should lead us, whenever we hear anything to a man's discredit about which there is no

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absolute certainty, to give him the benefit of the doubt. When a prisoner is being tried for an offence, the judge always tells the jury that if there be any reasonable doubt about the evidence the prisoner must have the benefit of it. It is better that the guilty go free than that the innocent should suffer.

We can be unjust in our thoughts of others, as well as in our actions and in what we say. We are constantly warned by the best and wisest men about the folly of rash judgments. These words, from the Sermon on the Mount, are an example of many similar warnings: "Judge not, that ye be not judged; for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." It is possible to be guilty of the gravest injustice to others, by forming harsh opinions of them in our own minds for which we have not sufficient ground. It is not necessary to utter our judgment in order to be unjust; we can harm people merely by thinking evil of them, because a harsh judgment in the mind affects all our dealings with them, and may thus injure them in the opinion of others.

In seeking to be just men, our grand guide should be the Golden Rule: "As ye would that men should do to you, do to them likewise." If, when about to do, or say, or think, anything unjust of any one, we could get into the way of asking ourselves how we should look upon the matter if the positions of the persons were reversed, there would be far less injustice in the world. Justice is one of the great virtues, and it is worth striving after. It is a virtue that we can only possess in a marked degree by constant practice in doing just acts, in speaking just words, and in thinking just thoughts.

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No. XI. BENEVOLENCE

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Benevolence is good will. The benevolent man has kind thoughts of everyone, kind words for everyone, and a helping hand for those who need it.

Goldsmith's biographer tells us that when the poet was taking a stroll one evening, he met a woman with five children, who implored his charity. Her husband was in the hospital, and she was from the country, and had neither food nor shelter for her helpless offspring. Goldsmith's kind heart melted at the story. He was almost as poor as herself, and had no money in his pocket, but he took her to the college gate, and brought out to her the blankets from his bed to cover the children, and part of his clothes to sell for food. In the night he found himself cold, and so he cut open his bed and buried himself among the feathers, where he was found next morning by a college friend, with whom he had promised to breakfast.

One boy has a feeling of spite against another, owing to some trivial quarrel. To vent it, he goes to his enemy's room, and, in his absence, slashes the gut of his tennis racket with a knife. That is an example of Malevolence, or evil will, or, as it is commonly called, Malice.

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The benevolent man is he who calls the whole world kin, and refuses to harbour an evil intention against any one. To have a mind like that requires long practise in patience, charity, fortitude, forgiveness, and self-denial. St. Paul, in one of his most famous letters, says that Benevolence is made up of these very things; so that in this matter we have not only our own experience, but a great authority to corroborate it. Shakespeare, too, says:

"Deep malice makes too deep incision;
Forget, forgive; conclude, and be agreed."

The saying of another poet, "To err is human, to forgive divine," might well read, "To avenge is human, to forgive divine." Every one who gives way to malicious anger usurps the place of God, and says to himself, "Vengeance is mine." But who ever got any lasting satisfaction out of revenge, when wrath has died away, and the injury he has suffered begins to look smaller? Sir John Lubbock well says: "Revenge does us more harm than the injury itself; and no one ever intended to hurt another, but did at the same time a greater harm to himself, 'as the bee shall perish if she stings angrily.'" The vulture, we are told, scents nothing but carrion, and the snapping turtle is said to bite before it leaves the egg, and after it is dead."

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If a little boy is hurt, how kind the big boy becomes in his help and in his words! And yet, when he gets well again, perhaps the same big boy will make his life miserable, through unkindnesses which really amount to bullying.

It is difficult to say kind things of those whom we do not like, and it is far harder to think kind thoughts about them; but, if we wish to be really men of good will, we shall have to make the effort to do both. Difficult as it may be, it is quite certain that the trial is worth making. The benevolent man is the happiest man in the world. Happiness is thus brought to us by striving to do what we think we shall hate doing. There is an old proverb which says: "Pursue happiness, and she will flee; avoid her, and she will pursue."

The distinctive feature of Benevolence is willingness to lend a helping hand to those in need of it. One great name in this respect is that of William Wilberforce, who gave up his time and energies to abolishing the slave trade. No other human being ever did a greater work than that, and no other name will live longer in history than his. Another great name is that of John Howard, who gave the best years of his life to improving the condition of prisons, not only in England, but in other countries, too. "In three years he personally inspected every prison in the three kingdoms that presented any peculiarity. He travelled ten thousand miles at his own expense, and delivered from prison a large number of poor debtors by paying their debts. Wherever he went he brought some alleviation to the lot of the prisoner by gifts of money, bread, meat, or tea, and by remonstrating with jailers, surgeons, chaplains, and magistrates. Several prisons underwent a complete renovation and reformation, solely in consequence of his conversations with county magistrates and circuit judges."

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We may not all be able to do great deeds of Benevolence; but we can all get into the habit of lending a hand whenever it is needed—not merely when a great occasion demands, but habitually. "A handful of good life is worth a bushel of learning." We can all practise keeping cheerful tempers, and saying kind words, and doing small acts of kindness, even to enemies. What distinguished Christ, as a teacher, from all other teachers that went before him, was His treatment of this subject of Benevolence. The old and well-established law was: "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." He laid down a new law, the principle of Benevolence: "If thine enemy hunger, feed him: if he thirst, give him drink."

No. XII. AMBITION

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Ambition is that longing for pre-eminence which urges men to intense and long-sustained exertions. Ambition is good or evil, according as it is selfish, or seeks the good of mankind.

Ambition is the putting forth of immense energy with a definite purpose in view. Nearly all the great achievements of the human race have been accomplished by means of the ambition of individuals, Alexander the Great, Cæsar, St. Paul, Henry IV. of France, Raleigh, Gustavus Adolphus, Richelieu, Warren Hastings, Clive, Napoleon, Wellington, Nelson, Faraday, Pallissy, Livingstone, Gordon, Edison, all achieved great deeds through ambition. But as the names represent types of good and bad character, so there are two kinds of ambition, noble and selfish, good and bad.

It must be confessed that Ambition is apt to lead men astray. It is hard to be ambitious without being at the same time selfish, proud, and covetous. Ambition is a dangerous possession to the young man whose character is not well grounded, and who has not learned to put the good of his fellow-men above his own personal advancement; and these two things always clash in questions of right and wrong. We are told that when the Russian engineers were consulting the Czar about the line of a railway from St. Petersburg to Moscow, he refused to listen to a statement of difficulties, but took a ruler, and, laying it on a map of Russia, drew a straight line between the two cities, and ordered the engineers to disregard towns, and private homes, and obstacles of any other kind. Napoleon literally waded "through slaughter to a throne," and cared nothing for the sacrifice of his soldiers or the tears of a whole nation.

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Ambition is bad when it leads men to seek power to gratify personal ends. Cæsar's ambition was evil because he thirsted for personal power for his own gratification and pride. The thirst for money is a bad Ambition. It nearly always ends in making man a miser, than whom there is no man more contemptible and pitiable. It is seldom a man amasses a very great fortune without depriving other people of their rights. The wise man said: "He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent."

Ambition often destroys the character of the man who gives way to it. Macbeth was a great general, and a brave and honest man. In thinking over the murder of the king, which his wife proposed to him, he said:

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"I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition which o'erleaps itself,
And falls on the other";

meaning that he had no motive whatever for killing Duncan except the ambition to occupy his throne. Ambition destroyed him. Frederick the Great bound himself to befriend and support the young ruler of Austria, yet he violated his oath, robbed his ally, and plunged Europe into a long and desolating war. To quote his own words: "Ambition, interest, the desire of making people talk about me, carried the day, and I decided for war." He sacrificed his own soul for the sake of the

glory arising out of victorious war.

The danger of Ambition to young men is that it leads to discontent with their present lot in life. Many a young man has been utterly ruined by giving way to discontent because of Ambition. A young man in a bank, filled with Ambition, wishes to improve his position. His salary is small, and he feels cramped. He begins to speculate through brokers, paying a little cash down. Perhaps he is successful at first. Then he hears of some railway shares that are going up in price every day. If he can only get some money to buy he can repay it in a week, and make a great profit for himself. He takes the bank's money. He does this several times, until at last the crash comes, as it always does, and the young man is sent to spend some of the best years of his life in gaol. Ambition has destroyed his reputation, and has cost him his liberty and his friends.

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To excel in his present calling, is a lawful Ambition for a young man, leaving it to the future, to his reputation, and to God, to lift him higher. How much wiser and happier Macbeth would have been if he had kept to his first resolution:

"If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me."

It is quite possible for Ambition and Contentment to go together, and to produce the very greatest results in the long run. This was the ambition of General Gordon, that he might excel others as a soldier, and yet be content with a position humble as men count such things. He refused repeated offers of money from the Emperor of China. He accepted the Peacock Feather and Yellow Jacket to give pleasure to his mother, and to enable him to exert the necessary influence upon the Chinese in settling the country after the horrors of war. This was the kind of Ambition held by Livingstone, by Palissy the potter, and, above all men in modern times, by Faraday. When Faraday made known some of his discoveries, he was offered large sums to make experiments for merchants, and he might soon have become very rich, but it would have taken all his time. He refused; he remained poor; he gave himself up to scientific research, and he made the name of England great in the scientific world, as it had never been before.

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The highest Ambition a man can have is to be able to make a sacrifice of his inclinations, and to give himself up to some noble work for the good of mankind, without any thought of profit or pride, or place or power, or any other form of selfishness.

No. XIII. PATRIOTISM

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Patriotism is love of and devotion to one's country. It is the spirit that prompts us from love of our country to obey its laws, to support and defend its existence and its rights, and to promote its welfare.

Maurice once said, very truly, "that man is most just, on the whole, to every other nation who has the strongest feeling of attachment to his own." Love of one's country, if it be real and deeply rooted in the heart, is a sacred thing. There are few nobler feelings, if only they are genuine. A boy's patriotism is generally associated with fireworks and brass bands, and it is right enough that he should make merry on his country's great days. But we should guard against thinking that there is nothing more in Patriotism than fireworks and bragging and brass bands. The show, the display, should be only the mark of a real love and respect within the breast.

It is natural to be proud of one's country. If a stranger should abuse it in our hearing, we should feel indignant, and a natural feeling of pride would urge us to refute his statements. There are many things to be proud of, even in a country by no means great in arms or in territory. He would be a very small-minded man who refused to acknowledge the right of every country to the devotion of its children. But, as Maurice said, "he is most just to others who has the deepest attachment to his own." It is not boasting to say that we belong to the greatest race that the world has ever seen. The growth of our race, not only in the little mother island, but also in every continent of the world, has not been paralleled by any other people. No other nation in history has retained so long its supremacy among the nations of the earth. When the great nations of Greece and Rome reached the height of their power, they maintained it for a time by means of slaves, and gave themselves up to luxury and vice. But, as soon as they became effeminate through loss of vigour and the idleness of their citizens, their power, and even their national existence, were destroyed. Instead of maintaining its power and wealth by slave armies and slave labour, the English people abolished slavery off the face of the civilized world. England paid Portugal \$1,500,000, Spain \$2,000,000, to induce them to give up the slave trade. For fifty years England kept a squadron on the west coast of Africa to keep down the slave trade, at a cost of \$3,500,000 a year. She paid the West Indies and Mauritius \$100,000,000 to free their slaves. The sum which it cost the English-speaking people of America to put down the slave trade cannot be calculated.

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The ancient nations of Greece and Rome derived immense sums of money from their colonies. They made the colonies pay for the support of all the armies and the general expense of government. England has never taxed a colony with any great burden. It is estimated by Sir John Lubbock that in ten years, from 1859 to 1869, \$210,000,000 was spent by the mother country upon her colonies.

It is the glory of Canadians to belong to such a race. The old land from which we came is worthy of our deepest love and veneration and pride. As Tennyson patriotically says:

"There is no land like England,
Where'er the light of day be;
There are no hearts like English hearts,
Such hearts of oak as they be."

And this new land, too, claims our love and loyalty. No boy ever grew to manhood with a fairer heritage than the young Canadian possesses. But if his privileges are many, so, too, are the duties of citizenship. After all, the best patriot is the best citizen. It is easy to cheer with the crowd, even when its cry is "Our country, right or wrong." That can never be the cry of the true patriot. In fact, real Patriotism concerns itself not with "cries," but with deeds. He is said to be the truest patriot "who can make two blades of corn grow where only one grew before." How true that is for Canadians! Our country does not at this stage of its history require the partisan, or the politician; we have too many of them. It needs men who love her as men love their homes and families; thinking it an honour and a pride to labour for them.

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Patriotism is a sacred thing, a sacred duty. Ruskin says, "Nothing is permanently helpful to any race or condition of men but the spirit that is in their own hearts, kindled by the love of their native land."

It is our duty to cultivate the love of our country, to do everything in our power to make that love stronger as we grow older. If we love our country, if we see that in her which calls forth our enthusiasm, then we are ready to make any sacrifice for her that she may demand, even to shedding our blood. Ruskin also says: "It is precisely in accepting death as the end of all, and in laying down his life for his friends, that the hero and patriot of all time has become the glory and safety of his country."

No. XIV. BODILY EXERCISE

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Mens sana in corpore sano.

"The glory of young men is their strength."

"He that hath clean hands waxeth stronger and stronger."

Dr. Hall tells the following true story: Two friends are in a canoe in the Mozambique channel. A flaw of wind upsets the boat, which fills and sinks, and the men are left to swim for their lives. One says to the other: "It is a long pull to the shore, but the water is warm and we are strong. We will hold by each other, and all will be well." "No," says his friend, "I have lost my breath already; each wave that strikes us knocks it from my body." In a moment he is gone. His friend can do nothing; only swim, and then float, and rest himself, and breathe; to swim again, and then float, and rest again; hour after hour to swim and float with that calm determination that he will go home; hour after hour, till at last the palm trees show distinct upon the shore, and then the figures of animals. And then, at last, his foot touches the coral, and he is safe. That is an example of the difference wrought in two men merely by exercise, or the steadiness of training.

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Exercise makes the body strong. Many a man has reason to bless the memory of his father or teacher, who, when he was a weak boy, with flabby muscles, and without energy or strength of will, made him take regular exercise. A young man who was threatened by weak lungs was ordered to take regular Exercise every day with clubs and dumb-bells and a vigorous walk in the open air. After a few months' steady practice he found that he could, with his hands, lift his elder brother, lying flat on the ground, by the clothes and elevate him above his own head. Neglect of Exercise keeps the muscles weak, makes the blood impure, and renders the body liable to the diseases which are ever ready to attack him. We now know that diseases enter the human body by means of minute living germs, which float unseen in the atmosphere. Practically, no people living in towns escape these germs; but the strong body is able to throw them off, while the weak succumbs. There are in the blood thousands of little bodies which act as scavengers, and are continually fighting against foreign invaders that get into the system. If the body becomes weak through lack of Exercise, the blood suffers, the number of scavengers becomes lessened, and disease more easily fastens upon it.

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Not only is the body weakened by lack of Exercise, but the brain is even more so. If a stream of pure blood be necessary for the strength of the body, it is far more necessary for the health of the brain. Parents often complain that their sons are stupid, and are not able to see through things, and have poor memories, when the trouble lies chiefly in the fact that the blood is unable to carry off the worn-out elements of the brain, because it is not kept pure by regular Exercise and fresh air. The secret of mental activity is complete bodily health. The boy who is subject to headaches cannot study hard; nine-tenths of the headaches arise from giving the stomach too much hard work, and the brain too little. The stomach is capable of an immense amount of labour if the other members of the body will only work, too; but if they get idle, it is apt to break down under its burdens, and then the brain suffers.

The English race has always been characterized by immense energy. Probably no other race has ever been so distinguished for enterprise and energy. It is the energy of the race which has led to the growth of its vast colonies, and to the maintenance of empire over less civilized peoples. It has made the United States the great nation that it is. Energy makes the man, as it makes the nation. The vast majority of people depend for energy upon Exercise. Loafing destroys energy. Mental energy depends very largely upon physical energy, except in the case of the sick. Physical energy depends upon taut muscles and supple joints.

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The relation of Exercise to morality is very close. If a young man fills up his spare time with Exercise, he runs no risk of going to the bad morally. After a day's work, and active Exercise to end it, he needs a great deal of sleep; and his sleep is sound and refreshing. The sleeplessness that arises from loafing causes an immense amount of mischief to the moral nature—impure thoughts, or half-waking dreams, with, perhaps, degrading habits growing out of them. When the body is in a good state of health, man's faith in God, and in truth, purity, and honour, is bright and steadfast. When his body is run down, through neglect, everything looks gloomy.

An important part of Exercise is the work of keeping the body clean. It is just as necessary to keep the outside of the body clean and sweet as the inside; and as the inside is being continuously cleansed by pure blood, the outside should be cleansed regularly with water. The decayed matter in the body, carried off by the blood, escapes chiefly in one way—that is, through the pores of the skin, and if these pores are allowed to get choked by neglect the dead matter remains in the system and pollutes it, and the body soon gets out of order. It is a duty to take sufficient exercise every day to incite perspiration, and then a cold plunge or sponge bath, or, at least, a vigorous rub-down. If we could only get into the habit of doing that, we might snap our fingers at most kinds of disease.

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These things depend largely upon daily Exercise: Bodily Strength, Mental Activity, Energy, the Moral Life.

No. XV. HABIT

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By Habit is meant accustoming ourselves to do certain things regularly. Habit is a tendency of the mind and body resulting from frequent repetition of the same acts.

An old man who had very deformed fingers said: "For over fifty years I used to drive a stage, and these bent fingers show the effect of holding the reins for so many years." Carlyle said: "Habit is the deepest law of human nature. It is our supreme strength, and also, in certain circumstances, our miserabest weakness." In the life of the young, especially, the two greatest laws are Habit and Imitation. There is nothing a boy's parents fear so much as that he will imitate bad things in the characters of others, and so learn bad habits. When a boy has learnt a great many bad habits, it is almost impossible to get rid of their effects, even though he should change his habits. They leave marks upon the character, just as smallpox does upon the face.

It is easy to learn bad habits. It is just like the old game of "Follow your Leader." Unless the leader is a very clever athlete, most boys have no difficulty in following and imitating what he does. When once a boy makes up his mind that he is not going to be very particular about his language, it is astonishing how easily he will learn to swear, and to use unclean words. But if he should become ashamed of such a habit, how hard it is to drop it! He may make the strongest resolutions, and try his best to put them in practice; but he will find himself dropping into profane language when he gets excited, or loses his temper, or at other times when it is particularly necessary for him to be careful.

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With many people to do a thing once is to form the Habit. It is well known that the taste for wine and spirits is often inherited by a boy from his parents. For that boy, or young man, to drink once is to form a Habit, though he may be quite unconscious of it. We always do form habits unconsciously, and we often know nothing of them until they are fully formed and have nearly mastered us. If some kind friend warn the youth, he may drop the habit at once; but, if not, drinking will soon be a positive pleasure, and, before he knows it, he will be on the primrose way.

Let a young man give way a few times to impure imaginations and thoughts, and he will soon be in danger of a habit that will destroy him, body and soul. The curse of the human race is the tendency to form bad habits.

The surest way to avoid bad habits is to form good ones before the former become established. And the first good Habit that will help us to avoid or conquer bad ones is *never to be idle*. "An idle man is like the housekeeper who keeps the door open for any burglar." I do not mean by not being idle that we should never cease from work. But I do mean that as soon as work ceases play should begin. Idleness is loafing; and nothing so surely produces other bad habits as the habit of loafing. The boy who has a game in view the moment his work ceases is not in very great danger of forming bad habits. The boy who is in danger is he who, having done the least possible amount of work in school hours, is tired by the effort to do nothing, and so would rather lie upon his bed than take exercise.

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The Habit of exercise is a sacred duty. All feel the effects of systematic neglect of fresh air and muscular training, and most young men and boys do take exercise spasmodically—one day a great deal, and the next, perhaps, none at all. The bodily system can no more flourish under that sort of treatment than it could if one were to over-eat on one day, and go absolutely without on the next. The only way to bring the body to a high state of cultivation and to keep it there is to form the habit of exercise, and let nothing interfere with it. It need not be always the same; it should be varied; but it should always be active. If a boy does not care for very violent exercise, he can substitute for it light gymnasium work, or club and dumb-bell exercise. The great Sandow says that he keeps his strength up to the point of efficiency by clubs and dumb-bells, and open-air exercise. The great thing about it is regularity; that is to say, Habit.

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Another great factor of success in life is the Habit of early rising. We all love to lie in bed a little longer than we ought; but we should fight against it. Mr. Gladstone, throughout his years of vigour, took seven hours sleep, and he said to a friend: "I should like to have eight; I hate getting up in the morning, and I hate it the same every morning. But one can do anything by habit, and when I have had my seven hours sleep my habit is to get up." King George III. was an early riser. He once said to a man who came late: "Six hours sleep enough for a man, seven for a woman, and eight for a fool." Dickens use to rise at seven, have a cold bath, "and then blaze away till three o'clock." Kant, the greatest philosopher of modern times, used to retire at ten, and his servant had strict orders never to allow him to sleep later than five, no matter how strongly he might plead for rest. Sir Walter Scott said: "God bless that habit of getting up at seven. I could do nothing without it." The Duke of Wellington said that when we turn in bed it is time to turn out.

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The wise boy will form habits of reading good books regularly, especially the Bible; of exact and strict punctuality in all his engagements, great or small; of neatness in his appearance; of personal cleanliness; of politeness of speech. A Habit once learned will stick to one, whether good or bad.

"Habit at first is but a silken thread....
Beware! that thread may bind thee as a chain."

No. XVI. INDUSTRY

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Industry is the fully formed habit of work. It is that which prevents us from wasting time, and strength, and the powers of mind. Its opposite is Indolence, or Laziness.

Work is a fundamental law of life. He who does not work must suffer, whether he be rich or poor, because man cannot break any law of nature without paying the penalty. If a man deliberately sin against nature, that is, against God, he may be forgiven, but he cannot escape the result, or, in other words, the punishment.

But all work is not Industry. If we are compelled to work against our will, that is not Industry. There must be the habit, and no habit can be fully formed without the mind's consent. Industry is work done with a will; not at odd moments, with wide spaces of idleness between, but regularly as a habit, which is as much the business of life as eating and sleeping.

In the history of mankind, Industry has been a far greater power than Genius. Genius, indeed, has been called "the power of taking pains"; that is, immense perseverance. The amount of good done to mankind by men of genius who have had no Industry is hardly worth counting up. Nearly all the world's great men have been men of great diligence. As Cicero said: "Diligence is the one virtue that includes all the rest." Solomon has the same thought: "The soul of the diligent shall be made fat." It is astonishing what a large number of great men have risen by their own industry to positions of the highest authority and influence. Faraday was the greatest chemist of modern

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times. His father was a village blacksmith, and he himself was first a newsboy, and then learnt the trade of bookbinding. He became interested in books through making their covers. Turner, the greatest modern landscape painter, was the son of a barber. He left school when he was thirteen; and from that time earned his own living.

Sir William Jones, the great oriental scholar, was a man of enormous industry. Before he was twenty years old, he had mastered Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, and had made great progress in Arabic and Persian. He divided his day as follows:

"Seven hours to law, to soothing slumber seven,
Ten to the world allot, and all to heaven."

Hugh Miller, the great geologist, began life as a stonemason. Elihu Burritt, a blacksmith, mastered eighteen languages and twenty-two dialects. Such perseverance and diligence should make us feel ashamed of neglected opportunities.

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The main thing to keep in mind about industry is that it is a habit, and, like most good habits, somewhat difficult to acquire. A boy is given a piece of work by his father. He goes at it with great vigour; but, in a short time, his attention is attracted by his dog, or birds, and he leaves the work for something more pleasant; he is not industrious. A boy begins his night lessons and works five minutes, and then remembers something that happened that afternoon at play; he returns to his book for five minutes more, and then thinks of the next half-holiday—and so on. Industry means concentration, and he has not learnt anything about that yet.

At the beginning of the lesson, a boy pays close attention; but he soon sees that his nails require attention, or his pencil a finer point, or the nearness of his neighbour suggests a small trick. Perhaps his head is heavy and requires to be held up by one hand, or the hero of the latest story persists in thrusting himself upon the mind, or he wishes he were out camping. Industry is attention; and he has not yet learned how to keep his mind on his work.

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Most boys suffer from lack of power to pay attention for a considerable time. With some it is a disease arising from physical causes. If a boy has got into the habit of imagining impure things, his power of attention is in danger of being destroyed; if he has learned to practise secret vice, his brain is being destroyed. Some boys possess marvellous power of concentration. Macaulay's mother tells us that he wrote a fairly complete history of the world, occupying twelve pages, when he was seven years old. But the average boy needs to have his power of attention cultivated, as any other faculty is trained. He can do this, first, by striving to take an interest in everything that presents itself to his mind, no matter how dry; and, secondly, by practising attention. He can do this by keeping a watch open, and seeing how long he can work without thinking of outside things. There is no more notable example of industry in our own day than that of Edison. He is said to sleep only three or four hours in the twenty-four for months at a time. Those who live with him say that his industry is the most remarkable thing about him. Some one once asked him how to succeed in life. His answer was: "Don't look at the clock!"

Attention produces the habit of industry, that is, of wasting not a moment in idleness. Lord Nelson said that he attributed his success in life to a habit he formed of being fifteen minutes ahead of time for all his engagements. Imagine a boy being fifteen minutes ahead of time in rising, and at meals, lessons, and prayers! The habitual late comer is destroying his faculty for industry. No one can afford to waste time; and there would be less time wasted if we could only remember that idleness is suffering, if not now, then later on.

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The great Cobbet said: "I learned grammar when I was a private soldier on the pay of sixpence a day. The edge of my berth was my seat; my knapsack was my bookcase; a bit of board on my lap was my writing table. I had no money for candles; in the winter time it was rarely that I could get any evening light but that of the fire, and only my turn at that."

Sir John Lubbock says: "Industry brings its own reward. Columbus discovered America while searching for a western passage to India; and, as Goethe pointed out, Saul found a kingdom while he was looking for his father's asses."

There is, for a boy, no motto grander than Luther's *Nulla dies sine linea*.

An old sun-dial in a churchyard in Scotland has these words engraved on it:

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"I am a shadow,
So art thou;
I mark time,
Dost thou?"

Self-control is the power a man exercises over himself—the power to check his desires and passions; the power to deny himself present pleasures for the sake of a great purpose; the power to concentrate his energies on a single object in life.

Self-control is the basis of all Character, and the root of all the virtues. Without it, man is like a ship that has lost its rudder, and tosses helpless upon the waves. Self-control is one of the hardest things to learn, though no one can succeed in life without it. We say of the poor drunkard: "He could never say no!" The young man who can say no to his friends, when his Conscience tells him he should, has learned one of the hardest lessons of his life, and is in no danger of many of the worst pitfalls of early manhood. Tennyson says:

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power."

The wise man said: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

A boy at school finds the greatest difficulty in paying *attention*. His mind keeps wandering away from his work. He makes good resolutions, but finds that, in spite of them, he cannot *fix* his attention. After a time, he despairs of himself, and gives up his chance, and perhaps bitterly disappoints his parents. The trouble was lack of Self-control. He had never learned how to master himself. He who can master himself can master almost any difficulty. He must learn what Concentration means. It is a habit, and can only be acquired little by little, by earnest effort, and a strict watch upon self. A good plan is to keep a watch open, and see how long the mind can be kept at work without suffering any interruption.

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If we learn to control self in one way, it becomes easier to do so in others. If a boy is given to flying into a rage, and practises checking himself, until the habit is controlled, it will not be nearly so hard to control himself in other ways. One of the hardest things to conquer is the habit of exaggeration; it is so easy to overstate a thing, so hard to keep to the *exact* truth. The boy who conquers a habit like that is on the road to thorough Self-control.

Control of the appetite is, perhaps, the most difficult form of Self-control for boys to practise. He who gives way to his appetite yields the reins to a reckless driver. There is no vice more disgusting or more dangerous than gluttony. It is the vestibule to all the other vices. It is quite as important a duty to control one's stomach as to check one's tongue. The best things are apt to come to him who has learned to do without; though Self-control for its own sake is the herald of happiness. In the life of General Gordon, we are told that he once offered a native of the Soudan a drink of water. The man declined the water, saying that he had had a drink *the day before*. A drink every other day was enough for him; he had learned Self-control.

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History is full of examples of the failure of men and nations through the loss of Self-control. The Greek nation was destroyed because the people gave themselves up to idleness and the gratification of their desires. So were the Romans, who were conquered by the savage Goths, who possessed the virtue of Self-restraint. No man ever yet became great who did not practise the great virtue of Self-denial.

St. Paul said: "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection."

No. XVIII. SELF-RELIANCE

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Self-reliance is the power to help one's self. It is personal independence. It is that which makes labour enjoyable. It is that which adds Zest to a man's pursuits in life, and produces the highest success.

He who learns the great lesson of Self-reliance will never lack the means of livelihood or the opportunity for usefulness. It is the duty of every boy to learn to depend upon himself. His father may be a rich man now, but it is far easier to lose wealth than to create it, and the day may come when his father may have to depend upon him. That every man should earn his own bread is one of the fundamental duties of life. St. Paul laid it down as a law for the Christians in Thessaly that "if any would not work, neither should he eat."

Most people have the stern necessity to labour laid upon them; but there are some who have inherited, or expect to inherit, wealth, and who see no need to employ their abilities in active, steady, persistent labour, and yet it is just these who have the power to confer special benefits and blessings upon their fellow-men. He who has no cares about the earning of his daily bread has a great opportunity to devote himself to some special line of labour which will result in a

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lasting benefit to the community in which he lives, and which requires leisure for its proper development. The rich man is a curse to his country, instead of a blessing, if he keeps his capital from active employment, and at the same time neglects to use for the good of his fellows that higher sort of capital—his personal abilities.

If the schoolboy wish to make real progress, he must learn to depend upon himself alone. He will never master a subject thoroughly if he go constantly to the master, or to another boy, for help. He who gets another to do his lessons for him cheats not only the master, but himself also. The boy who loves to overcome difficulties, whether they be in the gymnasium, or the class-room, or the cricket field, is sure to succeed in the struggles of after life.

Self-reliance comes naturally to some people, especially to those who have bodies trained by vigorous exercise. To others it becomes a habit only after long effort, but it is beyond the reach of no one. Two things are required for its attainment: determination and practice. We need not expect to attain any good habit without failure at first. But, as has been wisely said: "Perseverance, self-reliance, energetic effort, are doubly strengthened when you rise from failure to battle again."

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Emerson said: "Self-trust is the first secret of success"; and in another place: "Self-trust is the essence of heroism."

It would be easy to give a great many examples of the virtue of Self-reliance. One of the greatest in modern times was that of Lord Beaconsfield, Prime Minister of England. He tried many times before he at last got a seat in parliament. The first time he tried to speak in that great assembly, he was received with shouts of laughter, when he said: "Gentlemen, I now sit down, but a day will come when you shall hear me." All will remember the wonderful Self-reliance of the Black Prince at the battle of Crecy. At the close of his life, Jean Paul said: "I have made as much out of myself as could be made of the stuff, and no man should require more."

Lord Bacon said: "Men seem neither to understand their riches nor their strength: of the former they believe greater things than they should, of the latter much less. Self-reliance and Self-control will teach a man to drink out of his own cistern, and eat his own sweet bread, and to learn and labour truly to get his living, and carefully to expend the good things committed to his trust."

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Self-reliance does not mean Self-assertion. The truly self-reliant man is modest in his language and manners. The boaster has usually very little backbone to his character. Self-reliance is a deeply-rooted feeling of reserve power, which makes a man strong under all circumstances. It carries with it an equally strong feeling of self-respect. The old French proverb says that a man is rated by others as he rates himself.

Goethe's advice to young men was: "Make good thy standing place, and move the world."

No. XIX. FRIENDSHIP

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Friendship is that feeling between people which leads them to trust each other entirely, to tell each other of their difficulties, hopes, and fears; to share with each other pleasures and sorrows; to help each other when need arises, even though it involves a sacrifice.

Cicero thought Friendship of so much importance in life that he wrote a treatise on it. He said: "Of all the things which wisdom provides for the happiness of a lifetime, by far the greatest is friendship." Certainly, it is a thing for which human nature seems to cry out. Lord Bacon quotes an old saying: "Whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a god." Just as we all desire to be liked rather than to be hated, so we long to have, at least, one friend to whom we can tell everything, and who will stand by us. We envy him who has many friends. We may set it down as a truth, that if we have no friends the fault lies in ourselves. There is something lacking in us, or there is some horrid thing in our character that others cannot like. Real Friendship must be based on admiration, or liking for some quality that he who is desired as a friend possesses. The boy who lacks friends, but longs for them, must search his own heart and character to see if he cannot find out what is the matter with him.

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It is better to have one or two friends than to be popular with the crowd. Some boys will do anything to be popular, even to sacrificing Friendship. It is quite a common thing for boys to make themselves out to be much worse than they really are in order to gain admiration. They will pretend to be guilty of all sorts of things in order to get others to think them more daring than themselves. The worst of it is that a boy of that kind often becomes thoroughly bad at heart.

It is in the power of every one to have at least one sincere friend; if we are willing to be unselfish, to forget ourselves, and to try to help others, we can have many. There is nothing that makes the daily life so pleasant as the companionship of a friend present, or the thought of a friend absent. Cicero said: "A true friend is he who is, as it were, a second self." But, if we wish to keep our

friends, we must be prepared to make sacrifices sometimes. No man ever kept a friend for a long time without occasionally doing something to prove the warmth of his feeling for that friend. Friendships are generally broken because one or the other partner turns out selfish. Boyish Friendships would be much more lasting than they are, except for the great difficulty most boys have in "giving up" to others.

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If Friendship is a sacred thing, how necessary it is to use care in making a friend! It is the sign of wisdom to have many companions, but few friends. To have many companions is to knock off our own rough corners, and to teach us the principle of "give and take." In dealing with a real friend, it should be mostly "give" and very little "take." He who tries to make a friend should begin by giving his Friendship, and give it with all his heart. But if he does that to one who is morally below his own standard, the result will be disastrous. The old Romans had a saying, taken from their poet Virgil, *Facilis descensus Averno est*, which means that it is wonderfully easy to lower one's standard of right and wrong. The poet went on to say: "But to retrace your steps, and escape to the upper air, this is a work, this is a toil."

There is nothing truer than the saying that a man is known by his friends. A man's Friendships are the test of his character. A Spanish proverb says: "Tell me whom you live with, and I will tell you who you are." When a boy leaves school to go into a bank, or other business house, his employers watch to see what friends he has. If they are not what they should be, the young man is looked upon with suspicion; he is not put into a position of trust; he may, some day, be told that his services are no longer wanted. In buying an article which we intend to last a long time, we are careful to choose the very best that can be had for the money. If a man is going to buy a horse, how careful he is to see that there is no blemish in him, and how particular he is to secure a thoroughly reliable man to look after him! And yet the same person is perhaps quite careless about the choice of his friends, though their power to yield him the greatest pleasures in life, or to bring to him the greatest sorrows, cannot be measured. Wise is he who heeds the words of the wise man:

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"Enter not into the path of the wicked,
And go not in the way of evil men.
Avoid it, pass not by it,
Turn from it, and pass away.

"For they sleep not,
Except they have done mischief;
And their sleep is taken away,
Unless they cause some to fall.

"For they eat the bread of wickedness,
And drink the wine of violence.

"But the path of the just
Is as the shining light,
That shineth more and more
Unto the perfect day."

If you possess a friend who satisfies your heart and conscience, cling to him under all circumstances. If he find fault with you, be patient. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." If he give way to wrath, give back the soft answer that turns it away.

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If you cannot have the Friendship of the illustrious living, it is easy to obtain that of the illustrious dead. The Friendship of good books is one of the greatest pleasures of life. To win it, it is only necessary to form the habit of reading regularly, no matter how little at a time.

The best guide for a boy in forming Friendships is to choose none for his friend whom his father or mother would disapprove of, *if they knew all about him*.

No. XX. GENTLEMANLINESS

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The four chief marks of a gentleman are: Honesty, Gentleness, Generosity, Modesty.

Thackeray, who is noted among great English writers as a hater of shams, said: "Perhaps a gentleman is a rarer man than some of us think for. Which of us can point out many such in his circle—men whose aims are generous, whose truth is constant, whose want of meanness makes them simple, who can look the world honestly in the face with an equal manly sympathy for the great and small? We all know a hundred whose coats are very well made, and a score who have

excellent manners, and one or two happy beings who are what they call in the inner circles, and have shot into the very centre of fashion; but of gentlemen, how many?"

These four qualities of the gentleman include more than might appear at a single glance. Honesty means far more than not stealing. The "gentleman's psalm" tells us as one of his characteristics that "he speaketh the truth in his heart." He who does that is honest in his words, in his deeds, and in his thoughts. He so hates dishonesty that honesty has become part of his life—it is in his heart. Such a man can look the world in the face without flinching. He is the most fearless of men, because he has nothing to hide from the light of day. As one great man once said of another, "He has the ten commandments stamped upon his countenance." Here, then, to be honest is to be brave also; we cannot imagine a true gentleman as a coward.

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The second quality is Gentleness. It is hard for a boy to be gentle, because he spends most of the time during which he controls his own actions with other boys, and gentleness is not much called for. Some boys look upon this quality as womanish, the mark of a coward, a thing to be avoided. But what should we say of a boy who roughly handled a bird with a broken wing? All boys possess this quality of Gentleness, because it is founded on sympathy with the sufferings of the weak. If a small boy falls and breaks his arm, how eagerly the bigger boys come to his assistance, and how careful they are to touch the broken limb with all tenderness! The feeling of sympathy makes them gentle. No boy is without this God-given faculty. It is there to begin with, and if a boy wish to become a gentleman he must cultivate it, as he does his other powers. It is a faculty soon lost if we neglect it; it is easy to learn to be rough and loud-mouthed, and roughness soon leads to cruelty. The true gentleman practises Gentleness towards the weak at all times, whether they are suffering or not. The boy should learn it in his own home; that is the best and easiest place to learn it. It is easy to be gentle with one's mother; it is a bad-hearted boy who suffers himself to be rough in his speech, or rude in his manner, to her. The same rule of Gentleness should be steadily observed towards his sisters and younger and weaker brothers. He who has thus practised gentleness in his home will go out into the world a character actually trained to be gentle to those weaker than himself, and to be sympathetic towards the sorrows and sufferings of the unfortunate.

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The third mark of a gentleman is Generosity. By this I do not mean open-handedness about money. Lavish liberality may be only another name for careless imprudence. By Generosity is meant the utter absence of selfishness. Aristotle called his true gentleman the magnanimous man. Generosity is large-heartedness. It involves the absence of all thought of self, and a never-failing consideration for the feelings of others. Such a man was Sir James Outram. When the English army was marching to the relief of Lucknow, Sir James, who was the senior officer, allowed Havelock to take command, and to win the glory of the siege, and himself went in a subordinate position. Of him it was said that he was "one of the bravest, and yet gentlest, of men; respectful and reverent to women, tender to children, helpful to the weak, stern to the corrupt, honest as day, and pure as virtue." When Edward the Black Prince took the French king and his son prisoners at the battle of Poitiers, he gave a banquet for them in the evening, and he insisted on waiting upon and serving them at the table. At the battle of Dettingen a squadron of French cavalry charged an English regiment, and the two leaders found themselves opposed to each other. The young French officer raised his sword to attack his opponent, when he saw that he had only one arm, with which he held his bridle. Instead of cutting him down, the Frenchman saluted him with his sword, and passed on.

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The fourth mark of a gentleman is Modesty about his actions and opinions. Nothing more surely marks his opposite in society than self-assertiveness and bragging. The true gentleman never boasts of what he has done. On the other hand, he does not seek to belittle a good action for which he is praised. If such an action comes to general notice, he accepts the praise justly offered, and then seeks by silence, or by changing the topic of conversation, to withdraw particular notice from himself. He is content to do and let others talk. Sir Isaac Newton was one of the most modest men. He kept secret for a long time some of his greatest discoveries for fear of the notoriety they would bring him. He did not publish his marvellous discoveries of the Binomial Theorem and the Law of Gravitation for years, and when he published his solution of the theory of the moon's rotation round the earth he forbade the publisher to insert his name. The true gentleman is modest about his opinions. Comparatively few have deeds to boast about; but all have *opinions* to advance. We should guard against asserting them too strongly, or attempting to force them down people's throats. If an opinion is true or valuable, it is sure to make its own way by reason of its own force; it is only weakened by the loud assertion of the man of rude manner and coarse nature. It is a wise saying of the great apostle: "Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think." The old Hebrew poet thought the highest type of gentleman him "that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart."

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No. XXI. COURTESY

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Courtesy is kindness of heart, combined with good manners. It is the

special mark of a gentleman, particularly in his treatment of those in a humbler position than himself.

One of the most famous schools in England, founded by William of Wykeham, in the reign of Henry III., has for its motto the words, "Manners maketh the man." Though this does not express the whole truth, it is, nevertheless, undoubtedly true that many a man owes his success in life to his good manners. Two boys leaving school desire to enter a bank. One is a boy of very pleasing manners; the other, though, perhaps, possessing greater ability, is unpolished in appearance, and gruff in manner. If the bank manager has reason to believe them fairly equal in knowledge and ability, he will take the pleasant-mannered youth in preference to the other, because he believes in securing a clerk who will be civil to customers, and obliging to all with whom he comes in contact. It is worth while, then, to cultivate politeness in speech and manner. A famous woman once said: "Civility costs nothing, and buys everything."

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We must be careful to distinguish between Politeness and Courtesy. Any one can learn certain rules of Politeness, even though he be coarse at heart. Some men put on Politeness with their evening coats, but are the reverse of polite in their everyday garb. To such men Politeness is like varnish or veneer; scratch them on the surface, or merely rub them the wrong way, and their real nature comes out.

Politeness is an excellent thing when it is joined to genuine kindness of heart. It then becomes Courtesy. Courtesy is Kindness and Politeness joined together and exhibited at all times to all persons, no matter what their rank in life. The man who is kind to his servant, and speaks politely to him at one time, and at another gets into a furious temper and abuses him, has not learned Courtesy. Courtesy implies a certain gentleness in dealing with other people. It is a mistake to think that Manliness and Gentleness do not go together. The strongest and most manly men are noted for their quietness of disposition. Not only are they not self-assertive, but they are actually gentle to the weak.

Courtesy comes easily to some people; to others it is difficult. Some persons are naturally open and unreserved in their nature; others are reserved and shy, and it is hard to get at them. Boys and young men often suffer far more than people think on account of shyness, which keeps them from being openly friendly with people whom they do not know well. This shyness is sometimes put down to bad temper, or moroseness, or sometimes even to a desire to be rude. How earnestly should the boy or young man strive to get rid of a failing which may be the unfortunate cause of doing him so much harm in the eyes of others!

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Bacon says: "If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers, it shows he is a citizen of the world, and that his heart is no island cut off from other lands, but a continent that joins to them." If you wish to be known as a courteous man, begin at once to do little acts of kindness to others. Acts of kindness form the basis of true Courtesy. Lord Chesterfield said: "The desire to please is, at least, half the art of doing it." If we wish to learn how to get a reputation for Courtesy, we must make an effort to do what others like, though we may not care about it ourselves. Many a man owes his success in life to doing pleasant things in a pleasant way. The headmaster of one of the greatest public schools in England said: "Courtesy begets Courtesy; it is a passport to popularity. The way in which things are done is often more important than the things themselves." Another writer has said: "A good deed is never lost. He who sows Courtesy reaps friendship."

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To be Courteous, we must not only do kindnesses; we must do them in a pleasing manner. "Manner will do everything. Give a young fellow on setting out in life a good manner, and he will want neither meat, drink, nor clothes. 'I like that lad,' some one says, 'he has such nice off-hand manners.'" "Sir Walter Raleigh was every inch a man, a brave soldier, a brilliant courtier, and yet a mirror of Courtesy. Nobody would accuse Sir Philip Sidney of having been deficient in manliness, yet his fine manners were proverbial. It is the Courtesy of Bayard, the knight, *sans peur et sans reproche*, which has immortalized him quite as much as his valour." Burke said: "Manners are of more importance than laws. Upon them, in a great measure, the laws depend. Manners are what vex, soothe, corrupt or purify, exalt or debase, barbarize or refine us, by a constant, steady insensible operation, like that of the air we breathe in."

Dr. Johnson once said: "Sir, a man has no more right to say an uncivil thing than to act one—no more right to say a rude thing to another than to knock him down." We should be especially courteous to servants and those below us in the world. A great man returned the salute of a negro who had bowed to him. Some one told him that what he had done was very unusual. "Perhaps so," said he, "but I would not be outdone in good manners by a negro."

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The truly courteous man is never caught napping. He is courteous not only in crowds, where every one can see him, or in social life, among his equals; but also in little things, at odd moments, when no one of importance is by, and to the poor and ignorant. He is courteous, too, in his own home. That, perhaps, is the final and hardest test of all. It is easy to be polite when we are out at a party of friends, though even there it is sometimes hard to show real Courtesy. In giving advice to young men, Thackeray said: "Ah, my dear fellow, take this counsel: Always dance with the old ladies, always dance with the governesses!" He meant: show your gentleness by being kind to those who have not many friends. But it is hard to be Courteous in the home when things do not please us, and we are out with the world. Yet it is there we must begin to practise Courtesy. It is there we must learn that kindness, and cheerfulness, and good manners which will earn for us the epitaph of Tennyson's friend:

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

No. XXII. REPENTANCE

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We are often sorry when we do wrong; this is the first step towards Repentance; but Repentance itself is more than being sorry; it is ceasing to do wrong, and beginning to do right.

Man differs from the most intelligent of the lower animals in having a moral nature, called a soul; that is, he is responsible for his actions. One great evidence of this is to be found in the fact that, after he has done evil, his conscience generally reproaches him sharply, and he feels remorse, which is the keen pain brought about by the memory of wrongdoing. But we must not mistake this pain of remorse for Repentance. It should be the beginning of Repentance; but Repentance itself must go much further than that.

Two men with evil-looking faces were seen to enter a great church in Rome one day, where, in little chapels attached to the church, people were making confession of their sins to the priests, and obtaining absolution from them. These two men looked as though something very serious was weighing on their minds, as they searched for a priest to whom to confess. A short time after they had found one, they were again seen, coming down the aisle of the church, laughing together, and looking as jolly as possible. Next day they were arrested for attacking a traveller on the highway and almost murdering him. Probably those two men felt the pangs of remorse when they were in the church seeking to confess their sins. But there was no Repentance, because they went back at once to their evil courses.

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A sick man was said by his doctor to be dying. His clergyman came to see him, and begged him to be reconciled to a neighbour with whom he had had a serious quarrel. At last he consented, and when the neighbour was brought to his bedside they had a short, friendly conversation, and shook hands. But as the neighbour was leaving the room, the sick man called out: "*But you must remember this stands for nothing if I get better again.*" There was no real Repentance in the sick man's heart.

A man who had been living a very careless and sinful life went to hear a great man preach. The sermon had such an effect upon him that his conscience became very uneasy, and he felt keen remorse for the evil of his life, and determined to stop it all and begin again in a different way. He first went to see a neighbour who scoffed at religious things, and who, the moment he went in, began to ask him about the great preacher, and to make fun of him for paying much attention to what was "absurd, and all a lie." The man replied: "Never mind the preacher just now; I want to tell you about a very serious matter. Four years ago you lost two fine sheep out of your flock, and though you searched everywhere you could not find them. Those sheep came into my pasture field, and I caught them, and marked my brand on top of yours, and so they were not discovered. But I have now come to tell you of the matter, and to put myself in your hands. You can, if you like, have me arrested, or I will pay you whatever you ask." The neighbour was astonished, but at last said he would take the value of the sheep, with interest on the money from the time they were stolen. The man paid this down, and then doubled the amount. After he had gone his neighbour began to think that the sort of religion which made a man confess a sin long past, and which no one could ever find out, must have some reality about it, and he scoffed no more. That is a case of genuine Repentance.

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Happy is the man who repents while there is yet the opportunity to undo, to some extent, the evil he has done. Some men repent when it is too late to undo the mischief. Henry II., King of England, rode from London to Canterbury in the night, and when he came to the gates he dismounted, and walked barefooted to the shrine of the martyr. He there made public confession of his sin, and was scourged with a knotted cord before the people, though he was then king. Imagine the Emperor of Germany being publicly scourged! Though Henry repented, he could not bring Becket back to life again. Henry Ward Beecher told the story of a young man who came to Indianapolis, when Mr. Beecher was minister there, on his way to settle in the west. While there he was robbed in a gambling saloon of fifteen hundred dollars, all that he had. It led to his suicide. "I know the man who committed the foul deed; he used to walk up and down the street. Now, suppose this man should repent? Can he ever call back that suicide? Can he ever wipe off the taint and disgrace that he has brought on the escutcheon of that young man's family?"

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Everybody has need of practising Repentance, because no one can live a perfect life. Goldsmith said: "Our greatest glory consists not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall." If we rise again every time we fall, there is but little danger that we ever fall so low that we cannot rise at all, or of doing that which we cannot, to some extent, put right.

"Confess yourself to Heaven;
Repent what's past, avoid what is to come."

It is unwise to put off Repentance. It should be done now. The opportunity may slip away from us altogether. As a wise man once said: "I know that a man, going—swept down that great Niagara—if his little skiff be driven near to one shore, he can make one great bound and reach the solid ground—I know *he may be saved* from destruction: but it is an awful risk to run." [Pg 114]

We can best learn the value of Repentance by practising it in little things. If a boy is guilty of rudeness to any one, and especially to a lady, he should go at once and, in a manly way, acknowledge it. The fact that he has begged her pardon will keep him from committing the same offence again. If we practise Repentance in the small matters of daily life, it will be easier for us to practise it in things of great and serious moment.

No. XXIII. CHARACTER

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The word Character comes from a Greek word meaning to cut, or engrave. By Character we mean the peculiar qualities impressed by Nature or Habit on a person; in other words, what he really is.

Character is the crown of life; to the evil it is a crown of infamy; to the good, a crown of glory. Some scientists believe that all the facts of knowledge which we acquire are stamped upon the brain, making many grooves and creases upon its surface. Our actions and thoughts and words and habits being impressed upon the soul form its Character. The formation of good Character takes many years, and is a very gradual process; but every action has its part in the final result, and every habit binds the parts together. Bad Character is developed in the same way as good character; but the process is easy and rapid. A boy begins by stealing something; soon he is led on to lie about it. One lie leads to another, and the success of the bad experiment leads to another theft and more lying. Bad companions soon gather round him, and the sprouting plant of evil grows like a weed. Ere long it has fastened its thousand roots in the depths of his soul. [Pg 116]

Gibbon said: "Every man has two educations—one which he receives from others, and one, more important, which he gives himself." In the business world, the men of highest reputation value their Character above everything else, because no one can take it from them, unless they deliberately yield it. It is valued highly, because it has been earned by never-wavering effort through long years. They have educated themselves by unceasing practice to put Truth and Honour, Chastity and Courtesy, Industry and Temperance, Self-Reliance and Self-Control, Modesty and Charity, Justice and Benevolence above Cleverness and Love of Gain, which so often make a man unscrupulous in dealing with his fellows.

In the studies which have gone before, we have seen what these qualities mean. They go to make up Character. But Character cannot be produced by learning lessons about it in books. Character is the education which a man gives himself. In reading the lives of great men, we see very clearly that they began to acquire the qualities which afterwards distinguished them when they were boys. A great writer has said that Conduct is three-fourths of life. If we wish to be distinguished for Character, we must begin to practise those things which produce it while we are schoolboys. [Pg 117]

The grand thing about Character is that it is independent of circumstances. The man who values Honour above all things cannot be put into any position where there is any real danger of losing it. After the great battle of Assaye, the native prince sent his prime minister to the Duke of Wellington to find out privately what territory and other advantages would be secured to his master in the treaty with the Indian nabobs. They offered Wellington five hundred thousand dollars for the secret information. The great general looked at him quietly for a few seconds, and then said: "It appears, then, that you are capable of keeping a secret." "Yes, certainly," replied the minister. "*Then, so am I,*" said Wellington, smiling, and bowed him out of the room. Take another instance, in humble life. Once, when the Adige was in flood, the bridge of Verona was carried away, only the centre arch standing. On this was a house whose inmates called loudly for help, as this arch was slowly giving way. A nobleman called out, "I will give a hundred French louis to any one who will go to the rescue." A young peasant seized a boat, managed with great difficulty to reach the pier, and, at the risk of his life, rescued the family just in time. When they reached the shore, the count handed the promised money to the young man. "No," said he, "I do not sell my life; give the money to these poor people, who need it." [Pg 118]

The man of noble Character values, above all other things, these: Truth, personal Honour, Moral Courage, Unselfishness, the Voice of Conscience. Chaucer, the father of English poetry, said:

"Truth is the highest thing that man may keep."

In the days of chivalry, the noble-hearted soldier sang to her who wept at his going:

"I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more."

Of Courage, Addison said:

"Unbounded courage and compassion joined,
Tempting each other in the victor's mind,
Alternately proclaim him good and great,
And make the hero and the man complete."

Of Selfishness, Shelley said:

"How vainly seek
The selfish for that happiness denied
To aught but virtue!"

The voice of Conscience is the voice of God, That voice was never yet disregarded without suffering; to reject Conscience is to incur retribution. The wise man cultivates his Conscience; that is, he listens for its warnings and suggestions, and yields his desires at its call. The man of Character seeks its advice at every important movement of his life.

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It is impossible to build up a noble Character without a model. Before beginning to erect a magnificent building, the architect must provide a plan for the workman to follow. The shipbuilder requires a model for the construction of a beautiful racing yacht. Before making a new and intricate machine, the craftsman must have a working model. In the building of Character, the working model is Jesus of Nazareth. He is the example to the human race of all the traits of true manliness which men admire. He is the model of willing Obedience, of undaunted Courage, of absolute Truthfulness, of Generosity, of Gentleness to the weak and suffering. He is the model of all the virtues. An old poet said of Jesus, with the greatest reverence, that He was

"The first true gentleman that ever lived."

He who sincerely wishes to build up his life into noble Character will be helped by nothing so much as by the study of the actions and words of Jesus, the model of nobleness to all men, in all ages, since He came into the world.

No. XXIV. CONSCIENCE

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Conscience is that faculty of the mind which teaches us to distinguish between right and wrong. It often warns us when we are about to do wrong, and reproaches us for the wrong we have done.

A great man once said that when he was a small boy he was walking one day by the side of a pond, when he saw a turtle creeping out of the water. He had never yet killed anything, and he felt a great temptation to kill it with his stick, when some one seemed to whisper to him: "It is wrong." He went home and asked his mother what it was. She told him that men called it Conscience; but she called it the voice of God, speaking in his heart. He said that he often afterwards tried to listen for the voice, and it kept him from much wrong that he would otherwise have done.

Conscience has been compared to the needle in the sailor's compass; by its means the ship is kept upon her proper course. If we consult Conscience, we cannot go far astray. A boy is about to steal some money for the first time. Just as his hand is upon it, he fancies he hears steps approaching. He hastily drops the money, and turns away with a beating heart. But he finds he is mistaken, and, perhaps, thinks it was only imagination. He is wrong; the beating heart and the imaginary noises are Conscience warning him that he is about to do wrong. If he is an unthinking boy, he merely laughs at his fears, and next day goes back again. This time he *listens for the sound of steps*, but he does not hear them. The fact that he listened shows that Conscience has been at him again; but this time the warning is fainter, and he commits the theft. It is possible to stifle Conscience altogether.

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According to an Eastern tale, a great magician presented his prince with a ring of great value. Its

value did not consist in the precious stones it contained, but in a peculiar property of the metal. Whenever the prince had a bad or lustful thought, or meditated a bad action, or was about to say a wicked, or cruel, or unjust thing, the ring contracted, and the pain caused by the pressure on the finger warned him against the evil. The poorest person may possess and wear such a ring as that, for the ring of the fable is just that Conscience which is the voice of God in our hearts.

When Macbeth was on his way to murder King Duncan, he had a frightful vision of what he was about to do, and he saw an imaginary dagger beckoning him the way that he was going; the handle was towards his hand, and had gout of blood upon it. That was Conscience calling upon him to stop before it was too late. Conscience sometimes speaks to us while we are actually doing evil.

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While Conscience speaks to us about what are, for us, great wrongs, it seldom does so about little wrongs until they are over and passed away. A boy says: "I do many things of which I am ashamed, and which I would not have done had Conscience warned me." That shows us very plainly that Conscience is a thing we must cultivate if it is to be of any real service to us in the way of preventing us from the doing of evil. A. says to B.: "I am going across to the corner store for some candy. If that master over there should see me, you tell him I have just gone over the fence after something." B. thinks for a moment, and says: "Can't do it; it's not straight." A. then asks C., who agrees to do it. B. consults Conscience; C. does not. If they go on thus, in a few years B. will meet some great temptation and overcome it; C. will meet some great temptation, and fall under it.

If we do not form the habit of looking to Conscience for guidance, the time will come when its voice will be heard reproaching us for the evil that we have done, and that we can never undo. So common is it for men to think of Conscience only when the harm is done that it has been called "the awful compulsion to think." Half the grief that people suffer is through their own sins in the past, and it is Conscience pricking them that causes the grief. Sometimes this grief is so terrible that men, and even women, are led to take their own lives. He who listens to Conscience will never leave this world with the red blot of "suicide" staining his character.

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Dr. Johnson said: "Conscience is the sentinel of virtue." The wise captain never lets his men sleep on the field without posting one or more sentinels. The young man going out into the world is going on to the battlefield of his life, and to be caught napping is to fall into the enemy's hands. He needs all his forces, and, above all, the sentinel, Conscience, to keep guard when the enemy is lying in ambush, and danger seems far away. St. Paul tells us that if we wish to war a good warfare we must have two things, "Faith, and a good Conscience."

"No whip cuts so sharply as the lash of Conscience."

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"The voice of Conscience is so delicate that it is easy to stifle it; but it is also so clear that it is impossible to mistake it."

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