

Sunday Reading.

STRENGTH OF MANHOOD.

A Consideration of What is the Worth of a Man at the Present Day.

The following is a sermon by Rev. Charles W. Wendite, of Oakland, California.

Be thou strong, therefore, and show thyself a man.—1. Kings, ii., 2.

There never was a time when a man counted for so much as now. The barriers of birth, caste, privilege, and fortune have in a great degree fallen, and there is the amplest room for the exercise of individual force. It is so in every department of life. We sometimes speak of the unlimited combinations of modern business life as crushing out the efforts of the individual worker. In some measure this is true. Social science and Christian sympathy are hard at work to correct this evil, and new ideals of equality and fraternity inspire the economic and political life of our day.

But penetrate beneath this system of monopoly of which we are complaining, and what do we find at the centre? A man! A human brain that has spun the meshes of that cunning web, a human will, sends its electric message along the lines of that wide reaching organization. Who keeps the stock quotations flying up and down the financial barometer? Who hoards the gold in his coffers, controls the railroads and newspaper, consolidates the telegraph systems? It is a man, who is the very soul of the monopoly. Condemn him, as we often must, fight against the subtle fetters he throws around the common interest, yet there is something in the force, audacity, and enterprise he displays which challenges our admiration.

A man will make even a bad cause succeed for a time—yet only for a time. A bad cause bears in its bosom the seeds of its own decay, and final overthrow is the inevitable result of every attempt to set up human blindness and selfishness against the moral decrees of God. Though the iniquity may flourish for a season, it is predestined to final ruin, and often buries in its fall the very men whom its erection has already cost the better part of their manhood. When men come to understand better this inevitable moral ordering, we shall not find them giving themselves up, body and soul, as now, to the false worship of Mammon and self-aggrandizement.

Yet these very examples of greed, cunning, and unscrupulousness teach us with sad eloquence the worth of a man at the present day. These lordly speculators, monopolists, and financial magnates owe their pre-eminence to no favor of fortune merely. Rarely are they born into wealth, position, or power. Uneducated, friendless, unknown, they worked their own way from the bottom to the top of the financial ladder, and made use of the circumstances and events of their time as so many rounds upward into fame and fortune. A host of feeble imitators look up in envious admiration, and seek to follow. They fall, not merely because they lack the qualities that make their prototypes temporarily successful—vitality, energy, persistence, self-denial, patience, courage, the foundation of all true manliness, and the conditions of all eminent success.

It is the same thing in all fields of human activity. We sometimes say there are too many ministers, doctors, editors, attorneys, and the like. But Webster spoke the truth when he said to the young lawyers: "Gentlemen, there is plenty of room at the top." The man determines the success of the newspaper, the amount of the fee; too often decides the case for his client before it is even tried. Or, is a college, a philanthropic institution, a church, in trouble? An empty treasury, empty pews, division among the members—forthwith the cry is raised: "A man wanted!" Where is the eminent educator, the gifted preacher, who will fill empty benches, heal strifes, and shame meanness out of sight? When creeds cannot produce harmony, when endowments and organizations fail, then the man comes in the holiness of helpfulness, lifts up the fallen torch of learning in the academic halls, or rekindles the sacred flames of religion upon the altar.

There is no need of further illustration to show that in all human wants, from the hiring of Patrick in our pantry to the election of a president, it is the man that really decides everything.

This super-eminence of men over ideas and principles may have its discouraging aspects. It may seem as if truth and right ought to determine moral issues, and not personal influences. But as human beings are constituted, dependent on each other, with weak wills, that need to be braced by contact with stronger natures, with hearts that love and souls easily kindled to admiration and gratitude, it is not an intellectual proposition or an abstract principle only that is wanted. The idea, the principle, must be incarnate in a human life to assure the victory over error and sin. So, while we believe in ideas, we should believe still more in ideas incarnated in living men and women. The maxims of the philosophers may win our assent and yet leave us cold; but a noble personality, full of faith and power, quicken our feeble pulses,

clears our vision, lifts us out of doubt and apathy to faith and fervor, and carries us forward on the resistless tide of its larger life and hope. Ralph Waldo Emerson's serene and noble character is a diviner legacy to mankind than even his immortal writings. Longfellow gave to the world no sweeter poem than his own gentle, beneficent life. Fortunate is he who, in early life, has been attracted and inspired by some larger nature that came within the orbit of his mortal experience. Who that has ever felt the magic influence which a person of character and culture exerts on all about him will not thankfully confess the spiritual increase that flowed to him from such a contact? How it enlarged the scope of life for him, deepened its joys, lessened its trials, and gave him new readings of truth and duty.

The world's greatest need today is not more ideas, or more principles, but more manhood. What is there on earth nobler? Listen to Shakespeare as he tells us in sounding lines the glory and marvel of man: "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculties! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a god! The beauty of the world. The paragon of animals."

Even so the psalmist, in inspired language, pays tribute to manhood, as if to remind us in our sorrow over man's frequent weakness and littleness how near he yet is to heaven and God: "What is man that thou art mindful of him? Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels and hast crowned him with glory and honor!"

Such is man, conceived at his highest and best. As we mourn over the fallen fortunes and tarnished names of those we once honored and loved, let us not, therefore, despair of manhood. Let us remember that these fell, not because they were only men, but because they were not men enough. They mistook their high calling, wasted their opportunity, and spent on the this world the heart that was large enough for God and eternity.

For what is manhood? It is not so much native gifts as the power to rightly apply those gifts. The characteristics of manliness are an intense vitality, concentration of purpose, an energetic will, and a persistent courage. If a man has these, though his natural talent be small and his education limited, he has within himself the making of a man and the prime conditions of success in life.

But there are other and still more essential traits in all true manhood—a warm heart, a quick conscience and a soul inclined to natural pity. These three things super-added to the robust qualities already mentioned, are what determines whether one's manliness is to be warped into selfishness and insincerity, or to be harmoniously developed into a pure, generous, and beneficent life. A man may have all the other qualities of a high manhood, and yet, lacking these, produce only a superficial growth that is without moral fiber or spiritual sap.

All manhood, to be truly, permanently, successful, must be at the disposal of character and subject to the refining influences of culture and piety. Without faith, without personal piety, there can be no high order of manhood. It is a noble thing to be strong and brave; to have a well-trained mind, equipped with the culture of the schools; to have a heart easily touched with sympathy. Nobler still is it when this is united with a high moral purpose, and so attains to the serene poise of an upright, untemptable manhood.

LIFE'S HIGHEST PRIZE.

Character is the one Possession That Men Should Seek to Gain.

Character has been defined as the joint product of nature and nurture. Nature gives the raw material, character is the carved statue. These materials include the racial endowments, temperament, degree of vital force, mentality, aptitude for tool or industry, for art or science. These birth-gifts are quantities, fixed and unalterable. No heart-rendings can change the two talent nature into a ten talent man. No agony of effort can add a cubit to the stature. The eagle flies over the chasm as easily as an ant crawls over the crack in the ground. Shakespeare writes Hamlet as easily as Tupper wrote his tales. Once an oak, always an oak. Care and culture can thicken the girth of the tree, but no degree of culture can cause an oak bough to bring forth figs instead of acorns. Rebellion against nature and circumstance is sure to end in the breaking of the heart. Happiness and success begin with the sincere acceptance of the birth-gift and career God has chosen. But since no man can do his best work save as he uses his strongest faculties, the first duty of each is to search out the line of least resistance.

He who has a genius for moral themes

but has harnessed himself to the plow or the forge, is in danger of wrecking both happiness and character. All such misfits are fatal. No farmer harnesses a fawn to the plow, or put an ox into the speeding wagon. Life's problem is to make a right inventory of the gifts one carries. As no carpenter knows what tools are in the box until he lifts the lid and unwraps one shining instrument after another, so the instruments in the soul must be unfolded by education. On a world where the inventor accompanies the machine with a chart, illustrating the use of each wheel and accompaniment. But no babe lying in the cradle ever brought with it a handbook setting forth its mental equipment and pointing out its aptitude for his occupation, or that art or industry. The gardener plants a bulb with perfect certainty that a lily will come up, but no man is prophetic wise enough to tell whether this babe will unfold into quality of thinker or doer or dreamer. To each nature whispers, "Unseen, unseen; hold fast what you have." For the soul is shadowless and mysterious. No hand can carve its outline, no brush portray its lineaments. Even the mother embossing its infancy and carrying its weaknesses, studying it by day and night through years, sees not, she cannot see, knows not, she cannot know, into what splendor of maturity the child will unfold.

Man beholds his fellows as one beholds a volume written in a foreign language; the outer binding is seen, the inner contents are unread. Within general lines phrenology and physiognomy are helpful, but it is easier to determine what kind of a man lives in the house by looking at the knob on his front door than to determine the brain and heart within by studying the bumps upon face and forehead. Nature's dictum is, "Grasp the handle of your own being." Each must fashion his own character. Nature gives trees, but not tools; forests, but not furniture. Thus nature furnishes man with the birth materials and environment; man must work up these materials into those qualities called industry, integrity, honor, truth, and love, ever patterning after that ideal man, Jesus Christ.

The influences shaping nature's materials into character are many and various. Of old, the seer likened the soul unto clay. The mud falls upon the board before the potter, a rude mass, without form or comeliness. But an hour afterward the clay stands forth adorned with all the beauty of a lovely vase. Thus the soil begins a mere mass of mud, but hands many and powerful soon shaped it into the outlines of some noble man or woman. These teachers include home, friendships, occupations, travel, success, love, grief, death.

But when friendship and love have enriched man, deepened all the secret springs of his being, when grief hath refined and suffering mellowed him then God sends the ideals to stimulate man to new achievements. An ideal is a pattern or plan held up before the man's eye for imitation, realization, and guidance. In the heart's innermost temple of silence, whether neither friend nor enemy may ever come, there the soul unveils its secret ideal. The pattern there erected at once proclaims what man is and prophesies what he shall be. "By no political alchemy," said Herbert Spencer, "can we get golden conduct out of leaden instincts." Therefore must that pattern held up before the mind's eye be of the highest and purest. The legend tells us of the master's apprentice, who, from the small bits of glass that had been thrown away, constructed a window of surpassing loveliness. The ideal held up before the boy's mind organized and brought together these broken bits, and wrought them into lines of perfect beauty.

Thus by his inner aspirations man lives and builds. The vision before reason reveals to the toiler a better tool or law or reform, and the realization of these visions give social progress. The vision of conscience reveals new possibilities of character, and these give duty. The vision of the heart reveals new possibilities of friendship, and these give the home. As the sun standing upon the horizon orbs itself, first in each dewdrop, and afterwards lifts the whole earth forward, so the ideal repeats itself, first in the individual hearts, and afterward lifts all society forward. Thus unto man slowly building up his character comes the supreme ideal, when Jesus Christ stands forth fully revealed in his splendor. He is no empty abstraction, no bloodless theory, but one of our boys, of our own body and breath, yet marked by no weakness, scorched by no sin, tossing back temptations as some Gibraltar tosses back the sea's billows and the bits of drifting wood. Strong, he subdued his strength in the day of battle, and bore himself like iron. He was so gentle that his white hand felt the fall of the rose leaf, while he inflicted his gnanthood to the needs of the little child. Nor could he be holden of the bands of death, for he clove a pathway through the grave, and made death's night to shine like the day. "I have but one passion," said Tholuck. "It is he! it is he!" As Shakespeare first reveals to the young poet his real riches of imagination, as Raphael first unveils to the young artist the possibilities of color, so man knows not his infinite capabilities until Jesus Christ stands forth in all his untrodden splendor. Having him, man has not only his teacher and savior, but also his master, and model, fulfilling all the needs of the highest manhood and character.—Rev. N. D. Hillis.

LIVING BY PRAYER.

Illustrations of the Remarkable Faith Shown by George Muller.

On Friday last, writes a correspondent of the Christian World, I walked through one of Mr. Muller's five great orphanages, Ashley Downs, Bristol, and had the privilege of conversing with the venerated founder and head of the orphanages. He is now over ninety years of age, but he looks as fresh as a man in his seventies. He bears no obtrusive sign of feebleness or decrepitude; he needs no stick to lean

upon; and he walks with a firm, easy step which suggests that he has still a good reserve of available energy. He speaks without faltering, an occasional 'd' sound in place of 'th', reminding one of his German nationality. His face, far from showing a trace of worry or dismay as a result of his immense responsibilities and daily cares, is as placid and refreshing to look upon as a cool and shady lake on a hot summer day. His personality does impress one, as being powerful. He has probably never been perplexed with questions of merely intellectual or philosophic interest. His life problems have been of a far different kind. For over sixty years he has wrestled with God in prayer many times daily—in periods of dark trial he has scarcely been off his knees, and he has called no mortal aid to help him in his extremities. He feeds over two thousand orphans on Ashley Downs morning, noon and night, and he has usually a good many baskets, left over. He receives his supplies miraculously as Elijah got his food. He is our nineteenth century prophet, telling this doubting generation that the age of miracles is not past and gone, and that there is a God who both hears and answers prayer. Summer and winter, he rises at half-past six. At a quarter to eight he begins the task of going through the letters; and at ten o'clock he is waited upon by nine assistants, to whom he gives instructions. He preaches twice every Sunday and occasionally speaks at Bristol during the week. Since he began his great life work he has received about a million and a half of money for his orphans, and another quarter of a million for the other missionary work he directs, without having asked or hinted that he wished or needed a penny from any one. It is interesting to remember, in view of the achievements of this single God-helped man, that he broke a blood vessel in his youth and was exempted from service in the German army because he was too weak and had a tendency to consumption!

In the course of our conversation, I said to Mr. Muller that in my younger days I used to pray and believe I got direct answers, but as I grew older I got to fancy the answers must simply be coincidences. "Ah," broke in Mr. Muller, "you had lost the simplicity of childhood." "Then," I continued, "as I began to think things out and have deeper religious experience, I believed that God's will was established in everything, and that prayer was simply a surrendering of man's individual will to God's and placing one's self in harmony with the divine will in everything. But you go a step further," I said to Mr. Muller, "and pray for the direct divine interposition in the affairs of ordinary daily life." "Yes," replied the aged saint, smiling, "how could I do otherwise?" Then he drew his chair nearer mine, and as we sat face to face he instructed me affectionately in the following homily; I reproduce it as faithfully as my memory will allow: "The first essential to effectual prayer is simple faith and childlike trust in God, unminged with our own thoughts and fears. Secondly, you must find out what is God's will concerning the object of your petition, and if you are inexperienced in spiritual things, you must seek instruction from some good and holy man who can help you. I might pray to God to make me a duke or a wealthy man, or a learned literary gentleman, but to grant an answer to such prayers might be pernicious to me, and God would not answer it because he loves me. We must seek to ascertain what would be well pleasing to God, and to be free from all mere selfseeking in our prayers. Third, we must approach God, not pleading any merit of our own, for we are wicked, and only deserve punishment. We must plead the merit of Jesus Christ alone. Then, when we are sure our petition is a righteous one and when our inner conscience tells us that it cannot be otherwise than praying—never giving up. Many people lose the blessing or delay the answer because they do not persevere. Parents pray for the conversion of their children, and they lose heart if they have prayed apparently in vain for one or two or three years, or five years; but I have prayed twenty years before I got an answer even thirty and thirty-five years. And two gentlemen—I have prayed for their conversion for fifty-two years." "And they are alive still?" I inquired. "Yes," replied Mr. Muller; "they are alive still, and I know my prayer will be answered even though I may not be spared to see the answer. I know I shall meet them in heaven. My God never disappoints me or sees me contending. I have had thousands and thousands of answers to my prayers. When we begin to pray we must be in earnest about it, and hold on until we have got the answer. Our prayers must be persistent. I have not been free from periods of sore trial and perplexity. Sometimes when £90 per day was needed to pay our current expenses only £43 would come in, and when we might require about £700 in, and when we might require about £120 would come in. But we did not falter or stop. We went on, never doubting that the supplies would come, and they always have come. And I thank God that the times of my greatest trial have been, next to my conversion, the periods of greatest blessing to my soul."

FACING THE MORNING.

How we Should Feel in regard to the Past Year and the Present One.

"Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before."—Philippians, iii., 13.

The midnight of 1895 has given place to the day-dawn of 1896. It would manifest but little wisdom if we should be found peering sadly into the gloom of the past, fretting ourselves about the water that, being spilled, can never again be gathered up; concerning ourselves about the ghosts of the midnight and the darkness while the

SATINS,

The Finest

Molasses Chewing Candy

in the Land.

TRY

Have You seen the New Model No. 2?

—IMPROVED—

AMERICAN TYPEWRITER



\$10?

CONTAINS New Ideas and Improved Construction, developed in the manufacture and use of the No. 1. It is a marvellous combination of simplicity and capability, being rapid, durable, portable and serviceable. Writes in sight; uses no ribbon, but prints directly from type, which, combined with the perfect alignment, gives results unequalled by any; handsome enamelled and nickel-plated; every machine is guaranteed.

On Third Year and No Competitor. Send for catalogue and letter written with
Ira Cornwall, General Agent
For the Maritime Provinces.

Board of Trade Building, Canterbury St., St. John, N. B.

stars of sunrise are melting into the serene glories of a new-born day. The past is past! An ocean of tears and a whirlwind of sighing will make no change in the fixed, unalterable past. Our business is with the present and the future. Let the dead bury its dead. The prophet with the shining forehead ranging the mountain tops of time in answer to the world's anxious question. "What of the night, watchman, what of the night?" surveys the broadening heavens and answers back: "The morning cometh!" Our faces should be toward the rising, not the setting sun. Forgetting the things that are behind and all the days that are gone we should stretch out the strong hand of faith to the things that are to come. Memories of past failures dwell upon too moodily may prove only stumbling blocks in the way of progress. Memories of other days wisely cherished may prove stepping stones in the way to help us upward along the mountain steps of progress. With our faces to the morning we shall catch the light and inspiration of the coming time. God has revealed himself in wonderful ways in the days that are past. But there are grander revelations yet to come. Let us confront the sunny morning of this new year with the sure and certain confidence that tomorrow will be as yesterday, only much more abundantly.

In the Hindoo's Creed.

"Those simple hymns which, up to the present day, are regarded by the Brahmins, as Max Muller has said, 'with the same feeling with which a Mohammedan regards the Koran, a Jew the Old Testament, a Christian his gospel,' those hymns of the true ancestors of our race, in which we study the first beginnings of our language, take us into a purer air than we can elsewhere breathe in the temple of Hindooism. And I would mention, as perhaps the most important contrast between the Jewish and the Christian scriptures on the one hand, and the Hindoo on the other, that, in the former, we have a continuous, or substantially continuous, growth in doctrine, a development from the lower to the higher, from the less perfect to the perfect; while in the latter there is a woeful and sometimes swift degeneracy, a decline from the loftiness and purity of earlier thought and aspiration. I would not deny, I gratefully confess, that Hindooism has been a reservoir which in all ages has contained a variety of religious ideals, which are of supreme value. Hindooism has given us profound teachings concerning the sinfulness and spiritual weakness of man, the necessity of an incarnation, the value of prayers and self-sacrifice, the immortality of the soul, the supremacy of divine intelligence. It has offered comforting words concerning the divine goodness and sympathy. We find in it promises of a better age, 'which, no doubt, cheered many a heart crushed with a load or torn with the contradictions of life.' But how feeble, imperfect, unauthoritative and meager seems all this teaching compared with what has come to us through Biblical history! With the Hindoo all is speculation, dream; but with the Christian truth has been disclosed in connection with historic facts.—Rev. J. H. Barrows.

Giving and Receiving.

In the largest sense, a gift is the discharging of an obligation, the paying of a debt. "Noblesse oblige." Friendship is a kind of sweet slavery. Love is a silken yoke which presses us into service. The objection that love and friendship are independent of the medium and forms I have

mentioned is hasty and superficial. Love has its technic as music. There is a code of friendship as there is one of morals. There are no blind friendships or free loves. The subtlest and most spiritual intimacies are subject to law. The flame must be fed with fresh fuel, else it will waste and blow out. Likewise, to keep the coals of fire aglow we must occasionally throw incense on them, or fan them with the warm breath into brightness. It is not enough to have love, it must be expressed, translated into the vernacular, the people's tongue—that is to say, the love must become a thing, a shake of the hand, an embrace, a kiss, a gift.

But, like everything else, this beautiful institution is somewhat prevented. "Per- version" is the deadliest word in our language. The perversion of friendship into a commerce, a "give and take," or a "buy and sell," into policy and calculation, into fashion and hypocrisy, is the unpardonable sin, the sin against the holiest thing in the universe. We go twist things out of shape and sense! "The permanent interest of every man," says Emerson, "is never to be in a false position." Let every giver and receiver of presents bear this ever in mind. Life is truth.—M. M. Mangasarian.

Yesterday and Tomorrow.

Tomorrow wins no successes that yesterday did not plan. Tomorrow is only the point where yesterday empties out its baskets, laden with treasure. The closing year asks each youth to guard against all idle summers, to spend no winters "killing time," and slaying the very hours that wise men covet so eagerly. Maritaneau was deeply affected by the thought that hours mean different things to a stone and to a man. Over the dead rocks the unending ages roll, only the years are as though they were not. But to him who knelt in Gethsemane a single night availed for the sublimest crisis in history. To the martyr waiting in his dungeon or the tyrant's decision, not knowing whether it will be "to the release" or "to the Lyons," a night was crowded with thoughts that would fill years for other men. It is the mother, bending over the dying couch, watching the ebbing pulse and treasuring each whispered word; it is the patriot Lincoln, snatching from the courier the news of a battle lost or won; it is the wife hurrying to the ship's office to ask the list of the crew lost or saved, who can best tell us for what an hour avails, and what issues tremble thereupon. To the insect a summer's day of four and twenty hours may seem a career all too long, but to a man searching out the secrets of the rocks, hunting for some new remedy, some new force or tool, to man toiling upon his arts, his reforms, his industries, three score years and ten are all too short for his many and sublime purposes.—Dr. Hillis.

A Costly Church.

The Church of Our Saviour at Moscow was completed only a few years ago, and surpassed in beauty any church of modern times. It was built to commemorate the deliverance of Moscow from the French, and it cost about 4,000,000.

A Message From God.

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust." Psalm 91: 1, 2.