

Character Lessons to Train Youth

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XIX.—Ambition.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was born into the poorest of surroundings. His parents lived in such a condition of poverty that they could not even teach him to read. But he was not contented with his lot. He had a desire to be somebody and to do something in the world, so he determined to learn to read and taught himself with a spelling book, and the Bible was his only reading book. He had a desire to learn that nothing could subdue. What is this called?

Contentment that is satisfied with mediocrity and insignificant results ceases to be a virtue and becomes a fault. "Good enough" never makes real progress and often degenerates into shiftlessness. One should aim at perfection. One needs a little discontent to spur him on. The habit of mind that seeks to excel is called ambition. It is right to be contented with what we have, but not with what we are.

It is a worthy ambition to work hard for a comfortable home. Even ambition to be rich is worthy, but it must be remembered that riches may be purchased at too dear a price.

Everybody should have the ambition to do well whatever he does, at play as well as at work, but above all it should be his ambition to do the best things. Every one should cultivate an ambition to excel—a passion for perfection.

A boy used to crush flowers to get their color and painted the white side of his father's cottage with all sorts of pictures. He became the great artist Titian.

An old painter watched a little fellow who amused himself making drawings of his pot and brushes, enamel and stool, and said, "That boy will excel me some day." And he did, for it was Michelangelo.

A German boy was reading a delightfully thrilling novel. Right in the midst of it he stopped and said to himself: "Now, this will never do. I have work to do in real life." And he flung the book into the river. That boy was Fichte, the great German philosopher.

No one can afford to do less than his best. "Aspiration is inspiration." Ambition to excel, however, defeats its own purpose if it leads to the employment of unworthy means. Ambition is neither a virtue nor a vice, although it may easily become one. It derives whatever moral quality it possesses from its object and from the means employed in its attainment.

The world admires the ambition to "get on" in the world and to help others to "get on" in it. The highest ambition is to achieve something for the benefit of one's fellow man.

Ambition excites enthusiasm, which is the compelling power that overcomes all obstacles. Enthusiasm enables one to do the work that his heart desires. It brooks no interference with the accomplishment of its object. What matter that young Benjamin West had neither pigment nor brush? He made color from indigo and brushes from the cat's hair. Sumner says, "Have ambition to be remembered, not as a great lawyer, doctor, merchant or scholar, but as a great man—every inch a king." The people with high ideals are the advance guard of humanity. They cut the smooth road over which march future generations. Whipping and scolding only made Ole Bull more devoted to his violin.

Benjamin West was asked how he attained such excellence. He replied, "By observing one simple rule—to make each picture the best."

Practice.—Upon the next piece of work or duty you are called upon to perform determine to do it perfectly; do it better than any one else could.

Literature.

I cannot in this valley stay. The great horizons stretch away. The airy cliffs that wall me round Are ladders unto higher ground. To rest, to work, for each a time. I toil, but I must also climb. —Lucy Larcom.

We build the ladder by which we rise From lowly earth to the vaulted skies And mount to the summit round by round. —J. G. Holland.

Ah, the key of our life, that passes all words, opens all locks. Is not I will, but I must, I must, and I do it. —A. H. Clough.

Be thou contented with thy lot in earthly things, But be forever seeking after angels' wings. —James T. White.

There is nothing noble in being superior to some other man. The true nobility is in being superior to your previous self.—Hindu Saying.

An aspiration is a joy forever, a possession as solid as a landed estate.—Robert Louis Stevenson.

The chief want in life is somebody who shall make us do the best we can.—Emerson.

ROCKEFELLER IN BRONZE.

Andrew Carnegie Has Also Been Posing For Sculptor.

Bronze busts have been made of John D. Rockefeller and Andrew Carnegie, the two men who have been the most lavish in giving away gold and other forms of riches, and thus their lineaments will be preserved in enduring metal. Their deeds will doubtless keep their names known so long as the world endures, and these bronze busts will enable future generations to know what the two financial geniuses and philanthropists looked like.

The bust of Mr. Rockefeller was made by William Couper, a New York



BUST OF JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER.

sculptor. It was done especially for the Chicago university. It has been placed on the mantel over the big fireplace in Hutchinson commons, the huge dining hall where hundreds of the students eat. From that position the image of the oil magnate will look down on the future generations. An oil painting of Mr. Rockefeller as he looked at the time the university was founded hangs on the wall of the same room.

Recent large gifts by these two multimillionaires attracted considerable attention. Mr. Carnegie established a peace fund of \$10,000,000 and Mr. Rockefeller added \$10,000,000 to Mr. Carnegie's gift to the Chicago university, making his total \$35,000,000. Other donations to the school give it something more than \$41,000,000 and make it the richest university in America.

For some years the race between Mr. Rockefeller and Mr. Carnegie for the championship in the making of gifts has been close. Early in the contest the oil man was in the lead, but the ironmaster has recently made a spurt, and he is now a few millions ahead. Accurate estimates of the various donations of the two men credit Mr. Rockefeller with \$211,000,000, while Mr. Carnegie has given away about \$214,000,000. As each of them is still enjoying an income that amounts to many millions yearly the contest is not over.

THE KAISER'S GRANDSONS.

Many Boys Have Been Born in the Royal Family of Germany.

Kaiser Wilhelm has probably been envied many times by his fellow rulers, the czar of Russia and the king of Italy, because he was the father of six sons, thus insuring an heir to the throne. Four daughters were born to the czar of Russia before the stork brought a boy, and the king of Italy had three princesses in his family before there was a prince.

The crown prince of Germany has three children, all boys. Two of them are shown in the accompanying picture. The larger one is Prince William Frederick, and in due course of time he will become the crown prince and will later be the ruler of the German empire. The other one is Prince



GERMAN CROWN PRINCE'S CHILDREN.

Louis Ferdinand. Their baby brother is too small to play with dogs and toy warships, so he did not get into the picture.

Prince William Frederick, named for his grandfather and great-grandfather, was born July 4, 1900, so that he celebrates his birthday on the same date that Uncle Sam celebrates. Prince Louis Ferdinand was born Nov. 9, 1907.

The future ruler of Germany is a sturdy lad with Democratic proclivities. He is extremely mischievous and is a great favorite in the family, the Kaiser in particular being fond of him. He cares much more for his toys than about the cares of state and is simply a healthy, normal boy like thousands of others in Germany.

The Scrap Book

Handed Back His Own Coin. A Washington parent tells the following story of his young son, who, by the way, has not reached the shaving stage yet, but, as the story indicates, is not averse to trying:

"The other morning he was reading the newspaper when he suddenly exclaimed, 'Father, I see in the paper that the corporation is going to bust that you are president of.'"

"Now, I knew that I knew more about my business than the paper, so I replied very comfortably, 'My son, never believe anything you see in the newspaper.'"

"A few days later I found my new razor broken, wrapped in a newspaper and thrown behind the house. I immediately went in search of Bobbie. 'Look here, young man, what's the meaning of all this?' I said. 'Here's my new razor broken all to pieces, wrapped in a newspaper and thrown behind the house.' 'Father,' he replied, backing hastily out of the room, 'never believe anything you see in a newspaper.'—Washington Star.

The Mirror of Life. Do you wish for kindness? Be kind. Do you wish for truth? Be true. What you give of yourself you find. Your world is a reflex of you.

For life is a mirror. You smile And a smile is your sure return. Bear hate in your heart and erewhile All your world with hatred will burn. Set love against love. Every deed Shall armed as a fate recoil. You shall gather your fruit from the seed That you cast yourself in the soil.

Same as Hers. Senator William Pierson Fiero of Catskill was seated about the enormous fireplace in an Albany hotel one night when he told this story: "I remember thirty years ago, when I was a young lawyer, there were about fifteen or eighteen of us—all lawyers—seated about a fireplace much like this. It was a raw, wet night. A bedraggled stranger, wet to the hide, came in, tried to get accommodations and was told there was not a room left. The nearest other place was a mile away. Shivering, the stranger looked at the fire, but we formed such a solid line about it that he could not get near it. Finally one of the lawyers in a spirit of frivolity turned to him and said: 'My friend, are you a traveler?' 'I am, sir. I have been all over the world.' 'You don't say! Been in Germany, Egypt, Japan and all the countries in Africa and Asia?' 'All of them—been everywhere.' 'Ever been in hell?' 'Oh, yes; been there twice.' 'How did you find things there?' 'Oh, much the same as here—lawyers all next to the fire.'—New York Herald.

Did Not Look Right. The intelligent compositor, one of the kind that figures in many an anecdote, worked on an Arkansas paper at a period when a well known novelist was editor. One day the printer undertook to set up the word "doughnut." He spelled it "donut." "See here," said the novelist, "don't you know how to spell 'doughnut'?" "You've misspelled it here." The intelligent compositor came over and gazed at the proof and scratched his head in perplexity. "Well," he admitted, "that doesn't look right, but it had a 'w' in it once, and somehow that didn't look right either."

An Untold Story. There was one occasion when Chauncey Depew's mirthmaking abilities received a severe jolt. Feeling the need of upbuilding him self physically, he went to a country sanitarium which made a business of hardening muscles and perfecting the digestion. In the routine work of the institution there was a morning half hour devoted to pushing up into the air a pair of dumbbells, and with this as with every other feature of the training the rule was absolute obedience. Moreover, the superintendent of the place was a severe doctor. The first morning after Depew's arrival he had the dumbbells thrust into his hands. During the first few minutes he pushed them into the ether and pulled them down again with great haste, but in a little while the senatorial muscles began to grow weary. The new member of the class, looking round at his companions, took heart and stuck to the work. At last he could stand it no longer. He let his hands drop to his sides and laughed infectiously. "Doctor," he ha-ha-ed, "this reminds me of a story!" "Mr. Depew," said the trainer roughly, "either keep on pushing those dumbbells or leave the place!" And Mr. Depew pushed, grimly and without mirth.

Paying His Debt. A peevish and nagging professor who loved to dunk his students was examining a class in physiology. He placed under a microscope for identification a drop of blood obtained by pricking his own finger. One of the students who owed the professor a grudge when asked by the examiner to state to what animal the blood belonged looked up after carefully examining the specimen and sweetly replied, "A reptile, sir!"

CHOCKFUL OF FUN.

The Parson Didn't Look It, but He Fooled the Cowboy.

Appearances sometimes are very deceitful, and to prove this trite proposition Chauncey M. Depew once related the following stirring anecdote: "A clerical friend of mine," said the senator, "told me a capital story of a Yale man who was stroked out for his crew and the chief athlete on the football field. He entered the ministry and spent several years in missionary labor in the far west. Walking one day through the frontier town, a cowboy stepped up to him and said: 'Parson, you don't have fun enough. Take a drink.' 'The minister declined.' 'Well,' the cowboy said, 'you must have some fun. Here's a faro layout. Take a hand in the game.' 'The minister declined.' 'Parson,' said the cowboy, 'you'll die if you don't have some fun,' and he



THE OLD ATHLETE'S SPIRIT AROSE.

thereupon knocked the parson's hat off his head and hit him a whack on the ear. "The old athlete's spirit arose. The science which had been learned in the college gymnasium and forgotten for a quarter of a century was aroused, and a blow landed on the jaw of the cowboy that sent him sprawling in the street. The parson walked over him as if he had been a door rug, plected him up and dusted the side of the house with him, mopped up the sidewalk, and as the ambulance was carrying the cowboy off he raised his head feebly and said: 'Parson, what did you fool me for? You are chockful of fun.'—Washington Times.

Witty Willis. Nathaniel Parker Willis, the poet and author, was also a bit of a wit. Once at a dinner in Washington Willis and a young girl were talking with great animation. The young girl's aunt, seated beside a Mr. Campbell, passed down to her niece a note that said, "Stop flirting with Nat Willis." Willis on reading the note sent it back to the aunt again with this couplet scribbled on the reverse side: Dear aunt, don't attempt my young feelings to trammel Nor strain at a Nat while you swallow a Campbell.

A Garbled Message. At the last moment Mr. Gayley found he could not attend the garden party at Miss Fenton's house, and it was, of course, imperative that he should send his regrets, so he summoned Michael, the family gardener. "Tell Miss Bessie that I am very sorry, but business will prevent me coming," he said. "Yes, sir," said Michael. "And—stay a moment," said Gayley. "Could you remember a line of poetry?" "Certainly, sorr." "Well, tell her, 'Though lost to sight, to memory dear.'" Half an hour later Michael was delivering his message to Miss Fenton. "The master said it's sorry he is he can't be wid ye," said Michael, "and— and, though he's lost his sight, his memory's clear. And may I be forgiven for the untruth I'm tellin' ye!"

A Willful Misunderstanding. Pitt was induced by Sir John Sinclair to constitute a board of agriculture toward the end of the eighteenth century and make him the president. Having enjoyed his office for a few years, Sinclair began to desire promotion in the social scale. "Dear Mr. Pitt," he wrote to the prime minister, "don't you think the president of the board of agriculture should be a peer?" "Dear Sir John Sinclair," replied Pitt, "I entirely agree with you. I have therefore appointed Lord Somerville to succeed you as president of the board of agriculture." Sir John Sinclair went about wringing his hands and exclaiming: "Dear me, dear me! It was such a willful misunderstanding!"

Startled the Quakers. Of Diggle, Mr. Barham used to tell many absurd stories. The most amusing, however much to be condemned, of his practical jokes was one in which his friend Barham also had a share. The two boys in course of one of their walks discovered a Quakers' meeting house and forthwith procured a penny tart of a neighboring pastry cook. Furnished with this, Diggle marched boldly into the building and, holding up the delicacy in the midst of the grave assembly, said with perfect solemnity, "Whoever speaks first shall have this pie." "Friend, go thy way," commenced a drab colored gentleman rising: "go thy way." "The pie is yours, sir!" exclaimed Master Diggle, politely, and placing it before the astonished speaker, hastily effected his escape.—English College Life.

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