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Self-Help

By Samuel Smiles

A Condensed Version

12 March 2009

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London
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Preface (1866)

In one respect the title of the book, which it is now too late to alter, has proved unfortunate, as it has led some, who have judged it merely by the title, to suppose that it consists of a eulogy of selfishness: the very opposite of what it really is - or at least of what the author intended it to be. Although its chief object unquestionably is to stimulate youths to apply themselves diligently to right pursuits - sparing neither labour, pains, nor self-denial in prosecuting them - and to rely upon their own efforts in life, rather than depend upon the help or patronage of others, it will also be found, from the examples given of literary and scientific men, artists, inventors, educators, philanthropists, missionaries and martyrs, that the duty of helping one's self in the highest sense involves the helping of one's neighbours.

It has also been objected to the book that too much notice is taken in it of men who have succeeded in life by helping themselves, and too little of the multitude of men who have failed. 'Why should not Failure', it has been asked, 'have its Plutarch as well as Success?' There is, indeed, no reason why not, except that a record of mere failure would probably be found excessively depressing as well as uninstructive reading.

It is, however, shown in the following pages that failure is the best discipline of the true worker, by stimulating him to renewed efforts, evoking his best powers, and carrying him onward in self-culture, self-control and growth in knowledge and wisdom. Viewed in this light, failure, conquered by perseverance, is always full of interest and instruction, and this we have endeavoured to illustrate by many examples.

As for failure per se, although it may be well to find consolations for it at the close of life, there is reason to doubt whether it is an object that ought to be set before youth at the beginning of it. Indeed, 'how not to do it' is of all things the easiest learnt: it needs neither teaching, effort, self-denial, industry, patience, perseverance, nor judgment. Besides, readers do not care to know about the general who lost his battles, the engineer whose engines blew up, the architect who designed only deformities, the painter who never got beyond daubs, the schemer who did not invent his machine.

It is true, the best of men may fail, in the best of causes. But even these best of men did not try to fail, or regard their failure as meritorious; on the contrary, they tried to succeed and looked upon failure as misfortune. Failure in any good cause is, however, honourable, whilst success in any bad cause is merely infamous. At the same time success in the good cause is

[1] Condensed by David Moller.

unquestionably better than failure. But it is not the result in any case that is to be regarded so much as the aim and the effort, the patience, the courage and the endeavour with which desirable and worthy objects are pursued.

The object of the book briefly is to re-inculcate these old-fashioned but wholesome lessons which perhaps cannot be too often urged, that youth must work in order to enjoy, that nothing creditable can be accomplished without application and diligence, that the student must not be daunted by difficulties, but conquer them by patience and perseverance, and that, above all, he must seek elevation of character, without which capacity is worthless and worldly success is naught.

Self-help – national and individual

We put too much faith in systems, and look too little to men.

B. Disraeli

Heaven helps those who help themselves is a well-tried maxim, embodying in a small compass the results of vast human experience. The spirit of self-help is the root of all genuine growth in the individual; and, exhibited in the lives of many, it constitutes the true source of national vigour and strength. Help from without is often enfeebling in its effects, but help from within invariably invigorates. Whatever is done *for* men or classes, to a certain extent takes away the stimulus and necessity of doing for themselves; and where men are subjected to over-guidance and over-government, the inevitable tendency is to render them comparatively helpless.

Even the best institutions can give a man no active help. Perhaps the most they can do is to leave him free to develop himself and improve his individual condition. But in all times men have been prone to believe that their happiness and well-being were to be secured by means of institutions rather than by their own conduct. Hence the value of legislation as an agent in human advancement has usually been much over-estimated.

To constitute the millionth part of a legislature, by voting for one or two men once in three or five years, can exercise but little active influence upon any man's life and character. Moreover, it is every day becoming more clearly understood that the function of government is negative and restrictive, rather than positive and active; being resolvable principally into protection - protection of life, liberty and property.

Laws, wisely administered, will secure men in the enjoyment of the fruits of their labour, whether of mind or body, at a comparatively small personal sacrifice; but no laws, however stringent, can make the idle industrious, the thriftless provident, or the drunken sober. Such reforms can only be effected by better habits, rather than by greater rights.

The government of a nation itself is usually found to be but the reflex of the individuals composing it. The government that is ahead of the people will inevitably be dragged down to their level, as the government that is behind them will in the long run be dragged up. In the

order of nature, the collective character of a nation will as surely find its befitting results in its law and government, as water finds its own level. Indeed all experience serves to prove that the worth and strength of a state depend far less upon the form of its institutions than upon the character of its people.

National progress is the sum of individual industry, energy and uprightness, as national decay is of individual idleness, selfishness and vice. What we are accustomed to decry as great social evils, will, for the most part, be found to be but the outgrowth of man's own perverted life; and though we may endeavour to cut them down and extirpate them by means of law, they will only spring up again with fresh luxuriance in some other form, unless the conditions of personal life and character are radically improved. If this view is correct, then it follows that the highest patriotism and philanthropy consist, not so much in altering laws and modifying institutions, as in helping and stimulating men to improve themselves by their own free and independent individual action.

It may be of comparatively little consequence how a man is governed from without, whilst everything depends upon how he governs himself from within. The greatest slave is not he who is ruled by a despot, great though that evil is, but he who is in the thrall of his own moral ignorance, selfishness and vice.

The solid foundations of liberty must rest upon individual character, which is also the only sure guarantee for social security and national progress. John Stuart Mill correctly observes that ‘even despotism does not produce its worst effects so long as individuality exists under it; and whatever crushes individuality *is* despotism, by whatever name it be called.’

Old fallacies as to human progress are constantly turning up. Some call for Caesars, others for Acts of Parliament. We are to wait for Caesars, and when they are found, ‘happy the people who recognise and follow them.’ This doctrine in short means, everything *for* the people, nothing *by* them - a doctrine which, if taken as a guide, must, by destroying the free conscience of a community, speedily prepare the way for any form of despotism. Caesarism is human idolatry in its worst form - a worship of mere power, as degrading in its effects as the worship of mere wealth would be. A far healthier doctrine to inculcate among the nations would be that of self-help.

All nations have been made what they are by the thinking and the working of many generations of people. Patient and persevering labourers in all ranks and conditions of life, cultivators of the soil and explorers of the mine, inventors and discoverers, manufacturers, mechanics and artisans, poets, philosophers and politicians, all have contributed towards the grand result, one generation building upon another's labours and carrying them forward to still higher stages.

Daily experience shows that it is energetic individualism which produces the most powerful effects upon the life and action of others and really constitutes the best practical education. Schools, academies and colleges give but the merest beginnings of culture in comparison with it. Far more influential is the life-education daily given in our homes, in the streets, behind counters, in workshops, at the loom and the plough, in counting-houses and many factories, and in the busy haunts of men. For all experience serves to illustrate and enforce the lesson,

that a man perfects himself by work more than by reading, that it is life rather than literature, action rather than study, and character rather than biography, which tend perpetually to renovate mankind.

Biographies of great, but especially of good men, are nevertheless most instructive and useful, as helps, guides and incentives to others. Some of the best are almost equivalent to gospels - teaching high living, high thinking, and energetic action for their own and the world's good.

Great men of science, literature and art have belonged to no exclusive class nor rank in life. They have come alike from colleges, workshops and farmhouses - from the huts of poor men and the mansions of the rich. Take, for instance, the remarkable fact, that from the barber's shop came Sir Richard Arkwright, the inventor of the spinning jenny and founder of cotton manufacture; and Turner, the greatest among landscape painters.

The common class of day labourers has given us Brindley the engineer, Cook the navigator and Burns the poet. Masons and bricklayers can boast of Ben Jonson, who worked at the building of Lincoln's Inn with a trowel in his hand and a book in his pocket. Cardinal Wolsey, Defoe and Akenside were the sons of butchers; Bunyan was a tinker and Joseph Lancaster a basket-maker.

Among those who have given the greatest impulse to the sublime science of astronomy, we find Copernicus, the son of a Polish baker; Kepler, the son of a German public-house keeper; and Newton, son of a small freeholder near Grantham. The sons of clergymen and ministers of religion have particularly distinguished themselves in our country's history. Amongst them we find the names of Drake and Nelson, celebrated in naval heroism; of Wren, Reynolds and Wilkie, in art; and of Addison, Goldsmith, Coleridge and Tennyson, in literature.

Milton was the son of a London scrivener, and Pope and Southey were the sons of linen-drapers. Keats was a druggist and scientist Sir Humphry Davy a country apothecary's apprentice. Speaking of himself, Davy once said, ‘What I am I have made myself: I say this without vanity, and in pure simplicity of heart.’

Foreign not less than English biography abounds in illustrations of men who have glorified the lot of poverty by their labours and their genius. In art we find Claude, the son of a pastry-cook; and Haydn, of a wheelwright; whilst Daguerre was a scene-painter at the Opera. The father of (Pope) Gregory VII was a carpenter; of Sextus V, a shepherd and of Adrian VI, a poor bargeman. When a boy, Adrian, unable to pay for a light by which to study, was accustomed to prepare his lessons by the light of the lamps in the street and church porches.

One of the most illustrious of workers in modern times was unquestionably the late Sir Robert Peel. He possessed in an extraordinary degree the power of continuous intellectual labour, nor did he spare himself. His career, indeed, presented a remarkable example of how much a man of comparatively moderate powers can accomplish by means of assiduous application and indefatigable industry.

During the forty years that he held a seat in Parliament, his labours were prodigious. All his speeches bear evidence of his careful study of everything that had been spoken or written on

the subject under consideration. In one respect he surpassed most men: his principles broadened and enlarged with time; and age, instead of contracting, only served to mellow and ripen his nature. To the last he continued open to the reception of new views, and did not allow himself to fall into that undiscriminating admiration of the past, which is the palsy of many minds, and renders the old age of many nothing but a pity.

Mr. Disraeli affords a similar instance of the power of industry and application in working out an eminent public career. His first achievements were in literature; and he reached success only through a succession of failures. His 'Wondrous Tale of Alroy' and 'Revolutionary Epic' were laughed at, and regarded as indications of literary lunacy. But he worked on in other directions, and his 'Coningsby', 'Sybil' and 'Tancred' proved the sterling stuff of which he was made.

As an orator too, his first appearance in the House of Commons was a failure. It was spoken of as 'more screaming than an Adelphi farce'. Though composed in a grand and ambitious strain, every sentence was hailed with 'loud laughter'. 'Hamlet' played as a comedy was nothing to it. But he concluded with a sentence which embodied a prophecy. Writhing under the laughter with which his studied eloquence had been received, he exclaimed, 'I have begun several times many things, and have succeeded in them at last. I shall sit down now, but the time will come when you will hear me.'

The time did come; and how Disraeli succeeded in at length commanding the attention of the first assembly of gentlemen in the world, affords a striking illustration of what energy and determination will do. He did not, as many young men do, having once failed, retire dejected to mope and whine in a corner, but diligently set himself to work. He carefully unlearnt his faults, studied the character of his audience, practised sedulously the art of speech, and industriously filled his mind with the elements of parliamentary knowledge. He worked patiently for success; and it came, but slowly: then the House laughed with him, instead of at him. The recollection of his early failure was effaced, and by general consent he was at length admitted to be one of the most finished and effective of parliamentary speakers.

Although much may be accomplished by means of individual industry and energy, as these and other instances set forth in the following pages serve to illustrate, it must at the same time be acknowledged that the help which we derive from others in the journey of life is of very great importance. The poet Wordsworth has well said that 'these two things, contradictory though they may seem, must go together - manly dependence and manly independence, manly reliance and manly self-reliance.'

Human character is moulded by a thousand subtle influences; by example and precept; by life and literature; by friends and neighbours; by the world we live in as well as by the spirits of our forefathers. But great, unquestionably, though these influences are acknowledged to be, it is nevertheless equally clear that men must necessarily be the active agents of their own well-being and well-doing; and that, however much the wise and the good may owe to others, they themselves must in the very nature of things be their own best helpers.

Leaders of industry

One of the most strongly-marked features of the English people is their spirit of industry. It is this spirit which has laid the foundations and built up the industrial greatness of the empire. This vigorous growth of the nation has been mainly the result of the free energy of individuals. And while this spirit of active industry has been the vital principle of the nation, it has also been its saving and remedial one, counteracting from time to time the effects of errors in our laws and imperfections in our constitution.

The career of industry which the nation has pursued has also proved its best education. As steady application to work is the healthiest training for every individual, so is it the best discipline of a state. Honourable industry travels the same road with duty; and Providence has closely linked both with happiness. Certain it is that no bread eaten by man is so sweet as that earned by his own labour, whether bodily or mental.

The array of great names which we have already cursorily cited, who have achieved distinction in various walks of life - in science, commerce, literature and art - shows that at all events the difficulties interposed by poverty and labour are not insurmountable. As respects the great contrivances and inventions which have conferred so much power and wealth upon the nation, it is unquestionable that for the greater part of them we have been indebted to men of the humblest rank.

Inventors have set in motion some of the greatest industries of the world. To them society owes many of its chief necessities, comforts and luxuries; and by their genius and labour daily life has been rendered in all respects more easy as well as enjoyable. Our food, our clothing, the furniture of our homes, the glass which admits the light to our dwellings at the same time that it excludes the cold, the gas which illuminates our streets, our means of locomotion by land and by sea, the tools by which our various articles of necessity and luxury are fabricated, have been the result of the labour and ingenuity of many men and many minds.

Though the invention of the working steam engine - the king of machines - belongs, comparatively speaking, to our own epoch, the idea of it was born many centuries ago. Like other contrivances and discoveries, it was effected step by step - one man transmitting the result of his labours, at the time apparently useless, to his successors, who took it up and carried it forward another stage - the prosecution of the inquiry extending over many generations.

The steam-engine was nothing, however, until it emerged from the state of theory and was taken in hand by practical mechanics; and what a noble story of patient, laborious investigation, of difficulties encountered and overcome by heroic industry, does not that marvellous machine tell of! It is indeed, in itself, a monument of the power of self-help. Grouped around it we find Savary, the military engineer; Newcomen, the Dartmouth blacksmith; Cawley, the glazier; Potter, the engine-boy; Smeaton, the civil engineer; and, towering above all, the laborious, patient, never-tiring James Watt, the mathematical-instrument maker.

Watt was one of the most industrious of men; and the story of his life proves that it is not the man of the greatest natural vigour and capacity who achieves the highest results, but he who employs his powers with the greatest industry and the most carefully disciplined skill. Many men in his time knew far more than Watt, but none laboured so assiduously as he did to turn all that he did know to useful practical purposes.

Even when a boy, Watt found science in his toys. The quadrants lying about his father's carpenter's shop led him to the study of optics and astronomy; his ill health induced him to pry into the secrets of physiology; and his solitary walks through the country attracted him to the study of botany and history. While carrying on the business of a mathematical-instrument maker, he received an order to build an organ; and, though without an ear for music, he undertook the study of harmonics and successfully constructed the instrument.

And, in a similar manner, when the little model of Newcomen's steam-engine, belonging to the University of Glasgow, was placed in his hands to repair, he forthwith set himself to learn all that was then known about heat, evaporation and condensation, at the same time plodding his way in mechanics and the science of construction, the results of which he embodied in his condensing steam-engine.

For ten years he went on contriving and inventing, with little hope to cheer him and with few friends to encourage him. He went on, meanwhile, earning bread for his family by making and selling quadrants, making and mending fiddles, flutes and musical instruments; measuring mason-work, surveying roads, superintending the construction of canals, or doing anything that turned up and offered a prospect of honest gain.

Many skilful inventors have from time to time added new power to the steam-engine and, by numerous modifications, rendered it capable of driving machinery, impelling ships, grinding corn, printing books, stamping money, hammering, planing, and turning iron; in short, of performing every description of mechanical labour where power is required.

One of the most useful modifications in the engine was that devised by Trevithick and eventually perfected by George Stephenson and his son, in the form of the railway locomotive, by which social changes of immense importance have been brought about, of even greater consequence, considered in terms of their results on human progress and civilisation, than the condensing-engine of Watt.

One of the first grand results of Watt's invention, which placed an almost unlimited power at the command of the producing classes, was the establishment of cotton manufacturing. The person most closely identified with the foundation of this great branch of industry was unquestionably Sir Richard Arkwright, whose practical energy and sagacity were perhaps even more remarkable than his mechanical inventiveness. His originality as an inventor had indeed been called in question, like that of Watt and Stephenson. Arkwright probably stood in the same relation to the spinning-machine that Watt did to the steam-engine and Stephenson to the locomotive. He gathered together the scattered threads of ingenuity which already existed, and wove them, after his own design, into a new and original fabric.

When the demands of industry are found to pressure the resources of inventors, the same idea is usually found floating about in many minds - such has been the case with the steam-engine, the safety-lamp, the electric telegraph and other inventions. Many ingenious minds are found labouring in the throes of invention, until the master mind, the strong practical man, steps forward and delivers them of their idea, applies the principle successfully, and the thing is done. Then there is a loud outcry among all the smaller contrivers, who see themselves distanced in the race; and hence men such as Watt, Stephenson and Arkwright, have usually to defend their reputation and their rights as practical and successful inventors.

Richard Arkwright, like most of our great mechanicians, sprang from the ranks. He was born in Preston in 1732. His parents were very poor and he was the youngest of thirteen children. He never went to school: the only education he received he gave to himself; and to the last he was only able to write with difficulty. When a boy, he was apprenticed to a barber, and after learning the business, he set up for himself in Bolton, where he occupied an underground cellar, over which he put up the sign, 'Come to the subterraneous barber - he shaves for a penny'. The other barbers found their customers leaving them and reduced their prices to his standard, when Arkwright, determined to push his trade, announced his determination to give 'A clean shave for a halfpenny'.

After a few years he quit his cellar and became an itinerant dealer in hair. At that time wigs were worn and wig-making formed an important branch of the barbering business. Arkwright went about buying hair for the wigs. He was accustomed to attend the hiring fairs throughout Lancashire resorted to by young women, for the purpose of securing their long tresses; and it is said that in negotiations of this sort he was very successful. He also dealt in a chemical hair dye, which he used adroitly and thereby secured a considerable trade. But he does not seem, notwithstanding his pushing character, to have done more than earn a bare living.

The fashion of wig-wearing having undergone a change, distress fell upon the wig-makers; and Arkwright, being of a mechanical turn, was consequently induced to turn machine-inventor or 'conjurer', as the pursuit was then popularly termed. Many attempts were made about that time to invent a spinning-machine, and our barber determined to launch his little bark on the sea of invention with the rest. Like other self-taught men of the same bias, he had already been devoting his spare time to the invention of a perpetual-motion machine; and from that the transition to a spinning machine was easy. He followed his experiments so assiduously that he neglected his business, lost the little money he had saved and was reduced to great poverty.

His wife was impatient at what she conceived to be a wanton waste of time and money, and in a moment of sudden wrath she seized upon and destroyed his models, hoping thus to remove the cause of the family privations. Arkwright was a stubborn and enthusiastic man, and he was provoked beyond measure by this conduct of his wife, from whom he immediately separated.

In travelling about the country, Arkwright had become acquainted with a person named Kay, a clockmaker at Warrington, who assisted him in constructing some of the parts of his perpetual-motion machinery. It is supposed that he was informed by Kay of the principle of spinning by rollers; but it is also said that the idea was first suggested to him by accidentally observing a

red-hot piece of iron become elongated by passing between iron rollers. However this may be, the idea at once took firm possession of his mind, and he proceeded to devise the process by which it was to be accomplished, Kay being able to tell him nothing on this point.

Arkwright now abandoned his business of hair collecting and devoted himself to the perfecting of his machine, a model of which, constructed by Kay under his directions, he set up in the parlour of the Free Grammar School at Preston.

The exhibition of his machine in a town where so many workers lived by the exercise of manual labour proved a dangerous experiment; ominous growlings were heard outside the school-room from time to time and Arkwright - remembering the fate of Kay, who was mobbed and compelled to fly from Lancashire because of his invention of the fly-shuttle, and of poor Hargreaves, whose spinning-jenny had been pulled to pieces only a short time before by a Blackburn mob - wisely determined on packing up his model and removing to a less dangerous locality.

He went accordingly to Nottingham, where he applied to some of the local bankers for pecuniary assistance; and the Messrs. Wright consented to advance him a sum of money on condition of sharing in the profits of the invention. Since the machine, however, had not been perfected as soon as they had anticipated, the bankers recommended Arkwright to apply to Messrs. Strutt and Need, the former of whom was the ingenious inventor and patentee of the stocking-frame.

Mr. Strutt at once appreciated the merits of the invention and a partnership was entered into with Arkwright, whose road to fortune was now clear. The patent was secured in the name of ‘Richard Arkwright, of Nottingham, clockmaker’ and it is a circumstance worthy of note that it was taken out in 1769, the same year in which Watt secured the patent for his steam engine. A cotton mill was first erected in Nottingham, driven by horses; and another was shortly after built, on a much larger scale, at Cromford in Derbyshire, turned by a water-wheel, from which circumstance the spinning-machine came to be called the water-frame.

Arkwright's labours had, however, only just begun. He still had to perfect all the working details of his machine. It was in his hands the subject of constant modification and improvement, until eventually it was rendered practicable and profitable in an eminent degree. But success was only secured by long and patient labour: for some years, indeed, the speculation was disheartening and unprofitable, swallowing up a very large amount of capital without any result. When success began to appear more certain, then the Lancashire manufacturers fell upon Arkwright’s patent to pull it into pieces, as the Cornish miners fell upon Boulton and Watt to rob them of the profits of their steam-engine.

Arkwright was even denounced as the enemy of the working people; and a mill which he built near Chorley was destroyed by a mob in the presence of a strong force of police and military. The Lancashire men refused to buy his materials, though they were the best in the market. Then they refused to pay patent fees for the use of his machines and combined to crush him in the courts of law. To the disgust of right-minded people, Arkwright's patent was rescinded. After the trial, when passing the hotel at which his opponents were staying, one of them said,

loud enough to be heard by him, ‘Well, we've done the old shaver at last’; to which he coolly replied, ‘Never mind, I've a razor left that will shave you all.’

He established new mills in Lancashire, Derbyshire, and at New Lanark, in Scotland. The mills at Cromford also came into his hands at the expiry of his partnership with Strutt, and the amount and the excellence of his products were such, that in a short time he obtained so complete a control of the trade, that the prices were fixed by him, and he governed the main operations of the other cotton-spinners.

Arkwright was a man of great force of character, indomitable courage, much worldly shrewdness, with a business faculty almost amounting to genius. At one period his time was engrossed by severe and continuous labour, occasioned by the organising and conducting of his numerous factories, sometimes from four in the morning till nine at night. At fifty years of age he set to work to learn English grammar and improve himself in writing and orthography.

After overcoming every obstacle, he had the satisfaction of reaping the reward of his enterprise. Eighteen years after he had constructed his first machine, he rose to such estimation in Derbyshire that he was appointed High Sheriff of the county. Shortly after, George III conferred upon him the honour of knighthood. He died in 1792. Be it for good or for evil, Arkwright was the founder in England of the modern factory system, a branch of industry which has unquestionably proved a source of immense wealth to individuals and to the nation.

All the other great branches of industry in Britain furnish similar examples of energetic men of business, the source of much benefit to the neighbourhoods in which they have laboured, and of increased power and wealth to the community at large.

Great potters

It so happens that the history of pottery furnishes some of the most remarkable instances of patient perseverance to be found in the whole range of biography. Though the art of making common vessels of clay was known to most of the ancient nations, that of manufacturing enamelled earthenware was much less common. It was, however, practised by the ancient Etruscans, specimens of whose ware are still to be found in antiquarian collections. But it became a lost art, and was only recovered at a comparatively recent date.

At one time coarse brown jars and pipkins were almost the only articles of earthenware produced in France; and this continued to be the case, with comparatively small improvement, until the time of Palissy - a man who toiled and fought against stupendous difficulties with a heroism that sheds a glow almost of romance over the events of his chequered life.

Bernard Palissy is supposed to have been born in the south of France, in the diocese of Agen, about the year 1510. His father was probably a worker in glass, to which trade Bernard was brought up. His parents were too poor to give him the benefit of any school education. ‘I had

no other books,' he said afterwards, 'than heaven and earth, which are open to all.' He learnt, however, the art of glass-painting, to which he added that of drawing.

It was the sight of an elegant cup of Italian manufacture - most probably one of Luca della Robbia's make - which first inflamed him with the passion to discover the process of making and enamelling earthenware.

At first he could merely guess the materials of which the enamel was composed. He pounded all the substances which he supposed were likely to produce it. Then he bought common earthen pots, broke them into pieces, and, spreading his compounds over them, subjected them to the heat of a furnace which he erected for the purpose of baking them. His experiments failed; and the results were broken pots and a waste of fuel, drugs, time and labour.

Women do not readily sympathise with experiments whose only tangible effect is to dissipate the means of buying clothes and food for their children. Palissy's wife, however dutiful in other respects, could not be reconciled to the purchase of more earthen pots, which seemed to her to be bought only to be broken. But Palissy had become thoroughly possessed by the determination to master the secret of the enamel, and would not leave it alone.

For many successive months and years Palissy pursued his experiments. The first furnace having proved a failure, he proceeded to erect another out of doors. There he burnt more wood, spoiled more drugs and pots, and lost more time, until poverty stared him and his family in the face. 'Thus,' said he, 'I fooled away several years, with sorrow and sighs, because I could not at all arrive at my intention.' In the intervals of his experiments he occasionally worked at his former callings, painting on glass, drawing portraits and measuring land; but his earnings from these sources were very small.

For two more years he went on experimenting without any satisfactory result. But he resolved to make a last great effort; and he began by breaking more pots than ever. More than three hundred pieces of pottery covered with his compounds were sent to the glass-furnace. Four hours passed, during which he watched; and then the furnace was opened. The material on one only of the three hundred pieces of potsherd had melted, and it was taken out to cool.

As it hardened, it grew white - white and polished! The piece of potsherd was covered with white enamel, described by Palissy as 'singularly beautiful!' He ran home with it to his wife, feeling himself, as he expressed it, quite a new creature. But the prize was not yet won - far from it. The partial success of this intended last effort merely had the effect of luring him on to a succession of further experiments and failures.

In order that he might complete the invention, which he now believed to be at hand, he resolved to build for himself a glass-furnace near his dwelling, where he might carry on his operations in secret. At last the fire was lit. All day he sat by the furnace, feeding it with fuel. He sat there watching and feeding all through the long night. But the enamel did not melt. The sun rose upon his labours. His wife brought him a portion of the scanty morning meal - for he would not stir from the furnace, into which he continued from time to time to heave more fuel. For six

long days and nights the pale, haggard, unshorn, baffled yet not beaten Palissy sat by his furnace; and still the enamel would not melt.

It then occurred to him that there might be some defect in the materials for the enamel; so he set to work to pound and compound fresh materials for a new experiment. He borrowed sufficient from a friend to enable him to buy more fuel and more pots, and he was again ready for a further experiment.

It was the last and most desperate experiment of the whole. The fire blazed up; the heat became intense. The fuel began to run short! There were the garden palings: these would burn. They must be sacrificed rather than that the great experiment should fail. The garden palings were pulled up and cast into the furnace. They were burnt in vain!

Ten minutes more heat might do it. Fuel must be had at whatever cost. There remained the household furniture and shelving. A crashing noise was heard in the house; and amidst the screams of his wife and children, who now feared Palissy's reason was giving way, the tables were seized, broken up, and heaved into the furnace. Another noise of the wrenching of timber was heard within the house; and the shelves were torn down and hurled into the fire. Wife and children then rushed from the house, and went frantically through the town, calling out that poor Palissy had gone mad and was breaking up his very furniture for firewood!

For an entire month his shirt had not been off his back and he was utterly worn out - wasted with toil, anxiety, watching and want of food. He was in debt and seemed on the verge of ruin. But he had at length mastered the secret; for the last great burst of heat had melted the enamel. The common brown household jars, when taken out of the furnace after it had become cool, were found covered with a white glaze! For this he could endure reproach, contumely, and scorn, and wait patiently for the opportunity of putting his discovery into practice as better days came round.

Though he had already spent about ten years in the search for the enamel, it cost him nearly eight more years of experimental plodding before he perfected his invention. ‘For years my furnaces were without any covering or protection, and while attending them I have been for nights at the mercy of the wind and the rain, without help or consolation, save it might be the wailing of cats on the one side and the howling of dogs on the other.’ Yet every mishap was a fresh lesson to him, teaching him something new about the nature of enamels, the tempering of clays and the construction and management of furnaces.

Born at Burslem in 1730, Josiah Wedgwood was one of those indefatigable men who, by the example of diligence and perseverance, largely influence the public activity in all directions. What he chiefly aimed at was to manufacture cream-coloured ware of a better quality than was then produced in Staffordshire as regarded shape, colour, glaze and durability. To understand the subject thoroughly, he devoted his leisure to the study of chemistry; and he made numerous experiments on fluxes, glazes and various sorts of clay. Being a close inquirer and accurate observer, he noticed that a certain earth containing silica, which was black before calcination, became white after exposure to the heat of a furnace.

This fact, observed and pondered on, led to the idea of mixing silica with the red powder of the potteries and to the discovery that the mixture becomes white when calcined. He had but to cover this material with a vitrification of transparent glaze, to obtain one of the most important products of fictile art - that which, under the name of English earthenware, was to attain the greatest commercial value and become of the most extensive utility.

His first attempts at making porcelain for table use were a succession of disastrous failures, the labours of months being often destroyed in a day. It was only after a long series of trials, in the course of which he lost time, money and labour that he arrived at the proper sort of glaze to be used.

He was an indefatigable supporter of all measures of public utility; and the construction of the Trent and Mersey Canal was mainly due to his public-spirited exertions, allied to the engineering skill of Brindley. The road accommodation of the district being of an execrable character, he planned and executed a turnpike-road through the Potteries, ten miles in length.

The result of Wedgwood's labours was that the manufacture of pottery, which he found in the very lowest condition, became one of the staples of England. Instead of importing what we needed for home use, we became large exporters to other countries, supplying them with earthenware even in the face of enormous prohibitory duties on articles of British produce.

Yet, important as had been the advances made in his time, Mr. Wedgwood was of the opinion that the improvements which he had effected were of but small account compared with those to which the art was capable of attaining. When he began his labours, the Staffordshire district was only in a half-civilized state. The people were poor, uncultivated and few in number. When Wedgwood's manufacture was firmly established, there was found ample employment at good wages for three times the number of population; while their moral advancement had kept pace with their material improvement.

Men such as these are fairly entitled to take rank as the industrial heroes of the civilized world. Their patient self-reliance amidst trials and difficulties, their courage and perseverance in the pursuit of worthy objects, are not less heroic of their kind than the bravery and devotion of the soldier and the sailor, whose duty and pride it is heroically to defend what these valiant leaders of industry have so heroically achieved.

Application and perseverance

The greatest results in life are usually attained by simple means and the exercise of ordinary qualities. The common life of every day, with cares, necessities and duties, affords ample opportunity for acquiring experience of the best kind; and its most beaten paths provide the true worker with abundant scope for effort and self-improvement.

Fortune has often been blamed for her blindness, but fortune is not so blind as men are. Those who look into practical life will find that fortune is usually on the side of the industrious, as the winds and

waves are on the side of best navigators. In the pursuit of even the highest branches of human inquiry, the commoner qualities are found most useful - such as common sense, attention, application and perseverance. Genius may not be necessary, though even genius of the highest sort does not disdain the use of these ordinary qualities. Buffon said of genius, 'it is patience.'

The extraordinary results effected by dint of sheer industry and perseverance, have led many distinguished men to doubt whether the gift of genius is so exceptional an endowment as it is usually supposed to be. We have, indeed, but to glance at the biographies of great men to find that the distinguished inventors, artists, thinkers and workers of all kinds, owe their success, in a great measure, to their indefatigable industry and application.

When (the dancer) Taglioni was preparing herself for her evening exhibition, she would, after a severe two hours' lesson from her father, fall down exhausted, and had to be undressed, sponged and resuscitated, totally unconscious. The agility and bounds of the evening were insured only at a price like this.

Labourers for the public good especially, have to work long and patiently, often uncheered by the prospect of immediate recompense or result. Adam Smith sowed the seeds of a great social amelioration in that dingy old University of Glasgow where he so long laboured and laid the foundations of his 'Wealth of Nations'; but seventy years passed before his work bore substantial fruits, nor indeed are they all gathered in yet.

An eminently characteristic anecdote has been told of Carey, the missionary. When climbing a tree one day as a boy his foot slipped and he fell to the ground, breaking his leg. He was confined to his bed for weeks, but when he recovered and was able to walk without support, the very first thing he did was to go and climb that tree. Carey had need of this sort of dauntless courage for the great missionary work of his life, and nobly and resolutely he did it.

Not less interesting is the anecdote of Audubon, the American ornithologist, as related by himself:

> An accident which happened to two hundred of my original drawings, nearly put a stop to my researches in ornithology. I placed them carefully in a wooden box, and gave them in charge of a relative, with injunctions to see that no injury should happen to them.
>
> My absence was of several months; and when I returned the box was produced and opened; but reader, feel for me - a pair of Norway rats had taken possession of the whole, and reared a young family among the gnawed bits of paper, which, but a month previous, represented nearly a thousand inhabitants of air!
>
> The burning heat which instantly rushed through my brain was too great to be endured without affecting my whole nervous system. I slept for several nights, and the days passed like days of oblivion - until the animal powers being recalled into action through the strength of my constitution, I took up my gun, my notebook, and my pencils, and went forth to the woods as gaily as if nothing had happened. I felt pleased that I might now make better drawings than before; and, ere a period not exceeding three years had elapsed, my portfolio was again filled.

The accidental destruction of Sir Isaac Newton's papers, by his little dog 'Diamond' upsetting a lighted taper upon his desk, by which the elaborate calculations of many years were in a

moment destroyed, is a well-known anecdote and need not be repeated: it is said that the loss caused the philosopher such profound grief that it seriously injured his health and impaired his understanding. An accident of a somewhat similar kind happened to the manuscript of Mr. Carlyle's first volume of his 'French Revolution'. He had lent it to a literary neighbour to peruse. By some mischance, it had been left lying on the parlour floor and become forgotten.

Weeks ran on, and the historian sent for his work, the printers being loud for 'copy'. Inquiries were made, and it was found that the maid-of-all-work, finding what she conceived to be a bundle of waste paper on the floor, had used it to light the kitchen and parlour fires! Such was the answer returned to Mr. Carlyle; and his feelings may be imagined. There was, however, no help for him but to set resolutely to work to rewrite the book; and he turned to and did it. He had no draft, and was compelled to rake up from his memory facts, ideas and expressions which had been long since dismissed. The composition of the book in the first instance had been a work of pleasure; the re-writing of it a second time was one of pain and anguish almost beyond belief. That he persevered and finished the volume under such circumstances, affords an instance of determination of purpose which has seldom been surpassed.

The lives of eminent inventors are illustrative of the same quality of perseverance. George Stephenson, when addressing young men was accustomed to sum up his best advice to them in the words, 'Do as I have done - persevere.' He had worked at the improvement of his locomotive for some fifteen years before achieving his decisive victory at Rainhill.

The career of the Comte de Buffon presents another remarkable illustration of the power of patient industry, as well as of his own saying, that 'genius is patience'. Notwithstanding the great results achieved by him in natural history, Buffon, when a youth, was regarded as of mediocre talents. He was also constitutionally indolent; and being born to good estate, it might be supposed that he would indulge his liking for ease and luxury. Instead of which, he early formed the resolution of denying himself pleasure and devoting himself to study and self-culture.

Regarding time as a treasure that was limited and finding that he was losing many hours by lying a-bed in the mornings, he determined to break himself of the habit. He struggled hard against it for some time, but failed in being able to rise at the hour he had fixed. He then called his servant, Joseph, to his help, and promised him the reward of a crown every time that he succeeded in getting him up before six.

At first, when called, Buffon declined to rise - pleaded that he was ill, or pretended anger at being disturbed; and on the Count at length getting up, Joseph found that he had earned nothing but reproaches for having permitted his master to lie a-bed contrary to his express orders. At length the valet determined to earn his crown; and again and again he forced Buffon to rise, notwithstanding his entreaties, expostulations and threats of immediate discharge from his service.

One morning Buffon was unusually obstinate and Joseph found it necessary to resort to the extreme measure of dashing a basin of ice-cold water under the bedclothes, the effect of which was instantaneous. By the persistent use of such means, Buffon at length conquered his habit;

and he was accustomed to say that he owed to Joseph three or four volumes of his ‘Natural History’.

The more a man really knows, the less conceited he will be. The student at Trinity College who went up to his professor to take leave of him because he had ‘finished his education’, was wisely rebuked by the professor's reply, ‘Indeed! I am only beginning mine.’ The superficial person who has obtained a smattering of many things, but knows nothing well, may pride himself upon his gifts; but the sage humbly confesses that ‘all he knows is, that he knows nothing’, or like Newton, that he has been only engaged in picking shells by the sea shore, while the great ocean of truth lies all unexplored before him.

Helps and opportunities - scientific pursuits

The difference between men consists, in a great measure, in the intelligence of their observation. The Russian proverb says of the non-observant man, ‘He goes through the forest and sees no firewood.’ ‘Sir,’ said Johnson, on one occasion, to a fine gentleman just returned from Italy, ‘some men will learn more in the Hampstead stage (of a stage-coach journey) than others in the tour of Europe.’ It is the mind that sees as well as the eye.

While Captain (afterwards Sir Samuel) Brown was occupied in studying the construction of bridges, with the view of contriving one of a cheap description to be thrown across the Tweed, near which he lived, he was walking in his garden one dewy autumn morning, when he saw a tiny spider's net suspended across his path. The idea immediately occurred to him that a bridge of iron ropes or chains might be constructed in like manner, and the result was the invention of his suspension bridge.

Sir Isambard Brunel took his first lessons in forming the Thames Tunnel from the tiny shipworm: he saw how the little creature perforated the wood with its well-armed head, first in one direction and then in another, till the archway was complete, and then daubed over the roof and sides with a kind of varnish. By copying this work exactly on a large scale, Brunel was at length enabled to construct his shield and accomplish his great engineering work.

It is the close observation of little things which is the secret of success in business, in art, in science, and in every pursuit in life. Human knowledge is but an accumulation of small facts, made by successive generations of men, the little bits of knowledge and experience carefully treasured up by them growing at length into a mighty pyramid.

It is not those who have enjoyed the advantages of colleges, museums and public galleries, that have accomplished the most for science and art; nor have the greatest inventors been trained in mechanics’ institutes. Necessity, oftener than facility, has been the mother of invention; and the most prolific school of all has been the school of difficulty.

Some of the very best workmen have had the most indifferent tools. But it is not tools that make the workman, but the trained skill and perseverance of the man himself. An eminent

foreign *savant* once called upon Dr. Wollaston and requested to be shown over his laboratories in which science had been enriched by so many important discoveries, when the doctor took him into a little study, and, pointing to an old tea-tray on the table, containing a few watch-glasses, test papers, a small balance and a blowpipe, said, ‘There is all the laboratory that I have!’

Stothard learnt the art of combining colours by closely studying butterflies' wings: he would often say that no one knew what he owed to these tiny insects. A burnt stick and a barn door served Wilkie in lieu of pencil and canvas; and Benjamin West made his first brushes out of the cat's tail.

It is not accident, then, that helps a man in the world so much as purpose and persistent industry. To the feeble, the sluggish and purposeless, the happiest accidents avail nothing - they pass them by, seeing no meaning in them. But it is astonishing how much can be accomplished if we are prompt to seize and improve the opportunities for action effort which are constantly presenting themselves. Stephenson taught himself arithmetic and mensuration while working as an engineman during the night shifts; and when he could snatch a few moments in the intervals allowed for meals during the day, he worked his sums with a bit of chalk upon the sides of the colliery wagons.

With perseverance, the very odds and ends of time may be worked up into results of the greatest value. An hour in every day withdrawn from frivolous pursuits would, if profitably employed, enable a person of ordinary capacity to go far towards mastering a science. Dr. Mason Good translated Lucretius while riding in his carriage in the streets of London, going the round of his patients. Dr. Burney learnt French and Italian while travelling on horseback from one musical pupil to another in the course of his profession. Daguesseau, one of the great Chancellors of France, wrote a bulky and able volume in the successive intervals of waiting for dinner.

The mere drudgery undergone by some men in carrying on their undertakings has been something extraordinary, but the drudgery they regarded as the price of success. Newton wrote his 'Chronology' fifteen times over before he was satisfied with it; and Gibbon wrote out his 'Memoir' nine times. Montesquieu, speaking of one part of his writings, said to a friend, ‘You will read it in a few hours; but I assure you it has cost me so much labour that it has whitened my hair.’

Harvey was as indefatigable a labourer as any we have named. He spent not less than eight long years of investigation and research before he published his views of the circulation of the blood. He repeated and verified his experiments again and again, probably anticipating the opposition he would have to encounter from the profession on making known his discovery. The tract in which he at length announced his views was nevertheless received with ridicule, as the utterance of a crack-brained impostor.

For some time he did not make a single convert and gained nothing but contumely and abuse. His little practice fell away and he was left almost without a friend. This lasted for some years, until the great truth, held fast by Harvey amidst all his adversity, gradually ripened by further

observation, and after a period of about twenty-five years, it became generally recognised as an established scientific fact.

Hugh Miller was a man of similar observant faculties, who studied literature as well as science with zeal and success. While Hugh was but a child, his father, who was a sailor, was drowned at sea, and he was brought up by his widowed mother. He read much and miscellaneously, and picked up odd sorts of knowledge from many quarters - from workmen, carpenters, fishermen and sailors, and above all, from the old boulders strewed along the shores of the Cromarty Firth.

With a big hammer, the boy went about chipping the stones and accumulating specimens of mica, porphyry, garnet and such like. When of a suitable age he was apprenticed to the trade of his choice - that of a working stonemason; and he began his labouring career in a quarry looking out on the Cromarty Frith. This quarry proved one of his best schools. The remarkable geological formations which it displayed awakened his curiosity. The bar of deep-red stone beneath and the bar of pale-red clay above were noted by the young quarryman, who even in such unpromising subjects found matter for observation and reflection.

Where other men saw nothing, he detected analogies, differences, and peculiarities, which set him a-thinking. His curiosity was kept alive by the curious organic remains, principally of old and extinct species of fishes, ferns and ammonites, which were revealed along the coast by the washings of the waves, or were exposed by the stroke of his mason's hammer.

He never lost sight of the subject but went on accumulating observations and comparing formations, until at length, when no longer a working mason, he gave to the world his highly interesting work on the Old Red Sandstone, which at once established his reputation as a scientific geologist. But this work was the fruit of long years of patient observation and research. As he modestly states in his autobiography, ‘the only merit to which I lay claim in the case is that of patient research; and this humble faculty of patience, when rightly developed, may lead to more extraordinary developments of idea than even genius itself.’

Workers in art

Excellence in art, as in everything else, can only be achieved by dint of painstaking labour. There is nothing less accidental than the painting of a fine picture or the chiselling of a noble statue.

Sir Joshua Reynolds was such a believer in the force of industry that he held that artistic excellence, ‘however expressed by genius, taste, or the gift of heaven, may be acquired.’ Writing to Barry he said, ‘Whoever is resolved to excel in painting, or indeed any other art, must bring all his mind to bear upon that one object from the moment he rises till he goes to bed.’

But although diligent application is no doubt absolutely necessary for achievement of the highest distinction in art, it is equally true that without the inborn genius, no amount of mere

industry, however well applied, will make an artist. The gift comes by nature, but is perfected by self-culture, which is of more avail than all the imparted education of the schools.

Some of the greatest artists have had to force their way upward in the face of poverty and manifold obstructions. Illustrious instances will at once flash upon the reader's mind. Claude Lorraine, the pastry-cook; Tintoretto, the dyer; the two Caravaggios, the one a colour-grinder, the other a mortar-carrier at the Vatican; Salvator Rosa, the associate of bandits; Giotto, the peasant boy; Zingaro, the gipsy; Cavedone, turned out of doors to beg by his father; Canova, the stone-cutter.

Nor have the most distinguished artists of our own country been born in a position of life more than ordinarily favourable to the culture of artistic genius. Gainsborough and Bacon were the sons of cloth-workers; Opie and Romney, like Inigo Jones, were carpenters. Northcote was a watchmaker; Reynolds, Wilson and Wilkie were the sons of clergymen. Lawrence was the son of a publican and Turner of a barber.

Like Sir Joshua Reynolds, Michael Angelo was a great believer in the force of labour. He was himself one of the most indefatigable of workers; and he attributed his power of studying for a greater number of hours than most of his contemporaries to his spare habits of living. A little bread and wine was all he required for the chief part of the day; and very frequently he rose in the middle of the night to resume his labours. On these occasions, it was his practice to fix the candle, by the light of which he chiselled, on the summit of a paste board cap which he wore. Sometimes he was too wearied to undress and he slept in his clothes, ready to spring to his work so soon as refreshed by sleep.

Titian, also, was an indefatigable worker. His celebrated ‘Pietro Martire’ was eight years in hand and his ‘Last Supper’ seven. Few think of the patient labour and long training involved in the greatest works of the artist. They seem easy and quickly accomplished, yet with how great difficulty has this ease been acquired. ‘You charge me fifty sequins’, said the Venetian nobleman to the sculptor, ‘for a bust that cost you only ten days’ labour.’ ‘You forget’, said the artist, ‘that I have been thirty years learning to make that bust in ten days.’

Like all young artists, Turner had many difficulties to encounter, and they were all the greater that his circumstances were so straitened. But he was always willing to work and to take pains with his work, no matter how humble it might be. He was glad to hire himself out at half-a-crown a night to wash in skies in Indian ink upon other people's drawings, getting his supper into the bargain. Thus he earned money and acquired expertise. Then he took to illustrating guide-books, almanacs and any sort of books that wanted cheap frontispieces. ‘What could I have done better?’ said he afterwards; ‘it was first-rate practice.’ He did everything carefully and conscientiously, never slurring over his work because he was ill-remunerated for it. He aimed at learning as well as living; and never leaving a drawing without having made a step in advance upon his previous work.

The same honest and persistent industry was throughout distinctive of the career of David Wilkie. As with Reynolds, his motto was ‘Work! work! work!’ and, like him, he expressed great dislike for talking artists. Talkers may sow, but the silent reap. ‘Let us be *doing* something’, was

his oblique mode of rebuking the loquacious and admonishing the idle. He once related to his friend Constable that when he studied at the Scottish Academy, Graham, the master of it, was accustomed to say to the students, in the words of Reynolds, 'If you have genius, industry will improve it; if you have none, industry will supply its place.' 'So,' said Wilkie, 'I was determined to be very industrious, for I knew I had no genius.'

The same industry and application are equally required in the sister art of music. Handel was an indefatigable and constant worker; he was never cast down by defeat, but his energy seemed to increase the more that adversity struck him. When prey to his mortifications as an insolvent debtor, he did not give way for a moment, but in one year produced his 'Saul,' 'Israel,' the music for Dryden's 'Ode,' his 'Twelve Grand Concertos' and the opera of 'Jupiter in Argos', among the finest of his works. As his biographer says of him, 'He braved everything, and, by his unaided self, accomplished the work of twelve men.'

'Work,' said Mozart, 'is my chief pleasure.' Beethoven's favourite maxim was, 'The barriers are not erected which can say to aspiring talents and industry, "Thus far and no farther".' When Moscheles submitted his score of 'Fidelio' for the pianoforte to Beethoven, the latter found written at the bottom of the last page, 'Finis, with God's help.' Beethoven immediately wrote underneath, 'O man! Help thyself!'

Although musical composition is not an art in which Englishmen have as yet greatly distinguished themselves, their energies having for the most part taken other and more practical directions, we are not without native illustrations of the power of perseverance in this special pursuit. Arne was an upholsterer's son, intended by his father for the legal profession; but his love of music was so great, that he could not be withheld from pursuing it.

While engaged in an attorney's office, his means were very limited, but, to gratify his tastes, he was accustomed to borrow a livery and go into the gallery of the opera, then appropriated to domestics. Unknown to his father he made great progress with the violin, and the first knowledge his father had of the circumstance was when accidentally calling at the house of a neighbouring gentleman to his surprise and consternation he found his son playing the leading instrument with a party of musicians. This incident decided the fate of Arne. His father offered no further opposition to his wishes; and the world thereby lost a lawyer, but gained a musician of much taste and delicacy of feeling, who added many valuable works to our stores of English music.

Industry and the peerage

We have already referred to some illustrious commoners raised from humble to elevated positions by the power of application and industry; and we might point to even the peerage itself as affording equally instructive examples. One reason why the peerage of England has succeeded so well in holding its own, arises from the fact that, unlike the peerages of other countries, it has been fed, from time to time, by the best industrial blood of the country - the very 'liver, heart, and brain of Britain.'

The blood of all men flows from equally remote sources. No class is ever long stationary. The mighty fall and the humble are exalted. New families take the place of the old. Of the twenty-five barons selected to enforce the observance of Magna Carta, there is not now in the House of Peers a single male descendant. Civil wars and rebellions ruined many of the old nobility and dispersed their families. Yet their descendants in many cases survive and are to be found among the ranks of the people.

Two of the lineal descendants of the Earl of Kent, sixth son of Edward I, were discovered in a butcher and a toll-gatherer; the great grandson of Margaret Plantagenet, daughter of the Duke of Clarence, sank to the condition of a cobbler at Newport, in Shropshire. Hugh Miller, when working as a stone-mason near Edinburgh, was served by a hodman, who was one of the numerous claimants for the earldom of Crauford - all that was wanted to establish his claim being a missing marriage certificate; and while the work was going on, the cry resounded from the walls many times in the day of – 'John, Yearl Crauford, bring us anither hod o' lime.'

The great bulk of our peerage is comparatively modern, so far as the titles go; but it is not the less noble that it has been recruited to so large an extent from the ranks of honourable industry. In olden times, the wealth and commerce of London, conducted as it was by energetic and enterprising men, was a prolific source of peerages. Thus the earldom of Cornwallis was founded by Thomas Cornwallis, the Cheapside merchant. Edward Osborne, the founder of the Dukedom of Leeds, was apprentice to William Hewet, a rich clothworker on London Bridge, whose daughter he courageously rescued from drowning, by leaping into the Thames after her, and eventually married.

No less industry and energy have been displayed by the many brave men who have earned the peerage by their valour on land and at sea. We may point to Nelson, St.Vincent, and Lyons - to Wellington, Hill, Hardinge, Clyde and many more in recent times, who have nobly earned their rank by their distinguished service.

But plodding industry has far oftener worked its way to the peerage by the honourable pursuit of the legal profession than by any other. No fewer than seventy British peerages, including two dukedoms, have been founded by successful lawyers. The origin of the late Lord Tenterden was perhaps the humblest of all, nor was he ashamed of it; for he felt that the industry and application, by which he achieved his eminent position, were entirely due to himself. On one occasion he took his son Charles to a little shed, then standing opposite the western front of Canterbury Cathedral, and pointing it out to him, said, 'Charles, you see this little shop; … In that shop your grandfather used to shave for a penny: that is the proudest reflection of my life.'

There have been other illustrious instances of Lord Chancellors who have plodded up the steep of fame and honour with equal energy and success. The career of the late Lord Eldon is perhaps one of the most remarkable examples. He was the son of a Newcastle coal-fitter; a mischievous rather than a studious boy; a great scapegrace at school and the subject of many terrible thrashings, for orchard-robbing was one of the favourite exploits of the future Lord Chancellor.

He came up to London and worked with great diligence; rising at four every morning and studying till late at night, binding a wet towel round his head to keep himself awake. Long after,

when Lord Chancellor, passing down Cursitor Lane one day, he said to his secretary, ‘Here was my first perch: many a time do I recollect coming down this street with sixpence in my hand to buy sprats for supper.’ When at length called to the bar, he waited long for employment. His first year's earnings amounted to only nine shillings.

An opportunity at length occurred which enabled him to exhibit the large legal knowledge which he had so laboriously acquired. In a case in which he was engaged, he urged a legal point against the wishes both of the attorney and client who employed him. The Master of the Rolls decided against him, but on an appeal to the House of Lords, Lord Thurlow reversed the decision. On leaving the House that day, a solicitor tapped him on the shoulder and said, ‘Young man, your bread and butter's cut for life’. And the prophecy proved a true one.

In 1783, when only thirty-two, he was appointed King's Counsel, was at the head of the Northern Circuit, and sat in Parliament for the borough of Weobley. It was in the dull but unflinching drudgery of the early part of his career that he rose steadily upwards to the highest office that the Crown had to bestow - that of Lord Chancellor of England, which he held for a quarter of a century.

Such are a few of the distinguished men who have honourably worked their way to the highest position, and won the richest rewards of their profession, by the diligent exercise of qualities in many respects of an ordinary character, but made potent by the force of application and industry.

Energy and courage

It is the energy of individual men that gives strength to a state and confers a value even upon the very soil which they cultivate. There is, indeed, no blessing equal to the possession of a stout heart. Even if a man fails in his efforts, it will be a satisfaction to him to enjoy the consciousness of having done his best. In humble life nothing can be more cheering and beautiful than to see a man combating suffering by patience, triumphing in his integrity and who, when his feet are bleeding and his limbs failing him, still walks upon his courage.

He who allows his application to falter, or shirks his work on frivolous pretexts, is on the sure road to ultimate failure. In every moment of our life, conscience is proclaiming that our will is free. It is the only thing that is wholly ours and it rests solely with ourselves individually, whether we give it the right or the wrong direction. Our habits or our temptations are not our masters, but we of them.

One of Napoleon's favourite maxims was, ‘The truest wisdom is a resolute determination.’ His life, beyond most others, vividly showed what a powerful and unscrupulous will could accomplish. He threw his whole force of body and mind direct upon his work. Imbecile rulers and the nations they governed went down before him in succession. He was told that the Alps stood in the way of his armies: ‘There shall be no Alps’, he said, and the road across the Simplon was constructed, through a district formerly almost inaccessible.

‘Impossible’, said he, ‘is a word only to be found in the dictionary of fools.’ He was a man who toiled terribly; sometimes employing and exhausting four secretaries at a time. He spared no one, not even himself. His influence inspired other men and put a new life into them. ‘I made my generals out of mud’, he said. But all was of no avail; for Napoleon's intense selfishness was his ruin, and the ruin of France, which he left a prey to anarchy. His life taught the lesson that power, however energetically wielded, without beneficence, is fatal to its possessor and its subjects; and that knowledge, or knowingness, without goodness, is but the incarnate principle of evil.

Our own Wellington was a far greater man. Not less resolute, firm and persistent, but more self-denying, conscientious and truly patriotic. Napoleon's aim was ‘glory’; Wellington's watchword, like Nelson's, was ‘duty’. The former word, it is said, does not once occur in his despatches; the latter often, but never accompanied by any high-sounding professions. The greatest difficulties could neither embarrass nor intimidate Wellington, his energy invariably rising in proportion to the obstacles to be surmounted.

Energy usually displays itself in promptitude and decision. When John Jervis, afterwards Earl St. Vincent, was asked when he would be ready to join his ship, he replied, ‘Directly’. And when Sir Colin Campbell, appointed to the command of the Indian army, was asked when he could set out, his answer was ‘Tomorrow’ - an earnest of his subsequent success.

For it is rapid decision, such as taking instant advantage of an enemy's mistakes, that so often wins battles. ‘At Arcola’, said Napoleon, ‘I won the battle with twenty-five horsemen. I seized a moment of lassitude, gave every man a trumpet, and gained the day with this handful. Two armies are two bodies which meet and endeavour to frighten each other: a moment of panic occurs, and *that moment* must be turned to advantage.’ ‘Every moment lost’, said he at another time, ‘gives an opportunity for misfortune.’

India has, during the last century, been a great field for the display of British energy. Sir Charles Napier once said of the difficulties in one of his campaigns, ‘They only make my feet go deeper into the ground.’ His battle of Meeanee was one of the most extraordinary feats in history. With 2000 men, of whom only 400 were Europeans, he encountered an army of 35,000 hardy and well-armed Beloochees.

He charged the Belooch centre up a high bank which formed their rampart in front, and for three mortal hours the battle raged. Each man of that small force, inspired by the chief, became for the time a hero. The Beloochees, though twenty to one, were driven back, but with their faces to the foe. It is this sort of pluck, tenacity and determined perseverance which wins soldiers' battles and, indeed, every battle.

Although English officialism may often drift stupidly into gigantic blunders, the men of the nation generally contrive to work their way out of them with a heroism almost approaching the sublime. In May, 1857, when the revolt burst upon India like a thunder-clap, the British forces had been allowed to dwindle to their extreme minimum and were scattered over a wide extent of country, many of them in remote cantonments.

The Bengal regiments, one after another, rose against their officers, broke away and rushed to Delhi. Province after province was lapped in mutiny and rebellion; and the cry for help rose from east to west. Everywhere the English stood at bay in small detachments, beleaguered and surrounded, apparently incapable of resistance.

While the issue of the mutiny still appeared uncertain, Holkar, one of the native princes, consulted his astrologer for information. The reply was, 'If all the Europeans save one are slain, that one will remain to fight and reconquer.' In their very darkest moment - even where, as at Lucknow, a mere handful of British soldiers, civilians and women, held out amidst a city and province in arms against them - there was no word of despair, no thought of surrender.

The men were not picked: they belonged to the same ordinary people whom we daily meet at home - in the streets, in workshops, in the fields, at clubs; yet when sudden disaster fell upon them, each and all displayed a wealth of personal resources and energy, and became as it were individually heroic.

The siege and storming of Delhi was the most illustrious event which occurred in the course of that gigantic struggle. The British were really the besieged, though ostensibly the besiegers; they were a mere handful of men 'in the open' - not more than 3,700 bayonets, European and native - and they were assailed from day to day by an army of rebels numbering at one time as many as 75,000 men, trained to European discipline by English officers and supplied with all but exhaustless munitions of war.

The heroic little band sat down before the city under the burning rays of a tropical sun. Death, wounds and fever failed to turn them from their purpose. Thirty times they were attacked by overwhelming numbers and thirty times did they drive back the enemy behind their defences. As Captain Hodson - himself one of the bravest there - has said, 'I venture to aver that no other nation in the world would have remained here, or avoided defeat if they had attempted to do so.' Never for an instant did these heroes falter at their work until the British flag was again unfurled on the walls of Delhi. All were great - privates, officers and generals.

Common soldiers who had been inured to a life of hardship and young officers who had been nursed in luxurious homes, alike proved their manhood and emerged from that terrible trial with equal honour. The native strength and soundness of the English race, and of manly English training and discipline, were never more powerfully exhibited; and it was there emphatically proved that the men of England are, after all, its greatest products. A terrible price was paid for this great chapter in our history, but if those who survive, and those who come after, profit by the lesson and example, it may not have been purchased at too great a cost.

The career of Dr. Livingstone is one of the most interesting of all. At the age of ten he was sent to work in a cotton factory near Glasgow as a 'piecer'. With part of his first week's wages he bought a Latin grammar book and began to learn that language, pursuing the study for years at a night school. He would sit up conning lessons till twelve or later, when not sent to bed by his mother, for he had to be up and at work in the factory every morning by six. In this way he plodded through Virgil and Horace, also reading extensively all books that came in his way, but more especially scientific works and books of travels. He even carried on his reading amidst the

roar of the factory machinery, so placing the book upon the spinning jenny which he worked that he could catch sentence after sentence as he passed it.

In this way the persevering youth acquired much useful knowledge; and as he grew older, the desire possessed him of becoming a missionary to the heathen. With this object he set himself to obtain a medical education. He accordingly economised his earnings and saved as much money as enabled him to support himself while attending the Medical and Greek classes, as well as the Divinity Lectures, at Glasgow, for several winters, working as a cotton spinner during the remainder of each year. He thus supported himself entirely by his own earnings as a factory workman, never having received a farthing of help from any other source.

'Looking back now', he honestly says, 'at that life of toil, I cannot but feel thankful that it formed such a material part of my early education; and, were it possible, I should like to begin life over again in the same lowly style, and to pass through the same hardy training.' At length he finished his medical curriculum and was admitted a licentiate of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons.

Having offered his services to the London Missionary Society, he was by them sent out to Africa, which he reached in 1840. He set to work with great zeal. He could not brook the idea of merely entering upon the labours of others, but cut out a large sphere of independent work, preparing himself for it by undertaking manual labour in building and other handicraft employment, in addition to teaching.

Whilst labouring among Bechuanas, he dug canals, built houses, cultivated fields, reared cattle and taught the natives to work as well as worship. When he first started with a party of them on foot upon a long journey, he overheard their observations upon his appearance and powers: 'He is not strong', said they; 'he is quite slim, and only appears stout because he puts himself into those bags (trousers): he will soon knock up.'

This caused the missionary's Highland blood to rise and made him despise the fatigue of keeping them all at the top of their speed for days together, until he heard them expressing proper opinions of his pedestrian powers. What he did in Africa, and how he worked, may be learnt from his own 'Missionary Travels', one of the most fascinating books of its kind that has ever been given to the public.

The life of Granville Sharp is a striking example of the power of individual energy - a power which was afterwards transfused into the noble band of workers in the cause of slavery abolition, prominent among whom were Clarkson, Wilberforce, Buxton and Brougham. But giants though these men were in this cause, Granville Sharp was the first and perhaps the greatest of them all, in point of perseverance, energy and intrepidity.

The circumstance which gave direction to the main labours of his life originated in his generosity and benevolence. His brother William, a surgeon in Mincing Lane, gave gratuitous advice to the poor, and amongst the numerous applicants for relief at his surgery was a poor African named Jonathan Strong.

It appeared that Jonathan had been brutally treated by his master, a Barbados lawyer then in London, and became lame, almost blind and unable to work; on which his owner, regarding him as of no further value as a chattel, cruelly turned him adrift into the streets to starve. This poor man, a mass of disease, supported himself by begging for a time, until he found his way to William Sharp, who gave him some medicine and shortly after got him admitted to St. Bartholomew's hospital, where he was cured.

On coming out of the hospital, the two brothers supported the former slave in order to keep him off the streets, but they had not the least suspicion at the time that any one had a claim upon his person. They even succeeded in obtaining a situation for Strong with an apothecary, in whose service he remained for two years; and it was while he was attending his mistress behind a hackney coach, that his former owner, the Barbados lawyer, recognized him and determined to recover possession of the slave, again rendered valuable by the restoration of his health.

The lawyer employed two of the Lord Mayor's officers to apprehend Strong, and he was lodged in the compter until he could be shipped off to the West Indies. Strong, bethinking him in his captivity of the kind services which Granville Sharp had rendered him in his great distress some years before, despatched a letter to him requesting his help.

Sharp had forgotten the name of Strong, but he sent a messenger to make inquiries, who returned saying that the keepers denied having any such person in their charge. His suspicions were roused, and he went forthwith to the prison, and insisted upon seeing Jonathan Strong. He was admitted, and recognized the poor man, now in custody as a recaptured slave.

Mr. Sharp charged the master of the prison at his own peril not to deliver up Strong to any person whatever, until he had been carried before the Lord Mayor, to whom Sharp immediately went, and obtained a summons against those persons who had seized and imprisoned Strong without a warrant. The parties appeared before the Lord Mayor accordingly, and it appeared from the proceedings that Strong's former master had already sold him to a new one, who produced the bill of sale and claimed Strong as his property.

As no charge of offence was made against Strong and as the Lord Mayor was incompetent to deal with the legal question of Strong's liberty or otherwise, he discharged him, and the slave followed his benefactor out of court, no one daring to touch him. The man's owner immediately gave Sharp notice of an action to recover possession of his slave, of whom he declared he had been robbed.

About that time (1767), the personal liberty of the Englishman, though cherished as a theory, was subject to grievous infringements and was almost daily violated. The impressment of men for the sea service was constantly practised and there were regular bands of kidnappers to seize men for the East India Company's service. And when the men were not wanted for India, they were shipped off to the planters in the American colonies. Black slaves were openly advertised for sale in the London and Liverpool newspapers.

The position of the reputed slave in England was undefined and doubtful. The judgments which had been given in the courts of law were fluctuating and various, resting on no settled principle.

Although it was a popular belief that no slave could breathe in England, there were legal men of eminence who expressed a directly contrary opinion.

Mr. Sharp gave up every leisure moment during the next two years to the close study of the laws of England affecting personal liberty - wading through an immense mass of dry and repulsive literature and making extracts of all the most important Acts of Parliament, decisions of the courts and opinions of eminent lawyers as he went along. In this tedious and protracted inquiry he had no instructor, nor assistant, nor adviser. He could not find a single lawyer whose opinion was favourable to his undertaking. The results of his inquiries were, however, as gratifying to himself as they were surprising to the gentlemen of the law.

'God be thanked', he wrote, 'there is nothing in any English law or statute - at least that I am able to find out - that can justify the enslaving of others.' He had planted his foot firm and now he doubted nothing. He drew up the result of his studies in a summary form; it was a plain, clear and manly statement, entitled, 'On the Injustice of Tolerating Slavery in England'; and numerous copies, made by himself, were circulated by him amongst the most eminent lawyers of the time.

Strong's 'owner', finding the sort of man he had to deal with, invented various pretexts for deferring the suit against Sharp and at length offered a compromise, which was rejected. Granville went on circulating his manuscript tract among the lawyers, until at length those employed against Jonathan Strong were deterred from proceeding further. The result was that the plaintiff was compelled to pay treble costs for not bringing forward his action. The tract was then printed in 1769.

Another forcible capture of a black man, attended with great cruelty, having occurred in 1770, Sharp immediately set himself on the track of the aggressors. An African, named Lewis, was seized one dark night by two watermen employed by the person who claimed him as his property, dragged into the water, hoisted into a boat, where he was gagged and his limbs were tied. Then rowing down river, the watermen put him on board a ship bound for Jamaica, where he was to be sold as a slave.

The cries of the poor man had, however, attracted the attention of some neighbours; one of whom proceeded direct to Mr. Granville Sharp and informed him of the outrage. Sharp immediately got a warrant to bring back Lewis and he proceeded to Gravesend, but on arrival there the ship had sailed for the Downs. A writ of Habeas Corpus was obtained, sent down to Spithead, and before the ship could leave the shores of England the writ was served. The slave was found chained to the main-mast bathed in tears, casting mournful looks on the land from which he was about to be torn. He was immediately liberated, brought back to London and a warrant issued against the author of the outrage.

The case was tried before Lord Mansfield - whose opinion had already been expressed as decidedly opposed to that entertained by Granville Sharp. The judge, however, avoided bringing the question to an issue, or offering any opinion on the legal question as to the slave's personal liberty or otherwise, but discharged him because the defendant could bring no evidence that Lewis was even nominally his property.

The question of the personal liberty of black people in England was therefore still undecided until the important case of James Somerset occurred. Somerset had been brought to England by his master and left there. Afterwards his master sought to apprehend him and send him off to Jamaica, for sale. Mr. Sharp at once took Somerset's case in hand and employed counsel to defend him.

The cause of personal liberty, now at stake, was fairly tried before Lord Mansfield, assisted by the three justices, and tried on the broad principle of the essential and constitutional right of every man in England to the liberty of his person, unless forfeited by the law. At length judgment was given by Lord Mansfield, in whose powerful mind so gradual a change had been worked by the arguments of counsel, based mainly on Granville Sharp's tract, that he now declared the court to be so clearly of one opinion, that there was no necessity for referring the case to the twelve judges. He then declared that the claim of slavery never can be supported; that the power claimed never was in use in England, nor acknowledged by the law; therefore the man James Somerset must be discharged.

By securing this judgment Granville Sharp effectually abolished the slave trade until then carried on openly in the streets of Liverpool and London. But he also firmly established the glorious axiom, that as soon as any slave sets his foot on English ground, that moment he becomes free; and there can be no doubt that this great decision of Lord Mansfield was mainly owing to Mr. Sharp's firm, resolute and intrepid prosecution of the cause from the beginning to the end.

To the last Sharp held to the great object of his life - the abolition of slavery. He was encouraged by none of the world's huzzas when he entered upon his work. He stood alone, opposed to the opinion of the ablest lawyers and the most rooted prejudices of the times; and alone he fought, by his single exertions and at his individual expense, the most memorable battle for the constitution of this country and the liberties of British subjects of which modern times afford a record.

Men of business

Hazlitt, in one of his clever essays, represents the man of business as a mean sort of person yoked to a trade or profession; alleging that all he has to do is not to go out of the beaten track, but merely let his affairs take their own course. 'The great requisite, for the prosperous management of ordinary business is the want of imagination, or of any ideas but those of custom and interest on the narrowest scale.'

But nothing could be more one-sided, and in effect untrue, than such a definition. Of course, there are narrow-minded scientific men, literary men and legislators; but there are also business men of large and comprehensive minds, capable of action on the very largest scale.

It has, however, been a favourite fallacy with dunces in all times, that men of genius are unfit for business, as well as that business occupations make men unfit for the pursuits of genius.

The unhappy youth who committed suicide a few years since because he had been ‘born to be a man and condemned to be a grocer’ proved by the act that his soul was not equal even to the dignity of grocery.

For it is not the calling that degrades the man but the man that degrades the calling. All work that brings honest gain is honourable, whether it be of hand or mind. The fingers may be soiled, yet the heart remain pure; for it is not material so much as moral dirt that defiles.

The greatest have not disdained to labour honestly and usefully for a living, though at the same time aiming after higher things. Plato defrayed his travelling expenses in Egypt by the profits derived from the oil which he sold during his journey. Shakespeare was a successful manager of a theatre - perhaps priding himself more upon his practical qualities in that capacity than on his writing of plays and poetry. Indeed he seems to have been altogether indifferent to literary reputation. It is not known that he superintended the publication of a single play, or even sanctioned the printing of one. It is certain, however, that he prospered in his business and realized sufficient to enable him to retire upon a competency to his native town of Stratford-upon-Avon.

Chaucer was an effective Commissioner of Customs, and Inspector of Woods and Crown Lands. Milton, originally a schoolmaster, was elevated to the post of Secretary to the Council of State during the Commonwealth. Sir Isaac Newton proved himself an efficient Master of the Mint.

The path of success in business is usually the path of common sense. Patient labour and application are as necessary here as in the acquisition of knowledge or pursuit of science. In business, practice is the great secret of success. Some may make what are called ‘lucky hits’, but like money earned by gambling, such ‘hits’ may only serve to lure one to ruin. To have a daily appointed task of even common drudgery to do makes the rest of life feel all the sweeter.

On the whole, it is not good that human nature should have the road of life made too easy. Indeed, to start in life with comparatively small means seems so necessary as a stimulus to work, that it may almost be set down as one of the conditions essential to success in life. Hence, an eminent judge, when asked what contributed most to success at the bar, replied, ‘Some succeed by great talent, some by high connexions, some by miracle, but the majority by commencing without a shilling.’

It is doubtful whether any heavier curse could be imposed on man than the complete gratification of all his wishes without effort on his part, leaving nothing for his hopes, desires or struggles. The Marquis de Spinola once asked Sir Horace Vere what his brother died of. Sir Horace replied, ‘He died, Sir, of having nothing to do.’ ‘Alas!’ said Spinola, ‘that is enough to kill any general of us all.’

Those who fail in life are however very apt to assume a tone of injured innocence and conclude too hastily that everybody excepting themselves has had a hand in their misfortunes. An eminent writer lately published a book in which he described his numerous failures in business, naively admitting that he was ignorant of the multiplication table. Yet he came to the

conclusion that the real cause of his ill-success in life was the money-worshipping spirit of the age.

Again, some consider themselves born to ill luck and make up their minds that the world invariably goes against them without any fault on their own part. There is a Russian proverb which says that misfortune is next door to stupidity; and it will often be found that men who are constantly lamenting their luck are in some way or other reaping the consequences of their own neglect, mismanagement or want of application.

Method is essential and enables a larger amount of work to be got through with satisfaction. 'Method', said the Reverend Richard Cecil, 'is like packing things in a box; a good packer will get in half as much again as a bad one'.

Nelson once said, 'I owe all my success in life to having been always a quarter of an hour before my time.' Some take no thought of the value of money until they have come to an end of it and many do the same with their time. Lost wealth may be replaced by industry, lost knowledge by study, lost health by temperance or medicine, but lost time is gone for ever.

A proper consideration of the value of time will also inspire habits of punctuality. 'Punctuality', said Louis XIV, 'is the politeness of kings.' It is also the duty of gentlemen and the necessity of men of business. Nothing begets confidence in a man sooner than the practice of this virtue, and nothing shakes confidence sooner than the want of it. When Washington's secretary excused himself for the lateness of his attendance and laid the blame upon his watch, his master quietly said, 'Then you must get another watch, or I another secretary.'

The person who is negligent of time and its employment is usually found to be a general disturber of others' peace and serenity. It was wittily said by Lord Chesterfield of the old Duke of Newcastle – 'His Grace loses an hour in the morning, and is looking for it all the rest of the day.'

In addition to the ordinary working qualities the business man of the highest class requires quick perception and firmness in the execution of his plans. Though Napoleon had an immense love for details, he had also a vivid power of imagination, which enabled him to look along extended lines of action and deal with those details on a large scale. The movements of armies, the bringing up of reinforcements from remote points, the opening of canals and the levelling of roads to enable produce to be readily transported to his encampments, had his unceasing attention, down to the minutest details, directing where horses were to be obtained, ordering shoes for the soldiers. At the same time we find him writing to Paris giving directions for the reorganization of the French College, revising the details of budgets, throwing an occasional sarcasm at Madame de Stael and the Parisian journals, and interfering to put down a squabble at the Grand Opera.

Like Napoleon, the Duke of Wellington was a first-rate man of business; and the extraordinary qualities displayed throughout his (Peninsular) campaigns, can only be appreciated after a perusal of his despatches. Never was man more tried by difficulty and opposition, arising not

less from the imbecility, falsehoods and intrigues of the British government of the day, than from the selfishness, cowardice and vanity of the people he went to save.

He had the utmost difficulty in obtaining provisions and clothing for his troops; and it will scarcely be credited that, while engaged with the enemy in the battle of Talavera, the Spaniards, who ran away, fell upon the baggage of the British army, and the ruffians actually plundered it!

These and other vexations the Duke bore with a sublime patience and self-control, and held his course, in the face of ingratitude, treachery and opposition, with indomitable firmness. He neglected nothing and attended to every important detail of business himself. When he found that food for his troops was not to be obtained from England and that he must rely upon his own resources for feeding them, he forthwith commenced business as a corn merchant on a large scale, in co-partnery with the British Minister at Lisbon. Commissariat bills were created, with which grain was bought in the ports of the Mediterranean and in South America. When he had thus filled his magazines, the excess was sold to the Portuguese, who were greatly in want of provisions.

He left nothing whatever to chance, but provided for every contingency. He gave his attention to the minutest details of such apparently ignominious matters as soldiers' shoes, camp-kettles, biscuits and horse fodder. By such means he transformed an army of raw conscripts into the best soldiers in Europe, with whom he declared it to be possible to go anywhere and do anything.

Another feature in his character, showing the upright man of business, was his thorough honesty. Whilst Soult ransacked and carried away with him from Spain numerous pictures of great value, Wellington did not appropriate to himself a single farthing's worth of property. Everywhere he paid his way, even when in the enemy's country. When he had crossed the French frontier, followed by 40,000 Spaniards, who sought to ‘make fortunes’ by pillage and plunder, he first rebuked their officers, and then, finding his efforts to restrain them unavailing, he sent them back into their own country.

It is a remarkable fact that even in France the peasantry fled from their own countrymen and carried their valuables within the protection of the British lines! The Duke himself, had the matter been put to him, would most probably have disclaimed any intention of acting even grandly or nobly in the matter, merely regarding the punctual payment of his debts as the best and most honourable mode of conducting his business.

The truth of the good old maxim that ‘honesty is the best policy’ is upheld by the daily experience of life. It is possible that the scrupulously honest man may not grow rich so fast as the unscrupulous and dishonest one; but the success will be of a truer kind, earned without fraud or injustice. And even though a man should for a time be unsuccessful, still he must be honest: better lose all and save character.

Money - its use and abuse

How a man uses money - makes it, saves it and spends it - is perhaps one of the best tests of practical wisdom. Although money ought by no means to be regarded as a chief end of man's life, neither is it a trifling matter, to be held in philosophic contempt, representing as it does to so large an extent, the means of physical comfort and social well-being.

Indeed, some of the finest qualities of human nature are intimately related to the right use of money; such as generosity, honesty, justice and self-sacrifice; as well as the practical virtues of economy and providence.

On the other hand, there are their counterparts of avarice, fraud and selfishness, as displayed by the inordinate lovers of gain; and the vices of thriftlessness, extravagance and improvidence, on the part of those who misuse and abuse the means entrusted to them.

The provident and careful man must necessarily be a thoughtful man, for he lives not merely for the present, but makes arrangements for the future. He must also be a temperate man and exercise the virtue of self-denial, than which nothing is so much calculated to give strength to the character. John Sterling says truly that 'the worst education which teaches self-denial, is better than the best which teaches everything else, and not that.'

Those classes which work the hardest might naturally be expected to value the most the money which they earn. Yet the readiness with which so many are accustomed to eat up and drink up their earnings as they go, renders them to a great extent helpless and dependent upon the frugal.

On one occasion a deputation waited on Lord John Russell, respecting the taxation levied on the working classes of the country, when the noble lord took the opportunity of remarking, 'You may rely upon it that the Government of this country durst not tax the working classes to anything like the extent to which they tax themselves in their expenditure upon intoxicating drinks alone!'

Of all great public questions, there is perhaps none more important than this, no great work of reform calling more loudly for labourers. But it must be admitted that 'self-denial and self-help' would make a poor rallying cry for the hustings; and it is to be feared that the patriotism of this day has but little regard for such common things as individual economy and providence, although it is by the practice of such virtues only that the genuine independence of the industrial classes is to be secured.

It is, however, generally felt to be a far easier thing to reform the Church and the state than to reform the least of our own bad habits; and in such matters it is usually found more agreeable to our tastes to begin with our neighbours rather than ourselves.

Any class of men that lives from hand to mouth will ever be an inferior class. 'The world', once said Mr. Cobden to the working men of Huddersfield, 'has always been divided into two classes - those who have saved, and those who have spent - the thrifty and the extravagant. The

building of all the houses, the mills, the bridges, and the ships, and the accomplishment of all other great works which have rendered man civilized and happy, has been done by the savers, the thrifty; and those who have wasted their resources have always been their slaves.'

The healthy spirit of self-help created amongst working people would more than any other measure serve to raise them as a class, and this, not by pulling down others, but by levelling them up to a higher and still advancing standard of religion, intelligence and virtue.

The man who is always hovering on the verge of want is in a state not far removed from that of slavery. The proverb says that 'an empty bag cannot stand upright'; neither can a man who is in debt. It is also difficult for a man who is in debt to be truthful; hence it is said that lying rides on debt's back. The debtor has to frame excuses to his creditor for postponing payment of the money he owes him; and probably also to contrive falsehoods.

Dr. Johnson held that early debt is ruin. 'Do not accustom yourself to consider debt only as an inconvenience; you will find it a calamity. Poverty takes away so many means of doing good, and produces so much inability to resist evil, that it is by all virtuous means to be avoided. No man can help others that wants help himself.'

Mr. Hume hit the mark when he once stated in the House of Commons - though his words were followed by 'laughter' - that the tone of living in England is altogether too high. Middle-class people are too apt to live up to their incomes, if not beyond them: affecting a degree of 'style' which is most unhealthy in its effects upon society at large. There is an ambition to bring up boys as gentlemen, or rather 'genteel' men; though the result frequently is only to make them gents. They acquire a taste for dress, style, luxuries and amusements, which can never form any solid foundation for manly or gentlemanly character.

The late Sir Charles Napier, in taking leave of his command in India, did a bold and honest thing in publishing his strong protest, embodied in his last General Order to the officers of the Indian army, against the 'fast' life led by so many young officers in that service, involving them in ignominious obligations. Sir Charles strongly urged that 'honesty is inseparable from the character of a thorough-bred gentleman'; and that 'to drink unpaid-for champagne and unpaid-for beer, and to ride unpaid-for horses, is to be a cheat, and not a gentleman.'

Many popular books have been written for the purpose of communicating to the public the grand secret of making money. But there is no secret whatever about it, as the proverbs of every nation abundantly testify. 'Take care of the pennies and the pounds will take care of themselves.' 'Diligence is the mother of good luck.' 'No pains no gains.' 'Better go to bed supperless than rise in debt.'

Simple industry and thrift will go far towards making any person of ordinary working faculty comparatively independent. If he takes care of the pennies - putting some weekly into a benefit society or an insurance fund, others into a savings bank, and confiding the rest to his wife to be carefully laid out, with a view to the comfortable maintenance and education of his family - he will soon find that this attention to small matters will abundantly repay him, in increasing means, growing comfort at home and a mind comparatively free from fears as to the future.

To provide for others and for our own comfort and independence in old age is greatly to be commended; but to hoard for mere wealth's sake is the characteristic of the narrow-souled and the miserly. It is the *love* of money - not money itself - which is 'the root of evil', a love which narrows and contracts the soul, and closes it against generous life and action.

In Algiers, the Kabyle peasant attaches a gourd, well fixed, to a tree, and places within it some rice. The gourd has an opening merely sufficient to admit the monkey's paw. The creature comes to the tree by night, inserts his paw and grasps his booty. He tries to draw it back, but it is clenched, and he has not the wisdom to unclench it. So there he stands till morning, when he is caught, looking as foolish as may be, though with the prize in his grasp. The moral of this little story is capable of a very extensive application in life.

The power of money is on the whole over-estimated. The greatest things which have been done for the world have not been accomplished by rich men, nor by subscription lists, but by men generally of small pecuniary means. Christianity was propagated over half the world by men of the poorest class; and the greatest thinkers, discoverers, inventors and artists, have been men of moderate wealth, many of them little raised above the condition of manual labourers in point of worldly circumstances. And it will always be so.

Riches are oftener an impediment than a stimulus to action; and in many cases they are quite as much a misfortune as a blessing. The youth who inherits wealth is apt to have life made too easy for him and he soon grows sated with it, because he has nothing left to desire. Having no special object to struggle for, he finds time hangs heavy on his hands; he remains morally and spiritually asleep; and his position in society is often no higher than that of a polypus over which the tide floats.

The late Joseph Brotherton, MP, left a fine motto to be recorded upon his monument in Peel Park at Manchester: 'My richness consisted not in the greatness of my possessions, but in the smallness of my wants.' He rose from the humblest station, that of a factory boy, to an eminent position of usefulness, by the simple exercise of homely honesty, industry, punctuality and self-denial. Down to the close of his life, when not attending Parliament, he did duty as minister in a small chapel in Manchester; and in all things he made it appear, to those who knew him in private life, that the glory he sought was *not* 'to be seen of men', or to excite their praise, but to earn the consciousness of discharging the humblest duties of everyday life, in an honest, upright and loving spirit.

Self-culture - facilities and difficulties

Sir Walter Scott said, 'The best part of every man's education, is that which he gives to himself.' The education received at school or college is but a beginning. That which is put into us by others is always far less ours than that which we acquire by our own diligent and persevering effort. Knowledge conquered by labour becomes a possession - a property entirely our own. Our own active effort is the essential thing; and no facilities, no books, no teachers, no amount of lessons learnt by rote will enable us to dispense with it.

From the numerous instances already cited of men of humble station who have risen to distinction in science and literature, it will be obvious that labour is by no means incompatible with the highest intellectual culture. Work educates the body, as study educates the mind.

Even the leisure classes are in a measure compelled to work, sometimes as a relief from *ennui*, but in most cases to gratify an instinct which they cannot resist. Some go foxhunting in the English counties, others grouse-shooting on the Scotch hills, while many wander away every summer to climb mountains in Switzerland. Hence the boating, running, cricketing and athletic sports of the public schools, in which our young men at the same time so healthfully cultivate their strength both of mind and body. It is said that the Duke of Wellington, when once looking on at the boys engaged in their sports in the playground at Eton, where he had spent many of his own younger days, made the remark, 'It was there that the battle of Waterloo was won!'

The use of early labour in self-imposed mechanical employments may be illustrated by the boyhood of Sir Isaac Newton. Though a comparatively dull scholar, he was very assiduous in the use of his saw, hammer and hatchet – 'knocking and hammering in his lodging room' - making models of windmills, carriages and machines of all sorts.

The training of young men in the use of tools would, at the same time that it educated them in 'common things', teach them the use of their hands and arms and give them some practical acquaintance with mechanics. This is an advantage which the working classes, strictly so called, certainly possess over the leisure classes - that they are in early life under the necessity of applying themselves laboriously to some mechanical pursuit or other, thus acquiring manual dexterity and the use of their physical powers.

The chief disadvantage attached to the calling of the laborious classes is not that they are employed in physical work, but that they are too exclusively so employed, often to the neglect of their moral and intellectual faculties. While the youths of the leisure classes, having been taught to associate labour with servility, have shunned it, and been allowed to grow up practically ignorant, the poorer classes, confining themselves within the circle of their laborious callings, have been allowed to grow up in a large proportion of cases absolutely illiterate.

Burns, when a youth, was remarkable chiefly for his leaping, putting and wrestling. Some of our greatest divines were distinguished in their youth for their physical energies. Isaac Barrow, when at the Charterhouse School, was notorious for his pugilistic encounters, in which he got many a bloody nose.

Decision and promptitude are as requisite in self-culture as in business. The growth of these qualities may be encouraged by accustoming young people to rely upon their own resources, leaving them to enjoy as much freedom of action in early life as is practicable. Too much guidance and restraint hinder the formation of habits of self-help. They are like bladders tied under the arms of one who has not taught himself to swim. Want of confidence is perhaps a greater obstacle to improvement than is generally imagined. It has been said that half the failures in life arise from pulling in one's horse while he is leaping.

We may not believe that there is a royal road to learning, but we seem to believe very firmly in a 'popular' one. In education, we invent labour-saving processes, seek short cuts to science, learn French and Latin 'in twelve lessons' or 'without a master'. We resemble the lady of fashion, who engaged a master to teach her on condition that he did not plague her with verbs and participles. We get our smattering of science in the same way; we learn chemistry by listening to a short course of lectures enlivened by experiments, and when we have inhaled laughing gas, seen green water turned to red and phosphorus burnt in oxygen, we have got our smattering. Thus we often imagine we are being educated while we are only being amused.

The facility with which young people are thus induced to acquire knowledge, without study and labour, is not education. It occupies but does not enrich the mind. Accustomed to acquire information under the guise of amusement, young people will soon reject that which is presented to them under the aspect of study and labour.

Another way in which education may be prostituted is by employing it as a mere means of intellectual dissipation and amusement. Many are the ministers to this taste in our time. There is almost a mania for frivolity and excitement, which exhibits itself in many forms in our popular literature. To meet the public taste, our books and periodicals must now be highly spiced, amusing and comic, not disdaining slang and illustrative of breaches of all laws, human and divine.

Douglas Jerrold once observed of this tendency, 'I am convinced the world will get tired (at least I hope so) of this eternal guffaw about all things. After all, life has something serious in it. It cannot be all a comic history of humanity. Some men, would, I believe, write a Comic Sermon on the Mount. Think of a Comic History of England, the drollery of Alfred, the fun of St Thomas More, the farce of his daughter begging the dead head and clasping it in her coffin on her bosom. Surely the world will be sick of this blasphemy.'

Amusement in moderation is wholesome; but amusement in excess vitiates the whole nature. Nothing can be more hurtful to a youth than to have his soul sodden with pleasure. One of the most gifted of Frenchmen, in point of great intellectual endowments, was Benjamin Constant; but, *blasé* at twenty, his life was a only a prolonged wail, instead of a harvest of great deeds. He resolved upon doing so many things, which he never did, that people came to speak of him as Constant the Inconstant.

He was a fluent and brilliant writer, and cherished the ambition of writing works 'which the world would not willingly let die'. But whilst Constant affected the highest thinking, unhappily he practised the lowest living; nor did the transcendentalism of his books atone for the meanness of his life. He frequented the gaming-tables while engaged in preparing his work upon religion and carried on a disreputable intrigue while writing his 'Adolphe'. With all his powers of intellect, he was powerless, because he had no faith in virtue. 'Bah!' said he, 'what are honour and dignity? The longer I live, the more clearly I see there is nothing in them.' It was the howl of a miserable man.

It is not ease, but effort - not facility, but difficulty, that makes men. We learn wisdom from failure much more than from success. John Hunter used to remark that the art of surgery would

not advance until professional men had the courage to publish their failures as well as their successes.

Watt the engineer said, of all things most wanted in mechanical engineering was a history of failures: ‘We want’, he said, ‘a book of blots.’ Another distinguished investigator in physical science has left it on record that, whenever in the course of his researches he encountered an apparently insuperable obstacle, he generally found himself on the brink of some discovery.

Beethoven said of Rossini, that he had in him the stuff to have made a good musician if he had only, when a boy, been well flogged; but that he had been spoilt by the facility with which he produced. Men who feel their strength within them need not fear to encounter adverse opinions; they have far greater reason to fear undue praise and too friendly criticism. When Mendelssohn was about to enter the orchestra at Birmingham, on the first performance of his ‘Elijah’, he said laughingly to one of his friends and critics, ‘Stick your claws into me! Don't tell me what you like, but what you don't like!’

The battle of life is, in most cases, fought up-hill; and to win it without a struggle is perhaps to win it without honour. If there were no difficulties there would be no success; if there were nothing to struggle for, there would be nothing to be achieved. The school of difficulty is the best school of moral discipline, for nations as for individuals.

There are many illustrious names which might be cited to prove the truth of the common saying that ‘it is never too late to learn.’ Even at advanced years men can do much, if they will determine on making a beginning. Dryden and Scott were not known as authors until each was in his fortieth year. Handel was 48 before he published any of his great works. None but the frivolous or the indolent will say, ‘I am too old to learn.’

And here we would repeat what we have said before, that it is not men of genius who move the world and take the lead in it, so much as men of steadfastness, purpose and indefatigable industry. Notwithstanding the many undeniable instances of the precocity of men of genius, it is nevertheless true that early cleverness gives no indication of the height to which the grown man will reach.

An interesting chapter might be written on the subject of illustrious dunces - dull boys, but brilliant men. Many of our greatest divines have been anything but precocious. Goldsmith spoke of himself as a plant that flowered late. Robert Clive was a dunce, if not a reprobate, when a youth; but always full of energy, even in badness. His family, glad to get rid of him, shipped him off to Madras; and he lived to lay the foundations of British power in India. Ulysses Grant, the Commander-in-Chief of the United States, was called ‘Useless Grant’ by his mother - he was so dull and unhandy when a boy.

To conclude: the best culture is not obtained from teachers when at school or college, so much as by our own diligent self-education when we have become adults. Hence parents need not be in too great haste to see their children's talents forced into bloom.

Let them watch and wait patiently, letting good example and quiet training do their work. Let them see to it that the youth is provided, by free exercise of his bodily powers, with a full stock of physical health and set him fairly on the road of self-culture. As he grows older, if the right stuff be in him, he will be enabled vigorously and effectively to cultivate himself.

Role-models

Example is one of the most potent of instructors, though it teaches without a tongue. It is the practical school of mankind, working by action, which is always more forcible than words. All persons are more or less apt to learn through the eye rather than the ear. This is especially the case in early youth, when the eye is the chief inlet of knowledge. Whatever children see they unconsciously imitate.

Whatever may be the efficiency of schools, the examples set in our homes must always be of vastly greater influence in forming the characters of our future men and women. The home is the crystal of society - the nucleus of national character; and from that source, be it pure or tainted, issue the habits, principles and maxims, which govern public as well as private life. The nation comes from the nursery. Public opinion itself is for the most part the outgrowth of the home; and the best philanthropy comes from the fireside.

'To love the little platoon we belong to in society', says Burke, 'is the germ of all public affections.' The characters of parents are thus constantly repeated in their children; and the acts of affection, discipline, industry and self-control, which they daily exemplify, live and act when all else which may have been learned through the ear has long been forgotten. Even the mute action and unconscious look of a parent may give a stamp to the character which is never effaced.

There is, indeed, an essence of immortality in the life of man, even in this world. No individual in the universe stands alone; he is a component part of a system of mutual dependencies. And herein lies the great significance of setting forth a good example. There is no one so humble, but that he owes to others this simple but priceless instruction. He who tills a space of earth scarce bigger than is needed for his grave, may work as faithfully, and to as good purpose, as the heir to thousands.

It is not enough to *tell* others what they are to do, but to exhibit the actual example of doing. What Mrs Chisholm described to Mrs Stowe as the secret of her success, applies to all life. 'I found', she said, 'that if we want anything *done*, we must go to work and *do:* it is of no use merely to talk - none whatever.'

Good admonition and bad example only build with one hand to pull down with the other. Hence the vast importance of exercising great care in the selection of companions, especially in youth. There is a magnetic affinity in young persons which insensibly tends to assimilate them to each other's likeness. Lord Collingwood, writing to a young friend, said, 'Hold it as a maxim

that you had better be alone than in mean company. Let your companions be such as yourself, or superior; for the worth of a man will always be ruled by that of his company.'

Artists feel themselves elevated by contact with artists greater than themselves. Thus Haydn's genius was first fired by Handel. Hearing him play, Haydn's ardour for musical composition was at once excited. Speaking of Handel, he said, 'When he chooses, he strikes like the thunderbolt'; and at another time, 'There is not a note of him but draws blood.'

The chief use of biography consists in the noble models of character in which it abounds. Our great forefathers still live among us in the records of their lives, as well as in the acts they have done. Hence a book containing the life of a true man is full of precious seed. Sometimes a young man discovers himself in a biography, as Correggio felt within him the risings of genius on contemplating the works of Michael Angelo: 'And I, too, am a painter', he exclaimed.

Thus it is impossible to say where a good example may not reach, or where it will end, if indeed it has an end. Hence the advantage, in literature as in life, of keeping the best society, reading the best books, and wisely admiring and imitating the best things we find in them. Luther was inspired to undertake the great labours of his life by a perusal of the 'Life and Writings of John Huss'. William Carey, also, got the first idea of entering upon his sublime labours as a missionary from a perusal of the 'Voyages of Captain Cook'.

One of the most valuable, and one of the most infectious examples which can be set before the young, is that of cheerful working. Cheerfulness gives elasticity to the spirit. Spectres fly before it; difficulties cause no despair, for they are encountered with hope. Hume was accustomed to say that he would rather possess a cheerful disposition - inclined always to look at the bright side of things - than with a gloomy mind to be the master of an estate of ten thousand a year.

Granville Sharp, amidst his indefatigable labours on behalf of the slave, solaced himself in the evenings by taking part in glees and instrumental concerts at his brother's house, singing, or playing on the flute, the clarinet, or the oboe; and, at the Sunday evening oratorios, when Handel was played, he beat the kettle-drums.

Character - the true gentleman

The crown and glory of life is character. It is the noblest possession of a man, constituting a rank in itself and an estate in the general good will. It exercises a greater power than wealth and secures all the honour without the jealousies of fame. It carries with it an influence which always tells.

Character is human nature in its best form. It is moral order embodied in the individual. Men of character are not only the conscience of society, but in every well-governed state they are its best motive power; for it is moral qualities in the main which rule the world. Even in war, Napoleon said the moral is to the physical as ten to one. The strength, the industry and the

civilization of nations all depend upon individual character; and the very foundations of civil security rest upon it.

Though a man have comparatively little culture, slender abilities and but small wealth, yet, if his character be of sterling worth, he will always command an influence, whether it be in the workshop, the counting-house, the mart, or the senate. You may admire men of intellect; but something more is necessary before you will trust them. Hence Lord John Russell once observed, 'It is the nature of party in England to ask the assistance of men of genius, but to follow the guidance of men of character.'

Character creates confidence in men in high station as well as in humble life. It was said of the first Emperor Alexander of Russia that his personal character was equivalent to a constitution. During the wars of the Fronde, Montaigne was the only man amongst the French gentry who kept his castle gates unbarred; and it was said of him that his personal character was a better protection for him than a regiment of horse would have been.

There are many counterfeits of character, but the genuine article is difficult to be mistaken. Some, knowing its money value, would assume its disguise for the purpose of imposing upon the unwary. Colonel Charteris said to a man distinguished for his honesty, 'I would give a thousand pounds for your good name.' 'Why?' 'Because I could make ten thousand by it', was the knave's reply.

The true character acts rightly, whether in secret or in the sight of men. That boy was well trained who, when asked why he did not pocket some pears, for nobody was there to see, replied, 'Yes, there was: I was there to see myself; and I don't intend ever to see myself do a dishonest thing.' Such a principle goes on moulding the character hourly and daily, growing with a force that operates every moment.

It is indeed scarcely possible to over-estimate the importance of training the young to virtuous habits. In them they are the easiest formed, and when formed they last for life; like letters cut on the bark of a tree they grow and widen with age. To uproot an old habit is sometimes a more painful thing, and vastly more difficult, than to wrench out a tooth.

Try and reform a habitually indolent, or improvident, or drunken person, and in a large majority of cases you will fail. For the habit in each case has wound itself in and through the life until it has become an integral part of it, and cannot be uprooted. Hence, as Mr. Lynch observes, 'the wisest habit of all is the habit of care in the formation of good habits.'

Morals and manners, which give colour to life, are of much greater importance than laws, which are but their manifestations. The law touches us here and there, but manners are about us everywhere, pervading society like the air we breathe. 'Civility', said Lady Montague, 'costs nothing and buys everything.' The cheapest of all things is kindness, its exercise requiring the least possible trouble and self-sacrifice. 'Win hearts', said Burleigh to Queen Elizabeth, 'and you have all men's hearts and purses.'

The true gentleman values his character, not so much of it only as can be seen of others, but as he sees it himself. Humanity is sacred in his eyes: and thence proceed politeness and forbearance, kindness and charity. It is related of Lord Edward Fitzgerald that while travelling in Canada, in company with the Indians, he was shocked by the sight of a poor squaw trudging along laden with her husband's trappings, while the chief himself walked on unencumbered. Lord Edward at once relieved the squaw of her pack by placing it upon his own shoulders - the inbred politeness of the true gentleman.

The true gentleman has a keen sense of honour - scrupulously avoiding mean actions - a trait to be noted in the life of the Duke of Wellington. Shortly after the battle of Assaye, one morning the Prime Minister of the Court of Hyderabad waited upon him for the purpose of privately ascertaining what territory and what advantages had been reserved for his master in the treaty of peace between the Mahratta princes and the Nizam. To obtain this information the minister offered the general a very large sum - considerably above £100,000. Looking at him quietly for a few seconds, Sir Arthur said, 'It appears, then, that you are capable of keeping a secret?' 'Yes, certainly', replied the minister. '*Then so am I*', said the English general, smiling, and bowed the minister out.

Riches and rank have no necessary connection with genuine gentlemanly qualities. The poor man may be a true gentleman, in spirit and in daily life. He may be honest, truthful, upright, polite, temperate, courageous, self-respecting and self-helping, that is, be a true gentleman. The poor man with a rich spirit is in all ways superior to the rich man with a poor spirit.

Occasionally, the brave and gentle character may be found under the humblest garb. Here is an old illustration, but a fine one. Once on a time, when the Adige suddenly overflowed its banks, the bridge of Verona was carried away, with the exception of the centre arch, on which stood a house, whose inhabitants supplicated help from the windows while the foundations were visibly giving way.

'I will give a hundred French louis', said the Count Spolverini, who stood by, 'to any person who will venture to deliver these unfortunate people.' A young peasant came forth from the crowd, seized a boat, and pushed into the stream. He gained the pier, received the whole family into the boat, and made for the shore, where he landed them in safety. 'Here is your money, my brave young fellow', said the count. 'No', was the answer of the young man, 'I do not sell my life; give the money to this poor family, who have need of it.'

True courage and gentleness go hand in hand. The brave man is generous and forbearing, never unforgiving and cruel. It was finely said of Sir John Franklin by his friend Parry, that 'he was a man who never turned his back upon a danger, yet of that tenderness that he would not brush away a mosquito.' A fine trait of character - truly gentle, and worthy of the spirit of Bayard - was displayed by a French officer in the cavalry combat of El Bodon in Spain (during the Peninsular War). He had raised his sword to strike Sir Felton Harvey, but perceiving his antagonist had only one arm, he instantly stopped, brought down his sword before Sir Felton in the usual salute, and rode past.

Notwithstanding the wail which we occasionally hear for the chivalry that is gone, our own age has witnessed deeds of bravery and gentleness - of heroic self denial and manly tenderness - which are unsurpassed in history. The events of the last few years have shown that our countrymen are as yet an undegenerate race. On the bleak plateau of Sebastopol, in the dripping perilous trenches of that twelve-month siege, men of all classes proved themselves worthy of the noble inheritance of character which their forefathers have bequeathed to them.

The wreck of the *Birkenhead* off the coast of Africa on the 27th of February, 1852, affords another memorable illustration of the chivalrous spirit of common men acting in this nineteenth century, of which any age might be proud. The vessel was steaming along the African coast with 472 men and 166 women and children on board. The men belonged to several regiments then serving at the Cape, and consisted principally of recruits who had been only a short time in the service. At two o'clock in the morning, while all were asleep below, the ship struck with violence upon a hidden rock which penetrated her bottom; and it was at once felt that she must go down.

The roll of the drums called the soldiers to arms on the upper deck, and the men mustered as if on parade. The word was passed to *save the women and children;* and the helpless creatures were brought from below, mostly undressed, and handed silently into the boats.

When they had all left the ship's side, the commander of the vessel thoughtlessly called out, 'All those that can swim, jump overboard and make for the boats.' But Captain Wright, of the 91st Highlanders, said, 'No! if you do that, *the boats with the women must be swamped*'; and the brave men stood motionless. There was no boat remaining, and no hope of safety; but not a heart quailed; no one flinched from his duty in that trying moment. 'There was not a murmur nor a cry amongst them', said Captain Wright, a survivor, 'until the vessel made her final plunge.'

Down went the ship, and down went the heroic band, firing a *feu de joie* as they sank beneath the waves. Glory and honour to the gentle and the brave! The examples of such men never die, but, like their memories, are immortal.

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