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THE ROAD TO SUCCESS.

What shall I do to advance myself; is a question asked by many young men when first entering upon their business career. Too many are apt to answer it by supposing that some brilliant masterstroke is the talisman that is to open the pathway of success before them. Brilliant masterstrokes, however, always carry with them great risks, and, as a rule, the advancement made by persistent effort is the safest, surest, and most easy of attainment. In choosing a profession or a trade, it is of the utmost importance to select one that is congenial to the taste; and having chosen one to stick to it, for there is a wonderful element of success in the stamina that enables men to stick. How many of our most successful men have clung to the pathway marked out, at times when fainter hearts would have abandoned the task and sought refuge in some less difficult occupation! Is this a good trade; is that a good profession; are questions that may be at all times answered by "Yes, for those with the ability necessary for their pursuit and who possess the perseverance which success at all times demands."

It is folly to expect to start out upon any career with the pathway of progress as plainly mapped out as if laid down upon a chart. For all these things regulate themselves; and while a pursuit which promises all things may prove entirely unsuccessful, one apparently very uninviting may lead to rapid progress. All occupations have their periods of activity and of dulness; the brisk business of to-day may be the dull one of to-morrow. The rapid rise of others in any particular pursuit is no criterion, because business is something like poetry, it is not so much the subject as the manner in which it is treated that determines its quality. Be especially careful not to over-estimate your own abilities. It is very natural to feel quite convinced of your personal ability, and to be aggrieved that your efforts are not more specially recognized by employers, but rest assured that in the end employers will recognize any capability you may possess at its proper value, and are at all times eager to avail themselves of any elements you may possess that are advantageous to the pursuit of their business. If, on the other hand, your ability is recognized, bear in mind that you are fairly established upon the right path, and be careful not to succumb to the inducements offered elsewhere by a slight advance of remuneration. This is, indeed, the rock upon which the hopes of thousands of young men have foundered. In a position held by dint of appreciated labor there are a great many advantages that are not visible upon the surface, and which can scarcely exist in a new position. First of all is the consideration that you are making progress, so that, be the obstacles what they may, you are surmounting them. This is a great point, because in a new position you do not know and cannot foresee what elements of opposition may exist or arise. Next bear in mind that the length of time you have been in one employ is a valuable element; you are becoming identified with the business; you are getting more familiar with it, as well as more capable of transacting your part; and above all you are making a reputation in it. You are also forming around you a number of business acquaintances who are to be useful to you for all the rest of their lives, some of whom are in the future to become employers, others prominent employees, and so on, and all of whom will be morally sure to form a tolerably accurate estimate of your stability, as well as your business capacity. How often do we hear the remark, "Oh, so-and-so rose because he had a friend who could push him ahead." As a rule, however, the disposition to advance another does not arise from friendship, but rather from a full confidence in his ability; men possessing the elements which raise them in business are usually too just, too keen-sighted, and too careful of their own reputations to risk the same by recommending others out of pure friendship. Indeed, such a course would be anything but an act of friendship, because, as compared to getting a good appointment, keeping it is ten times more difficult.

The road to success is not a royal road, but it is a tolerably straight and sure one. Anxiety and watchfulness for success, avidity to seize every promising opening, readiness to relinquish what is already gained for something apparently more inviting, is more often a by-way than the highway. The energy expended in this manner will pay a man a hundredfold more interest if directed to becoming proficient in his daily duties, in mastering the difficulties of his calling, in learning the science of his occupation, and studying its necessities. He should study not only in, but out of, working hours, when the pen, the tool, or the instrument is laid down, and his daily duties are ended. It is this which will enable future days' duties, to be performed more easily and more efficiently. In fact every jot of knowledge gained after the hours of daily labor is capital which will bear ample interest in the way of advancement; and so sure is this that, if such studies are diligently and intelligently pursued, the present will be the all-absorbing topic and the future may be left out of mind with almost perfect assurance that it will be well able to take care of itself. There are sometimes circumstances which may interrupt a successful and worthy career, but in such a case it is only necessary to begin over again, undiscouraged and with increased determination to succeed.

One of the greatest causes of failure to progress in business is a dislike to strenuous exertion, especially when manual labor is entailed. Too many young men get the idea that because they are *smart* they ought to be able to live by their wits, and they shift about from pillar to post in any occupation that does not impose what is commonly termed manual labor. This indeed is a sad mistake: desultory or itinerant occupations are laborious to the body, and from their vicissitudes and uncertainty very exhausting to the mind. All men cannot, in the very nature of things, learn or follow a trade, but those who are adapted to do so will find the pursuit less onerous and more remunerative than that of entering some other pursuit because of a dislike to manual labor. If an operative becomes a skillful workman, he is a success even though he does not attain riches; and if he permits this latter fact to make him discontented, it is not an evidence that his career has not been a success, but rather that he permits a morbid feeling on that point to overshadow his success as a workman. It seems to be a human proclivity to wish that one's occupation had been something else, almost anything indeed but that which it actually is, and we often hear it said: "If I had my life to pass over again I would be a so-and-so."

We heard it remarked a few days ago: "If my father had educated me until I was 18 years old I should not have required to toil at the bench." The reply to this was so well chosen that we give it in full as follows: "That is a mistaken idea. When a young man, of 18 or 20 years old and with a good education, sets out to earn his own living he is to be pitied. What is he fit for? He knows nothing of any man's business, he has no experience of either business or the world; he can perform clerical work, but so can the office boy who went into the office at 14 years old and had a year at a night school. He can probably do the same work as the boy, but he cannot work for the boy's pay; he cannot afford to start at the beginning, but tries to jump into a middle position which he is not capable of holding. The boy is his superior, inasmuch as he has learned something of the routine and of the particular requirements of that particular business. He is also growing up with the firm, and will in time understand the duties required in every employee's station, from the office boy up to whatever position he may himself occupy. A good common school education, with the assistance of a night school, will fit a boy for any ordinary occupation."

THE MECHANICAL THEORY OF FORGETFULNESS.

It is one of the most curious phenomena of the memory that knowledge acquired for purposes of special future use may be remembered clearly and well up to the time when it is used; but when it is no longer required it rapidly fades away. Actors, for example, who are obliged to study new parts frequently, and commit long speeches to memory in very short periods of time, apparently have the power of cleansing the memory and rendering it blank and receptive to new tasks. Nor does the number of times a part has been played successively seem to affect this capability, for actors have informed us that, after even taking part in a performance which has been repeated night after night for months, the reproduction of the same play, after the lapse of a year or so, finds them almost ignorant of the text, and necessitates complete re-study. The same is true of pupils in school, and there are doubtless few teachers who have not remarked the dismay which a sudden turning back to review previous tasks excites among a class of apparently bright scholars, or who has not discovered that a perfect recitation is no proof that the substance of the knowledge will be found in the pupil's memory a week afterwards. Although this capability of freeing the mind is rather a drawback to education, it is of inestimable value in the affairs of daily life. It enables the business man to throw off the cares of the office when he crosses its threshold at night, the lawyer to keep his mind clear of the discords of his clients and to avoid continuing the anxieties of one case into the details of the other, the physician to keep separate the ailments and idiosyncracies of his patients; and thus its application might be traced in every profession and calling.

It has become so much the custom to seek mechanical explanations for circumstances apparently the most unmechanical that it is almost to be expected that, in analyzing this peculiarity of the mind, psychologists will at least borrow mechanical terms. This Mr. Verdon, in his elaborate essay on forgetfulness, published in *Mind*, manifestly does when he regards memory as energy, and absence of forgetfulness a conservation of the same. He points out that practically we sometimes keep a matter in mind, not exactly by attending to it, but by keeping our attention referred to something connected with it from time to time. Now when the use of the record is withdrawn and we think no more about it, we experience a feeling of relief, and we thus may conclude that energy is in some way liberated. After this the record does not seem conserved so well as before, and we have real difficulty in attempting to remember it. It is not rash, he adds, to suppose that this degradation of the record is real, that the record is left to decay, and that the forces which would have tended to preserve it now become useful in some other way.

Mr. Verdon supposes the existence of a "versatile energy," which is locked up in the memory, but which, after it is used to get up facts of one kind, may be employed to acquire facts of another kind, provided the former become reduced to the level of the general stock of the individual's knowledge. A actor, for example, learns a part, plays it, forgets it, and thus liberates versatile energy, which enables him to acquire another, and so on; but on the other hand, if the same person really assimilates knowledge so that it requires no attention to keep it from rapid decay (as in learning to read and write), there is little chance of forgetfulness liberating energy of use for further acquisition. The deduction from this, evidently, is that a person may exhaust his stock of