

the Swedish poet Sjöberg assumed, as Frederik von Hardenberg assumed that of *Nova-lis*, described the aspirations and the labors of both these men of genius.

We have spoken of work as a discipline: it is also an educator of character. Even work that produces no results, because it *is* work, is better than torpor—inasmuch as it educates faculty, and is thus preparatory to successful work. The habit of working teaches method. It compels economy of time, and the disposition of it with judicious forethought. And when the art of packing life with useful occupations is once acquired by practice, every minute will be turned to account; and leisure, when it comes, will be enjoyed with all the greater zest.

Coleridge has truly observed, that “if the idle are described as killing time, the methodical man may be justly said to call it into life and moral being, while he makes it the distinct object not only of the consciousness, but of the conscience. He organizes the hours and gives them a soul; and by that, the very essence of which is to fleet and to have been, he communicates an imperishable and spiritual nature. Of the good and faithful servant, whose energies thus directed are thus methodized, it is less truly affirmed that he lives in time than that time lives in him. His days and months and years, as the stops and punctual marks in the record of duties performed, will survive the wreck of worlds, and remain extant when time itself shall be no more.”\*

It is because application to business teaches method most effectually, that it is so useful as an educator of character. The highest working qualities are best trained by active and

\* “Dissertation on the Science of Method.”

sympathetic contact with others in the affairs of daily life. It does not matter whether the business relate to the management of a household or of a nation. Indeed, as we have endeavored to show in a preceding chapter, the able housewife must necessarily be an efficient woman of business. She must regulate and control the details of her home, keep her expenditure within her means, arrange every thing according to plan and system, and wisely manage and govern those subject to her rule. Efficient domestic management implies industry, application, method, moral discipline, forethought, prudence, practical ability, insight into character, and power of organization—all of which are required in the efficient management of business of whatever sort.

Business qualities have, indeed, a very large field of action. They mean aptitude for affairs, competency to deal successfully with the practical work of life—whether the spur of action lie in domestic management, in the conduct of a profession, in trade or commerce, in social organization, or in political government. And the training which gives efficiency in dealing with these various affairs is of all others the most useful in practical life.\* Moreover, it is the best

\* The following passage, from a recent article in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, will commend itself to general approval:

“There can be no question nowadays, that application to work absorption in affairs, contact with men, and all the stress which business imposes on us, gives a noble training to the intellect, and splendid opportunity for discipline of character. It is an utterly low view of business which regards it as only a means of getting a living. A man’s business is his part of the world’s work, his share of the great activities which render society possible. He may like it or dislike it, but it is work, and as such requires application, self-denial, discipline. It is his drill, and he can not be thorough in his occupation without

discipline of character; for it involves the exercise of diligence, attention, self-denial, judgment, tact, knowledge of and sympathy with others.

Such a discipline is far more productive of happiness, as well as useful efficiency in life, than any amount of literary culture or meditative seclusion; for in the long run it will usually be found that practical ability carries it over intellect, and temper and habits over talent. It must, however, be added that this is a kind of culture that can only be acquired by diligent observation and carefully improved experience. "To be a good blacksmith," said General Trochu, in a recent publication, "one must have forged all his life: to be a good administrator, one should have passed his whole life in the study and practice of business."

It was characteristic of Sir Walter Scott to entertain the highest respect for able men of business; and he professed that he did not consider any amount of literary distinction as entitled to be spoken of in the same breath with the mastery in the higher departments of practical life—least of all with a first-rate captain.

The great commander leaves nothing to chance, but provides for every contingency. He condescends to apparently

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putting himself into it, checking his fancies, restraining his impulses, and holding himself to the perpetual round of small details—without, in fact, submitting to his drill. But the perpetual call on a man's readiness, self-control, and vigor which business makes, the constant appeal to the intellect, the stress upon the will, the necessity for rapid and responsible exercise of judgment—all these things constitute a high culture, though not the highest. It is a culture which strengthens and invigorates if it does not refine, which gives force if not polish—the *fortiter in re*, if not the *suaviter in modo*. It makes strong men and ready men, and men of vast capacity for affairs, though it does not necessarily make refined men or gentlemen."

trivial details. Thus, when Wellington was at the head of his army in Spain, he directed the precise manner in which the soldiers were to cook their provisions. When in India, he specified the exact speed at which the bullocks were to be driven; every detail in equipment was carefully arranged beforehand. And thus not only was efficiency secured, but the devotion of his men, and their boundless confidence in his command.\*

Like other great captains, Wellington had an almost boundless capacity for work. He drew up the heads of a Dublin Police Bill (being still the Secretary for Ireland) when tossing off the mouth of Mondego, with Junot and the French army waiting for him on the shore. So Cæsar, another of the greatest commanders, is said to have written an essay on Latin Rhetoric while crossing the Alps at the head of his army. And Wallenstein, when at the head of 60,000 men, and in the midst of a campaign, with the enemy before him, dictated from headquarters the medical treatment of his poultry-yard.

Washington, also, was an indefatigable man of business. From his boyhood he diligently trained himself in habits of application, of study, and of methodical work. His manuscript school-books, which are still preserved, show that, as early as the age of thirteen, he occupied himself voluntarily in copying out such things as forms of receipts, notes of hand, bills of exchange, bonds, indentures, leases, land-war-

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\* On the first publication of his "Dispatches," one of his friends said to him, on reading the records of his Indian campaigns: "It seems to me, duke, that your chief business in India was to procure rice and bullocks." "And so it was," replied Wellington; "for if I had rice and bullocks, I had men; and if I had men, I knew I could beat the enemy."

rants, and other dry documents, all written out with great care. And the habits which he thus early acquired were, in a great measure, the foundation of those admirable business qualities which he afterwards so successfully brought to bear in the affairs of government.

The man or woman who achieves success in the management of any great affair of business is entitled to honor—it may be, to as much as the artist who paints a picture, or the author who writes a book, or the soldier who wins a battle. Their success may have been gained in the face of as great difficulties, and after as great struggles; and where they have won their battle it is at least a peaceful one, and there is no blood on their hands.

The idea has been entertained by some that business habits are incompatible with genius. In the Life of Richard Lovell Edgeworth,\* it is observed of a Mr. Bicknell—a respectable but ordinary man, of whom little is known but that he married Sabrina Sidney, the *élève* of Thomas Day, author of "Sandford and Merton"—that "he had some of the too usual faults of a man of genius: he detested the drudgery of business." But there cannot be a greater mistake. The greatest geniuses have, without exception, been the greatest workers, even to the extent of drudgery. They have not only worked harder than ordinary men, but brought to their work higher faculties and a more ardent spirit. Nothing great and durable was ever improvised. It is only by noble patience and noble labor that the masterpieces of genius have been achieved.

Power only belongs to the workers; the idlers are always powerless. It is the laborious and painstaking men who are the rulers of the world. There has not been a statesman of

\* Maria Edgeworth, "Memoirs of R. L. Edgeworth," ii., 94.

eminence but was a man of industry. "It is by toil," said even Louis XIV., "that kings govern." When Clarendon described Hampden, he spoke of him as "of an industry and vigilance not to be tired out or wearied by the most laborious, and of parts not to be imposed on by the most subtle and sharp, and of a personal courage equal to his best parts." While in the midst of his laborious though self-imposed duties, Hampden, on one occasion, wrote to his mother: "My lyfe is nothing but toyle, and hath been for many yeares, nowe to the Commonwealth, nowe to the Kinge. . . . Not so much tyme left as to doe my dutye to my deare parents, nor to sende to them." Indeed, all the statesmen of the Commonwealth were great toilers; and Clarendon himself, whether in office or out of it, was a man of indefatigable application and industry.

The same energetic vitality, as displayed in the power of working, has distinguished all the eminent men in our own as well as in past times. During the Anti-Corn-Law movement, Cobden, writing to a friend, described himself as "working like a horse, with not a moment to spare." Lord Brougham was a remarkable instance of the indefatigably active and laborious man; and it might be said of Lord Palmerston, that he worked harder for success in his extreme old age than he had ever done in the prime of his manhood—preserving his working faculty, his good humor and *bonhomie*, unimpaired to the end.\* He himself was accustomed to say that being in office, and consequently full

\* A friend of Lord Palmerston has communicated to us the following anecdote: Asking him one day when he considered a man to be in the prime of life, his immediate reply was, "Seventy-nine!" "But," he added, with a twinkle in his eye, "as I have just entered my eightieth year, perhaps I am myself a little past it."

of work, was good for his health. It rescued him from *ennui*. Helvetius even held that it is man's sense of *ennui* that is the chief cause of his superiority over the brute—that it is the necessity which he feels for escaping from its intolerable suffering that forces him to employ himself actively, and is hence the greatest stimulus to human progress.

Indeed, this living principle of constant work, of abundant occupation, of practical contact with men in the affairs of life, has in all times been the best ripener of the energetic vitality of strong natures. Business habits cultivated and disciplined, are found alike useful in every pursuit—whether in politics, literature, science, or art. Thus, a great deal of the best literary work has been done by men systematically trained in business pursuits. The same industry, application, economy of time and labor, which have rendered them useful in the one sphere of employment, have been found equally available in the other.

Most of the early English writers were men of affairs, trained to business; for no literary class as yet existed, excepting it might be the priesthood. Chaucer, the father of English poetry, was first a soldier, and afterwards a controller of petty customs. The office was no sinecure either, for he had to write up all the records with his own hand; and when he had done his "reckonings" at the custom-house, he returned with delight to his favorite studies at home—poring over his books until his eyes were "dazed" and dull.

The great writers in the reign of Elizabeth, during which there was such a development of robust life in England, were not literary men according to the modern acceptation of the word, but men of action trained in business. Spenser acted as secretary to the Lord Deputy of Ireland; Raleigh was, by turns, a courtier, soldier, sailor, and discoverer;

Sydney was a politician, diplomatist, and soldier; Bacon was a laborious lawyer before he became lord keeper and lord chancellor; Sir Thomas Browne was a physician in country practice at Norwich; Hooker was the hard-working pastor of a country parish; Shakspeare was the manager of a theatre, in which he was himself but an indifferent actor, and he seems to have been even more careful of his money investments than he was of his intellectual offspring. Yet these, all men of active business habits, are among the greatest writers of any age; the period of Elizabeth and James I. standing out in the history of England as the era of its greatest literary activity and splendor.

In the reign of Charles I., Cowley held various offices of trust and confidence. He acted as private secretary to several of the royalist leaders, and was afterwards engaged as private secretary to the queen, in ciphering and deciphering the correspondence which passed between her and Charles I.—the work occupying all his days, and often his nights, during several years. And while Cowley was thus employed in the royal cause, Milton was employed by the Commonwealth, of which he was the Latin secretary, and afterwards secretary to the lord protector. Yet, in the earlier part of his life, Milton was occupied in the humble vocation of a teacher. Dr. Johnson says, "that in his school, as in everything else which he undertook, he labored with great diligence, there is no reason for doubting." It was after the Restoration, when his official employment ceased, that Milton entered upon the principal literary work of his life; but before he undertook the writing of his great epic, he deemed it indispensable that to "industrious and select reading" he should add "steady observation," and "insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs."\*

\* "Reasons of Church Government," book ii.

Locke held office in different reigns: first under Charles II. as secretary to the board of trade, and afterwards under William III. as commissioner of appeals and of trade and plantations. Many literary men of eminence held office in Queen Anne's reign. Thus Addison was secretary of state; Steele, commissioner of stamps; Prior, under-secretary of state, and afterwards ambassador to France; Tickell, under-secretary of state, and secretary to the lords justices of Ireland; Congreve, secretary to Jamaica; and Gay, secretary of legation at Hanover.

Indeed, habits of business, instead of unfitting a cultivated mind for scientific or literary pursuits, are often the best training for them. Voltaire insisted with truth that the real spirit of business and literature are the same; the perfection of each being the union of energy and thoughtfulness, of cultivated intelligence and practical wisdom, of the active and contemplative essence—a union commended by Lord Bacon as the concentrated excellence of man's nature. It has been said that even the man of genius can write nothing worth reading in relation to human affairs, unless he has been in some way or other connected with the serious every-day business of life.

Hence it has happened that many of the best books extant have been written by men of business, with whom literature was a pastime rather than a profession. Gifford, the editor of the "Quarterly," who knew the drudgery of writing for a living, once observed that "a single hour of composition, won from the business of the day, is worth more than the whole day's toil of him who works at the trade of literature: in the one case, the spirit comes joyfully to refresh itself, like a hart to the water-brooks; in the

other, it pursues its miserable way, panting and jaded, with the dogs and hunger of necessity behind." \*

The first great men of letters in Italy were not mere men of letters; they were men of business—merchants, statesmen, diplomatists, judges, and soldiers. Villani, the author of the best history of Florence, was a merchant; Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio were all engaged in more or less important embassies; and Dante, before becoming a diplomatist, was for some time occupied as a chemist and druggist. Galileo, Galvani, and Farini were physicians; and Goldoni a lawyer. Ariosto's talent for affairs was as great as his genius for poetry. At the death of his father, he was called upon to manage the family estate for the benefit of his younger brothers and sisters, which he did with ability and integrity. His genius for business having been recognized, he was employed by the Duke of Ferrara on important missions to Rome and elsewhere. Having afterwards been appointed governor of a turbulent mountain

\* Coleridge's advice to his young friends was much to the same effect "With the exception of one extraordinary man," he says, "I have never known an individual, least of all an individual of genius, healthy or happy without a profession; *i. e.*, some regular employment which does not depend on the will of the moment, and which can be carried on so far mechanically, that an average quantum only of health, spirits, and intellectual exertion are requisite to its faithful discharge. Three hours of leisure, unalloyed by any alien anxiety, and looked forward to with delight as a change and recreation, will suffice to realize in literature a larger product of what is truly genial than weeks of compulsion. . . . If facts are required to prove the possibility of combining weighty performances in literature with full and independent employment, the works of Cicero and Xenophon, among the ancients—of Sir Thomas More, Bacon, Paxter (or, to refer at once to later and contemporary instances), Darwin and Roscoe, are at once decisive of the question."—*Biographia Literaria*, chap. xi.

district, he succeeded, by firm and just government, in reducing it to a condition of comparative good order and security. Even the bandits of the country respected him. Being arrested one day in the mountains by a body of outlaws, he mentioned his name, when they at once offered to escort him in safety wherever he chose.

It has been the same in other countries. Vattel, the author of the "Rights of Nations," was a practical diplomatist, and a first-rate man of business. Rabelais was a physician, and a successful practitioner; Schiller was a surgeon; Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Calderon, Camoens, Descartes, Maupertius, La Rochefoucauld, Lacedpede, Lamark, were soldiers in the early part of their respective lives.

In our own country, many men now known by their writings earned their living by their trade. Lillo spent the greater part of his life as a working jeweller in the Poultry, occupying the intervals of his leisure in the production of dramatic works, some of them of acknowledged power and merit. Izaak Walton was a linen-draper in Fleet Street, reading much in his leisure hours, and storing his mind with facts for future use in his capacity of biographer. De Foe was by turns horse-factor, brick and tile maker, shop-keeper, author, and political agent.

Samuel Richardson successfully combined literature with business — writing his novels in his back shop in Salisbury Court, Fleet Street, and selling them over the counter in his front shop. William Hutton, of Birmingham, also successfully combined the occupations of book-selling and authorship. He says, in his Autobiography, that a man may live half a century and not be acquainted with his own character. He did not know that he was an antiquary until the world informed him of it, from having read his "History

of Birmingham," and then, he said, he could see it himself. Benjamin Franklin was alike eminent as a printer and bookseller—an author, a philosopher, and a statesman.

Coming down to our own time, we find Ebenezer Elliott successfully carrying on the business of a bar-iron merchant in Sheffield, during which time he wrote and published the greater number of his poems; and his success in business was such as to enable him to retire into the country and build a house of his own, in which he spent the remainder of his days. Isaac Taylor, the author of the "Natural History of Enthusiasm," was an engraver of patterns for Manchester calico-printers; and other members of this gifted family were followers of the same branch of art.

The principal early works of John Stuart Mill were written in the intervals of official work, while he held the office of principal examiner in the East India House—in which Charles Lamb, Peacock, the author of "Headlong Hall," and Edwin Norris, the philologist, were also clerks. Macaulay wrote his "Lays of Ancient Rome" in the war office, while holding the post of secretary of war. It is well known that the thoughtful writings of Mr. Helps are literally "Essays written in the Intervals of Business." Many of our best living authors are men holding important public offices—such as Sir Henry Taylor, Sir John Kaye, Anthony Trollope, Tom Taylor, Matthew Arnold, and Samuel Warren.

Mr. Proctor the poet, better known as "Barry Cornwall," was a barrister and commissioner in lunacy. Most probably he assumed the pseudonym for the same reason that Dr. Paris published his "Philosophy in Sport made Science in Earnest" anonymously—because he apprehended that, if known, it might compromise his professional position. For