

The Emolument of Character.

IN the well-stocked library of a Russian home a man sat one night and pondered. The time had come when he must choose between two courses stretching before him into the future.

One way led him to positions of power and emolument; to follow it would be to meet with the favor of an Emperor and a Procurator. The other traversed the dreary paths of poverty and over it loomed the threatening snow-banks of Siberia. The young Russian weighed the matter carefully and made his choice---a world instead of a court---and going forth placed a wreath upon the honored tomb of Leo Tolstoi.

A time comes to every man when he must choose between the path of effort and the path of indolence. It is the crisis of his career, the turning point from which he must fight his way to success or drift inevitably to failure. In one direction a thousand pleasures smile assurances of easy triumph; the other is lighted only with the lamp of Reason.

Happy the young man who chooses the latter course, for there only is success. Along the other are masked pitfalls that threaten ruin and remorse.

Our course through life depends largely on our choice in matters of living. In more ways than one, we are our own destiny. Fate does not govern us so much as we govern fate. How shall we choose, or shall we choose at all? Shall we stand first on one foot and then on the other waiting for our ship to come in? The only ship that comes to such wastrels is that steered by Charon. He who successfully crosses the sea of life builds his own ship. With the oak of character and the blue prints of choice, he plans the craft of his career. He works while others sleeps---and that, my friend, is about the sum total of the difference between the man who succeeds and the man who fails.

Do we ever choose one thing in preference to another? Do we exercise our natural right to steer

our own ship? Or do we shift and sway with the waves of circumstance, miscalling weakness and want of self-confidence by such comforting names as patience or submission to the Divine Will? We should not fail to take the position of general manager of our own intellects and stop using the mental machinery of others; we should choose the higher and nobler part and play it to a finish.

To the young man how precious is the advice and encouragement of a friend! Left to himself he is only too likely to choose the way of pleasure and consequent disaster. He sees the thoughtless crowd beckoning and he follows.

Buying an overcoat will not keep one warm; buying shoes will not protect the feet from sharp pebbles; and buying a book will not make one a student. Education cannot be bought; college cannot make one a scholar but only gives one an opportunity to study; in itself it is as useless as the unworn shoes or overcoat.

C. BARRON.



THE GRAVE.

The last end
Of the good man is peace! How calm his exit!
Night-dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary worn-out winds expire so soft.
Behold him! in the evening tide of life---
A life well spent, whose early care it was
His riper years should not upbraid his green.
By unperceived degrees he wears away;
Yet, like the sun, seems larger at his setting.
High in his faith and hope, look how he reaches
After the prize in view.---Blair.

Whenever the spirit of fanaticism, at once so credulous and so crafty, has insinuated itself into a noble mind, it insensibly corrodes the vital principles of virtue and veracity.---Gib'on.