

A Letter to a Boy.

My Dear Boy,—

You are living at a time when to be a boy is the proudest thing in the world. There scarcely is a successful man living who would not give his success for the years that lie before you. A famous man once said: "I would give all I have to be alive in fifty years." The world will be a fine place to live in when you are a man. What are you going to do in it? Are you going to stumble along, until the gates open that lead to another life, or are you going to make yourself known and felt and become a power for good? Perhaps you live in a village and have not seen much of the world; but every avenue that leads to true greatness begins at the door of your school. You may walk out of your school and become Prime Minister. The roads to success are numerous and the prizes to be gained not few.

Perhaps as you sit reading this you will think that what I say may be all very well for others but somehow is not applicable to yourself, and that your life will be a succession of difficulties, sorrows and struggles. If you think thus you make up your mind at once that it is *not* applicable to yourself; for no man ever yet got farther than he looked. So make up your mind where you are going and remember that it is not the way you go that matters most but rather how far you go. Remember also that all useful work is honourable and that the only dishonour in it is its being done badly. The task then before every boy is not to do this, that, or the other thing, not to mind a machine, to drive a plough, to write a book, to paint a picture nor to go to the House of Commons, but so to prepare himself in the days of his youth that in his work in the world he may do all things well.

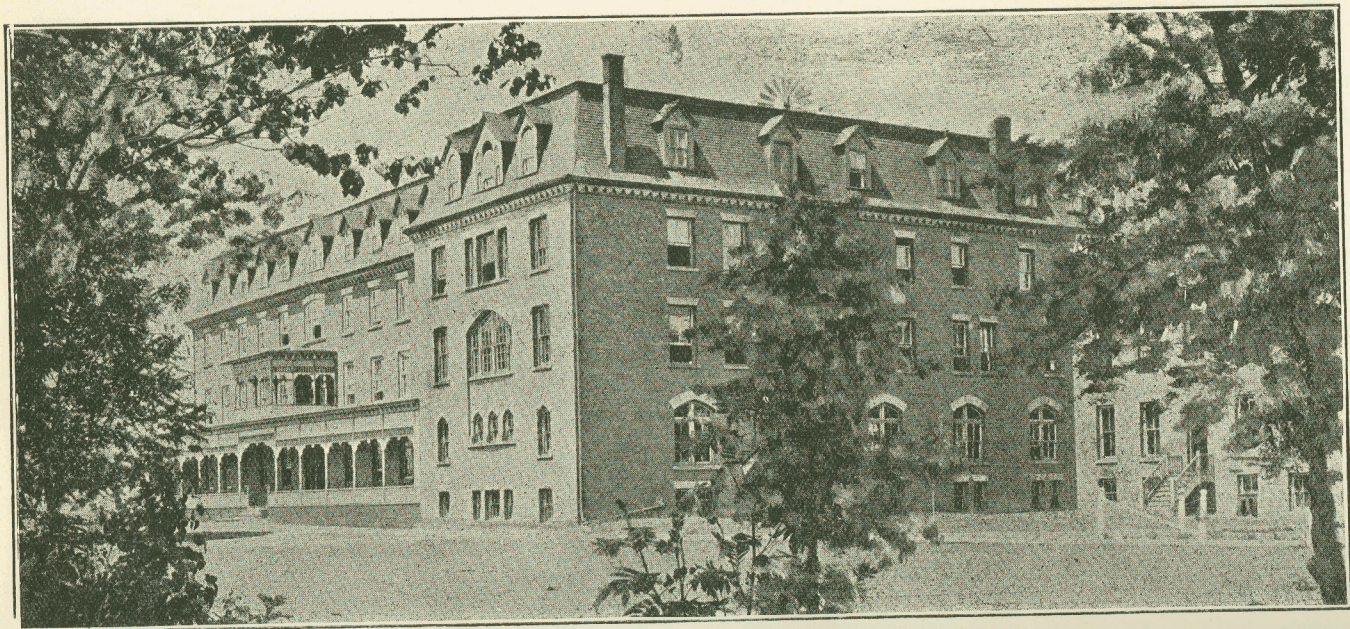
In order to accomplish this end we must first of all have a definite purpose in life. We must make up our mind what we want to do, how we want to do it and then let nothing stand in our way. We must think of time as what it really is—a treasure given to

us for our safe-keeping. Time, we say, is money ; but really it is much more for it can do things that money can never do. It can heal all sorrows and cure all ills ; and if properly used give unexpected opportunities. Think of this when you waste your time ; you would not throw money away yet how often do you waste an hour or a day. We do not forever want to be bent on serious things ; there is time for play ; but amusement is dangerous, and we had better never play than let play lead us to forget our aims.

We must have ambition—a desire to get on in the world. There is a right “getting-on,, and a wrong “getting-on.” Let us hope by “getting-on” you will always mean not having more money in your pocket but knowing more as well as having more ; and thus having more opportunities of well-doing and well-being. There are then low ambitions and high ambitions but let us “Hitch our wagon to a star.”

If you desire to carry out your ideas you must have determination; you must be resolute. Things supposed to be impossible were carried out by men of determination. Men said it was impossible to have railroads ; and the man who first tried to make a steamship was driven to despair by those who believed him insane. Sir Walter Scott called the man who first talked of lighting by gas, an idiot. The men who gave us all the inventions which makes millions happy and wealthy were often ridiculed; we owe the pleasure we get from their inventions to their determination. But determination will be much discounted if we lack concentration. You may have great energy and may put it all in your work but if it is scattered it fails. A man who spends money foolishly is a spendthrift but a man who scatters energy is even worse. Stick to your work—that is concentration; not attempting more than you can ably fulfil.

In after years you may regret the time wasted in youth but be assured you will never regret the time given to study. Men grow rich by lending money at good interest; but nothing pays such magnificent interest as the hours spent in study; and if there are any hours which a man would wish to call back



again, they are those golden hours which are yours today, use them well for they are the hours in which you are laying a foundation on which to build for yourself a name. I have in mind a man who has saved millions of lives. He began to think about a great problem that was puzzling the doctors and although very few believed in him he was not discouraged. He kept on thinking, thinking, thinking, until at last there came to him a great idea—the carrying out of which has been a blessing to suffering man and has made the name of Lord Lister famous.

The boy who sticks to his work—that is the boy the world is waiting for ; the boy for whom someone has a big salary ; the boy, for whom there is a vacant place in that House of Commons ; the boy who will paint the famous picture ; the boy who will be manager of a big business. And that is the boy Canada is waiting for to-day. There are plenty of other boys who will grow up to do nothing for anybody and worse than nothing for themselves. You are growing up in what is rapidly becoming one of the finest countries in the world ; for it has laid the foundations of good government. It will very soon be your privilege to take part in the government of this country a duty I trust you will perform with honesty and ability. If in life you fear nothing but evil and desire nothing but good if you serve your country and honour your God, you will travel to your destiny by away no cloud can darken, and with a calm no sorrow can disturb.

W. C. C. '17



I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet,
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men !

Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the soul.

