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A Cry of Distress and a Plea for Justice.

Too late for notice in our last issue there came to us from the German Evangelical Mission Aid Society of Berlin-Steglitz the English edition of an address which Dr. Theol. Karl Axenfeld, Director of Missions, delivered before the annual convention of the Mission Aid Society in 1919. Though three valuable months have elapsed since the receipt of this address, the readers, we doubt not, will agree with us that its intrinsic value, its defense of eternal and essential rights, is such that even at this somewhat belated date the message of the speaker should be reiterated here. It is a simple plea for fundamental justice, and is well founded, particularly if one studies Article 438 of the Peace Treaty. We hold no brief for the Mission Aid Society, whose confessional basis is not fully known to us, nor do we subscribe to every sentiment expressed in the address. What the speaker, however, is battling for is an inalienable right of the Church of Jesus Christ, common and dear to every member of the Church.

The title of Dr. Axenfeld's address is, "Germany's Battle for the Freedom of the Christian Missions." The author says:—

The imminent conclusions of peace will not only bring about a great transformation in the political and economic life of the nations, but intellectual values, as well as the spiritual and the *religious*, are at hazard. There is a great danger that these most precious possessions of mankind will not be sufficiently regarded in the battle for wealth and power.

The chief point at issue, however, cannot be confined to the acquisition of additional territory by certain nations, nor to the reinforcement of

The Road to Success, or Self-Improvement.

VII. A LOST HOUR IS WASTED POWER.

There is plenty of time; but some of us waste it all, most of us waste much, and we all waste some. Let us examine seriously our present use of our time. It has often been said, and cannot be said too often, given to any man all the time that he now wastes, not only in the vices, when he has them, but on useless business, wearisome or deteriorating amusements, trivial letter-writing, random reading; and he will have plenty of time for self-improvement.

There is a power lying latent everywhere waiting for the observant eye to discover it. A good understanding of the possibilities that live in spare moments is a great success asset. Seize and improve the opportunity when it comes to you, and were it only in a spare moment. The more opportunities are utilized, the more new ones are thereby created. New openings are as easy to find as ever to those who do their best. Thousands

of men have made fortunes out of their spare moments and seeming trifles, which others pass by.

When a noted literary man was asked how he managed to accomplish so much with so little worry, he replied, "By organizing my time. To every hour its appointed task or duty, with no overlapping or infringements." He who is not regularly or systematically employed incurs perpetual risk.

There is a great deal of wasted time even in the busiest lives which might be used to advantage. There are some whose failure to succeed in life is a problem to others as well as to themselves. They are industrious and prudent; yet they do not advance their fortunes. They complain of ill luck. But the real truth is that their projects miscarry because they mistake mere activity for energy. Confounding two things essentially different, they suppose that if they are always busy, they must of necessity be successful in their vocation; forgetting that labor and activity misdirected is but a waste of energy.

The very hours you have wasted, if improved, might have insured your success. One hour a day would in ten years make an ignorant man a well-informed man. The present time is the raw material out of which we make whatever we will.

The worst of a lost hour is not so much in the wasted time as in the wasted power. Such waste of power is inexcusable. "The hours perish and are laid to our charge," reads an inscription on a dial at Oxford. A waste of time means the waste of opportunities, which will never come back. We should, therefore, always make good use of our time; we should redeem even the moments of time. "Redeeming the time," Ephesians 5, 16, means according to the original, "making profitable the moment of time."

The way we use our spare moments reveals our character. Idleness rusts the nerves and makes the muscles creak.

Every moment of time wasted means less service to our neighbor. And with this we harm ourselves. For we are succeeding best for ourselves when we are succeeding best for

others. A Norwegian precept runs: "Give thyself wholly to thy fellow-men; they will give thee back soon enough."

Those who have become eminent have been early risers. Daniel Webster used often to answer twenty to thirty letters before breakfast. You remember the words of Benjamin Franklin, "Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy and wealthy and wise." Not too much can be said about the value of the habit of rising early. The early and prompt man not only has the advantage of the time saved from dilly-dallying and procrastination, but he also saves the energy and vital force which is wasted by the tardy man, whose tardiness, indecision, and irresolution soon become a bad habit which, like a ponderous weight, holds him down so that he cannot rise to real success.

It is difficult to conceive of a greater misfortune than always to be embarrassed and handicapped in later years just because of the neglect of early years and early hours. Let us speak with the psalmist: "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgression."

Let the night of my transgression
With night's darkness pass away:
Jesus, into Thy possession
I resign myself to-day.

VIII. IMPROVE YOUR EDUCATION.

Lack of education has caused many failures; if a man has success qualities in him, he will not long lack such education as is absolutely necessary to his success. He will walk fifty miles if necessary to borrow a book, like Lincoln. He will study between anvil blows, like Elihu Burritt. He will do some of the thousand things that other noble strugglers have done before to get what they hungered for.

Education makes you much larger. The size of a fish is determined by the bigness or smallness of the lake in which it swims. Living in a small world, hemmed in by narrow horizons, man becomes a mental dwarf, he dwindles and withers. But as knowledge and imagination occupy his thought,

he becomes a world citizen, local barriers crumble, and the sky-line recedes.

The uneducated man is always placed at a great disadvantage. No matter how much natural ability one may have, if he is ignorant, he is discounted. It is not enough to possess ability, it must be made available by mental discipline.

Many throw away little opportunities for self-improvement because they cannot see great ones. They let the years slip by without any special effort of progress, until they are shocked by waking up to the fact that they are still ignorant of what they ought to know.

Is it possible for them to educate themselves late in life? Of course it is. There are so many good books, libraries, and periodicals, that men who are determined to improve themselves have abundant opportunities to do so.

The reading habit grows on one, when once begun, especially when it is good reading-matter. And let us make this a point—let us always select something higher and bigger than ourselves. We must have room to stretch or we shall shrink; we shall speedily suffer from arrested growth. Let our reading be higher and better than we. If our books are about our own size, if they make no exacting demand upon us, our own mental life will shrivel and pass through swift impoverishment and deterioration. Our books must be higher than we if we are to rise. And if you always have some good reading-matter on hand to which you can turn during a moment's leisure, even if you read little in any one day, if done regularly, you will be amazed to see how much you get out of it in a year.

Make the most of your spare minutes. The faithfulness with which you improve every spare moment, every little chance to develop yourself to your highest possible power, is an indication of the sort of man you are; it is an evidence of the ability that wins. Many of the world's most eminent men acquired all their education in scraps of time. President Jackson had only a few months' schooling in a log-house. President Johnson had no schooling at all, but while he was

sewing, his wife read to him. Both got most of their education in later life, making the most of circumstances.

Man is naturally an active, progressive being, destined to be perpetually improving himself and his condition. It is this feature which stimulates and incites him to strain for intellectual improvement and advancement. It is, indeed, the glory of the world that nothing in it is stationary, or rests contented with itself, but that to whatever peak of excellence it climbs, it sees hills and Alps arise beyond. There is a perpetual longing and striving after something better. Things are little at first, but great at last. The acorn grows into a tree.

Spring's real glory lies not in the meaning,
 Gracious though it be, of her blue hours,
 But is hidden in her tender leaning
 To the summer's richer wealth of flowers.

IX. BEWARE OF UNIVERSALITY. CONCENTRATE YOUR EFFORTS.

He who scatters his efforts cannot hope to succeed. It is as true now as in the days of Seneca, that "he that is everywhere is nowhere." It is not given to the human intellect to expand itself widely in all directions at once. Stick to one business. Be polarized by a great master purpose. Concentrate, — patiently cultivate some province of thought till your mind is thoroughly saturated with it, — or you will experience disappointment. Universality is the alluring light which has deluded to ruin many a promising mind. In attempting to gain a knowledge of half a hundred subjects it has mastered none.

What an immense power in life is the power of possessing distinct aims! How many lives are blurs for want of concentration and steadfastness of purpose! They have become victims of miscellany, of universality. Their life is swayed by no sovereign purpose, no lofty dominating control. It is fragmentary and discordant, like an orchestra where every instrument plays a separate piece. The victim of universality is one who has many fires lit, but not one is blazing. He has

a multiplicity of interests, but no commanding enthusiasm. He toys with a thousand opinions, but he has no supreme conviction. He has a throng of flirtations, but he is not taken captive by any overwhelming affection. There is no great white throne, no supreme sovereignty that brings everything under the rule of one scepter. Instead of being the strong and fascinating captive of a great quest, he is the weak victim of universality. Beware of this great peril into which countless thousands have fallen.

Confine your powers to one particular channel. "The man who seeks one thing in life, and but one, may hope to achieve it before life be done." Emerson says, "The one prudence in life is concentration." Focus the rays of the sun in winter, and you can kindle a fire with ease. It is ever the unwavering pursuit of a single aim that wins. Success is jealous of scattered energies. Thinking about the things that matter most leaves no room in the mind for the things that matter least. Let us crowd out the mediocre and the non-essential. The arrow must fly straight to the mark.

How few people ever learn to concentrate their attention! We sit over our work without thinking. Our minds are blank much of the time. The mind remains inactive. The kind of reading and study that counts, that makes mental fiber and stamina, is that upon which the mind is concentrated. Passive, inattentive reading and study takes the spring and snap out of the mental faculties, weakens the intellect, and makes the brain torpid and incapable of grappling with great principles and difficult problems.

Scattering one's forces has killed many a man's success. Withdrawal of the best of yourself from the work to be done is sure to bring final disaster. Every particle of a man's energy, intellect, courage, and enthusiasm is needed to win success in one line. Attractive side issues too often lure a man from the safe path in which he may plod on to sure success.

There is no satisfaction like that which comes from the steady, persistent, honest, conscientious pursuit of a noble aim.

A habit of forcing yourself to fix your mind steadfastly and systematically upon certain studies, even if only for periods of a few minutes at a time, is, of itself, of the greatest value. This habit helps one to utilize the odds and ends of time which are unavailable to most people because they have never been trained to concentrate the mind at regular intervals.

You must be a decided man with a purpose. Without decision there can be no concentration; and to succeed a man must concentrate. The undecided man cannot bring himself to a focus. He dissipates his energy, scatters his forces, and executes nothing. He cannot hold to one thing long enough to bring success out of it. He who wishes to fulfil his mission must be a man of one idea, that is, of one great overmastering purpose, overshadowing all his aims, and guiding and controlling his entire life. Constant and steady use of the faculties under a central purpose gives strength and power. The mind must be focused on a definite end. This age of concentration calls for men who are trained to do one thing as well as it can be done.

Who is not properly educated, but has merely been crammed and stuffed through college, has merely a broken-down memory from trying to hold crammed facts enough to pass the examination, he will continue to shrink, shrivel, and dwindle, often below his original proportions, for he will lose both his courage and self-respect, as his crammed facts, which never became a part of himself, evaporate from his distended memory.

To succeed, a man must concentrate all the faculties of his mind upon one unwavering aim, and have a tenacity of purpose. Even Gladstone could not do two things at once; he threw his entire strength upon whatever he did. The intensest energy characterized everything he undertook. The weakest living creature, by concentrating his powers upon one thing, can accomplish something. The sun might blaze out upon the earth forever without setting anything on fire; although these rays focused by a burning-glass would melt solid

granite, or even change a diamond into vapor. There are plenty of men who have ability enough; but they have no power to concentrate their talents upon a point, and this makes all the difference between success and failure.

It is the single aim that wins. And you must stick to that aim. You must not become dissatisfied and give up. You must have a firm, a definite purpose. Discontent and dissatisfaction flee before a definite purpose. What we do grudgingly without a purpose becomes a delight with no one, and no work is well done nor healthily done which is not enthusiastically done.

The man who succeeds has a program. He fires his course and adheres to it. He lays his plans and executes them. He goes straight to his goal. Maybe he has but little knowledge, but the more of wisdom. Without wisdom the richest knowledge is unprofitable.

Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,
The mere materials with which wisdom builds,
Till smooth'd and squared and fitted to its place,
Does but encumber whom it seems t' enrich.

(To be concluded.)

Morris, Minn.

F. E. PASCHE.
