THOMAS HUGHES

TRUE MANLINESS

Thomas Hughes

True Manliness

Hughes T.

True Manliness / T. Hughes — «Public Domain»,

Содержание

I 13
II 14
III 15
IV 17
V 18
VI 19
VII 20
VIII 21
IX 22
X 23
XI 24
XII 25
XIII 26
XIV 27
XV 28
XVI 29
XVII 30
XVIII 31
XIX 33
XX 34
XXI 35
XXII 36
XXIII 37
XXIV 38
XXV 39
XXVI 40
XXVII 41
XXVIII 42
XXIX 43
XXX 45
XXXI 46
XXXII 47
XXXIII 48
XXXIV 49
XXXV 50
XXXVI 51
XXXVII 52
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента. 53

Thomas Hughes
True Manliness / From the Writings of Thomas Hughes

THOMAS HUGHES

[Preliminary Note. – Having somewhat rashly consented to write a short biographical preface to a volume of selections to be made in America from the writings of my friend, Mr. Hughes, I applied to him directly for the needful facts and dates. His answer was an autobiographical letter which I found so interesting that I resolved to print it, omitting only a few intimate allusions natural in such a communication, but with which the public has nothing to do. My temptation was the greater that the letter was not intended for publication, and had, therefore, that charm of unpremeditated confidence which is so apt to be wanting in more deliberate autobiographies. I cannot consult him, (and I confess that I purposely waited till I could not) for he is already at sea, on his way to America, and I fear that friendship may have tempted me to an unwarrantable liberty, but I could not bring myself, even at the risk of seeming indiscreet, to deny to others what had given me so much pleasure. At any rate, the indiscretion is wholly my own and in direct violation of the injunction with which Mr. Hughes' letter concludes: "I hate the idea of being presented in any guise to any public; so if you can't squelch the plan altogether, give only the driest and meagrest facts and dates." I feel somewhat as if I had been reporting a private conversation, and take upon myself in advance all the reproach that belongs of right to that scourge and desecrator of modern life, the "Interviewer." For the first time, I look forward with dread to my next meeting with an old friend, after having thus practised the familiar stage device of putting the right letter into the wrong cover. As the brief record of a well-spent and honorable life, devoted to unselfish ends and associated with notable friendships, Mr. Hughes' letter has a higher than merely personal interest. Of any critical introduction to American readers no one could stand in less need than he. The same qualities of manliness, frankness, simplicity and sympathy, with whatever is generous and humane, that gave and continue to "Tom Brown" a success that may be compared with that of "Robinson Crusoe," are not wanting in his other works. – J. R. L.]

"I was born on October 20th, 1822, at Uffington, Berks, of which village my grandfather was Vicar. He was also a Canon of St. Paul's, and spent half the year at his house in Amen Corner, with which my first memories of London are connected. It was, till this year, the strangest quiet old nook in the city, behind its big timber gates, within one hundred yards of Fleet street on one side, and Newgate Market on the other, but the distant murmur of life only made the repose more striking in those days. Now they are building some new minor Canons' houses on the vacant ground beyond which will be opened out towards Newgate street, and the corner will be a thoroughfare. The most remarkable fact of my childhood happened there, as I was in the house (I believe) with Sir Walter Scott, a great friend of my grandfather, on his last sad visit to London.

"My grandmother was a very notable woman in many ways, and a great economist and early riser. She used to take me and my brother out shopping in the early morning, and our excursions extended as far as Billingsgate fish-market, then at the height of the career which has secured for it an

unenviable place in our English vocabulary. It was certainly a strange place for a lady and small boys, and is connected with the most vivid of my childish memories. Toddling after my grandmother to the stall where she made her purchases, we came one morning on the end of a quarrel between a stalwart fish-fag and her fancy man. She struck him on the head with a pewter pot which flattened with the blow. He fell like a log, the first blood I had ever seen, gushing from his temples, and the scene is as fresh as ever in my memory at the end of half a century. The narrow courts in that neighborhood are still my favorite haunts in London.

"But my town visits were short. I was a thorough country-bred boy, and passed eleven months in the year at the foot of the Berkshire chalk-hills, much in the manner depicted in 'Tom Brown.'

"I was sent to school at the early age of eight, to accompany my elder brother. It was a preparatory school for Winchester, and the best feature about it was the Winchester custom, called 'standing up,' which means that we were encouraged to learn a great deal of poetry by heart, for which we got extra marks at the end of the half year. We were allowed (within limits) to choose our own poets, and I always chose Scott from family tradition, and in this way learned the whole of the 'Lady of the Lake,' and most of the 'Lay of the last Minstrel' and 'Marmion,' by heart, and can repeat much of them to this day. Milton reckoned highest for marks, but I was prejudiced against him in this wise: Not far from the school was Addington, a place of the then Duke of Buckingham, who was also a friend of my grandfather, who, with my grandmother, paid him a visit at the end of our first half year. We went over to sleep, and travel back home next day with the old folk, and in the morning before starting, the Duchess gave us each a sovereign, neatly wrapped up in white, glossy paper. It was the first piece of gold I ever had, and I kept it in my hand to look at on the journey. I was leaning out of the window of the carriage when my attention was suddenly called to some roadside sight, and I dropped the precious metal. My shout of anguish and dismay brought the carriage to a stand-still, and I had to confess. After some trouble my sovereign was found, and taken charge of by my grandmother, who, in due course, returned it to me, no longer in current coin of the realm, but in the shape of a pocket edition of Milton's poems, with 'Thomas Hughes from the Duchess of Buckingham and Chandos' written on the title page. I still possess the odious small volume, and have learnt to forgive the great Puritan, – indeed, I have read Masson's life of him with real interest in these latter days. But I never learnt a line of him by heart as a boy, and regret it to this day.

"Those were evil days in Wessex, the time of the Swing riots and machine and rick burning. My father was the most active magistrate in the district, and was constantly in the saddle, keeping the King's peace. He was an old fashioned Tory, but with true popular sympathies, and had played cricket and football all his life with the men and boys of our village, and it is one of my proudest memories that only one man from Uffington joined the rioters, and he came back after three weeks ashamed and penitent. Amongst other good deeds, my father rode off alone one night and saved the house and chapel of a dissenting minister in a neighboring village from being sacked and burned. Nevertheless I can not pretend to say that I was brought up to look upon dissenters as anything but a stiff-necked and perverse generation.

"At the age of ten, February 1834, I was sent on to Rugby with my brother, as, happily for us, Arnold had been a college friend of my father. Here I stayed till I was nearly nineteen, starting from the bottom and ending in the sixth form, though by no means at the head of the school.

"It was a very rough, not to say brutal, place when I went there, but much mended during those years.

"I was a very idle boy so far as the regular lessons were concerned, and I expect I should have been advised to go elsewhere early in my career but for a certain fondness for history and literature which Arnold discovered in me and which (I fancy) covered a multitude of sins. He first struck it at a monthly examination of the Shell, then the form intervening between the fourth and fifth. He asked the head boy why it was the Romans had so specially rejoiced over the terms of a certain treaty with the Parthians (we were reading Horace, I think). It came all down to the lowest bench where I was,

and I said, 'because they got back the eagles taken from Crassus,' and sent a gleam of pleasure into the Doctor's face which was getting rather grim. Up I went to the top of the form, and from that time he often asked me questions *outside* the text book and specially by way of illustration from Scott's novels, to which he was fond of referring. I could generally come to the point, having them at my fingers' ends, and was proud of my consequent recognition. To this day I remember the feeling of grief and humiliation which came across me when I failed him on a critical occasion. It was years after the above event when I was in the sixth, and some distinguished visitor (Bunsen, I think it was) was present at the lesson. We were reading the passage in Aristotle about old age, (is it in the Ethics or Politics? I'm sure I forget) and he asked the head of the school to illustrate from Scott's novels what Aristotle says about the characteristic of old age, to be absorbed in petty interests and to be careless about great contemporary events. Down came the question, past some very able and some very studious boys, since distinguished one way or another – past John Connington, Matt. Arnold, Sir R. Cross, to me – and then the Doctor paused for several seconds with a confident look. But no response came and he passed on, 'and I was left lamenting.' No one answered, and he had to remind us of the old Abbot, pottering away in his garden on the border, when Mary and her defeated followers ride up before Crossing, and the old monk leans on his spade and looks after them, saying, 'I could pity this poor Queen and these Lords, but what are these things to a man of four score – and it's a fine growing morning for the young kale-wort' – and so goes to his spading again.

"I cannot help to this day wondering at the patience and forbearance both of him and my tutor, Cotton, afterwards Bishop of Calcutta, over my frightful copies of verses, and Greek and Latin prose. As I was head of the eleven at cricket, and of bigside at football, I naturally had but small leisure to devote to such matters, and consequently my copies were notorious for the number of *picture frames* they were certain to contain, – picture frames being the strong black marks which the Doctor used to make round bad, false concords MUNUS HOSPITALIS or quantities MUNERA STARE.

"He used to do it slowly and grimly, his under lip seeming to grow out as the pen went deliberately round the wretched words, and one did not feel good during the operation. But as no boy enjoyed the sausage seller's buffooneries, or Socrates' banters more than I, (tho' I made sad hashes in construing them) I remained in favor, tho' incorrigible, till the end.

"I carried away from Rugby dreadfully bad scholarship, but two invaluable possessions. First, a strong religious faith in and loyalty to Christ; and secondly, open mindedness. It was said (and is still said, I believe,) of Arnold, by way of censure, that to him everything was an open question every morning of his life. And though he never made any direct effort to unsettle any of our convictions that I can remember, we went out into the world the least hampered intellectually of any school of English boys of that time. To this day I am always ready to change an old opinion the moment I can get a better one, and so I think it has been with many of my old school-fellows, though we believed ourselves to be a thorough *true blue* school.

"Perhaps I also owe to Rugby my strong democratic bias, but I don't think it. I guess I was born so (or *barn-zo*, as Wessex chaw-bacon pronounced it in the famous story). As a little scrap in petticoats nothing pleased me so much as playing with the village children, and I could never understand why they shouldn't have all the things I had. At any rate it was at Rugby that I first was able to indulge my radical propensities. Up to my time, the school-close (or playgrounds) was kept as sacred ground, no 'lout' (as we politely called the neighboring lieges) being allowed to set foot within the precincts, and I had often noticed the insolent airs with which casual intruders in fustian or corduroy had been extruded. So when I became head of the eleven (and so a sort of constitutional monarch in the close) I asked the best cricketers amongst the 'louts' to come in and practice with me on summer evenings, and got up matches with their club, to the great advantage, I still believe, of school as well as town.

"I was dreadfully loath to leave, and when I was obliged, (as nineteen is the limit of ages) was much averse to going up to Oxford. I knew that my scholarship was too weak to allow me to take anything like high honors, and so, as my profession was to be the Bar, I wanted to go up to London at

once and enter at an Inn of Court. My father, however, after consulting his legal friends, decided that I should go to Oxford, and accordingly I went up to his old College, Oriel, in February, 1842. My first year at Oxford was utterly wasted, except that I learned to pull a good oar, and perfected myself in boxing, which was then much in vogue, several prize-fighters being generally kept in pay by the under-graduates. The lectures were perfectly easy to me as I had read all the books at Rugby, and I employed no private tutor. I knew I couldn't take high honors, (or at any rate choose to think so) and as I happened to fall into an idle, fast set, just did as the rest, and made a fool of myself in all the usual ways. But I never much enjoyed that kind of thing and got very sick of it by the time I had taken my little-go, and towards the end of my second year, just before I was of age, the most important event of my life happened, for in the long vacation I became engaged to my wife, then a schoolgirl, the great friend of my only sister. This pulled me up short. Our parents very properly said we were silly young people and must not see one another for years, or correspond, that we might see whether we really knew our minds. I went back to Oxford quite a new man, knocked off all not absolutely necessary expense, and lived decently and soberly for the rest of my time, taking my degree the first moment I could without coaching, by which I saved money. Consequently, with the help of a small legacy of £200, which came to me at twenty-one from an old great-aunt, I came away quite out of debt and with some small balance towards furnishing chambers in London, which was fairly creditable, as, there being three of us up at once, my father only allowed us £200 a year each. This was supposed to be too small for a fellow to live on!! Alas, it is even worse now, I fear!

"I had the good luck to be under Clough (the poet) and Fraser, now Bishop of Manchester, who were Oriel tutors at that time, and the latter of whom is still one of my closest friends. I went up, as I have said, believing myself still a Tory, but left Oxford a Radical. Something of the change was owing to the insolence of undergraduate life at that day, but more to a tour I took with a pupil through the North in the long vacation of my third year. My pupil was the son of a neighboring Berkshire squire, and all his father wanted was that I should keep him out of mischief. If he could be interested or taught anything, so much the better. We happened to stop at a Commercial hotel in Lancashire on our way North, and in the bagman's room I got into an argument with some of the North county travellers on the subject of the Corn Laws, then prominently before Parliament. On this first night I came speedily to the conclusion that I knew very little about the matter, and before I returned to Oxford for Michaelmas term I had become a good free-trader.

"I was nearly twenty-two when I went up to London, straight from Oxford, to begin my legal career. My father kindly suggested that I should take a run on the Continent before settling down, to get up my French and German to the point at any rate of tolerably fluent small talk, and here again I have no doubt but he was right, as the want of early training of ear and tongue has left me a helpless mortal ever since. However, I was determined to lose not a month or a week if I could help it, and soon found myself in small rooms on the third floor at No. 15 Lincoln's Inn Fields, from the windows of which, on a fine day, I could see the Surrey hills. I paid £30 a year for the chambers, and lived in them for another £70, keeping down my whole expenditure within £100 a year, a feat I am still rather proud of. I never could have done it but for a glorious old woman who kept the house, and did for all the inhabitants, of whom only two lived in their chambers. She had come up from Devonshire as a girl some fifty years before to that house where she had been ever since, and in all that time had never seen the Thames, which is, as you know, not five minutes' walk from Lincoln's Inn Fields; nor St. Paul's, except the dome, from the top windows of No. 15. She still spoke with a delightful Devonshire accent, all her U's being as soft as if she had left Torquay yesterday, and I won her heart at once by professing, or I should say acknowledging, a passion for *junket*, which she prepared in a reverent and enthusiastic manner on the slightest excuse. As my wife that was to be lived in Devonshire, the coincidence was peculiarly grateful to me, and the dear old woman, Roxworthy by name, could not have had my interests more at heart had I been her own son.

"There I lived for two years and upwards pleasantly enough, for several old school and college friends had chambers in the neighborhood. My engagement was a constant stimulus to work and economy, and made me indifferent as to society. I just visited two or three family friends on Sundays, and for the rest did very well without it. From my own experience I would have every youngster get engaged by the time he is twenty-one, though I am not prepared to maintain that a long engagement is so good for girls as for boys. Mine at any rate was the making of me. My democratic instincts grew in strength during these years, notwithstanding the failure of my first practical endeavors to act up to them. One of these I will mention. Every house in the Square was entitled to a key of the five gardens, in which I spent most of the long summer evenings; and, seeing the number of ragged children who came round the railings and looked wistfully through at the lawns and beds within, I extended my privilege to them and used to let them in by the scores, and watch them tumbling on the grass and gathering the daisies with entire satisfaction. From the first, this outrageous proceeding greatly scandalized the Beadle, whose remonstrances I entirely disregarded, until at last a notice came from the Trustees of the Square that the key of No. **15** would be called in. This threat so alarmed poor Mrs. Roxworthy that I was fain to promise amendment, and so ceased myself to frequent the gardens. At the end of thirty years a strong effort is being made, as you may see in the papers, to throw the gardens open; so I live in hopes before long of seeing my revenge on the ghost of the Beadle of my day.

"I read hard at the law, but it was very much against the grain, and my endeavors to master the subtleties of contingent remainders, executory devises, the *scintilla juris*, and all the rest of it, were only partially successful. I sometimes think I might have taken *con amore* to common law and to criminal business, but conveyancing and real property law had no attractions for me, beyond the determination, if I could, to make a living by them. I read with a very able conveyancer and kindly old gentleman, who did his best to impart the mysteries to some six pupils. He soon found where my strength, such as it was, lay, and employed me in the preparation of deeds – such as appointments of new Trustees, where the operative part was quite simple common form, but long statements of fact had to be made in the recitals. These I rather excelled at, and on the whole, by the time I was of standing to be called to the Bar, was probably about as fit for that ceremony as the average of my cotemporaries.

"Three months before it took place I was married, the probation which my wife's parents had very properly insisted on, having expired at the beginning of 1847, and we being found entirely in the same mind after our three years of separation. Most of our friends thought us mad, as we started on the vast income of £400 a year. It was confidently foretold that we should be living on our friends or in the workhouse before long, which prophesies however were entirely falsified. We started in tiny lodgings, almost opposite the house we now live in, and always managed to pay our way in the worst of times. And though I admit the experiment was a risky one, I have never repented it.

"The year of my call, 1848, was the year of revolutions, and on the 10th of April I paraded, like the rest of respectable society, as a special constable, though with shrewd misgivings in my own mind that the Chartists had a great deal to say for themselves. In which belief I soon found sympathizers. Frederick Maurice had recently been appointed Chaplain of Lincoln's Inn, and was gathering round him a number of young Barristers and Students, whom he was putting to work in their spare time at a ragged school, and visiting the poor in a miserable district near Lincoln's Inn. Contact with our wretched clients soon made it clear to us that something more radical and systematic was needed to raise them to anything like independence. They were almost all in the hands of slop sellers, chamber masters, or other grinders of the faces of the poor. What could be done to deliver them? In the autumn, one of our number spent some time in Paris and came back full of the material and moral effects of association amongst the workmen there.

"We resolved to try the experiment and accordingly formed ourselves into a society for promoting Workingmen's Associations, with Maurice as president. The idea grew on us apace, and soon called out an amount of enthusiasm which surprised ourselves. We were all busy men, tied to

offices from ten till five, so we met at six in the morning and eight at night to settle our rules, and organize our work. We were all poor men too, but soon scraped together enough money to start our first Association. This we resolved should be a tailoring establishment, for which we could ourselves, with the help of our friends, find sufficient custom in the first instance. We had no difficulty in hiring good airy workshops, but how to fill them was the rub. We were now in communication with a number of poor workpeople, especially amongst the Chartists, and, to cut a long story short, started our Association with a slop-worker who had been in prison as manager, and some dozen associates of kindred opinions in the workroom.

"I needn't trouble you with any details of the Christian Socialist movement, of which this was a beginning, and which made a great noise in the press and elsewhere at the time. It has survived any number of follies and failures, and has gradually spread till there is a union of Societies all over the kingdom, doing a work for our poorer classes which one can only wonder at and be thankful for.

"We wrote tracts, and started a small paper, 'The Christian Socialist,' and were soon at open strife with nearly the whole of our press, both the 'Edinburgh' and the 'Quarterly' condescending to bestow on us contemptuous, but very angry articles, in which they were joined by weeklies and dailies innumerable. But we were young, saucy, and so thoroughly convinced we were right that 'we cared, shall I say, not a d – n for their damning.'

"Most of my friends looked very serious, and prophesied that my prospects at the Bar would be ruined by my crotchets, and indeed I was dreadfully afraid of this myself. But the state of things in England was so serious, and I was so thoroughly convinced of the necessity of work in this direction, that I couldn't give it up. No doubt I lost some business by it, but other business came, as I was wonderfully punctual at Chambers and soon got to be friends with my few clients, who even got to pardon, with a shrug of the shoulders, the queer folk they often found there. And queer no doubt they were for a Chancery barrister's chambers, as emissaries from the tailors', shoemakers', printers', and builders' Associations (we had a dozen of them going by this time) were often in and out about their rules and accounts and squabbles. I only remember one instance in which I really suffered. A dear old gentleman, a family friend of ours, had managed with much difficulty to persuade his solicitor to give me some business. That most respectable of men, head of a firm which could have made any young barrister's fortune, arrived one afternoon at my chambers with a brief, and was asked by my clerk to sit down for a moment till I was disengaged. This he did, graciously enough, though no doubt with the thought 'how little I could know my business to keep him waiting even for a moment,' when my door opened, and a full-blown black person (lately from the West Indies in quest of advice and aid for the freedmen there) walked out. This was too much for my intending client, who hurried away, saying he would call again, but I never saw his brief or him.

"So things went on for some years during which I managed to maintain my growing family without dropping my work for the Associations. We had migrated to Wimbledon, for health's sake, where we built a house side by side with one of the other Promoters, which had one large room common to both houses, the subject of much chaff and fun to our visitors and acquaintance. Our garden was also in common, and both arrangements, I think, answered well.

"About this time Maurice became convinced that if Associations of working people were to succeed, the men must be better educated in the highest sense. So he set to work to establish the Workingmen's College, of which he was the first and I am the present Principal. It is a very noteworthy institution, at which, by the way, Emerson and Goldwin Smith, besides Stanley, Kingsley, Huxley, and other eminent Englishmen, have delivered opening addresses, at the beginning of the academical year, in October.

"I found it at first very hard to discover my mission at the college. I tried lectures on the law of combination and association, but they did not draw, and all the other classes for which I was competent, were filled by much better teachers from amongst our number. So, noting how badly set up the men were with round shoulders, and slouching gait, and how much they needed some

strong exercise to supple them, I started a boxing class, and had some horizontal and parallel bars put up in the back-yard. These proved a great success, and at last it became clear to me, that all my Oxford time spent on such matters had not been thrown away. In connection with the boxing and gymnastic classes, we started social gatherings for talk and songs, over a cup of tea, which also were wonderfully successful. I remember Hawthorne coming to one of them; brought by his friend, H. Bright, of Liverpool, and quite losing his shyness and reserve for the evening.

"By this time we had a boy of eight, and, thinking over what I should like to say to him before he went to school, I took to writing a story as the easiest way of bringing out what I wanted. It was done mainly in the long vacation of 1856, but wasn't published till early in the next year, and made such a hit that the publishers soon betrayed the secret, and I became famous!

"Whereupon arose again the professional bugbear, now set at rest for years. I had managed to get over and live down Christian Socialism, but who on earth would bring business to a successful author! I considered whether I shouldn't throw over Lincoln's Inn and take to writing, but decided that the law was best for me, and determined to stop writing. This good resolution held for two years, when the Berkshire festival of scouring the White Horse, (an old Danish or Saxon, certainly Pagan figure, still left on our chalk-hills,) came round, and my old country friends made such a point of having an account of it from me that I gave in and wrote my book No. 2.

"By this time my clients had become case-hardened, and finding no particular ill effects from my previous escapades, I gave in in a weak moment to a tempting offer of Macmillan's, and wrote 'Tom Brown at Oxford,' for his magazine. Moreover, I had now made a plunge into public life, and was one of the leaders of a semi-political party. This is how it came about: There had been roused in me lively sympathies with the Abolitionists, and I had followed eagerly the progress of events through the Fugitive Slave, and Free Soil agitations. There was no warmer sympathizer with Garrison and John Brown and Levi Coffin, in England; so when the Lincoln election came, and South Carolina led off the seceding states with jubilant applause of society in England, I went at once fiercely into the other camp. You may judge of the difficulty of getting our public men of note to take active sides with the North (tho' many of them didn't conceal their sympathy, and were ready to speak in Parliament, and write,) by the fact that I was about the most prominent speaker at the first great public meeting, which was held in London. This proved to be such an extraordinary success, that there was no further effort on the part of the jingoes (that name hadn't yet been invented, but it was precisely the same party,) to demonstrate publicly in the metropolis. In other centres there was need of such work, and I went to Birmingham and Liverpool to speak and deliver lectures on the war and its causes and issues. It was supposed that there was to be a row at the latter place, which was the stronghold of the Rebels; but all went off quietly.

"It was mainly in consequence of these doings that I was asked by the working folk in South London to stand for Lambeth in 1865. I did so, and was brought in triumphantly at the head of the Poll, and almost all the expense paid by subscription. From that time I gradually gave up legal business, and in 1868 took silk, as it is called, *i. e.*, became a Queen's Counsel. In 1869 I wrote 'Alfred the Great' for Macmillan's Sunday Series. I now made it my chief business to attend to Social-Political questions in Parliament; sat on two Trades Unions Commissions; got amendments to the Industrial and Friendly Societies Acts through the House, but never took to party politics.

"In 1870, as I hope you remember, I paid my delightful visit to America.

"In 1872 I lost my dear eldest brother, and soon after wrote the memoir of him for my family. Maurice also died, and I became Principal of the Workingmen's College.

"Before the next election (1874) the Co-operative question had come to the front. The success of the Upper Class London Supply Societies [copies of our working-class Associations in their main principle and features] had roused the tradesmen throughout the country. I was a candidate for Marylebone, and was fiercely opposed by the tradesmen, and supported by the professional and working classes. There were three Liberal candidates for only two seats, so it was agreed to refer

it to the Attorney General to say who should retire, and he decided that I had the worst chance of winning the seat (on one-sided and insufficient evidence, as my supporters maintained, and I think rightly). I therefore retired, and got no chance of entering that Parliament. For by this time the Trades Protection Society had been organized, to fight against neither small nor great, but only against those accursed revolutionists who had supported the Co-operative movement, and refused to flinch from it.

"So it happened that I was again thrown out at the election this year. I had consented, on the unanimous and unsolicited request of the Liberal party in Salisbury, to stand there, and all went well till just before the election, when the Trades Protective people permitted the party organization to throw me over. I doubt if I shall ever return to the House, as my views on the Church question make me an almost hopeless candidate in the North of England, and my support of Co-operation a perfectly hopeless one at present in the South. I care, however, very little about it, having plenty to do outside in keeping irons hot, especially that most interesting of all my irons, the Tennessee settlement, which I hope to keep very hot indeed, and look upon as about the most hopeful of the many New Jerusalems which have attracted me during my pilgrimage. I am off to open Chapter II. of that Romance [Chapter I., the getting the titles clear, buying the land, &c., having taken some two years.] on the 12th of next month, and I can't tell you how much my heart is in it.

"And so end my confessions. The only other points of interest, omitted above, are the publication of the 'Old Church,' in 1877, when the disestablishment movement began to get serious, and 'The Manliness of Christ,' this Spring, (1880), which latter has been already republished on your side in four different forms; and lastly, my share in the Volunteer movement, which I joined at its start in 1859. The Workingmen's College raised a corps of two companies at once, of which, after serving for a few weeks as private, I was made Captain. It soon swelled into a regiment, the 19th Middlesex, of which I became Colonel, and served in it twelve years."

I

THE conscience of every man recognizes courage as the foundation of true manliness, and manliness as the perfection of human character, and if Christianity runs counter to conscience in this matter, or indeed in any other, Christianity will go to the wall.

But does it? On the contrary, is not perfection of character – "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect," perfection to be reached by moral effort in the faithful following of our Lord's life on earth – the final aim which the Christian religion sets before individual men, and constant contact and conflict with evil of all kinds the necessary condition of that moral effort, and the means adopted by our Master in the world in which we live, and for which he died? In that strife, then, the first requisite is courage or manfulness, gained through conflict with evil – for without such conflict there can be no perfection of character, the end for which Christ says we were sent into this world.

II

"Manliness and manfulness" are synonymous, but they embrace more than we ordinarily mean by the word "courage;" for instance, tenderness and thoughtfulness for others. They include that courage which lies at the root of all manliness, but is, in fact, only its lowest or rudest form. Indeed, we must admit that it is not exclusively a human quality at all, but one which we share with other animals, and which some of them – for instance the bulldog and weasel – exhibit with a certainty and a thoroughness, which is very rare amongst mankind.

In what, then, does courage, in this ordinary sense of the word, consist? First, in persistency, or the determination to have one's own way, coupled with contempt for safety and ease, and readiness to risk pain or death in getting one's own way. This is, let us readily admit, a valuable, even a noble quality, but an animal quality rather than a human or manly one. Proficiency in athletic games is not necessarily a test even of animal courage, but only of muscular power and physical training. Even in those games which, to some extent, do afford a test of the persistency, and contempt for discomfort or pain, which constitute animal courage – such as rowing, boxing, and wrestling – it is of necessity a most unsatisfactory one. For instance, Nelson – as courageous an Englishman as ever lived, who attacked a Polar bear with a handspike when he was a boy of fourteen, and told his captain, when he was scolded for it, that he did not know Mr. Fear – with his slight frame and weak constitution, could never have won a boat-race, and in a match would have been hopelessly astern of any one of the crew of his own barge; and the highest courage which ever animated a human body would not enable the owner of it, if he were himself untrained, to stand for five minutes against a trained wrestler or boxer.

Athleticism is a good thing if kept in its place, but it has come to be very much over-praised and over-valued amongst us.

True manliness is as likely to be found in a weak as in a strong body. Other things being equal, we may perhaps admit (though I should hesitate to do so) that a man with a highly-trained and developed body will be more courageous than a weak man. But we must take this caution with us, that a great athlete may be a brute or a coward, while a truly manly man can be neither.

III

Let us take a few well-known instances of courageous deeds and examine them; because, if we can find out any common quality in them we shall have lighted on something which is of the essence of, or inseparable from, that manliness which includes courage – that manliness of which we are in search.

I will take two or three at hazard from a book in which they abound, and which was a great favorite some years ago, as I hope it is still, I mean Napier's *Peninsular War*. At the end of the storming of Badajos, after speaking of the officers, Napier goes on: "Who shall describe the springing valor of that Portuguese grenadier who was killed the foremost man at Santa Maria? or the martial fury of that desperate rifleman, who, in his resolution to win, thrust himself beneath the chained sword-blades, and then suffered the enemy to dash his head in pieces with the end of their muskets."

Again, at the Coa: "A north-of-Ireland man, named Stewart, but jocularly called 'the boy,' because of his youth, nineteen, and of his gigantic stature and strength, who had fought bravely and displayed great intelligence beyond the river, was one of the last men who came down to the bridge, but he would not pass. Turning round he regarded the French with a grim look, and spoke aloud as follows, 'So this is the end of our brag. This is our first battle, and we retreat! The boy Stewart will not live to hear that said.' Then striding forward in his giant might he fell furiously on the nearest enemies with the bayonet, refused the quarter they seemed desirous of granting, and died fighting in the midst of them."

"Still more touching, more noble, more heroic, was the death of Sergeant Robert McQuade. During McLeod's rush, this man, also from the north of Ireland, saw two men level their muskets on rests against a high gap in a bank, awaiting the uprise of an enemy. The present Adjutant-general Brown, then a lad of sixteen, attempted to ascend at the fatal spot. McQuade, himself only twenty-four years of age, pulled him back, saying in a calm, decided tone, 'You are too young, sir, to be killed,' and then offering his own person to the fire, fell dead pierced with both balls." And, speaking of the British soldier generally, he says in his preface, "What they were their successors now are. Witness the wreck of the *Birkenhead*, where four hundred men, at the call of their heroic officers, Captains Wright and Girardot, calmly and without a murmur accepted death in a horrible form rather than endanger the women and children saved in the boats. The records of the world furnish no parallel to this self-devotion."

Let us add to these two very recent examples: the poor colliers who worked day and night at Pont-y-pridd with their lives in their hands, to rescue their buried comrades; and the gambler in St. Louis who went straight from the gaming-table into the fire, to the rescue of women and children, and died of the hurts after his third return from the flames.

Looking, then, at these several cases, we find in each that resolution in the actors to have their way, contempt for ease, and readiness to risk pain or death, which we noted as the special characteristics of animal courage, which we share with the bulldog and weasel.

So far all of them are alike. Can we get any further? Not much, if we take the case of the rifleman who thrust his head under the sword-blades and allowed his brains to be knocked out sooner than draw it back, or that of "the boy Stewart." These are intense assertions of individual will and force – avowals of the rough hard-handed man that he has that in him which enables him to defy pain and danger and death – this and little or nothing more; and no doubt a very valuable and admirable thing as it stands.

But we feel, I think, at once, that there is something more in the act of Sergeant McQuade, and of the miners in Pont-y-pridd – something higher and more admirable. And it is not a mere question of degree, of more or less, in the quality of animal courage. The rifleman and "the boy Stewart" were each of them persistent to death, and no man can be more. The acts were, then, equally courageous,

so far as persistency and scorn of danger and death are concerned. We must look elsewhere for the difference, for that which touches us more deeply in the case of Sergeant McQuade than in that of "the boy Stewart," and can only find it in the motive. At least, it seems to me that the worth of the last lies mainly in the sublimity of self-assertion, of the other in the sublimity of self-sacrifice.

And this holds good again in the case of the *Birkenhead*. Captain Wright gave the word for the men to fall in on deck by companies, knowing that the sea below them was full of sharks, and that the ship could not possibly float till the boats came back; and the men fell in, knowing this also, and stood at attention without uttering a word, till she heeled over and went down under them. And Napier, with all his delight in physical force and prowess, and his intense appreciation of the qualities which shine most brightly in the fiery action of battle, gives the palm to these when he writes, "The records of the world furnish no parallel to this self-devotion." He was no mean judge in such a case; and, if he is right, as I think he is, do we not get another side-light on our inquiry, and find that the highest temper of physical courage is not to be found, or perfected, in action but in repose. All physical effort relieves the strain and makes it easier to persist unto death under the stimulus and excitement of the shock of battle, or of violent exertion of any kind, than when the effort has to be made with grounded arms. In other words, may we not say that in the face of danger self-restraint is after all the highest form of self-assertion, and a characteristic of manliness as distinguished from courage.

IV

The courage which is tested in times of terror, on the battle-field, in the sinking ship, the poisoned mine, the blazing house, presents but one small side of a great subject. Such testing times come to few, and to these not often in their lives. But on the other hand, the daily life of every one of us teems with occasions which will try the temper of our courage as searchingly, though not as terribly, as battle-field or fire or wreck. For we are born into a state of war; with falsehood and disease, and wrong and misery in a thousand forms lying all around us, and the voice within calling on us to take our stand as men in the eternal battle against these.

And in this life-long fight, to be waged by every one of us single-handed against a host of foes, the last requisite for a good fight, the last proof and test of our courage and manfulness, must be loyalty to truth – the most rare and difficult of all human qualities. For such loyalty, as it grows in perfection, asks ever more and more of us, and sets before us a standard of manliness always rising higher and higher.

And this is the great lesson which we shall learn from Christ's life, the more earnestly and faithfully we study it. "For this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, to bear witness to the truth." To bear this witness against avowed and open enemies is comparatively easy; but, to bear it against those we love; against those whose judgment and opinions we respect, in defense or furtherance of that which approves itself as true to our own inmost conscience, this is the last and abiding test of courage and of manliness.

V

How natural, nay, how inevitable it is, that we should fall into the habit of appreciating and judging things mainly by the standards in common use amongst those we respect and love. But these very standards are apt to break down with us when we are brought face to face with some question which takes us ever so little out of ourselves and our usual moods. At such times we are driven to admit in our hearts that we, and those we respect and love, have been looking at and judging things, not truthfully, and therefore not courageously and manfully, but conventionally. And then comes one of the most searching of all trials of courage and manliness, when a man or woman is called to stand by what approves itself to their consciences as true, and to protest for it through evil report and good report, against all discouragement and opposition from those they love or respect. The sense of antagonism instead of rest, of distrust and alienation instead of approval and sympathy, which such times bring, is a test which tries the very heart and reins, and it is one which meets us at all ages, and in all conditions of life. Emerson's hero is the man who, "taking both reputation and life in his hand, will with perfect urbanity dare the gibbet and the mob, by the resolute truth of his speech and rectitude of his behavior."

VI

After all, what would life be without fighting, I should like to know? From the cradle to the grave, fighting, rightly understood, is the business, the real, highest, honestest business of every son of man. Every one who is worth his salt has his enemies, who must be beaten, be they evil thoughts and habits in himself, or spiritual wickednesses in high places, or Russians, or border-ruffians.

It is no good for Quakers, or any other body of men to uplift their voices against fighting. Human nature is too strong for them, and they don't follow their own precepts. Every soul of them is doing his own piece of fighting, somehow and somewhere. The world might be a better world without fighting, for anything I know, but it wouldn't be our world; and therefore I am dead against crying peace, when there is no peace, and isn't meant to be. I am as sorry as any man to see folks fighting the wrong people and the wrong things, but I'd a deal sooner see them doing that, than that they should have no fight in them.

VII

You can't alter society, or hinder people in general from being helpless and vulgar – from letting themselves fall into slavery to the things about them if they are rich, or from aping the habits and vices of the rich if they are poor. But you may live simple, manly lives yourselves, speaking your own thought, paying your own way, and doing your own work, whatever that may be. You will remain gentlemen so long as you follow these rules, if you have to sweep a crossing for your livelihood. You will not remain gentlemen in anything but the name, if you depart from them, though you may be set to govern a kingdom.

VIII

In testing manliness as distinguished from courage, we shall have to reckon sooner or later with the idea of duty. Nelson's column stands in the most conspicuous site in all London, and stands there with all men's approval, not because of his daring courage. Lord Peterborough, in a former generation, Lord Dundonald in the one which succeeded, were at least as eminent for reckless and successful daring. But it is because the idea of devotion to duty is inseparably connected with Nelson's name in the minds of Englishmen, that he has been lifted high above all his compeers in England's capital.

IX

In the throes of one of the terrible revolutions of the worst days of imperial Rome – when probably the cruelest mob and most licentious soldiery of all time were raging round the palace of the Cæsars, and the chances of an hour would decide whether Galba or Otho should rule the world, the alternative being a violent death – an officer of the guard, one Julius Atticus, rushed into Galba's presence with a bloody sword, boasting that he had slain his rival, Otho. "My comrade, by whose order?" was his only greeting from the old Pagan chief. And the story has come down through eighteen centuries, in the terse, strong sentences of the great historian, Tacitus.

Comrade, who ordered thee? whose will art thou doing? It is the question which has to be asked of every fighting man, in whatever part of the great battlefield he comes to the front, and determines the manliness of soldier, statesman, parson, of every strong man, and suffering woman.

> "Three roots bear up Dominion; knowledge, will,
> These two are strong; but stronger still the third,
> Obedience: 'tis the great tap-root, which still
> Knit round the rock of Duty, is not stirred,
> Though storm and tempest spend their utmost skill."

I think that the more thoroughly we sift and search out this question the more surely we shall come to this as the conclusion of the whole matter. Tenacity of will, or wilfulness, lies at the root of all courage, but courage can only rise into true manliness when the will is surrendered; and the more absolute the surrender of the will the more perfect will be the temper of our courage and the strength of our manliness.

"Strong Son of God, immortal Love,"

the laureate has pleaded, in the moment of his highest inspiration.

"Our wills are ours to make them thine."

And that strong Son of God to whom this cry has gone up in our day, and in all days, has left us the secret of his strength in the words, "I am come to do the will of my Father and your Father."

X

Haste and distrust are the sure signs of weakness, if not of cowardice. Just in so far as they prevail in any life, even in the most heroic, the man fails, and his work will have to be done over again. In Christ's life there is not the slightest trace of such weakness or cowardice. From all that we are told, and from all that we can infer, he made no haste, and gave way to no doubt, waiting for God's mind, and patiently preparing himself for whatever his work might be. And so his work from the first was perfect, and through his whole public life he never faltered or wavered, never had to withdraw or modify a word once spoken. And thus he stands, and will stand to the end of time, the true model of the courage and manliness of boyhood and youth and early manhood.

XI

The man whose yea is yea and his nay nay, is, we all confess, the most courageous, whether or no he may be the most successful in daily life. And he who gave the precept has left us the most perfect example of how to live up to it.

XII

It is his action when the danger comes, not when he is in solitary preparation for it, which marks the man of courage.

XIII

In all the world's annals there is nothing which approaches, in the sublimity of its courage, that last conversation between our Saviour and the Roman procurator, before Pilate led him forth for the last time and pleaded scornfully with his nation for the life of their king. There must be no flaw or spot on Christ's courage, any more than on his wisdom and tenderness and sympathy. And the more unflinchingly we apply the test the more clear and sure will the response come back to us.

XIV

Quit yourself like men; speak up, and strike out if necessary, for whatsoever is true and manly, and lovely, and of good report; never try to be popular, but only to do your duty and help others to do theirs, and, wherever you are placed, you may leave the tone of feeling higher than you found it, and so be doing good which no living soul can measure to generations yet unborn.

XV

We listened to Dr. Arnold, as all boys in their better moods will listen (aye, and men too for the matter of that,) to a man whom we felt to be, with all his heart and soul and strength, striving against whatever was mean and unmanly and unrighteous in our little world. It was not the cold, clear voice of one giving advice and warning from serene heights to those who were struggling and sinning below, but the warm, living voice of one who was fighting for us by our sides, and calling on us to help him and ourselves and one another. And so, wearily and little by little, but surely and steadily on the whole, was brought home to the young boy the meaning of his life; that it was no fool's or sluggard's paradise into which he had wandered by chance, but a battle-field ordained from of old, where there are no spectators, but the youngest must take his side, and the stakes are life and death. And he who roused this consciousness in them, showed them at the same time, by every word he spoke in the pulpit, and by his whole daily life, how that battle was to be fought; and stood there before them their fellow-soldier and the captain of their band. The true sort of a captain, too, for a boys' army, one who had no misgivings and gave no uncertain word of command, and, let who would yield or make truce, would fight the fight out (so every boy felt) to the last gasp and the last drop of blood. Other sides of his character might take hold of and influence boys here and there, but it was this thoroughness and undaunted courage which more than anything else won his way to the hearts of the great mass of those on whom he left his mark, and made them believe first in him, and then in his Master.

XVI

To stand by what our conscience witnesses for as truth, through evil and good report, even against all opposition of those we love, and of those whose judgment we look up to and should ordinarily prefer to follow; to cut ourselves deliberately off from their love and sympathy and respect, is surely one of the most severe trials to which we can be put. A man has need to feel at such times that the Spirit of the Lord is upon him in some measure, as it was upon Christ when he rose in the synagogue of Nazareth and, selecting the passage of Isaiah which speaks most directly of the Messiah, claimed that title for himself, and told them that to-day this prophecy was fulfilled in him.

The fierce, hard, Jewish spirit is at once roused to fury. They would kill him then and there, and so settle his claims once for all. He passes through them, and away from the quiet home where he had been brought up – alone, it would seem, so far as man could make him so, and homeless for the remainder of his life. Yet not alone, for his Father is with him; nor homeless for he has the only home of which man can be sure, the home of his own heart shared with the Spirit of God.

XVII

We have been told recently, by more than one of those who profess to have weighed and measured Christianity and found it wanting, that religion must rest on reason, based on phenomena of this visible, tangible world in which we are living.

Be it so. There is no need for a Christian to object. We can meet this challenge as well as any other. We need never be careful about choosing our own battlefield. Looking, then, at that world as we see it, laboring heavily along in our own time – as we hear of it through the records of the ages – I must repeat that there is no phenomenon in it comparable for a moment to that of Christ's life and work. The more we canvass and sift and weigh and balance the materials, the more clearly and grandly does his figure rise before us, as the true Head of humanity, the perfect Ideal, not only of wisdom and tenderness and love, but of courage also, because He was and is the simple Truth of God – the expression, at last, in flesh and blood of what He who created us means each one of our race to be.

XVIII

"My father," said Hardy, "is an old commander in the royal navy. He was a second cousin of Nelson's Hardy, and that, I believe, was what led him into the navy, for he had no interest whatever of his own. It was a visit which Nelson's Hardy, then a young lieutenant, paid to his relative, my grandfather, which decided my father, he has told me; but he always had a strong bent to sea, though he was a boy of very studious habits.

"However, those were times when brave men who knew and loved their profession couldn't be overlooked, and my dear old father fought his way up step by step – not very fast, certainly, but still fast enough to keep him in heart about his chances in life.

"He was made commander towards the end of the war, and got a ship, in which he sailed with a convoy of merchantmen from Bristol. It was the last voyage he ever made in active service; but the Admiralty was so well satisfied with his conduct in it that they kept his ship in commission two years after peace was declared. And well they might be, for in the Spanish main he fought an action which lasted, on and off, for two days, with a French sloop-of-war, and a privateer, either of which ought to have been a match for him. But he had been with Vincent in the *Arrow*, and was not likely to think much of such small odds as that. At any rate, he beat them off, and not a prize could either of them make out of his convoy, though I believe his ship was never fit for anything afterwards, and was broken up as soon as she was out of commission. We have got her compasses, and the old flag which flew at the peak through the whole voyage, at home now. It was my father's own flag, and his fancy to have it always flying. More than half the men were killed or badly hit – the dear old father among the rest. A ball took off part of his knee-cap, and he had to fight the last six hours of the action sitting in a chair on the quarter-deck; but he says it made the men fight better than when he was among them, seeing him sitting there sucking oranges.

"Well, he came home with a stiff leg. The Bristol merchants gave him the freedom of the city in a gold box, and a splendidly-mounted sword with an inscription on the blade, which hangs over the mantel-piece at home. When I first left home, I asked him to give me his old service-sword, which used to hang by the other, and he gave it me at once, though I was only a lad of seventeen, as he would give me his right eye, dear old father, which is the only one he has now; the other he lost from a cutlass-wound in a boarding party. There it hangs, and those are his epaulettes in the tin case. They used to be under my pillow before I had a room of my own, and many a cowardly down-hearted fit have they helped me to pull through; and many a mean act have they helped to keep me from doing. There they are always; and the sight of them brings home the dear old man to me as nothing else does, hardly even his letters. I must be a great scoundrel to go very wrong with such a father.

"Let's see – where was I? Oh, yes; I remember. Well, my father got his box and sword, and some very handsome letters from several great men. We have them all in a book at home, and I know them by heart. The ones he values most are from Collinwood, and his old captain, Vincent, and from his cousin, Nelson's Hardy, who didn't come off very well himself after the war. But my poor old father never got another ship. For some time he went up every year to London, and was always, he says, very kindly received by the people in power, and often dined with one and another Lord of the Admiralty who had been an old mess-mate. But he was longing for employment, and it used to prey on him while he was in his prime to feel year after year slipping away and he still without a ship. But why should I abuse people and think it hard, when he doesn't? 'You see, Jack,' he said to me the last time I spoke to him about it, 'after all, I was a battered old hulk, lame and half-blind. So was Nelson, you'll say; but every man isn't a Nelson, my boy. And though I might think I could con or fight a ship as well as ever, I can't say other folk who didn't know me were wrong for not agreeing with me. Would you, now, Jack, appoint a lame and blind man to command your ship, if you had one?' But he left off applying for work soon after he was fifty (I just remember the time), for he began to doubt

then whether he was quite so fit to command a small vessel as a younger man; and though he had a much better chance after that of getting a ship (for William IV. came to the throne, who knew all about him), he never went near the Admiralty again. 'God forbid,' he said, 'that his Majesty should take me if there's a better man to be had.'"

XIX

The object of wrestling and of all other athletic sports is to strengthen men's bodies, and to teach them to use their strength readily, to keep their tempers, to endure fatigue and pain. These are all noble ends. God gives us few more valuable gifts than strength of body, and courage, and endurance – to laboring men they are beyond all price. We ought to cultivate them in all right ways for they are given us to protect the weak, to subdue the earth, to fight for our homes and country if necessary.

XX

To you young men, I say, as Solomon said, rejoice in your youth; rejoice in your strength of body, and elasticity of spirits and the courage which follows from these; but remember, that for these gifts you will be judged – not condemned, mind, but judged. You will have to show before a judge who knoweth your inmost hearts, that you have used these his great gifts well; that you have been pure and manly, and true.

XXI

At last in my dream, a mist came over the Hill, and all the figures got fainter and fainter, and seemed to be fading away. But as they faded, I could see one great figure coming out clearer through the mist, which I had never noticed before. It was like a grand old man, with white hair and mighty limbs, who looked as old as the hill itself, but yet as if he were as young now as he ever had been; and at his feet were a pickaxe and spade, and at his side a scythe. But great and solemn as it looked, I felt that the figure was not a man, and I was angry with it. Why should it come in with its great pitiful eyes and smile? Why were my brothers and sisters, the men and women, to fade away before it?

"The labor that a man doeth under the sun, it is all vanity. Prince and peasant, the wise man and the fool they all come to me at last and I garner them away, and their place knows them no more!" So the figure seemed to say to itself, and I felt melancholy as I watched it sitting there at rest, playing with the fading figures.

At last it placed one of the little figures on its knee, half in mockery, as it seemed to me, and half in sorrow. But then all changed; and the great figure began to fade, and the small man came out clearer and clearer. And he took no heed of his great neighbor, but rested there where he was placed; and his face was quiet, and full of life as he gazed steadily and earnestly through the mist. And the other figures came flitting by again and chanted as they passed, "The work of one true man is greater than all thy work. Thou hast nought but a seeming power over it, or over him. Every true man is greater than thee. Every true man shall conquer more than thee; for he shall triumph over death, and hell, and thee, oh, Time!"

XXII

The strain and burden of a great message of deliverance to men has again and again found the weak places in the faith and courage of the most devoted and heroic of those to whom it has been entrusted. Moses pleads under its pressure that another may be sent in his place, asking despairingly, “Why hast thou sent me?” Elijah prays for death. Mohammed passes years of despondency and hesitation under the sneers of those who scoff, “There goeth the son of Abdallah, who hath his converse with God!” Such shrinkings and doubtings enlist our sympathy, make us feel the tie of a common humanity which binds us to such men. But no one, I suppose, will maintain that perfect manliness would not suppress, at any rate, the open expression of any such feelings. The man who has to lead a great revolution should keep all misgivings to himself, and the weight of them so kept must often prove the sorest part of his burden.

XXIII

We have most of us, at one time or another of our lives, passed through trying ordeals, the memory of which we can by no means dwell on with pleasure. Times they were of blinding and driving storm, and howling winds, out of which voices as of evil spirits spoke close in our ears – tauntingly, temptingly, whispering to the mischievous wild beast which lurks in the bottom of all our hearts – now, "Rouse up! art thou a man and darest not do this thing;" now, "Rise, kill and eat – it is thine, wilt thou not take it? Shall the flimsy scruples of this teacher, or the sanctified cant of that, bar thy way and balk thee of thine own? Thou hast strength to have them – to brave all things in earth or heaven, or hell; put out thy strength, and be a man!"

Then did not the wild beast within us shake itself, and feel its power, sweeping away all the "Thou shalt nots," which the Law wrote up before us in letters of fire, with the "I *will*" of hardy, godless, self-assertion? And all the while, which alone made the storm really dreadful to us, was there not the still small voice, never to be altogether silenced by the roarings of the tempest of passion, by the evil voices, by our own violent attempts to stifle it; – the still small voice appealing to the man, the true man, within us, which is made in the image of God, calling on him to assert his dominion over the wild beast – to obey, and conquer, and live. Aye! and though we may have followed other voices, have we not, while following them, confessed in our hearts that all true strength, and nobleness, and manliness was to be found in the other path. Do I say that most of us have had to tread this path and fight this battle? Surely I might have said all of us; all, at least, who have passed the bright days of their boyhood. The clear and keen intellect no less than the dull and heavy; the weak, the cold, the nervous, no less than the strong and passionate of body. The arms and the field have been divers – can have been the same, I suppose, to no two men, but the battle must have been the same to all. One here and there may have had a foretaste of it as a boy; but it is the young man's battle, and not the boy's, thank God for it! That most hateful and fearful of all relatives, call it by what name we will – self, the natural man, the old Adam – must have risen up before each of us in early manhood, if not sooner, challenging the true man within us, to which the Spirit of God is speaking, to a struggle for life or death.

Gird yourself, then, for the fight, my young brother, and take up the pledge which was made for you when you were a helpless child. This world, and all others, time and eternity, for you hang upon the issue. This enemy must be met and vanquished – not finally, for no man while on earth, I suppose, can say that he is slain; but, when once known and recognized, met and vanquished he must be, by God's help, in this and that encounter, before you can be truly called a man; before you can really enjoy any one even of this world's good things.

XXIV

In the course of my inquiries on the subject of muscular Christians, their works and ways, a fact has forced itself on my attention, which, for the sake of ingenious youth, ought not to be passed over. I find then, that, side by side with these muscular Christians, and apparently claiming some sort of connection with them (the same concern, as the pirates of trade-marks say) have risen up another set of persons, against whom I desire to caution my readers. I must call the persons in question "musclemen," as distinguished from muscular Christians; the only point in common between the two being that both hold it to be a good thing to have strong and well-exercised bodies, ready to be put at the shortest notice to any work of which bodies are capable, and to do it well. Here all likeness ends; for the "muscleman" seems to have no belief whatever as to the purposes for which his body has been given him, except some hazy idea that it is to go up and down the world with him, belaboring men and captivating women for his benefit or pleasure, at once the servant and fomenter of those fierce and brutal passions which he seems to think it a necessity, and rather a fine thing than otherwise, to indulge and obey. Whereas, so far as I know, the least of the muscular Christians has hold of the old chivalrous and Christian belief, that a man's body is given him to be trained and brought into subjection, and then used for the protection of the weak, the advancement of all righteous causes, and the subduing of the earth which God has given to the children of men. He does not hold that mere strength or activity are in themselves worthy of any respect or worship, or that one man is a bit better than another because he can knock him down, or carry a bigger sack of potatoes than he. For mere power, whether of body or intellect, he has (I hope and believe) no reverence whatever, though, *cæteris paribus*, he would probably himself, as a matter of taste prefer the man who can lift a hundred-weight round his head with his little finger to the man who can construct a string of perfect Sorites.

XXV

As a rule, the more thoroughly disciplined and fit a man may be for any really great work, the more conscious will he be of his own unfitness for it, the more distrustful of himself, the more anxious not to thrust himself forward. It is only the zeal of the half-instructed when the hour of a great deliverance has come at last – of those who have had a glimpse of the glory of the goal, but have never known or counted the perils of the path which leads to it – which is ready with the prompt response, “Yes – we can drink of the cup, we can be baptized with the baptism.”

XXVI

How can we be ever on the watch for the evil which is so near us? We cannot; but one is with us, is in us, who can and will, if we will let him.

Men found this out in the old time, and have felt it and known it ever since. Three thousand years ago this truth dawned upon the old Psalmist, and struck him with awe. He struggled with it; he tried to escape from it, but in vain. “Whither shall I go,” he says “from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.”

Is any of us stronger or wiser than the Psalmist? Is there any place for us to flee to, which was not open to him? My brethren, had we not better make up our minds to accept and acknowledge the truth, to which our own consciences bear witness, that not only in heaven, and in hell, and in the uttermost parts of sea and earth, He is present, but that in the inmost recesses of our own hearts there is no escape from his Spirit – that He is there also, sustaining us, pleading with us, punishing us.

We know it by the regret we feel for time wasted and opportunities neglected; by the loathing coming back to us, time after time, for our every untrue, or mean thought, word, or deed; by every longing after truth, and righteousness, and purity, which stirs our sluggish souls. By all these things, and in a thousand other ways, we feel it, we know it.

Let us, then, own this and give ourselves up to his guidance. At first it will be hard work; our will and spirits will be like a lump of ice in a man’s hand, which yields but slowly to the warm pressure. But do not despair; throw yourselves on his guidance, and he will guide you, he will hide you under his wings, you shall be safe under his feathers, his faithfulness and truth shall be your shield and buckler.

The ice will melt into water, and the water will lie there in the hollow of the hand, moving at the slightest motion, obeying every impulse which is given to it.

My brethren, the Spirit of God which is in every one of us – the spirit of truth and love unchangeable – will take possession of our spirits, if we will but let him, and turn our whole lives into the lives of children of God, and joint-heirs of heaven with his Son.

XXVII

"As the world was plastic and fluid in the hands of God, so it is ever to so much of his attributes as we bring to it," may be a startling saying of Mr. Emerson's, but is one which commends itself to our experience and reason, if we only consult them honestly. Let us take the most obvious examples of this law. Look at the relations of man to the brute creation. One of us shall have no difficulty in making friends of beasts and birds, while another excites their dread and hate, so that even dogs will scarcely come near him. There is no need to go back to the traditions of the hermits in the Thebaid, or St. Francis of Assisi, for instances of the former class. We all know the story of Cowper and his three hares, from his exquisite letters and poem, and most of you must have read, or heard of the terms on which Waterton lived with the birds and beasts in his Yorkshire home, and of Thoreau, unable to get rid of wild squirrels and birds who would come and live with him, or from a boat, taking fish which lay quietly in his hand till he chose to put them back again into the stream. But I suppose there is scarcely one of us who has not himself seen such instances again and again, persons of whom the old words seemed literally true, "At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh; neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth. For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field, and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee."

I remember myself several such; a boy who was friends even with rats, stoats, and snakes, and generally had one or other of them in his pockets; a groom upon whose shoulders the pigeons used to settle, and nestle against his cheeks, whenever he went out into the stable-yard or field. Is there any reasonable way of accounting for this? Only one, I think, which is, that those who have this power over, and attraction for, animals, have always felt toward them and treated them as their Maker intended – have unconsciously, perhaps, but still faithfully, followed God's mind in their dealings with his creatures, and so have stood in true relations to them all, and have found the beasts of the field at peace with them.

In the same way the stones of the field are in league with the geologist, the trees and flowers with the botanist, the component parts of earth and air with the chemist, just in so far as each, consciously or unconsciously, follows God's methods with them – each part of his creation yielding up its secrets and its treasures to the open mind of the humble and patient, who is also at bottom always the most courageous learner.

XXVIII

What is true of each of us beyond all question – what every man who walks with open eyes and open heart knows to be true of himself – must be true also of Christ. And so, though we may reject the stories of the clay birds, which he modeled as a child, taking wing and bursting into song round him, (as on a par with St. Francis' address to his sisters, the swallows, at Alvia, or the flocks in the marshes of Venice, who thereupon kept silence from their twitterings and songs till his sermon was finished), we cannot doubt that in proportion as Christ was more perfectly in sympathy with God's creation than any mediæval saint, or modern naturalist, or man of science, he had more power than they with all created things from his earliest youth. Nor could it be otherwise with the hearts and wills of men. Over these we know that, from that time to this, he has exercised a supreme sway, infinitely more wonderful than that over birds and beasts, because of man's power of resistance to the will Christ came to teach and to do, which exists, so far as we can see, in no other part of creation.

I think, then, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that he must have had all these powers from his childhood, that they must have been growing stronger from day to day, and he, at the same time, more and more conscious of possessing them, not to use on any impulse of curiosity or self-will, but only as the voice within prompted. And it seems the most convincing testimony to his perfect sonship, manifested in perfect obedience, that he should never have tested his powers during those thirty years as he did at once and with perfect confidence as soon as the call came. Had he done so his ministry must have commenced sooner; that is to say, before the method was matured by which he was to reconstruct, and lift into a new atmosphere and on to a higher plane, the faith and life of his own nation and of the whole world. For it is impossible to suppose that the works which he did, and the words he spoke, at thirty – which at once threw all Galilee and Judea into a ferment of hope and joy and doubt and anger – should have passed unnoticed had they been wrought and spoken when he was twenty. Here, as in all else, he waited for God's mind: and so, when the time for action came, worked with the power of God. And this waiting and preparation must have been the supreme trial of his faith. The holding this position must have been, in those early years, the holding of the very centre of the citadel in man's soul, (as Bunyan so quaintly terms it), against which the assaults of the tempter must have been delivered again and again while the garrison was in training for the victorious march out into the open field of the great world, carrying forth the standard which shall never go back.

And while it may be readily admitted that Christ wielded a dominion over all created things, as well as over man, which no other human being has ever approached, it seems to me to be going quite beyond what can be proved, or even fairly assumed, to speak of his miracles as supernatural, in the sense that no man has ever done, or can ever do, the like. The evidence is surely all the other way, and seems rather to indicate that if we could only have lived up to the standard which we acknowledge in our inmost hearts to be the true one – could only have obeyed every motion and warning of the voice of God speaking in our hearts from the day when we first became conscious of and could hear it – if, in other words, our wills had from the first been disciplined, like the will of Christ, so as to be in perfect accord with the will of God – I see no reason to doubt that we, too, should have gained the power and the courage to show signs, or, if you please, to work miracles, as Christ and his Apostles worked them.

XXIX

Christ's whole life on earth was the assertion and example of true manliness – the setting forth in living act and word what man is meant to be, and how he should carry himself in this world of God's – one long campaign, in which "the temptation" stands out as the first great battle and victory. The story has depths in it which we can never fathom, but also clear, sharp lessons which he who runs may read, and no man can master too thoroughly. We must follow him reverently into the wilderness, where he flies from the crowds who are pressing to the Baptist, and who to-morrow will be thronging around him, if he goes back among them, after what the Baptist has said about him to-day.

Day after day in the wilderness the struggle goes on in his heart. He is faint from insufficient food in those solitudes, and with bodily weakness the doubts grow in strength and persistence, and the tempter is always at his side, soliciting him to end them once for all, by one act of self-assertion. All those questionings and misgivings as to his origin and mission which we have pictured to ourselves as haunting him ever since his first visit to Jerusalem, are now, as it were, focussed. There are mocking voices whispering again as of old, but more scornfully and keenly in his ear, "Are you really the Messiah, the Son of God, so long looked for? What more proof have you to go upon than you have had for these many years, during which you have been living as a poor peasant in a Galilean village? The word of this wild man of the wilderness? He is your own cousin, and a powerful preacher no doubt, but a wayward, wilful man, clad and fed like a madman, who has been nursing mad fancies from his boyhood, away from the holy city, the centre of national life and learning. This sign of a descending dove, and a voice which no one has heard but yourself? Such signs come to many – are never wanting when men are ready to deceive themselves – and each man's fancy gives them a different meaning. But the words, and the sign, and the voice, you say, only meet a conviction which has been growing these thirty years in your own heart and conscience? Well, then, at least for the sake of others if not for your own sake, put this conviction to the proof, here, at once, and make sure yourself, before you go forth and deceive poor men, your brethren, to their ruin. You are famishing here in the wilderness. This, at least, cannot be what God intends for his Son, who is to redeem the world. Exercise some control over the meanest part of your Father's kingdom. Command these stones to become bread, and see whether they will obey you. Cast yourself down from this height. If you are what you think, your Father's angels will bear you up. Then, after they have borne you up, you may go on with some reasonable assurance that your claim is not a mere delusion, and that you will not be leading these poor men whom you call your brethren to misery and destruction."

And when neither long fasting and weakness, or natural doubt, distrust, impatience, or the most subtle suggestions of the tempter, can move his simple trust in his Father, or wring from him one act of self-assertion, the enemy changes front and the assault comes from another quarter. "You may be right," the voices seemed now to be saying; "You may not be deceived, or dreaming, when you claim to be the Son of God, sent to redeem this fair world, which is now spread out before you in all its glory. That may be your origin, and that your work. But, living as you have done till now in a remote corner of a despised province, you have no experience or knowledge of the methods or powers which sway men, and establish and maintain these kingdoms of the world, the glory of which you are beholding. These methods and powers have been in use in your Father's world, if it be his, ever since man has known good from evil. You have only to say the word, and you may use and control these methods and powers as you please. By their aid you may possibly 'see of the travail of your soul and be satisfied;' without them you will redeem nothing but perhaps a man here and there – without them you will postpone instead of hastening the coming of your Father's kingdom, to the sorrow and ruin of many generations, and will die a foiled and lonely man, crushed by the very forces you have refused to use for your Father's service. If they were wholly evil, wholly unfit for the fulfillment of any purpose of his, would he have left them in command of his world till this day? It is only through

them that the world can be subdued. Your time is short, and you have already wasted much of it, standing shivering on the brink, and letting the years slip by in that cottage at Nazareth. The wisest of your ancestors acknowledged and used them, and spread His kingdom from the river to the Great Sea. Why should you reject them?"

This, very roughly and inadequately stated, is some shadow of the utmost part, or skirt as it were, of the trial-crisis, lasting forty days, through which Christ passed from his private to his public career. For forty days the struggle lasted before he could finally realize and accept his mission with all that it implied. At the end of that time he has fairly mastered and beaten down every doubt as to his call, every tempting suggestion to assert himself, or to accept or use any aid in establishing his Father's kingdom which does not clearly bear his Father's stamp and seal on the face of it. In the strength of this victory he returns from the desert, to take up the burden which has been laid on him, and to set up God's kingdom in the world by the methods which he has learned of God himself – and by no other.

XXX

The second period of our Lord's ministry is one, in the main, of joyful progress and triumph, in which the test of true manliness must be more subtle than when the surroundings are hostile. It consists, I think, at such times, in the careful watchfulness not to give wrong impressions, not to mislead those who are touched by enthusiasm, conscious of new life, grateful to him who has kindled that life in them.

It is then that the temptation to be all things to all men in a wrong sense – to adapt and accommodate teaching and life to a lower standard in order to maintain a hold upon the masses of average men and women who have been moved by the words of lips touched by fire from the altar of God – has generally proved too much for the best and strongest of the world's great reformers. It is scarcely necessary to elaborate this point, which would, I think, be sorrowfully admitted by those who have studied most lovingly and carefully the lives of such men, for instance, as Savonarola or Wesley. If you will refer to a valuable work on the life of a greater than either of these, Mr. Bosworth Smith's "Mohammed and Mohammedanism," you will find there perhaps the best illustration which I can give you of this sad experience.

When Mohammed returns from Medina, sweeping at last all enemies out of his path, as the prophet of a new faith, and the leader of an awakened and repentant people, his biographer pauses to notice the lowering of the standard, both in his life and teaching. Power, he pleads, brings with it new temptations and new failures. The more thoroughly a man is carried away by his inspiration, and convinced of the truth and goodness of his cause and his message, the more likely is he to forget the means in the end, and to allow the end to justify whatever means seem to lead to its triumph. He must maintain as he can, and by any means, his power over the motley mass of followers that his mission has gathered round him, and will be apt to aim rather at what will hold them than at what will satisfy the highest promptings of his own conscience.

We may allow the plea in such cases, though with sorrow and humiliation. But the more minutely we examine the life of Christ the more we shall feel that here there is no place for it. We shall be impressed with the entire absence of any such bending to expediency, or forgetting the means in the end. He never for one moment accommodates his life or teaching to any standard but the highest: never lowers or relaxes that standard by a shade or a hair's-breadth, to make the road easy to rich or powerful questioners, or to uphold the spirit of his poorer followers when they are startled and uneasy, as they begin half-blindly to recognize what spirit they are of. This unbending truthfulness is, then, what we have chiefly to look for in this period of triumphant progress and success, questioning each act and word in turn whether there is any swerving in it from the highest ideal.

XXXI

We may note that our Lord accepts at once the imprisonment of the Baptist as the final call to himself. Gathering, therefore, a few of John's disciples round him, and welcoming the restless inquiring crowds who had been roused by the voice crying in the wilderness, he stands forward at once to proclaim and explain the nature of that new kingdom of God, which has now to be set up in the world. Standing forth alone, on the open hillside, the young Galilean peasant gives forth the great proclamation, which by one effort lifted mankind on to that new and higher ground on which it has been painfully struggling ever since, but on the whole with sure though slow success, to plant itself and maintain sure foothold.

In all history there is no parallel to it. It stands there, a miracle or sign of God's reign in this world, far more wonderful than any of Christ's miracles of healing. Unbelievers have been sneering at and ridiculing it, and Christian doctors paring and explaining it away ever since. But there it stands, as strong and fresh as ever, the calm declaration and witness of what mankind is intended by God to become on this earth of his.

As a question of courageous utterance, I would only ask you to read it through once more, bearing in mind who the preacher was – a peasant, already repudiated by his own neighbors and kinsfolk, and suspected by the national rulers and teachers; and who were the hearers – a motley crowd of Jewish peasants and fishermen, Romish legionaries, traders from Damascus, Tyre, and Sidon, and the distant isles of Greece, with a large sprinkling of publicans, scribes, Pharisees, and lawyers.

The immediate result of the sermon was to bow the hearts of this crowd for the time, so that he was able to choose followers from amongst them, much as he would. He takes fishermen and peasants, selecting only two at most, from any rank above the lowest, and one of these from a class more hated and despised by the Jews than the poorest peasant, the publicans. It is plain that he might at first have called apostles from amongst the upper classes had he desired it – as a teacher with any want of courage would surely have done. But the only scribe who offers himself is rejected.

The calling of the Apostles is followed by a succession of discourses and miracles, which move the people more and more, until, after that of the loaves, the popular enthusiasm rises to the point it had so often reached in the case of other preachers and leaders of this strange people. They are ready to take him by force and make him a king.

The Apostles apparently encouraged this enthusiasm, for which he constrains them into a ship, and sends them away before him. After rejoining them and rebuking their want of understanding and faith, he returns with them to the multitudes, and at once speaks of himself as the bread from heaven, in the discourse which offends many of his disciples, who from this time go back and walk no more with him. The brief season of triumphant progress is drawing to an end, during which he could rejoice in spirit in contemplating the human harvest which he and his disciples seem to be already successfully garnering.

XXXII

The more carefully we study the long wrestle of Christ with the blind leaders of a doomed nation, the more we shall recognize the perfect truthfulness, and therefore the perfect courage, which marks his conduct of it. From beginning to end there is no word or act which can mislead friend or foe. The strife, though for life and death, has left no trace or stain on his nature. Fresh from the last and final conflict in the temple court, he can pause on the side of Olivet to weep over the city, the sight of which can still wring from him the pathetic yearnings of a soul purified from all taint of bitterness.

It is this most tender and sensitive of the sons of men – with fibres answering to every touch and breath of human sympathy or human hate – who has borne with absolutely unshaken steadfastness the distrust and anger of kinsfolk, the ingratitude of converts, the blindness of disciples, the fitful and purblind worship and hatred, and fear, of the nation of the Jews. So far, we can estimate to some extent the burden and the strain, and realize the strength and beauty of the spirit which could bear it all. Beyond and behind lie depths into which we can but glance. For in those last hours of his life on earth the question was to be decided whether we men have in deed and truth a brotherhood, in a Son of Man, the head of humanity, who has united mankind to their Father, and can enable them to know him.

XXXIII

It is around the life of the Son of Man and Son of God that the fiercest controversies of our time are raging. Is it not also becoming clearer every day that they will continue to rage more and more fiercely – that there can be no rest or peace possible for mankind – until all things are subdued to him, and brought into harmony with his life?

It is to this work that all churches and sects, that all the leading nations of the world, known collectively as Christendom, are pledged: and the time for redeeming that pledge is running out rapidly, as the distress and perplexity, the threatening disruption and anarchy of Christendom too clearly show. It is to this work too that you and I, every man and woman of us, are also called; and if we would go about it with any hope and courage, it can only be by keeping the life of Christ vividly before us day by day, and turning to it as to a fountain in the desert, as to the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

From behind the shadow the still small voice – more awful than tempest or earthquake – more sure and persistent than day and night – is always sounding, full of hope and strength to the weariest of us all, “Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

XXXIV

Nicodemus was a leading member of the Sanhedrim, a representative of that section of the rulers who, like the rest of the nation, were expecting a deliverer, a king who should prevail against the Cæsar. They had sent to the Baptist, and had heard of his testimony to the young Galilean, who had now come to Jerusalem, and was showing signs of a power which they could not but acknowledge. For, had he not cleansed the temple, which they had never been able to do, but, notwithstanding their pretended reverence for it, had allowed to be turned into a shambles and an exchange? They saw that a part of the people were ready to gather to him, but that he had refused to commit himself to them. This, then, the best of them must have felt, was no mere leader of a low, fierce, popular party or faction. Nicodemus at any rate was evidently inclined to doubt whether he might not prove to be the king they were looking for, as the Baptist had declared. The doubt must be solved, and he would see for himself.

And so he comes to Christ, and hears directly from him, that he has indeed come to set up a kingdom, but that it is no visible kingdom like the Cæsars', but a kingdom over men's spirits, one in which rulers as well as peasants must become new men before they can enter – that a light has come into the world, and "he that doeth truth cometh to that light."

From beginning to end there is no word to catch this ruler, or those he represented; no balancing of phrases or playing with plausible religious shibboleths, with which Nicodemus would be familiar, and which might please, and perchance reconcile this well-disposed ruler, and the powerful persons he represented. There is, depend upon it, no severer test of manliness than our behavior to powerful persons, whose aid would advance the cause we have at heart. We know from the later records that the interview of that night, and the strange words he had heard at it, made a deep impression on this ruler. His manliness, however, breaks down for the present. He shrinks back and disappears, leaving the strange young peasant to go on his way.

The same splendid directness and incisiveness characterize his teaching at Samaria. There, again, He attacks at once the most cherished local traditions, showing that the place of worship matters nothing, the object of worship everything. That object is a Father of men's spirits, who wills that all men shall know and worship him, but who can only be worshipped in spirit and in truth. He, the peasant who is talking to them, is himself the Messiah, who has come from this Father of them and him, to give them this spirit of truth in their own hearts.

The Jews at Jerusalem had been clamoring round him for signs of his claim to speak such words, and in the next few days his own people would be crying out for his blood when they heard them. These Samaritans make no such demand, but hear and recognize the message and the messenger. The seed is sown and he passes on, never to return and garner the harvest; deliberately preferring the hard, priest-ridden lake-cities of the Jews as the centre of his ministry. He will leave ripe fields for others to reap. This decision, interpret it as we will, is that of no soft or timid reformer. Take this test and compare Christ's choice of his first field for work with that of any other great leader of men.

XXXV

Happy is the man who is able to follow straight on, though often wearily and painfully, in the tracks of the divine ideal who stood by his side in his youth, though sadly conscious of weary lengths of way, of gulfs and chasms, which since those days have come to stretch between him and his ideal – of the difference between the man God meant him to be – of the manhood he thought he saw so clearly in those early days – and the man he and the world together managed to make of him.

I say, happy is that man. I had almost said that no other than he is happy in any true or noble sense, even in this hard materialistic nineteenth century, when the faith, that the weak must go to the wall, that the strong alone are to survive, prevails as it never did before – which on the surface seems specially to be organized for the destruction of ideals and the quenching of enthusiasms. I feel deeply the responsibility of making *any* assertion on so moot a point; nevertheless, even in our materialistic age, I must urge you all, as you would do good work in the world, to take your stand resolutely and once for all, and all your lives through, on the side of the idealists.

XXXVI

He who has the clearest and intensest vision of what is at issue in the great battle of life, and who quits himself in it most manfully, will be the first to acknowledge that for him there has been no approach to victory except by the faithful doing day by day of the work which lay at his own threshold.

On the other hand, the universal experience of mankind – the dreary confession of those who have merely sought a "low thing," and "gone on adding one to one;" making that the aim and object of their lives – unite in warning us that on these lines no true victory can be had, either for the man himself or for the cause he was sent into the world to maintain.

No, there is no victory possible without humility and magnanimity; and no humility or magnanimity possible without an ideal. Now there is not one amongst us all who has not heard the call in his own heart to put aside all evil habits, and to live a brave, simple, truthful life. It is no modern, no Christian experience, this. The choice of Hercules, and numberless other Pagan stories, the witness of nearly all histories and all literatures, attest that it is an experience common to all our race. It is of it that the poet is thinking in those fine lines of Emerson which are written up in the Hall of Marlborough College:

> "So close is glory to our dust,
> So near is God to man —
> When duty whispers low, 'thou must,'
> The youth replies, 'I can.'"

It is this whisper, this call, which is the ground of what I have, for want of a better name, been speaking of as idealism. Just in so far as one listens to and welcomes it he is becoming an idealist – one who is rising out of himself, and into direct contact and communion with spiritual influences, which even when he shrinks from them, and tries to put them aside, he feels and knows to be as real – to be more real than all influences coming to him from the outside world – one who is bent on bringing himself and the world into obedience to these spiritual influences. If he turns to meet the call and answers ever so feebly and hesitatingly, it becomes clearer and stronger. He will feel next, that just in so far as he is becoming loyal to it he is becoming loyal to his brethren: that he must not only build his own life up in conformity with its teaching, must not only find or cut his own way straight to what is fair and true and noble, but must help on those who are around him and will come after him, and make the path easier and plainer for them also.

I have indicated in outline, in a few sentences, a process which takes a life-time to work out. You all know too, alas! even those who have already listened most earnestly to the voice, and followed most faithfully, how many influences there are about you and within you which stand across the first steps in the path, and bar your progress; which are forever dwarfing and distorting the ideal you are painfully struggling after, and appealing to the cowardice and laziness and impurity which are in every one of us, to thwart obedience to the call. But here, as elsewhere, it is the first step which costs, and tells. He who has once taken that, consciously and resolutely, has gained a vantage-ground for all his life.

XXXVII

Our race on both sides of the Atlantic has, for generations, got and spent money faster than any other, and this spendthrift habit has had a baleful effect on English life. It has made it more and more feverish and unsatisfying. The standard of expenditure has been increasing by leaps and bounds, and demoralizing trade, society, every industry, and every profession until a false ideal has established itself, and the aim of life is too commonly to get, not to be, while men are valued more and more for what they have, not for what they are.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.