

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

A LESSON TO YOUNG MEN.

The way of the transgressor is hard. A law of nature makes it so. Nearly always a young man who is bright and has talent and ambition, wishes he had money. Often he imagines that it would vastly augment his happiness, and that without it life is devoid of charm or purpose. When the imagination of a young man has gained as far as this an ascendancy over his judgment and conscience, he is in danger, and his fall becomes an easy matter.

The dismal, awful door of the State prison lately closed behind a young man who, a few years ago entered upon a life career that promised everything his family and friends, or even he himself, could reasonably hope or desire. His parentage and connections were highly respectable, his education was thorough, his natural abilities were superior, he was energetic and ambitious, and without much difficulty he obtained a responsible position.

Funds that did not belong to him passed through his hands. He imagined that he needed money faster than he could draw his salary, which was a generous one, and the rest is soon told. He fell, and today he is a convicted felon. Hope, pride and prospects are crushed. A gulf of agonizing, horrible despair has swallowed him up. In their old age his parents are bowed down in shame and grief because of him, and his wife, true and loving to the last, were happier were she a widow.

Honorable and intelligent men who have passed from poverty to affluence are almost if not quite unanimous in their testimony upon three points: 1. Money does not produce happiness. 2. There is more happiness in a sense of duty faithfully performed than there is in spending money. 3. There is more pleasure in acquiring wealth by patient and diligent effort than there is in possessing and using it after it is acquired. If every young man could have these truths ineffaceably impressed upon his memory they would be a protection to him in the hour of temptation.

The world is full of allurements and as the children of men pass through it all of them yield more or less. But if the shallowness and the hallowiness and the bitter fiction of that which entices from the path of rectitude were more generally and thoroughly comprehended by each succeeding rising generation as it enters upon the stage of active life, there would be less sin, and consequently less shame and suffering here upon the earth. If youth could be made to believe the truth and prevented from believing that which is not true about the laws of life and happiness, such examples as the one referred to would cease to be repeated.

The fall of a man charged with the custody of funds not his own, is always a matter of regret and is often the topic of a sermon. But generally these sermons have one grave defect; they do not reach the root of the trouble. They fail to point out when, where and how the character of a young man requires to be strengthened if it is to resist the strain of temptation in after life.

Students of this subject agree that the boy who is taught the value of sexual purity, and who, from childhood to manhood is so trained and environed as to arm him against temptation to commit sexual sin, is, other things being equal, better fortified against every other form and sort of temptation than a young man possibly can be who has not been taught to preserve his chastity. And the con-

verse of this is true; the young man who has led an unchaste life is necessarily weak throughout his entire moral structure, and is always liable to yield under the pressure of a temptation.

There is a direct and strong connection between that phase of a young man's morals which relates to the opposite sex and the phase which relates to his pecuniary honesty; and his status in regard to one of these phases goes far to determine his condition in the other respect. Men who are strong in maintaining their own sexual purity are morally strong in every way; while the libertine is never to be trusted in any position that calls for resisting moral fibre. The conclusion to be drawn from these truths so often illustrated in human experience, is obvious. If the boy is to be fortified against temptations to commit such crimes as embezzlement, forgery, theft, or any other, he must be taught the danger and degradation of unchaste conduct.

WILLIAM E. GLADSTONE.

Gladstone has gone and the world pauses for a moment to contemplate in reverent silence the remarkable career just ended. His contest with the last enemy has been long and painful, but at last his victory is complete, and it can be said truly of him that in his death he has given to the world a lesson perhaps more valuable than any conveyed by his life. The curtain has just fallen over a scene in which the triumph of faith over the terrors of the valley of the shadow of death is well illustrated.

William Ewart Gladstone was born in Liverpool, December 29, 1809, a year in which Lincoln and Darwin, Tennyson and Poe, Mendelssohn and Oliver Wendell Holmes, and many other noble spirits commenced their earthly mission. He was educated at Eton and graduated at Oxford in 1831. The following year he commenced his public life as member of Parliament from Newark. He was a conservative. From his father he had inherited a keen sense for practical business, and it is doubtful whether, in his long career, he ever considered any question of importance to the state without weighing duly its effects commercially. He was a statesman and a business man combined.

As a representative of the Tory party Gladstone in the dim past appears as a defender of slavery in West India. With fervent eloquence he showed how beneficent a state of bondage would be when the chains are held in humane hands. From the first he attracted attention and soon became a leader among men. In 1837 Sir Robert Peel appointed him junior lord of the treasury, and in 1835 under secretary for colonial affairs. In 1842, as a member of the privy council, he made a thorough revision of the tariff. In 1843 he had a seat in the cabinet, which he two years later resigned on a question of conscience. Between 1846 and 1852 he changed his politics and became moderately liberal. As chancellor of the exchequer it was Gladstone's duty to manage the British finances during the Crimean war. After Palmerston's death he became leader of the House of Commons and as such he encountered the long and bitter antagonism of his most brilliant rival, Benjamin Disraeli. For more than twenty years the two opposed each other in contest for the premier-

ship of Great Britain. Three times Disraeli was successful and four times Gladstone, and Great Britain's policy was shaped according to the policy of the one or the other of these giants among the leaders of men. In 1868 he pushed through the House of Commons a resolution favoring the disestablishment of the Irish church, and a bill to that end passed the house, but was beaten by the peers. In 1868 he was rejected by South Lancashire but returned for Greenwich, and in 1868, on the resignation of the Disraeli ministry, Gladstone succeeded as first lord of the treasury. During his administration the Irish church disestablishment bill was passed; also, the Irish land act, the elementary education act, and the "Alabama" claims treaty. He was succeeded by Disraeli in 1874. In 1880 he was returned for Midlothian, and his (the liberal) party having a decided majority in the house, he again took office as head of the ministry. His great struggle for Ireland took place after, and although his home rule bill was negatived, the great statesman retired from the political battlefield more as a conqueror than one who had suffered defeat.

Gladstone was an author as well as a statesman. Some of his published works treat on ecclesiastical matters; others deal with classical subjects. It is characteristic of the man that his first literary effort was devoted to a defense of the church and state, while his last work was an exposition of Butler's analogy. His mind was bent on religion, and in his sufferings he found strength in the beautiful sentiments expressed in poetry of a devotional nature. Rock of Ages was a favorite, and often his friends heard him repeat its lines as death drew near. How could an illustrious career more fittingly close?

Gladstone's life brings to mind the fact that the progress of the world in this age is most rapid. What changes since he first attracted public attention! The wonders of steam and electricity were then unknown. The postal service was in its infancy. Agricultural machinery was in its rudimentary stages. Natural sciences were undeveloped. Slavery prevailed and brute force was about the only effective method of discipline known in the state, the home and the school. What a change in all ramifications of life, in the brief space of the life of one man! And much of the change for the better is due to the efforts of this one man. There is mourning in the nation whose son he was, and the world at large reverently watches the procession that follows to their last resting place the remains of the noble dead, but even the silent lips speak, with eloquence, words of hope for the future. The progress of humanity is onward, and a high plane will be reached, when the successors of Gladstone shall have faithfully ended their mission, as he did his. That thought is forcibly suggested by the life-work of William Ewart Gladstone.

DIPLOMATIC SPAIN.

The Spanish minister at Paris, it seems, is endeavoring to affect an understanding between the two countries in the present crisis. It is more than probable that the stubborn resistance with which Spain has met all the advances of the United States and finally brought a hopeless war upon herself is due to a hope regarding the possibility of a European coalition. Spain depends in this struggle as much on her diplomacy as on her army and navy.

In the beginning of the war, European sympathy was largely for Spain. The old countries cannot but