

to the best possible advantage, while at the same time he should be careful not to overtask his mind with the study of books or anything likely to impair his health. Of course he must avoid every habit and indulgence that tends to weaken his nervous force, and leads a natural, wholesome, pure and temperate life. The working power of the mind ought not to demolish with the approach of age, and it is possible for us to do our best work toward the close of our mortal existence.

"I attribute my own health, which has never been seriously impaired, and my longevity, very much to the inheritance which has been transmitted to me by my ancestors. I am descended on my mother's side from the Rev. John Wheelwright, one of the earliest of the Boston ministers, who was banished from the Massachusetts colony for heresy about the year 1640. He lived to an extreme old age, as most of his posterity have done, my own grandfather being ninety-three years old the first time he ever sent for a physician.

"As to my own personal habits, I smoked tobacco faithfully for fifty years, and then, seven or eight years ago, I abandoned it altogether, on the ground that I did not care to be a slave of such a habit any longer. I have not been a total abstainer, except for certain limited periods, when I thought that the welfare of others required it. I have been accustomed to sleep as other people do and without giving much thought to it. In fact, a scrupulous regard for sanitary rules and special attention to bodily health have never interested me very much.

"In regard to marriage as being conducive to longevity and everything else that is good and desirable, I think that every able bodied man who has the means of supporting a family is under a moral obligation to marry as soon as possible after he has reached the age of twenty-one. If he expects to live upon other people, like a parasite, he has no right to marry at all.

"In order to preserve intellectual health a young man, I would say to an old man also, should act and work like a reasonable being, and always have something on hand to occupy and benefit and interest him. A machine that lies idle for a series of years is destroyed by rust, and it works in the same way with human beings, whether they are young or old. I do not mean that a business man should keep on going to his office or his shop every day and toil on as he has been accustomed to do until the end comes. But there must be something to occupy the mind if we would keep from dying before our time.

"As to insomnia, I go to bed every night at 12 o'clock and get up before eight next morning—taking a short nap during the day if I have the opportunity to do so. I often keep on writing until after midnight, as I am now doing, but this does not interfere with my sleeping. I have no trouble on that score.

"I have, in fact, no consciousness of old age, and but for the impediment in walking I should consider myself as young a man as I ever was. I know, of course, that the end must be near, but it does not seem to me any nearer than it did fifty years ago. I have great reason to thank God for giving me such a serene and famous old age.

"THOMAS M. CLARK."

My next letter is from Mr. Samuel Smiles, the author of *Self Help* and of a dozen other valuable works. He also says that work is the only thing that keeps men young. His letter is full of personal details about his habits and his work. It is written in a firm hand. It reads as follows:

KENSINGTON, London, June 4th, 1894.

Dear Sir—I have to ask your pardon for not sooner replying to your letter of April 10th. It came to me through Edinburgh, Scotland, which I left fifty-six years ago. Since then I have lived at Leeds, but principally in London, where I long acted as secretary of the Southeastern Railway company.

I am well on in my eighty-second year. About twenty-three years ago I had a stroke of paralysis and should scarcely be living at present, but having a sound constitution and giving up all work for about five years, I happily recovered, and only the other day I sent the manuscript of a new book to the printers.

The reason I had my stroke of paralysis is as follows: After doing my secretarial work during the day I went home at night and wrote the *Lives of the Engineers*. After that came *Self Help and Character*. The first successful book I wrote was on the life of George Stephenson. I had attained the age of forty-five years when I wrote that book. The others followed. While I was writing *Character* I was also editing the work of my son, "*A Boy's Voyage Round the World*." This was more than any human brain could undergo. Then I was stricken down—lost the use of my right side, lost my speech—had what is called aphasia; and then took my long rest. When I recovered I proceeded to write other books, most of which are known in America. Many of my books have been translated into European languages and also into Asiatic, as far as Japan.

You ask me about my habits. I am never idle. Work is the salvation of every human being. My wife is alive and as happy as I am. I should not have been as I am without her. We had two sons and three daughters—one of the sweetest of the latter died. But we have, nevertheless, twenty grandchildren, and one of them is happily married. We had our golden wedding in December last.

I smoke moderately and take three-quarters of a glass of whisky at night, by the advice of my doctor, to induce sleep. Everything in moderation. I take two walks a day, one in the forenoon, another in the afternoon. On the whole I am very well.

Evers yours, faithfully,

S. SMILES.

One of the most interesting of these unpublished letters was from Honorable Hugh McCulloch. He was seventy-six years old when Secretary of the Treasury, and he preserved his intellectual vigor to the last. About a year ago he dictated a letter for me on youth and how to keep it. He was not well at the time, and Mrs. McCulloch wrote the letter and signed it. In it she said: "Mr. McCulloch believes in the golden rule. The young man who would grow old and still keep young should do to others as he would be done by. He should be pure in soul and body, and be temperate in eating and drinking.

He believes that tobacco and ardent spirits are injurious, and he would advise the young to let them alone. He should devote himself to business, but he should not neglect his family. He should marry as soon as he is able to keep house, and when he finds the woman whom he can sincerely love.

"You ask as to insomnia. Mr. McCulloch has found that horseback riding has done a great deal for him. He has always been a light sleeper, and he could not sleep well when business cares annoyed him. He was delicate, when he went to Indiana at the age of twenty-five, but he had to take four trips a year from Fort Wayne to Indianapolis on horseback. This exercise made him strong and vigorous, and he kept it up in after life. It was his chief exercise when in the Treasury department. Secretary McCulloch has always been domestic in his tastes. His pleasures have been in his family, and it is there that he has gotten his rest and enjoyment. His boys have always been fonder of home than of any other place, and their father was their favorite companion. He therefore had no black sheep in his family. Sons and grandsons are respectable men so far, God bless them!

[Signed.] "MRS. MCCULLOCH."

One of the most famous astronomers and scientists of England is the Hon. William Huggins, F. R. S., D. C. L., LL. D., who now, at eighty-one, writes a hand like copper-plate. I have a long letter from him upon these subjects, and he gives me many good points as to how to keep young. Says he:

"One of the chief things that I would say to young men is, don't burn your candle at both ends. Do not attempt to take upon yourself the double burden of hard intellectual work and at the same time try to undergo the exhausting activities of modern social life. Work alone seldom if ever kills or ever enfeebles, but intellectual work, followed by the exhausting excitement of society, makes a double strain which is one of the most frequent causes of premature feebleness and of old age. I believe in regular and sufficient periods of sleep, and as for myself, I have never smoked, and, though not a total abstainer, I take very little of any alcoholic stimulants. I sometimes drink a glass of claret, but often for a long period no wines at all.

"You ask as to marriage. I reply, that other conditions being equal, a young man will do wisely to marry reasonably early. I think, however, that it would be far better to defer marriage if its increased expenses and social claims are likely to cripple the means of the young man and his preparation for his life work. If a wise choice is made, and both are willing by a prudent mode of living to avoid bringing upon themselves prematurely large expenses and social distinctions, I believe a young man in such cases will be immensely the gainer by the stimulus, sympathy and safeguards of an early marriage.

[Signed.] "WILLIAM HUGGINS."

Few men in the United States have done more literary work than Thomas Wentworth Higginson. He has written a dozen different works and he has been one of the leaders of advanced thought in the United States for years. He is now eighty-two years of age, but he is in good physical condition and is still at