

## "BUSINESS TRAINING."

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT MORGAN  
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This might be considered a barren and unattractive subject, partaking more of the prose of every day life than of its poetry; more of travel in the hard and rugged highway of mental and moral discipline, than of loitering where flowers bloom, and where all the asperities of fact are softened by the glamor of fancy. It means more the accumulation of forces and their uses, than of the full fruition of acquired competency and its beneficent repose. It speaks more fervently of the girding of the loins and of going forth as a soldier in the battle and storm of life, than of the days when he shall return, laden with the trophies of his victory, and crowned with the days of triumphant success. It tells of saddened but hopeful feeling for the future rather than the retrospective tracings of the past, and the stirring consciousness that from a quarter or half a century of toil, there have been garnered those elements which herald to the world the facts that by business training men have accomplished and will continue to accomplish more for the good of our humanity than was claimed for mythological heroes in the misty regions of the past.

Many have an idea that business training has special reference to those who purpose engaging in the pursuits of commerce and trade, and none to the artisan, who repairs our soles and frames our understanding, but little to the man who from the plowshare and the barn, brings forth the "harvest home," still less to the stirring wife or beneficent mother who, in the traffic and barter of domestic life, makes or mars the fortune of her lord. But this is a serious error, one that has been productive of evil results, and which, like the fabled "Upas" tree, has beneath its spreading branches, been to thousands as the very valley and shadow of death, material and financial death.

What is there implied in this "business training" that it should command a good share of our attention, and what are the characteristics which shall guarantee its success?

Business training implies that a man, every man, that a woman, every woman, shall be able to do and perform that for themselves which must be done by themselves or by others, sometimes by strangers, sometimes by enemies, and sometimes, though rarely, by friends. It implies that the products of a man's labor, of a woman's labor, shall be given to them in its integrity, and that the recipient shall be competent to so direct its division that it shall minister to the welfare of all concerned, the men or women who earn 5, 10, 20 dollars per week and yet cannot tell whether they received it, and the men or women who receive 5, 10, or 20 dollars, as the case may be, and know what has become of it, are equally culpable and equally deficient in business training; as one man or woman may inherit the treasure of a millionaire, and for lack of this may fall into abject poverty, and another may be taken from the very dunghill of obscurity and penury, then subjected to its healthful processes, until he shall exchange his obscurity for fame, and his penury for the glitter and substantial of accumulated wealth.

In this business training our Schools and Colleges are grand auxiliaries, and none can show a prouder record for its age than that Institution under whose auspices we are now assembled. To this our commercial interests, our educational and our social interests bear a faithful testimony. Many of its graduates have become experts through its educational discipline, and if this has been thoroughly seconded, or if, as a primary, their moral and social forces have been subjected to as efficient a training, these graduates will be the men of our future, their history will be the history of our State, it will be interwoven with the social, political and religious fabric, of our nation and will give to it that integrity and perpetuity which are the crown and climax of a nation's life.

But this is not to be achieved simply by writing, by arithmetic, by grammar, by composition, by geography, or by the advanced studies of the higher classes, all these give power to the machine, cogs they are and aids, but main spring and balance wheel are just as important, and mayhap more so, in that grand system which in all lands and on all seas manifests the hidden, mysterious, yet powerful influences of heart and head conjointly.

It is true none can be said to have had a business training except they are conversant with all the above rules, which minister in that direction, but for a few moments we will point out some features of character without which there can be no assured success.

Industry is one very important element of business training. No matter how conversant with rules or goods, or how clever as a workman in any department of labor, the idler is an unsuccessful man. Solomon was right when he indicted that sentence whose pleasant music has made melody through the ages, "Seekest thou a man diligent in business; he shall not stand before mean men, he shall stand before kings." This acknowledged, dignified labor and placed it on an equality with kings, say, more, courtiers might "crook the pregnant knee," and bow before the rulers of the earth, but the industrious man, he knows no peer, he owns no kings, he is a king by virtue of divine law, he STANDS BEFORE kings. A good deal of that which men call genius, when divested of the glitter which irradiates success, will be found, no doubt, to be but the golden halo of an industrious man.

Persistency is a very important item in successful business training—it is not being industrious one hour in a day, one day in a week, one week in a year; it must become a settled habit of life, no matter how thorny the path or how rugged and undesirable to an idle man; no difference how many obstacles in the way, or how many may have failed therein, persistency will remove mountains, will control the lightning and direct the storm. This is the stuff of which heroes are made, men who "fight it out on this line if it takes all summer." Men who possess this quality, laugh at danger, they know no defeat, they ask no quarter, they go, as the comic writer said, onward, "with the intrepid tread of a jackass towards a sack of oats."

Integrity throws a splendid lustre over its associate characteristics, persistency and industry, it is the setting, the unadulterated gold of character, it is not tarnished by cloud, nor enhanced by sunshine, nor changed by defeat or success. If it suffers the first, all good men say it deserved the latter; if it enjoys the latter, none envy but those whose good word would be reproach. The man of integrity is the man who can be trusted, "his word is as good as his bond," he takes no undue advantage of his neighbor, he does not misrepresent when he sells nor deprecate when he buys, is not considered smart, but is honest, not clever, but a child places confidence in him, he takes no advantage of his neighbor's ignorance, or of his necessity, does not drive a good bargain, yet feels in the very atmosphere the respect of his fellow. Such a man steals into the affections of the world, even mean men feel small when in his presence, he can be "tied to," as men say; his praise is in all the gates.

Conscientiousness is a prime requisite of good business training, that is a man will not accumulate in other than a righteous cause and honorable business, he is not engaged in that which saps the morals of any people, or in that which perverts even the appetites of man, which ministers to drunkenness, the social evil, the perpetuation of injustice or withholding of rights. It cannot be said of him that he has his price—he is religious without sectarianism, he is not a slave to party or to nationality, he sees God in man, or, if unseen, he would bring from the rubbish of false education and circumstances the germ of the possible, losing sight in a measure of the actual, seeing in all the brotherhood of a common humanity and the defects of an uncertain business training.

Economy is another of the gems which belong to the chaplet of the business man. It is not what a man earns that marks a perfect man, but in a measure what he accumulates over and beyond his needs. It is not an evidence of success that a man should be under obligations to labor till he is three-score years and ten. Conscientious integrity, coupled with persistent industry, should for gray hairs give competency, and with genuine economy, it generally will. Nor does this imply stinginess. No, it more often implies liberality, the stingy, parsimonious man may accumulate, but he is not the ideal business man. It is, "the liberal man deviseth liberal things, and by his liberality shall he stand." It is this which glorifies the name of Peabody \* and sheds a more than regal lustre on

\* [Notwithstanding the great liberality of Mr. Peabody in public matters in his latter

days, if he has not been badly misrepresented he was anything but liberal to his employees while he was gathering his wealth.—Ed.]

the name of Miss Burdett Coutts. Their wealth is not deified, only in its uses, and its beneficence runs to all generations. By them the poor are made rich, rich by being subjected to the processes of faithful business training; that is, so far as schools and their appliances of culture can work out this problem for all who come within the influence they have evoked. The merchant who, on looking out of his office window, saw an applicant for a situation pick up a pin, found a quality which gave him a favored and faithful servant. Some young men ignore this quality, and lavish all their earnings on style, dress, jewelry, and other extravagance, while the inner man is without adornment, unclothed, unfurnished; thought, culture, reading, discipline find no place; with outside wealth there is internal poverty, outside extravagance but an internal economy which is false and delusive, possessing none of the elements of business training, which the thoughtful man, the business man, the professional man delights to see in the youth of the community in which he dwells.

Promptitude marks all the transactions of a genuine business man. When he promises he performs. If he makes an engagement you may prophecy it will be fulfilled. The hand upon the hour or moment is the signal for his presence. His notes know no protest. Other men's time is held by him of equal value with his own, so he never compels any to wait. He is the very incarnation of honor, and when he errs, you can hardly indict either heart or hand. Other men may use excuses or form apologies, but these are not in his vernacular. Subject, it is true, to all the accidents of our common life, he acts as if to him they were unknown, his will and opportunity close and jump together, he is none of your creature of circumstances; he controls or circumvents, never allowing "I dare not wait upon I would." Like the avalanche he becomes irresistible, and all obstructions vanish at the instance of his imperial will.

This promptitude is under the supervision of a serene intelligence. He understands his business, or delves into every manifestation thereof that he may become proficient. If a teacher, he is a devotee at the shrine of human nature—he can almost mould it as if he were its creator. Temperament, traits and tendency are all so many keys by which he enters into the corridors and avenues of the human soul, latching one door and opening another, that the breath of knowledge may penetrate the innermost recesses of the same. Call him an enthusiast—he is, and deals with the most subtle element known to the entire universe. Is he a farmer, creation is an open book, soils, gases, manures, and chemical processes are his daily life, from germ to harvest he is a willing student, "looking through nature up to nature's god," and no matter what the avocation, or how humble the calling, intelligence reveals a fragrance unknown to common sense. It becomes spiritualized and sanctified. Labor, work, industry, when intelligent, smacks of creative skill. No matter how crude or how common the element in which such men deal, it becomes plastic in the hand, and by the cunning artificer glows in forms of beauty, or of use and through all the ages and in all lands, wondrous have been its immortal triumphs, blossoming in stone, pealing in all hamony, glowing on all canvasses, storing up monuments of social grandeur, and through each ideal pointing to a millenium when all shall be filled with the love of beauty and blest with the beauty of love.

But what has all this to do with business training? Much every way, because it is the consummation of an ideal and every point made in academy or college, every act of sustained progress in the flight of centuries, tells in tones of music, that all the educational forces of the universe, no matter how commenced, continued, or consummated, are but so many steps or acts in the great human drama (or tragedy if you will) of human progress by business training.

System is also a fundamental trait of business training; all the other qualities mentioned lose a good deal of their value unless system governs and controls the whole. A business man without this, would be an anomaly—he might have what is called luck, and apparently succeed, and because of this some would decry, not system alone, but all the elements of a business cha-

acter, and in the idle longings for fame, fortune and success, they pass a restless life. System implies that timely attention is given to every duty. Many are amazed at the amount of labor which is performed by a person of system; every moment, so long as a duty is unfilled, is precious. Nor is this a condition of slavery—it is rather a condition of freedom. Whereas the man who is driven by his business is a fearful slave, the man of system is never at a loss—he has "a place for every thing and every thing in its place." Nothing to him is trifling, but only part of one great whole. Routine takes the place of chance, order of indifference, and success of failure. He is a disciplinarian and an economist of the forces he controls. He compels his destiny, he is the one "who achieves greatness, and finds greatness thrust upon him."

We might multiply characteristics which are the results and necessities of business training, but these must suffice. And now in all candor, my fellow students, when divested of all localized or exclusive meaning, what is there in these ideas that do not belong to man? If the qualities of the discipline, if the results are good, are they not good for all, are they of any more individual benefit in a commercial sphere of life than in the life of the artisan or the laborer; are they not of equal value to the woman, to the wife and the mother, as to the man, the husband, and the father? Nay, more; if we would impress upon our posterity, if we would have an impression upon the world, shall we not welcome to our seminary and halls of learning and to much of the rich treasures of experience in business life (now the exclusive heritage of man), the great educators of our race, viz, our sisters, our daughters and our wives? Do not the duties of domestic life require industry, persistency, integrity, conscientiousness, economy, promptitude, intelligence and system? Yes; where they are not, home is without its richest glory, its greatest power, its most benign influence. Such a home garners not the wealth which adorns, sanctifies, and hallows its sacred precincts, but from its bounds go forth the idle man, the dishonest man, the unscrupulous man, the wasteful man, the disorderly man, the ignorant man, the Ishmaels of the world. Example dealt a deadly blow to them. Where the water of life should, like a perennial fountain, have slaked their every thirst, the waters of Marah (or bitter) was the well at which they drank, and that which should have been bread was but as the husks which the swine did eat. Their daily food lacked the elements of heaven-born, God-given "business training."

So may we be faithful to the highest ideal which inspiration gives, that in the great day of account, when the books are opened and the balance sheet is presented to the great business head of the Universe, may it be demonstrated that each of us have a good cash balance on the credit side, having laid up treasure beyond moth or rust. This will be success. "Having been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many," "having used the talents with which thou wast endowed and made increase, thou shalt stand for ever as an ensample of unpurged Business Training."

A little four-year old being asked by his mother if he would not like to have wings and be an angel, replied: "No, ma; I'd rather be a hawk and live on chickens."

An intelligent writer says: "It is not possible to over-estimate the advantage which would result from men in trades and professions allowing their daughters some participation in the daily work of their lives. What girls want is a larger observation of the world, and a deeper knowledge of human nature."

There are few of our merchants and manufacturers and business men who could not largely avail themselves of the service of their educated and competent daughters; and if such service could be rendered generally available, it is not too much to say that a wider and more social life would arise for mankind. Man's occupation would in no sense be prejudiced, whilst women would at once find that outlet for their faculties for which many of them have been so long striving. A certain responsibility would increase their self-reliance. A capacity for earning would remove the sense of dependence; a definite occupation would bring both health and cheerfulness; and the largest experience of life would give force and completeness to their mental character.