

depends on you. You can develop qualities that will make you an attractive companion. Being a wage earner teaches you how to work with others. If employed, you can build up a dowry. What qualities do you most desire in the man you hope to marry? Outside of marriage—and singleness is far better than a bad marriage—there are many opportunities for usefulness and happiness. Do the best you can to achieve your heart's desire and make up your mind in any event to live happily and well.

To Young Men

The desire for a fine wife and family is a powerful motive in the lives of most young men. The desire to do nothing that would interfere with the aspiration to establish a worthy family has stimulated many a young man to greater efforts and to higher standards. Are you developing in yourself the qualities which you would desire in the husband of your sister? Are you choosing your girl companions among those who have the qualities you would wish in a lifelong mate? Ask a few older men who have been successful in their home life if they will not talk with you on how to make the most of that phase of your life.

Foundation Years

To get a picture of your life as a whole, review carefully your earlier years to age 20. Note that they are the basic habit-forming years. Note points of strength or weakness. What bearing may these years have on the rest of your life? During the decade from 10 to 20 you should begin to look at your life as a whole and plan for it. Make a list of your talents, preferences, and resources. Study the various kinds of vocations and the basic skills required for each. Test your qualifications for the fields of work that interest you, and then choose school and outside activities that will help you. If you do not plan to attend college, outline a program of continuing study after you leave school. Vocational success depends on skill, purpose, energy and integrity.

The Third Decade

Note that the years of life from 20 to 30 usually include two major decisions: the choice of an occupation or if that decision has been made earlier, choice of a first job; second, the choice of a mate and the establishment of a home. Because of these major decisions, this is one of the most important decades of your life. Let us assume that the choice of a vocation has been made before age 20 and that the task now is to make the best possible start in that vocation. Let us list the specific things we can do to get a good start. Let us list the things we may well avoid. How can we achieve personal cultivation? How can the family life be enriched? Is our standard of living simple enough to provide savings for the later years? What contribution can we make to our fellows and to the world? These choices lay the foundation for the afterself. They are too important to be left to chance.

The Fourth Decade

If the earlier foundations have been well laid, the years from 30 to 40 will be peculiarly rich in satisfactions. The majority of outstanding modern achievements in inventions, science, professions, art

and literature were made by men and women between the ages of 28 and 40. These are the years when financial capital is usually accumulated most rapidly; when wise investment provides for the security of loved ones in the later years; when children are getting into high school and college so that parents live with them in the new world of vibrant young life. There is danger during these years that we shall be spoiled by our leisure and comforts, that we shall spend too recklessly, that we shall cease to make the efforts toward personal improvement which must carry us forward if we are to enjoy the highest excellence. A program of reading and study is particularly fruitful during this period.

The Fifth Decade

The years from 40 to 50 are transition years. Perhaps the hardest thing for youth is to get the perspective of the middle and later years of life. This is true if the young person has no companions and friendships among older people. Make a list of the people you know who are at this age. Note the increasing number of breakdowns. Note how those who are successful manage themselves. Note that those who pass through these transition years often enjoy a long life of happiness and achievement. Note your own body. Try to visualize it in terms of 70 years of action. Seek to understand the change which comes in middle life when the supply of energy begins slowly to decrease. Observe about you the effect of this change on others.

Beyond Fifty

Study the lives of those who have passed the half century mark. Are they happy? At what points are their lives unsatisfactory? Perhaps the first problem is that of financial insecurity. Next comes failing health with its discouragement. Third, there is often an absence of worthwhile interests and activities to occupy leisure hours. Could these difficulties have been avoided by careful planning in the earlier years? It is just as important to plan for interests and activities during the later years of life as it is to plan for financial security during those years. What foundations have you laid for hobbies? What contribution will you make to civic welfare. Select the best among your acquaintances who are living in the later years. Learn from them.

The Larger Planning

The individual is often caught by forces in the world outside his control. This is especially true in times of transition and economic stress. He can make the most of himself only by joining with his fellows in a collective effort to improve the state, to perfect the laws, to restrain the greedy, to insure justice and opportunity. Include as a part of your planning, time for taking your part in the larger planning activities of the community. The idea of planning may be the chief contribution of the twentieth century to human progress. To plan beyond the year or the decade into the life as a whole; to plan beyond the individual to the family, the neighborhood, the state, the nation, and even the world, is to gain a new perspective which knows that many of the uncertainties of life can be provided for, and a faith to undertake the task.