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GISTRATE'S and CONSTABLE'S BLANKS.

Miscellaneous.

On the Evils of Idleness.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

All degrees of indolence incline a man to rely upon others, and not upon himself; to eat their bread and not his own. His carelessness is somebody's loss; his neglect is somebody's downfall; his promises are a perpetual stumbling-block to all who trust them. If he borrows, the article remains borrowed; if he begs and gets, it is as the letting out of water—no one knows when it will stop. He spoils your work; disappoints your expectations; exhausts your patience; eats up your substance; abuses your confidence; and brings a dead weight upon all your plans; the very best thing and honest man can do with a lazy man, is to get rid of him. Solomon says: "Beware of a fool with a pestle, in a mortar with wheat, yet will not his folly depart from him." He does not mention what kind of a fool he meant; but as he speaks of a fool by pre-eminence, I take it for granted he meant a lazy man; and I am the more inclined to the opinion, from another expression of his experience: "As vinegar to the teeth, and smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him."

Indolence is a great spendthrift. An indolently inclined young man, can neither make nor keep property. I have high authority for this: "He that is slothful in his work, is brother to him that is a great waster."

When Satan would put ordinary men to a crop of mischief, like a wise husband-man, he clears the ground and prepares it for seed; but he finds the idle man already prepared, and he has scarcely the trouble of sowing; for vices, like weeds, ask little sowing, except what the wind gives their ripe and winged seeds, shaking and scattering them all abroad. Indeed, lazy men may fitly be likened to a tropical prairie, over which the wind of temptation perpetually blows, drifting every vagrant seed from the hedge and hill, and which—without a moment's rest through all the year—waves its rank harvest of luxuriant weeds.

First, the imagination will be haunted with unlawful visitors. Upon the outskirts of towns are scattered houses, abandoned by reputable persons. They are not empty, because all the day silent; thieves, vagabonds, and villains haunt them, in joint possession with rats, bats, and vermin. Such are the men's imaginations—full of unlawful company.

The imagination is closely related to the passions, and fires them with its heat. The day-dreams of indolent youth glow each hour with warmer colors, and bolder adventures. The imagination fashions scenes of enchantment, in which the passions revel; and it leads them out, in the shadow at first, to deeds which soon they will seek in earnest. The brilliant colors of far-away clouds are but the colors of the storm; the salacious day-dreams of indolent men, easy at first and distant, deepen every day, darker and darker, to the color of actual evil. Then follows the blight of every habit. Indolence promises without redeeming the pledge; a mist of forgetfulness rises up and obscures the memory of vows and oaths. The negligence of laziness breeds more falsehoods than the cunning of the sharper. As poverty waits upon the steps of indolence, so, upon such poverty, broad evasions, subterfuges, lying denials, falsehood becomes the instrument of every plan. Negligence of truth, next occasional falsehood, then wanton mendacity—these three strides traverse the whole road of lies.

Indolence as surely runs to dishonesty, as to lying. Indeed, they are but different parts of the same road, and not far apart. In directing the conduct of the Ephesian converts, Paul says, "Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good." The men who were thieves, were those who had ceased to work. Industry was the road back to honesty. When stores are broken open, the idle are first suspected. The desperate forgeries and swindlings of past years have taught men, upon their occurrence, to ferret their authors among the unemployed, or among those vainly occupied in vicious pleasures.

The terrible passion for stealing rarely grows upon the young, except through the necessities of their idle pleasures. Business is first neglected for amusement, and amusement soon becomes the only business. The appetite for vicious pleasure outruns the means of procuring it. The theatre, the circus, the card-table, the midnight carouse, demand money. When scanty earnings are gone, the young man pilfers from the till. First, because he hopes to repay, and next, because he despairs of paying—for the disgrace of stealing ten dollars or a thousand will be the same, but not their respective pleasures. Next, he will gamble, since it is only another form of stealing. Gradually excluded from reputable society, the vagrant follows all the badges of vice, and is familiar with her paths; and, through them, enters the broad road of crime. Society precipitates its lazy members, as water does its filth; and they form at the bottom, a pestilent sediment, stirred up by every breeze of evil, into riots, robberies, and murders. Into it drains all the filth, and out of it, as from a source, flow all the streams of pollution.

Brutal wretches, desperately hunted by the law, crawling in human filth, brood here their villain schemes, and plot mischief to man. Hither resorts the truculent damage-giver, to stir up the fetid filth against his adversaries, or to bring up mobs out of this sea, which cannot rest, but casts up mire and dirt.

The results of indolence upon communities, are as marked as upon individuals. In a town of industrious people, the streets would be clean; houses neat and comfortable; fences in repair; school-houses swarming with rosy-faced children, decently clad, and well-behaved. The laws would be respected, because justly administered. The church would be thronged with devout worshippers. The tavern would be silent, and for the most part empty, or a welcome retreat for weary travellers. Grog-sellers would fail, and mechanics grow rich; labor would be honorable, and boasting a disgrace. For music, the people would have the blacksmith's anvil, and the carpenter's hammer; and at home, the spinning-wheel, and girls cheerfully singing at their work. Debts would be sold in paid, because seldom made; but if contracted, no grim officer would be invited to the settlement. Town officers would be respectable men, taking office reluctantly, and only for the public good. Public days would be full of sports without fighting; and elections would be as orderly as weddings or funerals.

In a town of lazy men, I should expect to find crazy-houses; shingles and weather-boards knocked off; doors hingless, and all a-creak; windows stuffed with rags, hats, or pillows. Instead of flowers in summer, and warmth in winter, every side of the house would swarm with vermin in hot weather—and with starveling pigs in cold; fences would be curiosities of lazy contrivance, and gates hung with ropes, or lying flat in the mud. Lank cattle would follow every loaded wagon, supplicating a morsel, with famine in their looks. Children would be ragged, dirty, sallow; the school-house empty; the jail full; the church silent; the grog-shops noisy; and the carpenter, the saddler, and the blacksmith, would do their principal work at taverns. Lawyers would reign; constables flourish, and hunt sneaking criminals; burly justice (as their interests might dictate) would connive a compromise, or make a commitment. The peace-officers would work at tumults, arrest rioters in fun, and drink with them in good earnest. Good men would be obliged to keep dark, and bad men would swear, and rule the town. Public days would be scenes of confusion, and end in rows; elections would be drunken, illegal, bisterous and brutal.

The young abhor the last results of idleness; but they do not perceive that the first steps lead to the last. They are in the opening of this career; but with them it is general leisure, not laziness; it is relaxation, not sloth; amusement, not indolence. But leisure, relaxation, and amusement, when men ought to be usefully engaged, are indolence. A spacious industry is the worst idleness. A young man perceives that the first steps lead to that last, with every body but himself. He sees others become drunkards by seditious dipping; as if he could not be a drunkard. He sees others become dishonest, by petty habits of fraud; but will indulge silent aberrations, as if he could not become knavish. Though others, by lying, lose all character, he does not imagine that his little dalliances with falsehood will make him a liar. He knows that salacious imaginations, villainous pictures, harlot snuff-boxes, and illicit familiarities, have led thousands to her door, whose house is the way to hell; yet he never sighs or trembles lest these things should take him to this inevitable way of damnation!

In reading these strictures upon indolence, you will abhor it in others, without suspecting it in yourself. While you read, I fear you are excusing yourself; you are supposing that your leisure has not been laziness; or that, with your disposition, and in your circumstances, indolence is harmless. Be not deceived: if you are idle, you are on the road to ruin; and there are few stopping places upon it. It is rather a precipice than a road. While I point out the temptation to indolence, scrutinize your course, and pronounce honestly upon your risk.

1. Some are tempted to indolence by their wretched training, or rather, wretched want of it. How many families are the most remiss, whose low condition and sufferings are the strongest inducements to inducements to industry. The children have no inheritance, yet never work; no education, yet are never sent to school. It is hard to keep their rags around them, none of them will earn better raiment. If ever there was a case when a government should interfere between parent and child, that seems to be one, where children are started in life with the education of vice. If in every community, three things should be put together, which always work together, the front would be a grog-shop—the middle a jail—the rear a gallows; an infernal trinity; and the recruits for this three-headed monster, are largely drafted from the lazy children of worthless parents.

2. The children of rich parents are apt to be reared in indolence. The ordinary motives to industry are wanting, and the temptations to sloth are multiplied. Other men labor to provide a support; to amass

wealth; to secure homage; to obtain power; to multiply the elegant products of art. The child of affluence inherits these things. Why should he labor who may command universal service, whose money subsidizes the inventions of art, exhausts the luxuries of society, and makes rarities common by their abundance? Only the blind would not see that riches and ruin run in one channel to prodigal children. The most rigorous regimen the most confirmed industry, and steadfast mortality, can alone disarm inherited wealth, and reduce it to a blessing. The profligate wretch, who fondly watches his father's advancing decrepitude, and secretly curses the lingering steps of death (seldom too slow except to hungry heirs), at last is overblessed in the tidings that the lotterer work is done—and the estate. When the golden shower has fallen, he rules as a prince in a court of expectant parasites. All the slues by which pleasurable vice drains an estate are opened wide. A few years consume the ruin. The hopeful heir, avoided by all whom he had helped, ignorant of useful labor, scorning a knowledge of it, fired with an insatiable appetite for vicious excitement, sinks steadily down—profligate, a wretch, a villain-soundrel, a convicted felon. Let parents who hate their offspring rear them to hate labor, and to inherit riches, before long they will be stung by every vice, racked by its poison, and damned by its penalty.

3. Another cause of idleness is found in the secret effects of youthful indulgence, the purest pleasures lie within the circle of useful occupation. Mere pleasure—sought outside of usefulness—existing by itself—is fraught with poison. When its exhilaration has thoroughly kindled the mind, the passions thereafter refuse a simple food; they crave and require an excitement, higher than any occupation can give. After reveling all night in wine-dreams, or amid the fascinations of the dance, or the deceptions of the drama, what has the dull store, or the dirty shop, which can continue the pulse at this fever-heat of delight? The face of pleasure to the youthful imagination, is the face of an angel, a paradise of smiles, a home of love; while the rugged face of industry, embrowned by toil, is dull and repulsive; but at the end it is not so. These are harlot charms which pleasure wears. At last, when industry shall put on her beautiful garments, and rest in the palace which her own hands have built—pleasure, blotched and diseased with indulgence, shall lie down and die upon the dung-hill.

4. Example leads to idleness. The children of industrious parents at the sight of vagrant rovers seeking their sports wherever they will, diabolical labor, and envy this unrestrained leisure. At the first relaxation of parental vigilance, they shrink from their odious tasks. Indolence is begun when labor is a burden, and industry a bondage, and only idle relaxation a pleasure.

The example of political men, office-seekers, and public officers, is not usually conducive to industry. The idea insensibly fastens upon the mind, that greatness and hard labor are not companions. The inexperienced youth imagines that great men are of great leisure. They see them much in public, often applauded, and greatly followed. How disgusting in contrast is the mechanic's life; a tinkering shop—dark and smutty—is the only theatre of his exploits; and labor, which covers him with sweat and fills him with weariness, brings neither notice nor praise. The ambitious apprentice, sighing over his soiled hands, hates his ignoble work; neglecting it, he aspires to better things—plots in a caucus; declaims in a bar-room; fights in a grog-shop; and dies in a ditch.

5. But the indolence begotten by vena ambition must not be so easily dropped. At those periods of occasional disaster when embarrassments cloud the face of commerce and trade drags heavily, sturdy, laborers forsake industrial occupations, and petition for office; Had I a son able to gain a livelihood by toil, I had rather bury him, than witness his beggarly supplications for office; sneaking along the path of men's passions to gain his advantage; holding in the breath of his honest opinions; and breathing feigned words of flattery to hungry ears, popular or official, and crawling, viler than a snake, through all the unmanly courses by which ignoble wretches perjure the votes of the dishonest, the drunken, and the vile.

The late reverses of commerce have unsettled the habits of thousands. Manhood seems debilitated, and many sturdy yeomen are ashamed of nothing but labor. For a farthing-pittance of official salary—for the miserable fees of a constable's office—for the pernings and perquisites of any deputyship—a hundred men in every village rush forward—scrambling, jostling, crowding—each more obsequious than the other to lick the hand that holds the omnipotent vote, or the starveling office. The most supple cunning gain the prize. Of the disappointed crowd, a few, rebuked by their sober reflections, go back to their honest trade—ashamed and cured of office-seeking. But the majority grumble for a day, then prick forth their ears, arrange their felicitous arts, and mouse again for another office. The general appetite for office

and disrelish for industrial calling, is a prolific source of idleness; and it would be well for the honor of young men if they were bred to regard office as fit only for those who have clearly shown themselves able and willing to support their families without it. No office can make a worthless man respectable; and a man of integrity, thrift, and religion, has name enough without badge of office.

6. Men, become indolent through the reverses of fortune. Surely, despondency is a grievous thing, and a heavy load to bear. To see disaster and wreck in the present, and no light in the future; but only storms, lurid by the contrast of past prosperity, and growing darker as they advance; to wear a constant expectation of woe like a grille; to see want at the door, imperiously knocking, while there is no strength to repel, or courage to bear its tyranny; indeed, this is dreadful enough. But there is a thing more dreadful—if the man is wrecked with his fortune. Can anything be more poignant in anticipation, than one's own self, unweaved, crowded down and slackened to utter pliancy, and helplessly drifting and driven down the troubled sea of life? Of all things on earth, next to his God, a broken man should cling to a courageous industry. If it brings nothing back and saves nothing, it will save him.

To be pressed down by adversity has nothing in it of disgrace; but it is disgraceful to lie down under it like a supple dog. Indeed, to stand composedly in the storm amidst its rage and wildest devastations; to let it beat over you, and roar around you, and pass by you, and leave you undisunited—this is to be a MAN. Adversity is the mint in which God stamps upon us his image and superscription. In this matter men may learn of insects. The ant will repair his dwelling as often as the mischievous foot crushes it; the spider will exhaust life itself, before he will live without a web; the bee can be deceived from his labor neither by plenty nor scarcity. If summer be abundant it toils none the less; if it be parsimonious of flowers, the tiny laborer sweeps a wider circle, and by industry, repairs the frugality of the season. Man should be ashamed to be rebuked in vain by the spider, the ant, and the bee.

"Seest thou a man diligent in his business, he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men."

THE EDITOR'S COPY.

BY THE EDITOR OF

general idea of what the number contained before Lizzy came back. But I was mistaken. Lizzy had not been out of my office ten minutes ere the door opened, and Mrs. L., wife of my very particular friend, Colonel L., came in. I said the "Book" down as she entered.

"Just what I came for," said Mrs. L., familiarly as she stepped forward and seized upon the book. "Is it a good number, Mr. —?"

"Yes ma'am I should think it was, from the slight glance I have had of the contents. Won't you take a chair?"

"Oh, no, thank you. Good morning. I'll bring this back in a day or two." And the lady was retiring without ceremony.

"Mrs. L. —," said I stepping forward, pardon me. But I have promised that number to Miss R. in half an hour."

"Oh, never mind! Miss R. — can have it in the morning."

"But —"

"Oh, none of your ifs, and ands, and buts, with me;—I've got the Book, and you know that possession is nine points in the law," replied the lady, with laughing resolution. "So, good morning! Tell Miss R. — that I've got the number."

"Yes—but Mrs. L. —"

"Good morning!" And the lady waved me a triumphant adieu, and retired with the Book.

"Well, that is cool!" said I to myself, as I settled back in my arm-chair and raised my feet upon the table. "Cool enough?"

I was not angry at the lady, for she was a very particular friend—so was her husband—and I liked them both. But she had "done" me out of my Lady's Book; there was no mistake in that; and, moreover, had gotten me into a sort of scrape.

Punctual to the moment, in came Lizzy at the expiration of the half hour.

"Tell your sister that I am very sorry in deed," said I, in a really serious tone, and with a serious face, "that I cannot send her the number. I fully intended that she should have had it; but Mrs. L. — came in and carried it off before I could prevent it."

Lizzy's countenance fell.

"Sister will be so disappointed," she said. "And you promised, positively, that she should have it in half an hour."

"I know I did, Lizzy. And I intended that she should have it. Tell her I am very sorry indeed; and that I will get the number for her to-morrow morning, and send it over."

Lizzy retired with an expression in her eyes and about her lips, which said pretty plainly that she did not believe my story about Mrs. L. — having carried the number off. This worried me; for I was satisfied that the little mix would convey that impression to her sister.

In the morning I sent a note to Mrs. L. —, requesting her to return the Book, as I had promised positively that Miss R. — should have it. My messenger returned, in due time, with information that Mrs. L. — had loaned the number to Mrs. M. —, and that I must not expect to get it back for a week, and there were ten in the house to read it; and after they were through, it had to go to Mrs. M. —'s cousin who had already spoken for the number.

"Oh dear!" said I, sinking back into my chair. "Isn't this too bad?"

What was I to do? I had promised Miss R. — the book; but the promise could not be complied with. If there had been an agent in the place from whom I could have bought a number, there would have been a smooth sea before me. But our town is too small to support a periodical agent. In my dilemma, I sat down and wrote a note, apologetic, to Miss R. —, and assured her that the moment I could get possession of the Book I would send it to her. In about fifteen minutes I had this reply:—"Miss R. —'s compliments to Mr. —;—It isn't the least matter in the world—not the least. If Mr. — prefers letting others have the Book, of course no one has a right to complain. It is his property."

"My property!" said I, throwing the note of the offended lady aside. "I was not aware of that before! If it is my property, I should like amazingly to enjoy it some sort of peace and comfort."

On the next day, Mr. R. — called in, looking very grave. He asked for his bill; and, after paying it, desired me to discontinue his paper at the end of the current six months.

"Confound Godey's Lady's Book?" said I, as the door closed on my lost subscriber. "The next time I publish Mr. Godey's prospectus it will do him good."

I saw no more of the number for three weeks, although applications for it came in almost every day. When it at last found its way back, oh! what a change was there! The "Lost Dove" had disappeared altogether; so had the "Oakland Gallopade"; and the lady "Dusting Cupid" had been wounded in both eyes with a pin—you could see daylight through them. The design for a "Watch Pocket in crocheted netting," which I had already described to my sister, and which she intended taking for a pattern, had been clipped off with a pair of scissors, leaving the mutilated pages as a pleasing evidence of the piracy committed by some fair reader of my number of the Lady's Book. As for the fashion plates, they bore many soiling indications of having been in the hands of bread and butter Misses; and the cover besides being torn and worn; was

in the same condition. I threw the number from me in disgust, vowing to end the annoyance I had suffered for years by forfeiting my right to receive the Book.

If this were only a solitary case, Mr. Godey, I would not be so impatient about it. But as it was with the March number, so has it been with all the rest. All the numbers of your Book issued for the last five years have I received, yet I am not the owner of ten of them, and those are in a shocking state.

Seriously, I believe the fact of my getting your Book is an injury to you. Not over two besides mine are taken in this neighborhood, one half of which depends upon reading the editor's copy. So for your sake, as well as mine, please stop sending the magazine; at least for the present. In the course of six months, I have not the least doubt, you will have twenty subscribers in our village; for if people cannot borrow your Book they will buy it—once enjoyed, the luxury cannot be dispensed with.

Of course, Mr Godey, you will consider this communication, explaining my reason for not publishing your prospectus, between ourselves; for if a hint of what I have written should get wind, the village of R. — would soon be too hot to hold me.

[The editor of the ——— must really forgive us for publishing his communication. The evil of which he complains is not one that he suffers alone. We have had many letters on the subject from others of the quill fraternity, and in the hope of creating a reform for the benefit of all parties, we spread his communication on the pages of the "Book"; but with certain modifications that will throw him beyond the pale of suspicion.

Pub. of Lady's Book.

From the Boston Museum.

The King-Cup and Clover-Blossom.
A PROSE POEM.
BY J. W. HANSON.

A white Clover-blossom modestly lifted her head from the green earth. Her pale cheek was almost hidden in the long grass. She was scarcely conscious of her own existence, and would have bloomed unseen, but but for the fragrant breath, which filled the air with perfume.

High above her head flaunted a brilliant King-Cup. As the winds fluttered her broad, yellow petals to and fro, she seemed a golden butterfly, and not a flower. She did not see the white Clover-blossom that slept unconsciously at her feet.

And there was a beautiful brown Bee that the King-Cup loved. His wings were transparent like silken gauze, and he wore a broad, band of gold about his waist.

But the Bee cared not for the King-Cup. A tattling Zephyr came riding by on her invisible steed, and she whispered to the King-Cup the cause of the Bee's neglect. He loved the unpretending Clover-blossom. Then the King-Cup looked down to her feet, and beheld the Clover-blossom slept in the grass. Her pale cheek was wet with tears and her head was bowed with sadness. She dreamed of the Bee.

"Vain, aspiring creature!" cried the King-Cup, "what ambitious spirit has filled thee, that thou dares raise thy thoughts to him whom I have selected? Dost thou think he will deign to regard thee, thou earth-seeking daughter of the Dust? Will he look as low as thou art, while I allure his eyes?"

Then the Clover-blossom timidly looked up to reply, but her bosom filled with sadness, and breathing a prayer for forgiveness, she sunk at the feet of the haughty flower.

A misdell murmur filled the summer air. Nearer it came, charming the flowers, and hushing the Zephyrs to rest. It was the Bee. Round and round the lofty King-Cup he flew, while she delightedly listened to his musical murmurs. But they were not for her. With a hasty wing he left her, and dropped into the bosom of the sweet Clover-blossom. And the proud flower withered and died, hearing no sound save the voice of the Bee, as he sung the song of affection to the unassuming but lovely flower.

Maiden! 'Tis not the proud, the rich, the beautiful that win the love of others; 'tis the virtuous and the good.

False Charity.—A negro preacher, speaking from—"What is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"—mentioned, among many other things, that they lost their souls by being too charitable! Seeing the congregation astonished beyond measure at his saying, he very emphatically repeated it, and then proceeded to explain his meaning.

"Many people," said he, "attend meetings, hear the sermon, and, when it is over, they proceed to divide it among the congregation—this part was for that man, and that part for that woman—such denunciations for such persons, these threats for you sinners—and so," continued the shrewd African, "they give away the whole sermon and keep none for themselves."

An exchange paper says there have been many definitions of a "gentleman," but the prettiest and most poetic is that given by a girl in New York: "A gentleman," said she, "is a humane being combining a woman's tenderness with a man's courage."