THE COMMONWEALTH.
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CHILDHOOD.

My childhood days! Their memory stirs
now;
I dream and try to call them back again;
But, through the fleeting years that come
and go
I call in vain.

Oh! they were happy, careless, golden
days,
When, unrestrained, I sported glad and
free—
When every moment, with its boyish
plays,
Had joy for me.

Time then had no beginning, nor no end;
The present was a paradise of years;
No care could with my happiness contend,
To bring the tears.

Each token of the ever-welcome spring
Was treasured then, as of wealth untold;
Each silvery bird-song would to fancy
bring
A gem of gold.

The summer days brought only glad content—
A bright succession of unwearied
hours—
An endless holiday, rich-freighted spent
Among the flowers.

The somber autumn, with harvest store,
Its ripened fruits in rich abundance
piled,
Brought pleasures that were never felt
before
To me, a child.

Stern, icy winter could not check the
stream
Of childhood's softly-rippling tide of
glee;
Sweet home delights bring back a happy
dream
To memory.

Each season of the year was then replete
With pleasant pastimes, all alike enjoyed;
Each boyish day-dream then was peaceful, sweet
And unalloyed.

A mother's watchful care protected me;
Her loving kindness strewed my path
with flowers;
She soothed each troubled moment tenderly
In childhood hours.

To her of gratitude I owe a debt
That all my later life has not erased—
That years have not obliterated yet,
Nor time effaced.

May she in brighter spheres be ever
blessed.
And here remembered with a filial love;
And may her spirit find eternal rest
In Heaven above!

But they are gone. They vanished from
sight
Like glistening dew-drops in the sunlight rays;
And memory lingers in the distant light
Of childhood days.

—G. V. BUTTERFIELD, in Boston Transcript.

Rough or Smooth—Which?

BY SYDNEY DAYRE.

"What are we to do now?"

"Yes, that's a weighty question."

Two boys, sons of widowed mothers whose means had been almost entirely swept away by a disasterous bank failure, looked out upon life from their standpoint of sixteen years, good health, and a fair education so far as it went.

"I'd go on a farm if it wasn't for mother and Janet," said Robert Leigh. "I'd make a business of learning the whole thing thoroughly, and then I'd go West and preempt a farm of my own. I'd put my shoulder to the wheel and have a square tussle with hard times, and in twenty years you'd see me a bonanza farmer with my broad acres yielding me up a snug little fortune yearly," he laughed, and went on more seriously, "but I can't do that. I'm a boy, and can rough it; but mother and Janet can't—and shan't. So I must think of something else."

"Mr. Strong has offered me a situation in his store," said Frank Wells. "The salary is small, but it will keep me, and I don't know that I can do better. Perhaps you could get in there too."

"What! dry goods!—measuring silks and fingering laces? No, I thank you: I'm going to do man's work, and leave such a place for some foor woman or girl who has to make her living, and needs a comfortable way of doing it. It's the kind of work for them, and I don't mean to elbow them out."

"But," said Frank, "of course I expect to work up in it, and have a business of my own in time."

"Maybe so, but it's not the work for me."

Robert's mother sold her house and moved into a small one. Frank's mother retained hers and took boarders, while he went into the store and worked in very stylish clothing with very soft white hands.

Robert went to work too, "somewhere down among the foundries, I believe, working like a day laborer," Frank remarked rather contemptuously, after meeting him one day in clothing which was undeniably shabby, with somewhat grimy hands actally carrying a dinner-pail. He had gone into the machine shops with a determination to master the business from the very beginning, thus entering upon years of steady toil. Gradually he dropped out of his old circle, for he had little in common with them. Frank and the others seemed more embarrassed by the old clothes when they happened to meet than Robert himself. He ceased to appear at the young people's gatherings, because they unfitted him for his early morning work.

"You get very little recreation, my boy," said his mother, laying her hand tenderly on his head one evening, "you ought to have more young society."

"Never mind, mother dear. I'd like it well enough, but it won't hurt me to do without it. I've chosen my way, and please God I'm going to stick to it 'with loyal heart and true.' It's a rougher way than most of the boys and girls have, which I suppose is the reason I don't seem to fit in with them any longer."

"What's become of Robert?" asked Frank Wells of one of his friends some four years after the two had begun to fight with the world.

"I don't know—I heard something about his having gone East."

"To find work, probably," said Frank, and then he forgot all about Robert.

Years after this Frank stood in the corner of a crowded room, furnishing his small quota of well-dressed manhood to the party given by Mr. Strong, his employer, on the occasion of his daughter's eighteenth birthday.

"Come, Frank, let's go home," said a friend to him after supper. "Ain't you tired of this?"

"Yes, but I want to see who that is old Strong is introducing to Miss Laura. See how much he's making of the young fellow. Who is he?—seems to look familiar, somehow."

"Well, I forget his name, but it's a man who has graduated with great honor at some school for civil engineers, and they're making a big fuss over him. I heard him a while ago talking with railroad conductor Gay, who they say tried to give him a lift some years ago because he made some clever little invention in the way of a steam cut-off when he was in the machine shops—wish I'd had such a chance!"

"Or I," grumbled Frank, "I've always had to tug for myself."

"But this chap wouldn't be lifted. Said he had gone in to work his way up, and was going to do it. Got admitted at the Polytechnic, has studied while he worked with all his might, and now he's got a position out on the *Great Western*, and is going to South America next season on a contract that's going to make his fortune."

Frank continued to gaze into the strong young face, wondering where he could have seen it before. The large eyes, quick and bright in their thoughtfulness, seemed to carry him back to other days, but a moustache hid the mouth, and Frank had dropped his own eyes to evolve from his brain the far-off memory, when a powerful grasp took in his soft hand.

"I've been looking for you—how do you do?"

"*Robert!*"—said Frank in bewilderment.

"Yes, didn't you know me?"

"Not at first."

"I only got home yesterday, or I should have hunted you up. Sit down with me, old fellow, and tell me about all the folks I used to know."

So they talked. Robert touched but lightly on his hard struggle with circumstances in which he had come out winner, but it was all told in the expression of earnest purpose and high endeavor which always writes its own story on a face. Every victory over self, every resolution which bore "Forward" for its watchword had set its line on Robert's countenance, as hard work and ignoring of luxuries had developed his powerful well-knit frame. There came vaguely to Frank's mind some lines Robert had been fond of in the soberer hours of his school-boy life of long ago, which ran:

—"Loyal hearts and true
Stand ever in their light,
All rapture through and through
In God's most holy sight."

He could not help feeling that he had borne them clearly before him all these years.

"He was right," said Frank to himself in bitter self-contempt as he walked home alone. "He's doing a man's work, and I'm the favorite salesman at old Strong's ribbon counter, a place which any girl of moderate ability could fill better than I. I wish I'd begun differently, but 'tis too late now. I'm bound to be a cipher all my life."

DYING.

Observation has shown that in countries boasting of a highly advanced civilization death from pure old age rarely appears; as even in those who live the longest some vulnerable point becomes developed, and disease hastens the termination of life. But occasionally age alone causes the scene to close. The nature of the process by which this is achieved is approximately indicated as we advance in life. The organs become impaired, the sight dim, the hearing dull, the touch obtuse. Indolence becomes natural to the old; with enfeebled strength, bones brittle, ligaments rigid, and muscles weak, activity becomes impossible. The celebrated Lord Chesterfield, in his decrepitude, and unable to bear rapid motion in a carriage, said, when about to take an airing at a snail's pace "I am now going to the rehearsal of my funeral," an expression showing that the mind had not shared in the decay of his body. Yet this retention of mental faculty is but partial. In the celebrated Fontenelle his memory was impaired, but his wit remained. He marked and could jest on his infirmaties "I am," he remarked, "about to decamp; some faculties have left me, and I have sent my baggage on before." It is also recorded of him that when near the age of 100, a lady of nearly equal age said gayly, "Monsieur, I believe that death has forgotten us." "Hush, madam," said the venerable wit, "don't talk so loud, or you may arouse his attention."

It is cheering to think that death is not to the patient the melancholy quarter of an hour which many imagined, for we generally die by piecemeal, and, frightful as this sounds, it is the gentlest form. The organs degenerate without pain, and dwindling together, preserve their harmony. De Moivre, the master of calculation, spent (at 80) twenty hours of the twenty-four in sleep, until he fell asleep and woke no more. Ozanman, the mathematician, while in apparent health, rejected pupils, in the belief of his coming death, and he speedily died of an apopleptic stroke. Flechier the divine, had a dream foreboding his dissolution, and he forthwith ordered the erection of his tomb, which had scarcely been finished when he became its occupant. Mozart's "Requiem" and Hogarth's picture of "The End of all Things" were both executed by the artists in the belief that the number of their days was nearly filled, and the event appeared to countenance the foreboding. Louisa of Savoy, the mother of Francis I., when in a fever, saw, or thought she saw, a comet. "Ha!" she exclaimed "there is an omen, which appears not for persons of low degree. God sends for us great; shut the window, it announces my death. I must prepare." Her physician assured her that she was not in a dying state. She died in three days, the victim of a fright produced by pride and ignorance.

Many traits are frequent in the dying hour which are far from usual. Some, when sinking toss the bedclothes from their chests, which indicates that they feel the covering oppressive. Others pick the sheets or work them between their fingers, which may be done to excite by friction the benumbed sense of touch. When the sensibility to outer impressions is lost, the dying often dream of their habitual occupations, and construct an imaginary present from the past. Doctor Armstrong departed delivering medical precepts. Napoleon fought some battles over again, and his last words were "*Tete d' armee.*" Lord Tenterden, who passed straight from the judgement seat to his death-bed, fancied himself presiding at a trial, and expired with, "*Gentlemen of the Jury, you will now consider your verdict.*" Dr. Adam, the author of "Roman Antiquities," imagined himself in school, distributing praise and censure to his pupils. "*But it grows dark,*" he said, "*the boys may dismiss,*" and instantly died. Thus each believed himself engaged in the business of life when life itself was departing.

Sometimes a fatal malady appears to stop, and friends congratulate the patient on his recovery. But it is death come under a mask. A son of Doctor Beattie having passed from the delirium of a fever to complete tranquility, died while his father congratulated him on his recovery. A victim of hydrophobia—disease in which every drop of fluid aggravates convulsions—was found by Dr. Latham quietly quaffing off a jug of porter at a draught. The nurse exclaimed, "What a wonderful cure!" but within an hour the man was dead. Death by brain fever is frequently preceded by a lucid interval. A patient who had passed three days in lunatic violence without sleep became rational, settled his affairs, and conversed about a sister of his lately dead, whom he said he should soon follow, as he did in the course of the night. Sir Henry Halford cautioned his pupils against these appearances, which often deceived physicians themselves. This pause in the disorder is called the lighting before death, and the amendment is not real, unless the pulse be improved. The moment which converts a sensitive body to inanimate matter is often indistinguishable, and many persons especially women, almost fear to sleep least they should wake with six feet of earth for their covering and a coffin for their bed. Many have written books to aggravate these terrors, and Julia de Fontenelle who seems to have been a fanatic in the faith that burial alive was frequent, has collected in his work all the hackneyed tales by which the timid have for ages been terrified.

An extraordinary phenomenon normally excited the worst apprehensions. Bodies were undoubtedly found turned in their coffins and the grave-clothes deranged. But this is now known to be due to the agency of corruption. The development of gas in a corpse, and its mechanical force, frequently mimics the movements of life. All bodies generate gas in the grave, and it constantly twists the bodies and sometimes bursts the coffin itself. When the gas explodes with a noise, imagination has converted it into a cry or groan. The grave has been reopened, and the position of the body and the laceration of the flesh have confirmed the suspicion. The ceasing to breath is, however, the invariable and also the unerring sign that death has taken place. Even the existence of heat in the body indicates no vitality when the breathing has actually ceased. The pain of dying must be distinguished from the pain of previous disease, for the term "agonies of death" has led to serious error. Persons dying frequently attest the absence of pain. "If I had strength enough to hold a pen" said William Hunter in his last moment "I would write how easy and delightful it is to die." The same sentiment has in other instances been frequently expressed. In another and a common condition they are in utter unconsciousness. We have evidence from those whom disease spared at the eleventh hour, that while their supposed sufferings were pitied by their friends, existence was a blank. The delirium of fever is distressing to witness, but the victim awakens from it as from a heavy sleep, totally ignorant that he had passed days and nights tossing wearily and talking wildly. As little is the death-sweat forced out by anguish. It was in the midst of this that Montaigne, roused by the weeping of his relations, exclaimed, "Who is it that torments me thus? why was I snatched from my deep and pleasant repose? O, of what rest do you deprive me!" Such fond lamentations disturb many a last moment, and the dying often remonstrate by looks when they cannot by words.—*British Quarterly Review.*

DRUDGE—MOTHERS AND LADY DAUGHTERS.

Everyone blames the lady-daughter, and pities the drudge-mother. The daughter sits in the parlor, in nice clothes, and elegantly arranged hair, dawdling over a novel or chatting with companions or friends. Her mother is toiling in the kitchen, or fretting her soul in the vain attempt to reduce the pile of "mending," and at the same time looking after the tumbling baby. The mother's face is worn and thin. Baby has pulled her hair askew. She still wears the old dress that she put on in such a hurry at half-past five in the morning, when the baby woke her up from her weary sleep. She is tired! She is always tired. She is tired on Saturday; she is tired on Sunday; she is tired in the morning; and tired in the evening, and goes to bed and gets up tired. It is hard not to get angry with the daughter, we confess. She can look on her exhausted mother's face, and know how much work there is to be done, and never willingly put forth a hand to help her. Nay, she is going out to tea this evening, and will come to her mother to have a dress adjusted for the great occasion. She casts much of the burden of her existence upon the too generous heart that she does not appreciate, and never once feels the impluse to give the aid of her youthful strength. In all our modern world there is not an uglier sight than this—no not one. It is but natural to throw the blame of it upon the daughter. "Heartless wretch!" we have heard, such a girl called by indignant acquaintances. She is to be pitied, rather. When she was a little child, all lovely and engaging, her mother said to herself: "She shall not be the drudge I was. She shall not be kept out of school to do housework, as I was. She shall have a good time when she is young, for there's no knowing what her lot will be afterwards." And so her mother made her young life a long banquet of delights. Rough places were made smooth for her; all difficulties were removed from her path. The lesson taught her every hour for years was that it was no great matter what other people suffered, if only her mother's daughter had a good time. She learned that lesson thoroughly, and frightful selfishness was developed in her. Her eyes may fall upon these lines. If so, we tell her that people in general will make no allowance for the faults of her bringing up. They will merely say, "See what a shocking and shameful return she makes for her mother's indulgence and generous care."

"Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" is as true in agriculture as in morals. Therefore get the best seed for every crop if it is possible to do so.—*Ex.*

DISRAELI AND THE SOUTHERN CONFEDERACY.

[Letter in the London Morning Advertiser.]

I am able to speak with knowledge on this subject, and I affirm, without fear of contradiction, that Mr. Disraeli, although never committing himself, as Mr Gladstone and Lord John Russell did, to the principles for which the Southern Confederacy was fighting, always regarded "recognition," as a possible card to play, and was quite prepared, at the proper moment, to play it. The moment seemed to have come when General Lee invaded the Federal States, after having shattered the strength of the Northern invasion. At that time it was notorious that the bulk of the Tory party and more than half of the Ministerialists were prepared for such a step Mr Lindsey's resolution on the subject had failed; Mr. Roebuck's eloquence had been equally ineffectual. But in the face of the repeated triumphs of the Southern army, and the possible occupation of the capital by General Lee's troops, it seemed hopeless to restrain the pent-up feelings of the House of Commons, and Mr. Disraeli saw his opportunity.

I had frequent conversations with him on the subject, and I perfectly recollect his saying to me that he thought the time had now come for moving in the matter. "But" he said, "it is of great importance that, if the move is to be made, it should not assume a party character, and it is of equal importance that the initiative should come from our (i. e., the Conservative) side. Now, Mr. Lindsay carries no weight. Lord Robert Cecil could handle the matter best, but he is an avowed partisan of the Confederacy, and would arouse too much party feeling on the other side. If the thing is to be done, I must do it myself; and then from all I hear and know, the resolution will be carried, Lord Palmerston being quite disposed to accept the declaration of Parliament in favor of a policy which he personally approves. But" he continued, "I cannot speak without more knowledge of the subject than I now possess, and I should be glad if you could give me a brief, furnishing the necessary statistics of the population, the institutions, the commercial and political prospects of the Southern States, in order that when the moment comes I may be fully armed." I procured the necessary information from the best authorities, and placed it in his hands. Every day seemed to bring the moment for its use nearer, and the general feeling in the House of Commons was perfectly ripe for the motion in favor of 'recognition," when the news of the battle of Gettysburg came like a thunder-clap upon the country. General Meade defeated Lee and saved the Union, and from that day not another word was heard in Parliament about recognition. A few days afterward I saw Mr. Disraeli, and his exact words were, "We nearly put our foot in it."

Now the leader of the Tory Opposition may have been right or wrong in his judgement, but it was not he who controlled the Conservative party. The most powerful influences on the Opposition side were undoubtedly the late Lord Derby, through his acquaintance with the anti-slavery feeling in the manufacturing districts of the North and the present Lord Derby, then Lord Stanley, whose sympathies were always and avowedly with the Northern side. But these two noblemen would have been powerless against the overwhelming feeling of the bulk of the Tory party; and Mr. Disraeli, had Lee been triumphant at Gettysburg, would undoubtedly have carried the House of Commons and the country with him.

HOW TO SAY IT.

Say "I would rather walk," and not "I had rather walk."

Say "I doubt not but I shall," and not "I don't doubt but I shall."

Say "for you and me," and not "for you and I."

Say "whether I be present or not," and not "present or no"

Say "not that I know," and not "that I know of."

Say "return it to me," and not "return it back to me."

Say "I seldom see him," and not "that I seldom or ever see him."

Say "fewe. friends," and not "less friends."

Say "if I mistake not," and not "if I am not mistaken."

Say "game is plentiful," and not "game is plenty."

Say "I am weak in comparison with you," and not "to you."

Say "it rains very fast," and not "very hard."

Say "in its primitive sense," and not "primary sense."

Say "he was noted for his violence," and not that "he was a man notorious for violence."

Say "thus much is true," and not "this much is true"

Say "I lifted it," and not "I lifted it up."

And last, but not least, say "I take my paper and pay for it in advance."—*Ex.*

DR. TALMAGE ON BLUNDERS.

Rev. Dr. Talmage lectured in Norfolk a few days ago on "Big Blunders." He defined them as follows:

Big Blunder 1.—"Multiplicity of occupation." The greatest character of every age, he said, were the "one idea" men who define their object in life, trod this path with courage and toil, and exemplified in the highest degree, that stick-to-iveliness which eventually tells.

Big Blunder 2.—Indulging in bad temper." With our supernatural advantages no one in America ought to be in a bad temper. A surly business man makes the lives of all his subordinates and associates miserable. Growl, Spitfire & Co, made the worst firm in town, while Merryman & Warmgrasp the best.

Blunder 3.—"Discouragement at treatment of others." The evils of gossip and slander were strongly depicted; and he showed how the storm that wrecks a home is often started by a faint breath of suspicion.

Blunder 4.—"Excess of amusement." Proper amusements, mental and physical, should be encouraged and enjoyed; but an excess was ruinous; there were things in life which could not be caught with a fishing tackle.

Home was a charmed word, and when a man liked any other place better, something was wrong.

Blunder 5.—"Formation of wrong kind of domestic relations." An incongenial marriage often mars a man's life; but as often a happy one saves him. Some men find that instead of wife they have married an album, Godey's Magazine, and a medicine chest. Can judge a man's character by his estimate of woman. He paid a beautiful tribute to the true wife and to the American woman.

Blunder 6.—"Attempting life without enthusiasm and enterprise." Life all around was full of stir. Every day saw fresh discoveries and new appliances in every field. Gigantic progress was being made. Never was such an opportunity for enthusiastic work. Without such qualities a man would go under. Each one, he said had a special mission.—*Ex.*

RIGHT SORT OF A BOY.

"Sir," said a lad coming down to one of the wharves in Boston, and addressing a well-known merchant, "sir, have you any berth on your ship? I want to earn something."

"What can you do?" asked the gentleman.

"I can try my best to do whatever I am put to do," answered the boy.

"What have you done?"

"I have sawed and split all mother's wood for nigh on two years."

"What have you not done?" asked the gentleman, who was a queer sort of a questioner.

"Well, sir," answered the boy, after a moment's pause, "I have not whispered in school once for a whole year."

"That's enough," said the gentleman; "you may ship aboard this vessel, and I hope to see you the master of her some day. A boy who can master a wood-pile and bridle his tongue must be made of good stuff."—*The Southern Churchman.*

A new steamship now at the New York docks for completion is as great an advance beyond the ordinary ocean steamer as the screw propeller was beyond the side wheel craft. The novel features of the steamer are her wedge-shaped model below the water-line and her homelike arches above, covering every part of the vessel at all likely to be reached by wind or sea. She will be absolutely safe against the dash of the waves, no matter how fiercely they may rage, and the seas will glide from her like the traditional "water from a duck's back." The new steamer's trial trip next week will be an important event to ocean travellers as well as to marine architects and ship-builders.—*News and Observer.*

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Dec. 7, 15—1y.] Baltimore, Md.

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June 29th, 1882.

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