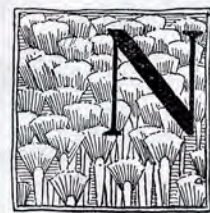


# SIDE TALKS WITH BOYS

BY FOSTER COATES

MR. COATES cheerfully invites questions touching any topic upon which his young readers may desire help or information. Address all letters to FOSTER COATES, care of THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL, Philadelphia, Pa.



more perplexing question presents itself to the lad ready to step upon life's busy stage than the choosing of a trade or a profession. A good many boys, far too many, indeed, seem to prefer to go out into the world empty-handed. They dislike a trade, because it means hours of toil and study, and one's hands become rough, and clothing soiled by manual labor. Some boys seem to regard manual labor as degrading. They argue that they were born to better things; they console themselves with the reflection that they will be lucky enough to get on without very great labor, and they hope and pray that they will get through life without any drudgery. Later they find they have made a mistake. When they should be making giant strides on the road to success, they find themselves distanced by competitors who are better qualified for the race. It is too late, however. They build their lives wrong. The foundation stone was not set properly, and the whole structure proves a failure.

### EVERY BOY SHOULD LEARN A TRADE

IF I had my way I would insist that every boy should learn a trade. It was so in the olden times, and it should be so now. The man who has a trade is a thousand times better equipped than the man who has none. Let every boy select the trade that best suits his ability, and promises the highest honors and remuneration. When he has mastered his trade, if he dislikes it, or it is not profitable, he can begin to study a profession, or enter upon a commercial life. If he should fail in both of these, he is still master of a good trade—something that no one can take from him, no matter what exigencies may arise. The man who is master of a good trade is as independent as a millionaire. He need never want; he can find profitable work in any corner of the world. I do not say one word against a professional career. But I do say emphatically that the man who has a trade and a profession as well, need have no fear of the future. The boy who wants to can master a trade between the years of sixteen and twenty, and if he dislikes it, he still has time to study medicine, the law, or any other of the learned professions. But if he waits until he is twenty, or over, he may not have an opportunity or feel inclined to learn either.

### A MILLIONAIRE'S VIEW OF SUCCESS

IT was my intention to have given prominence in this article to the views of the late Charles Pratt, the founder of the Pratt Institute, of Brooklyn, one who grew up from a poor boy and became a rich man, whose later years were occupied in helping boys to fit themselves to become successful men. He had begun an article for THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL when he was beckoned over the dark river to his eternal reward. A few pages of the uncompleted article were found upon his desk the day after he died, as follows:

"The education of a young man or young woman is, in a few words, embraced in the power of habit. Every young person needs to learn the power of attention, the value of industry, promptitude in beginning work, method, accuracy and dispatch in carrying it out, courage before difficulties, self-denial, self-control and temperance. These are the primary qualities, and the fundamental rules for success in life. And how these qualities can best be obtained is what we are seeking at Pratt Institute to illustrate.

"My general experience is that if a young man desires to make a success of life, either in a professional way or in business, it will all depend upon the thoroughness with which he has learned the fundamental requirements of every successful man. These are outlined in the first thoughts expressed."

### THE RIGHT THING FOR A BOY TO DO

IT is my general opinion," continued Mr. Pratt in this article, "that the young man or young woman whose education and training have been such as to throw them in contact with material things; where the eye has been trained to see accurately through an effort to learn to draw; where the senses have been quickened to distinguish sounds; where the hand has been trained to careful, exact execution of work of any kind, whether planing a board or modeling a figure, are more likely to acquire the principles outlined above. The same principles, however, which lead the young artist or artisan to be exact in the measurement of material things, or careful in the mechanic arts, can be developed through the study of language or mathematics, or the patient, careful, painstaking application to a knowledge of literature. The question which seems to me to be before our people is: 'In what way can we develop these fundamental qualities with the greatest facility?' My thought is that this may be done through what is generally termed 'industrial art

work,' that is, teaching the eye to see, the hand to execute, while the mind is brought into active sympathy with these efforts.

"It is not to discard as unimportant the literary part of a person's education, but it is to develop specifically the power to think and see correctly. With the foundation of character laid on these general lines, I think the future of a young man's life depends upon the use he makes of the opportunities open to him. The thing that lies nearest at hand is the thing for him to do, whether it is a trade or a profession, and his success will depend upon the fidelity with which he makes use of his opportunities."

The article ends abruptly here, as did the good man's life, but his work is going on and doing incalculable good.

### THE VALUE OF A TRADE

I REMEMBER years ago, when I was a very young man, meeting John Roach, the great ship-builder, in his ship-yard at Chester, Pennsylvania. I remember, too, what he said then about the value of a trade to the average boy.

"Young man," he said, laying his great, broad hand on my shoulder, and looking at me earnestly with his keen, steel-blue Irish eyes, "next to a clear conscience, a trade is as good a thing as any young man can have in this country. You can carry it with you all your life long; you have to pay neither rent nor taxes upon it, and it will help you around a sharp corner when most other things will fail."

I have never forgotten that utterance from a man who started in life—after landing in New York from Ireland—as helper to a machinist, who became the leading ship-builder of his time, and who, up to the hour that he was stricken with a fatal illness, could take the place of any of his workmen, whether it was a man driving rivets, or an expert putting together the most delicate parts of a steamship's machinery.

Something very like what John Roach said, I heard another great man, who is now dead, say. This was Peter Cooper, a man of whom American boys cannot know too much, and whom they certainly cannot too much admire.

"If I had my way," said the venerable philanthropist, on the occasion to which I refer, "I would give every boy a trade. Then I would have him stick to it, love it and be good to it. If he does, it will be good to him."

It was homely language, but it was truthful, as boys will find if they will it so.

### LATER INFLUENCES OF A TRADE

I HAVE noticed one thing about some men who started in life from the carpenter's bench, from the forge or the mill, and who became great—they never entirely get away from the habits and influences of their early life. They never lose the habits of diligence and of industry that they learned to acquire in the workshop. They may have drifted away from their original trade and become famous in some other pursuit, but they never get altogether away from their earlier environments. Another thing that I have noticed is that these great men are more inclined to be proud of their skill as mechanics than of their successes in other lines. When I was in Europe last I saw Bismarck. I was somewhat surprised to hear he was more proud of his skill as a brewer than of the fact that he had crushed France and unified the great German Empire. In this country there is practically no end to the number of men who found a trade the most valuable of all helps on the road to fame and fortune. I have the names of some of them before me as I write. I pass over the name of Andrew Johnson, who from a shoemaker's bench arose to be President of the United States. He lived and succeeded under conditions that do not exist now.

### MECHANICS WHO HAVE SUCCEEDED

THERE is Thomas A. Edison, the greatest genius of our day. Learning telegraphy was the first thing that led him into that intimacy with electricity which has ended with him being its master; Andrew Carnegie was a telegrapher; Charles Pratt, whom I have mentioned above, and who did more to help young men to acquire trades than any man whom I can mention, started in life as a machinist; Judge Daniels, of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, was a shoemaker; William R. Grace, who was Mayor of New York, and who is worth some twenty million dollars, was a butcher; the late George Jones, who, as editor of the New York "Times," was one of the most powerful men of his day, was a printer's "devil," in the same office with Horace Greeley when both were boys; Jay Gould, the great financier, was first a tanner and then a surveyor; Dr. John R. Paxton, D. D., who preaches to the wealthiest congregation in the world, began life as a carpenter; Philip Armour, the Chicago millionaire, was a moulder; the late John Kelly, the famous politician, was a grate seller; John D. Rockefeller, now worth one hundred and twenty-five million dollars, was a mechanic in iron; Rev. Robert Collyer, D. D., was a blacksmith;

John A. Mackay was a stone-mason before he became the owner of the Comstock Lode, and one of the richest men in the world; Jesse Seligman, the eminent banker and philanthropist, laid the foundation of his fortune by studying in the very poor night trade schools that existed when he was young; United States Senator Hill, of New York, was a printer; the late Henry W. Grady, the greatest orator the South has given us since the days of Calhoun, was also a printer. And so it goes. I could give scores of other names of men who were mechanics, or were skilled in trades and became great after serving faithfully at their various tasks.

### THE MAN WHO PUT DOWN THE WAR

I NEARLY forgot one man. Abraham Lincoln once said that three forces put down the Rebellion. As he put it they were: "The Army of the United States, the Navy and Petroleum V. Nasby." The latter was the late David R. Locke, owner of the Toledo "Blade," and the greatest satirist of his day. He was the best specimen of the man who has learned a trade and can never shake off its influence. Even in his later years, and when he was wealthy, he was more proud of the fact that he was a good printer than of his reputation as the favorite humorist of President Lincoln. I have seen him, when he had some subject in his mind, go to a printer's case, and with composing stick in hand, set the type of the article with his own hands, and he did his best work that way. Almost the last time I saw him he recalled the days when he was a boy in a country newspaper office. "I got my education there," he said. "Lying flat on the floor, with 'pied' matter all about me, I read the exchanges and such books as came my way, and so the world opened up before me. Those were very happy days."

Such is the fascination that a trade well learned has for a man, even after he has passed beyond all necessity for retaining it.

### A TRADE EASILY LEARNED NOW

THERE is no reason now why every boy should not have a trade. Be he rich or poor, the opportunities are alike ample. Indeed, they are the same. Doors have been thrown wide open in the behalf of all who wish to make use of the opportunities offered. Nothing is more easy now than to acquire a trade. You do not need to bind yourself to a certain employer for a certain length of time and give up all other employment. To-day the bright boy of fifteen can learn a trade, and at the same time continue his education in its ordinary courses, or if compelled to leave school at that age, as very many boys are, and become a bread-earner, he has the chance still to learn any trade toward which he is inclined. The schools in which trades are taught are now open day and night, and Jack must, indeed, be a dull boy if he can learn nothing in them.

### THE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS OF THE LAND

I HAVE been looking, of late, into the workings of some of our industrial schools in New York, at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, the Manual Training School, of Philadelphia, and the schools in Chicago, St. Louis and other large cities. They suggested one thought. The American boy of to-day is rich in advantages that his father knew nothing of. I often hear boys say that there are no such chances to succeed now as there were a generation ago; that there is too much competition, and that all the pursuits in which success is to be won are overcrowded. Now, boys who talk that way lack knowledge, and in most cases self-confidence as well. They would not succeed under any circumstances. As a matter of fact, boys, the paths that lead to success are as many and as broad as they ever were. What is more, the boy or young man who now treads these paths finds willing hands to help him on his way. Men, who when they were boys, had to work fourteen to sixteen hours out of twenty-four for a pittance, and pick up an education as best they could, have not forgotten their early struggles, and the result has been schools like the Pratt Institute that now exist in many cities, and that are certain to be followed by others. The present is the very time for you to go in and succeed.

### HOW THE BOYS ARE TAUGHT

HOW am I to profit by these schools? Can I choose the trade I wish to learn? These are among the questions that are, naturally enough, put to me. I can only answer them briefly. In the first place, there are schools that are entirely free, but these are not numerous. This system is yet in its infancy. When the public schools generally in city and country towns have manual training departments connected with them, the learning of a trade will become something within the reach of every boy. In Philadelphia there is an excellent "Manual Training School," which is part of the public system. A full course in it covers four years, but any boy who has any wish to go ahead may learn enough in that time to fit him for any walk in life. In the way of manual training, he is taught in drawing—free hand, mechanical, architectural, design; in wood-working—pattern making, carving, joinery, turning; in metal-working—chipping, filing, fitting; in smithing—iron, tin, brazing, casting, molding, and beside, electrical and mechanical engineering in all their branches. But in addition, these pursuits in which the hands of a man are factors, the young man is taught science, mathematics, literature, history and economics.

What is going to become of the young men who go through a course like this and conclude it with hand, and heart, and brain alike, well trained?

I will venture to answer that question for you. In twenty years they will be the flower of our land. They will drive uneducated and unskilled labor from the field, and with their brains and their hands will exalt the name of their country.

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NE of my correspondents asks if the time given to pleasure is not wasted? Certainly not. A boy or man who thinks so is in a bad way. The boy or man who works without ceasing, who never plays, is leading a wretched existence. Work makes pleasure exhilarating, and after a few hours of pleasure we return to work better fitted for labor, freshened, and with a new enthusiasm stirring within us. I am as much an advocate of recreation as I am of work. I believe in plenty of out-door exercise. Because a boy goes to work is no reason why he should never kick a football, pull an oar, or run or skate. If all these out-door sports were given up, America would soon become a nation of puny pigmies. Our men would be hollow-eyed, yellow-skinned, and flat-chested, instead of rosy-cheeked and robust as they are now. Take plenty of walking exercise. Walk to and from school, to the office or shop, and in the evenings, twice or three times a week, go out to lectures, or social gatherings, or to see some good dramatic performance. Go to bed early. Do not get into the habit of staying up too late. Arise early and you will find then that the hours you give to work or study will be of incalculable benefit to you. When you work, devote every thought to what you have in hand. When you study, fasten your mind upon the subject before you. When you play, let no thought of business or study disturb you.

## THE HANDY BOY ABOUT THE HOUSE

I LIKE the handy boy about the house, who knows how to hang a picture, drive a nail, and do the little necessary repairing that any mother wants done. It is easy enough to learn how to use a saw or chisel, and every boy should have a box of tools, so that he can repair articles that may become damaged. The boy who is handy about his mother's house will be of inestimable value to his wife when he shall marry. Boys who do not care to go out at night may learn to make many pretty pieces of furniture, if they will only devote some time to studying how to use tools and paints. With a few lessons, the handy boy may make picture frames, or cabinets, odd cornices, or desks or other articles of usefulness and value. The boy who is handy about the house and a help to his mother is one who learns how to make purchases for the household, who can tell a good piece of meat at the butcher's, or pick out fresh vegetables at the market. Oh, no, do not say that marketing is woman's work. It is quite as much man's work, and besides, none of us can know so much in this world that we can afford to ignore even the details of marketing.

## THE MOTHER'S BOY

HE is only a mother's boy," is a statement I have heard more than once. And then there was a curl of the lip which said plainer than words that a mother's boy is not held in very high respect.

Let me see: what is a mother's boy? I have one in mind as I write. He is about twelve years of age. He is strong of limb, and fair of face. He is a hard student, and an enthusiastic playfellow after school hours. He does not use vile language. He is considerate of others. He plays with a vim and dash born of enthusiasm and good health, but he is considerate of boys younger, weaker and smaller than himself. He is tender in his treatment of his sisters. He does not cause his father anxiety by doing things that would displease him. He does not go into his class-room without preparation for the studies of the day. He treats his teachers with the consideration that boys should treat their elders and superiors. He goes to bed early, and is up with the lark. He has a due regard for his own personal appearance, and keeps his face and hands and clothing clean. He reads good books to elevate the mind. He is loving and gentle with his mother. He finds pleasure in her society. He is ever ready to save her weary footsteps by anticipating her wishes. He is saving of his pennies. He is generous to those who do not treat him fairly. In a sentence, he is a manly boy. There are many such mother's boys in the world. They are the hope of our future. Some of them will be our presidents and lawmakers. They will be the presidents of our colleges, banks, and railways. They are the men who will move the world. I wish all my boy readers were mother's boys. The lad who is called a "mother's boy" need never be ashamed of the appellation; many of the great men of this and other countries have been such and have been proud of it.

Upon the day of Garfield's inauguration as President of the United States he turned after taking the oath of office and kissed his mother who was standing near him. In his hour of triumph, and amid the glittering crowd, he did not forget the mother whose heroic struggle in bringing up her children in the poverty of frontier life forms one of the most fascinating pages in our history. Surely he must have been a "mother's boy."

## TWO TYPES OF MODERN LADS

THE humble boy. He seems to be afraid to let the world know he is alive. He is shy and retiring in company, and his face flushes when he enters a room filled with people. He speaks in a low voice, and seems to have no control over himself. He is afraid to express an opinion on any topic. He does not believe in himself. He says yes or no to everything. He does not know how to help himself. He does not dance, for he thinks he is ungraceful. He does not try to sing, because he is afraid of his own voice. He does not push himself forward in school or business, because he is afraid people may laugh at him. He is not a happy boy, and the world is not very promising to him.

But if the boy who is too humble is a drawback to himself, the boy "who knows it all" stands equally as much in his own light. He is generally loud of speech, pushes himself into places where he is not wanted, is thoughtless, domineering in manner, rude to everybody, and seems to care for no one but himself. He will discuss any subject. He will talk in a rapid way on art, literature, science and religion. He sneers at his mother and sisters. He does not know how to control himself. He likes to crush and bully the weak. He does not care to study. He derides the church. He cares only for himself. To the world at large he is a nuisance.

## PETS OF OUR HOUSEHOLDS

MANY of my readers have written me about household pets. The article printed on this page in the April JOURNAL has attracted much attention. It is for this reason that I return to the subject, and hope thereby to aid some of my readers by telling them of some wonderful monkeys, and how patience, kindness and perseverance will make them docile, and to an extent, if I may use the word, humanize them; also how birds may be taught to sing.

## CAN MONKEYS TALK?

THE man who will make a very great reputation or a considerable failure is a southern gentleman of the name of R. L. Garner, of Roanoke, Virginia, who has given up many years of his life to study the ways of an animal that comes as near to being human as any beast can, and whose ability to acquire the worst vices of man is marvelous. Professor Garner believes that monkeys can talk in a language of their own, and he will spend several months in equatorial Africa with the purpose of fully testing his theory. He will live in a steel cage, will be provided with firearms, with ammonia bags to stifle the monkeys if they become too familiar, and in addition will have a circuit of live electric wires about the cage and a phonograph that will record anything that the monkeys about him may say. It is the opinion of Professor Garner that the sounds uttered by the members of the monkey tribe that gather about the cage in which he may be can be analyzed in such a way that it is quite possible to make out the full meaning of them. But he does not intend to deal with ordinary monkeys. His business is with the great gorillas of interior Africa, that come closer to being Darwin's missing link than any other animal. They walk upright upon two great feet, and stand some six feet in height in many cases. They rule their families by physical force, and regulate their domestic affairs with a degree of order that other beasts know nothing of. Their great size and strength, their courage and intelligence, are such that all other animals known to the jungles hold them in awe. They have a language that seems sufficient for their needs, and Stanley and other explorers say that they are extremely fluent and forcible when chiding either their wives or children. If Professor Garner shall succeed in finding a key to this talk of the animal he will have opened up a field of speculation and research almost unparalleled in importance.

## THE LANGUAGE OF BIRDS

I DISCUSSED this subject with another learned Professor who has spent a life time in studying animals and their ways, and I must say that he rather startled me by what he said. "You may not use my name," he said, "for I fear that even my brother scientists would be inclined to laugh at me. Yet I will say that in my opinion very many birds and animals not only have a language of their own, but that they have the power to learn our own tongue and to articulate ordinary words with considerable clearness.

"It is said that a dog was once trained to speak thirty words in plain English, and when you consider that notwithstanding its great intelligence the dog is one of the most forgetful of animals. Those canary birds that come from the Harz Mountains in Germany, the best of their specie, learn to pipe full tunes without any difficulty. A bullfinch will learn from three to five tunes if he be of the right intelligence, and will be perfect in them. The nightingale is of another sort entirely. He is a natural songster, but will sing no melodies save his own. But you may develop his powers until his music becomes almost within the realm of humanity."

## A WONDERFUL BABOON

IT is not so long ago that my attention was called to a baboon in Cape Colony. His owner is a cripple who is a signal man on the Port Elizabeth railroad," said the gentleman who told me the story. "He had both his legs cut off in an accident. He now handles the telegraph instrument at his post, but this baboon that he trains does the rest of his work. He handles the levers that work the switches, and does all the things that his master cannot do. The passengers on the road at first objected to this arrangement. But one day when the signal man himself was absent, and the baboon was entirely without supervision, an unannounced special train came along the road. There was one switch open and that the wrong one, for there was a junction at the station. The baboon through habit, or through some almost superhuman instinct, noted that the train should be switched on another track. So he locked the switch that was open and opened the switch that was locked, and thereby prevented a possible disaster. Passengers on that railroad no longer objected to the baboon who, among other things, pushes his legless master in a sort of a handcart to and from the signal station that he has charge of every morning and night. Now we have no means of getting at the thought and opinions of that baboon, but in my opinion he is capable of thinking to a certain extent, and of holding opinions. If Professor Garner succeeds in so recording the sounds of these and kindred animals as to render them intelligible, he will have performed a great service to humanity. As for myself, I think the time will come, although I may not see it, when we shall be able to understand the language of birds and of animals in some degree. It is probable that the phonograph, as it is developed, will assist us, and it is possible that we shall have to go deeper into the rules of music and the significance of phonetic sounds than we have yet gone. In instance of this I may say that in my opinion the songs of birds can be so set to music of our own kind that we can read the thoughts of those feathered pets of ours. Of course, you could not set the coarse guttural of the ape or the womanly cries of a monkey to music. But I think that eventually we shall be able to understand them better than we do now."

The man who spoke in this way to me has a great reputation, honestly earned. I gather that he believes that animals and birds can be taught to talk, not in the queer and amusing way of half-trained bipeds of the parrot race, but intelligently.

There is much in this. If any of my young readers would give their attention to this matter, and should be able to prove that the language of birds and animals is such that it may be translated, he will make a reputation scarcely second to that of Professor Darwin himself.

## WHAT PATIENCE WILL DO

NOW, I will again return to the financial side of this subject and repeat that any boy who has patience, and industry, and persistence can do well with animals. Good trainers of dogs or horses command their own price in the market now. The handlers of more savage animals are well paid, but their work is not so pleasant, and proficiency can only be attained after many years of hard service. But I assume that among my young readers not many of them seek to take up the training of the more savage species. I fancy they are not so different from the boys of a score of years ago, and that they will in the main cling to those ever-popular pets, such as dogs, rabbits, pigeons, colts or treasures of that sort for the pleasure that there is in it rather than the profit. Yet it would seem that there is both pleasure and gain in the handling of our animal friends. I know of a good many boys who earn not a little pocket money in raising and training carrier pigeons. This is rather an important work now. The pigeon is regarded as a valuable adjunct to the military service. In European countries notably, thousands of these valuable birds are trained and kept to act as army messengers in case of war. It is comparatively an easy matter to train song birds. Any boy who can whistle can do it, and these birds always command a fair price. Or if you have no wish to make money out of them, they are certainly pleasant companions. The same is true of dogs. Take a dog when he is young, and you can teach him how to perform any number of tricks and by the simplest methods.

## ABOUT THE HANDLING OF ANIMALS

I HAD intended to furnish you with some of the rules by which your pets can be trained, but upon investigation I find that a book as large as a copy of THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL might be devoted to this alone, and no more be said than was told me by Superintendent Conklin and other experts in a few words. All animals, they said, were much alike, and the rules for handling them were few and very simple.

"You must be kind," they said, "and you must be firm with either a kitten or an elephant. You must not allow them to master you, and you must not carry your authority too far. We have seen many sorts of animals, and there is one rule that we all follow. First teach the animals to love you, which is not hard. After that you can teach them anything. This is true of every animal, domestic or savage. There is no other certain rule, for animals differ just as men do. They have their moods and weaknesses which must always be taken into consideration. Take them when young. Study their dispositions and the rest will come.

## SOUND, PRACTICAL ADVICE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

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**S** CORES of letters reach me every month from boys asking how they may obtain work in New York city. A great many of my readers seem to have an irresistible desire to begin their business careers there.

I have been at some pains to seek the advice of eminent business men on the subject. New York does not differ from any other city in the method to be pursued in seeking an engagement. Much depends upon what line of work a boy wishes to follow. It would probably be quite as easy to begin in any other city, although there is no doubt that in the end New York offers more opportunities for both fame and fortune than any other city on the American continent. However, if every boy thought this way, New York would soon be over-run with a vast army seeking employment, and there would be few positions that would be really worth the having. There are many opportunities elsewhere that promise well, but it is a difficult matter to obtain places of responsibility and power in small cities, because of the limited scope of trade.

### BRIGHT BOYS IN DEMAND

**I** HAVE said before in the JOURNAL that bright, enterprising, studious and thoughtful lads are always in demand in a big city. The opportunities are more numerous, the capital invested is much larger, and promotions, because of the great volume of business, are more rapid than in the smaller cities. The compensation, too, is somewhat higher, and altogether the field is more promising than anywhere else; that is, of course, if boys are willing to work hard for small pay until they can demonstrate their usefulness and their ability to make money for their employers. I do not want any of my readers to misunderstand me, and to get the idea that New York is the only place where success in business comes quickly. A great many men, who have never seen New York, have amassed enormous fortunes, and made splendidly successful business careers. They might have done even better in New York. Men who work hard, and who are honest and faithful, usually make a success in any line of work they take up. It is all a question of getting a proper start, knowing what you can do, and then working with tireless energy until the end in view is accomplished.

### KNOWING WHAT YOU WANT TO DO

**B**E sure you know what you can do, and what you want to do, before you begin to seek employment. Boys, as well as men, fail because they work at something they do not understand, or do not like. You must not expect to find just the sort of work you want without some trouble or inconvenience. "The difficulty with most boys who present themselves for engagements in our stores," said a prominent wholesale grocer to me the other day, "is that they are totally unprepared for the positions they seek. They are looking for some light employment, where the hours are short, and the pay high, and they profess to be willing to do anything that is wanted of them if the labor will not soil their hands, and they are unrestricted in their liberties. They are apparently eager for employment in our great grocery house, but they have given the subject of our business no thought before making application for place; they forget that in all commercial houses the way to begin is at the bottom, on small pay, with a prospect of rapid advancement if the services rendered are valuable to us. A boy seeking employment with us should, first of all, have a natural aptitude for the grocery business. You can see at once that if a boy's mind runs in other channels the work would be distasteful to him, and he would simply be doing what he was told in a perfunctory manner, hoping that something would turn up in the business or profession upon which his mind is set. Such boys are of no value to us; we want only those who are not afraid to toil day and night, if necessary, until they have established their usefulness, or created a place for themselves. Once we find a boy who is doing this, who is thoughtful of our interests, who gives evidence of business ability, and is strictly honest and faithful, advancement is rapid, and he may hope, in time, to obtain any position in our employ—places worth having, with an annual salary anywhere from twenty-five hundred to twenty thousand dollars a year. It is a free field and no favor. Every business house in the country wants bright, industrious, and money-making boys and men, but the boys must be willing to begin at the very lowest rung of the ladder, and carve out their own fortunes. There are many men in our stores who have not begun with us, as boys, but have learned the business elsewhere; but the majority of our employes have been with us since boyhood, and they are now carrying on our vast business. One man, who is now in a very responsible position here at twenty thousand dollars a year, began fifteen years ago at six dollars a week. So you can see there is plenty of opportunity. If a boy fails it is largely due to himself."

### POSITIONS IN OTHER STORES

**W**HAT this gentleman had to say in speaking of his business is largely true of other great commercial houses. The boy seeking employment in one of the wholesale dry goods houses must be well educated, have unexceptional references, be willing to work early and late for small pay, with the chance of rapid promotion when he is worthy of it; he must also have, as I said before, a natural aptitude for the work, and, of course, the more knowledge of the business he may possess the better chance he has of securing a position. No firm cares to bother with a boy who is not himself ambitious, and who will not work with courage and determination for the interests of his employers. It is pertinent to know something as to the compensation a boy may expect when he begins work in commercial houses. There are a good many large firms who insist that a boy shall give three to six months of his time without pay. There are other houses who begin with only a small sum per week, say two dollars and a half or three dollars, until the beginner has given evidence that he likes the place, and his employers esteem him, and that he will be worth employing permanently. There are still other houses that have no fixed rules on the subject, and who pay from three dollars to six dollars per week, according to the work the boy may be required to do. In the main, I should say that the average rate of pay for a boy who is beginning work in a great store is four dollars per week for the first six months.

### EMPLOYMENT IN BANKS

**P**OSITIONS in banks and banking houses are very largely sought after by boys and young men because of the gentility of the work, the easy hours, and a belief that the compensation is large. I was talking to the president of one of the largest banks in New York the other day, who began twenty years ago by sweeping out the office. He rose from one position to another, from \$3.00 a week to \$25,000 a year through his own industry and business tact and ability. He had no idea when he first entered the bank that he would remain more than a few weeks in its service. The work was hard, the pay was small, and he knew nothing and cared less about the banking business. But he was far-seeing for all that. He was the first to reach the bank in the morning and the last to leave at night. He did not wait to be told what to do, but busied himself every moment, doing uncomplainingly everything that came to his hand, and studying late into the night, until he became an expert mathematician. He also began to read and study books upon banking and currency questions, until he had fairly mastered some of the great problems of finance. He also watched and studied how the business of the office was conducted, and he gave such evidence of business shrewdness that when a vacancy occurred he was made messenger for the institution. He became acquainted with business men and the employes of other banks, and it was not long before he was again promoted. Gradually his pay was increased as he was pushed up from one place to another. The business of the bank increased very largely, because the city was growing and it was in a favorable locality. All this time the young man had one ambition. It was to be cashier of the bank. It was a long look forward, but he was young and could afford to work and wait. In less time than he imagined he was made cashier, then vice-president, and when the president of the institution suddenly died, he was called to sit in his place, and many of the directors of the bank were men who had known him when he was only an humble messenger. What one man can do can be done again. I simply cite this as a notable example of what hard work, patience, integrity and ability will do. Talking to this gentleman recently, I asked him what was the best method for a boy to pursue who desired to enter a bank or a banking house. He told me the above story of his own life, and said that he knew no better way than for others to begin as he did. Of course, not every boy can be as successful, but he can work and hope. Compensation in banks varies according to the work performed. There is only small pay for beginners, and from \$600 to \$2,000 a year for first-class clerks later on.

### GOOD TRADESMEN IN DEMAND

**I**N a recent article in the JOURNAL, I discussed at length the question of a trade or a profession for young men. You will remember that I decided in favor of a trade. My article attracted a great deal of attention. Hundreds of letters came to me endorsing my views, and I was able to place a number of my readers in communication with trades schools, so that they might begin their career successfully. There is not much that I can add to that article upon the value of trades for young men, but I am more convinced than ever that every boy should learn a trade before he begins to study for professional life. The pay to young apprentices varies from \$2.00 to \$6.00 a week, according to the usefulness of the boy and the work to be performed.

### WHAT THE LAW OFFERS

**N**EW YORK has a large army of lawyers. A small percentage of them are able men and understand their business. The others do not amount to very much and consequently make little headway. Many of the great legal firms employ large forces of clerks. These men are not very well paid. Young men who desire to become lawyers must be well educated, have great patience, evenly balanced minds, have some ability as public speakers—the more the better, of course—be good students of human nature, have the power to grasp quickly the pith and point of the subject in hand, and know how to analyze and solve all sorts of complex problems. There is not much in the law for clerks. Only a few offices find it necessary to employ high-priced men, and by high-priced men I mean those whose salaries will run from \$2,000 to \$6,000 per year. Young men who enter lawyers' offices do so usually on very small pay, so that they may learn from association with their superiors how to conduct business for themselves in the future. It would be hard to say just what the average New York lawyer earns in the course of a year. A very few of the giants in the profession earn \$100,000. There are others who make from \$20,000 to \$50,000, and there are a great many who find it difficult to make \$2,000. It all depends upon the lawyer's ability and the opportunities that may come to him in getting big cases. The profession does not promise much for a young man who must rely upon his own ability to make money. There is hardly a living in it, unless one possesses more than usual ability, or is helped by friends.

### WHY NOT CREATE A PLACE?

**I**F financial success is what is desired, there is plenty of room for boys who can create positions. By this I mean working in some new line of business that is not overcrowded, where the remuneration is sure and large, and fame awaits those who are shrewd and far-seeing. Look at the army of men who have made fortunes out of electricity within the past dozen years. This is a business still in its infancy. Not even Edison, the wizard of Menlo Park, to whom the world is more indebted to-day than to any man of this age, dare say what progress will be made in this line of work in the years to come. Very little is yet known about electricity. Experimenters are busy day and night in this work, and their profits are very large.

Take, for another example, book and newspaper illustrating. Ten years ago there were only a few men at work trying to bring this most important work to the perfection it has now reached. I say perfection, but ten years hence the work of to-day will seem very crude. There is an excellent chance here to make money if one has the pluck to work and the ability to offer something new. Our newspapers and books are more generously illustrated to-day than ever before in the history of the world. But it may be necessary to walk upon new lines and new ideas to succeed.

There is no end of other work that will pay well, too; professions and trades that are not overcrowded, and offer splendid openings for bright boys—designing of all kinds, engineering, new ideas that may be used to make lighter and quicker work now being performed in a crude way. Look at the vast fortunes that have been made out of sewing machines, typewriters, telegraphy, the telephone, and you will see that there is hope for those who have ideas, and are willing to work.

The truth of the matter is that the world is not standing still. Great changes are going on about us every day. We have not reached the age of perfection in anything. The people, particularly Americans, are hungry for novelties in every line. Boys and men with new ideas are always in demand. So I say if you cannot find the position you want in life, it is in your own power to create something that will suit you. Do not sit down and wait for some one to come to you with an offer of a profitable place. The "some one" is disappointing always. Learn to help yourself. There is plenty of profitable work in this country for every one. The complaints that constantly reach me that this and that line of work is overcrowded and profitless are undoubtedly true, and I know the difficulties that beset a boy in trying to get a foothold in life. But with study and perseverance, with eyes always open to make the most of the opportunity presented, with a fixed determination to get on, no matter what the obstacles, success is sure. Honesty, faithfulness, pluck, and patience always count in this world. Once you have begun right, the rest is easy. You cannot fail if you do right.

### ONE THING TO REMEMBER

**A**BOVE all, remember that it is only by hard work that success is achieved. If you would win in the great struggle of life you must study and work without intermission. As one of the most famous of our self-made men has said, "You must not only work, but you must select your work with intelligence. You must be preparing the way for what you intend to become." What your hands find to do, do it so well that you will satisfy not only your employer, but yourself. Boys who do this are bound to achieve financial success, and that is a great deal in this world, but not all. Financial success does not always bring happiness. You can round out your careers in a splendid way by doing something for others as well as yourself. If you find some weak brother who is not as able as you are to cope with the world, be generous and do what you can to aid him. Try to do something for others every day. Helpfulness is a word that you should always keep in mind.

### SOUND, PRACTICAL ADVICE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

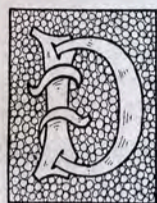
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# SIDE TALKS WITH BOYS



BY FOSTER COATES

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**D**URING the past six months fully two hundred letters have reached me from boys making inquiries about electrical matters. All of these I have answered briefly by mail, but the subject is so large, and the interest in it is so absorbing, that I have determined to devote my page in the

JOURNAL this month to a full discussion of the matter.

I may say at the outset, that of all the pursuits open to the boy of to-day—that is, the boy who wishes to win name and fame—there is none, perhaps, that is more fascinating than the study and development of electricity. Part of the attraction that is connected with this great science or industry, no doubt comes from its novelty, for, despite its gigantic growth of late years, it is as yet a new and almost unexplored force. Compared to steam, it is as an infant to an elderly man. Yet this infant, in all probability, will be the ruling force of the world within a few years.

## THE INDUSTRY OF THE COMING CENTURY

**T**HOMAS A. EDISON has done more than any other living man to open up this great field of industry. At the same time he has a wide and more thorough knowledge of its possibilities. Yet he said to me not long ago: "I am only beginning to learn the business. The mind of man is not capable, at this time, of grasping the future developments of this wonderful force. What may yet be done through its agency remains to be seen. I could not, if I would, prophesy as to the final results, and I fear that I should be laughed at if I tried. You may look at the progress that has been made during the past ten years, and then consider that this new industry has all the future before it. It is a scientific miracle; one of the greatest ever evolved, and its possibilities are almost limitless. The best informed of scientific men will not attempt to say what may or may not be done by means of electricity. It would be worse than rash, for no man knows. We are constantly studying and just as constantly discovering new wonders. It is a study that is fascinating, and that one never wishes to give up after he learns its first rudiments."

## THE OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED

**N**OW, my boy readers will doubtless form in their own minds one short and simple question:

"What are the opportunities for the boy of to-day who engages in the electrical industry with the intent to make it his life work?"

That is the question that I have asked of a dozen or more men who are leaders in the development of electricity in its several branches. They gave various answers, but there was one statement that they made in common: That a boy's success, in this as in any other pursuit, depends mainly on the boy and his mental and moral make-up. But they all agreed that there is no pursuit that offers greater inducements to the right sort of a boy. The boy who is clever with his hands or his brain, who is willing, ambitious and persevering, and who takes up the study of electricity in good earnest, will find no reason to regret his course. He may not, to be sure, become an Edison. But he will have at his hand work that will bring to him all in the way of material compensation that a reasonable person should wish for, and he will be engaged in a field in which his mind may constantly find new delight.

## EDISON'S WONDERFUL SUCCESS

**W**HEN I speak of the success that will be met by the clever, industrious boy who enters that pursuit of which this talk treats, I do not mean mere monetary success. As this world is made up, money is a useful and necessary thing. But the boy who enters upon any pursuit with no thought save to accumulate money is making a mistake. His effort to become wealthy may be successful, but he will miss the great undercurrents that make the life of the poorest man sweet and wholesome. There is no evidence that Galileo, or Newton, or Darwin put money above all other things, but their names will live for all time. Theirs was a success that succeeded. Nor has money been the moving influence with Edison. The development of the wonderful force that he has spent the better part of his life in studying, has brought him money in the natural course of things, but no one who has met the famous man and talked with him has ever been able to note that he is in any way mercenary. His inventions produce money, but he looks beyond this to their results on the world at large. He thinks more of his experiments than of his bank book. He lives for his profession and not for the profit there is in it. Were it otherwise he would be less great than he is. His is a career that is an object lesson that every boy may study with profit. It has been one of honest, manly endeavor, the finer by reason of the fact that there has been nothing to equal it.

## MIRACLES OF MODERN SCIENCE

**T**EN years ago there was but one electrical branch that was really worthy to be classed as a great industry, and that was the science of telegraphy. Telegraphy in itself was, and is, a wonderful thing, but it was but the first of a series of scientific miracles. The result of these has been the opening up of many hundreds of companies that are engaged in the perfecting of electric forces and the manufacture of electrical machinery. The foremost experts now reckon that from \$800,000,000 to \$1,000,000,000 is invested in the business. There is one firm that was started some ten years ago that has a capital of \$50,000,000 invested. The Western Union Telegraph Company alone has a capital of over \$100,000,000. These are large figures that show clearly what great progress has been made in this new industry. Yet even now it is in a crude and in many ways unfinished state. But crude, though it may be, with a future before it that even experts hesitate to speculate upon, it is being utilized in all manner of ways for the benefit of mankind. Not only are written messages now signaled over the wires, but spoken ones as well. It is used to operate machinery in the place of steam. It runs railway cars. It is driving gas from the field as an artificial light. It supplies heat. It is the hope of the foremost experts that the time is now at hand when it will furnish the natural power to our great ocean steamships. Then there is the domestic branch that in itself is a highly important one. Electric bells, burglar alarms, and scores of other conveniences are now in thousands of business and private houses.

## VARIOUS BRANCHES OF THE BUSINESS

**T**HE average boy who reads all this may be puzzled as to what branch of the electric business will suit him best. The matter is not so complicated as it may seem. After all, there are but five branches to be considered. They carry the rest with them. Any of these branches is of sufficient importance, and holds out inducements to move anybody to take it up as his profession. But the studying of any one of these branches will lead to the study and consequent familiarity with the others. Perhaps it would be more correct to say there are four branches to the electrical industry proper. These are the telephone, the telegraph, lighting by electricity, and the development of the electrical power for the use of railroads, steamships, and those various lines of business that in the past have had to depend upon steam as a motive power. The fifth division referred to is what is known as the general electric trade. It lies in the manufacture of tools, appliances and general supplies to the other divisions of the general industry, and in its way is as important as any of them. It is growing just as rapidly, too, for the development of the great force has been such as to call for constant progress in the business of making instruments and tools.

## WHAT OFFERS THE BEST INDUCEMENT

**W**ITH that branch of electricity known as telegraphy most of my boy readers are doubtless more or less familiar. It is the older branch of the business. It has reached that state of development where it does not offer the same advantage that it once did. Still the boy who takes it up and does his full duty by it will find that it is not without its reward for the persistent worker. What is true of telegraphy, is in a measure true of the telephone business. It is in a sense a monopoly controlled by a few. But it is in its further developments that opportunities for inquiring minds and willing hands are to be found. Even now there are more than 200,000 miles of telephone wires in use, and upwards of 400,000 instruments connected.

Electric lighting is newer than the two branches mentioned, but its growth has been wonderful. There is the great sum of \$150,000,000, or thereabouts, invested in it. This represents the operation of upwards of 150,000 arc lights, and more than 1,500,000 incandescent lights. Still newer than this branch is the development of power by electricity, applied to locomotives, steamships, stationary engines and all that. The possibilities in this line seem almost limitless. A few years ago the idea of an electric railroad was dismissed with the mere suggestion of it. Now, the subject is puzzling the brains of thousands, and in some of our great cities the electric car has been tested, not with great success, it is true, but it is the general opinion that with new discoveries and improvements from time to time, the old horse and steam railroads will disappear entirely. It is in these latter pursuits, the development of the electric light, and of the electric motive power, that the young man of to-day may find work ready to his hand. The rest depends upon himself. He may become a great electrician or inventor along the line of his profession, or he may remain an inferior and poorly paid workman all his life. But if he remains the latter, he will have himself to blame, for there is no pursuit that seems to offer greater or more solid advantages to the young man or boy than does electricity in its several branches.

## SECOND TO NO OTHER FORCE

**I** HAVE dwelt at some length upon the magnitude of the electrical industry, for the reason that it is so young that most of my boy readers can scarcely be acquainted with it. It naturally follows that a business so vast, and with so great a future before it, is one that holds out special inducements to young men who enter it now, and to use an expression, grow up with it. It was advice of this kind that the famous railroad magnate, Commodore Vanderbilt, gave to his protégé, Chauncey Depew, many years ago, when the latter seemed inclined to make politics, to a large extent, his profession.

"Stick to railroading, Chauncey," said the wise old man, "railroading is going to be the business of this country."

He was right. Mr. Depew took the advice. He advanced as the railroad grew, until he is now, as you know, at the head of the great Vanderbilt railroad system.

Now, if Mr. Edison and other prominent experts know anything of the matter, electricity opens up much the same field of endeavor to young men that the railroad did twenty years ago. Indeed, it may in time outgrow it. Yet it is not in any way the rival of the other industry. On the other hand, it is the hope of electricians that they may help in the further progress of the railroad by supplying it with a motor power superior to steam. When they do this, and furnish steamships with the same, when they light all our houses and streets, when they supply heat, and do one hundred and one other things that are now done by hand, and when the telephone, the phonograph and all the other wonders of late years are fully perfected, electricity will rank second to no other force from an industrial standpoint. Then the boy who has taken it up and grown with its growth will find himself in an enviable position.

## THE RIGHT WAY TO START

**M**R. EDISON and the other experts all agree on another point, besides, in the opinion that the boy of to-day will find the study of electricity a good thing to take up. They agreed that when a boy started in this profession he should start in at the bottom. He cannot start at the top. He may be a born inventor, but he cannot hope to vie with Edison, or even inferior men, in one year, or two, or more. He must remember that the very best of the experts are at this time but feeling their way in this profession. They are developing a great power, whose force, strength and usefulness in the future they can but imagine. Mr. Edison, whose accomplishments in this branch of science have been so many, might claim to know, but he makes no such claim. He says that he is only beginning to learn it.

This is an important time in the history of the business, for the leaders in it are working hard to make electricity a motive power, capable of supplanting steam. It cannot now. So far, even in the running of railroads, it has been found impossible to economically generate the electric currents directly. Steam and water are used for the purpose, but in most of the electrical establishments in this country steam is depended upon almost entirely. But the electric motors, when perfected, will be far cheaper than steam motors, and the man who provides the means for bringing the former to the right point will have fame and fortune at his feet.

## ONE WAY TO BEGIN

**H**OW to enter upon the profession is the question that will confront the boy who has a desire to engage in it. Let me repeat that the best way to get into it is to start at the bottom. Of course, it is possible for him to study electrical engineering and all that in regular classes. But that will cost, surely. The science is taught in trade schools, but these are not numerous enough to be accessible to all the boys who would like to know something of the wonders of this modern science.

But for those boys who cannot attend these schools, where the first rudiments of electricity are to be learned, there is still a way. There are electrical works and factories in every town of any consequence in this country. There are always opportunities for a boy to obtain places in these. These positions will at first be humble ones. The work will be hard. The compensation will be small, or for that matter, there may for a time be no return at all. But the boy who really wants to thoroughly learn this great business will not be dismayed by these conditions if there is any good in him.

To succeed in this profession, the boy must be clever with his hands, as well as with his brains. That is what has helped Mr. Edison to his present high fame. Not only is his a master mind, but his is also a skilled craftsman's hand. There is no man's work about his factory whose labor he cannot do. He is master of every branch of the business, even down to the making of the most delicate tools that are required in it. All this he learned by hard study and persistent labor. What he has done other boys may do, in at least a degree, by copying his methods.

## POSSIBLE REWARDS OF ELECTRICITY

**A**S to the compensation that a boy may expect in the electrical field that is a matter that cannot at this time be reduced to any reliable statistics. It is another thing that depends a great deal upon the boy himself. Inferior, or careless boys, who continue as such, must expect no great rewards. Boys of the right sort may look forward to almost anything that is in reason, for at the rate this business is developing there is no telling if it will not reward those who follow it, just as the great railroads have done.

## SOUND, PRACTICAL ADVICE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

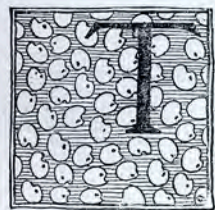
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HE letters that come to me as a result of these off-hand talks with my boy friends, would seem to indicate that I have touched points in which boys of to-day are interested, and to me they bring much information as to the make-up of the American boy that is ever new and of interest. Before me as I write there is a heap of these letters, all of them dealing with a single subject, and as I look at them it seems to me that the spirit of war is still abroad in the land. Here is a sample that I will reproduce:

"I have just finished reading a book called 'Military Heroes.' How can I get into West Point, and how long before I can become a commanding officer?"

This letter is written in all earnestness and sincerity. It is not to be laughed at, for the boy who wrote it was merely seeking knowledge, and no one who so seeks should be idly sneered at. I have a score or more of letters of the same sort on my desk now.

There are boys who prefer the navy to the army, and they write too, asking all sorts of questions about the Naval Academy at Annapolis.

All of which shows that the American boy of to-day has in him that same spirit that has lived ever since the Greeks showed what human valor could accomplish. There can be no doubt, if I interpret aright the letters that are constantly coming to me, that the American youth of to-day is full of fight, and only looking for an opportunity to exhibit his ability in that particular line.

## ASPIRATIONS THAT BOYS HAVE

IN talking with my boy friends upon this subject, I feel that I cannot be as impartial as I could wish to be. I cannot rebuke any of them for wishing to become famous as soldiers and sailors, for the stars on our flag are very largely due to the men who fought in the ranks in both branches of the service. It would be wrong for any one writing for American boys to overlook the splendid careers of Farragut or of Grant, or of Sherman, or Sheridan, or Phil Kearney who had but one arm, but who, old soldiers say, was a veritable genius on the battle field as he rode over it with the reins of his horse between his teeth. Certainly the American boy has much to look back upon from the time that the farmers of Massachusetts held their own against trained men who had fought in the French wars and in Spain, down to the time of the battle of Gettysburg—the greatest battle, perhaps, that was ever fought, for the reason that the life of a nation depended upon it.

## THE SERVICE OF THE COUNTRY

AS I have said, I have no word of rebuke for boys who wish to enter into the service of their country. It is a fact that the best men this country has produced have come from small cabins in the West, where they did in all good faith earn their bread in the sweat of their brows. No, my boy friends, that sort of thing has become something of the past. There are few cabins in the West now. Great cities stand where the cabins stood, and the sons of the men of yesterday are the men of to-day. No one can quarrel with the youth who wishes to emulate the deeds of the great men who have gone before him. I am in a way as open to rebuke as any of my boy readers are when this matter of military heroism comes up. I have before me as I write, Thackeray's "Chronicle of the Drum," and I advise every boy to read it. I can never read the story of Sherman's march to the sea, with its volume of song and story, without wishing I might be a Sherman. I never read the poem that describes Sheridan going down the good broad road from Winchester town, twenty miles away, without feeling that there are depths in the current of our American valor that are not easily sounded.

They have all history behind them from the time when the three hundred Greeks kept the pass at Thermopylae. But there are no passes of that kind now. It is well for my boy friends to take that fact into consideration. And science has destroyed war as it was, and has made it murder. That fact must also be taken into consideration. The men who kill to-day are the men who do not fight. They make the weapons, and the money, too.

Still, I see no reason why some of the questions of my readers should not be fairly answered. The most of these run in this way: "How can I get into West Point?" or "How can I get an appointment in the Navy?" I treat these questions in all seriousness, for it is a part of my experience with boys that they are honest. They dream and build castles in the air, but they steal no material to do it with. I would not give one cent for an American boy who has not in his heart of hearts pictured himself the President of the United States. A boy who cannot climb is not much of a boy. A boy who will not aspire to climb high is not as good a boy as he might be.

## CHANCES IN MILITARY LIFE

OVER on Governor's Island, just below the city of New York, there is one veteran, who has done his country some service. He is a major-general in the army of the United States. He would have one arm more if he had let some one else do the fighting for him when fighting was to be done. He commanded a wing of Sherman's army in the great march from Atlanta to the Sea, and he has served in many places, and always well. This man is General Oliver Otis Howard. He is very brief in expressing his opinion of military geniuses. "They are like the poets," said the General to me one day; "you can't make them."

"What are the chances in a military life?" he continued repeating my question. "Well, here is one of them" and at this point he lifted the stump of the arm that had been shot away.

"Still," said, he "I see no reason why young Americans should keep out of the army or navy. This is a great country, and no one knows what the future may bring forth. At present our navy is very largely manned by foreign sailors. I wish it were otherwise, for I believe that we have the best men in the world right here in this country."

The grizzled one-arm old General was right so far as I can make out. The difficulty with our American soldiers and sailors now is that after they know their profession well they leave this country, where there is no fighting to speak of, and go where there is fighting and promotion and money as well. The best officers they have in those outbreaks that are constantly occurring on the borders of Eastern Europe are men who were trained either in England or America. But there is a reason for their desertion of the land that gave them their education. It lies in the fact that there is no fighting to be done here.

Now, if all the boys who read THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL were to be divided, half and half, and if one half were to be detailed to serve in the navy and the other in the army, we would have a much larger army and navy than we now have. But Congress in its wisdom has seen fit to prevent anything of this kind, for it has restricted the navy, and has ordained that on a peace footing our army shall consist of 10,000 men and no more.

## WEST POINT AND ANNAPOLIS

SO it is that West Point does not hold out the same inducements it once did. What is the use in learning to fight if there is no one to fight? That is the question that some of the students ask, but they are not wise students. It is not an easy thing to get into either West Point or Annapolis. It depends a good deal upon your Congressman. He has, at periods, the right of an appointment at either or both of these great schools. Under the law now there must be a competitive examination of the applicants, and this is thoroughly fair. The son of a washerwoman may win before the son of a millionaire, and in any event is treated the same. I sometimes think that this fair and democratic way of dealing with our young men produces better results than if we pursued a different policy. So there it stands. Do you wish to become a Farragut or a Porter or a Grant or a Sherman or a Sheridan? Then apply to the Congressman in your district, or if this fails try the last resort—the Secretary of War or of the Navy. They will probably not interfere. You see this is a big country, and if all the athletic, hot-blooded boys who think fighting is fun were put in training we should have a nice time of it some day or another. Yet I will say to my boy friends that I know of no better schools than those at West Point and Annapolis.

I find in some of my letters this question: "What do they teach at West Point?"

I can answer this very briefly. They teach you all of value that is taught in any college, and they teach you that in this life your honor is your shield. They could not teach much more.

## THE MATERIAL ADVANTAGES

AND now we come to the material advantages of a position of honor in the army or navy. I find in these articles that I am sometimes misunderstood when I speak of the mere money benefits that follow some special callings. But the conditions are such in these days that money and sentiment are so entwined that they can not well be separated. I should be very loth to advise any of my boy readers to enter into any profession that would not promise him a sufficient income to sustain any responsibilities that he might take upon himself. I am no great lover of gold, but I am constrained at times to revert to the old, and it may be somewhat vulgar, saying: "Talk is cheap, but it takes money to buy land." That is why I take up the material end of this subject. And I say to the young man who wishes to enter the army or the navy for pure material reasons and no other: Don't. It will be the mistake of your life. If you wish to go into the service for the reason that you think you can be of use to your country then: Do—if you can.

## PAY OF THE ARMY AND NAVY

SO far as the actual pay is concerned, our Government does as well or even better by its graduates from its military and naval schools than any foreign country. A major-general of the army gets \$7,500 per year, and yet all our major-generals at this time are men who served the country in its need. A brigadier-general is supposed to get \$5,500; a colonel \$3,500; a lieutenant-colonel \$3,000; a major \$2,500, and so on down to an unmounted first lieutenant at \$1,400 per year.

In the navy the pay is somewhat the same. There is no admiral in the American navy now since Admiral Porter died. The rear-admirals, however, get \$6,000 a year when in command of a squadron at sea, \$5,000 when doing shore duty at some of our navy yards, and \$4,000 when waiting orders. A lieutenant-commander in the service of the United States navy after the date of his commission for four years, gets \$2,400 per year when on duty. After four years more of service he may get \$2,600.

Some of my young readers may say that \$7,500 a year, or \$6,000 or \$5,000 or even \$2,500 is very good pay for a man who has little to do. Those who say this make a great mistake. There are men who have served honorably and earnestly in the service in both the army and navy, who graduated with high rank from their respective schools, but who in their middle and old age are poor so far as the goods of this world are concerned. There are men who are in the service of the navy who have been looking for promotion these twenty years, and have received little of it. There are men who are serving in the army on the frontier who are still looking for some call to step up higher. You will remember how Wolfe quoted Grey as he came before the Heights of Abraham, when he accepted the poet's idea that "the paths of glory lead but to the grave."

## SOME CONSPICUOUS EXAMPLES

IT is a merciful and a good thing that all of the great men that West Point or Annapolis have produced have died poor. And what is more, they were poor all their lives. In the eyes of a merely commercial man the career of some of the greatest of them was full of failure. Grant tried almost everything before he found that which was to bring him his fame. Sherman was a failure in every business except that of war. Hancock was a great soldier who knew fighting and knew that well, but when he attempted politics it was beyond him. Perhaps General Philip H. Sheridan was the wisest of all those great generals of our war. He was a soldier from first to last. He devoted his whole life to the service and died the last General of the American armies, that title being conferred upon him when he lay dying.

## THE CHANCE OF PROMOTION

AS to promotion: Once you have gone through West Point or Annapolis I will be frank enough to tell you the chances of promotion are small. You see, we are not at war with any nation, and are not likely to be for some time to come, if ever. Therefore, the fighting man is subordinated to the man of business and affairs. There is a "drummer" for a New York grocery house who makes every year of his life twice as much money as does the senior major-general of the armies of the United States. If there was a great war on hand, then indeed there might be some chance for promotion in both army and navy. There is a gray veteran in my mind as I write. He went into the battle of Fredericksburg a private and came out a lieutenant. He could not well help it, for almost all the men who were in his company were killed. Promotion was quick in those days, and for that matter so was death. Nowadays, West Point is turning out more men than the country needs. But it is a wonderful training school. I do not believe it has its equal in the world. Not even the famous French school in which Napoleon, the greatest soldier of our times, graduated, can equal it.

## MAKERS RATHER THAN DESTROYERS

SO in the end, if there be among my readers those who love the blue and long for epaulets, then let them have them if they can get them. If they can secure an appointment at either West Point or Annapolis, this I can promise—they will find no coat of dishonor there unless they make it. And for aught I know there may be some of my younger readers now marching boldly on to conquer words of three syllables who may yet command armies. Yet I would say to those Cæsars, and Alexanders, and Napoleons in embryo, "Don't go too fast. The world is growing. Men of peace and good-will are also growing in favor, and after awhile warriors who fight for money will be out of work." I give this advice as the best that I have. As I have said, I in no way rebuke the desire on the part of my boy friends to fight for their country. I merely bid them to wait until their country demands the fighting. As a matter of fact, the young men who enter our army and navy will have little to do for many years but wait wearily for promotion.

It may be said that I am speaking in a pessimistic way of the advantages offered in the army and navy of the United States. I am not. The records of both are above all criticism. And if any of my young readers thinks he can serve his country and himself better by being a member of one of the arms of its service, let him go to his Congressman and see if he can settle it at once. Frankly, however, I do not advise him to do this. War and warriors destroy more than they make.

## SOUND, PRACTICAL ADVICE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

A BUSINESS education is necessary to business success. Every person should study book-keeping, business forms, penmanship, letter writing, business law, or shorthand; at home, by mail. Successfully taught by BRYANT & STRATTON'S COLLEGE, 459 W. Main St., Buffalo, N. Y. Write for Prospectus.