THE PHILOSOPHY OF COURAGE.

A FRENCH writer has said that every mistake made in life can be traced to fear. Though this was doubtless written more to shape an epigram than to state a fact,—and epigrams are generally regarded as jewels purchased at the expense of veracity,—yet the more we reflect upon the remark the more we are impressed with its truth.

Fear, above all things else, enfeebles the vigor of man's actions, supplants decision by vacillation, and opens the road to error. When one seeks counsel of one's fears, judgment ceases to obtrude advice.

Courage, on the other hand, is universally recognized as the manliest of all human attributes; it nerves its possessor for resolute attempts, and equips him for putting forth his supreme efforts. Powerful aristocracies have been founded with courage as the sole patent of nobility; kings have maintained their dynasties with no other virtue to commend them to their subjects. A once popular farce set forth these two opposite traits in human nature under the title of "The nervous man and the man of nerve."

Courage has so many different natures, assumes so many different forms, and is subject to so many eccentricities, that it is hard to define it. To separate it into the two grand divisions of moral courage and physical courage is a simple matter, but when the subdivisions of these are to be determined, the task is confronted with formidable difficulties.

Few men possess all the various forms of courage. One man may be utterly fearless in the most perilous storm at sea, while on land he may be afraid to travel at the rate of twenty-five miles an hour on a first-class railroad, and, sailor-like, expends his sympathies in pitying "poor unhappy folks ashore." A locomotive engineer on an Eastern railway, who was always selected for his "nerve" when a fast "special" was to be sent out, and whose courage, repeatedly displayed in appalling accidents, had become proverbial, was afraid in the quiet of his own home to go upstairs alone in the dark.

In ascending a Southern river on a steamboat, towards the close of our civil war, we had an officer on board who, during three years of fighting, had treated shot and shell in action with an indifference that made him a marvel of courage; but on this expedition he manifested a singular fear of torpedoes, put on enough life-preservers to float an anchor, and stood at the stern of the boat ready, at the first sign of danger, to plunge into the water with the promptness of a Baptist convert. He once came very near jumping overboard at the sound of a sudden escape of steam from the boiler. He made no disguise of his nervousness at this new form of danger. I recollect a company officer of infantry who never seemed to know what the word fear meant under any circumstances until his promotion to a higher rank compelled him to mount a horse, and then his mind knew no peace. A sudden snort from the beast alarmed him more than the opening of a battery, and the pricking up of the animal's ears had more terrors for him than a bayonet charge.

These instances, though numerous, are the exceptions, not the rule. They can often be accounted for by the fact that the victim had suffered a severe fright, perhaps in childhood, which produced a permanent shock to his nerves, and made him timid ever after respecting the particular form of danger to which he had been exposed. An acquaintance of mine whose repeated acts of gallantry in the field had convinced all his comrades that he had been born without the sense of fear was seen to give a wide berth to any horned animals that came in sight. Whenever a drove of commissary's cattle were encountered on the road, he began a series of well-timed maneuvers with a view to getting a fence between himself and them in the shortest possible time. Their approach seemed to demoralize him as much as a cavalry charge of the enemy elated him. The providing of an army with "beef on the hoof" was one of the methods of military logistics which had more terrors for him than a prospect of starvation. When twitted on the subject, he one day said in explanation, that, when a child, a cow had once chased him, thrown him down, and then tossed him on her horns, and he had never recovered from the shock, or been able to banish from his mind the sense of terror the circumstance produced. It was the burned child dreading the fire.

This instinct is common to all animals. At a country station on one of our railways a pig used to be a constant visitor, and drove a thriving business in picking up stray grains of corn which dropped from the bags as they

were loaded on the cars. One day the pig's greed so far overmastered his discretion that his tail got nipped between the brake-shoe and the car-wheel, and when the train started the tail was jerked out by the root. The victim of this sudden catastrophe was now confronted with the dismal prospect of having to navigate through the rest of life with his steering apparatus a total wreck. He continued coming to the station after that, but whenever he heard the clatter of an approaching train, he hurried off to a safe distance and backed up close against a brick wall till the cars had passed; he was never going to permit himself to be subject to the risk of such an indignity again, even though there was no longer any tail left to be pulled out. He had acquired sufficient railroad experience to appreciate the magnitude of the loss of terminal facilities.

As one's physical condition is affected by circumstances of health and sickness, so does one's courage vary under different surroundings. Troops, after being refreshed by a rest and a good meal, have stood their ground under a fire from which they would have fled in confusion if tired and hungry. An empty stomach, like conscience, makes cowards of us all. The Duke of Wellington proved himself a philosopher when he said, "An army moves principally upon its belly." In the days when personal difficulties were settled under the "code," the parties never tried to screw their courage to the sticking-point on empty stomachs, but "pistols and coffee" always went hand in hand.

In the successful attack made by Admiral Du Pont with his fleet upon the Confederate forts which commanded Port Royal harbor, when the dinner hour arrived the admiral directed rations to be served as usual, and the crews were ordered to cease loading their guns and go to loading their stomachs to fortify themselves for the continuation of the battle. The commanding officer was severely criticised for this at the time, but it was afterwards generally conceded that he understood the true relations between the nerves and the stomach, and gained the victory all the sooner by taking time to lodge that dinner where it would do the most good. An attack of dyspepsia or a torpid liver will sometimes rob a man of half his natural courage; rabbits in his path then become magnified into lions, and mole-hills into mountains. Napoleon lost the battle of Leipsic from eating too heavy a dinner and being seized with a fit of the blues brought on by indigestion. As the Latin roots of the word locate the source of courage in the heart, and as the seat of all courage is believed by many to be in the mind, no one would attempt the ungracious and unsentimental task of trying to transfer its location to the stomach, but facts point to the belief that the condition of the stomach has something to do even with this high attribute of man.

Courage, like everything else, wears out. Troops used to go into action during our late war displaying a coolness and steadiness the first day that made them seem as if the screeching of shot and shell was the music on which they had been brought up. After fighting a couple of days, their nerves gradually lost their tension, their buoyancy of spirits gave way, and dangers they would have laughed at the first day often sent them panic-stricken to the rear on the third.

It was always a curious sight in camp after a three-days' fight to watch the effect of the sensitiveness of the nerves; men would start at the slightest sound, and dodge at the flight of a bird or a pebble tossed at them. One of the chief amusements on such occasions used to be to throw stones and chips past one another's heads to see the active dodging that would follow.

Recruits sometimes rush into dangers from which veterans would shrink. When Thomas was holding on to his position at Chickamauga on the afternoon of the second day, and resisting charge after charge of an enemy flushed with success, General Granger came up with a division of troops, many of whom had never before been under fire. As soon as they were deployed in front of the enemy, they set up a yell, sprang over the earth-works, charged into his ranks, and created such consternation that the Confederate veterans were paralyzed by the very audacity of such conduct. Granger said, as he watched their movements, "Just look at them; they don't know any better; they think that 's the way it ought to be done. I 'll bet they 'll never do it again." Men, like children, are often ignorant of danger till they learn its terrors in the school of experience.

Every soldier understands why "two o'clock in the morning" courage is recognized as courage in its highest form. At that time many hours of fasting have occurred since the evening meal; enough sleep has not yet been had to restore the nervous system to its normal condition after the fatigue and excitement of the previous day; it is the hour of darkness and silence, when the mind magnifies the slightest sounds. The stoutest nerves require a great deal of bracing when a camp is startled out of its sleep by an attack at such an hour.

Nearly all persons are more timid when alone. The feeling of lonesomeness is akin to fear. At Spotsylvania a staff officer flinched and turned back when bearing a message to a part of the field which required him to pass

along a road exposed to a short-range fire from the enemy. His courage had stood every test when in the company of others, but on this occasion he had set out alone, and had been seized with a fear which at the time completely unmanned him.

A woman when quite alone in a house at night may be tortured by a sense of fear which completely destroys her peace of mind; but let there be a child in the same room with her, and she will feel but little apprehension of danger. The relief comes not from any protection she believes the child could afford, but from her release from the fearful sense of lonesomeness which had unnerved her.

There is a peculiar significance in "shoulder to shoulder" courage. It springs from a sense of the strength which comes from union, the confidence which lies in comradeship, the support derived from a familiar "touch of the elbow."

A battery of artillery has often been ordered to open fire when there was no chance of doing the enemy any damage, merely for the moral effect upon the infantry, whose courage is always increased by feeling that they have the support of the noise of the sister arm of the service, if nothing else.

Indifference to danger is not always the form of courage which should entitle its possessor to the highest credit. It is a negative virtue as compared with the quality which enables one to perform a dangerous duty while realizing the full measure of the peril encountered.

These two traits are best illustrated by the old story of the two soldiers whose regiment was charging up a hill in a desperate attempt to capture a battery. When half-way up, one of them turned to the other and said, "Why, you 're as pale as a sheet; you look like a ghost; I believe you 're afraid." "Yes, I am," was the answer; "and if you were half as much afraid as I am you 'd have run long ago." It is something higher than physical courage, it is a species of moral courage, which recognizes the danger and yet overmasters the sense of fear. When the famous mine in front of Petersburg had been completed, and the National troops drawn up ready to charge the enemy's works as soon as the mine had done its work in creating a breach, the signal was given just before daylight, the fuse was lighted, and the command stood waiting with intense anxiety for the explosion which was to follow. But seconds, then minutes, then tens of minutes passed, and still no sound from the mine. The suspense became painful, and the gloom of disappointment overspread the anxious faces of officers and men. The fuse had been spliced about midway. It was now thought that there was a defect in the splice, and that it was at this point that the fuse was hanging fire. The day was breaking, the enemy was becoming alert at sight of our unmasked columns, there was not a moment to be lost. Lieutenant Doughty and Sergeant Rees, of the 48th Pennsylvania infantry, now volunteered to examine the fuse. They entered the long dark gallery which led to the mine, and without stopping to calculate the chances of life, calmly exposed themselves to one of the most horrible forms of death. With no excitement to lend them its intoxication, with nothing to divert their minds from the fate which seemed to await them, they followed the course of the fuse through the long subterranean passage, found the defect at which the spark had been arrested, and made a new splice. On their return the match was again applied, and the train was now prompt to do its deadly work. These men displayed even a higher order of courage than those who afterwards charged into the breach.

Perhaps the most striking case of desperate and deliberate courage which the history of modern warfare has furnished was witnessed at Cold Harbor. The men had been repeatedly repulsed in assaulting earth-works, had each time lost heavily, and had become impressed with the conviction that such attacks meant certain death. One evening, after a dangerous assault had been ordered for daylight the next morning, I noticed in passing along the line that many of the men had taken off their coats and seemed engaged in mending rents in the back. Upon closer examination I found that they were calmly writing their names and home addresses on slips of paper, and pinning these slips upon the backs of their coats, so that their dead bodies might be recognized upon the field and their fate made known to their friends at home. Never was there a more gallant assault than that made by those men the next day, though their act of the night before bore painful proof that they had entered upon their work without a hope of surviving. Such courage is more than heroic; it is sublime.

Recklessness often masquerades as courage, but it is made of different mettle. Plato, in reasoning upon this subject, says: "As knowledge without justice ought to be called cunning rather than wisdom, so a mind prepared to meet danger, if exerted by its own eagerness and not the public good, deserves the name of audacity rather than of courage."

Courage born of passion or excitement should always be looked upon with suspicion. It may fail at the very moment it is most needed. I remember a soldier in one of the regular batteries in the Army of the Cumber-

land, who had displayed conspicuous bravery in a dozen engagements while serving his gun as a cannoneer. At the battle of Chickamauga he was assigned to duty as a driver, and instead of participating in the excitement of loading and firing, he had nothing to do but sit quietly on his horse and watch the havoc created around him by the enemy's shot. He soon became seized with a terror which completely unmanned him, and after the battle he implored his commanding officer to send him back to his gun, saying that if he ever went into another engagement as a driver, he felt certain he should run away and lose all the reputation he had ever gained. His courage had disappeared with the excitement which inspired it.

Men have performed deeds of bravery by being goaded on by anger or stung with taunts, but those who require to be lashed into a rage before they can key up their nerves sufficiently to meet danger are not the possessors of a courage which is trustworthy. Fierce fires soon burn out. According to Shaftesbury, "Rage can make a coward fight, but fury or anger can never be placed to the account of courage."

It is a fact known to every soldier that the most courageous men indulge the least in brutal bullying, and those who exhibit all the pluck necessary to make them leaders in street rows and prize rings are the first to shirk an encounter in which death stares them in the face. During our civil war the regiments which were composed of plug-uglies, thugs, and midnight rounders, with noses laid over to one side as evidence of their prowess in bar-room mills and paving-stone riots, were generally cringing cowards in battle, and the little courage they exhibited was of an exceedingly evanescent order. A graduate of a volunteer fire company arrived in Washington one day, in the ranks of a regiment in which he had enlisted. As he stepped from the cars he took off his coat, hung it over his arm, tilted his hat a little farther up behind, brushed his soap-locks forward with his hand, and said to a midget of a newsboy standing at the station, "I say, sonny, hev you seen anything of Je-Jeff Davis around h'yar? Ve 're lookin' fur him."

"You 'd better go down to Richmond and do yer lookin'," replied the boy.

"Well now, sonny, don't you worry none about that," said this forerunner of destruction. "That 's de very town ve 're goin' fur, and ven ve gets inside of it, thar von't be anything but vacant lots around thar, you bet."

In his first fight this same plunging swash-buckler suddenly became seized with a feeling of marked tenderness towards his fellow-beings generally, concluded he did not want to hurt anybody, and soon struck his best gait in an effort to join the baggage-wagon committee in the rear.

Courage, like most other qualities, is never assured until it has been tested. No man knows precisely how he will behave in battle until he has been under fire, and the mind of many a gallant fellow has been sorely perplexed by the doubts that have entered it previous to his first fight. He sometimes fears his courage, like Bob Acres's, may ooze out, and that he may behave like the enthusiastic young hunter in pursuit of his first bear, who followed the trail vigorously all day, spoiling for a chance to get to close quarters with the animal, but in the evening suddenly turned back, giving as an explanation of his abrupt abandonment of the hunt that the bear's tracks were getting too fresh.

At the beginning of our war officers felt that, as untested men, they ought to do many things for the sake of appearance that were wholly unnecessary. This, at times, led to a great deal of posing for effect and useless exposure of life. Officers used to accompany assaulting columns over causeways on horseback, and occupy the most exposed positions that could be found. They were not playing the bravo: they were confirming their own belief in their courage, and acting under the impression that bravery ought not only to be undoubted, but conspicuous. They were simply putting their courage beyond suspicion.

At a later period of the war, when men began to plume themselves as veterans, they could afford to be more conservative; they had won their spurs; their reputations were established; they were beyond reproach. Officers then dismounted to lead close assaults, dodged shots to their hearts' content, did not hesitate to avail themselves of the cover of earth-works when it was wise to seek such shelter, and resorted to many acts which conserved human life, and in no wise detracted from their efficiency as soldiers. There was no longer anything done for buncombe; they had settled down to practical business. One day, in the last year of the war, General Butler rode out with his staff to see how the work was progressing in the digging of his famous Dutch Gap Canal, that was to cut off a bend in the James River. He stopped at a point which soon became a conspicuous target for the enemy's batteries. After a while a staff officer, who had won a famous reputation by his repeated acts of personal courage, saw the uselessness of the exposure of so many valuable officers, and proposed to the general to move to another position. The general turned upon him sharply and said,

"Any officer of the staff who 's afraid can go back to camp." The officer at once turned his horse about, touched his hat, and with a quizzical look at his commanding officer said, "Good morning, General, I 'm afraid," and rode off to a position where he could be of just as much service and not be a party to an exhibition of recklessness. Such an act before his courage had been tested would have cost him his commission. Now he could afford to exercise the wisdom of a veteran, and no one dared question his motives.

There have been many instances which go to prove that a young soldier ought not always to be hastily sacrificed for flinching in his first engagement. Upon one occasion, during a desperate assault in which the attacking column was under a withering fire, I saw a company officer desert his men, and run to the rear, as pale as a corpse, trembling like an aspen, the picture of an abject craven. He even tore off his shoulder-straps that he might not be recognized as an officer. He heeded neither urgings nor threats; he was past all shame; he was absolutely demented. It was the more distressing because he was a man of great intelligence and possessed many good qualities. When the engagement was over, the only question seemed to be whether he should be cashiered or shot; but he begged so hard of his commanding officer to give him another trial, to grant him one more chance to redeem himself from disgrace, and gave such earnest pledges for his future conduct, that he was finally released from arrest and allowed to go into battle again with his company. He fulfilled his pledges most religiously. Wherever there was danger he was seen in the midst of it; his conduct in every subsequent fight was that of a hero; and he was finally promoted to the rank of a field officer. He had effaced the blot from his escutcheon. The man was no coward at heart; he had for the moment, in army parlance, "lost his grip" under that first murderous fire.

Boucicault, in his play called the "Relief of Lucknow," introduces the character of a young English officer fired with professional ambition, who has just joined the service, and finds himself in the beleaguered city, surrounded by rebels. He is ordered to make his way through the enemy and carry a message to the column advancing to the garrison's relief; but his heart fails him, his courage deserts him, and he turns back and stands before a brother officer a miserable poltroon. This officer brings him to a realizing sense of the wretched position in which he has placed himself, and procures him an opportunity to wipe out his disgrace. He embraces it, and afterwards becomes one of the most heroic figures in the siege. In conversation with Mr. Boucicault, I once asked him whether this scene was founded on fact. He said it was not, that he had introduced the incident merely because he considered it dramatic, and somewhat novel in a military play. I then told him the story related above, about the company officer whose nerves were unstrung in his first encounter with danger, as confirmative of the truthfulness with which the distinguished author had held the mirror up to nature in his admirable military drama.

The cases of recovery, however, from the disease of fear are rare. Cowardice is generally a constitutional malady, and has to be recognized and dealt with as such. General Sheridan used to estimate that about twenty-five per centum of the men were lacking in the requisite courage for battle, and he at times tried to have the weak-kneed troopers singled out and assigned to hold the horses of the other men when the cavalry dismounted to fight on foot. He said we had this complement of the faint-hearted in the ranks; we could not very well deplete the forces by getting rid of them, and the only philosophical plan was to utilize them by giving them some duty which their unsoldierly nerves could stand.

A curious characteristic of fear is that it generally affects persons when death is threatened in an inverse ratio to the value of their lives. In battle an officer upon whom the fate of a command depends will risk his life generously unmoved by a sense of fear, while a shirk whose life is of no earthly use to anybody will skulk in the rear and dodge all danger. When encountering heavy weather in a sail-boat an able-bodied young fellow, with every prospect of a career of usefulness before him, often sits calmly through the danger, while some aged invalid, with one foot already in the grave, will prove himself a martyr to his fears, squirm at every lurch of the boat, and summon all hands to stand by to save him.

A sense of cowardice seems to rob a being of all his manhood. When you see a person acting the coward you may sting him with reproach, hurl at him every epithet of contempt, even cudgel him as you would a cur, and there is usually not enough manhood left in him to resent it; no sense of shame to which appeal can be made; no sensibilities to wound.

The question is often asked whether men in battle, when they break, run to the rear very fast. Usually they do not; they often do not run at all; the most provoking part of it is that they deliberately walk away; and as to reasoning with them, you might as well try to reason with lobsters when they scramble out of a basket and start for the water.

There was one soldier, however, in a Western army, who in a retreat proved an exception to the rule and showed himself still master of the faculty of resentment. An irreverent general officer, who was famous for designating his men on all critical occasions by a title which was anything but a pet name, called out to this soldier who was breaking for the rear:

"Halt there, turn round, and get back to the front, you ——."

"Look-ee here, Gin'ral," said the man, cocking his gun and taking aim at the officer's head, "when a man calls me a name sich es that, it 's his last departin' word."

"Oh, put up your gun," said the general. "I did n't mean anything. I forgot your other name."

Reasoning dictated by fear is seldom logical. When a man becomes panic-stricken he recognizes but one principle for his guidance, that self-preservation is the first law of nature, and is ready to repeat the cry, "I would give all my fame for a pot of ale and safety." The instincts of fear do not always guide him to a safe place. In his confusion he often rushes into more danger, and becomes a ludicrous object to watch. In one of our prominent battles, a soldier belonging to a command which was supporting a battery was lying down with the rest of his regiment to obtain some cover afforded by a bit of rolling ground. The fire soon became so hot that his nerves could no longer stand the strain upon them, and he sprang to his feet and started for the rear. He soon found himself in a level field that was being plowed by the shot and shell which ricochetted over the rolling ground in front, and saw that he had got out of the frying-pan into the fire.

"What are you doing there?" cried an officer.

"Well," said the man, "I 'm looking for the rear of this army, but it don't seem to have any."

The question most frequently asked of soldiers is, "How does a man feel in battle?" There is a belief, among some who have never indulged in the pastime of setting themselves up as targets to be shot at, that there is a delicious sort of exhilaration experienced in battle, which arouses a romantic enthusiasm, surfeits the mind with delightful sensations, makes one yearn for a life-time of fighting, and feel that peace is a pusillanimous sort of thing at best. Others suppose, on the contrary, that one's knees rattle like a Spanish *bailarina's* castanets, and that one's mind dwells on little else than the most approved means of running away.

A happy mean between these two extremes would doubtless define the condition of the average man when he finds that as a soldier he is compelled to devote himself to stopping bullets as well as directing them. He stands his ground and faces the dangers into which his profession leads him, under a sense of duty and a regard for his self-respect, but often feels that the sooner the firing ceases the better it would accord with his notion of the general fitness of things, and that if the enemy is going to fall back the present moment would be as good a time as any at which to begin such a highly judicious and commendable movement. Braving danger, of course, has its compensations. "The blood more stirs to rouse a lion than to start a hare." In the excitement of a charge, or in the enthusiasm of approaching victory, there is a sense of pleasure which no one should attempt to underrate. It is the gratification which is always born of success, and, coming to one at the supreme moment of a favorable crisis in battle, rewards the soldier for many severe trials and perilous risks.

The physical effect produced upon different men in the presence of danger forms an interesting study, but in many cases the outward signs as indicated by the actions of the individual in no wise measure the degree of his courage or his fear. The practice, for instance, of dodging shots, "jackknifing" under fire, proceeds from a nervousness which is often purely physical, and has but little more significance as a test of courage than winking when something is thrown in one's face. The act is entirely involuntary. A general officer who was killed at the second battle of Bull Run was one of the most gallant soldiers that ever drew a blade. Everybody had predicted his early death from the constant and unnecessary exposure to which he subjected himself. When under fire, the agile dodging he performed was a whole gymnastic exercise in itself. His head would dart from side to side and occasionally bob down to his horse's neck with all the vigor of a signal-flag in waving a message. These actions were entirely beyond his control, and were no indications whatever of fear. Dodging to some extent under a heavy infantry fire is very common. I can recall only two persons who throughout a rattling musketry fire always sat in their saddles without moving a muscle or even winking an eye; one was a bugler in the regular cavalry, and the other was General Grant.

Two general officers in the field, conspicuous for their fearlessness, possessed such nervous temperaments physically that, under the strain to which they were subjected in the face of a destructive fire, they invariably became affected with nausea, and, as our English friends say of seasick people, they frequently became

"actively ill." It was a source of great mortification to them, but it was constitutional; they could not control it, and no one could attribute it to fear.

The realization of danger is always egotistical. Men waiting to go into action turn their conversation upon their previous hair-breadth escapes and the havoc made among their comrades, just as passengers on a steamer invariably assemble in a storm and relate their former harrowing experiences in the "roaring forties," and travelers on a railway train as soon as it gets to running at a break-neck speed on a dark night begin to tell each other their blood-curdling stories of fatal telescopings and tangled wrecks. These recitals are not calculated to be cheering in their effects, but human nature is so constituted that the mind will dwell upon the horrors which the presence of danger always conjures up, and it seems to find a melancholy relief in expending its thoughts in words.

Superstition, which is the child of fear, is common among all people who lead a life surrounded by dangers. Sailors are proverbially superstitious, and it is natural that such a feeling should enter an army and sometimes warp men's courage. Presentiments are usually common with recruits, but after repeatedly finding their most clearly defined apprehensions unrealized they lose faith in such imaginings, and begin to look upon these things as so lost to all sense of punctuality that they no longer believe in their coming. I have known but one presentiment which was fulfilled, and that was accomplished in such a bungling way as to be robbed of all respect for its methods.

The practical questions involved in this discussion are, Can courage be taught, and, if so, what are the best means of education? Numerous experiments have been attempted in this direction. I knew the father of a large family of boys who became greatly distressed on account of the timidity shown by several of them, and set about educating them up to a higher standard of courage after a method which he had practiced successfully with dumb animals. He had found, for instance, that when a horse showed great terror at sight of a railway train in motion, the surest way to break him of it was to throw him down close to the track and confine him in that position till the train had thundered by. After subjecting the animal to this mode of discipline two or three times its sense of fear was entirely overcome. He applied similar lessons to his boys. If one was afraid to be alone in the dark, the father made him wander repeatedly through the attic rooms at midnight without a light. If another had a dread of the water, he compelled him to swim swift streams and dive off high landings. The practice was disagreeably heroic for the boys, but the father insisted that it finally drove all fear from the most timid of them. He proceeded upon the theory that fear is fed by the imagination, and as soon as any one is convinced that the objects dreaded are harmless, all fear of them will vanish. He evidently believed, with Schiller, that the chief element in the sense of fear is the unknown.

Some years ago a gentleman traveling on a European steamer became such a victim to his terror of the sea that he attracted universal attention. He allowed his mind to dwell constantly upon the objects of his fears. A morbid curiosity led him to take a look into the boiler-room and watch the blazing fires just before going to bed; every few hours in the night he would open his state-room door and sniff the air to find whether he could notice the smell of smoke, and prowl around through the passage-ways to see just when the expected conflagration was going to break out. In a storm he would watch the waves in an agony of fear, in the confident belief that each one was going to swallow up the ship. Finding his business would require him to make frequent ocean trips, he set himself to work on the "mind cure." He gradually schooled his mind until, by a strong effort of the will, it could be in a great measure diverted from dwelling on the causes of his fears. When a sense of terror seized him he struggled manfully to concentrate his thoughts on other subjects, and finally he so far succeeded that, except in very dangerous gales, his fears were completely controlled, and he began to acquiesce in the popular belief that, after all, crossing the ocean was about as safe as crossing Broadway, New York, in the era of omnibuses.

The peculiarity of the cases just related, however, lies in the fact that the dangers were mainly unreal, and all the mind required was to be assured of the harmlessness of the objects which had inspired its fears. If the dangers had been real, and their effects had been destructive, the training by which the fear was expected to be overcome would not have been so effectual. If the father mentioned above had attempted to silence a son's fear of being shot by sending him into battle, the son, instead of finding his apprehensions unrealized would have seen that shots were fatal and that there was actual destruction of life all around him; his worst fears would have been realized, and in this mode of educating him to a higher standard of courage the lessons taught would doubtless have been found unprofitable.

It is true that a person may often nerve himself to meet danger courageously if he has

time to contemplate the coming peril, philosophize upon the situation, and thus avoid the effects of the shock which sudden danger always brings. A spy in war, or a criminal who has committed a capital offense, may at the moment of his capture evince an agony of fear and become totally unmanned; but after undergoing trial and a term of imprisonment, and dwelling upon the fate which awaits him and from which there is no escape, he may go to his execution without a tremor, and face death with the calmness of a Spartan.

Are there, then, any means by which man can be educated up to a degree of courage which will brave the actual danger of facing death? While heroes, in the great majority of cases, are, like poets, born, not made, yet courage can undoubtedly be acquired in many ways. Take two youngsters born with equal degrees of courage; let one remain in a quiet city, playing the milksop in a modern Capua, leading an unambitious, namby-pamby life, surrounded by all the safeguards of civilization, while the other goes out on the frontier, runs his chances in encounters with wild animals, finds that to make his way he must take his life in his hand, and assert his rights, if necessary, with deadly weapons, and knows he will be drummed out of the community if he is once caught showing the white feather. In the one particular trait of personal courage the frontiersman will undoubtedly become the superior of the lad who has remained at home. It is perhaps a confirmation of Guizot's remark, however, that in every country the value set upon human life is in proportion to the degree of civilization. Take the case of military schools, in which courage is inculcated from entrance to graduation, where cowardice is recognized as the unpardonable sin, and an exhibition of fear on the part of a lad in riding a bucking horse, or even in a boyish personal encounter with his fellows, makes it infamous for others to associate with him, and sends him like a leper outside the camp. The standard of courage under such circumstances is unquestionably raised to a higher grade than in a school in which this quality is not dwelt upon as the saving virtue.

Ancient Greece made her sons a nation of heroes by holding up valor as the only true badge of earthly glory. She sought out every means of claiming for her heroes the admiration of the people, and taught courage by the force of example. It is said that for ages after the battle of Thermopylæ every scholar in the public schools of Greece was required each day to recite from memory the names of the three hundred heroes who fell in defending that pass.

Napoleon taught Frenchmen that the sum of worldly glory was the reward gained by courage on the field. Kingdoms were bestowed upon victorious marshals, and promotion and decorations evidenced the prompt recognition of every gallant deed. When La Tour d'Auvergne, accounted the bravest grenadier in the ranks of the grand army, finally fell, pierced by the bullets of the enemies of France, a general order was issued directing that his name should be kept on the active list of his regiment, that it should be called at every roll-call, and each time a comrade should answer from the ranks, "Dead on the field of honor." By every device that could appeal to men's ambition this wizard of modern warfare educated his people to be paragons of valor, and, until his training-school closed its doors, the French armies set all Europe an example in courage.

Discipline, that well-spring of victory, is recognized as one of the most potent means of raising the standard of courage in an army. It teaches men that their best reliance is in their own bravery; gives them confidence in each other; removes the fear that they may not be properly supported in emergencies; convinces them that they are part of an intelligent machine moving methodically, under perfect control and not guided by incompetency, and establishes that *esprit de corps* which goes so far towards making armies formidable in war. It was discipline which enabled the commander of the troops on board the English ship, when foundering, to form his men in line on deck, present arms, and go down with the vessel, while the band played "God save the King."

The moral influence of the prestige which comes from past success does much towards developing courage. Instances of this are innumerable. I happened to be in Chicago in May, 1886, when the anarchists attacked the police and threw the destructive bomb into their ranks, and when that force rallied so gallantly, drove the anarchists from their strongholds, scattered them like chaff before the wind, and became the object of the highest honors that the best citizens of Chicago could bestow. Before that event the police had been strictly on the defense; their small squads huddled together for protection had been boldly attacked, and they had been ordered from pillar to post to rescue their comrades from the fierce onslaughts that were being made upon them by a foe whose reckless acts and exaggerated numbers had almost paralyzed the community. But the next day after the suppression of the Haymarket riot the police went forth wearing the laurels of success; they swaggered like the returned heroes of Austerlitz; each man seemed to feel two feet higher

in stature and competent to cope single-handed with an army of anarchists. One of these policemen undertook to guard a railway station where a dozen were required the day before; they searched single-handed for anarchists like ferrets for rats; the city was safe from that hour. The prestige born of that memorable achievement had been a complete education in courage.

Moral courage will always rank higher than physical. The one is a daily necessity, while the other may be required only in emergencies.

It cannot be doubted that the crime of embezzlement, unhappily becoming so common among employés who handle money, is mainly due to lack of moral courage. The history of the unfaithful cashier is always the same old story. He has incurred a debt through an extra bit of extravagance or taking a turn in the stock market, in the certain belief in success. If he had the moral courage to tell his employer frankly of his pressing necessities, make a clean breast of it, and ask advice and assistance at the outset, he would, in nine cases out of ten, if a valuable employé, receive good counsel, be assisted to a loan, helped to bridge over the results of his indiscretion, and be saved from ultimate ruin. His moral cowardice leads him to steal money with which to silence pressing creditors or to gamble in the hope of freeing himself from debt, and, when matters go from bad to worse, carries him panic-stricken to Canada to end his days as a branded criminal and a fugitive from justice.

Morality cannot flourish without courage; criminality certainly thrives upon the lack of it. If we cannot go so far as to believe with the Frenchman that every mistake in life may be traced to fear, we can at least agree with the philosopher who said, "Great talents have been lost for want of a little courage."

Horace Porter.

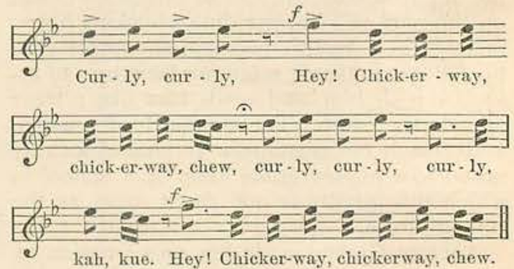
BIRD MUSIC: THE ORIOLE AND THE THRUSH.

HE Baltimore oriole is the most beautiful of our spring visitors, has a rich and powerful voice, the rarest skill in nest-building, and is among the happiest, most jubilant of birds. The male generally arrives here a few days in advance of the female — the first week in May.

The melodic structure here is similar to that of the bluebird's strain, but the effect is very different. Hardly a songster, the oriole is rather a tuneful caller, a musical shouter; nevertheless, as will appear, he sometimes vents his high spirits in ingenious variations indicative of great melodic possibilities. Years ago I heard, from a large, tall elm standing in an open field, a strain the beauty of which so struck me that it is often wafted through my mind to this day. It was the oriole's voice, but could it be his song?

It proved to be so, and it became with me a favorite argument for the old form of the minor scale — the seventh sharp ascending, natural descending.

But a still greater deviation from the usual vocal delivery of orioles was noticed here on the 22d of May, 1884, the new song continuing through the season. A remarkable feature of the performance was the distinct utterance of words as plainly formed as the whippoorwill's name when he "tells" it "to all the hills."



While listening to this song I could not help thinking that the bird had been trained. He invariably attacked the *f* in the climax most artistically, taking it as if with a full sense of the exclamation Hey! We hoped the wandering minstrel would summer in our grove of maples, but he passed on, visiting the neighbors as he went, finally taking quarters about a fourth of a mile away. Nearly every day during the season, however, we