

Man The Invincible

By Samuel Rosinger

One of the most heartening incidents in connection with the fatal crash of the big British dirigible is contained in the Press report, according to which, unmindful of the fate that overtook the dirigible in the air, many of the friends and relatives of the victims arrived at the scene of the disaster in aeroplanes. Man's courage and perseverance form, indeed, his most admirable traits. Risking danger in the face of disaster, has been responsible for the progress of the race. Fishermen living on the coasts, brave in their frail craft the treacherous sea, though this means of livelihood has ever demanded the sacrifice of countless lives. Italian peasants dwelling on the slopes of Mt. Vesuvius, are frequently put to flight by the liquid fire of the volcanic lava stream. Yet as soon as the eruption subsides, they return to their homesteads, and rebuild their ruined cottages. Explorers penetrate into forbidden regions of the earth, undaunted by the tragic failure of those who have preceded them. The spirit of conquest is man's innate endowment, and as long as the race will keep a spark of that spirit alive, man will overcome all obstacles in his path of progress by the invincible power of his heroic courage.

The pity of it, however, is that man concentrates all his conquering energy on external difficulties, and not on the internal obstacles that block his moral progress. Especially during the past century, man has bent every ounce of his physical strength and intellectual energy on the conquest of the elements, but he has failed to overcome his passion, his appetite, his greed, his lust, his brutality and all that animalism which reduce a human being to the state of the dweller of the jungle, even though he be surrounded with all the outward trappings of an artificial civilization. To educate a man to live up to the moral code is of far greater importance than enabling him to communicate with lightning speed by means of the Morse code. To train man to walk straight on earth, is a far greater achievement than teaching him to perform stunts in the air.

There is hope, however, that after man will tire of playing with the scientific inventions of his brain, he will turn with all his dogged persistence and perseverance to the real task of the race, namely the conquest of himself. Then will he develop a sense of honesty that will uproot from his heart the rank weeds of fraud and deceit. Then will he develop a social conscience, sensitive enough to feel the misery of his fellowmen as much as one feels a hurt to his own limb. Then will he respect the majesty of the law, the sanctity of life and the divinity that dwells in man. Then, indeed, man will have outgrown his infancy, and enter upon his glorious manhood in which wielding a moral power unimpaired by vice, he will be invincible indeed.

ROTARYGRAMS

OF BEAUMONT



WEEKLY BULLETIN

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Slants at the Meeting

Your old scribe was sitting pretty last week, dove-tailed in between two connoisseurs, or technicians, of music—Wilbur Carroll Gilbert affectionately known as "Patoutie" and William Otto von Wahrmond, juvenially characterized as "Willie." Your reporter's contiguity to this talent was just like a life-saving station to a sinking sister.

To the official observer Prof. Dhossche looked all wet when he began that little musical incursion into the animal kingdom but under the guiding influence of Wagnerian Wahrmond and Bovine Bill, who are adepts at interpretative music, the intricate and tonal beauties of the program began to reveal themselves like hungry tramps at your back door in hard times.

That little donkey ditty was especially appealing to "Patoutie" and those lacrimose orbs of his were twitching in sympathetic unison as we caught the low, subdued murmur of contentment that fell from his lips "Just like a night in Old Connecticut". The rising cadencies of that braying ass seem to grip his very soul and with child-like simplicity he reached for a Lucky.

The crow of the cock awakened those rhythmic impulses in little "Willie" and we could perceive fowl emotions flitting up and down his vertebrae like a flat-tired flivver on a rocky road. His physiognomy was all aglow like the hot end of a spark plug; his mind had wandered off into the elysian fields of "chicken a la Maryland."

Our old friend, Abraham Moses Blieden, juxtaposed, and who, you remember, had had calipers on his cranium indicating his pituitaries were proceeding against his profits, lamenting he could not interpret feline and rodent harmonies. His forte was in porcine parodies, he says.

Prof Dhosscre made one of the best Rotary talks we have heard in many moons. His cleanness of thought offset his cloudy speech, and with the laconic words "I von't say nothings" he sat down, thereby 'living' his declaration.—Check.

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—Rotarygrams—

Out of Step With Life

"Pop, we are through prep school. What shall we do next?"

When the two sons of Hendrik Willem Van Loon asked him that question, his answer was:

"I won't send you to college."

For Van Loon, war correspondent, university lecturer, and author, is convinced modern colleges are out of step with life. Writing in the October Rotarian Magazine, he presents some rather disconcerting views.

In the middle ages, he points out, the so-called "classical education" was something essentially practical. Men learned Latin, not only because of the beauty of a hexameter, but because "a smooth knowledge of the international language of commerce and statesmanship provided them with pleasant and lucrative jobs as secretaries and managers to the powers that ruled this earth, and divided the riches thereof."

But, Van Loon, "the bull in the educational china shop", holds modern education has gone to seed. It has separated "the practical" from the "classical" as though they had no relationship whatsoever.

"The 'academic department' no longer bears any true relation to life", he says. "It is a sort of a kindergarten for the children of the well-to-do. Because it lacks all inner cohesion and intellectual discipline, it encourages the mind to dwindle and after four years of perfunctory and childish little tasks it leaves the boy and girl totally unfit for the harsh business of living, and even more unfit for the harsher business of making a living."

"For our modern college is neither one thing nor the other, but is everything it should not be."

"And until it shall have caught up with the times, my boys had better go lobster-fishing with Jack Mulhaley. Jack is not familiar with the split and unsplit infinitive, but he does know lobsters. And he can talk of them with feeling and enthusiasm."

District Governor

Frank Davis, just a big he-man plus, an ambidextrous lifter and one who never splits his infinitives or drinks. Rituals to him are so much rot. He can be ethical without being serious. A business man without being too busy. Neither pedantic or pestering but a likeable chap.

Be on hand Wednesday 8th and meet him.

—Rotarygrams—

WILLIAM LYON PHELPS ON GOLF

A golf story that promises to become a classic in the annals of the ancient Scotch pastime, is told by Professor William Lyon Phelps in the September "Rotarian," under the facetious caption "Thirty Years of Looking Up."

A professorial friend growing bold, one day challenged Mr. Phelps to a 36-hole match, offering, if he was defeated, to eat and swallow "Tennyson's poem 'Crossing the Bar'."

"Why," comments Professor Phelps, "he selected this particular lyric I cannot say, except that it is a poem of death."

"Well, I defeated him; he left town immediately. But learning his address, I sent him a mutilated copy of Tennyson's complete works, where many passages had been cut out, but where 'Crossing the Bar' remained. It was a copy from which I had cut extracts to use on examination papers. I sent a letter with the volume, telling him he must eat his poem, and that the other missing poems had been eaten by other persons whom I had defeated."

"He now has Tennyson in his system; for like a good sportsman, he did eat and swallow and somehow digest 'Crossing the Bar,' sending me an affidavit signed by President Paul Moody, of Middlebury College, son of the famous evangelist."

—Rotarygrams—

"What shall I do? I'm engaged to a man who says he simply can't bear children."

"Well, you can't expect too much from a husband."