

A CLOSE RELATION.

CHAPTER VII.

The professional nurse, Miss West, met me next morning with the official hope that I "had had a refreshing night's rest."

Elsie had refrained from asking me how I had passed the dark hours. The child's tact was like cooling lint upon a raw surface. I was up and dressed when she awoke, and she remarked neither upon this nor upon my expressed intention of going down to breakfast with her. But for the grave taciturnity that has superseded her accustomed cheerful chat, she might have seemed forgetful of yesterday's tragedy. I learned long afterwards that she had gone downstairs to the breakfast room and suggested to the butler that no chair be set at the head of the table, and that the usual arrangement of the tea-quipage be modified so as to make the significant gap less obvious.

Tray and urn were at the side of the board, and Miss West sat behind them, an open newspaper spread over cups and saucers. Her eyes were dilated and eager; she stayed not to hear the answer to her perfunctory query, had I meditated one.

"It will be a shock, of course, my dear Miss Salisbury, and you are in no condition to receive any more shocks; but since you must see it, and some evil-tempered person will be sure to rush up to you with it—"

"Let me have it!" I held out my hand. "You won't let it prey upon your spirits, will you now? It's awful the influence the newspapers have, and how it is abused—"

I was beyond her moralizings, having carried off the paper to a window.

The story of yesterday was told three times. First, and briefly, in head-lines of varying and seductive proportions, to whet the appetite. Not an element of the tragic was omitted; nothing that could shock sensibility and set at naught every delicate instinct, violate the innermost privacy of home and heart, and pander to the prurient of vulgar curiosity, was forgotten by the social scavenger bracketed as "our special correspondent."

—any person of clean tastes and self-respect ought to have despised the garbage garnished into a dainty dish to set before the kings and queens of the breakfast-table. There are those who claim to be proof against the vitriolic douche. In the abstract their boast might have been mine, particularly as the identity of "our special correspondent" with our venomous neighbor was fully known to me before I read a word. In reality every head-line and sub-title raised a blister; the effect of the whole which I was drawn on to read to the last word was the action of caustic acid upon flayed flesh. After the lapse of the years that give perspective to my autobiographical sketch, I cringe and cower in recalling the strange and harrowing sensation of seeing that which I could not have divulged to any creature of mortal mould paraded in bald type; the guarded chambers of imagery unroofed and gutted, and the spoils thereof vended in the market-place.

I cannot write the tale as the newspaper-woman set it forth. But the worst was there, and made doubly superlative by the supple pen.

The cowardly technicalities "it is said" and "we are told" were the shields for such declarations as that the "cardiac affection under which the unfortunate lady had labored was no secret to many of her acquaintances. That the Drs. Wentworth acted as if ignorant of the fatal complication is a criminal mystery which an enlightened and human public will not condone without other explanation than that which the wedded pair are disposed to supply. Shrewd residents of Mapleton already couple with this latest action of the masculine member of the firm another as rash, which nearly resulted fatally for his youngest step-daughter a few days ago."

A highly-colored account of the incident at the station followed, in which was introduced the circumstance of my separate fortune and Elsie's dependence upon her mother.

"In the event of the child's death, the handsome doctor would become sole heir of the wife whose devotion to him approximates, if it does not exceed, infatuation that is notorious. She is his senior by perhaps fifteen years, and, although his superior in intellect and education, invariably defers to his judgment. Herein, say the initiated, is the cause of the tragedy that has shocked the community. It is an established fact that Mrs. Dr. Wentworth—or Dr. Salisbury-Wentworth, as she prefers to be styled in reminiscence of the deserved eminence of her first husband—made more than one auscultation in Mrs. Upton's case. It is as certain, unless the fame of her skill be a lie, that she must have been fully aware of what the autopsy that should be demanded by public opinion will show,—i.e., that the hapless lady was not a fit subject for the administration of ether or chloroform. The evidence of the professional nurse in attendance proves that the saturated napkin held to mouth and nostrils by Dr. Salisbury-Wentworth killed the patient as surely and well-nigh as quickly as if it had been a loaded pistol with a finger upon the trigger."

My betrothal to the son of the deceased was made a telling feature of the article; my presence at the "splendid luncheon (of which a detailed account appears in our society columns) given by Mrs. Rossiter Wilcox in honor of her daughter's engagement" was treated dramatically and unparaphrasingly. "It was expedient, no doubt, that a young lady whose excitable temperament is well known to her intimates should be banished from an operating-room; but that she should select the hour of supremest anguish and peril to the mother of her betrothed, and go straight from the house-eyer which the death-shadow was impending to a scene of revelry, her face shaded by no graver emotion than anxiety to keep her recherche costume unspotted from cream, wine, and gravy, is, to say the least, a remarkable development of the girl of the period. The news of the terrible casualty was conveyed to the fair and philosophic reveller between the sixth and seventh courses of the feast. With the perfect aplomb that characterizes the true American patriotin, she requested permission from the hostess to absent herself 'for a little while,' and departed in such good form that the entertainment was not marred by uneasiness on the part of those who remained.

"Her relations to Mr. Donald Upton, who is now absent in California, threaten, in the mysterious circumstances connected with his mother's death, to assume a roman-

tic aspect of more than melodramatic intensity."

Cuts purporting to be portraits of all the parties concerned in the "shocking affair" illustrated the three columns given up by the editorial staff to "an event of importance in society and scientific circles." I may add here that the originals, which had been abstracted from an album in Mrs. Upton's library, were returned in good order some days thereafter, accompanied by Mrs. Thomas Robb's card.

In those three columns of nonpareil type, The Clarion, mighty, impersonal, and irresponsible, cited, testified, argued, convicted and sentenced a household that, up to yesterday noon, had maintained a reputation for respectability and benevolence. In the hour of woe that seemed to lack no element of anguish, the denial to the tormented ones of the sad, sweet drops of human sympathy that might have wetted their parched tongues was ostentatious and gratuitous. To the outside world, until now ignorant of our existence, we were held up as monsters of ingratitude and cruelty. Whatever of moderate palliation of the enormity of our sin might be admitted to the incorruptible pages in days to come, journalistic policy and precedent would exclude from "The Clarion" refutation of the charges printed upon the evidence of a single flippant, bad-tempered woman.

I folded the paper and put it, in mechanical and unconscious satire, under the family Bible that lay upon a table near by.

"Your coffee is getting cold, my dear," said the nurse, who, as "quite the lady," made herself at home at every family board, and "my-deared" everybody except her inferiors.

What a ghastly, tedious farce was the outward observance of times, seasons, and trite ceremonies, when the foundations of our life and world were destroyed! Yet, with Miss West behind the urn, what other common ground was there?

Something in my face, or the studious reserve I maintained with regard to the newspaper-story, warned her to discretion, and Elsie betrayed no curiosity by glance or word.

We were still at the table when a telegram was brought in. It was directed to me, and from Don:

"Will be with you Wednesday night. Take care of yourself."

Don's tastes and feeling were fine. He would never have written "God bless you!" upon a postal card, or sentimentalized at two cents per word upon a telegraphic form; so that second sentence was fraught with a volume of sorrow, of longing and of love, to my comprehension. It meant that the thought of me and the hope of our meeting were all that stood between him and despair. It purported, furthermore, that his heart was overflowing with tenderest compassion for me suddenly bereft of my second mother.

"Take care of yourself—for me," I read between the lines. "Now that she is gone, to whom else can I turn for consolation? For God's sake, care watchfully for my most precious treasure!"

"Take care of yourself—until I can be with you, to cherish and comfort and protect you from all that love can avert of pain or loss."

"Take care of yourself—for she is no longer with you to brood over and guide her daughter."

I locked the despatch up in my jewel-chest; I have it still; I shall keep it always. The daily letter from Don was received by the morning mail, but I left the seal unbroken. I had no right to read what he had written in ignorance of the events of yesterday. The same mail brought a letter for his mother. I eluded Miss West's watchfulness, and made my way, unseen by Elsie or the watchful Rosalie, to the chamber of which nobody spoke, yet which was the fixed centre of every thought. The key was on the outside of the door. I withdrew it from the lock and shut myself in. The room was so dark that it was a moment before I could make out the outline of the odious lounge still standing in the middle of the floor. Bowls of roses and chrysanthemums were upon table and mantel, but the blended perfume did not overcome, to my diseased fancy, the smell that had been strongest here yesterday. I knelt by the couch and drew aside the linen sheet.

Could death wear so fair a guise? The quick, gentle touch of the black-browed angel had smoothed away the few lines graven by time and care upon the lovely face. There was even something like archness in the smile that almost parted the lips.

In our bedtime Bible-reading a few nights before, she had talked with me of one of the beautiful new truths that were continually drifting to her by a sort of spiritual gravitation, and which she was always eager to share with others. To give was ever to double a joy for her. The words at which she had arrested the reading were these:

"To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you."

She explained that the text in the original held a subtle intimation of a glorious surprise-gift kept by the Father against the home-coming of each of His children.

"A gift so well worth the waiting for that He cannot help giving us a hint of it to keep us in good heart when the day is dark and the way rough," she said, with the same happy smile I now looked upon. "Yet something that cannot be told while we are 'in the body pent.' We could not comprehend it, and be content to live. As an earthly parent might let a line slip into a letter to his absent boy or girl,—'I will not tell you what it is, for I am hoarding it as a joyful surprise for you. Imagine what you please. The reality is sure to transcend in beauty and value the anticipation.' Why, girlie! I lived upon that one 'finding' for days after it came to me. I'm afraid I was almost impatient for the hour when the beautiful reserved portion shall be revealed to me."

The secret and the exceeding joy of it were hers now.

For a brief space the peace of the thought, like a placid river, went over my soul. I remembered no more the anguish of total bereavement, in sympathy with the unutterable blessedness of her entrance upon the changeless Now and Forevermore. Gazing upon the mysterious radiance of the smile, the sweet significance of which was but an intimation of the "to be revealed," I felt, presently, warm dimness steal over my aching eyes; then a rush of weeping hid her from me.

It was a fitting close to her earthly ministry that I should leave at her feet the fierce, bitter nature she would have reckoned alien to that of the girl she knew, and arise from my knees when the paroxysm had spent itself, still sorrowful as unto death in spirit, but no longer rebellious and vindictive. I kissed the sealed letters I had brought with me, and hid them beneath the still folds covering her heart.

"You understand why neither of them belongs to me!" I whispered. In the act I felt that I gathered up in my trembling hands what poor remains of my life were left, acknowledging in contrition that, since God had given it, it were sin to despise it, even in ruins. I had reached the door and taken hold of the key, when an impulse, a guardian angel—who not she?—must have awakened, turned me back. I knelt again, and, laying my arm over my darling, repeated without omission the Master's Prayer-Lesson to His own. I added, reciting still as from the prompter's dictation,—

"For if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses."

As it passed my lips I became conscious of a light, unequal tread lingering in the hall, passing the room, halting and returning, pausing at the door, then going on. It was, as I suspected, Elsie. She wore hat and jacket; her face was colorless, her eyes anxious.

"Ab, Sydney!" catching her breath at my appearance. "I did not like to disturb you. Papa has sent the carriage for us. Mamma is worse again."

She hesitated before passing to me a note directed to her, not to me. It was written in pencil, and the uneven characters bore but a general resemblance to Dr. Wentworth's clerical script:

"Your mother is dangerously ill. Cannot one of her daughters come to her?"

"We will both go, and at once," I said. "We can do no good here now."

Dr. Gibney was coming out of the front door when we reached home, and turned back to tell us the story of the night and morning. The rally of our mother's forces to arrange, as she believed we would wish, that we should spend the night under Mrs. Upton's roof, sustained her during the homeward drive. She did not speak on the road; but sat erect and apparently composed in her corner of the carriage. When it stopped she alighted and walked steadily into the house. At the foot of the stairs she sank, helpless, speechless, almost lifeless. She was carried to her bed, and had not moved or spoken since.

"It is nervous prostration of the most serious type," pronounced the old doctor. "What will be the result I dare not predict, but it is my duty to tell you, Sydney, that reason and life are threatened. The shock of yesterday, supervening upon what may have been prolonged mental strain, is responsible for her condition. One thing more,—dropping his voice and beckoning me into the drawing-room out of hearing of Elsie, and of possible listeners above-stairs,—"it is safe to confide to you my dear child, my impression that Dr. Wentworth's presence is not salutary at this juncture: I should say decidedly the reverse of soothing. Her eyes assume what I might characterize as a certain troubled wildness at sight of him. Her pulse fluctuates dangerously when he enters the room or approaches her. I have intimated something of this to him, and he did not receive it as I could have desired, I regret to say. In fact, he was palpably disposed to resent the communication, which, I assured him, was professional, not friendly; unequivocally professional, and as indubitably not friendly or personal. Mrs. Wentworth turned her eyes toward me when I spoke of summoning you. I received it, I believe, with reason, as an indication of a natural desire to have you with her. I am equally confident that Miss West's attendance would not be sedative. Are you sufficiently composed to undertake the charge of your mother at this crisis? If so, I will leave my orders with you."

He sank his voice to a whisper when I had assured him that I would allow nobody else to perform the sacred duty.

"Above all things, and before everything, keep away from her so much as the rustle of a newspaper! One hint of what appeared in to day's Clarion would be fatal to her. And I may say the same of the creak of a reporter's shoes,—let it be Mrs. Robb or any other interviewer. The printer's font and the assassin's bullet are cast from the same material, and—God forgive me!—I had nearly said that both are sometime run in the fires of hell! The traditional bird-of-the-air was a blind snail by comparison with the gentry that nose out all we are at least willing to have other people know. Now that you breathe naturally and your color has come back, we will go upstairs. Let Midget come, too!" holding out a kindly hand to Elsie, hovering about the stair-foot. "She is too much like a shadow to disturb anybody."

My mother's eyes moved slightly when we stood beside her; and in holding her hand, as I kissed it, I fancied that I felt a tremor in the middle of the palm. Aside from these tokens of life, and the faint, slow respiration we had to stoop to hear, she lay motionless and irresponsible for nine days and ten nights.

After the plain hint of his brother-physician, Dr. Wentworth kept obtrusively out of the way. The scrupulousness of his self-imposed quarantine would have driven me frantic had not my thoughts been absorbed by weightier matter. He even avoided the second story, lest his step should be recognized. A folding-bed was set up for him in the library, but the gargle that was not so much as shaded all night proclaimed to passers-by, as to the inmates of the house, how little use he had for sleeping-accommodations. By day he walked the length of the two parlors and the dining-room in the rear, until his beat was perceptible upon the nap of the velvet carpets. He received visitors while he thus strode back and forth, and, having the field of narrative to himself, said what he liked and as he pleased to say it. He was a born poseur, and Fate was generous in granting him opportunities for the practice of his speciality.

On the first morning after my return he waylaid me on my way from the breakfast-room to the patient's chamber. I wore felt shoes and a gown that did not rustle, but he drew his brows together at the slight sound I made in passing along the hall.

"If I were in charge of your patient, I should recommend precaution that would insure more than nominal quiet," he said plaintively. "I have known a person suffering from nervous prostration to go into spasms at the tread of a fly upon her pillow. I beg your pardon and that of Dr. Gibney and his colleague for the presumption of the suggestion. I should also apologize for detaining you now. How is your mother this morning?"

I made respectful reply, and he hearkened hungrily to each detail, sighing profoundly at the conclusion. With ostentation of reticence he bit back something he had nearly spoken, and turned with difficulty to the cause of the detention.

"It is but right that you should know what is the natural and inevitable result of the regime established in the house of which I have never been the master except by courtesy. I allude to the transfer into other hands of the care of her who, were she conscious, would rise in indignant protest against my exile. And this is but a part of the consequences of Dr. Gibney's autocracy and your blind submission to it, if, indeed, it be blind. Read that!"

My eye followed the dramatic stroke of his forefinger upon a paragraph in the newspaper he handed me:

"The mystery in the Wentworth-Upton case thickens. Friends are still rigorously excluded from Mrs. Dr. Salisbury-Wentworth's apartment. Her daughters (by a former marriage) are her custodians, and, with the alleged connivance of local practitioners, forbid the entrance of everybody else. The husband, Dr. Raymond Wentworth, is no exception to this law of banishment, and is reported to be greatly afflicted by the extraordinary measure. A rumor was current last evening that Dr. Salisbury-Wentworth was dead. It was afterward contradicted by Dr. Gibney, who, with provincial obstinacy refuses to give the public any satisfactory account of his patient's conditions. His reserve lends color to the story that the principal actor in the calamitous experiment that has deprived the community of its brightest ornament lies at the point of dissolution, in consequence of an unsuccessful attempt at self-destruction. Her apologists suggest that remorse drove her to this extreme step. Cooler heads are nodding over the possibilities of a criminal prosecution—"

I dropped the paper and put my hands over my eyes. The dry ache in my throat made my ears roar and my brain swim.

Dr. Wentworth picked up the journal. "Read on! There is worse to come!" I pushed it away.

"That cannot be! Oh, I never dreamed that anybody could be so caustically—so wantonly cruel! Why does not some one—why do not you—insist that those horrible slanders shall be retracted?"

"What could I say?"

His tone was low and hard, so singular that I looked at him inquiringly. One hand crumpled the newspaper into close folds; the other was thrown behind him. His fine eyes were contracted and bright; his pose was picturesque.

"What would you have me to say?" altering the phraseology of the query but not the emphasis.

"That the fault was less hers than yours!" My courage rose into audacity. "That your decision and her action were against her better judgment; that she yielded through fear of wounding and displeasing you. Other physicians have waived their opinions in deference to a colleague. Assume a share of the blame. Think how smitten and helpless she is, how her life hangs upon a hair! She may never be able to plead her own cause against this wicked injustice. You are her husband. She has no other protector. Oh, if I was only a man!"

I wrung my hands in impotent distress.

My step-father's visage changed oddly while I talked, from pallid to purple, and then to the color of dead ashes. Pale muscles stood out tense about the well-cut mouth; the light in his eyes was not pleasant to see; but the strangest thing was a strangled hiss in the thorax at the close of each sentence.

"I have not to learn for the first time your sentiments with regard to the man honored in your mother's choice of a partner for the life of one of the contracting parties. I believe, however, that you have not, up to this hour, essayed to school me as to my duty as a man and a husband. Were you more familiar with the circumstances of Mrs. Upton's decease, you might abate your zeal for the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. If you wish, I—or Miss West—can put you into possession of the facts of the case. Should you, after hearing these, persist in your demand that I should take the public into confidence, I will accede to it. Whether or not such obedience will prove me a man will depend upon the tastes of my readers."

He rose the paper twice across, rolled each half into a ball, and tossed them into the waste-basket.

"When you are older and wiser you will comprehend how much easier it is to rush into print than to rush out. It is barely possible, also, that you may scrape a bowing acquaintance with the practical wisdom of letting sleeping dogs lie. Barely possible I say, because your sex as a body is intent upon pursuing the contrary course. You look amazed at this plainness of speech. I have been tempted to it before, again and again, but a feeling with which you do not credit me—regard for your mother—has restrained me. Without going into particulars, let me close this dialogue by advising you to ask few questions concerning what has occurred within the past week. Should Mr. Donald Upton push his inquiries to the length of a civil or criminal suit, I shall be so unmanly as to defend myself and the male members of the profession. Unless forced to speak openly, I shall act upon the practical hint given you just now, and not stir up an ugly cur."

He made me a magnificent bow and went over to his promenade in the drawing-room opposite.

He had never liked me. He was now my open enemy.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

In a printed card of regulations for public information, issued by the Wells-Fargo Express Company in the early '50s, the last regulation read: "This company will not be responsible for any loss or damage occasioned by fire, the acts of God, or of Indians or any other public enemies of the government."

On the plateaus of the south-western border states the most furious whirlwinds often fail to raise the sand more than a few feet above the level of the plain till suddenly, perhaps an hour after the crisis of the storm, great columns rise to a height of a hundred yards, and swaying from side to side waltz about like tipsy giants.

INTERVIEWING TRAMPS.

Statistics Collected by a Clergyman From the Knights of the Road.

The Rev. J. J. McCook, of New York, preaches good citizenship by practicing it. He is always pegging away at something for the public good. Now, with the help of the mayors and police officers of fourteen American cities, he has been taking a "tramp census," and he communicates the results— or some of them—to the Forum.

The number of American tramps covered by this census is 1,349. Thirty-two questions were asked in every case, and Mr. McCook grieves that he inadvertently omitted a thirty-third, though he tells us in the same breath of one involuntary catechumen who found the thirty-two too many. "That's a devil of a lot of questions," exclaimed this indignant victim, "to ask a fellow for a night's lodging!" In the most ambitious previous tramp census of which Mr. McCook has heard—London, 1889—the number of weary wanderers questioned was only 286.

Of these 1,349 American tramps, less than one-half describe themselves as unskilled laborers, and only sixteen say they have no regular calling. Of the representatives—on the retired list—of skilled labor, 46 per cent. say they used to be sailors, firemen, brakemen, shoemakers, curriers, teamsters, hostlers, blacksmiths or horsehoers. Mr. McCook's dragnet caught three electricians, two brokers, two reporters, a music teacher, a designer, an artist ("a real German count"), a Salvation Army captain, a "gentleman," but no clergyman, and no professor. "The sedentary clerk," he tells us, "was just as numerous as the nomadic peddler."

Nearly all of the 1,349 tramps are in the prime of life, averaging much younger than their (recorded) fellow pilgrims in England and Germany. "Following my results," says Mr. McCook, "we may expect to find one tramp in twenty under twenty years, three out of five under thirty-five, seventy-five out of every 100 under forty, and one in twelve fifty or over. Only one in 111 will be over seventy."

Of the whole number questioned 83.5 per cent. promptly said their health was "good," 8 per cent. "pretty good," or "not very good," 8.5 per cent. "bad." This at a time when the grip was raging among well fed well housed people, and the general death rate was disquietingly high. "Neither the tramps age nor his health, then," concludes Mr. McCook, "is a bar to successful labor."

Only fifty out of the 1,349 owned up to having been on the road more than a year. The explanations of their presence there given by 82.8 per cent. of the whole number were:—"Out of money," "Out of work," "Looking for work." Twelve "wanted to see the country," eight "wanted to take life easy," six said they would not work; twenty-five laid their tramping to drink. One exceptionally candid wanderer diagnosed his case in three words: "Whisky and lazy."

As to nativity: 56.1 per cent. of the 1,349 were born in this country, 20.3 per cent. in Ireland, 6.6 per cent. in England, 3.4 per cent. in the Scandinavian countries, 2.6 per cent. in bonny Scotland. There are thirteen negroes in the lot and one Indian. Only one Southern State is represented, and that by a white man. "The tramp," remarks Mr. McCook, "seems to be a product of our Northern civilization and to move along the more temperate belt, avoiding extremes of heat and cold as being disagreeable and less favorable to health."

Don't think of the tramps as illiterate: 1,187 of the 1,349 can read and write, 18 of the 162 who can't write can read, and one of the favorite purchases is the daily newspaper. Only 7.3 per cent. are married; 4.4 per cent. are widowers. Thirty of the 1,349 say they are total abstainers, 459 that they are temperate, 825 that they are intemperate. Only 5.8 per cent. own up to having been convicted of crimes other than drunkenness. Only 113 say they have no religion. Only 116 say they have seen the inside of the almshouse. By their own admission 14.9 per cent. of the whole number are, or have been, specially dangerous to the public health.

PEARLS OF TRUTH.

Freedom is not caprice, but room to enlarge.

Self-control lies at the foundation of the character.

In thankfulness for present mercy, nothing so becomes us as losing sight of past ills.

Kindness is a tender consideration toward every living thing which God has created.

Honesty is the straightforward performance of every duty and every action as conscience dictates.

Not to do honor to old age is to demolish in the morning the house wherein we are to sleep at night.

In estimating a life or character, the question rarely turns on the correctness of this or that opinion held.

Courage is cool-headed strength of will and purpose, ready for dangers and difficulties whatever they may be.

There are many persons who do not know how to idle their time alone; they are the scourge of those who are occupied.

A few books, well studied and thoroughly digested, nourish the understanding more than hundreds gargled in the mouth.

Some things, after all, come to the poor that can't get into the doors of the rich, whose money somehow blocks up the entrance way.

If we see to it that the roots of character are pure, healthful, and strong, we may rest assured that its fruit will be sweet, wholesome and abundant.

Our ideal can never be too high for us to look up to and approach; but to expect to reach it at a single leap and to abandon it because we do not rise to it is folly—it is the death of all mortal progress.

You are to go the road which you see to be the straight one; carrying whatever you can find is given you to carry, as well and as stoutly as you can; without making faces or calling people to come and look at you.

One of the first lessons that a young man should learn is faithfulness to duty and trustworthiness in small matters. Having these, the foundation of prosperity is laid; and, if to such characteristics are added a determination to become absolute master of the business and the capacity to grasp the various requirements, the highway to wealth and standing is well laid out.