



Short Talks With the Boys

The architect of this department heard a temperance sermon the other night. Not one of your regular stereotyped temperance addresses, but the remarks of a man who knows from practical experience what temperance means. He didn't look at it from moral grounds, but from the standpoint of a man who had demonstrated that to be the best kind of a man, physically, mentally and morally, a man had to be temperate.

It was at a wrestling match, an exhibition of clean, clever athletics, unmarred by brutality. One of the contestants was a man forty-seven years old, yet his flesh was as white as marble, the great muscles writhed and twisted under his firm flesh like serpents, his eyes were as bright as a baby's and he was as quick on his feet as any schoolboy. Just before he demonstrated that he was still entitled to rank among the few-only great wrestlers of the world he made a little talk to the assembled multitude, and in that little talk he compressed a temperance sermon that every boy in the land should heed.

"There are five reasons why I, at the age of forty-seven, am still able to hold my own," said "Farmer" Burns. "First, I don't chew; second, I don't smoke; third, I don't drink intoxicants; fourth, I don't swear; fifth, I don't use tea or coffee. You may wonder why I mention swearing. I'll tell you: Swearing is the first step in 'toughness' and no 'tough' ever made a mark as an athlete. Men who swear are likely to lose their temper easily. No athlete can succeed who does not know how to control his temper. I have played this wrestling game nearly thirty-nine years, and I have yet to take my first drink, smoke my first cigar or take my first chew of tobacco. I've seen hundreds of athletes go down before these things. Old John Barleycorn is the champion wrestler of the world. He wins against every man who tackles him and stays in the ring long enough. Boys, if you want to be strong men, keep clean inside and out."

Then "Farmer" Burns went into the arena and demonstrated that it pays to be temperate. His forty-seven years sit lightly on his broad, firm, sloping shoulders. There was nothing brutal about the exhibition. It was a game of science and skill—two stalwart men engaged in a friendly wrestling match—and dyspeptic business men sat around and envied the build, the muscle, the wind and the endurance of two men who had lived clean and careful lives.

Boys, did you ever read Thomas Hughes' great boy story, "Tom Brown's School Days?" If you never did you have a wonderful treat before you. My, how the architect of this department envies the schoolboy who has never read that corking story! Tom Brown was a real boy, with all of a boy's love of sports, but he was a manly boy; who wasn't afraid to admit when he was in the wrong, and strong enough to try and do right when the right was pointed out to him. Now don't imagine that Mr. Hughes "preaches" in this story. He tells plain facts in such a way that every boy fairly loves him for it. And Mr. Hughes advises every boy to learn to box, to row and to swim. That's mighty good advice, too. All three are healthy exercises—they strengthen the muscles, improve the wind, clear the brain and train the eyes. No boy was ever the worse for knowing how

to do these things well. But, my young friends, you can never be a first-rate boxer, a good swimmer or a good oarsman unless you keep clean, inside and out.

By a strange coincidence there is a man named Hughes down in the Indian Territory who is a demonstration of Thomas Hughes' sound advice. The Indian Territory Hughes is named William. Thirty years ago he was a schoolmate of the architect's away back yonder in an Illinois town. Billy was a plodder. He had to study hard in order to keep up with his classes. While other boys skimmed their lessons and rushed out to the playgrounds, Billy was digging away at his books, and even at that he usually showed up at the foot of the class. There were only two things he could do well—he was the best boxer in school, and the way he could swim would make an otter envious. Time went on, and Billy went to law school. Still he was a plodder. But he was a good fellow even if he never went out with the boys. You couldn't get a drink of intoxicants into him with a fire engine and a hose. He refused to use tobacco. But he was a star in the gymnasium.

A few weeks ago the architect met Billy in the Indian Territory. He was the same old Billy—built like an athlete, clean-minded, clear-brained, never a gray hair in his head, scarcely a wrinkle in his face, eyes clear—and still a plodder. But it was another case of tortoise and hare. Billy the plodder has made more money than he can haul in a hay wagon, and everybody admires him for his generosity, his public spirit and his unostentatious Christian life. He has two grown sons, and they are clean-limbed, clean-minded young athletes who think their father is the finest man in all the wide world. And there are a lot of old boys—classmates of Billy Hughes—who look back on the old days and return silent thanks to him for the good influence his personal cleanliness had upon them—cleanliness of body and mind.

"But if you learn to box are you not apt to get into fights?" you ask. Not at all. Just because you like to eat a nicely broiled steak is no sign you like to see a butcher at work in his slaughter house. The young fellow who knows how to box and has learned the fair rules of the game is quite sure to be a gentlemanly sort of fellow, unwilling to take an unfair advantage and willing to take the worst of it a long while before entering a muscular protest.

"O, you admire prize fighters, do you?" you ask. Not much! We have no use for them. They are not athletes. There is nothing attractive about a prize fight, any more than there is about a cock fight, or a bull fight.

Learn to box, row and swim, my boy. But first learn to be a gentleman. To be a gentleman means more than being merely polite. The real gentleman is always clean inside, no matter how soiled his clothes may be. He is clean of mind, clean of body, clean of heart. He willingly soils his hands with honest toil, but he scorns to soil his mouth with unclean language or his mind with unclean thoughts.

Almost the last words of John B. Gough were: "Young man, keep your record clean." That's mighty good advice, my boy. Keep your record

clean. Keep mind and heart and body clean. Physical heroes there are a plenty in this world. What is needed just now more than anything else is the moral hero—the young man who is not afraid to stand forth among his fellows as an advocate of the cleanly life—cleanliness in body and in mind.

Shy

The great railroad magnate was in a rage, and as he paced up and down the floor he fairly foamed at the mouth.

"The scoundrel," he hissed. "He actually broke into my desk and stole a lot of valuable secrets!"

"Why do you not prosecute him?" we asked.

"Now that's a brilliant idea, isn't it?" queried the magnate with fine scorn. "Catch me going on the witness stand."

Immediately we saw the force of the argument, remembering how the magnate had fared the last time he took the witness stand.

An Average

Walking into the office of the manager of the X., Y. & Z. railroad Farmer Cornroe said:

Mr. Manager, I just come in to see if I could get you to strike an average if I agree to give you my cattle shipment this spring.

"If you mean a rebate, sir," began the manager, "I must inform you that the inter—"

"I'm not looking for a rebate," said Farmer Cornroe. "I just want to be assured of an average."

"Our rates are fixed and we make no deviation from the schedule."

"O, I'm not kicking on the rate, although it's high. What I want is an average if I ship my cattle over your line."

"Well, if you'll tell me what you want, or what you mean, perhaps I can do something for you, sir," said the manager.

"It's just this way," said Farmer Cornroe. "It takes about forty-eight hours to get cattle from my town to the market. If you'll give my stock one-half as much water in transit as you give your own stock in transit, I'll ship over your line. But don't give my stock as much as you have yours, for I don't want 'em drowned before they get in sight of the packing houses."

Having ascertained what his granger patron wanted, and seeing the point of the argument, the manager quickly made a contract with Farmer Cornroe, and the latter departed smiling.

Osculatory

A daring theft that Jack wrought last night

On darling little Rose.  
He stole some things he wanted,  
right

Beneath her very nose.  
—Philadelphia Press.

'Tis to be hoped that if fair Rose  
Returned the blissful smack  
Jack did not overlook a bet,  
But turned and kissed her back.  
—Houston Post.

That may be as they do this job  
Down in the Sunny South.  
But if Jack lived here in the north  
He kissed her on the mouth.  
—The Commoner.

Why rouse again the bitter strife,  
And North and South wax hot,  
Let's all agree to compromise—  
Jack kissed her on the spot.  
—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Brain Leaks

The one who flatters is never a friend.

Funny, isn't it, that the prune crop is never ruined by frost?

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