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Back in our university days, there was one professor, then in the prime of life, who was continually referring to books that he had purchased, but hadn't read. He had the usual professional desire to accumulate a library of good books, but his time was so occupied with classes and lectures and other regular duties that it required nearly all his reading hours to read the new books in his line. Every time a new book was recommended to him, however, he trotted down to the book shop and purchased it.

The prof. used to explain to us that he was buying all these books against the time when he should be too old to teach. He was storing up pleasures for his old age, he said, and when he got to the point where a crowd of students annoyed him beyond endurance, he would sever his connection with the faculty and retire to his library and his fireside and read good books until the time to draw the curtains.

Edward Bok, in the September Atlantic Monthly, presents his ideas of the way to spend an old age. Mr. Bok surprised his friends and his publishers some months ago by retiring. His acquaintances believed that he was ill, and sent him polite notes hoping that he "would soon get well." And now he tells them that he has retired, and plans to "enjoy the results of a lifetime of work while the capacity is still there with which to enjoy them. The European, with an older civilization and a larger experience behind him, has learned this," says Mr. Bok; "the Englishman has felt it; but the American has still to learn that the great adventure of life is something more than work—and money."

"One of the most pathetic sights in our American business life is the inability of men to let go, not only for their own good, but to give the younger men behind them a chance. They hang on beyond their years of greatest usefulness and efficiency; convince themselves that they are indispensable to their business, while, in scores of cases, the truth is exactly the opposite: the business would be distinctly benefited by their retirement and the resultant coming to the front of the younger blood in affairs. A great many men in pivotal positions apparently do not see that they often have it within their power to advance the fortunes of a number of younger men by stepping out when they have served their time; while by refusing to let go they often work dire injustice and even disaster to their younger associates.

"The real trouble with the American business man is that in many instances he is actually afraid to let go because, out of business, he would not know what to do. For years he has so immersed himself in business to the exclusion of all other interests, that at fifty or sixty he finds himself a slave to his business, with positively no inner resources. Retirement from the one thing that he does know would naturally leave such a man useless to himself, his family, and his community: worse than useless, as a matter of fact, for he would become a burden to himself and a nuisance to his family. You rarely ever find a European or English business man reaching a mature age devoid of outside interests: he always lets the breezes of other worlds blow over his mentality when he is in affairs, with the result that, when he is ready to retire from business, he has other interests to fall back upon. This is rarely the case with the American business man. It is becoming more frequent that we see American men retiring from business and devoting themselves to other interests, and their number will undoubtedly increase as time goes on and we learn the lessons of life with a richer background. But one cannot help feeling regretful that the number is not growing larger more rapidly.

"A man must unquestionably prepare years ahead for his retirement. I do not mean alone financially, which naturally is paramount, but mentally as well. I have been in-

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terested to note that, in nearly every case where a business man has told me that I have made a mistake in my retirement, and that the proper life for a man is to stick to the game and see it through,—to 'hold his nozzle agin the bank,' as Jim Bludso would say,—it has been a man with no resource outside of his business. Naturally, my action is a mistake in the eyes of such a man; but think of the pathos of such a position, where, in a world of so much interest and an age so fascinatingly full of worth-while things, a man has allowed himself to become so absorbed in his business that he has become a slave to it and to it alone, and cannot imagine another man happy without the same bone at which to gnaw.

"It is this lesson that the American business man has still to learn: that he is not living a four-squared life if he concentrates every waking thought on his material affairs. He has still to learn that man cannot live by bread alone. The making of money, the accumulation of material power, is not all there is to living. Life is something more than those two things, and the man who misses this truth misses the greatest joy and satisfaction that can come into his life—that is, from service for others.

"Some men argue that they can give service and be in business too. But 'service' with such men generally means the drawing of a check for some worthy cause and letting it go at that. I would not for a moment belittle the giving of contributions, but it is a poor nature that can satisfy itself that it is serving humanity by the mere signing of a check. There is no form of service so easy and so cheap as to give a check to an object with the interest stopping there. Real service is where a man gives himself with his check, and that the average business man cannot do if he remains in affairs. Particularly true is this of today, when every problem of business is so engrossing, demanding a man's fullest time and thought. It is the rare man who can devote himself to business and be fresh for the service of others afterward. No man can, with efficiency to either, serve two masters so exacting as are these. He can do one or the other effectively; both, he can do only ineffectively."

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