

### CHARACTER.

The artist takes the crude mass of marble, and with his soul filled with inspiration, chisels out a form of exquisite beauty. It is completed, and breathes forth the love of the sculptor for his art, and glows with the coloring of his fancy and imagination.

His finest productions are those of the human form; that form that is in the likeness of its maker. It furnishes a scope for his greatest power and skill, and the statue of a Pygmalion moves and breathes.

The artist, as an artist, finds the greatest scope for his power in the creation of the form of man, while man, as a man, finds the greatest use of his powers in the formation of character—that combination of all the properties and attributes which bring man nearer to the fulfilment of the mission of life.

Character in its wide signification is man's individuality—that which distinguishes him from his fellow men. In the general acceptance of the term, a man with *character* is one possessing noble traits; whose life is controlled by grand and worthy motives.

There must be a close line drawn between reputation and character. The one represents the paste diamonds, the other the real. Reputation is the life without, and character the life within. A breath may destroy a reputation which it has taken years to obtain, while no one has the power to injure character, except the one who possesses it. Scandal and calumny may rob one of his good name, but it can never touch his character. That remains inviolate, and is to be as much more valued than reputation, as the real diamonds are above the paste.

Pretensions, shams, and pampering public opinion will win for one a name; but struggles, sacrifices, and a strict regard for right can alone bequeath him a character.

The motives which lead men to form, slowly and carefully, characters of which

they may be proud, are not always worthy of the object in view. In their desire for praise, honor, and respect, they will erect an edifice, stately and imposing, but too fine for common use, and they retire from the contaminating influences of the public and spend their time and energies in the preservation of that which they consider so precious. Their motives are selfish, and nothing can be expected from such in hours of trial and danger. Their cry is consistency, and every new idea is rejected for fear it might tarnish the fair walls of their cherished mansions. Such men never bring about any great reforms, nor aid in the progress and enlightenment of the world. They are so completely wrapped up in self as to be oblivious of all the great events and issues of the day, and their attention being called to any such matters they are unwilling to risk their characters, forgetting that character cannot be injured, except by the voluntary act of an individual.

Those men who boldly asserted their rights, and withdrew from the allegiance of their king, knew not the glorious sequel to their venturesome undertaking; but their greatest interests being at stake, they did not shrink from being called traitors, and risking their reputations and lives, they gave to us all the precious benefits and advantages contained in the watchword of our nation, *Liberty*.

Martin Luther in declaring against the opinions and prejudices of his time, did not shrink from being called heretic and infidel, but followed up his convictions of right and through his persistency and success has the church attained to its high state of spirituality.

Politicians, to further selfish ends, assume characters foreign to their own, but often find that men who have always been above reproach are chosen before them, and their stroke of policy is a failure.

Persons priding themselves upon the purity of their lives are unconscious, oftentimes, of their weaknesses, and yielding once to the wrong, their characters are