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## LITTLE MAID-O'-DREAMS

*By James Whitcomb Riley*

LITTLE MAID-O'-DREAMS, WITH YOUR  
EERIE EYES SO CLEAR AND PURE  
GAZING, WHERE WE FAIN WOULD SEE  
INTO FAR FUTURITY,—  
TELL US WHAT YOU THERE BEHOLD,  
IN YOUR VISIONS MANIFOLD!  
WHAT IS ON BEYOND OUR SIGHT,  
BIDDING TILL THE MORROW'S LIGHT,  
FAIRER THAN WE SEE TO-DAY,  
AS OUR DULL EYES ONLY MAY?

LITTLE MAID-O'-DREAMS, WITH FACE  
LIKE AS IN SOME WOODLAND PLACE  
LIFTS A LILY, CHASTE AND WHITE,  
FROM THE SHADOW TO THE LIGHT;—  
TELL US, BY YOUR SUBTLER GLANCE,  
WHAT STRANGE SORCERY ENCHANTS  
YOU AS NOW,—HERE, YET AFAR  
AS THE REALMS OF MOON AND STAR?—  
HAVE YOU MAGIC LAMP AND RING,  
AND GENII FOR VASSALING?

LITTLE MAID-O'-DREAMS, CONFESS  
YOU'RE DIVINE AND NOTHING LESS,—  
FOR WITH MORTAL PALMS, WE FEAR,  
YET MUST PET YOU, DREAMING HERE—  
YEARNING, TOO, TO LIFT THE TIPS  
OF YOUR FINGERS TO OUR LIPS;  
FEARFUL STILL YOU MAY REBEL,  
HIGH AND HEAV'NLY ORACLE!  
THUS, THOUGH ALL UNMEET OUR KISS,  
PARDON THIS!—AND THIS!—AND THIS!

LITTLE MAID-O'-DREAMS, WE CALL  
TRUCE AND FAVOR, KNOWING ALL!—  
ALL YOUR MAGIC IS, IN TRUTH,  
PURE FORESIGHT AND FAITH OF YOUTH—  
YOU'RE A CHILD, YET EVEN SO,  
YOU'RE A SAGE, IN EMBRYO—  
PRESCIENT POET—ARTIST—GREAT  
AS YOUR DREAMS ANTICIPATE.—  
TRUSTING GOD AND MAN, YOU DO  
JUST AS HEAVEN INSPIRES YOU TO.

*Rising Sunset*

THE STUFF THAT MAKES YOUNG MANHOOD

By Rev. Charles H. Parkhurst, D. D.



THE most important thing a young man ever does is to get ready. The keynote lasts to the end of the tune, and the foundation reaches clear to the final. Beginnings are autocratic. No matter how long a man lives he will never get away from his youth. My initial paper in this series, therefore, will concern itself with the matter of stuff. What is in a man at the commencement has almost as much to say as to what he will finish with, as the chestnut has to say about the kind of tree that will grow out of it. There is good authority for the fact that thistles do not evolve figs. Every live kernel, whether botanical or human, is stamped with its destiny. An acorn can never grow into anything but an oak. I shall have considerable to say before I am through about a young man's power to shape his own future. It is all the more necessary to begin, therefore, by understanding that that is true only within limits. It has ceased to be a current theory that every mother's boy is liable to become President of the United States. All men are not run in the same mould, and a man is handicapped by his mould. It is not likely that Colonel Smith could have become Napoleon even if he had lived south of the Channel in the days of the French Revolution. There is a quality in some men that is in them before they begin to do anything, and that cannot be earned by perspiration. Putting a buttercup to school will not graduate it a butterfly even if it is a very good school. Its only wholesome ambition will be to be as good as it can as a buttercup. Born differences are incorrigible and are a good deal in the nature of fate.

MY intention in emphasizing stuff is to discredit the stress that is in so many quarters laid on circumstance. A good many young men excuse themselves from ever becoming anything or doing anything by the fact that they always live where it is low tide. Perhaps that is because it is always low tide where they live. At any rate the more I learn of the history of the men who have succeeded the more apparent it becomes that if they were born in low water they patched up their tattered circumstances and beat out to sea on a tide of their own making. Dr. Roswell D. Hitchcock once wrote: "How many mute, inglorious Miltons die in their mothers' arms nobody knows; but the grown-up Miltons all get heard from." I have watched a good many brooding hens, but I never saw one facilitate the hatching process by pecking the shell. The chick on the inside will get out if he is worth it. Circumstances are only remotely related to the marrow of the matter. Success means, all the way through to the finish, a victory over difficulties, and if the young aspirant lacks the grit to face and down the difficulty that happens to confront him at the start, there is little reason to expect that his valor will show to any better advantage in his encounter with enemies that get in his way later. Thirty years ago if a young man made up his mind to go to college the first question he asked of himself was, "How can I earn the money?" The first question he is likely to ask himself to-day is, "Whom can I look to to give me the money?" Removing difficulties is often nothing more nor less than putting a premium on incompetency. More men are injured by having things made easy for them than by having their path beset with difficulties, for it encourages them to stay themselves on circumstances, whereas their supreme reliance needs to be on their own personal stuff. We therefore rarely expect that the son of a successful man will be himself a success. Abraham's son was nothing but Isaac, hardly more than a hyphen to connect Abraham with Jacob. It is a big mistake to have too great a father. Sir William Grove says: "An estate in Somersetshire, of which I once took charge temporarily, was on the slope of the Mendip Hills. The rabbits on one part of it, viz., that on the hillside, were in perfect condition, not too fat nor too thin, sleek, active, vigorous and yielding excellent food. Those in the valley, where the pasturage was rich and luxuriant, were all diseased, most of them unfit for human food, and many lying dead on the fields. They had not had to struggle for life, their short life was miserable and their death early." Which is as true of boys as of rabbits. We are more likely to find a good destiny by going afoot than by riding.

THE personal stuff just mentioned is primarily composed of two factors—intelligence and passion—the power to know a thing and the power to feel it. The degree to which these two possibilities are combinedly developed will measure pretty accurately the reach of their possessor's effectiveness and influence. Whatever contributes to that result is education in the best and broadest sense of the term. This is the only thorough way of approaching the educational problem. I am assuming in all this that the young man whom I am addressing is disposed to take matters seriously, and that nothing contents him short of the reality in the case. I come back to it again, then, that his own personality, trained in the two mentioned directions of thought and feeling, is certain to constitute the capital with which he is to make himself a personal factor in the world's life. Young men are constantly worrying lest they be failures and nonentities. Every man will count for all he is worth. There is as steady and constant a ratio between what a man is and what he can accomplish as there is between what a ton of dynamite is and what it can accomplish. There is as much a science of success as there is a science of hydraulics. And it all comes back in the first instance on the matter of laying in supplies, accumulating primary stuff. A lad is never too young to have that fact put before him, and never too old to have it rehearsed. He will understand and appreciate the truth of it before he gets through life, and it is a great pity for him not to have, at least, a little appreciation of it near the beginning, so as to frame his initial years in consonance with it. The point at which so many of our young men go wrong is in thinking that qualification for life consists in being able to do certain particular things. This would be like saying, for example, that a man is physically equipped because, as the result of a good deal of specialized gymnastic training, he has learned to stand on his head or to walk on his hands. Such tricks may be both interesting and remunerative, but the ability to perform them tells us nothing as to the athlete's general physical condition, or as to his bodily ability to sustain the pressure that will be put upon him, or to render the service that will be required of him. The first thing that a man needs as an animal is to have a body that is all-around healthy, and as much of it as possible. Everybody understands that, but there are a great many who are not understanding that a similarly thorough and harmonious accumulation of supplies is just as much a necessary preliminary to large and effective work along personal lines. That accounts for the ambition that so many young men have to get at their life-work early, and for their anxiety to confine themselves to narrow lines of preparation. Such a mode of procedure will doubtless qualify them to perform certain intellectual, artistic or mechanical tricks, and to perform them cleverly and in a manner that will have in it some promise of bread and butter.

BUT I have little interest in addressing myself to young men who have no other ambition than to play upon the stage of personal life the same rôle that an equilibrist plays upon a tight-rope, or that a trick mule plays in a circus. A man does not begin to fulfill his functions as a man by any number of specific things which he can do as an expert. The world cares very little for experts, and the course of events is only infinitesimally determined by them. It is not so much any one thing which a man can do ingeniously that makes him a power as it is the tremendous amount of interior capital that he has to do with, giving him thus a kind of imperial grasp upon any situation that he may happen to be called on to face. Young men do not realize that, and perhaps it is hardly to be expected that they should, but they will realize it before they get through, and it is a terrific pity that they cannot so far be brought to respect and defer to the experimentally-acquired judgment of their elders as to save themselves the misfortune of regretting by-and-by that they had not laid at the bottom a foundation broad enough to carry all that they had the ambition to build upon it. Just at this point I want to reiterate a statement already made that there is nothing haphazard in these matters. The less a young man talks about luck and untowardness of circumstances, and the coquettishness of popular favor, and the like, the better for him and for the world to which he owes himself. Every man will have all the power he earns, and the power that he has will tell, not because people like it or like him, but because it is power, and as such can keep itself erect without having a cricket put under its feet, and keep itself dry without having an umbrella spread over its head.

PERSONAL pressure can no more be hooted down, or voted down, or argued out of existence than can the push of the wind or the pull of the moon. If you weigh a ton you will exert a ton's pressure. It is well to emphasize this, because in this way life loses a good deal of that lottery aspect with which sluggishness and poltroonery are so prone to clothe it. Likewise a good deal of what is said about genius is similarly foolish. There is probably such a thing as genius, although ninety-nine hundredths of it is doubtless the name which lazy people give to results which others have earned by hard work in those hours when the lazy people themselves were either sleeping or wishing they could gain it without toiling for it. The word is a tribute which sloth pays to industry in order that sloth may not have the general reputation of being slothful. Of the remaining one per cent, a considerable fraction is certainly a type of insanity, by which I mean that the majority of such men's faculties are pauperized to order in the subsidizing of the minority. There is faculty enough in almost anybody to become genius if only all that faculty were lumped at one spot. No doubt there are geniuses in the technical sense of the term; so there are physical giants, but a great deal more than nine hundred and ninety-nine thousandths of the solid work of the world is done by men who measure under six feet, and any man marking five feet ten would be set down as a compound of coward and idiot who should offer it as the lachrymose apology for his own do-nothingness that he was undersized, and that there was no use in trying to compete with Goliath and the Anakims. The power to know and the power to feel I have mentioned as being the warp and the woof of an equipped manhood. A thought multiplied into a passion is the engine of human effect. To know a truth, and then to have our heart throb in warm appreciation of it and strong commitment to it, makes power—always makes power. Those are the two parallel railway irons, then, upon which the train of the young man's individual discipline will have to run.

I do not care just now to amplify this point except to say that truth is what creates within us our material of effect, and that while it is intellect that gives us access to the truth, and makes us master of it, it is by the agency of feeling that truth turns about and masters us; and it is the latter mastery, really, that makes us puissant. It is on that account that so much of what we know as intellectual discipline is fruitless so far as relates to filling the student with capacity for effects. He has learned his lesson, which, however, lies in him only as so much combustible material, but to which, as yet, no torch has been applied. On the contrary, the man whose entire capital is one of enthusiasm will be conspicuous for his abundance of torch, at the same time lacking the timber which the torch exists primarily to enkindle.

I AM saying nothing in this article as to the means by which this twinship of effect will best be accomplished. That will come farther on. I shall be amply satisfied if at the close of these paragraphs my young reader shall feel that "getting ready" to be a man and to do a man's work consists in having solid deposit made exactly at the core of his own personal life; that success is not going to mean anything which he can cleverly append to the branches, but something which he is going to have worked into the stock. Truth is the only nutriment I know of that will become in us the substance of manhood and the material of effect—truth digested till it has become stout fibre in our muscles and warm blood in our hearts. We can become an excellent human machine simply by doing things, and doing them so many times that the performance becomes automatic and unconscious; but that sort of dexterity is hardly even tangent to our main matter. The first great desideratum is not to train our energies of action; it is to get them. It is comparatively an easy thing to conduct the water on to the paddles and run your mill after once you have captured the water supply and secured it in the reservoir. If it is claimed that this way of handling the matter is impracticable, and has not enough to say about the return it will yield in the shape of money, bread and preferment, I can only rejoin that it is quite as practical, as the work of laying foundation ever is; it is quite as practical as the process of making investment ever is. Dividends form, of course, a more congenial theme than investments, but the latter of these logically takes precedence. Sowing still antedates reaping, and the amount sowed determines pretty closely the size of the harvest. Whether it be young men or wheatfields the interest can be depended upon to keep up with the capital, and empty barns in October are the logical sequence of empty furrows in spring. The young man may as well understand that there are no gratuities in this life, and that success is never reached "across lots."

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C. H. Parkhurst

EDITOR'S NOTE—The first of a series of articles by Dr. Parkhurst addressed to young men, which will appear in the JOURNAL during 1896.