Riches without Wings

In writing this chapter it is the author's purpose to set forth the general indestructibility and need of character and education. The word character as here used is nearly synonymous with reputation—but it is broader. It includes honesty, esteem and in fact all the attributes which are brought to mind in the phrase, a man of character. By education is meant as Webster says properly to draw forth. It implies not so much the communication of knowledge as the discipline of the intellect, the establishment of principles, and the regulation of the heart.

Education and character as used in this sense are truly riches without wings. They may be lost but if a person does lose them how often is it due to the fact that his other riches have gone before. How often it is true that insanity is brought about by loss of property, or unsuccessful in business, a man will sometimes stoop to do things he would not think of before.
You have heard many times of the bank defaulter or others who have wrong-
fully used money and lost it and who im-
mediately sink lower and lower in the
scale of humanity. Such men were once
supposed to have the best character and
such cases may be taken to prove its in-
stability. But I claim they do not. The very
fact of misusing others money
proves there was a fault somewhere and
it is probable this lack of honesty would
have shown itself sooner if an oppor-
tunity had been offered. On the other hand
there are men who when they have failed,
or in some manner lost others property
pay back every cent of it. Such men we
honor and respect.

Friends are fickle and property van-
ishes away but a person’s education and
character, if it is a true character, will
abide with him to the end. These two things
are really riches. Without them a person
can do nothing but the lowest kind of
work and that which will give him the
least return. Without education and char-
acter a man is at the bottom of the ladder
with a great mass of others. Many are striving to reach the sound of education which will help them to reach that of reputation and so they may rise into fame.

We as a class have reached the sound of education and all have character, but to be sure how good it is we must stand the test of the many temptations which will fall to our lot. We must prove to the world that we deserve a place and without industry and honesty this is a hopeless task. Our education if it has accomplished its whole object has taught us how to be industrious, our character makes us honest, we therefore have the foundation on which to build a useful life.

Character and education are necessary. The time when the attainment of great muscular strength was looked upon as the great end of life is past. May we wish for it as a means not an end. The numerous devices perfected during late years have made this of secondary importance—for instance what an incredible change the steam engine
has accomplished. We have discovered
that man has a higher and better
force than muscular energy, and so
there is a tendency always noticeable for
it to decline and intellectual force to
advance. This may in fact rightly be
called an intellectual age. It is the time
when great inventors, speakers and writers
astonish the world with their wonderful com-
binations and keen perceptions.

But there is another and still higher-
moral force. In past years men of education
were much scarcer than at present. Our schools,
colleges and universities are annually giv-
ing to the world hundreds of talented
men. The thought of competition for the
best positions thus becomes of importance.
These are places for all but in many cases
the best character is indispensable. A
young man to fill a place of trust must
have proved himself worthy of it. As com-
petition between educated people becomes
more intense the tendency will be to
require better and better character
and even now this is of great im-
portance.
Obtaining character and education is the grandest work a person can engage in. From their very nature they will make a man better. Not like many other things there is no point where he should stop—no point beyond which if he goes he will be degraded. The higher a person advances the better he becomes not only for himself but for others as they are necessary to make man of benefit to man. We cannot live simply for ourselves. We must meet with others and our success in life will largely depend on whether we have been a help or a hindrance to mankind.

Character and education develop the better tendencies of man's nature. They broaden his mind and make him better. From the very pleasure there is in living it is worth while to get an education. What an infinite change it makes in a man's views of the things around him. One can see a world of wonder and beauty where another sees nothing but the plain uninteresting object.
From these various considerations it seems to me we must conclude that education and character are the most lasting, most valuable, most necessary and the best of all riches. With us they end but their effects may last forever.

The most valuable part of these riches is that they can be obtained by all. With the advancement the world has made and the wonderful facilities now offered it is nearly impossible for a person to say with truth he had no opportunity to obtain an education. Living as we do when a student is honored because he works his way through college there is no reason why if a person really wishes an education he may not get it.

Character is a growth. It may be changed for good or bad while a person is young, but once formed it is likely to remain the same. Our conduct in our daily intercourse with others and the company we are in has a control over us we are little aware of, and an effect on our character we can seldom fully appreci-
If education and character can be obtained by all and are so essential to our growth and development, if without them a person has to stay in a comparatively low state is it surprising that we see multitudes of institutions for obtaining and preserving them? Consider the wonderful progress made during the last fifty years and notice what a close relation it has to the mental and moral growth of the people. But this work will not stop it is being recognized that these are the true riches and there is an unmistakable tendency for them to take precedence of all others.

E. C. Drayer.