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The things men live for, 1929.

"THE THINGS MEN LIVE FOR."

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER.

THE TEMPLE, SUNDAY MORNING.

MARCH 10, 1929, CLEVELAND, O.



I suppose that if you were to ask this question of ten men--"What does a man live for?" that nine out of ten would answer, "To be happy." We all want to be happy in life. From the beginning of time men have sought the way to happiness, and great schools of thought have developed which prescribed for human beings exactly the way they must follow if they wish to attain to that rather elusive goal to happiness. Each school has a different way, a different proscription.

The Epicurean will tell you that the way of happiness is the way of self-indulgence. Open up your life to the stimuli of the world outside; let your senses partake of all the pleasure, of the things that are in the world. That is the way to happiness. "Eat, drink and be merry." That was not basically the philosophy of Epicurus, but that is exactly what it came to mean in social thought.

The Stoic, on the other hand, will tell you that the way to happiness is the way of self-control. Do not make your peace of mind dependent on conditions over which you may have no control,--upon the outside world, upon the opinions of other men. Learn to do without. Nothing matters which is matter. All that matters is your own point of view. Therefore train yourself into a point of view which will enable you to look with indifference upon pain, disappointment, sorrow, poverty. That is the

way to happiness.

The altruist, on the other hand, will tell you that the true way to happiness is the way of selflessness; the root of all unhappiness is selfishness. Forget yourself in the service of others. Do not think all the time about your wants, your desires, your ambitions. Think of the great world around you, and lose yourself in that great world in a career of service and helpfulness. That is the way to bring happiness.

The other worldly religionists, on the other hand, will say, "Don't try to find happiness in this world. It is not to be had. This world is a vale of tears. It is at best only a corridor which leads to the world beyond, wherein there is eternal bliss. Therefore, do not spend your time trying to wrest from this unyielding world a measure of happiness, which cannot be done, but prepare yourself for the life hereafter. Cleanse your soul; perfect yourself, so that you may inherit the kingdom to come."

The mystic will say that the way to happiness is the way of complete submergence of self in God; to find the road which leads to the heart of reality is to understand the profoundest mysteries of the universe. That is the road to real happiness. To know God with every fiber of your soul, and to feel His kinship and His nearness; to completely saturate yourself with that kinship and that nearness;--that is happiness.

Now, the surprising thing about it all is that with so many good guides and so much good counsel to enable man to find happiness, there is still so much of unhappiness in the world. I may well assume that there never was an Epicurean, nor a Stoic, nor an altruist, nor a religionist, nor a mystic who was entirely happy or continuously happy. Perhaps the secret of it all is this: that there is a very large pattern of unhappiness inwoven in the very fabric of life; that there is an inescapable quantum of pathos and tragedy in life, quite regardless of our attitudes, quite regardless of our position, quite regardless of what we do.

Recently there appeared a very interesting interview with a man who is certainly not an ordinary person; who does not conjure up imaginary things in the universe,--Mr. Edison, the great Thomas Edison; and in a moment of philosophic meditation he gave expression to his concept of human happiness. I quote it because it represents a man of the world, a practical man, a scientist; not a poet or a visionary. It is interesting to note what Edison had to say about happiness,--a man who has lived beyond the three-score years and ten; who has known life in the fullness of life and the glory of success of life, the adulation and the esteem of his fellowmen. Triumphs were his throughout the major part of his life, and he has written his name indelibly upon the annals of mankind.

Let us see what he has to say on the subject of happiness. "The happiest time in my life was when I was twelve years old. I was just old enough to have a good time in the world, but not old enough to understand any of its troubles. Looking back now across eighty-two years, I can see that, relatively, I have been happy. I have had a better chance to be happy than have most people, but I have had plenty of unhappiness, too. For a good many years I worried about my payroll. I didn't always know how I was going to meet it. My trouble has been that I have always had too much ambition, and tried to do things that were sometimes financially too big for me. If I had not had so much ambition and had not tried to do so many things, I probably would have been happier but less useful. Human beings as they are now constituted are unable to be very happy, because no matter how much they have they want more. I refer now to material things, to money and the luxuries of life." He repeats: "As human beings are now constituted it is impossible for them to be very happy. The only ones who are continuously happy are the ones who, having little ambition, do small things of little importance. A man whose business it is to catch butterflies is probably pretty happy all the time."

And in spite of the fact that Edison said that "if I had not so much ambition and had not tried to do so many things, I probably would have been happier,"

when asked what was his hobby at the age of 82, when most men prefer the comfortable Morris chair and a pair of felt slippers,--"What is your hobby?"--he answered, "My hobby is experimenting. What I most like to do is to tackle a problem to which I do not know the answer and try to solve it." When Edison went to Florida last January for his winter vacation, he took a carload of machinery with him and several employees. Hobby and machinery mean to him just one thing.

Now there is certainly homespun philosophy in all this. Seemingly there is a more important road through life than happiness, and that is achievement through struggle, and in the very structure of ambition, without which achievement is impossible, there is already ingrained a modicum of unhappiness. Prometheus sought to bring light down from heaven,--a superb ambition, but the price which he had to pay, so recounts the ancient Greek myth, was to be chained to the crags and have the eagles tear the entrails from his body; and, in a way, that is true for all times, for all men and for all ambition.

When Adam was in the Garden of Eden, and led a vegetative, contented life, he had no ambition. The minute he sought to gain knowledge, that driving impulse in human life, he was at once cursed with this curse: "With the sweat of thy brow shall thou eat bread." Labor, pain, frustration, defeat,--these things go hand in hand with striving and success. Some people conceive the ideal of

life as being sort of a bovine contentment; just to have no worries, to have ease and comfort, to have a comfortable bank balance and you don't have to worry.

I came across recently a very charming essay on the subject of happiness by Professor William Lyon Phelps, of Yale. I quote this paragraph: "I have no desire to underestimate the world of physical comfort, but if happiness purely existed in physical ease and freedom from care, then the happiest individual would be neither a man nor a woman. It would be, I think, the American cow. American cows and American dogs are ladies and gentlemen of leisure. In Europe they hitch them up and make them draw loads. Take, therefore, an average day in the life of an American cow, and we shall see that it is not far from the commonly accepted ideal of human happiness. The cow rises in the morning, and with one lick of her tail her toilet is completed for the whole day. This is a distinct advantage over humanity. The cow does not have to brush her teeth; the cow does not have to bob her hair; the cow does not have to select appropriate and expensive garments, or carry a compact. In one lick she is ready, and when she is ready breakfast is ready. She does not have to light the kitchen fire herself, or mourn because the cook has left without notice. The grass is her cereal breakfast and the dew thereupon the cream. After eating for an hour or so she gazes meditatively into the middle distance, wondering if that grass yonder is fresher or

greener than this, or, if it be so, whether peradventure it is worth the trouble to walk there and take it. Such an idea as that occupied the mind of the cow for three hours. After grazing without haste and without rest, she reaches by noon the edge of the stream. 'Lo, here is water. What hinders me from descending and slaking my thirst.' She descends about waist deep into the cooling stream, and after external and internal refreshments she walks in dignity to the shade of the spreading tree, sits down calmly in the shadow there, and then she begins to chew the cud. Her upper jaw remains stationary while the lower revolves in kind of a solemn rapture. There is on her placid features no pain or accusing thought. The cow chewing the cud has very much the expression of a healthy American girl chewing gum.

"The cows are never perturbed by introspection or by worry. There are no agnostic cows, no fundamentalist or modernist cows. Cows don't worry about the income tax or the League of Nations. A cow does not lay awake at night wondering whether her son is going to the devil in some distant city. Cows have none of the thoughts afflicted upon humanity that distress and torture."

Well, since the daily life of an American cow is exactly the existence held up to us as ideal physical comfort, with no pain and no worry, why wouldn't we be a cow? Very few human beings would be willing to change with the cows, which can mean only one thing: that

life, with all its sorrows, crass perplexities and heart-aches, is more interesting than bovine simplicity; hence more desirable. The more interesting it is, the happier it is, and the happiest person is the person who thinks the most interesting thoughts.

So we ought to revise our notion of happiness, and I think that the nine men out of ten who would answer that the thing men look for most in life is happiness would be wrong. Men are driven on not by the lure of happiness but by the power of ambition. There are latent in us, in you and in me, certain vast forces which demand expression, and unless we give them a chance to express themselves they will rend us. Very frequently they bring sorrows upon us, even when we do give them a chance to express themselves; but be that as it may, they must be expressed, and it is this driving urge to give birth to the inner prompting that constitutes the supreme adventure of life.

Human beings don't begin their careers by asking themselves: is life worth while? Who can answer that question? No one. There are moments in your life, if you were to ask yourself that question, has my life been worth while? you would answer; at other times you would answer, I am sure, no. The answer depends a good deal upon the time when you ask the question, upon the condition in which you find yourself at the time. The Rabbis say that King Solomon, the wisest of men, wrote

three great books. The three of them are included in the sacred Bible. The first is the Song of Songs; the second is the Book of Proverbs; and the third is the Book of Ecclesiastes.

When he was a young man, say the Rabbis, when Solomon was young, full of hope and ambition, he wrote the first book, the Song of Songs, which is a love song, a song of beauty, of nature, of hope, of love, of unquenchable youth. Life was decidedly worth while for Solomon when he wrote that book. When he was of middle age he wrote the Book of Proverbs, a book of calm, collected wisdom, based on his experience; a book of counsel, a book of reflection. I suppose if Solomon were asked at that moment, was life worth while, that he would hesitate a bit and perhaps conclude that, taken all in all, his life has been worth while. When he was old, say the Rabbis, when the stream of life ran sluggish in his veins, when age, which is described so superbly in the closing chapter of that book, came upon Solomon, he wrote the Book of Ecclesiastes, whose refrain is, as you well know, "Vanity of Vanities, all is vanity." And if he asked himself the question, as he actually does in the book, is life worth while? he would give you a categorical answer--decidedly not.

So that who can answer the question with absolute truth? None. Do all young people start out on their career to become physicians or lawyers or ministers

or business men with the thought that that career would make them happy? Not at all. Young people do not answer themselves that question. They choose their careers, if they choose at all, because that career responds to some craving of their soul, because that is what they want to do, because that profession will be a channel for the expression of the deepest thing in them.

So that if you were to ask me what are the things that men live for in life, I would say, first of all, self-expression. Beethoven, deaf, groping through his deafness to fashion symphony, melody; groping with a bleeding soul to fashion music which his own ears cannot hear, is doing nothing more than giving expression to that irresistible impulse of his soul. He is not seeking happiness; he is seeking an outlet for the fires within. The experimental physician in the laboratory, who experiments with the X-ray until his limbs become affected, until half of his body becomes burnt and destroyed, until his sight is gone, and yet persists,--what is it that he is seeking most in life? What is he living for? Why, just to express that which he must express. The physician who went down to the fever marshes of Africa and there perished, in the hope of discovering a clue to some fever which yearly slays its myriads,--what is driving him to sacrifice himself? Why, just an irresistible longing to fulfill his destiny.

There is great unhappiness, my friends, when

a man is called upon to do that which he cannot do, that which he does not want to do; but there is real tragedy when a man is restrained from doing that which he feels he can do and desperately wants to do; and that is when parents sometimes commit the greatest crime against their children, in diverting their children from those channels of opportunity through which their lives normally wish to express themselves. I have known parents who forced careers upon children because parents thought that these careers would make them successful. They thereby defiled and desecrated the most sacred thing in the life of their child,--the chance to be himself, to do that which he wants to do most in the world. If there is one thing that society owes its citizens it is the chance to do congenial work, work congenial to them. The Rabbis have a beautiful phrase:"the Bible says, 'And thou shalt choose life (that is, work) for which a man is equipped.'"

I suppose that the thing for which men live next to self-expression is independence. Human dignity cannot thrive in a surrounding of dependence. Poverty is a curse because it makes men dependent, because it thwarts a human being from living his own life. Ignorance is a curse because it makes a human being dependent. Autocracy is a curse because it makes human beings dependent on the whims and the will of other peoples. Mankind has from the beginning of time felt this tragic dependence on nature, and so it has progressively set about to master

nature, so that man may become independent of the whims of nature. That, I would say, is the second great goal of life. Even when men are not conscious of it, that is what they are striving for,--independence.

And the third thing for which men live, I would say is the esteem of their fellowmen. "A good name is better than precious oil." Elaborate on that and you have the complete thought which I wish to impart this morning. We want the respect of our fellowmen because man is a social being. Man does not live by himself and for himself, and he is not satisfied with his own estimate of himself. He wishes others to think as highly of himself as he thinks of himself. Even those men who seek power, even those men who feel a certain cynicism as regards human beings, who are rather indifferent as regards the opinion of other men, still, at the bottom of it all is a great fear concerning the opinion of mankind. Alexander and Caesar and Napoleon were much more concerned about what mankind will think of them than about winning a battle. Even those men who spend themselves in the conquest of money do so not because money has a fascination for them, but because they feel that people are evaluated on the basis of money. The more a man has of wealth, the more he is respected by his fellowmen; and therefore they set about acquiring as much of wealth as they possibly can. In those countries where wealth is not so much praised, money is not so much prized by human beings. Whatever the

standard is in a given land,--military power, wealth, culture, physical strength,--whatever a people admires most, that will be the thing that human beings will strive for to acquire most. What we want along with self-expression and independence is the esteem and respect of our fellowmen.

And, lastly, I would say that another thing for which men live is survival. We wish to outlive ourselves, somehow. We are not reconciled to complete annihilation. We want to transcend the portals of the grave. Whether we know it or not, we are craving for a measure of immortality, all of us. That is what builds a family. Parents want to immortalize themselves, as it were, in their children. They want to continue to live long after all that was perishable and mortal of them has descended to the grave. That is what prompts many men to build institutions and to endow them, so that their name, at least, may live on after their bodies have ceased to be. Now that may not be a conscious drive in human life, but it is, nevertheless, a very real urge,--survival.

Now these four goals are all legitimate and all praiseworthy--to express oneself, to become independent, to win the admiration of our fellowmen, and, in a way, to outlive ourselves. These are all legitimate goals, and the man who links up his destiny to one of these goals is likely to gain the fullest measure of happiness possible for a human being to gain. The man

who ties his life up to less noble goals, to meager ambitions, to power or to wealth, or to mere position, or to comfort and ease, that man's life, instead of being a constantly rising crescendo will be a constantly declining diminuendo, a life gradually dribbling away to nothing.

On the contrary, a life which has as its objective one of these things of which I have spoken, will be a life which will rise, a life which will defy defeat, a life which will defy old age. I think it was Choate who once said that the best years of a man's life are the years between 70 and 80, and he advised all his friends to hurry along and get there as soon as they could. What did he mean by that? He meant that a man who laid up treasures for himself in things intellectual and cultural, in independence, in the esteem of his fellowmen, that man will have a harvest to enjoy in the twilight years of his life. The man who has pinned his fate to lesser things will find in his declining years nothing but emptiness and desolation, cultural and intellectual weariness and exhaustion.

These, then, my friends, to my mind, average men live for. Blessed are those men who live for them.

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*In an Unusual
Talk with
Allan L. Benson*



EDISON

tells *WHY FORD*
and COOLIDGE
aren't HAPPY~

WHY Colleges
Fail to Educate~
Offers a Sure Cure
for WORRY

I HAVE been interviewing Edison for twenty years and more, but here is to be set down a report of the most interesting and the most revealing interview with him that I ever had. It is out of the ordinary because I had not expected to see him and had no questions in my mind to ask him. One might say he interviewed himself.

He talked for an hour, went over to his desk for a few minutes, then came back and talked some more. He told funny stories. He told why neither Ford, Coolidge, nor anybody else can be very happy. He told how much happiness he had been able to get out of life and what had prevented him from getting more. He told—

The gods were simply with me—that was all! By the merest chance, I had happened to stumble across the great man's path when he felt like relaxing. He was no longer Edison, the greatest inventor ever produced by any age. He was Edison, the human being, glad to cast aside his problems for the moment and talk about whatever happened to enter his mind—to flit from one subject to another, pausing a moment here and remaining longer there.

We all do it, but here is how Edison did it:

"I have just been over to Kearny to see them begin assembling Ford's new car. What a reception that car has had throughout the world! One might think it would make Ford happy for the rest of his days, but it won't. Ford is the type of man who can't be happy very long. His mind is too active. He sees too many things to do. His successes bring him pleasure for the moment, but such pleasures are soon swallowed up in the concentration that is involved in the performance of the next task.

"Besides, no man's life—not even Ford's—is composed wholly of success. It must have been an awful blow to him when the sales of his old car began to fall off. He did not care anything about the money. The thing that must have hurt him was the thought that people were turning from him and going to somebody else. But that is all fixed now. Ford will regain his old place with a rush and be bigger than he ever was before.

"As human beings are now constituted," continued Edison, "it is impossible for them to be very happy. The only ones who are continuously happy are the ones who, having little ambition, do small things of little importance. A man whose business it is to catch butterflies is probably pretty happy all the time. Negroes, too, are usually happy. Things that would knock the rest of us cold don't seem to distress negroes at all.

Perhaps the best funny story that I have heard for years illustrates the boundless capacity of colored people to keep

smiling. A white woman happened to meet on the street a colored girl who had worked for her a year or so before. The colored girl was wheeling a baby. The white woman pulled back the cover and looked at the child who was as black as a hat. 'Does the baby look like its father?' asked the white woman. 'Har, har, har!' laughed the colored woman. 'I can't tell you dat. I met dat chile's father at a masquerade ball.'

"I told that story to Ford and John Burroughs once when we were camping, and Burroughs laughed so hard that he fell over backwards in his camp-chair. For days after Burroughs would occasionally break out laughing and when we would ask him what was the matter, he would say, 'That story.'

"Coolidge isn't happy. Years ago, when he was up in Massachusetts, he wanted to be President, but now that he's been in the White House, he's glad to get out of it. The responsibilities of the office are too great to permit anybody who bears them to be happy very long.

"The happiest time in my life was when I was twelve years old. I was just old enough to have a good time in the world, but not old enough to understand any of its troubles. Looking back now, across eighty-two years, I can see that relatively I have been happy. I have had a better chance to be happy than have most people. But I have had plenty of unhappiness, too.

"For a good many years I worried about my pay-roll; didn't always know how I was going to meet it. My trouble has been that I have always had too much ambition and tried to do things that were sometimes financially too big for me. If I had not had so much ambition and had not tried to do so many things I probably would have been happier, but less useful.

"But I have always found, when I was worrying, that the best thing to do was to put my mind upon something, work hard and forget what was troubling me. As a cure for worrying, work is better than whisky. Much better.

"Human beings, as they are now constituted, are unable to be very happy, because, no matter how much they have, they want more. I refer now to material things—to money and the luxuries of life.

"Dishonest people cannot be happy because, deep down in their hearts, they are always saying to themselves, 'I am a dirty, rotten crook.' Nor can people be happy who are small and mean, always trying to get the better of every bargain."

What Edison said about Ford's happiness particularly interested me because I once talked with Ford about it. I asked him if he was happier when he became a billionaire than he was when he was a machinist working for a few (Continued on page 167)

Concluding UNKNOWN

FOUR days went by, and the envoys of the Admiral were back with the fleet. They had not found the Grand Khan, nor had they seen any king who was friend or enemy of that powerful monarch. They had penetrated some forty miles inland to reach a village of fifty houses inhabited by a population which they put at about a thousand—the huts seemed to be community dwellings, each sheltering a large number of natives.

The envoys had been welcomed like gods by the savages, men and women running out to meet them, to touch them with their fingers admiringly as beings come from heaven, and to kiss their hands and feet.

The Spaniards inquired for the king of the country; but in spite of the good offices of an interpreter from the fleet, no one could satisfy their curiosity. A few individuals seemed to stand out among the natives as leaders, distinguished from the others especially by their greater fatness; but not one of these naked, painted and well-fed leading citizens bore the least resemblance to the omnipotent "King of Kings" who ruled the vast empire of the East. Then the samples of cinnamon, pepper, and other spices from Seville were exhibited. Yes, such things were abundant in the country, but not just there—off to the east, far off toward the east!

The disappointment could not have been more complete; and the Admiral could see no reason now for not hurrying on to those lands toward which the Indians kept pointing whenever they were asked about gold and pearls.

The vessels had been successfully floated, so on Thursday, the eleventh of November, the Admiral provided in general orders: "In the name of God, Southeast, to find gold, spices, and new lands." And the fleet set out, the Pinta as usual in the lead, the Niña and the flag-ship following abreast at a distance of some miles.

On the twenty-first of November, the fleet reached the eastern end of Cuba and struck its true course to the southeast. The vessels were still in the usual order, the Pinta, better-canvased and better-handled, far in the lead, and making the usual stabs to south and north, without delaying the slower boats behind her. But at nightfall, on the third day out, the head wind freshened, the sea grew heavier, and the Admiral suddenly decided to return to the sheltered haven in the estuary which he had named the Cape of Palms, postponing the sail to "Bohío" or Babeque till the elements should show themselves more favorable. Acting at once upon this design, he brought the flag-ship about, signaling his change of course by lights on his mastheads. The Niña, near by, also came about, following the Admiral in his retirement. The Pinta however, some miles



Ⓒ Evidently Gonzalez intended to use the arrows as spears or lances. If

in the lead, held on through the dark, without observing that the two ships astern had dropped out of sight.

The winds held unfavorable for some days and Don Cristobal lingered very willingly about the beautiful bays of Cuba; but when the Santa Maria and the Niña finally sailed with wind astern, the lofty mountains of Babeque were soon in view. The scenery of this new island, which the natives were now calling "Haiti" reminded the Admiral of certain regions of Spain, and he gave it the name of "Hispaniola"—"Little Spain," the "Spanish Isle."

Cuevas was hoping for another long stop in one of the numerous harbors the vessels kept entering, but the Admiral was now in a hurry to see more and contented himself with sending boats ashore either to fish and hunt or to barter with the natives. The "broom" Andujar did not find Lucero on any of these landings. The fleet, which had hitherto encountered Indians either living in a state of Edenlike innocence or in rudimentary democracies, now began to find native monarchies. Don Cristobal thought this indicated closer proximity to the Grand Khan's influence, and chose to treat the kings he encountered with all the formalities of royalty. He invited them aboard his ship and stripped his personal wardrobe bare to make them gifts. One day he even parted with the amber necklace which he had bought at Granada before setting out on the voyage.

One other person also was extremely happy to have entered at last into realms of Divine Right. This was Diego de Arana, high constable of the fleet. The Cordoban *hidalgo* strutted in all his glory whenever one of these litter-borne sovereigns attended by a veritable, though half-naked "court," came aboard the Santa Maria to pay his respects to the Sons of Heaven.

Edison

(Continued from page 83)

dollars a week. "My happiness," he replied, "has always been the same." That was not quite as definite an answer as I wanted, so I asked him if he believed that, with a billion dollars, he was any happier than I was.

I was writing a book about Ford that winter, seeing him every day, and he knew a good deal about my state of mind, so he had something upon which to base an answer. I recall that he hesitated a few seconds before answering, then said, "No, I don't think I am."

When Ford comes home at night, Mrs. Ford's usual greeting is, "Well, Henry, what kind of a day did you have today?" and Ford's usual reply is, "The best day of my life," or something like that. But Edison's estimate of Ford's happiness is about right. Ford, in my opinion, is approximately as happy as every man is who is doing congenial work successfully—which means that he is pretty happy most of the time, but his happiness is not at all in proportion to his wealth.

I told these things to Edison by writing a sentence or two on a piece of paper now and then and handing it to him.

"You are right about Ford," Edison said, after reading one of the slips. "He is pretty happy most of the time, but he is never happy a billion dollars' worth and sometimes he is not happy at all."

Edison looked out of the window and was silent. One minute, two minutes.

"Benson," he asked, "how many things can you see in three seconds?"

I reached for my pad of paper and wrote: "It somewhat depends upon the number of things there are where I am looking."

"There is the greatest difference in people," he continued, "in their ability quickly to observe. Some of this difference probably arises from natural ability, but a good deal of it arises from training."

"It is not merely a joke to say that one of the best ways to hide a thing is to hang it on the wall in the sitting-room. One of the best men we have here is always missing things that are right before his eyes. This capacity to observe should be developed far and away beyond what it is now. What good are eyes if what they see does not get through to the gray matter in back of them?"

Again Edison was silent and my mind had time to go back to an occasion, many years ago, when in a little less than six hours, spent in a great cement plant that he was building, Edison noted more than six hundred different things that he wanted done and wrote them all out from memory after he returned home, taking all night and half of the next day to do it.

"The eyes can be trained," Edison continued, "to take in a great deal at a glance. A few years ago, when I was working on my storage-battery, I trained my eyes so I could see the word 'nickel' in three or four seconds, even if it appeared but once upon a page of fine print consisting of a thousand words. I wanted to learn all I could about nickel because I was thinking of using it in a storage-battery, so I went through every book I could find that had to do with metals."

"I never could have covered more than a fraction of this ground if I had had to read every word. Instead, I used to turn the leaves about like this"—illustrating by giving about two seconds to a page—"and if the word I wanted was on a page I got it."

Another minute of silence.

"Children could just as well be taught to read, not by words but by sentences and paragraphs."

"I have trained myself to read sentences and paragraphs at a glance. The individual words do not go through my mind at all, but I get the meaning of them. Colleges, if they would, could teach this method of reading and it would be of great value to their students, but they don't do even that much."



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Edison has not much use for our so-called institutions of learning, which does not mean, of course, that he regards them as useless. His criticism has to do only with what they teach and how they try to teach it. He believes the public schools are missing a great opportunity by not making more use of moving-pictures. Nor do college graduates, as prospective employees, appeal strongly to him unless they are of a type that would have appealed to him if they never had been to college.

"When I prepared one of my questionnaires a few years ago," he said, "to test the capacities of applicants for employment, and college graduates could not answer many of the questions, word came to me from one of the universities that they trained students not to answer such questions, but to know where the answers could be obtained. Well, I prepared fifty more questions and sent them over to the university, saying, 'Here are some more questions, there is your library—go to it.' Not ten percent were answered correctly.

"It is a great thing to have a hobby," Edison suddenly exclaimed. "I met a professor in Paris a few years ago, the walls of whose rooms were covered with pipes. He had been collecting pipes for forty years and, as far as I could judge, had every kind that had ever been smoked. 'There,' I said to myself, 'is a happy man.'"

"What is your hobby?" I wrote.

"My hobby," he replied with a grin, "is ex-

perimenting. What I most like to do is to tackle a problem to which I do not know the answer and try to solve it. This rubber business just suits me. Do you know that there are many, many plants right here in New Jersey that have rubber in them? There are many other plants, not used at all now, that beyond a doubt have economic uses. Economic use is something that botanists don't care anything about. They find a plant, give it a Latin name if it hasn't one already, put it in a catalog and they are through."

When Edison went to Florida last January for his winter "vacation" he took a car-load of machinery with him and several employees. "Hobby" and "vacation" mean for him just now, rubber.

This time, when Edison arose and went back to his desk, he did not return. His mind, having had the little play-spiel that it wanted, was ready for more work. A moment later he was back at his old roll-top desk, so lost in work that, to attract his attention, one would have had to put his lips close to his ear and shout. Nothing about Edison is more remarkable than his ability to shift his mind quickly from one subject to another and to lose himself in each subject to which he turns. Having come to the surface a few moments for air, so to speak, he plunged back to the depths of thought. But in those few moments I had got what I feel is one of the most revealing interviews ever written.

The Flagrant Years (Continued from page 65)

put in the necessary local improvements, don't you think?"

This was beyond Miss Barr. She sought refuge in the nearest unoccupied cell, where Consuelo was working. "There's the funniest nut out there. I think he's crazy. But awfully smart-looking. Will you take him?"

"No." She felt a decided distaste for any such dealings with Ipsy Smith. At first she told herself that it was because she was disgusted with him for coming. Later came illumination; it was really because she couldn't face the intimacy of that sort of contact; not with him!

Revulsion? No; it was certainly not revulsion. Rather it was—well, she just couldn't be sure of being quite impersonal about it where Ipsy Smith was concerned. Let Bob have him. She made the suggestion to Beulah and Bob got him.

Almost immediately and much to her displeasure Connie had a client. This prevented her from overhearing anything more than a lively alternation of voices from Bob's room and occasional punctuations of laughter. Once she made an excuse to go out after something and caught this bit:

"I never heard anyone ask so many questions in my life."

In the most drawly of the Smith-tones came the reply, "Information is the life of trade. I'm thinking of going into this business."

"It won't be your fault if you don't know all there is to know about it." Apparently he was taking a full line of treatments, for Connie had finished with her finger-wave long before her attentive ear made out indications of an end in Bob Roberts' division. She easily contrived to be in the outer room when Ipsy emerged.

"How do you do?" he inquired politely.

"You might have asked me that any time in the last two weeks."

"Suppose you answer it now and we'll pass on to the next one."

"I'm well. But I don't think you ought to come here."

He looked puzzled. "Where would you suggest that I go when I want my personal beauty polished up? To a plumber's?"

"Oh!" said Connie and managed to put a good deal into the monosyllable.

"I don't believe you're feeling as well as you pretend. Would going out to dinner with me help any?"

"No; I don't think it would." She wasn't going to let him get away with it so easily after his neglect.

"Then you've got another engagement?" He looked almost crestfallen—for him. Connie had to stiffen herself against an inclination to waver.

"What phenomenal powers of inference!"

"Some people are born that way; don't give me too much credit," said he modestly. "May I take you to your engagement?"

Now Connie had no engagement for that evening, so she decided to fix one up with Bob. "That would be nice," she admitted languidly. "I'll be at the entrance about five."

Just by way of discipline she kept him waiting ten full minutes. When she appeared he told the taxi-driver to go by way of the Park and make it as roundabout as possible.

"What have you been doing with yourself?" she demanded as they crept along in the slow parade of late afternoon on the Avenue.

"Me? Oh, in the inspired words of the poet:

"I have been leaning idly on a star
And thinking kindly thoughts of
time and space."

"It's very pretty but not too convincing. Ipsy! What's the matter with your nose? It looks as if it had been broken."

"You've put it out of joint with your cold and clammy treatment of me," was the reproachful reply. "It'll recover."

"You might as well tell me. I know about the fight."

"So does your friend Miss Roberts. Is there anything you don't know about in your busy mart of pulchritude?"

"Rowdy told me. And I told him he was a coward."

"That's below the belt. He isn't," returned Smith quietly. "It was a square-enough fight."

"Square? For him to pick on a man half his size?"

"Oh, be fair to me," he pleaded. "I'm at least two-thirds if not three-quarters his size. Moreover, I'm afraid I started it."

"Why on earth did you start it?"

"He was getting too conversational."

She did not ask him what about. She could surmise. Rowdy, drunk, would be likely to become confidential anywhere, or to anybody. She asked anxiously:

"Ipsy, what did you mean by saying that

1. If you were to ask - Happiness - and from beginning of time men have contemplated the best way of finding Happiness. Great scholars & thought have ~~defined~~ ^{searched} for mankind just how this elusive goal could be reached.

① The Epicurean said - indulge yourself - ~~eat~~ ^{satisfy} your appetites - open yourself to all the stimuli of the world - let your senses test all that the ~~photographs~~ ^{world} ~~shows~~ ^{is}. Eat, drink & be merry - This is the way to Happiness.

② The Stoic - Let not the world disturb you - Protect yourself from the stimuli & attractions of the material learn to do with out it - Nothing matters that is matter - Do not let your peace of mind depend upon conditions over which you may have no control - This is the way to Happiness -

③ The Aristocrat - Get out (yourself) - Don't be selfish - Selfishness leads to bitterness & defeat - Work for others - Serve - Help - This is the way -

④ The Religionist - Hope not to find happiness here but prepare yourself for the eternal hereafter bliss - This is Paradise ~~after~~ ^{beyond} this veil of tears - This is the way to happiness -

⑤ The Hypocrite -

2. With all these guides to happiness - is it strange that so many people are still unhappy - Perhaps the secret of it is that regardless of what we do, the attitude we take, there is a large portion of unhappiness inevitably in every man's life - inseparable element of tragedy & misery -

① Edison quote

② - Unhappiness follows in the wake of human ambition -
- The hype of the ambition - the path to the unhappiness -
- Edison quote - Edison quote - Edison quote -
- But not Edison people to continue questing.

③ Men know a higher goal than happiness -
- achievement - then struggle! The thrill of creating something -

④ Cow - William Lyon Phelps -

⑤ Men are driven not by love & happiness but by pride & ambition - In us are vast energies which must be expressed - They will ruin us otherwise - They may bring peace in process & expression - But this is life -

3. We don't begin our careers by asking ourselves life with what will be like? Who has ever answered that question? Who ever can?

① Depends on individual's fortune - say Plutarch -

② So not fool -

b) How does a young man set out upon his studies in a doctor large lecture with the chances that that plot will make him happy -

It's what he wants to do - If he does it well.
He might be happy - not continuously, & he may,
but ~~periodically~~ at times -

Boothman -
X-Ray -
Jalilama -

4. The first thing man has for them, is self expression

① Frustated frustrated - is frustrated expression - This
is unhappiness in ~~activity~~ ^{activity} that which you cannot
do. There is frustration in not being free to do that
which you are able to do -

② Parents have often diverted their children
from the channel of their true expression -
into careers in which they have
no calling - deprived & dehumanized their lives.
Some rebel! The saddest are those who are
muted, resigned & cannot rebel -

③ A chance to do original work is society's
first responsibility to its members - To equip
a man to do that for which he is qualified
is to give him life. - 1/11/13 - 1/11/13

5. Independence - Human dignity cannot brook dependence -
- 1/3/13 9/11/13 1/11/13 1/11/13

① The cause & problem is that it makes men
dependent upon others - so that a man cannot be
himself - Men struggle to escape it.

② Cause & symptom - man is dependent -
upon others -

- ③ Cause of ~~anxiety~~ ignorance & poverty - insecurity -
 - + dependence -
 ④ Antagonism
 ⑤ Last struggle, wanting for wealth, knowledge, education
 and freedom - is struggle for independence.

6. Esteem -

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- ① Ego those who seek Power - Alexander - Napoleon -
 - esteem of their ego & persistence - May do per-
man - but fear judgment, mankind -
 ② Ego those who spend themselves accumulating
money - do so to reach a position of esteem -
 In this country where wealth is not highly
praised - it is not so highly prized. What
 a people admire most - that is citizens will
like ask most - ~~whether it be~~ military power, wealth,
 culture, or physical ~~power~~ -

7. Survival
Immortality - To ~~transmit~~ something survive -
 - to ~~others~~ in perishable body -
 ① That huge build the family -
 ② Principles men to build a solid institution -
 ③ ~~to~~ to - transmit power & power -

8. There are all hypnotic ends ① Self expression ②
 Independence ③ Esteem ④ Survival - circles -
 - money enjoyment - was not but not not
 ① Those who live for other other ends - pleasure -
money - comfort - mis life - diminished - a
wasting and dubious advantage -

1. Insurance - 65% for 100 dollar - Human Error - Stability - Russia - Unemployment.
Inflation - Leg. change - Indictment - Eng. & Germany -
① Struggle, To-morrow - Economic - The bus. men who are wise - look
ahead - suppose instead, 1500 - we had 15000 nothing -

2. I suppose that if I were to ask 10 men "What does a man live for?" -
9 - "To be happy". All want to be happy - Great Schools - Way to Happ.
① Epicurean - self-indulgence. Let your senses partake. Stimuli -
- Eat, drink - not really the point - what it came to mean
② Stoic - self-control - do not make your peace & mind dependent
on conditions - control outside world - Spinoza - Learn to do
without - Nothing matters what is matter - Indiff. to pain etc.
③ Aldrich - selflessness - Forget yourself in service of others -
- your ambitions, your desires.
④ Religionist - ^{other unhappiness} no happiness in this world. Val. J. Travis - Corridor
to Eternal bliss - Prepare yourself for life hereafter.
⑤ Myth - Submergence in

3. Surprising thing - in spite of these many good guides - so most Unhappy are
- no Epicurean who is entirely happy - Perhaps the secret - a very
large pattern of unhapp. woven in the very fabric of life -
Incapable quantum of pathos & tragedy in all life - quite
regardless, our attitudes etc.

4. Interview with Mr. Eccleson - At 82 he gave his phil. of happiness
- He had full life, creative, success, recognition, immortal - interesting
to see what he has to say about happiness (Read)
① In spite of fact that he said - if he had less ambition he
would have been happier, when, at 82, ^{best step} he is asked what
was his hobby - "Experimenting" - Tackle a problem to which
I do not know answer - & try to solve it
② Seemingly there is something more important > Happiness

7. Independence - Human dignity cannot think in dependence - Poverty is curse - Ignorance - Autocracy - Even dependence on nature - Insurance

8. Esteem, one's fellowmen - "A good name is better & precious oil" -
- man is social being - not satisfied with his own estimate of himself -
① Those who seek power - Alex. Caesar & Nap. more concerned abt what mankind will think, than > winning a battle
② He strives too hard to make money, his career, a man's standing in the com. - Whatever standard - military prowess, wealth, culture, phys. strength - that men will try to acquire -

9. Survival - we live to outlive ourselves - reminded to transcend
Transcend - whether, w/ them or not, caring for them in all - family - human evolution is on children - build institutions - endowments - Survival -

10. All ♀-ly traits! The man who seeks them - will rise -
- a rising crescendo - The other - ebb, etc - declining to insignificance
- a life slipping away to nothing

① Choate "the best years of a man's life are the years bet. 70 and 80, and he advised all his friends to hurry along and get there as soon as they could" -

② True. The man who laid up Treasures - in things, intellect, cultural, in self exp. - Incl. Esteem - efforts which have moral value - will enjoy harvest, twilight -
- Men who pursued less. harm dec. years - emptiness was never overhauled.

8) Buttore, X-Ray - Fern - March.

9) Judith - June

10) Eskeen - "A good day" - Alexander
- we start for money

11) Survival -

12) Leptoma - Ascer -

① Choate - "Best year" -

② Itacant -

- ① Insurance - Social Stability - 65m - Russia
- Unemployment - Indifferent - 1500 -
- Struggles of To-morrow -
- ② things men live for - 10 - To be Happy
- Schools ① Epicurean ② Stoic
③ Altruist ④ Religionist.
- ③ Suprising - so few - Large Pattern - Franklin
- ④ Edison - 82 - (Reed) - "Hobby" - Experimentally
- Evidently - Achievement Through Things
① Promoters ② Adam -
- ⑤ Some People - much for East - Wm Lyon
Phelps of Yab -
- ⑥ Well, why not to cores - "not interesting"
- Reise - 9 out 10 - was arranged -
- ⑦ Self-Expression - Vast Forces -
① When we begin our career - "Is life
worth living" - no answer - Words -
② Solomon -
③ Young people - in Refuge -

- Achievement thru Struggle! - And in that, a measure of luck.
is already involved -

① From there - true of all men of ambition

② Adam - Garden, Eden - Vegetation life, no ambition. The
minute he sought knowledge - opened with the curse:
pain & sweat - labor, pain, & sweat. So hard as to deal
with strong obstacles.

③ Some people conceive of the ideal life: being contentment -
no worries - no care, comfort; a comp. rank between
two worlds!

④ Charming Essay of Prof. Wm. Lyon Phelps, of Yale - on
Happiness. (Jude)

5. Well, why not be a cow? Very few - life, with all, is more
interesting.

① We must, write our notes, what men live for. The 9 out
of 10 - would be wrong! Men are used on not by
love & happiness but just and purpose.

6. Self Expression - In us certain Vast forces - Read us -

- sorrow etc when expressed - But we must! Inevitable -

① We don't begin life on Careers by asking ourselves: "Is life
worth living"? Who can answer this question? How!
At times! answer depends upon time, condition, mood.

② My Illness

③ Young people who start out to be engineers, salesmen etc.
- will it make them happy - in response to inner craving
- That is what they want most to do! - Channel

④ Beethoven - deaf, going, and happiness, outlet for his -

⑤ X-Ray

⑥ John Marcher - Fulfilled their destiny