

THE UNIVERSITY OF HARD KNOCKS!

The School That Completes Our Education!

(Lesson 9 & Lesson 10)



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Just So You Know

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Hopefully by giving you this information it will help you to also have a successful online business.

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It has been invaluable to me.

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Jim Phillips has also given me a heads up on another great opportunity.

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Acknowledgements

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He has helped me tremendously by setting a good example. Then also showing me what a successful online business should be.

If you really want to succeed online than let me introduce you to Bryan.

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Kavi is a great person and has absolutely gone out of the way to help me.

Talk about a great programmer, business person and human being. It is my privilege to introduce you to my friend.

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Well there you have it. I hope you will get to know some of my friends.

They certainly have been instrumental in helping me to become a success on a shoe string budget.

May you have the same success with them as I have.

The University of Hard Knocks!
By Ralph Parlette & Jim Phillips
ViralNEWS.com

About This eBook

The University of Hard Knocks!
Ralph Parlette (1870-1930)

LADIES and Gentlemen: I do not want to be seen in this lecture. I want to be heard. I am only the delivery wagon. When the delivery wagon comes to your house, you are not much interested in how it looks; you are interested in the goods it brings you. You know some very good goods are sometimes delivered to you in some very poor delivery wagons.

So in this lecture, please do not pay any attention to the delivery wagon--how much it squeaks and wheezes and rattles and wabbles. Do not pay much attention to the wrappings and strings. Get inside to the goods.

Really, I believe the goods are good. I believe I am to recite to you some of the multiplication table of life--not mine, not yours alone, but everybody's.

Can Only Pull the Plug!

Every audience has a different temperature, and that makes a lecture go differently before every audience. The kind of an audience is just as important as the kind of a lecture. A cold audience will make a good lecture poor, while a warm audience will make a poor lecture good.

Let me illustrate:

When I was a boy we had a barrel of sorghum in the woodshed. When mother wanted to make ginger-bread or cookies, she would send me to the woodshed to get a bucket of sorghum from that barrel.

Some warm September day I would pull the plug from the barrel and the sorghum would fairly squirt into my bucket. Later in the fall when it was colder, I would pull the plug but the sorghum would not squirt. It would come out slowly and reluctantly, so that I would have to wait a long while to get a little sorghum. And on some real cold winter day I would pull the plug, but the sorghum would not run at all. It would just look out at me.

I discovered it was the temperature.

I have brought a barrel of sorghum to this audience. The name of the sorghum is "The University of Hard Knocks." I can only pull the plug. I cannot make it run. That will depend upon the temperature of this audience. You can have all you want of it, but to get it to running freely, you will have to warm up.

Did You Bring a Bucket?

No matter how the sorghum runs, you have to have a bucket to get it. How much any one gets out of a lecture depends also upon the size of the bucket he brings to get it in. A big bucket can get filled at a very small stream. A little bucket gets little at the greatest stream. With no bucket you can get nothing at Niagara.

That often explains why one person says a lecture is great, while the next person says he got nothing out of it.

What It's All About

Here is a great mass of words and sentences and pictures to express two or three simple little ideas of life, that our education is our growing up from the Finite to the Infinite, and that it is done by our own personal overcoming, and that we never finish it.

Have you noticed that no sentence, nor a million sentences, can bound life? Have you noticed that every statement does not quite cover it? No statement, no library, can tell all about life. No success rule can alone solve the problem. You must average it all and struggle up to a higher vision.

We are told that the stomach needs bulk as well as nutriment. It would not prosper with the necessary elements in their condensed form. So abstract truths in their lowest terms do not always promote mental digestion like more bulk in the way of pictures and discussions of these truths. Here is bulk as well as nutriment.

If you get the feeling that the first personal pronoun is being overworked, I remind you that this is more a confession than a lecture. You cannot confess without referring to the confesser.

To Everybody in My Audience

I like you because I am like you.

I believe in you because I believe in myself. We are all one family. I believe in your Inside, not in your Outside, whoever you are, whatever you are, wherever you are.

I believe in the Angel of Good inside every block of human marble.
I believe it must be carved out in The University of Hard Knocks.

The University Of Hard Knocks! - 9 -

I believe all this pride, vanity, selfishness, self-righteousness, hypocrisy and human frailty are the Outside that must be chipped away.

I believe the Hard Knocks cannot injure the Angel, but can only reveal it.

I hope you are getting your Hard Knocks.

I care little about your glorious or inglorious past. I care little about your present. I care much about your future for that is to see more of the Angel in you.

The University of Hard Knocks

Lesson 9 - Go On South!

The Book in the Running Brook

THERE is a little silvery sheet of water in Minnesota called Lake Itasca.

There is a place where a little stream leaps out from the lake.

"Ole!" you will exclaim, "the lake is leaking. What is the name of this little creek?"

"Creek! It bane no creek. It bane Mississippi river."

So even the Father of Waters has to begin as a creek. We are at the cradle where the baby river leaps forth. We all start about alike.

It wabbles around thru the woods of Minnesota. It doesn't know where it is going, but it is "on the way."

It keeps wabbling around, never giving up and quitting, and it gets to the place where all of us get sooner or later. The place where Paul came on the road to Damascus. The place of the "heavenly vision."

It is the place where gravity says, "Little Mississippi, do you want to grow? Then you will have to go south."

The little Mississippi starts south. He says to the people, "Goodbye, folks, I am going south." The folks at Itascaville say, "Why, Mississippi, you are foolish. You hain't got water enough to get out of the county." That is a fact, but he is not trying to get out of the county. The Mississippi is only trying to go south.

The Mississippi knows nothing about the Gulf of Mexico. He does not know that he has to go hundreds of miles south. He is only trying to go south. He has not much water, but he does not wait for a relative to die and bequeath him some water. That is a beautiful thought! He has water enough to start south, and he does that.

He goes a foot south, then another foot south. He goes a mile south. He picks up a little stream and he has some more water. He goes on south. He picks up another stream and grows some more. Day by day he picks up streamlets, brooklets, rivulets. Business is picking up! He grows as he flows. Poetry!

My friends, here is one of the best pictures I can find in nature of what it seems to me our lives should be. I hear a great many orations, especially in high school commencements, entitled, "The Value of a Goal in Life." But the direction is vastly more important than the goal. Find the way your life should go, and then go and keep on going and you'll reach a thousand goals.

We do not have to figure out how far we have to go, nor how many supplies we will need along the way. All we have to do is to start and we will find the resources all along the way. We will grow as we flow. All of us can start! And then go on south!

Success is not tomorrow or next year. Success is now. Success is not at the end of the journey, for there is no end. Success is every day in flowing and growing. The Mississippi is a success in Minnesota as well as on south.

You and I sooner or later hear the call, "Go on south." If we haven't heard it, let us keep our ear to the receiver and live a more natural life, so that we can hear the call. We are all called.

It is a divine call--the call of our unfolding talents to be used.

Remember, the Mississippi goes south. If he had gone any other direction he would never have been heard of.

Three wonderful things develop as the Mississippi goes on south.

1. He keeps on going on south and growing greater.
2. He overcomes his obstacles and develops his power.
3. He blesses the valley, but the valley does not bless him.

Go On South and Grow Greater

You never meet the Mississippi after he starts south, but what he is going on south and growing greater. You never meet him but what he says, "Excuse me, but I must go on south."

The Mississippi gets to St. Paul and Minneapolis. He is a great river now--the most successful river in the state. But he does not retire upon his laurels. He goes on south and grows greater. He goes on south to St. Louis. He is a wonderful river now. But he does not stop. He goes on south and grows greater.

Everywhere you meet him he is going on south and growing greater.

Do you know why the Mississippi goes on south? To continue to be the Mississippi. If he should stop and stagnate, he would not be the Mississippi, river. he would become a stagnant, poisonous pond.

As long as people keep on going south, they keep on living. When they stop and stagnate, they die.

That is why I am making it the slogan of my life--GO ON SOUTH AND GROW GREATER! I hope I can make you remember that and say it over each day. I wish I could write it over the pulpits, over the schoolrooms, over the business houses and homes--GO ON SOUTH AND GROW GREATER. For this is life, and there is no other.

This is education--and religion. And the only business of life.

You and I start well. We go on south a little ways, and then we retire. Even young people as they start south and make some little knee-pants achievement, some kindergarten touchdown, succumb to their press notices. Their friends crowd around them to congratulate them. "I must congratulate you upon your success. You have arrived."

So many of those young goslings believe that. They quit and get canned. They think they have gotten to the Gulf of Mexico when they have not gotten out of the woods of Minnesota. Go on south!

We can protect ourselves fairly well from our enemies, but heaven deliver us from our fool friends.

Success is so hard to endure. We can endure ten defeats better than one victory. Success goes to the head and defeat goes to "de feet." It makes them work harder.

The Plague of Incompetents

Civilization is mostly a conspiracy to keep us from going very far south.

The one who keeps on going south defies custom and becomes unorthodox.

But contentment with present achievement is the damnation of the race.

The mass of the human family never go on south far enough to become good servants, workmen or artists. The young people get a smattering and squeeze into the bottom position and never go on south to efficiency and promotion. They wonder why their genius is not recognized. They do not make it visible.

Nine out of ten stenographers who apply for positions can write a few shorthand

characters and irritate a typewriter keyboard. They think that is being a stenographer, when it is merely a symptom of a stenographer. They mangle the language, grammar, spelling, capitalization and punctuation. Their eyes are on the clock, their minds on the movies.

Nine out of ten workmen cannot be trusted to do what they advertise to do, because they have never gone south far enough to become efficient. Many a professional man is in the same class.

Half of our life is spent in getting competents to repair the botchwork of incompetents.

No matter how well equipped you are, you are never safe in your job if you are contented to do today just what you did yesterday.

Contented to think today what you thought yesterday.

You must go on south to be safe.

I used to know a violinist who would say, "If I were not a genius, I could not play so well with such little practice." The poor fellow did not know how poor a fiddler he really was.

Well did Strickland Gillilan, America's great poet-humorist, say, "Egotism is the opiate that Nature administers to deaden the pains of mediocrity.

This Is Our Best Day

Just because our hair gets frosty or begins to rub off in spots, we are so prone to say, "I am aging rapidly." It pays to advertise. We always get results. See the one shrivel who goes around front-paging his age. Age is not years; age is grunts.

We say, "I've seen my best days." And the undertaker goes and greases his buggy. He believes in "preparedness."

Go on south! We have not seen our best days. This is the best day so far, and tomorrow is going to be better on south.

We are only children in God's great kindergarten, playing with our A-B-C's. I do not utter that as a bit of sentiment, but as the great fundamental of our life. I hope the oldest in years sees that best. I hope he says, "I am just beginning. Just beginning to understand. Just beginning to know about life."

We are not going on south to old age, we are going on south to eternal youth. It is the one who stops who "ages rapidly." Each day brings us a larger vision. Infinity, Eternity, Omnipotence, Omniscience are all on south.

We have left nothing behind but the husks. I would not trade this moment for all the years before it. I have their footings at compound interest! They are dead. This is life.

Birthdays and Headmarks

Yesterday I had a birthday. I looked in the glass and communed with my features. I saw some gray hairs coming. Hurrah!

You know what gray hairs are? Did you ever get a headmark in school?

Gray hairs are silver headmarks in our education as we go on south.

You children cheer up. Your black hair and auburn hair and the other first reader hair will pass and you'll get promoted as you go on south.

Don't worry about gray hair or baldness. Only worry about the location of your gray hair or baldness. If they get on the inside of the head, worry. Do you know why corporations sometimes say they do not want to employ gray-headed men? They have found that so many of them have quit going on south and have gotten gray on the inside--or bald.

These same corporations send out Pinkertons and pay any price for gray-headed men--gray on the outside and green on the inside. They are the most valuable, for they have the vision and wisdom of many years and the enthusiasm and "pep" and courage of youth.

The preacher, the teacher--everyone who gets put on the retired list, retires himself. He quits going on south.

The most wonderful person in the world is the one who has lived years and years on earth and has perhaps gotten gray on the outside, but has kept young and fresh on the inside.

Put that person in the pulpit, in the schoolroom, in the office, behind the ticket-window or on the bench--or under the hod--and you find the whole world going to that person for direction, advice, vision, help, sympathy, love.

I am happy today as I look back over my life. I have been trying to lecture a good while. I am almost ashamed to tell you how long, for I ought to know more about it by this time.

But when anybody says, "I heard you lecture twenty years ago over at----" I stop him.

"Please don't throw it up to me now. I am just as ashamed of it as you are. I am trying to do better now."

O, I want to forget all the past, save its lessons. I am just beginning to live. If anybody wants to be my best friend, let him come to me and tell me how to improve--what to do and what not to do. Tell me how to give a better lecture.

Years ago a bureau representative who booked me told me my lectures were good enough. I told him I wanted to get better lectures, for I was so dissatisfied with what little I knew. He told me I could never get any better. I had reached my limit. Those lectures were the "limit." I shiver as I think what I was saying then. I want to go on south shivering about yesterday. These years I have noticed the people on the platform who were contented with their offerings, were not trying to improve them, and were lost in admiration of what they were doing, did not stay long on the platform. I have watched them come and go, come and go. I have heard their fierce invectives against the bureaus and ungrateful audiences that were "prejudiced" against them.

Birthdays are not annual affairs. Birthdays are the days when we have a new birth. The days when we go on south to larger visions.

I wish I could have a birthday every minute!

Some people seem to string out to near a hundred years with mighty few birthdays. Some people spin up to Methuselahs in a few years.

From what I can learn of Methuselah, he never grew past copper-toed boots. He just hibernated and "chawed on."

The more birthdays we have, the nearer we approach eternal youth!

Bernhardt, Davis and Edison

The spectacle of Sarah Bernhardt, past seventy, thrilling and gripping audiences with the fire and brilliancy of youth, is inspiring. No obstacle can daunt her. Losing a leg does not end her acting, for she remains the "Divine Sarah" with no crippling of her work. She looks younger than many women of half her years. "The years are nothing to me."

Senator Henry Gassaway Davis, West Virginia's Grand Old Man, at ninety-two was working as hard and hopefully as any man of the multitudes in his employ. He was an ardent Odd Fellow, and one day at ninety-two--just a short time before his passing--he went out to the Odd Fellows' Home near Elkins, where he lived. On the porch of the home was a row of old men inmates. The senator shook hands with these men and one by one they rose from the bench to return his hearty greetings.

The last man on the bench did not rise. He helplessly looked up at the senator and said, "Senator, you'll have to excuse me from getting up. I'm too old. When you get as old as I am, you'll not get up, either."

"That's all right. But, my man, how old are you?"

"Senator, I'm old in body and old in spirit. I'm past sixty."

"My boy," laughed Senator Davis, "I was an Odd Fellow before you were born."

The senator at ninety-two was younger than the man "past sixty," because he was going on south.

When I was a little boy I saw them bring the first phonograph that Mr. Edison invented into the meeting at Lakeside, Ohio. The people cheered when they heard it talk.

You would laugh at it today. It had a tinfoil cylinder, it screeched and stuttered. You would not have it in your barn today to play to your ford!

But the people said, "Mr. Edison has succeeded." There was one man who did not believe that Mr. Edison had succeeded. His name was Thomas Alva Edison. He had gotten to St. Paul, and he went on south. A million people would have stopped there and said, "I have arrived." They would have put in their time litigating for their rights with other people who would have gone on south with the phonograph idea.

Mr. Edison has said that his genius is mainly his ability to keep on south. A young lady succeeded in getting into his laboratory the other day, and she wrote me that the great inventor showed her one invention. "I made over seven thousand experiments and failed before I hit upon that."

"Why make so many experiments?"

"I know more than seven thousand ways now that won't work."

I doubt if there are ten men in America who could go on south in the face of seven thousand failures. Today he brings forth a diamond-pointed phonograph. I am sure if we could bring Mr. Edison to this platform and ask him, "Have you succeeded?" he would say what he has said to reporters and what he said to the young lady, "I have not succeeded. I am succeeding. All I have done only shows me how much there is yet to do."

That is success supreme. Not "succeeded" but "succeeding."

What a difference between "ed" and "ing"! The difference between death and life. Are you "ed-ing" or "ing-ing"?

Moses Begins at Eighty

Moses, the great Hebrew law-giver, was eighty years old before he started south. It took him eighty years to get ready. Moses did not even get on the back page of the Egyptian newspapers till he was eighty. He went on south into the extra editions after that!

If Moses had retired at seventy-nine, we'd never have heard of him.

If Moses had retired to a checkerboard in the grocery store or to pitching horseshoes up the alley and talking about "ther winter of fifty-four," he would have become the seventeenth mummy on the thirty-ninth row in the green pickle-jar!

Imagine Moses living today amidst the din of the high school orations on "The Age of the Young Man" and the Ostler idea that you are going down hill at fifty. Imagine Moses living on "borrowed time" when he becomes the leader of the Israelite host.

I would see his scandalized friends gather around him. "Moses! Moses! what is this we hear? You going to lead the Israelites to the Promised Land? Why, Moses, you are an old man. Why don't you act like an old man? You are liable to drop off any minute. Here is a pair of slippers. And keep out of the night air. It is so hard on old folks."

I think I would hear Moses say, "No, no, I am just beginning to see what to do. Watch things happen from now on. Children of Israel, forward, march!"

I see Moses at eighty starting for the Wilderness so fast Aaron can hardly keep up. Moses is eighty-five and busier and more enthusiastic than ever. The people say, "Isn't Moses dead?" "No." "Well, he ought to be dead, for he is old enough."

They appoint a committee to bury Moses. You cannot do anything in America without a committee. The committee gets out the invitations and makes all the arrangements for a gorgeous funeral next Thursday. They get ready the resolutions of respect-- "Whereas,--Whereas,--Resolved,--Resolved."

Then I see the committee waiting on Moses. That is what a committee does--it "waits" on something or other. And this committee goes up to General Moses' private office. It is his busy day. They have to stand in line and wait their turn. When they get up to Moses' desk, the great prophet says, "Boys, what is it? Cut it short, I'm busy."

The committee begins to weep. "General Moses, you are a very old man. You are eighty-five years old and full of honors. We are the committee duly authorized to give you gorgeous burial. The funeral is to be next Thursday. Kindly die."

I see Moses look over his appointments. "Next Thursday?"

Why, boys, every hour is taken next Thursday. I simply cannot attend my funeral next Thursday."

They cannot bury Moses. He cannot attend. You cannot bury anybody who is too busy to attend his own funeral! You cannot bury anybody until he consents. It is bad manners!

The committee is so mortified, for all the invitations are out. It waits.

Moses is eighty-six and the committee 'phones over, "Moses, can you attend next Thursday?" And Moses says, "No, boys, you'll just have to hold that funeral until I get this work pushed off so I can attend it. I haven't even time to think about getting old."

The committee waits. Moses is ninety and rushed more than ever.

He is doing ten men's work and his friends all say he is killing himself. But he makes the committee wait.

Moses is ninety-five and burning the candle at both ends.

He is a hundred. And the committee dies!

Moses goes right on shouting, "Onward!" He is a hundred and ten. He is a hundred and twenty. Even then I read, "His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." He had not time to stop and abate.

So God buried him. The committee was dead. O, friends, this is not irreverence. It is joyful reverence. It is the message to all of us, Go on south to the greater things, and get so enthused and absorbed in our going that we'll fool the "committee."

All the multitudes of the Children of Israel died in the Wilderness. They were afraid to go on south. Only two of them went on south-- Joshua and Caleb.

They put the giants out of business.

The Indians once owned America. But they failed to go on south.

So another crop of Americans came into the limelight. If we modern Americans do not go on south we will join the Indians, the auk and the dodo.

The "Sob Squad"

I am so sorry for the folks who quit, retire, "get on the shelf" or live on "borrowed time."

They generally join the "sob squad."

They generally discover the world is "going to the dogs." They cry on my shoulder, no matter how good clothes I wear.

They tell me nobody uses them right. The person going on south has not time to look back and see how anybody uses him.

They say nobody loves them. Which is often a fact. Nobody loves the clock that runs down.

They say, "Only a few more days of trouble, only a few more tribulations, and I'll be in that bright and happy land." What will they do with them when they get them there? They would be dill pickles in the heavenly preserve-jar.

They say, "I wish I were a child again. I was happy when I was a child and I'm not happy now. Them was the best days of my life childhood's palmy days."

Wake up! Your clock has run down. Anybody who wants to be a child again is confessing he has lost his memory. Anybody who can remember the horrors of childhood could not be hired to live it over again.

If there is anybody who does not have a good time, if there is anybody who gets shortchanged regularly, it is a child. I am so sorry for a child. Hurry up and go on south.

It is better on south.

Waiting till the "Second Table"

I wish I could forget many of my childhood memories. I remember the palmy days. And the palm!

I often wonder how I ever lived thru my childhood. I would not take my chances living it thru again. I am not ungrateful to my parents.

I had advantages. I was born in a parsonage and was reared in the nurture and admiration of the Lord. I am not just sure I quoted that correctly, but I know I was

reared in a parsonage. About all I inherited was a Godly example and a large appetite. That was about all there was to inherit. I cannot remember when I was not hungry. I used to go around feeling like the Mammoth Cave, never thoroly explored.

I never sit down as "company" at a dinner and see some little children going sadly into the next room to "wait till the second table" that my heart does not go out to them. I remember when I did that.

I can only remember about four big meals in a year. That was "quart'ly meeting day." We always had a big dinner on "quart'ly meeting day." Elder Berry would stay for dinner. His name was Berry, but being "presiding elder," we called him Elder Berry.

Elder Berry always stayed for dinner. He was one of the easiest men to get to stay for dinner I ever saw.

Mother would stay home from "quart'ly meeting" to get the big dinner ready. She would cook up about all the "brethren" brought in at the last donation. We had one of those stretchable tables, and mother would stretch it clear across the room and put on two table-cloths. She would lap them over in the middle, where the hole was.

I would watch her get the big dinner ready. I would look over the long table and view the "promised land." I would see her set on the jelly. We had so much jelly--red jelly, and white jelly, and blue jelly. I don't just remember if they had blue jelly, but if they had it we had it on that table. All the jelly that ever "jelled" was represented. I didn't know we had so much jelly till "quart'ly meeting" day. I would watch the jelly tremble. Did you ever see jelly tremble? I used to think it ought to tremble, for Elder Berry was coming for dinner.

I would see mother put on the tallest pile of mashed potatoes you ever saw. She would make a hollow in the top and fill it with butter. I would see the butter melt and run down the sides, and I would say, "Hurry, mother, it is going to spill!" O, how I wanted to spill it! I could hardly hold out faithful.

And then Elder Berry would sit down at the table, at the end nearest the fried chicken.

The "company" would sit down. I used to wonder why we never could have a big dinner but what a lot of "company" had to come and gobble it up. They would fill the table and father would sit down in the last seat. There was no place for me to sit. Father would say, "You go into the next room, my boy, and wait. There's no room for you at the table."

The hungriest one of that assemblage would have to go in the next room and hear the big dinner. Did you ever hear a big dinner when you felt like the Mammoth Cave? I used to think as I would sit in the next room that heaven would be a place where everybody would eat at the first table.

I would watch them thru the key-hole. It was going so fast. There was only one piece of chicken left. It was the neck. O, Lord, spare the neck! And I would hear them say, "Elder Berry, may we help you to another piece of the chicken?"

And Elder Berry would take the neck!

Many a time after that, Elder Berry would come into the room where I was starving. He would say, "Brother Parlette, is this your boy?" He would come over to the remains of Brother Parlette's boy.

He would often put his hand in benediction upon my head.

My head was not the place that needed the benediction.

He would say, "My boy, I want you to have a good time now." Now!

When all the chicken was gone and he had taken the neck! "My boy, you are seeing the best days of your life right now as a child."

The dear old liar! I was seeing the worst days of my life. If there is anybody shortchanged--if there is anybody who doesn't have a good time, it's a child. Life has been getting better ever since, and today is the best day of all. Go on south!

It's Better on South

Seeing your best days as a child? No! You are seeing your worst days. Of course, you can be happy as a child. A boy can be happy with fuzz on his upper lip, but he'll be happier when his lip feels more like mine like a piece of sandpaper. There are chapters of happiness undreamed of in his philosophy.

A child can be full of happiness and only hold a pint. But afterwhile the same child will hold a quart.

I think I hold a gallon now. And I see people in the audience who must hold a barrel! Go on south. Of course, I do not mean circumference. But every year we go south increases our capacity for joy. Our life is one continual unfolding as we go south.

Afterwhile this old world gets too small for us and we go on south into a larger one.

So we cannot grow old. Our life never stops. It goes on and on forever. Anything that does not stop cannot grow old or have age.

Material things will grow old. This stage will grow old and stop.

This hall will grow old and stop. This house we live in will grow old and stop. This flesh and blood house we live in will grow old and stop. This lecture even will grow old--and stop! But you and I will never grow old, for God cannot grow old. You and I will go on living as long as God lives.

I am not worried today over what I do not know. I used to be worried. I used to say, "I have not time to answer you now!" But today it is such a relief to look people in the face and say, "I do not know."

And I have to say that to many questions, "I do not know." I often think if people in an audience only knew how little I know, they would not stay to hear me.

But some day I shall know! I patiently wait for the answer. Every day brings the answer to something I could not answer yesterday.

It will take an eternity to know an infinity!

What a wonderful happiness to go on south to it!

Overcoming Obstacles Develops Power

As the Mississippi River goes on south he finds obstacles along the way. You and I find obstacles along our way south. What shall we do?

Go to Keokuk, Iowa, for your answer.

They have built a great concrete obstacle clear across the path of the river. It is many feet high, and many, many feet long. The river cannot go on south. Watch him. He rises higher than the obstacle and sweeps over it on south.

Over the great power dam at Keokuk sweeps the Mississippi. And then you see the struggle of overcoming the obstacle develops light and power to vitalize the valley. A hundred towns and cities radiate the light and power from the struggle. The great city of St. Louis, many miles away, throbs with the victory.

So that is why they spent the millions to build the obstacle--to get the light and the power.

The light and the power were latent in the river, but it took the obstacle and the overcoming to develop it and make it useful.

That is exactly what happens when you and I overcome our obstacles.

We develop our light and power. We are rivers of light and power, but it is all latent and does no good until we overcome obstacles as we go on south.

Obstacles are the power stations on our way south!

And where the most obstacles are, there you find the most power to be developed. So many of us do not understand that. We look southward and we see the obstacles in the road. "I am so unfortunate. I could do these great things, but alas! I have so many obstacles in the way."

Thank God! You are blessed of Providence. They do not waste the obstacles. The presence of the obstacles means that there is a lot of light and power in you to be developed. If you see no obstacles, you are confessing to blindness.

I hear people saying, "I hope the time may speedily come when I shall have no more obstacles to overcome!" When that time comes, ring up the hearse, for you will be a "dead one."

Life is going on south, and overcoming the obstacles. Death is merely quitting.

The fact that we are not buried is no proof that we are alive. Go along the street in almost any town and see the dead ones. There they are decorating the hitching-racks and festooning the storeboxes. There they are blocking traffic at the postoffice and depot.

There they are in the hotel warming the chairs and making the guests stand up. There they are--rows of retired farmers who have quit work and moved to town to block improvements and die. But they will never need anything more than burying.

For they are dead from the ears up. They have not thought a new thought the past month.

Sometimes they sit and think, but generally they just sit. They have not gone south an inch the past year.

Usually the deadest loafer is married to the livest woman. Nature tries to maintain an equilibrium.

They block the wheels of progress and get in the way of the people trying to go on south.

They say of the people trying to do things.
"Aw, he's always tryin' to run things."

They do not join in to promote the churches and schools and big brother movements.

They growl at the lyceum courses and chautauquas, because they "take money outa town." They do not take any of their money "outa town." Ringling and Barnum & Bailey get theirs.

I do not smile as I refer to the dead. I weep. I wish I could squirt some "pep" into them and start them on south.

But all this lecture has been discussing this, so I hurry on to the last glimpse of the book in the running brook.

Go on South From Principle

Here we come to the most wonderful and difficult thing in life. It is the supreme test of character. That is, Why go on south? Not for blessing nor cursing, not for popularity nor for selfish ends, not for anything outside, but for the happiness that comes from within.

The Mississippi blesses the valley every day as he goes on south and overcomes. But the valley does not bless the river in return.

The valley throws its junk back upon the river. The valley pours its foul, muddy, poisonous streams back upon the Mississippi to defile him. The Mississippi makes St. Paul and Minneapolis about all the prosperity they have, gives them power to turn their mills.

But the Twin Cities merely throw their waste back upon their benefactor.

The Mississippi does not resign. He does not tell a tale of woe. He does not say, "I am not appreciated. My genius is not understood.

I am not going a step farther south. I am going right back to Lake Itasca." No, he does not even go to live with his father-in-law.

He says, "Thank you. Every little helps, send it all along." Go a few miles below the Twin Cities and see how, by some mysterious alchemy of Nature, the Mississippi has taken over all the poison and the defilement, he has purified it and clarified it, and has made it a part of himself. And he is greater and farther south!

He fattens upon bumps. Kick him, and you push him farther south. "Hand him a lemon," and he makes lemonade.

Civilization conspires to defeat the Mississippi. Chicago's drainage canal pollutes him. The flat, lazy Platte, three miles wide and three inches deep; the peevish, destructive Kaw, and all those streams that unite to form the treacherous, sinful, irresponsible lower

Missouri; the big, muddy Ohio, the Arkansas, the Red, the black and the blue floods--all these pour into the Mississippi.

Day by day the Father of Waters goes on south, taking them over and purifying them and making them a part of himself. Nothing can discourage, divert nor defile him. No matter how poisonous he becomes, he goes a few miles on south and he is all pure again.

Wonderful the book in the running brook! We let our life stream become poisoned by bitter memories and bitter regrets. We carry along such a heart full of the injuries that other people have done us, that sometimes we are bank to bank full of poison and a menace to those around us. We say, "I can forgive, but I cannot forget."

Oh, forget it! Drop it all. Purify your life and go on south all sweet again. We forget what we ought to remember and remember what we ought to forget. We need schools of memory, but we need schools of forgettery, even more.

As you go on south and bless your valley, do you notice the valley does not bless you very much? Have you sadly noted that the people you help the most often are the least grateful in return?

Don't wait to be thanked. Hurry on to avoid the kick! Do good to others because that is the way to be happy, but do not wait for a receipt for your goodness; you will need a poultice every time you wait. I know, for I have waited!

We get so discouraged. We say, "I have gone far enough south." There is nobody who does not have that to meet. The preacher, the teacher, the editor, the man in office, the business man, the father and mother--every one who tries to carry on the work of the church, the school, the lyceum and chautauqua, the work that makes for a better community, gets discouraged at times.

We fail to see what we are doing or why we are doing it. Sometimes we sit down completely discouraged and say, "I'm done. I'm going to quit. I have done my share.

Nobody appreciates what I do. Let somebody else do it awhile."

Stop! You are not saying that. The evil one is whispering that into your heart. His

business is to stop you from going south. His most successful tool is discouragement, which is a wedge, and if he can get the sharp edge started into your thought, he is going to drive it deeper.

You do not go south and overcome your obstacles and bless the valley for praise or blame, for appreciation or lack of it. You do it to live. You do it to remain a living river and not a stagnant, unhappy pond or swamp.

YOU ARE SAVING YOURSELF BY SAVING OTHERS. GO ON SOUTH!

Almost everybody is deceived. We work from mixed motives. We fool ourselves that we are working to do good, when as we do the good, if we are not praised or thanked for it, if people do not present us a medal or resolutions, we want to quit. That is why there are so many disappointed and disgruntled people in the world. They worked for outside thanks instead of inside thanks. They were trying to be personal saviours. They say this is an ungrateful world.

O, how easy it is to say these things, and how hard it is to do them!

Reaching the Gulf

But because the Mississippi does these things, one day the train I was riding stopped in Louisiana. We had come to a river so great science has not yet been able to put a bridge across it.

I watched them pile the steel train upon a ferry-boat. I watched the boat crossing a river more than a mile wide. Standing upon the ferry-boat, I could look down into the lordly river and then far north perhaps fifteen hundred miles to the little struggling streamlet starting southward thru the forests of Minnesota, there writing the first chapter of this wonderful book in the running brook.

I thank God that I had gone a little farther southward in my own life. Father of Waters, you have fought a good fight. You are conquering gloriously. You bear upon your bosom the commerce of many nations. I know why. I saw you born, saw your struggles, saw you get in the right channel, saw you learn the lessons of your knocks, and saw that you never stopped going southward.

And may we read it into our own lives. May we get the vision of which way to go, and then keep on going south--on and on, overcoming, getting the lessons of the bumps, the strength from the struggle and thus making it a part of ourselves, and thus growing greater.

Go on South Forever!

Where shall we stop going south? At the Gulf of Mexico?

The Mississippi knows nothing about the gulf. He goes on south until he reaches the gulf.

Then he pushes right on into the gulf as tho nothing had happened. So he pushes his physical banks on south many miles right out into the gulf.

And when he comes to the end of his physical banks, he pushes on south into the gulf, and goes on south round and round the globe.

When you and I come to our Gulf of Mexico, we must push right on south. So we push our physical banks years farther into the gulf.

And when physical banks fail, we go on south beyond this mere husk, into the great Gulf of the Beyond, to go on south unfolding thru eternity.

WE NEVER STOP GOING SOUTH.

Lesson 10 - Going Up Life's Mountain

The Defeats that are Victories

HOW often we say, "I wish I had a million!" Perhaps it is a blessing that we have not the million. Perhaps it would make us lazy, selfish and unhappy. Perhaps we would go around giving it to other people to make them lazy, selfish and unhappy.

O, the problem is not how to get money, but how to get rid of money with the least injury to the race!

Perhaps getting the million would completely spoil us. Look at the wild cat and then look at the tabby cat. The wild cat supports itself and the tabby cat has its million. So the tabby cat has to be doctored by specialists.

If the burden were lifted from most of us we would go to wreck.

Necessity is the ballast in our life voyage.

When you hear the orator speak and you note the ease and power of his work, do you think of the years of struggle he spent in preparing? Do you ever think of the times that orator tried to speak when he failed and went back to his room in disgrace, mortified and broken-hearted? Thru it all there came the discipline, experience and grim resolve that made him succeed.

When you hear the musician and note the ease and grace of the performance, do you think of the years of struggle and overcoming necessary to produce that finish and grace?

That is the story of the actor, the author and every other one of attainment.

Do you note that the tropics, the countries with the balmiest climates, produce the weakest peoples? Do you note that the conquering races are those that struggle with both heat and cold?

The tropics are the geographical Gussielands.

Do you note that people grow more in lean years than in fat years?

Crop failures and business stringencies are not calamities, but blessings in disguise.

People go to the devil with full pockets; they turn to God when hunger hits them. "Is not this Babylon that I have builded?" says the Belshazzar of material prosperity as he drinks to his gods. Then must come the Needful and Needless Knocks handwriting upon the wall to save him.

You have to shoot many men's eyes out before they can see. You have to crack their heads before they can think, knock them down before they can stand, break their hearts before they can sing, and bankrupt them before they can be rich.

Do you remember that they had to lock John Bunyan in Bedford jail before he would write his immortal "Pilgrim's Progress"? It may be that some of us will have to go to jail to do our best work.

Do you remember that one musician became deaf before he wrote music the world will always hear? Do you remember that one author became blind before writing "Paradise Lost" the world will always read?

Do you remember that Saul of Tarsus would have never been remembered had he lived the life of luxury planned for him? He had to be blinded before he could see the way to real success. He had to be scourged and fettered to become the Apostle to the Gentiles.

He, too, had to be sent to prison to write his immortal messages to humanity. What throne-rooms are some prisons! And what prisons are some throne-rooms!

Do you not see all around you that success is ever the phoenix rising from the ashes of defeat?

Then, children, when you stand in the row of graduates on commencement day with your diplomas in your hands, and when your relatives and friends say, "Success to you!" I shall take your hand and say, "Defeat to you! And struggles to you! And bumps to you!"

For that is the only way to say, "Success to you!"

Go Up the Mountain

O UNIVERSITY OF HARD KNOCKS, we learn to love you more with each passing year. We learn that you are cruel only to be kind. We learn that you are saving us from ourselves. But O, how most of us must be bumped to see this!

I know no better way to close this lecture than to tell you of a great bump that struck me one morning in Los Angeles. It seemed as tho twelve years of my life had dropped out of it, and had been lost.

Were you ever bumped so hard you were numb? I was numb. I wondered why I was living. I thought I had nothing more to live for. When a dog is wounded he crawls away alone to lick his wounds. I felt like the wounded dog. I wanted to crawl away to lick my wounds.

That is why I climbed Mount Lowe that day. I wanted to get alone.

It is a wonderful experience to climb Mount Lowe. The tourists go up half a mile into Rubio Canyon, to the engineering miracle, the triangular car that hoists them out of the hungry chasm thirty-five hundred feet up the side of a granite cliff, to the top of Echo Mountain.

Here they find that Echo Mountain is but a shelf on the side of Mount Lowe. Here they take an electric car that winds five miles on towards the sky. There is hardly a straight rail in the track.

Every minute a new thrill, and no two thrills alike. Five miles of winding and squirming, twisting and ducking, dodging and somersaulting.

There are places where the tourist wants to grasp his seat and lift. There is a wooden shelf nailed to the side of the perpendicular rockwall where his life depends upon the honesty of the man who drove the nails. He may wonder if the man was working by the day or by the job!

He looks over the edge of the shelf downward, and then turns to the other side to look at the face of the cliff they are hugging, and discovers there is no place to resign!

The car is five thousand feet high where it stops on that last shelf, Alpine Tavern. One cannot ride farther upward. This is not the summit, but just where science surrenders.

There is a little trail that winds upward from Alpine Tavern to the summit. It is three miles long and rises eleven hundred feet.

To go up that last eleven hundred feet and stand upon the flat rock at the summit of Mount Lowe is to get a picture so wonderful it cannot be described with this poor human vocabulary. It must be lived. On a pure, clear day one looks down this sixty-one hundred feet, more than a mile, into the orange belt of Southern California.

It spreads out below in one great mosaic of turquoise and amber and emerald, where the miles seem like inches, and where his field-glass sweeps one panoramic picture of a hundred miles or more.

Just below is Pasadena and Los Angeles. To the westward perhaps forty miles is the blue stretch of the Pacific Ocean, on westward the faint outlines of Catalina Islands. The ocean seems so close one could throw a pebble over into it. How a mountain does reduce distances. You throw the pebble and it falls upon your toes!

And Mount Lowe is but a shelf on the side of the higher Sierras.

The granite mountains rise higher to the northward, and to the east rises "Old Baldy," twelve thousand feet high and snow eternally on his head.

This is one of the workshops of the infinite!

All alone I scrambled up that three-mile trail to the summit. All alone I stood upon the flat rock at the summit and looked down into the swimming distances. I did not know why I had struggled up into that mountain sanctuary, for I was not searching for sublimity. I was searching for relief. I was heartsick.

I saw clouds down in the valley below me. I had never before looked down upon clouds. I thought of the cloud that had covered me in the valley below, and dully watched the clouds spread wider and blacker.

Afterwhile the valley was all hidden by the clouds. I knew rain must be falling down there. The people must be saying, "The sun doesn't shine. The sky is all gone." But I saw the truth--the sun was shining. The sky was in place. A cloud had covered down over that first mile. The sun was shining upon me, the sky was all blue over me, and there were millions of miles of sunshine above me. I could see all this because I had gone above the valley. I could see above the clouds.

A great light seemed to break over my storm swept soul. I am under the clouds of trouble today, BUT THE SUN IS SHINING!

I must go on up the mountain to see it.

The years have been passing, the storm clouds have many times hidden my sun. But I have always found the sun shining above them. No matter how black and sunless today, when I have struggled on up the mountain path, I have gotten above the clouds and found the sun forever shining and God forever in His heavens.

Each day as I go up the mountain I get a larger vision. The miles that seem so great down in the valley, seem so small as I look down upon them from higher

up. Each day as I look back I see more clearly the plan of a human life. The rocks, the curves and the struggles fit into a divine engineering plan to soften the steepness of the ascent. The bumps are lifts. The things that seem so important down in the smudgy, storm swept valley, seem so unimportant as we go higher up the mountain to more important things.

Today I look back to the bump that sent me up Mount Lowe. I did not see how I could live past that bump. The years have passed and I now know it was one of the greatest blessings of my life. It closed one gate, but it opened another gate to a better pathway up the mountain.

Late that day I was clambering down the side of Mount Lowe. Down in the valley below me I saw shadows. Then I looked over into the southwest and I could see the sun going down. I could see him sink lower and lower until his red lips kissed the cheek of the Pacific.

The glory of the sunset filled sea and sky with flames of gold and fountains of rainbows.

Such a sunset from the mountain-side is a promise of heaven.

The shadows of sunset widened over the valley. Presently all the valley was black with the shadow. It was night down there. The people were saying, "The sun doesn't shine."

But it was not night where I stood. I was farther up the mountain. I turned and looked up to the summit. The beams of the setting sun were yet gilding Mount Lowe's summit. It was night down in the valley, but it was day on the mountain top!

Go on south!

That means, go on up!

Child of humanity, are you in the storm? Go on upward. Are you in the night? Go on upward.

For the peace and the light are always above the storm and the night, and always in our reach.

I am going on upward. Take my hand and let us go together. Mount Lowe showed the way that dark day. There I heard the "sermons in stones."

Some day my night will come. It will spread over all this valley of material things where the storms have raged.

But I shall be on the mountain top. I shall look down upon the night, as I am learning to climb and look down upon the storms. I shall be in the new day of the mountain-top, forever above the night.

I shall find this mountain-top just another shelf on the side of the Mountain of Infinite Unfolding. I shall have risen perhaps only the first mile. I shall have millions of miles yet to rise.

This will be another Commencement Day and Master's Degree. Infinite the number on up. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

We are not growing old. We are going up to Eternal Life.

Rejoice and Go Upward!
