

HEALTH PAPERS

Happiness.

A lecture on 'Happiness' was delivered recently by Dr. J. P. Hastings, Dunedin, who said: Perhaps of late I have given too much attention to hygiene subjects, and to-night we will let our thoughts wander into new channels. A little variation will refresh us all, and with renewed vigor we will return later on to our original topic. Already I have asked 'What is life?' I now demand an answer to the query, 'What is the purpose of life?' This question opens up a world of possibilities. Let us realise its full significance. Why were we born? Was it only that we might eat and sleep and work? Examine society as it exists to-day; take from its ranks an average specimen of humanity, and with an impartial mind let the motives of his actions be judged. What do we find? Is love the mainspring of his actions? You might answer that it is not, but I contend that love—self-love or selfishness—is too often his guiding principle. In so far as it concerns himself he extends his affections to his family. But for his neighbor—for those whose interests in any way clash with his own—he has nothing but hatred. His own triumphs, whether acquired honestly or otherwise, elate him, but what a change comes over him when his neighbor is successful. Jealousy grips his heart, envy maddens his brain; he is eaten up with mortification; the fruits he cannot grasp himself he begrudges to another rather than they should enrich his neighbor. With outward courtesy he masks the inward hate. Let us pass over a few years. The spring-time and summer of his life have fled; never has he felt that honest happiness—the priceless blessing of a sincere, loving soul. His whole life has been tinged with bitterness; in his old age he has grown cynical. For him the morning sun of hope never again shall rise. The powers of his mind are failing; in the feebly illuminated background of his memory his illspent life stands out in sombre relief. Too late he realises his mistake. True, his money-bags are full, and perhaps he commands a certain amount of respect in the community; but now that his soul trembles on the verge of eternity the aged man sees more clearly; into that other world he cannot take the products of his selfish life—his wealth, his sheltering hypocrisy. The great mistake of his life was that he loved, not his neighbor, but himself. Let those of us who have not reached the summit of life's hill take heed. I would ask you to look at this subject from a common-sense point of view. Your commercial knowledge tells you that if you would make much money you must invest. To get money you must spend. If you always keep your money locked up securely it will never increase—it is of no use to you. Now, we all wish to be happy. If we are selfish the realisation is impossible. Selfishness is absolutely destructive of happiness. To increase your happiness you invest the stock of it you have in hand. Do this by trying to make some one else happy. Look around, and you will not have far to seek for some one in trouble. Think of their troubles, and in your unselfish solicitation you will forget your own. To lighten your own cares help your neighbor to bear his burden. Visit the sick, the poor, and the needy. When you enter your own well-furnished home, contrast your conditions of life with what you have just witnessed. Let this stimulate you, not to make disparaging remarks about your unfortunate neighbor, but to render him some material assistance.

To be happy ourselves we must endeavor to make others happy. We must invest our happiness capital; we must eliminate selfishness, and encourage in our minds happy thoughts. Let us ponder over these truths; they are not intended for others,

they apply to each one of us. That man lives best who does most good. The most renowned general or statesman might really be contemptible, for in his selfish ambition he may have trampled on all the finer feelings of humanity.

Aerial Navigation

A cable message from Berne in Saturday's papers stated that Count Zeppelin, in his aerial warship, with a dozen passengers, made a 12 hours' flight at a great height, from Lake Constance to Zurich and Lucerne and back, at a speed of 30 miles an hour. In connection with Count Zeppelin's successful flight it is interesting to note the opinions of the inventor of the Maxim gun, Sir Hiram Maxim, who says that before a successful flying machine is perfected many difficulties will have to be surmounted. I have been carrying out extensive experiments with aeroplanes (he says), and have experienced that, in order to give a balloon sufficient lifting power to carry two men and a powerful engine, it is necessary it should be of enormous bulk. Therefore, not only is a very large surface exposed to the wind, but the whole thing is so extremely light and fragile as to be completely at the mercy of the wind and weather.

Take that triumph of engineering skill, the Nulli Secundus, for example. The gas-bag, which was sausage-shaped and 30ft in diameter, was a beautiful piece of workmanship, the whole being built up of gold-beater's skin, at an enormous cost. The whole construction, including the car, the system of suspension, the engines and propellers, had been well thought out, and the work fully executed; yet still, under these most favorable conditions, only a slight shower of rain was necessary to neutralise its lifting power.

The new airship to be produced by the War Office is said by the designers to remove this difficulty. It is being constructed with a greater capacity and a stronger engine. The gas-body of the new balloon is to be sausage-shaped and 42ft in diameter; the area of the cross-section would, therefore, be 1385 square feet. The designers state that it is to be provided with an engine of 100 h.p., which it is claimed will give it a speed of forty miles an hour through the air, so that with a wind of twenty miles an hour it will still be able to travel by land twenty miles an hour against the wind.

This speed, however, is proved on scientific grounds to be practically impossible with such a vessel. If the new balloon were attached to a long steel wire and drawn by a locomotive through the air, the amount of energy required would be 236 h.p.—that is, if the gas-bag would stand being driven through the air at the rate of forty miles an hour, which is extremely doubtful. Under these conditions, the driving wheels of the locomotive would not slip, and therefore no waste of power would result.

But in the dirigible balloon we have a totally different state of affairs. The propelling screws are very small in proportion to the airship, and their slip is fully 50 per cent.—that is, in order to drive a ship at the rate of forty miles an hour the screws would have to travel at least eighty miles an hour. It would, therefore, require 472 h.p. instead of 100 h.p. to drive the proposed new vessel through the air at the rate of forty miles an hour. It will be seen from this calculation that the new airship will still be at the mercy of the wind and weather.

The experiments of navigating the air with machines heavier than air—the only true flying-machine—have proved that the difficulties are not nearly so great as is generally supposed. In an aeroplane it is possible to get a much stronger build of machine, besides greater speed, than in the case of airships.



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