

**THE STUFF OF MANHOOD:
SOME NEEDED NOTES IN
AMERICAN CHARACTER**

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The Stuff of Manhood: Some Needed Notes in American Character by Robert E. Speer

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By ROBERT E. SPEER

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The Merrick Lectures

BY the gift of the late Rev. Frederick Merrick, M. D., D. D., LL. D., for fifty-one years a member of the Faculty, and for thirteen of those years President of Ohio Wesleyan University, a fund was established providing an annual income for the purpose of securing lectures within the general field of Experimental and Practical Religion. The following courses have previously been given on this foundation :

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Introduction

THE moral elements of individual character are inevitably social. And the social obligation immensely strengthens the sanctions which enjoin them. When a man "has trained himself," to use the words of Lord Morley in dealing with Voltaire's religion, "to look upon every wrong in thought, every duty omitted from act, each infringement of the inner spiritual law which humanity is constantly perfecting for its own guidance and advantage . . . as an ungrateful infection, weakening and corrupting the future of his brothers," he views each struggle within his own soul against evil and each firm aspiration after purity not as a mere incident in his own spiritual biography but as a fight for social good and for the perfecting of the nation and of humanity. And the struggle for social good and the perfecting of human life is fundamentally a struggle for the triumph of ideals in personal wills. God can take hold of men only in man. He revealed Himself and wrought redemption less by a social process than by a personal incarnation. And the only way of which we know to uplift the life of the nation and to fit it for its mission and its ministry

is to reform our own and other men's characters, and ourselves to be what manner of man among men we would have the nation be among nations. It is of some of the elements of character of which men stand specially in need to-day that we are to speak in these lectures. What is good in our lives as individuals and in our life as a nation is not in need of discussion here. And there is no nobility in analyzing and deriding our weaknesses. Our purpose is to urge our keeping if we have not lost them, and our regaining if we feel them slipping from us, some of the elemental moral qualities and spiritual resources which are vital to the capacity for duty and to the living of a full and efficient life.

It has seemed best, on the whole, to preserve in the printed volume the free colloquialism of the lectures as they were delivered.

R. E. S.

New York.