

**MENTAL EFFICIENCY
SERIES. CHARACTER,
HOW TO STRENGTHEN IT**

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Mental Efficiency Series. Character, How to Strengthen It by D. Starke & Lorenzo O'Rourke

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D. STARKE & LORENZO O'ROURKE

**MENTAL EFFICIENCY
SERIES. CHARACTER,
HOW TO STRENGTHEN IT**

MENTAL EFFICIENCY SERIES

CHARACTER
HOW TO STRENGTHEN IT

By **D. STARKE**

TRANSLATED BY **LORENZO O'ROURKE, M.A.**

AUTHORIZED EDITION

*"He who can control himself can easily master events
and men"*



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PREFACE

TO SAMUEL SMILES the crown and glory of life was Character. It is the noblest possession of man, constituting a rank in itself, and an estate in the general good-will, dignifying every station, and exalting every position in society. Of itself Character is power and influence. Experience has taught us that the worth and the strength of a state depend upon the character of its men rather than on the form of its institutions. Just as the letters of the alphabet enable us to spell *reputation*, so do the actions, looks, and words of a man enable us to read his true *character*. Character is what one is; reputation is what one is thought to be. A man's character being himself must be molded by himself alone. In this work the Author, taking as his motto, "The man who can master himself can easily control events and man," teaches his readers how to strengthen character. He does this by explaining what constitutes strength of character, what this wonderful power can achieve, and how it may be acquired and utilized to best advantage.

Schopenhauer, whose cynical criticism gives voice to the bitterness of his heart against the world's whole artificial life, found time to teach us that men best show their character in trifles when they are not on their guard. "It is in insignificant matters," said he, "and in the simplest habits, that we often see the boundless egotism which pays no regard to the feelings of others, and denies nothing to itself." All the petty vexations of life serve their purpose in training us in moral discipline; these provide the severest test of character. There are many men who could face great dangers with calmness and resignation, yet who, if they be taken off their guard and their will be opposed, or their efforts thwarted, fly into uncontrollable passion. A man of character never allows the sun to set on his wrath, nor does he permit it to rise on his temerity. In these pages one is taught by a master-hand how the appetites and passions must be controlled to develop that calm force which is a factor necessary to self-domination, and how such physical ills as may arise from nervous affections, enervating forces, fear, etc., are to be overcome.

Nothing is left to chance. The body must be brought into harmony with the mind in every

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effort made to acquire patience and perseverance. Exercises for the development, both temperamental and physical, of character are provided in separate series. Impulsiveness of thought leads to impulsiveness of action; therefore, the reader is taught to control his impulses; to check irritability; and to cultivate that calm which permits one to concentrate one's powers, to use them advantageously in moments of excitement and stress. The exercises are designed to impart the quality of endurance, which is the keystone of character.

In the pages that follow, the Author leads the reader along the way he must travel to achieve success. The man who succeeds is he who saw his object in early life and never lost sight of it. "Genius," Bulwer tells us, "is but fine observation strengthened by fixity of purpose." Every man who is steadfastly resolute and a vigilant observer can attain success. Strength of character is resolution. Resolve to do something, and it will be done. Napoleon once said, "The truest wisdom is a resolute determination." The man of strong character is he who achieves success in business. His forcefulness is sustained by foresight, prudence, discernment, reason, logic, and clear thinking.

In the home, where one must learn to bear and forbear, strength of character is indispensable. There egotism invariably rules. Individual comfort is always in direct ratio to the efforts put forth to acquire it. We all seek some end, and to attain it must submit ourselves to the necessary discipline. There is need for strict attention to little things, for on these depend much of the peace and harmony of life. The man of strong will applies all the energies of his body and mind to every task that he undertakes and so avoids that failure which besets his weaker associates.

In business the one great difference between men—between the weak and the strong, the mean and the mighty—is one of character. It is not what a man makes but what a man does that he should give thought to. Let him think first of his character and then of his circumstances; for, character attracts but circumstances are dependent upon it. Some men, by combining great abilities with promising circumstances, have not only succeeded in acquiring distinction, but in creating characters that are the envy and admiration of mankind. Given a strong character, and energy, determination, and a fixed purpose will be found to attend it. These are the

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qualities that enable us to develop mentally, morally, and physically; that compel us to surmount all obstacles, to overcome all difficulties; and, finally, that teach us to resist temptation, and to bear the heaviest burdens cheerfully; the qualities that bring calmness before the storm, and fearlessness in the face of danger. He who heeds the advice given in the following pages will learn not only that character controls fame and fortune, but also that only the man who is master of himself can exercise a governing influence over his fellow men.

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