

## GETTING ON.

It was one of the older generation who used to remark about various people, especially unmarried women, that they were "getting on." This meant getting on not only in years but in experience. It denoted an approach to that stage of life where one begins to look backward instead of forward. After practising law for twenty odd years, I am "getting on."

Thirty, twenty and even ten years ago my one idea of getting on was to "get on in the world," as the saying goes: to achieve something worth while, notably eminence in the profession and plenty of money. Soon to register fifty years in age, I am passing through a period of disillusionment. Fairly successful as a lawyer and now a "K.C.," I am still just one of the rank and file. Respected more or less for public service in my own community, I am by no means a man of eminence. The depressing fact that now looms up is that what I am now in the estimation of myself and of others is what I always shall be.

As for wealth, I have earned in lawyer's fees for my own use approximately one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Of those earnings I have spent about half on the needs and luxuries of living. There should remain a competence on which one could retire and live at ease. I have invested continually in ventures that promised big profits, in real estate, in farming, in mercantile enterprises and in stocks. Occasionally I have treasured up some bonds. To-day I have assets worth about twenty thousand dollars, mostly unproductive and unsaleable.

Thanks to the high pressure of salesmen exercised upon me years ago, I have a good accumulation of life insurance policies, with premiums nearly all paid. Financially I am about as well off as I can ever expect to be, my estate will be much better off than I am.

On passing over the peak of middle life, I find myself enveloped in the clouds of world-wide gloom. Outwardly as inwardly it is a period of depression. In the midst of it all, however, I have found a refuge and a comfort unknown since early zenith.

In our office practice the "overhead" has become burdensome. Gradually we have reduced the outlay for our staff, not by dismissing anyone or by reducing the rate of pay, but by cutting down the hours of work. Now each employee is working only half time and for half pay.

Recently my partners and I had a solemn conference. None of us could find enough to do day in and day out to keep us busy and

contented. The junior made an outrageous proposal. He said: Why not do as the staff are doing, everyone take at least a day or two off each week. The proposal was outrageous to enterprising Canadians trained from school days on the doctrine of hard work and self-reliance. It might be all right in the Old Country where fees were higher and habits more leisurely. Eventually we adopted the junior's suggestion.

Now I spend two days a week at play, not including Sunday. My ability to play is not of the highest order, but for that I have worked out apologies satisfactory to myself. And I am trying to cultivate an intelligence beyond that of the ordinary player regarding golf, tennis and other games. Lack of practice in the past is my only shortcoming; so I tell myself. I am even a good conversationalist on fishing and hunting. What one reads on these sports of the rod and the gun, coupled with occasional membership in a camping party, gives fairly good material for a brief to support fireside arguments.

One diversion at which I have found myself unexpectedly proficient is that of loafing. Our city is really a city in miniature. Reared in a metropolis, I have always despised those who gossip on street corners or hang around hotel lobbies. Their conduct betrays their up-bringing as rustic, bucolic, crude. On a public thoroughfare or in a semi-public resort, one must always be going somewhere and must know precisely where he is going, especially if he be a professional man.

One day a week I am now almost a "bum." I mingle with the mass of the unemployed as one of themselves. Seldom one of these days passes when I do not meet clients, old or new, who tell me at leisure things they would never bother telling me in the office. Fellows whom I would never meet at my Club open up their minds to me on things in general. Sometimes they quite unhinge my lifelong attachment to political ideals and economic doctrines.

Frequently on idle days I take trips into the country and to neighbouring towns. I find that when I meet a man at his home and see him at his own occupation I get to know him better than I do when he comes to see me in my professional setting.

The greatest luxury of all under this 'New Deal' my partners and I have made is to lie in bed of a morning. There is no dread of telephone, mail or callers; and one's reading of good literature needs a little extension. After a good breakfast the next best thing to have in bed is a good book. There will be plenty of time for a round of golf in the afternoon.

Somehow the business of the firm seems to keep going smoothly. If I am reported "away to-day" the clients are just as patient in

waiting until to-morrow as if I were reported to be busily engaged in Court all day. Better still, I am always in good humour when they do see me to-morrow. My physical health is really improving week by week. As the once famous Dr. Coué might say, *Every day in every way I am getting on better and better.\**

\* EDITOR'S NOTE.—For obvious reasons the writer of this delightful account of a successful quest for the secret which Horace tells us will put a man on good terms with himself—*quid te tibi reddat amicum*—has asked us to relieve him of our rule against anonymity. We do so gladly, for the pressure of the time still requires us all “to take arms against a sea of troubles” and our contributor furnishes a very happy example of how it may be done.

---