

Reflections

East Hollywood, January, 26, 1910

--From notes by H. C. Bailey

Prang and Copyrighted by F. F. Latta, 1930-49

In looking back from this point of view over my life, the changes along all the lines, I think I will have pleasure in writing some of these changes. I also hope to give from my experience and observations some hints and suggestions that may be in some way helpful to my descendants in whose estimation I feel I stand high.

In taking up this subject I am at a loss how to begin and how to proceed. I will jot down such thoughts as they suggest themselves and in the manner suggested without any attempt at system or order.

The main end of the work to be attained as planned out in my mind is to give our descendants as perfect an insight of our hopes, aspirations and expectations of our descendants what we believed and what we expected.

In our hearts we always believed ours were above the ordinary. Believing this there was no sacrifice we were not willing to make to forward their interest. To fit them for positions in society we felt assured we never could try with gold had we so desired. To us it looked out of place to build fine marble in a common stone wall. Hence we determined to give polish enough to reveal the true grain of the material.

In writing along this line, I use the pronoun we to induce two. If ever two souls struggled toward one common point disregarding all else allowing nothing to intervene or for a moment from that point toward which all the pent up ^{energies} of two souls were striving.

What a single individual can accomplish when the whole life and energies of soul are concentrated ^{on} that one object who can tell. When two are equally determined and united, so much the greater results may be expected.

The final outcome of our efforts is still largely in the future. While the present is not all that could be desired, I feel there is nothing to be ashamed of. One thing we never forget and that was that we were once children.

In dealing with my boys I always remembered what I felt when I was a boy.

The average boy is much like a Kentucky bean vine. If watched and trained aught, it will grow into a thing of beauty and utility. But if left to itself is likely to get into a tangled mass and destroy both beauty and utility.

It is little trouble to direct the tender shoots aught before it goes wrong, but a hard and delicate job to get it back on the right track and it is never so perfect. It was always a real pleasure to me to watch my sons every day and to keep them on the right track.

So it seems to me all parents should find the richest joys of life in watching the opening development of character in their children, ever watchful to turn the tender shoot aught if inclined to go wrong. But it is the law of our nature that all that is good, noble or great must be obtained by sacrifice. Duty and inclination will often come in conflict. Duty is always the safest. Like the little book spoken of in the Bible, it may be bitter in the mouth, but it will be sweet in the belly. Our family has always been to me a source of pride, comfort and pleasure. It has been unique along many lines.

First and prized most was the good fellowship of all, one to another. The bond of unselfish love that seemed to act as a charm, bringing all the members to a common center with the parents as the lodestone attracting all. The unselfish emulation of who should do the most to help or shield the others. The ability to entertain and be entertained by each other, outside independent of outside influences (an advantage enjoyed by very few families). Though friction sometimes arose, it was but as the spring shower that left the atmosphere all the brighter and sweeter.

So deep rooted and grounded are those family ties that even the marriage of all but two and the new issues that of necessity must follow in introducing new members, so far no serious friction has followed.

But the same unflattering and unselfish love seems to flourish strong

and vigorous as of old. Let one squeal and all would rush to the rescue.

Such is the estimate I feel justified in putting on our family. And if I am deceived, I sincerely hope I may never be undeceived. I hope to die in the full faith of all I have written. I know of no language to express my admiration of a large, loving, harmonious family of boys and girls where harmony, love and courtesy prevails. Where there is emulation without strife; where all wants to give the most and receive the least.

The sceptic may say such homes are a myth, but I have seen many that met all the requirements of such a home; and have yet to see a bad man or bad woman come out of such a home.

These facts should incite all parents to strive to make their homes attractive, whether rich or poor. Of the very rich or poor, I know but little but by observation. But my medicine great wealth is not prolific in producing such homes. Neither are they excluded by poverty. Some of the best contented and happiest homes, I ever saw were among the moderately poor. The self sacrifice often made in such homes by different members often reach the heroic and often approaches the sublime.

In order to create and maintain such a home there are great underlying principles that must be rigidly maintained and enforced. There is where individual liberty has its truth which is the foundation of our government and the fundamental hope of its perpetuity. I have studied close and long the individuality and personality of you all and find but little similarity between any two of you, yet harmony prevails.

I attribute it largely to the spirit of according to all what each ~~of~~ claimed for themselves.

I have always to the best of my ability tried to impress this idea and feel satisfied with the result. All children have rights that should be as sacredly observed and maintained as those of the elders, and I believe fell and risen quite as quick. To injure their rights has a depressing and discourages aspirations to try to do better. It is no use the child it

is all the same and the result is the child follows its own inclination to resent and go wrong.

A few words of praise and encouragement given at the right time and in the right spirit is worth more than volumes of scolding and instruction. I was always first, last and all the time for children's rights.

I will now take up the subject I have had in my mind and that caused the writing of these the last suggestions for the future of our family.

While I live there will be a kind of common center toward which you will all naturally gravitate. But in the course of nature will soon go and then the last common tie will be gone.

What I most desire and hope in a measure to help is that the same feeling and fellowship may go one not only to the end of your lives but that you will as far as you can, inculcate the same feeling in your children even to the third generation.

One proposition Ma and I never disagreed on and that was that all else must yield to what would forward your interest.

I never felt I got a fair deal out of this world but had to fight against more than ordinary hard conditions. I have always believed that in our family there was more than the ordinary worth and talent had conditions been favorable for its development. I am still of that faith and have strong hopes that in the second generation to a degree, my expectation may be realized. Not along financial lines, though they are alright if not abused, but along nobler and grander lines.

There are great and vital issues and political to be settled in the near future; issues that may try men's souls.

Either the good or the bad must prevail to an entirety in the near future. I hope one and all of you will take pains to impress right and patriotic principles on your children and if is never too soon to begin if opportunity offers. Also to impress on them they all belong to one family

stock and are of the same flesh and blood and should have a common pride in the whole and as far as possible keep in touch with each other. So if they meet in any land or country, they may know from whence they came.

It seems to me it should be a work of love, both pleasant and profitable to all and if any member gets a kenning wrong, don't drive such a one off, but use all kind means to win them back to the field. I know it may be a little hard but it is the best way. The pride and boast of my heart is our grand children. And I love to contemplate the future I can never see.

But I venture the prediction that out of our band will arise men and women to fill useful and important positions in life along many lines. There is no position in life that can not be filled with credit and honor and made alike useful to all who comes within the circle of such a life.

Some lives shed sunshine where ever they go; strive for such and though full success may not come, no harm can and some good may be expected.

One other suggestion and I am done. Teach your children to ever remember they are free born American citizens and are justly entitled to all the privileges that confers.

Love of country is next to love of God and family.

I feel like apologizing for the rough way this is written, but it is the best I could do. I hope it is plain enough to enable you to get the meaning and you can afford to pass over the imperfections. Sufely it is not intended as an artistic production, but simply a labour of love and I feel well assured I will be received in the same spirit it is offered.

And if the doctrine of guardian angels is true, I anticipate much joy in watching all your developments for good to yourselves and to the glory of our great creator in the end.

H. C. Bailey.