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## UA36I/2 Standards

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The term standard ordinarily means an arbitrary amount used to compare unknown quantities in measurement. In my laboratory the term standard means a meter a yard a second a gram a pound etc. But I have in mind another meaning of this word. In my early days I worked on a farm and here I learned many valuable lessons. I liked as much as I could be said to like any work haying time. I have in mind now the long hay frame which was made from two sassafras poles sixteen feet long and held together by cross bars fitted into auger hole and spaced about four feet apart. To keep the hay from slipping from the frame we bored  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch holes in the frame and sticks of about  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch diameter were put in these. These sticks

we called standards. I wish if you are not familiar with such a frame you would visualize this one in your mind. The purpose of the standards was to hold the load of hay wheat etc. in place and avoid slipping from the frame when we traveled over rough ground across gullies or along sloping hillsides.

In our everyday life we speak of standards of morals and conduct and standards of living. By this we mean an arbitrary fixed measure by which we compare the condition of ourselves and others. I like to think of this frame as CHRISTIANITY the load as civilization and the standards as something that has been placed around us to keep civilization as we know it from slipping away from the human race.

Just as the hay frame standards were of arbitrary length and spaces apart so are these standards set to hold civilization. They will be found to differ in separate sections of the world. The hay frame standards had to be replaced after a number of years of use. Some of course lasted longer than others. Some became rotten and worm eaten and had to be discarded. Others seasoned well and became more valuable with the years of use. Occasionally a severe strain would snap one and the load would perhaps be thrown off. Just in this same way have our standards of life and conduct acted. Some have been outgrown by changing conditions some have become rotten some have been undermined by parasites and occasion

ally one has been placed under such great stress as cause it to break allowing civilization to lapse into a former period. But some of these standards are as old as the human race and have grown better and more necessary to us with the passing of the years.

Sometimes it became necessary to make a tie from one standard to another so that the load might be made more secure. In such a case we found one standard just as useful as the other each held its end of the tie. Just in this same way we need to tie the today's modern standard back to that of yesterday because there is strength in both and we need all of our strength. If the tie is made from the strength of one to the strength of the other the load is safe but

if the weakness of either is used then surely there is danger of the load slipping. Let me illustrate what I mean. Some time ago I stood in the stadium of a great school at one of its football games. As we waited for the kick off a middle aged alumnus by my side spoke to me and at once began to lament that the students of that college were not what they used to be—that they had in a large measure lost the nerve and courage of his day—that they no longer met in a grand battle that left many bruised beaten and sore unable to attend classes for days and in some instances maimed for life—they no longer hazed the freshmen—in short he longed for the good old days and this was his idea of the good old days. He wanted to tie the weakness

of yesterday to the strength of today. He had failed to see that the standard had seasoned and that today we have a better method of working off the exuberant spirits of the youth with athletics and physical education.

Now I am not one that believes everything old is wrong or everything new is right. There is good in both. I most assuredly am not one that cries for the good old days. Neither would I like to turn the clock backward with the poet's song

"Backward turn backward  
On time in thy flight  
Make me a child again  
Just for tonight."  
I am inclined to think that "Just for tonight" would suffice for most of us. Do you think for a moment that I would care to live over

those same experiences of my childhood—go back for instance and get out early—before sunup—sucker in tobacco with the cold dew running down my back? Not me. And further more if you think you would like the good old days just take down your screens disconnect the running water cut off the electric lights take out the telephone and park the car in the garage. "Just for tonight" will cure you too I believe.

However there are some things of the past that have not been equaled in the present days. The faith of our fathers that believed unquestioningly. The faith in God that lasted through life and brought peace and comfort at the end. The leisure that people had to make friends and to cultivate their friendships.

The first of these standards that I wish to discuss I shall name courage. courage of the physical courage of the mental courage of the spiritual I mean by courage something more than the ability to meet another face to face and exchange blow for blow without flinching. This may be courage and it may be foolhardiness. I mean the courage of the man that pioneers an unknown country or an uncharted sea. I mean by courage the man that stands by his convictions as did Martin Luther— as did Paul and Peter when to do so meant possible death and worse than death. I mean the courage that a young woman is called upon to show when she refuses to lower her moral standard for fear that she

will be left out of the crowd. There is a story in one of the old readers of a small boy who was very much worried over the word Popocatepetl the name of a volcano in Mexico. He said it was the hardest word in the world to say. But his mother a wise woman told him she knew a much more difficult word to say. When he inquired as to what it was imagine his amazement when told that it contained only two letters "NO". "Why mother he said that is one of the easiest words in the world to say". "My son she replied try to always say it as easy as you think you can now.

Another story is that there were three boys passing a schoolhouse one day. Snow was on the ground. One of the boys made a snowball

to throw against the door. When it was finished the second boy wanted to know who was going to throw the ball. The first boy handed it to the least one and said "Here George you throw it". Whack went the ball and the boys took to their heels the older one laughing heartily to think what a fool he had made out of George.

These are far fetched examples you say. Perhaps they are but I see nearly every day in school, in business in every phase of life with which I associate a repetition of these. A person in order to save a few steps cuts across a beautiful lawn tramples down the grass and crushes some flowers that are bursting forth to gladden the people and glorify their Creator\*—Seesthe

back turned and takes that for which he does not pay or return. Someway I feel that this same person will not ~~hesitate~~ have the courage along life's path way to keep from placing the black mark on an innocent character or entering into a shady business deal.

I shall call my next standard faith. I place it in the frame at this point because I believe without faith there would be little need for courage or any other standards. If we are to do our part in keeping civilization from slipping away from the human race we must have faith that the great majority of people are earnestly and sincerely striving to make this world a better and more livable place. Evangeline Booth was asked if the world was growing better replied

"I do not know but I am doing all that I know how to make it better are you?" We must have the kind of faith that makes us allow the other fellow the same latitude we take. We must have faith that there are tasks undone and discoveries unmade and tie to courage to help in their accomplishment.

You know the story of Alexander the great how he wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. He lacked the faith to see the countries undiscovered across the sea. There are those today who weep because there are no worlds left to conquer but have not the faith to look about them and see that they have no cheap substitute for the diminishing gasoline supply—that tuberculosis

is still raging and killing that there are hundreds of diseases to be conquered and countless thousands of inventions needed. But you say there is very little glory and honor outside the military field. I grant that in the past the military heroes have had the largest monuments and the most space in the histories. But which means most in your life and mine Napoleon standing with folded arms and stern countenance trying to see through the smoke and haze of the battle which pile of dead was the largest or the doctor that submitted to the bite of a fever infected mosquito in order to eradicate yellow fever. One had the faith of destruction the other the faith of service. One meant the ultimate destruction of all that resisted

*Epheum M<sup>2</sup> Dowell*

the other the preserving and lengthening of human life.

About 1910 the radio had made enough progress to be a real rival of the telephone co. A group of engineers was called in consultation by the telephone co. and they told the management that for 25000 for experimental work they would agree to talk for five hundred miles by radio or for \$100000 they would span the Atlantic. They had faith in the ability. The management showed their faith by voting the larger amount. In Oct. 1915 nearly fourteen yrs ago the voice crossed the Atlantic. Their faith extended further than this however. They had faith that service to all parts of Europe and eventually to all parts of the earth

*South to the just  
gathering power*

could be made a reality. Today you are as near to your friend in any European city as your nearest telephone.

But there is a greater faith than this. The faith of our fathers—the faith that gives us a glimpse of the hereafter and makes us know that all is well here—that our labors are not in vain—faith in God—a faith that cannot be shattered.

A standard that I would wish you to make extra strong in your life is named responsibility. I would have you to cut it with an extra measure because it will be tried so many times. Someone has said that everyone who will take responsibility must also shoulder the responsibility of nine

others. When there are schools to be built, roads to be made, churches to maintain how many meet their just and fair share of the obligations. One illustration: A community wanted a consolidated school a high school. Money was raised by popular subscription. One man in the community who had a number of children to educate refused consistently to make a contribution and never paid one extra penny above his legal taxes to help carry the burden of the school and yet he was more able to have made a liberal donation than most of the people in the community. But he never lost a single opportunity to take advantage of the school after it had been established.

A standard that I consider of the utmost importance today is loyalty. Someone has said that most folks are like grandfather clocks—if placed in the correct position and adjusted and perfectly aligned they will run and work but just let something slip the least bit and they quit. What we need more of are folks that are like wrist watches—ones that will work in any position. We must always remember that life must be a series of compromises. I do not mean by this that we are to sacrifice a fundamental principle or allow for shoddy or loose morals and conduct. As a rule we are in agreement on the great truths but differ we differ and become not

disloyal but unloyal over the non-essential small things of life. You have known of people having been killed and much hatred engendered over a few feet of land that grew only briars and bushes. Today we are still allowing the small things of life to make us unhappy and miserable. After all are we not very much like the six blind men who went to see the elephant— Do we not get a different angle on the same great truth and cling to our narrow conception claiming that the other fellow has not seen the truth because he did not see our same view?

I heard a man tell a story of a dog—just a dog a fox hound. This hound had grown old and could not keep up with the pack in

the chase so was left at home. But one beautiful moonlit night with the frost in the air the owner decided to go for a chase "When the dogs were being turned out" so the master said "Old Texas looked into his eyes and said master let me go tonight. No Texas you are too old you will only be in the way. But let me go pleaded Texas I'll do my best. I'll be a good sport. It is such a beautiful night. Master let me go. So Texas was allowed to go. After a while we heard the dogs strike a trail. We listened while they chased the fox. A deep note indicated that Texas was coming along but behind. As we stood on a little rise we saw the fox pass near by and soon the hounds came along in hot pursuit.

After they passed I listened to old Texas coming up behind. True to his every training and traditions following the trail. As he came into the moonlight of the little clearing I could hear him breathing heavily. He pushed on but staggered. Then straightened and went ahead stumbled over a little hole and laid still. I ran to him and gathered him in my arms but old Texas had had his last chase I buried him there. I never pass that way without stopping and going to his grave I stand with hat off and bowed head and say "O God make me as faithful and as loyal to the things for which I was intended as Old Texas was to things for which he was intended" Only a dog—a fox hound—but faithful and loyal.

to the best in life as he had known until death. One day when I was about thirteen years old my brother sent me with the wagon and team to the woods to cut a new set of standards. I made a good with all it seems until I came to the last one. For this one I picked a long straight sapling and cut it down. Since it was such a nice long straight one I cut it quite a bit longer than I had cut the others-- gave it an extra measure so to speak. When I arrived at the field I had to enter through a gate with high posts and a cross bar at the top. Imagine my consternation when this last standard struck this cross bar and tore it from the posts. You may imagine that I

never heard the last of this. My brother even today still laughs at me about this occurrence. I never think of this standard ~~xxx~~ now without wanting to name it service. Not because it tore down a useless cross bar but because of the extra measure I had put into it. Just in this same way I would have you cut the standard of service in your life--as long as it is straight.

I have placed the standard of service last but just as I cut the whole set at the same time so must you hew your standards side by side--but service is the final standard by which your life will be tested. We hear at this time of year a great deal about success and what it means to some it is the gaining

of fame--to some the accumulation of money etc.--but to me a life is successful insofar as it has served humanity. Count that life a failure that passes this way and leaves no more than it found.

I stood one afternoon at sunset and looked over a familiar scene--one that I had known in childhood. The master painter spread a picture across the western sky. As I watched this wonderful panorama I heard a soul crying from a pain wracked body for relief. I heard the doctor try with words and deeds to soothe and make easy the few remaining days. I went with this man of medicine over roads almost impassable and dangerous to minister to a blood poisoned man. I saw him take a mangled hand of a man blinded and

old and work with it so that even the few remaining years might be made more joyful. He did this not so much for the money he received as for the service he could render.

Here they sit tonight  
Of course you take a pride in them. They have their standards well on the way to completion. They are the ones to take the place of responsibility in the future. You have guided them in the making of their standards with the idea that as you shed the cloak of responsibility it will fall upon their shoulders and be accepted as was the cloak of Elijah when it fell upon the shoulders of Elisha in the olden days.

James Barry in the Little Minister says that a dairy is book into which we expect to write one story and end by writing another and the humblest hour of our existence is when we compare what we have written with what we expected to write. Let me paraphrase this--Your life is a new book into which you expect one story and you will end by writing another ~~xxx~~. But may I plead with you to make the story such a one that when you compare it with the one you had expected to write that no blush of shame will tinge your cheeks or regrets tug at your heartstrings.