

**TITCOMB'S LETTERS
TO YOUNG PEOPLE,
SINGLE AND MARRIED**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649360857

Titcomb's letters to young people, single and married by J. G. Holland

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J. G. HOLLAND

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Holland, Josiah Gilbert

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SINGLE AND MARRIED.

TIMOTHY TITCOMB, ESQUIRE.

NEW YORK:
CHARLES SCRIBNER,
No. 134 GRAND STREET.
1858.

TITCOMB'S LETTERS.

TO THE
REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

YOU have very kindly permitted me to dedicate this book to you. I do it with hearty pleasure, and with cordial thanks for your courtesy, because it will do me good in several ways. First, it will give me an opportunity to manifest the respect and admiration which I entertain towards one who, in the best way, is doing more than any other American for the elevation of the standard of Christian manhood and womanhood. Second, it will save to me the awkward labor of writing a

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general preface. One can say to a friend, you know, in a familiar way, what he would hesitate to say directly to the public of his own performances. Third, it will show the public that you know the author of these letters, and that you have confidence in his good intentions.

The Great Master taught you how to teach, and, if we heed the lesson of His life, He will teach us all. He assumed a sympathetic level with humanity, that He might secure the eye and ear of the world. Through these He obtained the heart—a conquest preliminary to that of the world's understanding and life. It was the divine policy—rather, perhaps, I should say, the eternal necessity—that He should be made in all points like as we are, in order to a fitness for and the fulfilment of his mission. It was the brother that was in Him which touched humanity, and became the medium of heavenly impulses and inspirations; and it is the brother in us, rather than the preceptor, which will enable us to reach the hearts and minds that call for our ministrations.

With this idea in mind, I cannot but think that a general mistake has been made in the instruc-

tions given to the young. Most writers have chosen a standpoint distant from, and elevated above, the warm, quick natures which they have addressed. The young have been preached to, lectured to, taught, exhorted, advised, but they have rarely been *talked to*. My aim, in this triple-headed series of letters, is to give brotherly counsel, in a direct and pointed way, to the young men and women of the country, upon subjects which have immediate practical bearing upon their life and destiny, and to give this counsel without a resort to cant, or to the preceptive formularies that so much prevail in didactic literature. I think I know the young, and know what they need; so I have addressed them with this presumption, and with the same freedom—sometimes with the same earnest and emphatic abruptness—that I would use in talking to brothers and sisters whose eyes were looking into mine, whose hands I held.

After all, is there not an assumption of superiority in this? Only that which is necessary for decanting the experiences and the truths which my heart holds into the hearts I seek to fill. A pitcher may have an ear noticeable for length and

breadth, and its contents may occupy an inferior level, yet it may brim a goblet with pure water, without other elevation than that which is necessary for the service.

You will notice that I address my letters to the young men, young women, and young married people, as classes, with distinctness of aim and application, while I inclose all in a single volume. I have intended the whole book for each class. I believe that each should know what I have to say to the other. I have written nothing to one class which it would not be well for the other to know. The effort to maintain a divided interest and a divided sympathy between the sexes, to deny to them partnership in a common knowledge of their relationship, to hide them from each other as if they were necessarily enemies or dangerous associates, and to obliterate the idea that they are sharers in the same nature, and companions in a common destiny, may spring from the purest motives, but it produces inhuman results.

I look around me, and I see the young of both sexes with hearts bounding high with hope, forms elastic with health, and eyes bright with the enjoyment of life; and the thought of the stern

discipline which awaits them, touches me to tears. Their dawning sun gilds only the mountain-tops of life, and leaves the blind defiles and dismal gorges for their weary feet to find, through years of patient or fretful travel. To tell them how to perform this journey worthily, and to do it hand in hand, in harmonious companionship, I have written these letters. It has been with me an honest and earnest work, in the object of which I am sure that you will sympathize. I only hope that you will find little to criticise and nothing to condemn, in the nature and style of the means by which I have sought to accomplish it.

Yours,

With respectful affection,

THE AUTHOR.

REPUBLICAN OFFICE, }
Springfield, July 1, 1858. }