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## TONIC TALKS FOR THE WEEK

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### INDIVIDUALITY

**T**o preserve one's individuality throughout life is a very desirable thing. Possibly everyone instinctively strives to make it prevail. With many people, however, the idea is more present than the reality. They are conscious of having an individuality, but it is not a very strong one, and it soon becomes effaced by its surroundings and circumstances and remains but as a dream of something that once existed.

We must realise that in the case of most of us, our individuality is created by our own efforts. It is built up slowly and gradually, and during the whole period of its formation it is assailed and is called upon to act vigorously in its own defence. We shall not retain it unless we fight for it. We must summon character to guard it. The pressure of circumstances will continually threaten to diminish or nullify it and it will remain with us to bring all the forces of our nature to combat outside influences if we are to prevent them from encroaching on our preserves.

What makes up our individuality is our thoughts and feelings, and the force and passion with which they are held. And just as strong as these are in combination, in just such

measure will our resistance be to retain them unimpaired. If we give way to circumstances it means that our passions are too weak or too easily allayed, our thoughts too shallow to prevail, our feelings too superficial to suffer in their own cause, and in such cases our individuality of which these are the constituents was never robust enough to live out of its swaddling clothes.

If we consider ourselves entitled to claim an individuality we must remember that the right to any title is our power to enforce it. Everything we possess is subject to the assault of the world, and it depends on our courage, on our skill and resource, as to whether we are able to defend the possessions which we hold most dear.

Now, most of us would not stand idly by while our property was being taken from us, but should we, or do we, make as much exertion to see that no one robs us of our thoughts and feelings, our aspirations and ideas which go to make up what is called our individuality?

This is a point to consider because it enables us to appreciate not only the nature of individuality, but the terms on which we lay claim to it.