

They had been  
bought for a good



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

They are spurred on to renewed efforts by the conviction that they will succeed another time. Thus it was well said by Sir Philip Sidney that “confidence in oneself is the chief nurse of magnanimity.” If we turn to the pages of history, we shall find that the most splendid instances of magnanimity proceeded from self-reliance.

When the Athenians saw their city in the power of the Persians, and had every reason to suspect their allies of treachery, they magnanimously refused to listen to the tempting terms offered by the enemy, because they relied on their own ability even then to save the cause of Grecian liberty. A similar spirit of magnanimous self-reliance was shown by the Romans in the war with Hannibal. Although they had been defeated in three great battles, and had seen Italy ravaged from the Alps to Calabria by their seemingly invincible foe. They nevertheless had such confidence in their strength as a nation that they scorned to think of coming to terms, and Hannibal, to his surprise, heard that the very ground on which his camp was pitched had been bought for a good price at a Roman auction. It was a similar spirit that inspired Sir Francis Drake and the other English commanders in their contest with the Spanish Armada.

They were playing a game of bowls when the news came of the approach of the hostile armament; but instead of being startled out of their tranquility by the intelligence, they quietly finished their game and then proceeded to take measures to defend England against the threatened invasion. It was again a feeling of reliance in himself and the free spirit of the nation that made Hampden stand out boldly against the tyrannous exactions of the king. When Caesar in the civil war was deserted by Labienus, his highest and most

trusted officer, he voluntarily gave permission to such of his other officers as had served under his rival, Pompey, to go over to the enemy. He was too confident in his political and military genius to attach importance to the slight diminution of his strength that their departure would effect. They were, however, so touched by their leader's magnanimity that they refused to leave him. Even when self-reliance does not lead to such conspicuous instances of magnanimity as those we have been considering, it is a serviceable quality that will be of great assistance in the affairs of ordinary life. The world is generally inclined to save itself the trouble of careful study of character, and therefore, as a rule, accepts every one at his own estimation.

The man who has no confidence in himself has little reason to expect others to put confidence in him. We always find that in times of trouble everybody turns to the self-reliant man, and all are ready to trust their fortunes to his guidance. Thus the self-reliant man gains in power and influence and obtains the most responsible appointments, while the diffident man is again and again passed over and cannot seize the opportunities of gaining distinction that are thrown in his way.