

are, who do not become weary and exhausted and with a feeling of desparation, exclaim, "Why was I born! Why do I exist! Is it better to live or to die?" There are few mortals who have ever lived, who have not had some such thoughts. A few half crazed from nervous exhaustion and disappointment drink the fatal draught, fire the deadly shot or in some other way declare that it were better to die.

The question "Why do I exist?" is great and important. It has been considered by men and women of all ages and has been variously answered. The ancients sought diligently to discover the secret of life or the highest good of life. Human nature is ever the same. There are many in existence to-day who desire an answer to the question. The problem is important for other reasons. On its solution depends true success in this life and a guarantee of the best in the world to come. Ladies and gentlemen, I shall now present to you the solution of this problem.

In the first place I assert that we are born to have experiences. In support of that assertion I call attention to the fact that we are peculiarly constituted physically, mentally and morally. Every part of our being is constructed for the express purpose of receiving experiences. It is as easy to decide the main purposes of my constitution as it is to discover the use of a watch or a steam engine by examining their respective structures. Someone will perhaps say: "True, we grant you this, but the lower animals are similarly constituted. In fact they are superior to us in the matter of physical sensations because they possess more acute sense organs." This is all very true, but man has a compensating advantage which more than off-sets all this. Man is not only constituted so as to receive experiences but he has been given a soul, an intelligence, by means of which he may interpret the significance of those experiences. The man or the woman who is the passive victim of experiences is an animal pure and simple. God has created every man

and woman a king or queen by endowing each with the rational faculty. It is through that instrumentality that all creation bows at man's feet in humble subjection.

We cannot escape experiences but we may fail to note the significance of our experiences or we may interpret those experiences incorrectly and in either case life will be more or less a failure. The busy careers of to-day are not generally conducive to a full and correct interpretation of experience. We must have leisure periodically in order to think our experiences into harmony and relation. Conditions that existed fifty years ago may have been more favorable in this respect. With all our advancement and civilization of which we are justly proud, we may nevertheless lose sight of the main purpose of our existence.

For present purposes the totality of a life's experience may be classified as follows: home, school and society, or the world. The experiences of one period prepares for the next and under normal conditions the experiences of a succeeding stage aid in the interpretation of the significance of the preceding stage or stages. It is not necessary for my present subject that I should review the main features of the experiences of the home, their origin and development, leading up to school life and subsequently to society in the broadest sense.

I shall now illustrate what I mean by an experience and then explain its significance keeping in mind the problem which we may have before us, namely: "Why do I exist?" In dealing with a subject of this kind it is absolutely necessary to use the first personal pronoun very frequently. The experience that I am about to relate connects to some extent home and school life. It was a bright November afternoon. My comrade and myself, mere lads, were in our places at the public school on this particular day. The school work had proceeded much as usual. At four o'clock we decided to go to the woods near by for two reasons, mainly to have a confidential conversation about certain