

or stoop to the smallest mean or dishonourable action? Is life a scrub-race, where, at every hazard, though you have to blind the man on your right and trip the one on your left, you must struggle to come out ahead? Shall we subscribe to that dangerous materialism running throughout American life, which preaches that money is the great end and evidence of the possession of intellect, that a man must be a failure unless he culminates in the possession of a check-book,—a belief worthy only of a people prepared to accept "Poor Richard's" maxims as a New Testament? Were we sent into the world simply, in the slang phrase of the day, "to win a pile?" And when we have a competence, shall we sacrifice health, peace, conscience, that we may boast of our hundreds of thousands, though we know that incessant fear and nervous anxiety are often the shadows that surround the glittering heap? Is it nothing to have a conscience void of offence, a face that never turns pale at the accuser's voice, a bosom that never throbs at the fear of exposure, a heart that might be turned inside out and discover no stain of dishonour?

But perhaps you regard popularity as the great test of success; you covet the *digito pretereuntium monstrari*; you would be the focus of all eyes, "the observed of all observers," though of that kind of honour, as Cowley says, "every mountebank has more than the best doctor, and the hangman more than the lord chief justice of a city." Then you live a life only in others' breath; your happiness depends on every turn of the weathercock; you are at the mercy of every wind that blows. Are you the lion of to-day, because you have burnt the heart of the world with your ardent soul? I am the lion to-morrow, because I balance myself on a wire over the dizzy chasm of Niagara, and you are quite forgotten. The confounding of excellence with pecuniary success or a seat in Congress is both absurd and immoral. Was the divinest life ever led on this earth a success, humanly speaking? And are you entitled to pronounce your fellow-man, who has humbly tried to copy it, a cipher, because he has not, like you, courted applause, and made some little nook or corner of the earth ring with his name? Has not many a man been a blessing to the world who has made no noise in it, and who has died a beggar? And have not thousands died rich in goods or reputation, who were