

ambition, for instance Washington, in the midst of adversity, refused bribes "to trim anew his lamp of hope." When destruction seemed to hover over his starving army, when the hearts of others sank in despondency, could anything but integrity and a just appreciation of the future rights of mankind have induced him to forego, in many instances, the necessities of life, when reward seemed not only improbable, but impossible. He, from childhood, cultivated an unselfish, laudable ambition, until his mind was so deeply imbued with universal benevolence that it was impossible for him to act in opposition to this cultivation. Washington is only an example of many others, who, forgetting themselves, have had only their country's good at heart. And as ambition was both the ruin and the glory of these illustrious lives, so it has been with hundreds of others.

Everywhere we find men following the airy phantoms which hope pictures to their vision. Many are the homes that this insatiable thirst for power has desolated. Nations and men alike have been ruined by ambition's power. It wields a power fearful and wonderful to contemplate. We mark its influence in every walk of life, we trace it through the pages of history, biography, fiction and the blood-stained records of crime. It seems hard that there is implanted in so many minds this peace-destroying ambition; for, as we pause to reflect upon the countless wrecks strewn all along the shores of time, we can scarcely look upon ambition as other than a dangerous pilot, and when, never more so than in the present time, the desire to be honest is pressed so hard, is so violently assaulted by the ambition to be great.

How many ever meet, on a solid foundation, the structures that loom imposingly in the air. It demands but little thought to show us clearly that the majority of our ambitions is hopeless. Shakespeare says, "Dreams, indeed, are ambition"; for the very substance of the ambitions is merely the shadow of a dream, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that is but shadow's shadow.

Ambition, like other desires, may be cultivated, but it must be directed, it must be controlled and shorn of a selfish nature, that it may be instrumental in redressing wrongs.

It is necessary to have some object in view before you give your ambition a loose rein.

The dark background which has been touched upon serves to set off the brighter side with still greater splendor. Though ambition may serve the meanest ends, may debase the noblest talents to most ignoble uses, it may, and does serve the highest aims and the sublimest purposes. It is, in its very essential nature, a good thing, to be cherished and cultivated; and dangerous only when abnormal in its growth, just as an unguarded love may degenerate into a lawless passion, or reverence into servility. It is the motive power, the regulator of society, and of the world. It is necessary that different classes of society, and different classes of men, should exist. There must be some to command and some to serve; as in an army there are different ranks and grades, so in life there must be various classes and orders.

Every one, in the eager pursuit for himself, labors more or less for all, and the united efforts tend to produce progress, civilization, and the greatest efforts of genius and invention.

In the history of ambition we have almost the history of a world. In the different races do we find active, energetic, aspiring men? No, if there were such among them they would soon lift their people out of the depths of degradation, and place them among the powers of the earth. Individuals constitute the race, and unless the heart of the individual beat with high hopes and aspirations, the pulse of the race can never be quickened.

Of all the motives which urge men to the consummation of a purpose, love of fame ranks among the loftiest. Books, poems, grand monuments, and even the humble stone in the grassy churchyard, all bear witness to the universal desire to be remembered. And can we wonder that men shrink from the thought of passing into utter oblivion?

"To die, like a dull worm, to rot,
Thrust foully into earth to be forget."

What stores of learning and of literature has ambition urged to be contributed to mankind, simply that their names might be held in remembrance. Nor is it altogether unworthy of the ambition of a noble