



Taking the Road.

By Lewis Worthington Smith, in The Independent.

Here is my task. Why should I turn and go.

Seeking in fairer fields a kindlier foe? Here is my task, and with it alien eyes Blaze foul and leering hate and mean surmise.

Here is my task: I cannot turn aside. Here I must press straight on while fools deride.

This is for me the one thing most worth while.

Not to be lured by some well-practised smile.

Not to be driven by a threat or blow. Out of the road it is my will to go. I may not have a path the world can see, I make the paths, and in them I am free.

Here is my task, and here my joy at once.

Why should I care to be some dawdling dunce.

Breathing the perfume of his lady's lips Idly, as flap the sails of anchored ships? I stretch my muscles, lift my head, and laugh.

Being myself is all the wine I quaff.

This is for me enough, that I so choose, I trust no toss of coin, and I refuse

All leadings of dumb chance. Against the net

The destinies may weave I shall not fret, But they must give me passage till I turn And write my own last message on my urn.

Ask What You Will.

By Frank Walcott Hutt.

Ask what you will, the wise world says; Ask freely what you will of me: The grace of knowledge, length of days, A lease of power and mastery, The praises of an honored name, The seats of splendor and of fame.

Ask what you will; but you must share The struggles of my men of toil, And on my broad arenas dare The contest and the ceaseless moul, As thousands manfully have done Ere battles have been fairly won.

Ask what you will; but you must climb My hills by many a devious way, To gain those fastnesses of Time That have not yielded in a day; And long the siege ere you shall win At length your right of way therein.

Ask what you will, brave knight-at-arms; Lo, I have untold wealth to give; But every gift that lures and charms Seeks only of the life you live, Wherever led, however spent, A just and fair equivalent.

Browsings Among the Books.

WORK.

(From "Midstream," by Will Lovington Comfort. Published by "The Oxford University Press," Canadian Branch, Toronto.)

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." . . . I can not rush off to another war without a moment's halt. Work and life to me mean the same thing. Through work, in my case, a transfer of consciousness was finally made from animalism to a certain manhood. This is the most important transaction in the world. . . A working idea of God comes to the man who has found

his work—and the splendid discovery invariably follows, that his work is the best expression of God. All education that does not first aim to find the student's life-work for him is vain, often demoralizing; because, if the student's individual force is little developed, he sinks deeper into the herd, under the levelling of the classroom.

There are no men nor women alive of too deep visioning nor of too lustrous a humanity for the task of showing boys and girls their work. No other art answers so beautifully. This is the intensive cultivation of the human spirit. This is world-parenthood, the divine profession.

I would have my country call upon every man who shows vision and fineness in any work to serve for an hour or two each day among the schools of his neighborhood, telling the children the mysteries of HIS daily task—and watching for his own among them.

All restlessness, all misery, all crime, is the result of the betrayal of one's inner life. One's work is not being done. You would not see the hordes rushing to pluck fruits from a wheel, nor this national madness for buying cheap and selling dear, if as a race we were lifted into our own work.

The value of each man is that he has no duplicate. The development of his particular effectiveness on the constructive side is the one important thing for him to begin. A man is at his best when he is at his work; his soul breathes then,—if it breathes at all. Of course, the lower the evolution of a man, the harder it is to find a task for him to distinguish; but here is the opportunity for all of us to be more eager and tender.

When I wrote to Washington asking how to plant asparagus, and found the answer; when I asked about field-stones and had the output of the Smithsonian Institute turned over to me—my throat choked; something sang all around; the years I had hated put on strange brightenings; I had written Home for guidance. Full, eager and honest, the answer came—the work of specialists which had moved on silently for years. I saw the brotherhood of the race in that—for that can only come to be in a Fatherland.

So the Father of us all answers when we do our work well. His revelations rain down according to our receptivity. All our struggle and training is to reach this receptivity. We must master the body first; then the brain—after that we receive. Thus you see how work and religion are one; how all our years of training, in the thrall of perfecting our task, is but a mastering of body and brain; how it runs parallel to the austerities of the religionist who inflicts tortures upon his body to conquer it, and the terrors of concentration upon his brain to keep it silent, in order to hear the soul's voice.

All pure preparation for expression in the work we love integrates immortality. All the tests and temptations of the world are offered merely for us to master them. All evolution from the rock, through lichen, limpet, lizard, through the rising spines to manhood, and through man's living soul, to prophecy and divinity,—is but a perfecting of our receptivity to the revelations of God. We refine to higher and higher vibrations, each revelation which we reach changing the world through our expression of it. The roof of earth is the floor of heaven. The upper node of human receptivity touches the lower plane of spiritual revelation—and the result is a remembered human utterance. The orbit of the satellite has intersected the orbit of its primary. All dimensions of evolution are reached in this

way; the highest plant becomes the lowest animal. The first resulting flashes of contact are only suggestions of the steady flame to come.

THE HIGHEST EXPRESSIONS OF HUMAN GENIUS IN THE PAST ARE BUT SUGGESTIONS OF THAT WHICH IS TO BE THE STEADY CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE WORLD—MEN OF THE FUTURE.

I can hardly wait to tell you of such things alone; they break out from this narrative of sordid affairs, from the slow grind of the years; yet it was this grinding that gave me surface to receive certain realizations; and it is the years that will enfold them for other men, as no formal essay could do. I do not want to give your visions. I want them blood and bone to move among men—the spirit shining through.

Give a man his work and you may watch at your leisure the clear-up of his morals and manners. Those who are best loved by the angels receive not thrones, but a task. I would rather have the curse of Cain than the temperament to choose a work because it is easy.

Real work becomes easy only when the man has perfected his instrument,—the body and brain. Because this instrument is temporal, it has a height and limitation to reach. There is a year in which the sutures close. That man is a master who has fulfilled his possibilities—whether tile-trencher, stone-mason, writer, or carpenter, hammering periods with nails. Real manhood makes lowly gifts significant; the work of such a man softens and finishes him, renders him plastic to finer forces.

No good work is easy. The apprenticeship, the refinement of body and brain, is a novitiate for the higher life—for the purer receptivity—and this is a time of strain and fatigue, with breaks here and there in the cohering line.

The achievement of mastery brings with it the best period of human life. After the stress the relaxation. In its very nature this relaxation is essential, for the pure receptivity can only come when the tensility of the fight is done. If your horse is trained you do not need to picket him and watch lest he hang himself. Your body has learned obedience; you may forget it in the trance of work. . . The pure trance of work, the different reservoirs of power opening so softly; the instrument in pure listening—long forenoons passing without a single instant of self-consciousness, desire, enviousness, without even awareness of the body.

Every law that makes for man's finer workmanship makes for his higher life. The mastery of self prepares man to make his answer to the world for his being. The man who has mastered himself is one with all. Castor and Pollux tell him immortal love stories; all is marvellous and lovely from the plant to the planet, because man is a lover when he has mastered himself. All the folded treasures and open highways of the mind; its multitude of experiences and unreckonable possessions—are given over to the creative and universal force,—the same force that is lustrous in the lily, incandescent in the suns, memorable in human heroism, immortal in man's love for his fellowman.

FURTHER MESSAGES FROM "MID-STREAM."

All the lower forces of self must be conquered before man is at his best.

The real worker goes his way alone. Standing alone—that is the way of fine work and of pure living. Again, the training for the one is the training for

the other; all that has to do with real work has to do with the life that lasts.

It's all true—what the prophets and saviours came to earth to tell men. We've each got powers undreamed of.

The individual is a man who hears himself. I don't mean a man-crusher; not a man who rises on the necks of other men. He doesn't hear a real self, but an ugly animal instinct.

I learned well there in the Field-house that this "love of God" only comes to a man's soul when love for his fellow-man goes forth.

The world is wonderful, perpetually modern.

The soul of woman dies if it may not some time aspire.

There is a task for every man who has learned to listen; a task, or a dream, or an ideal.

It is good to love one's neighbor, for love is service; love is giving.

Nothing, ever compared in racial importance to the promise of a messiah which became a conviction in the breast of every Jewish woman. Prophets, judges and soldiers, were the incidents of that great dream's maturing. . . There is no law to prevent avatars being born into the world other than the lack of vessels fine enough and pure enough.

We love God by loving our neighbor—that is the immortal formula.

All creative thought is spiritually energized.

The highest moments of human genius in the past are but suggestions of that which is to be the steady consciousness of the world—men of the future.

Hope's Quiet Hour.

The Leader's Demand.

He said unto them all, If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose or forfeit his own self.—S. Luke ix.: 22-25, R. V.

Our Lord had been "praying alone," though the disciples were with Him. Then—straight from the strengthening communion with His Father—He gathered around Him the people and His nearest disciples (S. Mark viii.: 34-37) and told "them all" that His way led through rough places, and that anyone who wished to be a follower of His must not expect a rose-strewn path. The disciple must be content to be "as his Master," must not be discouraged or despairing if sorrow, pain or death have to be endured.

When the Israelites were journeying through the wilderness they were led by

God Himself there was no murmur against stone him be out of their also tempted LORD among their nation v they felt that right way, bu "into a grea where were so drought," the ing led astray to hunger and might humble do them good hard discipline was intended lesson that m highest sense, ties are suppl that proceede LORD doth m

Sometimes ti priceless mees drowned in th Then the guid dence leads H wilderness so listened to.

tread our app eyes on our L tive to His ca

What is our very important haps it is to existence; to be able, avoid un praise of our to the greater course, we do these things; b —Self may be day. It is pos for a good caus worthy objects, knowledge aim

St. Paul war bestow all his and die as a m no love in the nothing.—1 Cor are very clever as charity. L lest we are f Christ.

There is a pos religion as a ki comfortably upo not considered. We may become consciousness of sure of His reac dent that our s dition that we s like the Pharise we are not as o fortable ease of energies, and we are, quite sat condition, instead Leader, and tryin Let us prayerful eyes turned away Lord. Then—if danger have to be them without losi were in His pati to follow in His Pain. Those wh to save themse Possible, are foll Christ; and the they lose their l world is no bet lived.

A perfectly she satisfy any of us, very limp and ch trenches may be I notice that ur eager to get to tl appointed if they parative security muda.

One day a poe seeking shelter fro outstretched arms His first thought lovely to have a f would make him shelter when dan storm passed, and careless and forg changed his mind. Christian is called ness than seeking The prayer for safe Prayer for courage said: