

courage of the poet, who murmurs in his blindness, "Yet I argue not against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer right onward."

But it is rather of those who have not yet met in a hand to hand fight with the opposing forces of a harsh world, and felt the wearying influences of the never-ending "struggle for life" that I wish to speak; of those whose armour is still unstained by the blood of conflict, and upon whose budding purposes is still sparkling the dew of life's morning. To such the future is aglow with the brilliant products of their own imaginations, which are continually changing and dissolving into each other like the varying phases of a kaleidoscope. These young enthusiasts have ideals, but they are unable to tell what they are. Like a certain philosopher's view of the Absolute, the ideal to them is merely a tentative grasp of the mind which is never realized, a *nisus* which is never complete.

The life of a student, perhaps more than that of any other, tends to inspire the mind with just such vague conceptions. Lifted above the humdrum existence of the crowd, with fields of knowledge spreading before him in every direction, and the countless voices of the future calling in persuasive tones across the years, the student delights in building for himself gaudy air-castles and picturing in the liveliest colors his future triumphs in the battles of life. On these pleasant prospects he dwells eagerly, until a more persuasive voice and a brighter picture attract him in some other direction.

We ought not to depreciate the value of these day-dreams however, for when directed and modified by an intelligent understanding of our abilities, they supply the needed stimulus for the attainment of the greatest success. We must have the concept, the ideal, before we attain to the reality. Nevertheless there are some who never seem to get beyond the first stage,—that of the dreamer. Content with the easy motion of floating with the tide, and watching the play of colors in the sunset of hope, they awake at last to their true position when the darkness of old age and opportunities past closes down over a wasted and aimless life.

The majority of students, however, profess to be more alive to the responsibilities and privileges which they possess. They will say that they have a purpose which they mean to work at, a position to which they mean to attain; but if asked what this purpose or position is, they will reply, "Oh! well; I am going to make the most of my opportunities and do the best that I can for myself, so that when the time comes I shall be prepared to occupy one of the highest places." Now this is tantamount to saying, "I do not know what the future may bring to me, and of course cannot make any definite plans, but I shall prepare myself for any good fortune that may fall to my lot." This is no purpose at all in the real

sense of the word, and yet how many, if they questioned themselves sincerely, would get substantially the same answer. In order to assure a successful life these floating shadows of the future must be disregarded and all the wandering fancies of the mind must be recalled from their phantom flights and brought to bear on one main purpose, the accomplishment of which will require the united powers of the individual.

The first step toward the formation of a purpose in life is the choice of a profession. In this age of specialists, there is a call for those who have prepared themselves for a certain class of work, and not for those who may have good general qualifications. The "jack of all trades" in the literary as well as in other departments of life, invariably sinks to a second or third class position. The reason is simply this, that concentrated effort in a given direction is always more effective than desultory effort in various directions.

A young man should choose his profession as soon as he can form an intelligent opinion of his abilities, and even if the added wisdom of later years should prove his choice to be wrong, he will have lost nothing and gained much from his habits of concentrated effort, and he will be better prepared to take up the line of work his new choice demands. The work is but begun however, when the choice of a profession is made; 'tis true the lines of thought and action have begun to converge, and the scattered forces of the mind have been marshaled under the leadership of a dominant purpose, but time is required before these untrained capabilities can be made to work in harmony; before the various impulses can be restrained and made to serve willingly the higher and nobler purpose. Just here the personality of each individual must assert itself in subduing and controlling his subject powers and making them all pay tribute to the sovereignty of his own will. Every opportunity must be improved, every event must be made to contribute some stimulus to action. The faculty of turning to account every energy and every circumstance must be cultivated, and it will be surprising how many gems in every day life we may find that will fit in the setting that we have provided for them. To those who are observant, diligent and earnest, each hour will bring its offering, and each night will find their lives richer and nobler than before.

Whatever purpose a young man may set before him, however high the ideal he fondly worships and around which cling his most sacred hopes, he must yet remember that energy, perseverance and self-determination are the magic words before which difficulties dissolve, and by which the greatest and highest conceptions are made a glorious reality; but on the other hand no life can be a success whose hidden purpose is not in unison with that grand eternal purpose, that through all the ages runs.

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