

born to hopes and aspirations that reach into the eternities. The doctrine of evolution means eternal progress toward a high and ever higher goal.

"The white doves brood low with innocent flight,
Higher, my soul, higher into the night, into black night,
Beyond where the eagle soars strong in the sun;
Naught hast thou, if only earth-stars be won.
Beyond where God's angels stand silent in white,
Higher, my soul, higher, into the light—
Straight to God's sight."

Every young man and woman should have before them a divine ideal of character, and a high standard of achievement. It is your duty and privilege to emulate the glorious achievements of those whose lustrous fidelity to high ideals illumine the pages of human history. The golden age of the world is before us and not behind us. Mankind has higher levels yet to reach. The limit of achievement has not yet been attained in science or sainthood, in art or literature, in invention or achievement.

God is saying to the soul: On, forever on. It is a sad day in a man's life when he is contented with what he has accomplished, and feels in his soul no beating of strong desire to do something larger and nobler.

The life of Cecil Rhodes has always been of interest to me. He had great ambitions, not for himself, but for the British Empire, and the world. He tells us that a sentence from Aristotle was the guiding star of the life he lived. The sentence was this: "Virtue is the highest activity of the soul, living for the highest object, in a perfect life." Under the inspiration of that classic incentive he could not be content with mediocrity of achievement. He must be adventurous and do as Tennyson bids men do:

"Follow you the star that lights a desert pathway,
yours or mine,

Forward, till you see the highest, human nature
is divine."

You tell me ambition has ruined men. I admit it has ruined men. This also I know, where you show me one man ruined by excessive ambition, I can show you thousands ruined for both worlds, because they were destitute of ambition. The shame and ruin of multitudes is, they are content with a low level of character and achievement. "Not failure but low aim is crime."

To elevate the Indian is slow work because he is so empty of ambition. The average Indian is as ambitionless as the crowd of young men and young women who spend their nights with the cheap novel, the movie and the dance. I am not surprised that some of them get behind a cigarette and smoke themselves into confirmed mental imbecility.

Ambition, like other of God's gifts, has been perverted and worked harm, but the perversion of a power is no argument for its annihilation. Great learning has been the ruin of some men. Will you therefore condemn scholarship? Because one man's ambition led him to "wade through slaughter to a throne and shut the gates of mercy on mankind," is no argument that ambition itself is evil. I wish men were more ambitious, more determined to better their condition. I like that saying of the poet Keats, "I was never afraid of failure, for I would sooner fail than not be among the greatest." Jenny Lind, the singer, said, "I am determined to be content with nothing but the best that is possible for me, no matter what the sacrifice may be." Watts, the great English artist, said, "One thing only I possess and I never remember the time I was without it,

an aim toward the highest, the best, and a burning desire to reach it." Browning has one of his characters to say, "My business is not to remake myself, but make the absolutest best of what God made first."

In Paracelsus he has a character who put his ambition for excellence in dramatic form, saying there are

"Two points in the adventure of the diver,
One when a beggar he prepares to plunge,
One when a prince he rises with his pearl.
Festus, I plunge."

That is magnificent. You must take the risk. You must make the plunge if you would find the pearl and rise the prince. You must launch your vessel, crowd your canvas, and follow the gleam. A noble ambition to reach the heights, and be the best possible, is religion. Rightly understood, ambition is a command of God, a call from heaven to make the most of one's self, not at the expense of others, but for the benefit of others.

To every young man and woman whom this appeal reaches, I say, It is your duty, your religious duty to develop your God-given faculties to the highest possible reach of excellence. It is the glory of our race that we are climbers. It is better to climb than to crawl. "Unless he can above himself erect himself, how mean a thing is man." For a young man to let his life go to waste like a sluggard's garden is to sin against the Holy Ghost. "Not failure but low aim is crime."

Roosevelt spoke truth when he said, "It is hard to fail, but worse never to have tried to succeed."

Longfellow felt that "Excelsior" was one of the best poems he had written, because it appealed to the deepest chord in young human hearts, namely, the purpose to put pleasure aside, put indulgence aside, put the love of ease aside, and rise higher and ever higher in mental and moral attainments.

The world suffers, and every good cause languishes because there are so many incompetent workers, mere bunglers, men and women who are ready to say of their poor work, "It is good enough, it will pass." They are found in every trade and in every profession.

Take an inventory of people out of work, and you will find in most cases it is because they are bunglers. A skilled physician will have more patients than he can mix medicine for. An able lawyer will have more cases and clients than he can do justice to. A preacher who can preach will get called to ten times more pulpits than he can occupy. Of average workers there is a surplus. For men who excel, there are openings everywhere.

The Bible inspires men with a high and holy ambition. Its ideals are lofty and are reached only by the aspiring and ambitious. God's word to man is: "Go

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