


### + Onward. +


 HIS world is a battlefield and "onward," is the watchword of those who succeed in life's battle.

"The brave man ne'er despairs,  
And lives where cowards die."

One victory gained is, with him, only a stepping-stone to something higher. The pleasure of life is in this ever pressing onward; this constant march. Happiness is more in pursuit than in possession. A great student has said that if in his hand he held truth he would let it go for the sake of pursuing after it. And another says if the Creator were to offer him his choice between the searching after truth and that truth itself, he would choose the first. For after all, what is all the learning any of our most scholarly men possess but one link in the chain of knowledge—one step in the right direction; the vast eternity of knowledge lying still beyond. The more a person learns the more clearly does he see what heights are yet to be reached; what mountains yet to scale. Looking down the distance travelled, seems as nothing compared with that beyond.

In other things beside learning does this spirit of advancement show itself. We notice it in the struggle for wealth; what seems a fortune to the poor man to the owner often looks very small. The miser has this feeling to such a degree that he will deny himself anything to increase the weight of his money bags. So this continual desire for change and reaching out after something beyond; if not watched with care is very likely to lead its master, or rather, we might say its servant astray. Different motives may lead one on; it may be a real thirsting for knowledge, a desire to make the most of one's self—which is the most noble motive—but often pride, desire for fame and glory, a wish to outstrip others engaged in the struggle, or even revenge may be the mainspring of action. Nations and men have been ruined by the power of ambition wrongly directed. It is a

terrible peace-destroyer; its destructive effects can be seen on almost every page of history.

"Fatal ambition! say what wondrous charms

Delude mankind to toil for thee in arms;  
When all thy spoils, thy wreaths in battle won,

The pride of pow'r and the glory of a crown,

When all war gives, when all the great can gain,

E'en thy whole pleasure pay not half the pain."

But there is a bright side to ambition, as well as dark one. It must be directed and controlled and then it becomes the motive power of the world. The grandest epic in our language was the result of Milton's desire to address a work to posterity which should perpetuate his name at least in the land in which he was born. Progress is comparatively slow; it is made by working cheerfully on while patiently waiting for the ripening of the seeds that have been sown. De Maistre, says that "to know how to wait is the great secret of success." Various definitions have been given of genius, whether we exactly agree with these or not, certain it is that the very greatest men have been wise and persevering. Very few of the great discoveries of the world have been accidental. It has been said that only for the accidental fall of the apple at Newton's feet he never would have made his great discoveries. But if his mind had not been full of the subject of gravitation and his thoughts turned in that direction, the fallen apple would never have suggested them. "Trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle," was once said by the great artist Michael Angelo, in reply to a scoffer. Spare moments are trifles; but what a lot can be crowded into them and extracted from them if they were properly used. They are as "sands of precious gold" to those who are leaving their names on the roll of history. Elihu Burritt, we are told while working as a blacksmith, mastered eighteen ancient and modern languages and twenty-two European dialects.