

The story illustrates the wisdom of selecting a business that deals with the steady wants of the people; and while intelligence and diligence cannot be dispensed with in any calling, it is worth a good deal to remember that progress is always easiest along the lines of least resistance. Under some circumstances a business runs itself, to use a common phrase; under others it requires a vast expenditure of force and oil, and often then it fails. But many persons are so constituted that they have no pleasure in what are called the meaner pursuits of life. Nothing has a charm for them but to undertake the difficult or the impossible, wherein to succeed is glory and perchance a fortune, and wherein to fail is loss and disappointment without, it may be, a compensating grain of gathered wisdom.

The two most abundant minerals in this country are clay and lime, and they are likewise among the most useful. They furnish the raw material too for mineral industries of the first importance, in which a large amount of capital and many laborers are employed. Yet in the vulgar opinion clay and lime are not worthy of being called minerals, and the seekers after gold, silver, copper, nickel and iron would scorn to recognize the workers in clay and lime as fellow-miners. I think it will not be hard to show, however, that these very common minerals possess a value not in any degree inferior to the metals, and that they are deserving of much greater attention than they have yet received in this country, at the hands of moneyed men, and men of the best technical training in the mineral industries. But let it be premised that in this paper lime (using the term in its colloquial sense) will be dealt with only as material for the production of cements.

As to the extent and growth of the industries, information is afforded by the census reports of the Dominion Government. But for comparative records we can only go back to 1881; no account was taken of cements in the censuses preceding the one for that year, and the earlier statistics of the brick industry are of no use in showing its growth.

The statistics of the two industries in Canada and the Province of Ontario respectively are given in the following table for the years 1880 and 1890: