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MAN

By
WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

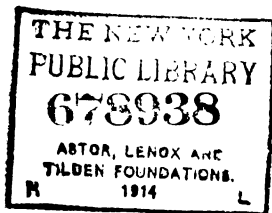


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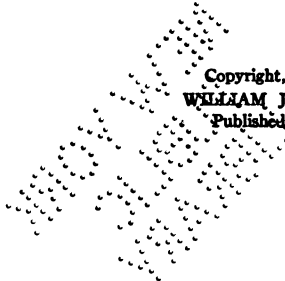
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WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN
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THE Psalmist asks Jehovah, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" And answering his own question he adds: "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor."

Man, in the sense in which the term describes the human being to whom the Creator has given dominion over earth, and air and sea, and upon whom He has imposed responsibilities commensurate with capabilities and possibilities—man, as thus defined, is an appropriate theme for an occasion like this, and its con-

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sideration is worthy not only of those who, having completed the course of study prescribed by this institution, go forth to meet life's problems, but worthy also of the thought of those who are older.

Miracle of miracles is man! Most helpless of all God's creatures in infancy; most powerful when fully developed, and interesting always. What unfathomed possibilities are wrapt within the swaddling clothes that enfold an infant! Who can measure a child's influence for weal or woe? Before it can lisp a word, it has brought to one woman the sweet consciousness of motherhood, and it has given to one man the added strength that comes with a sense of responsibility. Before its tiny hands can lift a feather's weight, they have drawn two hearts closer

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together and its innocent prattle echoes through two lives. Every-day that child in its growth touches and changes some one; not a year in all its history but that it leaves an impress upon the race. What incalculable space between a statue, however flawless the marble, however faultless the workmanship, and a human being "afire with the passion of eternity."

If the statue can not, like a human being, bring the gray hairs of a parent "in sorrow to the grave," or devastate a nation, or with murderous hand extinguish the vital spark in a fellow being, neither can it, like a human being, minister to suffering mankind, nor scatter gladness "o'er a smiling land," nor yet claim the blessings promised in the Sermon on the Mount. Only to man, made in

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the Divine likeness, is given the awful power to choose between measureless success and immeasurable woe.

Man shares with the animal a physical nature—he has a body, the citadel of the mind, the temporary tenement of the soul. It is necessary that this link in the endless chain that connects the generations past with the generations yet to come shall be made as strong as conditions, heredity and environment, will permit. Infinitely varied are the physical capabilities bequeathed to us by our ancestors. Some of us are heirs to virtuous estates with which no courts can interfere; some of us bear in our bodies the evidence of ancestral sins and are living proof of the fact that the iniquities of the parents are visited upon the children. All of us

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inherit both weaknesses and elements of strength. It is within our power to conserve and to increase the strength that has come down to us, and it is also within our power to dissipate the physical fortune which we have received. Nothing but a proper conception of the creature's stewardship under the Creator can protect the individual from the rust of inaction, the wear of excess and the waste that arises from a perverted use of the powers of the body.

If civilization can be defined—and I know of no better definition—as the harmonious development of the human race, physically, mentally and morally, then each individual, whether his influence is perceptible or not, raises the level of the civilization of his age just in proportion as he contributes to the world's work a

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body, a mind and a heart capable of maximum effort. No one lives unto himself or dies unto himself. The tie that binds each human being to every other human being is one that cannot be severed. We cannot without blame invite a physical weakness that can be avoided or continue one which can be remedied. The burdens to be borne are great enough to tax the resources of all when service is rendered under the most favorable conditions; no one has a right to offer less than the best within his power.

Every kind of sport, every form of exercise that contributes to the development of the body, without mental deterioration or an impairment of the moral forces, should be encouraged. Not only does the body demand attention in the growing years, but it requires continuous care throughout

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the entire life. A stunted body is the penalty for overworking a child, a weak body the penalty for lack of exercise, but nature's punishments are not visited upon youth alone. The overworked or underfed man or woman can not escape nature's penalty, neither can those escape who, fancying themselves more fortunate, invite the evils of idleness and over-feeding. An eminent Swiss, Carl Hilty, in his book on "Happiness," declares that regular employment at some work which satisfies the conscience and the judgment is essential to any true enjoyment of life, and Tolstoy quotes with approval the opinion of the Russian writer, Bondereff, who insists that systematic manual labor is a religious duty as well as a physical requirement. If any one supposes that education

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should relieve him from a personal knowledge of bread-labor—"the primary struggle with nature"—he is in grievous error. At present the strength of the race is materially lessened by the decay consequent upon the idleness of those who have come to regard physical toil as a disgrace (unless endured for amusement), and the average length of life is shortened by those who convert the normal function of eating into gluttony. Those who approach life in the right spirit and seek the highest development must in the very beginning understand the importance of so mastering the body and its forces as to make them potent for good. In the care of the body three things are necessary: First, food sufficient in quantity and proper in quality to insure growth until maturity and

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health afterwards. At present we have at one extreme those who suffer from lack of nourishing food and at the opposite extreme those who ruin their health with high living. Second, the body needs exercise sufficient in quantity and kind to keep it in good working order. At present a large number, young and old, work too long, while, on the other hand, many do not work at all. Third, the body needs rest sufficient for recuperation. To-day a portion of the population have too little opportunity for rest, while others rest until they become weary of resting.

It is hardly necessary to add that no habit, however pleasant it may be, can with wisdom be acquired or with safety be continued which increases the probability of sickness, tends to weaken the body in the struggles with

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diseases, or in any other way impairs the vital forces. The total drain upon the nation's strength resulting from the use of liquor and tobacco can scarcely be estimated, not to speak of other forms of dissipation.

But man must be more than a perfect animal; he does not rise above the level of the beast if he permits his thoughts to rest entirely upon blood, and bone and muscle. The prolongation of life would scarcely be worth the effort, or the avoiding of disease reward the care, if there were not more in human life than food, toil and rest.

The presence of these graduates, attended by parents, relatives and friends, is evidence that there is in this community a recognition of the importance of the training of the mind. The scholastic course pre-

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scribed by our educators and paid for out of the productive labor of the State represents a considerable pecuniary outlay. No compulsory legal requirements are necessary to convince a large majority of the parents of the short-sightedness of denying to a child the mental training given by our schools. From the first day in the kindergarten to the last day in the university the student follows a path marked out by discriminating wisdom and guarded by sympathetic interest. Those who are foolish enough to exchange the permanent advantage of an education for the temporary gain of remunerative employment have, as a rule, a protracted season of repentance. As the workman gains rather than loses by the time employed in sharpening his tools, so the student accumulates more

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capital by careful preparation than he could by too early an entrance upon money making. There is in some quarters a disposition to regard what is contemptuously called "book-learning" as of little value except in the professions. No error can be more harmful, and it arises from a misconception of the purpose of education. Books are not to be despised; they contain the best thought of the authors and these best thoughts are again sifted by time. While one should know people as well as the written page, still books are faithful friends.

Even if the student's thoughts were centered upon himself there could be no excuse for inadequate preparation or for the attempt sometimes made to substitute technical training for general instruction. But

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when it is remembered that instruction is not purely for the benefit of the individual, but for the public as well, the importance of a liberal education becomes still more apparent. The person who understands the fundamental principles of science can render a larger service than one who is ignorant of the lines along which nature acts; mathematics teach exactness in thought and argument; literature and language give readiness, expression and illustration, while history equips us with that knowledge of the past which is essential to a proper estimate of the future. And how shall we excuse the blindness of those—if there be such—who, believing in popular institutions, would deny to the masses a knowledge of political economy, sociology and the science of government—a

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knowledge so useful in the discharge of the high duties of citizenship? Whether a boy intends to dig ditches, follow the plow, lay brick upon brick, join timber to timber, devote himself to merchandising, enter a profession, engage in teaching, expound the Scriptures, or in some other honorable way make his contribution to society, I am anxious that he shall have all the education that our schools can furnish. He will do better work because of his education; he will have his mind for his companion and will not be tempted to loaf upon the streets when the day's work is done, and he will be in a position to demand reasonable conditions, reasonable terms and reasonable compensation for those who toil.

Where an education has seemed to be a detriment in business or has

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yielded a less dividend than might properly be expected, it can be traced to a deficit in purpose rather than to a surplus of learning.

And this leads us to the consideration of the necessity for a moral development to accompany mental training. An athlete bent on mischief can do more harm than a dwarf or an invalid; and so, a well-disciplined mind, misdirected, is capable of doing more serious damage than an ignorant mind. Society is poorly repaid for the money spent upon education if the one who profits by the expenditure feels ashamed to cooperate with those whose toil supplies him with food and clothing. That labor is dignified, that work is honorable, is a truth that needs to be imprest upon every young man and upon every young woman. It is

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worthier by far to add something to the world's store of wealth than to spend the money that others have earned. We must have food, and clothing, and shelter, and we must earn these things or some one must give them to us. A young man's self-respect ought to make him ashamed to sponge upon the world for a living; he ought to insist upon repaying with interest the service which society renders him; and this rule applies to young women as well as to young men, for the forms of service are infinite and the return that women make to society is as valuable as the return made by men. The essential thing is that each person, man or woman, shall recognize the obligation to contribute in helpfulness.

There is no place for the drone in

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human society, and as public opinion becomes more enlightened we shall give less regard to those, however refined or well educated, who consult their own pleasure at the expense of others and more consideration to the bread-winners whose hands are calloused and whose brows are acquainted with perspiration.

There is evident on every side a distortion of view as to the relative desirability of a life of productive labor as compared with a life of luxurious ease, and a widening gulf seems to divide the two. This should not be true. The bud, blooming in beauty and fragrance, might as justly scorn the roots of the rosebud because they come into contact with the soil, as that any man, however trained in mind or supplied with means, should hold in contempt those

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who with brain and muscle coax the annual crop from mother earth, fashion the fabric which protects him from heat and cold, or bring fuel from the coal mines.

An education is incomplete which does not place a noble purpose behind mental training and make the hands willing to work. The work should ultimately be the largest work of which the hands are capable, but at all times it should be the work that most needs to be done. That education is also defective which so inflames one's vanity or so shrivels one's heart as to separate him in sympathy from his fellows. Education has been known to do this—yes, education has even been known to make a graduate ashamed of his parents. A Chicago paper recently reported such a case. A mother who had been

denied the advantages of the schools, but who had by economy and sacrifice enabled her son to attend college, visited him after he had established himself in the practise of the law. She had looked forward for years to his success, and started upon her visit with great expectation. She soon learned, however, that her presence embarrassed her son—that he did not want his clients to know that she was his mother. Her heart was broken, and as she waited at the depot alone for the train that would bear her back to her humble home, she poured forth her sorrow in a letter. If I thought that any of those who receive their diplomas on this glad day would allow their superior advantages to lessen their affection for their parents or to decrease their devotion to them, I would wish them children

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again. Better loving companionship than intellectual solitude, but there is no reason why the scholar should be less a son or daughter. Head and heart should be developed together, and then each forward step will bring increasing joy, strengthen family ties and make early friendships more sacred.

If he is culpable who shrinks from full participation in the work of this struggling world, or shirks the responsibilities which he is by education prepared to assume, still more culpable are those who, by employing their talents against society, prey upon those who supplied their training. If by force of fraud or cunning one seeks to appropriate to his own use that which he has not earned, he turns against the public the weapons

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put into his hand by the public for the promotion of the common weal.

The old-fashioned methods of wrong-doing are everywhere condemned, but Professor Ross of the Nebraska University has pointed out some of the new methods of wrong-doing which do not bear the odium which they deserve. He calls attention not only to the dishonesty involved in the adulteration of food, but to the actual bodily harm done by the mercantile use of the poisons. There has been an enormous increase in the quantity of adulterants used and a woful lack of conscience manifested among those who find a profit in the practise of dangerous impositions. Professor Ross also presents some statistics to show the mortality due to the failure to use safety appliances—the lives of employes being

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coined into larger dividends for the benefit of the stockholders. But not all of those who make misuse of their intelligence are engaged in either the adulteration of food or in doing bodily harm through unprotected machinery. The pecuniary damage done by the market speculator is even greater. The gross sum every year abstracted from the pockets of the wealth producers by the misuse of the stock exchange and the chamber of commerce is enormous, for this sum not only includes that which is lost by those who yield to the temptation to engage in the game of speculation with the manipulators of the market, but it includes that still larger sum which measures the injury done legitimate dealers who are the innocent victims of man-made fluctuations.

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I know of no more imperative need to-day than that there should be a clear recognition of the law of rewards, namely, that each person is entitled to draw from society in proportion as he contributes to the welfare of society. This law is fundamental. It conforms to that sense of justice which forms the broad basis of social intercourse and a firm foundation for government. This sense of justice is offended when any one, either through the favoritism of government or in defiance of government, acquires that for which he has not given an equivalent. There are certain seeming exceptions, but they will upon examination be found to be only apparent or to present evidence of an attempted approximation to the standard. For instance, by general consent there is acquirement by right

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of discovery. A man finds something of which man has not before known, and altho the discovery may not have caused him great effort, yet it may be of great value. There is justice in giving him a reasonable compensation out of the thing which he has discovered, but the fact that the government under whose jurisdiction the land lies limits by metes and bounds the land which the pioneer may claim is evidence of an effort to fix a relation between service and compensation. And so if one discovers precious metals the law determines the amount of land that can be claimed under the discovery. The inventor, also, in return for the benefits conferred upon society, is given a temporary monopoly of the sale of the thing invented, but the fact that he is protected for a limited time only is

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another proof of the general desire that the reward collected from society shall be proportioned to the benefit conferred upon society. It is hardly necessary to add that in the case of an invention the attempt is often unsuccessful, the inventor in many cases losing in large part or entirely the protection intended for him, while some one prepared to furnish money for experimentation receives the lion's share of the benefits.

The inheritance would seem to furnish the most notable exception to the rule of rewards, and yet it can not really be considered an exception, for a man's right to provide for those dependent upon him is as sacred as his right to provide for himself, and the mutual obligations between parent and child take inheritances out of the ordinary rules of property, and

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yet even in this case the graded taxes now imposed upon inheritances in various States—and they should be imposed in all States—indicate a tendency to limit the testamentary disposition of property. Gifts are either, first, an expression of affection or friendship, or, second, payment for service rendered, or, third, payment in advance for service to be rendered to the donor or to others.

But turning from the exception to the rule, what could be more salutary to-day than a universal recognition of this law of rewards? If instead of measuring success by the amount received each one measured success by the amount actually earned, what a transformation would be wrought in the world! If each one were so perfectly under self-control and so attached to a high ideal as not to

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desire more from the world than a just reward for his contribution to the world's welfare, society would present a changed appearance. Nearly all injustice, nearly all of "man's inhumanity to man," can be traced to an attempt on the part of the wrong-doer to obtain something for nothing or something for which only part payment is offered. A conscientious application of this law of rewards would not only go far toward adjusting disputes between labor and capital, but it would go far toward removing the barriers between the classes. The employe to make a just complaint against his employer must show that the latter is claiming a larger share of the joint profits than is his due, and the employer to bring a just indictment against his employe must prove that the employe is seek-

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ing a larger compensation than he has earned. There would be little difficulty in adjusting hours of labor and the conditions of labor if the primary question of participation in profits could be adjusted, and that adjustment can not be equitably made upon any other basis than that of equivalent values. With universal acquiescence in this rule the usurer would disappear, carrying his train of evils with him; with the establishment of this rule the stock jobber and the market gambler would cease to disturb the law of supply and demand, and the reign of watered stock and of exploitation would be at an end. The observance of this rule would make factory laws unnecessary and relieve from premature toil hundreds of thousands of children who now, to the shame of our civilization and to

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the permanent harm of our country, become sullen supporters of the family when they should enjoy the delights of childhood and the advantages of school. Those who, instead of trying to see how much they can squeeze out of the world, are anxious to give the world a dollar's worth of service for a dollar's worth of pay, are protected against every form of swindling, for the "get-rich-quick" schemes which spring up and impose upon the public until they are exposed and driven out, always appeal to the speculative spirit, and lead their victims to expect something for nothing.

It must not be understood, however, that the law of rewards comprehends all of one's obligations. There is a clear distinction between justice and benevolence. Justice re-

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quires that each person shall be secure in the enjoyment of that which he earns, but there is something better than justice. True, the elimination of injustice is greatly to be desired, but if the world contained nothing more comforting than justice, there might still be a vast amount of suffering and woe. After the government has exhausted human wisdom in the effort to so adjust rewards as to secure to each person a fair and just compensation for all that he does, religion steps in and suggests a still higher and broader rule. Justice would leave the individual to suffer for his own errors and to pay the penalty for his own mistakes, but love, as taught in the Bible and exemplified by the Author of our religion, teaches us "to feel another's woe" and to bear one an-

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other's burdens. If sickness overtakes a neighbor it does not satisfy the conscience to say: "He brought it upon himself, let him suffer." If a wife is impoverished by the dissipations of a husband it does not satisfy the conscience to say: "She ought to have known better than to marry him," or "She ought to leave him." If a child is left friendless it does not satisfy the conscience to say: "It is not my child! I owe it nothing." In a multitude of ways we are daily brought face to face with the fact that this world needs something more helpful, more encouraging, more uplifting than justice, and love supplies this need. A high ideal of life, therefore, leads us to be more exacting with ourselves than we are with others. We must use a larger measure when we esti-

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mate society's claims upon us than when we calculate our claims upon society, for while we have a right to expect from society a fair compensation for what we do, we are in duty bound to make to society a contribution which no legal definition can measure.

Those who attempt to construct the world without reference to the spiritual forces which are at work defend altruism on the ground that it is an enlightened self-interest; they contend that the doing of good to others, even sacrificing for others, yields a reward in pleasure. The difficulty about the philosophy that rests upon such calculations is, first, that it is impossible for one to look far enough ahead to form any accurate opinion as to the time or manner in which the reward is to come, and, sec-

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ond, that time spent in calculation can better be spent in acting. The person who attempts to keep a book account of the good he does, does not, as a rule, do enough good to justify an entry in the book; the spirit that leads him to keep the account continually hampers him in his work. Life is made up of an innumerable number of small acts, not considered worth doing by those who are guided by selfish considerations. Of the countless millions of kind and generous acts done, but few would have been done had it been necessary to reason out just in what way the bread "cast upon the waters" would return.

The spring is the best illustration of a life conforming to the Christian ideal. As the spring pours forth constantly of that which refreshes and invigorates, seeking nothing in re-

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turn, and asking not who is to be the recipient of its bounty, so a life consecrated to a noble purpose pours forth a constant flood of helpfulness; and man is as little able to follow through succeeding generations the good that he does as the spring is to trace the refreshing influence of its waters.

I have dwelt at length upon the ideal because it is of transcendent importance both to the individual and to those about him. Whether life is a success or not depends far more upon the moral purpose than it does upon the health or mental strength of the individual. History is replete with instances where men and women have accomplished much in spite of great physical infirmity. Helpless cripples and persons deformed have sometimes won a fame denied to ath-

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letes and to gladiators; sightless eyes have often beheld spiritual beauties which multitudes have failed to find; the bed of the invalid has sometimes been a throne from which have flowed blessings greater than a monarch can bestow. Not only has a high purpose overcome physical obstacles, but it has often made up for the lack of educational advantages. In innumerable cases an uneducated person, inspired by love for a great cause and filled with zeal, has surpassed those far better equipped, but lacking a compelling purpose.

If I were gifted with the power to penetrate the future and could discern the careers which lie before the graduates of this day, I would doubtless note a wide difference in accomplishments. Making allowance for different standards of measurement,

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some will be more successful than others; some will surprizè their friends by the progress which they make, others may prove a disappointment, and the ideal which to-day lies within each heart, or may hereafter be planted there, will have more to do in explaining the success or failure than the studies that have been pursued here—more than any health report would indicate.

In the *Memorabilia* of Socrates you will find an interesting description of the choice of Hercules. The great philosopher quotes another Greek in substance as follows:

“When Hercules was advancing toward the period when the young begin to give intimations whether they will enter life by the path of virtue or by that of vice, he went forth into a solitary place and sat down perplexed as to which of these two

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paths he would pursue. Two maidens appeared before him, one in gaudy attire and with froward manner said: 'Hercules, if you will follow the path that I point out you shall taste of every species of pleasure, and lead a life free from every sort of trouble. Your whole time will be occupied in considering what meat or drink will please you, and what will most delight you.' Hercules asked her name, and she replied: 'My friends call me Happiness but those who hate me give me to my disparagement the name of Vice.'

"The other maiden, more reserved in manner and more modest in demeanor, said to him: 'Hercules, I shall not deceive you. The path that I point out is full of labors, full of trials, full of difficulties, but it is a path that leads to immortality. If you seek to be beloved by your friends you must serve your friends. If you desire to be honored by any city, you must benefit that city; if you wish to be admired by all Greece for your merit you must endeavor to be of service to all Greece.' And her name was Virtue."

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That which is told in story by the ancient philosopher is set forth in the form of an injunction by the Master, for when his disciples asked who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, he answered, "Let him who would be chiefest among you be the servant of all." Thus, if we seek authority from history—whether profane or sacred—we find that he is the greatest who does the most of good. This is the law from which there is no appeal—a law confirmed by all experience, a law proved by the inscriptions upon the monuments reared by grateful hands to those whom the world calls great.

And what an opportunity for service this age presents! If I had my choice of all the ages in which to live, I would choose the present above all others. The ocean steamer and

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the railway train bring all the corners of the earth close together, while the telegraph—wire and wireless—gives wings to the news and makes the events of each day known in every land during the following night. The printing press has popularized knowledge and made it possible for each one who desires it to possess a key to the libraries of the world. Invention has multiplied the strength of the human arm and brought within the reach of the masses comforts which, until recently, even wealth could not buy. The word “neighborhood” no longer describes a community; that “all ye are brethren” can be more readily comprehended than ever before. It is easier for one to distribute blessings to the world to-day than it was a few centuries ago to be helpful to the

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residents of a single valley. A good example set anywhere can be seen everywhere, so intimate has become the relation between man and man.

And yet with the wonderful spread of knowledge and the marvelous range of achievement there is vast work to be done. Conscience has not kept pace with commerce, nor has moral strength increased with the growth of wealth. The extremes of society have been driven farther and farther apart, and the chord of sympathy between rich and poor is greatly strained. Destitution and squalor lurk in the shadow of palaces, and great law-breakers vie with petty thieves in ignoring the statutes of the State. The instrumentalities of government are being used for public plunder, and those who make fortunes through legislation employ

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a tithe of their winnings for the corruption of the sources of public opinion. Not only is a bribe dangled before the eyes of the indigent voter, but those who profit through the control of the government do not hesitate to subsidize newspapers and to scatter their hush money wherever a protest can be silenced.

The opportunity is here and the field inviting. A great orator complained a generation ago that the scholar in the republic was not doing the work for which his education fitted him. He declared that the great truths relating to society were not the result of scholarly meditation, but had been first heard in the solemn protest of martyred patriotism and the loud cries of crushed and starving labor—that the scholars, instead of making history, were content to write

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it "one-half truly and the other half as their prejudices might blur and distort it."

Let not this reproach be truthfully uttered against the scholars of America to-day. With a soil capable of supporting a vast population; with a climate that gives infinite variety and furnishes healing for every ill; with a people commingling the best blood of all the races, and a government which furnishes the greatest stimulus to high endeavor—here the scholar ought to find the most powerful incentive and be inspired to the most heroic effort. Whether he turns his attention to the improvement of crops and herds, to mechanical labor, to the perfecting of methods of exchange or to the cheapening of transportation, or ministers as a physician to the ills of the body, or as an in-

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structor to the wants of the mind, or as a religious teacher to the needs of the heart,—no matter to what he devotes himself, infinite possibilities are before him. In whatever walk of life he takes his place he can not shirk the duties of citizenship, for, living in a land where every citizen is a sovereign and where no one dares to wear a crown, he must help to make the government good or share the blame for permitting evils that might be corrected.

If we apply the term coward to one who, from fear of bodily harm, falters upon the battlefield, we must find some harsher term to apply to those who ignominiously withdraw themselves from the struggle of to-day, in the presence of the tremendous problems which require for their wise solution all the energies of the body, all

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the powers of the mind and all the virtues of the heart.

Members of the graduating class: I have endeavored to impress upon your minds and hearts, first, the possibilities for good or evil in a human being, and, second, the responsibility which great opportunity imposes upon him. I have endeavored to suggest the relation which should exist between body and mind and heart. I have endeavored to emphasize the paramount importance of the moral element. Your labors are not ended, but begun. You are not going into undisturbed retirement, but into the nation's busy, throbbing life. You have been "burning the midnight oil"; henceforth you stand in the sunlight. Fear not to mingle with the poor and the unlearned; they need you most. You will find among them

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the homely virtues and you will find among them honest inquiry, for it was not in speaking of such that it was said: "The cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the truth."

Strive to make your lives resemble a purifying stream, remembering that the higher the reservoir from which you draw the greater will be the pressure. Let not happiness be the aim of your lives, for happiness eludes those who most eagerly pursue it, but comes unbidden into the homes of those who labor for higher ends.

Beware of selfishness, for selfishness defeats itself. "He that findeth his life shall lose it" is true in other than a religious sense, while he who surrenders himself unreservedly to some great cause gains a larger life

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than the one surrendered. Wendell Phillips gives fitting expression to this truth when he says, "How prudently most men sink into nameless graves, while now and then a few forget themselves into immortality."

I have endeavored to suggest an ideal which may be helpful to you when the festivities of this closing week are past and you turn to the sober work of life. No ideal is a sufficient one that will not satisfy us in our declining years, as well as in the days of youth and the days of maturity. Ay, more, no ideal is all that it should be unless it is so lofty as to be visible from both sides of the river that separates the temporal life from the life that is eternal. Be not discouraged because you strive for that which can not be wholly attained. The ideal is only ideal because it is

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beyond our reach, and yet it may guide us as the polar star guides the mariner upon the open sea. If perfection is not possible to us, neither is it required of us. When we have done our full duty our consciences will acquit us, and our friends will not condemn. "We work in the real, but we live in the ideal," some one has said, and yet the ideal is the most real thing that we know, as all can testify.

Ask the mother who holds in her arms her boy, what her ideal is concerning him and she will tell you that she desires that his heart may be so pure that it could be laid upon a pillow and not leave a stain; that his ambition may be so holy that it could be whispered in an angel's ear, and that his life may be so clean that his mother, his sister, his wife, his child,

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could read a record of its every thought and act without a blush. But ask her if she will require this perfection in her son before she showers her love upon him, and she will answer "No." She will tell you that she will make him as good as she can; that she will follow his footsteps with a daily prayer; that in whatever land he wanders her blessing will abide with him; and that when he dies she'll hope, hope, yes, hope that the world will be better because he has lived. This is all that she can do. All that any of us can do for ourselves or for others is the best that opportunity and circumstances permit.

The development of the individual is never complete. Solomon describes the path of the just as "like the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day," and

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Holland, putting the same thought into verse, says:

“Heaven is not gained by a single bound.
We build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And mount to its summit round by round.”

So, with the work of government and the work of civilization. We find an unfinished work when we arrive; we leave the work unfinished when we are called hence. Each day marks out our duty for us, and it is for us to devote ourselves to it, whatever it may be, with high purpose and unfaltering courage. Whether we live to enjoy the fruits of our efforts or lay down the work before the victory is won, we know that every well-spoken word has its influence; that no good deed is ever lost. And we know, also, that no one can count his

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life on earth as spent in vain if, when he departs, it can be said: The night is darker because his light has gone out; the world is not so warm because his heart has grown cold in death.

