

It is not only the unhealthy, bereaved, forsaken or ruined that consider life not worth the living—who do not look with distinct eye upon the real meaning of their life. There are young men, their pulses beating steadily, but who suffer from sadness. The estimate of the many ordinary pleasures, of ordinary existence, the neglect to place a real value upon these, is the true cause of their melancholy. How feebly we often estimate the pleasures of respiration, that of muscular action, that of volition. Yet these are all pleasures. Were they more frequently valued higher, fewer would be the graves filled with suicides (for they virtually killed themselves) taken in their early days when life should seem brightest and pleasure should seem most joyful.

Life then means happiness. He has true happiness who most lives, who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.

And he whose heart beats quickest lives the longest. Lives in one hour more than in years do some whose fat blood sleeps as it slips along their veins.

“A day to childhood seems a year
And years like passing ages.”

View with me that late catastrophe, which swept ten thousand souls into eternity. What countless heroic deeds have been recorded. What other land or age can boast of men, women and children so noble, so self-sacrificing, so heroic. Death given for another's safety, life for a life more dearer. What happiness those beings must possess and ever will possess who endanger their lives to save another's. So great is a human life valued that the qualification of saving a life alone fully compensates the risking of a life. Yet how much nobler to save a soul from eternal death! How much grander the deed to be the means of instilling into ignorant minds incentives to a life of goodness and purity.

Truth must therefore be the one object of our pursuit and through the truth happiness.

The chemist surrounded with his retorts and fires, works patiently to discover some new element or compound, fully satisfied if his researches benefit or enlighten his fellow-man. Selfishness is not his aim. Truth, truth emblazoned on his banner, points out his path and on he marches steadily, patiently. The mechanic whistles merrily over his task, knowing that his fellow-man will bless and thank him for his generous character and unselfish workmanship. Why is it that our artisans, our business men all toil together so cheerfully? Is it for the simple hard cash they are earning? No, no, there is, I believe, implanted in every rational mind, a consciousness that tells one to aid his fellow-man—aid him gloriously and heroically. Why do we wring our hands and cry out in anguish as we view a drowning man. It is sympathy, unselfish, noble. All we have would we give to bring back that person to life.

If we have found that the present age offers its peculiar intellectual trials, and if we feel ourselves set in the midst of so many and great dangers, let us not be paralyzed by the consciousness of them, so as to deem the search for truth unimportant, or anticipate that it will be unsuccessful. Let us realize the solemnity of our position as responsible and immortal beings. We are creatures of a day, soon to pass into eternity, placed here to prepare ourselves for that unknown world into which we shall carry the moral character that has been stamped upon us here, and capable whilst we are here of doing untold good by a godly example, or of contributing to the ruin of the souls of our fellow-man. How important, both for ourselves and for others that we should learn and appreciate that truth which is to be the means of our salvation, how important for ourselves, lest we be castaways! how important for others, lest we help them build a structure of hay and stubble which shall be consumed and destroyed at the last day.