

Happiness

In almost every man, there are two natures, one the source of all his actions, the explanatory cause of his whole life, the other a deeper and, I think, a finer nature, the fountain-head of all his ideals, a source whence flow all his dreams of life, as he would like to lead it. In other words, many a person willing and performing his daily work, in a way perfectly all right in itself, deep within him, dreams that same life in a manner much more perfect. If a person be led by this deeper nature, throughout his whole life, he can expect only happiness.

It is my own personal opinion that both these natures are to be found in myself. I have a very great fear of being pushed into this world of strife, for, lacking self-confidence, I do not expect very great things of myself. What we may call my finer nature bids me seek only a moderate success in life, to get any sort of a job, and, by working steadily, to arrive at some decent position. More than this does it tell me. The very essence of its message is that, whatever my position in life may be, I should always cheerfully accept life's ups and downs. But my coarser nature is in complete control. I know myself too well. I realize that a life of strenuous toil will not bring out the good in me but rather the coarseness. Therefore I can only dream idle dreams of success, of wealth, fame and position, idle, because by them I am not led to seek any certain work, or other means to that end.

To follow the precepts of the deeper nature insures a man's complete happiness in this life so far as it can be attained. He desires only moderate success, for great success is not necessary to his plan. He does not desire every comfort. In his mind, it is good for a man to suffer. His two greatest ambitions are these, to live rightly, and whatever life may hold for him, to be cheerful and optimistic. Without a good life, there can be no true happiness. But the second ambition, what a powerful medium to happiness is there! To toil cheerfully at one's work, to be a source of pleasure to all around, to accept one's troubles with the proper spirit, thinking of their beneficial side, to accept one's pleasures as they come, not madly revelling in pleasures but rather quietly enjoying them, to rejoice in the good things of life, yet not to sorrow

deeply in the discomforts, should not all these constitute happiness? If a person acted thus, no matter how tragic his life, it could never be called unhappy. He would build up in himself such a fountain of happiness as would destroy any such possibility.

Happiness is a state of the soul. It should not be affected a great deal by externals. It is spirit that a man gradually builds up in himself, which enables him to meet the evils in life and to increase the good things. It must be earned. It cannot be bought. It is not to be found in the extremes of life. For, even as the truest love is not that burning, romantic passion, so often manifested to us in popular writings, but rather a gentle, tender flame, which though never flashing to great heights, yet, beginning humbly, never flickers out, but, on the contrary, gathers strength throughout the years; so true happiness is not to be found in that state where every want is sated as it is known but rather, in that in which man meets many obstacles to his desires, where he is often discomforted, yet never discouraged, where he defeats the world or is defeated with the same unfailing cheerfulness. Such happiness is the nearest man may ever approach beatitude and it is an end for which all men should strive.

Yet, if one be ruled by this second and less beautiful nature, one also will seek happiness, a happiness not founded on a spirit of cheerfulness and a resolute optimism in the face of trouble, but rather on the evasion of one's troubles and the satisfaction of every want. Material success then is to be the medium, leading to this happiness. By such success is meant the attainment of wealth, position, and power. In true happiness, one has a spirit of cheerfulness, whereby sorrows are easily forgotten and pleasures more agreeably enjoyed. Through success, a person attempts to do away with everything that does not affect him agreeably, and to make all pleasure, and the result is boredom. Every man must meet sorrows many times in life. Success cannot remove many of them. A person, as a result of success, becomes less inured to them, and, if he have no spiritual fortification against them, is bound to suffer much more intensely than one who meets his own troubles face to face, and ever overcomes them. Happiness being a perfection of the soul, cannot be acquired by a man either through the qualities of his intellect or through his possessions. It is an end in itself for which a man must strive all his days. It cannot be acquired as the by-pro-

duct of some other end. Success is not and can never be the true means to happiness.

Man is ever seeking perfection, happiness. Millions today have their minds directed to wealth and success as the means to this end. Let them be warned that happiness is not thus to be found with any certainty. Of those, who desire success, many will fail to attain it and their lot can only be one of discontent. Many of those who do attain it will find that their greatest pleasure was in working for it, in piling up wealth. There will be little happiness for them in enjoying it. Much wealth is unnecessary for happiness. Therefore the ambition of all people should be a moderate success in life, enough money to maintain them in a state, where, though living in some comfort, they may still meet the storm and stress of everyday life. If all people realized this, and if we might have at the same time both an economic depression, and a millennium, then well might the slogan of the unemployed be, "A decent job for all, and let wealth be the burden of a few."—D. J. M., '32.



In faith and hope the world will disagree,
But all mankind's concern is charity.

—Pope.

Ah! What would the world be to us,
If the children were no more?
We should dread the desert behind us
Worse than the dark before.

—Longfellow

