

Men Are Not Willing to Pay the Price

He who starts upon a journey should have a definite idea as to his destination, otherwise, he wanders about aimlessly like a vessel upon the great ocean, without chart or compass, or even a pilot, driven before every wind, and wrecked at last upon the shores of some unknown, barren country. Alas! and how many persons finally discover that life has been spent in vain, their energies and strength have been exhausted for naught; that the tree of life, which should have been laden with fruit, is barren, containing nothing but leaves.

Life is a journey, and he who would succeed should carefully consider its aim and end. Life is also a growth, and it should be developed along natural and noble lines. Every man endowed with the faculties and intelligence accorded to the great mass of people of this country ought to make his life a success, especially in the present enlightened generation, and in this, the best and greatest country of all civilized nations. It would seem that the only real excuse for failure must be either lack of intelligence or pure laziness.

Success is sure to crown the life of any person who possesses an average intellect, a high ideal, a disposition to work, who is ready to sacrifice if necessary and endure without flinching, and is willing to bear needful trials. And yet how few succeed. The world has ever been sharply divided into two classes, the few who succeed, and the many who fail.

Why is it that so many fail while the opportunities are so great and the possibilities so vast? The answer is obvious. Men are not willing to pay the price of success, they turn a deaf ear to the warnings of others; they ignore the lessons of experience, and, with eyes wide open, head their course straight for the rocks where thousands have gone down. Failure is the result of disregarding natural law.

(Portraits and Principles of the World's Great Men and Women... Designed and Arranged by William C. King, Springfield, Massachusetts: King-Richardson Publishing Co., 1897, ebook, 44-45; From Selecting an Occupation by James W. Cole)