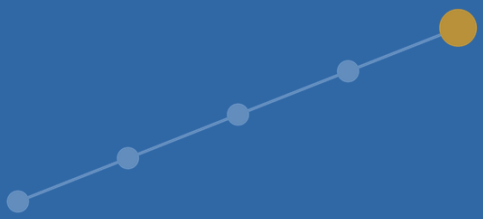
LEADERSHIP SERIES FOR SUCCESSFUL LIVING

VOLUME FIVE



Persistence An Iron Will

"Life makes way for the determined man or woman."

ORISON SWETT MARDEN

Edited and narrated by Richard Gorham

Leadership-Tools.com

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VOLUME FIVE

Persistence

An Iron Will

Based on the original edition of
An Iron Will (1901)

ORISON SWETT MARDEN
Author of Pushing to the Front

Edited for ebook and audio by
Richard Gorham

REVISED 2026

Leadership-Tools.com

ABOUT THIS EDITION

Orison Swett Marden published *An Iron Will* in 1901. Richard Gorham edited it for ebook and audio in 2006. He shortened some passages and brought parts of the language closer to the way people talk today. This 2026 edition keeps that text and gives it a new design, with a contents page that links to each chapter.

The audio edition and the companion workbook are free at Leadership-Tools.com. The audio covers the seven chapters of the book, and the workbook follows the same chapters, with a summary of key points and questions for each one.

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CHAPTER I

Training the Will

"The education of the will is the object of our existence," says Emerson.

Nor is this putting it too strongly, if we emphasize the human will in its relationship to one's personal happiness and fulfillment. This supports the saying of J. Stuart Mill, that "a character is a completely fashioned will." Meaning, the will-power of a person is well trained and resolute when called upon.

The development and discipline of one's will-power is of supreme importance in relation to one's overall success in life. No man can ever underestimate the power of an iron will. It is a part of our human nature, and the quality of our very existence depends upon it. The achievements of history have been the choices, the determinations, the creations, of the human will. It was the will, quiet or outspoken, gentle or firm, of men like Wilberforce and Garrison, Goodyear and Cyrus Field, Bismarck and Grant, that made them indomitable. They simply would do what they planned to do, what they said they would do outright, despite any challenge or hardship.

Such men can no more be stopped than the sun can be dimmed, or the tide be kept from rising. Most men and women

fail, not through a lack of education or agreeable personal qualities, but from a lack of dogged determination, from a deficit of a dauntless will.

"It is impossible," says Sherman, "to look into the conditions under which the battle of life is being fought." Our success really depends upon the strength and hardiness of our will-power. Therefore we must make efforts to cultivate, strengthen, and make it into one of our greatest assets, a priceless tool that will remain at our disposal throughout all our lifetime. Young people need to go into training for it. We live in an age where athletes are of a high profile. Those who are determined to have great achievements in sports must leverage their willpower to get the most out of their training. This is well illustrated by a report that was written about the Marathon race in an Olympian Games, which was won by the young Greek peasant, Sotiri Loues.

A STRUGGLE IN THE RACE OF LIFE

There had been no great parade in honor of the countless hours spent in training of this champion runner. From his work at the plough he quietly determined that he would take on the task of making Greece victorious before the assembled strangers from every land. He was known to be a good runner, and without fuss or hesitation he entered himself as a competitor. But it was not his speed alone or out-distancing every rival that made the young Greek stand out from among his fellow athletes on that day.

When he left his cottage home, his father said to him, "Sotiri, you must only return a victor!" The light of a firm resolve shone in the young man's eye. The old father was sure that his boy

would win, and so he made his way to the games, determined to witness his son's great victory.

No one knew the old man and his three daughters as they elbowed their way through the crowd. The race was on and the fans were thrilled. At last the crowd that had assembled was told that the critical moment had arrived, that the racers were nearing the goal, the old father looked up through eyes that were a little dim as he realized that truly Sotiri was leading the way.

He was "returning a victor." How the crowd surged around the young peasant when the race was fairly won! Wild with excitement, they did not know how to shower upon him sufficient praise for his grand achievement. Ladies overwhelmed him with rings of flowers; some even gave him their watches, and other gifts of all kinds were quickly offered as a well deserved bounty for his captured prize. The princes embraced him, and the king himself saluted him in military fashion. But the young Sotiri was seeking praise of another kind. Past the ranks of royalty and past the outstretched hands of his own countrymen, past the applauding crowd of foreigners, his gaze wandered till it fell upon an old man trembling with eagerness, who resolutely pushed his way through the excited, satisfied throng of well-wishers. Then the young face lit up with anticipation, and his father advanced to the innermost circle with arms outstretched to embrace his boy, the young son said, simply: "You see, father, I obeyed, I will return home the victor."

MENTAL DISCIPLINE

The athlete trains for his race; and the mind also must be in constant training if one is to win the race of life.

"It is,"' says Professor Mathews, "only by continued, strenuous efforts, repeated again and again, day after day, week after week, and month after month, that the ability can be acquired to focus the mind to one subject, however abstract, to the exclusion of everything else.

The process of obtaining this level of self-mastery — this complete command of one's mental powers — is a gradual one, its length varies depending upon the mental constitution of each person; but its acquisition is worth infinitely more than the cost of it’s labor."

"Perhaps the most valuable result of all education," it was said by Professor Huxley, " is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do when it ought to be done, whether you like it or not; it is the first lesson which ought to be learned, and, however early a man's training begins, it is probably this one lesson that will most determine his destiny."

DOING THINGS ONCE

When Henry Ward Beecher was asked how it was that he could accomplish so much more than other men, he replied:

"I don't do more, I do less than other people. They do all their work three times over: once in anticipation, once in actuality, and once again upon reflection. I do mine in actuality alone, doing it once instead of three times provides me with a most powerful advantage."

This was the intelligent, habitual exercise of Mr. Beecher. He trained himself to use his will-power to concentrate his mind upon what he was doing at a given moment, and to think it through fully before turning to focus on something else. Anyone, who has observed successful businessmen closely, has noticed this characteristic. One of the secrets of a successful life is to be able to hold all of our energies upon one point, to focus all of the power of our mind upon one single place or thing.

A CENTRALIZING FORCE

The mental reservoir of most people is similar to that of a leaky dam, where the potential power of the water is lost, never fully harnessed to run over the wheel. The habit of an unfocused mind opens the door to allow worry, petty anxieties and jealousies to enter. The leaks in our mental reservoir, eventually sap our reserve power and therefore lessen the chances of our success.

The great thing to learn here is the secret of always running all of the water over the wheel of the mill and not allowing any of it to go through the holes in the dam.

The man who does not learn, early in life, to focus his efforts, to centralize his power, will never achieve marked success in anything. The waste of life, as a result of trying to do too many things at once is appalling. No one is large enough to be split up into many parts and remain in his most effective state; and the sooner a man can stamp this truth upon his mind the better his chances will be for becoming a successful and profitable member of society.

Energy must be conserved. The manager of a large establishment, a very promising young man, declined the offer of a directorship of two leading banks in his town. In giving his reason for declining, he said that if he committed his energies in too many directions, he could not make a great success of his regular business. The man who has the power of unification, whose every effort has reference to one central aim, is the one who reaches the top.

He understands that it is not the amount of work that can be accomplished at a fever-pitch, stretched in all directions, but it is persistence of focus that keeps us at our best. It is the long, steady pull, the unconquerable purpose, the unbroken effort, that wins the battle of life.

"No one ever won success without great will-power to eternally hold himself to his goal, even in the face of great difficulties and obstacles. Even if you possess great abilities, without will-power, they are of little use, for they are not forced to leave their mark. They are never fully developed into the great gift that they were meant for. A person of only medium talents, but who possesses a great strength of will, can, by remaining focused on this one thing, win great success."

> "Genius, that power which dazzles mortal eyes, Is but Perseverance in disguise."
> — Henry Austin

Many a man would have been a success had he only seen fit to connect his fragmented efforts. Spasmodic, disconnected attempts, without concentration, uncontrolled without any fixed

idea, will never bring long lasting success. It is continuity of purpose alone that achieves the greatest results.

LEARNING TO SWIM

The way to learn to run is to run, the way to learn to swim is to swim. The way to learn to develop will-power is by the actual exercise of will-power in the business of life. "The man that exercises his will," says an English writer, "develops a stronger and more effective force for overcoming life's challenges. His success is based on the extent to which such an exercise is intelligently and persistently developed and maintained."

The putting forth of will-power is a means of strengthening will-power. The will becomes strong by exercise. To stick to a thing till you are a master of it, is a test of intellectual discipline and power.

"It is astonishing," says Dr. Theodore Cuyler, "how many men and women lack this power of 'holding firm' until they reach their goal. Anyone can make a sudden dash, but they too often lack the grit to sustain their drive. They are easily discouraged. They get on as long as everything goes smoothly, but when there is friction they lose heart. They depend on stronger personalities for their spirit and strength. They lack independence or originality.

They only dare to do what others do. They do not step boldly from the crowd and act fearlessly on their own."

THE BIG TREES

What is needed for someone who would succeed at the highest levels possible is the skill of careful planning. He should maintain his energy and health so that he may be equal to all emergencies. Thomas Starr King said that the great trees of California gave him his first impression of the power of a solid reserve. "It was the thought of the vast time and energy that had been compacted into those enormous trees," he said, "that stirred me. The mountains had given them their iron and rich stimulants, the hills had given them their soil, the clouds had given their rain and snow, and a thousand summers and winters had poured strength into their vast root system."

No young man can hope to do anything above the commonplace who has not made his personal and financial situation into a reservoir of power on which he can constantly draw from, and which will never fail him in any emergency. Be sure that you have stored away, into your very own reservior, the energy and the knowledge that will be equal to any great challenge when it comes. To be clear, not IF, but when. "If I were twenty, and had but ten years to live," said a great scholar and writer, "I would spend the first nine years accumulating knowledge and getting ready for the tenth."

"I WILL."

"There are no two words in the English language which stand out more boldly, like kings upon a checker-board, to so great an extent as the words 'I will.' There is strength, depth and solidity, decision, confidence and power in these two little words. They

bring determination, vigor and individuality, into any conversation. The man who says “I will” is a man who believes in his ability to triumph over difficulties, to gain victory in the face of discouragement. He possesses the will, the promise and strength to perform, unfettered aspirations, and is the master over a thousand and one human impulses that would otherwise impede his progress."

As one has well said: "He who is silent is forgotten; he who does not advance falls back; and he who stops is overwhelmed, out-distanced and crushed. He who ceases to grow and develop, to become greater - becomes smaller. The man who becomes stationary begins to deteriorate and eventually dies. Inactivity, is the beginning of the end — it precedes death. To live is to achieve, to press on, to will without ceasing."

> Be thou a hero, let thy might
> Tramp on eternal snows its way,
> And through the ebony walls of night,
> Hew down a passage unto day.
> — Park Benjamin

CHAPTER II

The Rulers of Destiny

There is no chance, no destiny, no fate,
Can circumvent, or hinder, or control
The firm resolve of a determined soul.
Gifts count for nothing, will alone is great;
All things give way before it soon or late
What obstacle can stay the mighty force
Of the sea-seeking river in its course,
Or cause the ascending orb of day to wait?
Each well-born soul must win what it deserves.
Let the fool prate of luck. The fortunate
Is he whose earnest purpose never swerves,
Whose slightest action or inaction serves
The one great aim.

— Ella Wheeler Wilcox

There is always room for a man of force.

— Emerson

The king is the man who can

— Carlyle

A strong, defiant purpose is many-handed, and lays hold of whatever is near that can serve it, it has a magnetic power that draws to itself whatever is kindred.

— T. T. Munger

What is will-power? Some see it as the energy and force of our character. Energy of will, self-originating determination, is the soul of every great character. Where there is will-power, there is

life, where it is not present, there is faintness, helplessness, and despondency. "Let it be your first priority of study to teach the world that you are not made of wood or straw; that there is some iron in you."

Those who have left their mark upon the world have been men and women of great and prompt decision. The achievements of will-power are almost beyond computation. Scarcely anything seems impossible to the person who can will strongly enough and long enough. With a clear goal and a resolute will-power, all things are possible. One talent with a firm will behind it will accomplish more than any special gift without the will can ever hope for. Just as a thimbleful of gunpowder, supported by the focus and force within a rifle, will provide a greater execution than an entire railroad car full of the same material that is simply burned in the open air.

"THE WILLS, THE WON'TS, AND THE CAN'TS."

"There are three kinds of people in the world," says an unnamed recent writer, "the wills, the won'ts, and the can'ts. The "wills" accomplish everything; the "won'ts" oppose everything; the "can'ts" fail in everything."

The shores of fortune, as Foster says, are covered with the stranded wrecks of men of brilliant ability, but who have lacked courage, faith, and decision, and have therefore perished in sight of more resolute but less capable adventurers, who succeeded in making their journey complete.

If I were called upon to express in a single word the secret of so many failures among those who started out with high hopes,

I would say they lacked will-power. They could only half will: and what is a man without a full will? He is like an engine without steam. Genius that is unexecuted is no more genius than a bushel of acorns is a forest of oak trees.

Will-power has been called the spinal column of personality. "The will in its relation to life," says an English writer, "may be compared to the rudder and to the steam engine of any vessel. It is the will entirely that determines the direction of its course and the speed and vigor of its progress."

Strength of will-power is the test of a young man or woman's possibilities. Can he maintain his will, and hold on to whatever he undertakes with an iron grip? It is this iron grip that – makes the man. What chance is there in this crowding, competitive, selfish, greedy world, where everything is push or be pushed, for a young man or woman with no will, no grit and determination to achieve their life goals? The one who would forge to the front in this competitive age must be a person of prompt and determined decision.

A TAILOR'S NEEDLE

It is said in one of Ben Jonson's old plays: "When I once take the humor of a thing, I am like your tailor's needle — I go through with it."

This is not different from another, who said: "When I have once taken a position, I go straight to my aim; I overthrow all barriers that stand in my way, I conquer each one."

And in business affairs the advice of Rothschild is to the same effect: "Do without fail that which you determine to do."

Gladstone's children were taught to accomplish to the end whatever they might begin, no matter how insignificant the undertaking might be.

WHAT IS WORSE THAN RASHNESS?

It is irresolution or indecision that is worse than rashness. "He that shoots," says Feltham, "may sometimes hit the mark; but he that shoots not at all can never hit it. Indecision is like a terrible fever; it shakes neither this limb or that limb alone, but all the body is at once in a fit."

The man who is forever twisting and turning, stepping forward then back, hesitating and dawdling, weighing and balancing, splitting hairs over non-essentials, listening to every new motive which presents itself, will never accomplish anything. But the positive man, the decided man, is a true power in the world, and stands straight up for something; you can measure him, and estimate in advance the work that his energy will accomplish.

Opportunity is coy and swift. It is gone before the slow, the unobservant and the careless can ever seize her. "Vigilance in watching opportunity," said Phelps, "tact and daring in seizing upon opportunity; force and persistence in leveraging opportunity to its utmost for the greatest achievement possible — these are the virtues which will command success." "The best men," remarked Chapin, "are not those who have waited for chances, but who have taken them; besieged the chance; conquered the chance; and made chance his servant."

Is it not possible to classify successes and failures by their various degrees of willpower? A man who can resolve vigorously

upon a single course of action, and turns neither to the right nor to the left of it, though he may be squarely tempted to do so, is the man who keeps his eyes upon his goal, brushing off any and all distractions. This is the same man who is sure to succeed.

Kings were known to say, "Not every vessel that sails from port will bring back the golden treasure. But shall the vessel therefore rot in the harbor? No, my loyal subjects! Give its sails to the wind!"

PERSONAL POWER

Personal power exists within the mind of every human being. Sometimes its existence is unrealized, but it is there. It is there to be developed and brought forth like the flower of an orchid. To allow this latent power to remain dormant, to desolate one's ambition, to smother one's purpose, would be criminal. To develop your personal power is to give life to all that is best within you, so that you may then share it with others. Only through having an absolute knowledge of yourself, can you properly estimate your value to the world."

"There is hardly a reader," says an experienced educator, "who will not be able to recall the early life of at least one young man whose childhood was spent in poverty, and who, in boyhood, expressed a firm desire to secure a higher education. Once that desire became a stern-resolve, the avenues began to open for the young man. His desire and resolve created an atmosphere which attracted the forces necessary for the attainment of Lincoln’s purpose. Many daring men will tell us that, as long as they were hoping and striving and longing for a clear aim, mountains

of difficulty would rise before them; but upon focusing their desires into fixed purposes, aid seemed to always reach them to help them along their way."

DO YOU BELIEVE IN YOURSELF?

The man without self-reliance and an iron will is the plaything of chance, the puppet of his environment, the slave of circumstances. Are not our own self-doubts the greatest of our enemies? If you are to succeed up to the limit of your possibilities, then you must constantly hold to the firm belief that you are destined to succeed, and that you will be successful, no matter what opposes you?

You should never allow doubt to enter your mind that you were not intended to do great things in this life. Regard any suggestion that your life may be a failure, that you are not made like those who succeed, as you would a traitor, and expel it from your mind forever.

There is something raw and pure in the young boy or girl who possesses the spirit of boldness and fearlessness, who has proper confidence in his or her ability to do and dare, without hesitation.

The world takes us at our own valuation. It believes in the man who believes in himself, but it has little use for the timid man, the one who is never certain of himself; who cannot rely on his own judgment, who craves advice from others, and is afraid to go ahead on his own account.

It is the man with a positive nature, the man who believes that he is equal to any emergency, who believes he can do the

thing he attempts, who wins the confidence of his fellow-man. He is trusted and admired because he is brave and self-sufficient.

Those who have accomplished great things in the world have been, as a rule, bold, aggressive, and self-confident. They dared to step out from the crowd, and act in an original way. They were not afraid to be held accountable.

There is little room in this crowding, competing age for the timid, vacillating youth. She who would succeed today must not only be brave, but must also dare to take chances. She who waits for certainty never wins.

> "The law of the soul is eternal endeavor,
> That bears the man onward and upward forever."

"A man can be too trusting of others, but he can never be too confident in himself." Never admit defeat or poverty. Stoutly assert your divine right to hold your head up and look the world in the face; step bravely to the front of whatever or whomever may oppose you, and the world will make way for you. No one will insist upon your rights while you yourself doubt that you have any. Believe you were made for the place you fill. Put forth your whole energies. A young man once said to his employer, "Don't give me an easy job. I want to handle heavy boxes and be the one you look to for shouldering the greatest loads — and he stretched out his two brawny arms, while his honest eyes were fixed and resolute, his entire being glowed with an awareness of strength.

The world in its heart admires the focused, determined doer. The world steps aside to let any man pass who knows where he is going. It is quite interesting how so many men and women who

become mere casualties of life, seem to bow to any spirit that will not bow to them. They quickly yield to another's design, after having in vain attempted to make their own.

"The man who succeeds," says Prentice Mulford, "must always continually live, move, think, and act as if he has already gained that success, or he never will gain it."

"We go forth," said Emerson. "We remain dedicated, believing in the iron links of our Destiny, and we will not turn on our heels for no one. A thought-provoking book, a sermon, a powerful speech, or only the sound of a name can energize our will. We then we come alive and suddenly believe we can do anything. We cannot hear of others success, their great powers of performance, without making a fresh declaration for our own future achievements.

CHAPTER III

Force of Will in Camp and Field

Oh, what miracles have been wrought by the self-confidence, and the self-determination of an iron will!

What impossible deeds have been performed by it! It was this firm resolution that took Napoleon over the Alps in midwinter; it took Farragut and Dewey past the cannons, torpedoes, and mines of their enemy; it led Nelson and Grant on to declare victory; it has been the great stimulant in the world of discovery, invention, and art; it has helped to win a thousand triumphs in war and science which were deemed impossible by the naysayers.

The secret of Joan of Arc's success was not alone in her character, but in her will to realize the visions which inspired her. Her will was fueled by her self-confidence— confidence in her divine mission.

It was an iron will that gave Nelson command of the British fleet, along with a title, and a statue in the Square. It was the keynote of his character when he said, "When I don't know whether to fight or not, I always fight."

It was an iron will that was brought into play when only three men held ninety thousand Tuscans at bay until the bridge across the Tiber had been destroyed. It was the iron will of Caesar, who

when finding his army hard pressed seized a spear and measured his voice to inspire his army to snatch victory from almost certain defeat— when Wellington fought in so many battles without ever being conquered — when Ney on a hundred fields changed apparent disaster into brilliant triumph — when Sheridan arrived from Winchester just as the Union was about to retreat, to quickly turn the tide — when Sherman signaled his men to hold the fort clinging to his firm belief that their leader would arrive shortly. In all cases, an iron will was the key ingredient for the successful outcome.

History furnishes thousands of examples of men and women who have seized occasions to accomplish results deemed impossible by those less resolute. Prompt decision and an instinct for taking action, places the world before them. Who is the organizer, the great leader in every village or large city? Is it not the man who is made mostly out of iron?

NAPOLEON AND GRANT

"What would you do if you were besieged in a place entirely destitute of provisions?" asked the examiner, when Napoleon was a cadet.

"If there were anything to eat in the enemy's camp, I should not be concerned." Napoleon quickly replied.

When Paris was in the hands of a mob, and the authorities were panic-stricken, in came a man who said, "I know a young officer who can quell this mob." "Send for him."

Napoleon was sent for; he came, he subjugated the mob, he subjugated the authorities, he ruled France, then he conquered Europe.

Without a word or a look of concern, Napoleon was known to place himself at the head of the battle, and his aids and generals were close to his side. He believed so firmly in his effective planning to outreach and overwhelm his enemy that he had little care or worry for his own safety, or that of his generals. He had thought through to a finish his entire plan for victory.

The guns of the enemy were rarely aimed squarely upon his advance. The advance was too quick to allow time for a thoughtful response from the enemy. So sudden and so miraculous was it all, that the enemy artillerists would many times abandon their guns, and they would flee in a panic instead of rushing to the front to meet Napoleon and his men in a typical battle. This element of surprise Napoleon had counted on in making his bold attacks.

What was Napoleon but a thunderbolt of war? He once journeyed from Spain to Paris at seventeen miles an hour in the saddle.

"Is it possible to cross the path?" asked Napoleon of the engineers who had been sent to explore the dreaded pass of St. Bernard.

"Perhaps," was the hesitating reply, "it is within the limits of possibility." "Forward, then!" Napoleon exclaimed.

Yet Ulysses S. Grant, a young man unknown to fame, with neither money nor influence, with no patrons or friends, in six

years fought more battles, gained more victories, captured more prisoners, took more spoils, commanded more men, than Napoleon did in twenty years. "The great thing about him," said Lincoln, " is cool persistence."

"DON'T SWEAR — FIGHT."

When the Spanish fire on San Juan Hill became almost unbearable, some of the Rough Riders began to swear. Colonel Wood, with the wisdom of a good leader, called out, amid the whistle of the bullets: "Don't swear — fight!"

In a skirmish at Salamanca, while the enemy's bullets were raining into his regiment, Sir William Napier's men became disobedient. He at once ordered a halt, and beat down four of the ringleaders. The other men yielded at once, and then marched three miles under heavy cannon fire as coolly as if they were conducting a practice drill session.

Once, when a famous General, struck an officer with a whip, the man drew a pistol that mis-fired. The General quickly replied: "Sir, I hereby order you to a three days' arrest for not having your arms in better order." The man of an iron will is calm in the hour of danger.

"I HAD TO RUN LIKE A CYCLONE."

This was what Roosevelt said about his pushing forward up San Juan Hill ahead of his regiment: "I had to run like a cyclone to stay in front and keep from being run over."

The personal heroism of Hobson, or of Cushing, who blew up the "CSS Albemarle" in Oct 1864, was but the expression of a

magnificent will power. It was this will-power that was the basis of General Wheeler's unparalleled military advancement: a second lieutenant at twenty-three, a colonel at twenty-four, a brigadier-general at twenty-five, a major-general at twenty-six, a corps commander at twenty-seven, and a lieutenant-general at twenty-eight.

General Wheeler had sixteen horses killed under him, and a great number wounded. His saddle equipments and clothes were frequently struck by the missiles of his enemy. He was three times wounded, once critically. He had thirty-two staff officers, or acting staff officers, killed or wounded. In almost every case they were immediately by his side. No officer was ever more exposed to the missiles of death than Joseph Wheeler.

What is this imperial characteristic of manhood, this iron will? It is the will that drives all magnificent achievement, whether by heroes in our greatest battles, or the heroic firefighters and patrol officers of our most dangerous cities?

CHAPTER IV

Will-Power in Its Relation to Health and Disease

I

There is no doubt that, great decision of character is usually accompanied by a solid and unwavering resolve. Men who have been noted for great firmness of character have usually been strong and robust.

As a rule it is the strong physical man who carries weight and conviction. Take, as an example, William the Conqueror, as he is described by Green:

"The very spirit of the sea-robbers from whose ancestry he sprang seemed embodied in his gigantic form, his enormous strength, his savage countenance, his desperate bravery. No other knight under heaven, his enemies confessed, was William's peer.

No other man could bend William's bow. He rose to his greatest heights in moments when other men despaired. No other man who ever sat upon the throne of England was this man's match."

Or, take Webster. Sydney Smith said: "Webster is a living lie; because no man on earth can be as great as he looks." One would

be inclined at first sight to bet that this man could successfully take on the most powerful army of men on earth."

His very physique was eloquent Men yielded their wills to his at first sight of him.

The great prizes of life often fall to the most robust, the strong, — not to a huge muscle or powerful frame necessarily, but to a strong vitality, a great nervous energy. It is the man working almost continuously for hours on end to finish a task to its finest; it is the Napoleons, that travel twenty hours in the saddle; it is the Franklins, camping out in the open air at seventy years of age; it is the Gladstones, firmly grasping the helm of the ship of state at eighty-four, tramping miles every day, and chopping down huge trees at eighty-five, — it is these sorts of men who possess the will to accomplish the greatest things in life.

To prosper you must improve your brain power; and nothing helps the brain more than a healthy body. The race of today and tomorrow is only to be won by those who will study and work hard to keep their bodies and minds in good working condition, so that they are able and ready to sustain the continued daily pressures, staying one step ahead of our most persistent enemy, old age.

It is health rather than strength that is of the greatest importance. Health is essentially the requirement of our time, which will enable us to succeed in a long life. In all modern occupations — from the nursery, to the school, to the shop or world beyond — the brain and the body needs our attention and nourishment. We must serve it, so it can continue to serve us.

As a rule physical vigor is the condition of a great career. Stonewall Jackson, early in life, determined to conquer every weakness he had, physical, mental, and moral. He held all of his powers with a firm hand. To his great self-discipline and self-mastery he owed his success. So determined was he to harden himself to the weather that he could not be induced to wear an overcoat in winter. "I will not give in to the cold," he said.

While he was professor at the Virginia Military Institute, his doctor advised him to retire at nine o'clock; and, no matter where he was, or who was present, he always went to bed on the appointed hour. He adhered rigidly through life to this stern system of discipline. Such self-training, such self-conquest, gives one great power over others. Self-discipline has been called the equal to genius itself.

"I can do nothing," said Grant, "without nine hours' sleep."

What else is so grand as to stand on life's threshold, fresh, young, hopeful, with a consciousness of power equal to any emergency, — a master of the situation? The height of glory for every young man or woman is his or her level of reserve power; it is their greatest strength.

Our great need of the world today is for men and women who are tough-spirited and dogged to every task. To endure the strain of our highly competitive and concentrated civilization, the future man or woman must have an excess of will-power and rugged determination. They must have a robustness of health. Mere absence of disease is not health. It is the overflowing river or spring, not the one that is only half full, that gives life and beauty

to the valley below. Only he is healthy who places himself above mediocrity; whose very life is a luxury; who feels a pounding pulse throughout his body; who feels life in every limb, as dogs do when they are in the hunt, or as young boys or girls do when unwrapping a gift.

II

Yet in spite of all this, in defiance of it, we know that an iron will is often triumphant in the contest with physical illness or infirmity.

> "Brave spirits are a balsam to themselves:
> There is a nobleness of mind that heals Wounds beyond salves."
> — Cartwright

"One day," said a noted tightrope walker, "I signed an agreement to walk a wheelbarrow along a tightrope on a given day. Turns out this was only a day or two before I was seized with a terrible illness. I called in my medical physician, and told him I must be cured by a certain day; not only because I should lose what I hoped to earn, but also forfeit a large sum by not honoring my contract. I got no better, and the doctor forbade me to leave my bed. I told him, 'What do I want with your advice? If you cannot cure me, of what good are you to me?'

When I got to the place, there was the doctor protesting that I was unfit for the exploit. I went on, even though I felt awful. I got my pole ready and my barrow, took hold of the handles and wheeled it along the rope as well as I ever had. When I got to the

end I wheeled it back again, and when I was done and out of harms way I was again stricken with the pain and discomfort of my illness. What made me so that I could wheel the barrow successfully? It was my reserve will."

"What does he know, who has not suffered?" Schiller produced his greatest tragedies in the midst of physical suffering, which almost amounted to torture. Handel, the great composer was never greater than when, approaching death, and struggling with distress and suffering, he sat down to create the great works that have made his name immortal in the world of music.

Beethoven was almost totally deaf and burdened with sorrow when he produced his greatest works. Milton wrote, "Who best can suffer, best can do."

> "Yet I argue not
> Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
> Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
> Right onward."
> — Milton

The Rev. William H. Milburn, lost his sight when he was only a child. He went on to study for the ministry, and was ordained much earlier than most. He has written half a dozen books, among them a very careful history of the Mississippi Valley. He long held the position of chaplain for the lower house of Congress.

Blind Fanny Crosby, of New York, was a teacher of the blind for many years. She wrote nearly three thousand hymns.,

"The truest help we can render one who is afflicted with illness or handicap," said Bishop Brooks, "is not to take his burden from him, but to call out his best energy which is stored deep from within. Better to assist one in calling out their greater gifts so that he may be able to bear his affliction honorably"

What a mighty will Darwin had! He was in continual ill health. He was in constant suffering. His patience was marvelous. No one but his wife knew what he endured. "For forty years," says his son, "he never knew one day of good health; "yet during those forty years he unremittingly forced himself to do the work from which others would have quickly dismissed. He had a wonderful power of sticking to a subject. He used to apologize for his patience, saying that he could not bear to be beaten, as if it were a sign of weakness.

Bulwer advises us to refuse to be ill, never to tell people we are ill, never to own it ourselves. Illness is one of those things which a man should resist on principle. Do not dwell upon your ailments nor study your symptoms. Never allow yourself to be convinced that you are not the complete master of yourself. Stoutly affirm your own superiority over any bodily illness. While we must take steps to protect our health, we should balance our concerns by keeping a high vision of health and harmony constantly in our mind.

Is not the mind the natural protector of the body? We cannot believe that the Creator has left the whole human race entirely at the mercy of our learned pharmacists. There is a divine remedy placed within us for many of the ills we suffer. If we only knew

how to use this power of will and mind to protect ourselves, many of us would be able to carry youth and cheerfulness with us into the teens of our second century.

The mind has the power to preserve and sustain physical youth and beauty, to keep the body strong and healthy, to renew life, and to preserve it from decay, many years longer than it does now. The longest-lived men and women have, as a rule, been those who have attained great mental and moral development. They have lived in the upper region of a higher life, beyond the reach of the bottle, beyond worry, and the daily anxieties that torment so many, which weaken and shatter so many lives.

Every physician knows that courageous people, with indomitable will, are not half as likely to contract contagious diseases as the timid, the vacillating, and the indifferent.

Napoleon used to visit the plague hospitals even when the physicians dreaded to go, and actually put his hands upon the plague-stricken patients. He said the man who was not afraid, could vanqish the plague. A will power like this is a strong tonic to the body. Such a will has taken many men and women from apparent death-beds, and enabled them to perform wonderful deeds of valor. When told by his physicians that he must die, Douglas Jerrold said: "And leave a family of helpless children? I won't die." He kept his word, and lived for years thereafter.

CHAPTER V

The Romance of Achievement Under Difficulties

What doth the poor man's son inherit?
Stout muscles, and a sinewy heart,
A hardy frame, a hardier spirit!
King of two hands he does his part
In every useful toil and art:
A heritage it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

— Lowell.

Has not God given every man a strong capital to start with? Are we not born rich? He is rich who has good health, a sound body, strong muscles; he is rich who has a good mind, a positive disposition, a warm heart; he is rich who has two good working hands, with five chances placed squarely on each. Equipped? Every man is equipped as only God could equip him.

What a fortune we each possess in the marvelous mechanism of our body and mind. It is individual effort that has achieved everything worth achieving.

THE FUN OF THE LITTLE GAME

A big Australian, six feet four, James Tyson, died with an estate of $25,000,000, even though he began life only as a farm hand. Tyson cared little for money. He used to say this about money:

"I shall just leave it behind me when I go. I will be done with it then, and it will not concern me afterwards.

But," he would add, with a characteristic snap of the fingers, "the money is nothing. It was the little game that was all the fun."

Being asked, "What was the little game?" he replied with a pure energy of concentration particular to only him: "Fighting the desert. That has been my work. I have been fighting the desert all my life, and I have won. I have put water where there was no water, and beef where there was no beef. I have put fences where there were no fences, and roads where there were no roads. Nothing can undo what I have done, and millions will be happier for it long after I am dead and forgotten."

Has not self-help accomplished almost all the great things of the world? How many young men falter, faint, and dally with their purpose because they have no sufficient capital to start with; so they wait and wait for some good luck to give them a lift. But success is the child of diligence and perseverance. It cannot be coaxed or bribed, get moving and begin to pay the price, and it is yours. A constant struggle, a ceaseless battle to bring success from inhospitable surroundings, is the price of all great achievements.

CONQUERORS OF FORTUNE

Benjamin Franklin had this tenacity of purpose in a wonderful degree. When he started in the printing business in Philadelphia, he carried his material through the streets on a wheelbarrow. He hired one room for his office, work-room, and sleeping-room. He found a formidable rival in the city and invited him to his room.

Pointing to a piece of bread from which he had just eaten his dinner, he said:

"Unless you can live cheaper than I can, you cannot starve me out."

Franklin's grit and determination again proved the wisdom of Edmund Burke's saying, that "He that wrestles with us strengthens our nerves, and sharpens our skill: our antagonist is our helper."

The poor and friendless lad, George Peabody, weary, footsore, and hungry, called on a tavern in Concord, N.H., and asked to be allowed to saw wood in order to pay for lodging and breakfast. He put in the necessary work to pay for everything he ever received, and as a result he out-matched most men's earnings.

Gideon Lee could not even get shoes to wear in the winter when he was a boy, so he went to work barefoot in the snow. He made a bargain with himself to work sixteen hours a day. He fulfilled it to the letter, and when from the occasional interruption he lost time, he robbed himself of sleep to make it up. He became a wealthy merchant of New York, mayor of the city, and a member of Congress.

COMMERCIAL COURAGE

The business affairs of a gentleman named Rouss were once in a complicated condition, owing money to his conflicting interests in various states, and he was eventually thrown into prison. While confined he wrote on the walls of his cell:

"I am forty years of age this day. When I am fifty, I shall be worth half a million; and by the time I am sixty, I shall be worth

a million dollars." He lived to accumulate more than three million dollars.

"The ruin which overtakes so many merchants," says Whipple, "is due not so much to their lack of business talent as to their lack of business nerve and staying power."

Cyrus W. Field had retired from business with a large fortune when he became possessed with the idea that by laying a cable at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, telegraphic communication could be established between Europe and America. He plunged into the undertaking with all the force of his being. It was an incredibly complex task: to maneuver through the forests of Newfoundland and lobby in Congress, to develop the skilled handling of his cable, to resolve a second and a third breaking of the cable at sea, to understand the effect of the current on a well-laid cable, to rebound from the snapping of a main cable — none of these issues could foil the iron will of Cyrus Field, whose final triumph was the direct result of focused mental energy and dogged determination in the application of science.

FOUR NEW YORK JOURNALISTS

James Brooks, once the editor and proprietor of the "Daily Express," and later an eminent congressman, began his early career as a clerk in a store in Maine, and when he was twenty-one he recalls receiving for his pay a barrel of New England rum. He was so eager to go to college that he began his journey with his trunk on his back, and once he graduated he was still so poor that he carried his trunk on his back to the station as he returned home.

When James Gordon Bennett was forty years old he collected all his property, three hundred dollars, and in a cellar with a board laid squarely upon two barrels for a desk, he appointed himself his own typesetter, office boy, publisher, newsboy, clerk, editor, proofreader, and printer – in doing so, he started the "New York Herald." He did this, only after many attempts and defeats in trying to follow the advice of others. This time it was going to be done his way. Never was any man's early career a better illustration of the words spoken by Wendell Phillips' when he said, "What is defeat? Nothing but education; nothing but the first steps to something better."

Thurlow Weed was a journalist for fifty-seven years, strong, sensible, congenial, and tactful, who did so much to shape public policy in the Empire State, tells a most romantic story of his boyhood:—

"I cannot ascertain how much schooling I got at Catskill, probably less than a year, certainly not a year and a half, and this was when I was not more than five or six years old. I felt a necessity, at an early age, of trying to do something on my own.

My first employment was in sugar-making, an occupation to which I became passionate about. I now look back with great pleasure upon the days and nights spent in the sap-bush. The lack of shoes in the wintertime was the only drawback upon my happiness. However, I used to tie pieces of an old rag carpet around my feet, and got along pretty well, chopping wood and gathering up sap. But when the spring advanced, and bare

ground appeared in spots, I threw off the old carpet encumbrance and did my work barefoot.

There is much leisure time for boys who are making maple sugar. I devoted this time to reading, when I could obtain books; but the farmers of that period had few books, if any at all, except for their Bibles. I borrowed books whenever and wherever I could.

I heard that a neighbor, three miles away, had borrowed from an even more distant neighbor a book of great interest. I started off, barefoot, in the snow, to obtain the treasure. There were spots of bare ground, upon which I would stop to warm my feet. And there were also, along the road, occasional lengths of log-fence where the snow had melted, and upon which it was a luxury to walk. The book owners were at home, and they consented to loan me the book, upon my promise that it should be neither torn nor soiled upon its return. In returning with the prize, I was too happy to think of the snow or my naked feet.

Candles were then among the luxuries, not the necessaries, of life. If boys wanted to read, instead of going to bed after dark, they supplied themselves with pine knots, by the light of which, in a horizontal position, they could pursue their studies. In this manner, with my body in the sugar-house, and my head out of doors, where the pine sap was blazing, I read with intense interest the book I had borrowed, a 'History of the French Revolution.'"

Weed's next earning adventure was in an iron foundry:

"My business was, after each casting, to temper and prepare the moldings. This was night and day work. We ate salt pork and rye and Indian bread, three times a day, and slept on straw in bunks. I liked the excitement of a furnace life."

When he went to the "Albany Argus" to learn the printing business he worked from five in the morning till nine at night.

FROM HUMBLEST BEGINNINGS

> The more difficulties one has to encounter, within and without, the more significant and the higher in inspiration his life will be.
> — Horace Bushnell.

The story of Weed is not an uncommon one in America. Some of the most eminent men and women on the globe have struggled with poverty in early life and triumphed over it.

Linnaeus, considered one of the fathers of modern ecology, was so poor when first getting his education that he had to mend his shoes with folded paper, and often had to beg his meals from his friends.

During the ten years in which he made his greatest discoveries, Isaac Newton could hardly pay two shillings a week to the Royal Society of which he was a member. Some of his friends wanted to get him excused from this payment, but he would not allow them to act on his behalf.

Humphry Davy, a famous chemist who was considered to be one of Britain's leading scientists, had but a slender chance to acquire great scientific knowledge, yet he had true will-power in him

and he made even old pans, kettles, and bottles contribute to his success, as he experimented and studied in the attic of the store where he worked.

George Stephenson was one of eight children whose parents were so poor that all lived in a single room. George had to watch cows for a neighbor, but he managed to make time to sculpt engines out of clay, adding hemlock sticks for pipes. At seventeen he had the chance to take charge of an engine. He could neither read nor write, but the engine was his teacher, and he was a faithful student. While the other hands of his mates were playing games or loafing in liquor shops during the holidays, George was taking his machine to pieces, cleaning it, studying it, and making experiments in engines. When he had become famous as a great inventor, for improvements in engines, those who had loafed and played called him lucky.

It was by steadfastly keeping at it, by indomitable will power, that these men won their positions in life.

> "We rise by the things that are under our feet;
> By what we have mastered of good or gain."
> — Holland

TALENT IN TATTERS

Among the companions of Sir Joshua Reynolds, while he was studying art in Rome, was a fellow pupil by the name of Astley. They made an excursion, with some others, on a sultry day, and all except Astley took off their coats. After several taunts he was persuaded to do the same, and displayed on the back of his coat

was displayed a foaming waterfall. Distress had compelled him to patch his clothes with one of his own priceless landscapes.

James Sharpies, the celebrated blacksmith artist of England, was very poor, but he often rose at three o'clock to copy books he could not buy. He would walk eighteen miles to Manchester and back after a hard day's work, to buy a shilling's worth of artist's materials. He would ask for the heaviest work in the blacksmith shop, because it took a longer time to heat at the forge, and he could thus have more time to study the precious book, which he propped up against the chimney. He was a great miser of spare moments, and used every one as though he might never see another. He devoted his leisure hours for five years to that wonderful production, "The Forge," copies of which are to be seen in homes around the world. It was by one unwavering aim, carried out by an iron will, that he was able to complete his greatest triumph.

"That boy will beat me one day," said an old painter as he watched a little fellow named Michael Angelo making drawings of pots and brushes, easels, and other articles in the studio. The barefoot boy did persevere until he had overcome every difficulty and become the greatest master of art the world has known. Although Michael Angelo made himself immortal in three different occupations,—and his fame might well rest upon his dome of St. Peter as an architect, upon his "Moses" as a sculptor, or upon his "Last Judgment" as a painter. Yet, we know by his correspondence, now in the British Museum, that when he was at work on his colossal bronze statue of Pope Julius II., he was so poor that

he could not have his younger brother come to visit him, for he possessed only one bed in which he and three of his assistants slept together.

> "The star of an unconquered will
> Arose in his breast,
> Serene, and resolute and still,
> And calm and self-possessed."

CONCENTRATED ENERGY

The struggles and triumphs of those who are destined to win is a never-ending tale. It is true that the inspiring procession of enthusiastic workers will never cease so long as the globe is turning on its axle.

Say what we will of genius, those specialized in a hundred callings, yet the fact remains that no amount of genius has ever availed upon the earth unless empowered fully by a will-power to overcome any obstacles. It is natural for barriers to rise up in front of anyone who would dare to rise above the circumstances in which he or she was born. Was not Virgil the son of a porter, Horace of a shopkeeper, Shakespeare of a wool stapler, and Cromwell the son of a brewer?

Ben Jonson, while practicing his trade of a mason, worked on Lincoln's Inn in London, with trowel in his hand, and a book in his pocket. Joseph Hunter was a carpenter in his youth, Robert Burns a plowman, Keats a druggist, Thomas Carlyle and Hugh Miller were masons. Dante was a soldier. Cardinal Wolsey, Defoe, and White were the son’s of butchers. Kepler was a waiter in a German hotel. Our many great men and women throughout

history rose from meager beginnings. They somehow harnessed a powerful work ethic and used it to gain the education and the character to become experts in their field. They rose by being greater than their callings.

By being first-class barbers, shoemakers, rail-splitters, and masons, they acquired the power which enabled them to become great inventors, authors, statesmen, and generals. Inventors John Kay, James Hargreaves, and Samuel Compton, were all artisans, uneducated and poor, but were endowed with natural talents which enabled them to make a more enduring impression upon the world than anything that they could have been done had they merely possessed scholarship or wealth.

It can be said of each of these great names that their path in life would not have been what it was, had they not possessed a superb will power that supported them each day that they pushed and prodded to move themselves onward and upward.

> Let Fortune empty her whole quiver on me,
> I have a soul that, like an ample shield,
> Can take in all, and verge enough for more;
> Fate was not mine, nor am I Fate's:
> Souls know no conquerors.
> — Dryden.

CHAPTER VI

Staying Power

"Never give up, there are chances and changes,
Helping the hopeful, a hundred to one;
And, through the chaos, High Wisdom arranges
Ever success, if you'll only hold on.
Never give up; for the wisest is boldest,
Knowing that Providence mingles the cup,
And of all maxims, the best, as the oldest,
Is the stern watchword of 'Never give up!'"
Be firm; one constant element of luck
Is genuine, solid, old Teutonic pluck.

— Holmes.

Success in most things depends on knowing how long it takes to succeed.

— Montesquieu.

The power to hold on is characteristic of all men and women who have accomplished anything great; they may lack in some other particular area, or have many weaknesses or eccentricities, but the quality of persistence is never absent from the successful individual.

No matter what opposition he meets or what discouragement overtakes him, drudgery cannot dishearten him, obstacles cannot discourage him, labor cannot depress him; misfortune and tragedy cannot break him. It is not so much a keen intellect, or having widespread resources that makes one great. Rather, it is

in being persistent and holding true to one's purpose, that makes one rise above ordinary men.

Those who succeed in life are the men and women who keep at it, who get-to-it and stick-to-it, who do not believe themselves geniuses, but who know that if they will ever accomplish anything they must do it through a determined and persistent work ethic.

Audubon after years of forest life had two hundred of his priceless drawings destroyed by mice.

"A poignant flame," he relates, "pierced my brain like an arrow of fire, and for several weeks I was sick with fever. At length my physical and moral strength awoke from within me. Again I took my gun, my game-bag, my portfolio, and my pencils, and plunged once more into the depths of the forests." Audubon would not be beaten by mice.

Many are familiar with the misfortune of Carlyle while writing his "History of the French Revolution." After the first volume was ready for the press, he loaned the manuscript to a neighbor, who left it lying on the floor, and the servant girl used it to kindle the fire. It was a bitter disappointment, but Carlyle was not the man to give up. After many months of poring over hundreds of volumes of authorities and scores of manuscripts, he reproduced that which had once burned in only a few short minutes.

PROCEED, AND LIGHT WILL DAWN

The slightest knowledge of literary history brings to light a multitude of inspiring heroes, who each came from poverty or misfortune, men and women perplexed and disheartened, who took

ownership of their plight and determined for themselves to work as hard as was necessary in order to overcome their obstacles.

A student once found under the cover of a text book he was reading a short note from a teacher to another student that said the following:

"Go on, young sir, go on. The difficulties you meet with will resolve themselves as you advance. Proceed; and light will dawn, and shine with increasing clearness on your path."

Had Balzac been easily discouraged he would have hesitated at the words of warning given by his father: "Do you know that in literature a man must be either a king or a beggar?" "Very well," was Balzac's reply to his father, "I will be a king."

His parents left him to his fate in a loft. For ten years he fought terrible battles with hardship and poverty, but he won a great victory at last. He won it after producing forty novels that did not win.

Émile Zola was the creator of the literary movement known as "naturalism". He experienced a bitter struggle against poverty and deprivation during his early adulthood. Until age twenty he was a spoiled child; but, on his father's death, he and his mother began the battle of life in Paris. Of his dark time, Zola himself says:

"Often I went hungry for so long, that it seemed as if I must die. I scarcely tasted meat from one month's end to another, and for two days I lived on three apples. Fire, even on the coldest nights, was an undreamed-of luxury; and I was the happiest man

in Paris when I could get a candle, by the light of which I might study at night."

Samuel Johnson's bare feet at Oxford showed through the holes in his shoes, yet he threw out of his window the new pair that some one left at his door. He lived for a time in London on nine cents a day. John Locke once lived on bread and water in a Dutch loft, and Heyne slept many a night on a barn floor with only a book for his pillow.

There are no more interesting pages in biography than those which record how Emerson, as a child, was unable to read the second volume of a certain book, because his widowed mother could not afford the five cents necessary to obtain it from the library.

"Poor fellow!" said Emerson, as he looked at his delicately-reared little son, "how much he loses by not having to go through the hard experiences I had in my youth."

It was through the responsibility laid upon him to earn money for his family that Emerson made his first great success in life as a teacher. I know there is no equal badge of honor or distinction, than that of having a clear mind, a healthy body, a great purpose and the determined will to see it through. No change of companions, or reversals of fortunes, will ever change the determined spirit, and because of this persistence you will eventually arrive at your destination - victorious.

"SHE CAN NEVER SUCCEED."

Louisa Alcott earned two hundred thousand dollars by her pen. Yet, when she was first dreaming of her power, her father handed

her a manuscript one day that had been rejected by Mr. Fields, editor of the "Atlantic," with the message:

"Tell Louisa to stick to her teaching; she can never succeed as a writer."

"Tell him I will succeed as a writer, and some day I shall write for the 'Atlantic'", she replied.

Not long after she wrote a poem for the "Atlantic", she wrote in her diary:

"Twenty years ago I resolved to make the family independent if I could. At forty, that is done. Our debts are all paid, and we have enough now to finally be comfortable."

"I TRAMPLE ON IMPOSSIBILITIES"

So it was recalled by Lord Chatham. "Why, should we call ourselves men, unless it be to succeed in everything everywhere?"

"It is all very well," said Charles J. Fox, "to tell me that a young man has distinguished himself by a brilliant first speech. He may very well go on fully satisfied with his first triumph; but show me a young man who has not succeeded at first, and has then gone on, and I will back that man to do better than those who succeeded at the first trial." Men of great will-power have broken down completely the first time they appeared on a platform to speak, at times others have had to apologize for them; but the great man does not give up speaking until he conquers his fear. Otherwise he knows that fear has conquered him. Young Disraeli sprung from a hated and persecuted race, pushed his way up through the middle classes and upper classes, until he stood self-poised upon the highest pedestal of political and social

power. At first he was scoffed at, ridiculed, rebuffed, hissed from the House of Commons; he simply said, "The time will come when you will hear me." The time did come, and he swayed the scepter of Prime Minister of England for a quarter of a century.

PERSISTENT PURPOSE

We hear a great deal of talk about genius, talent, luck, chance, cleverness, personality and fine manners playing a large part in one's success. Leaving out luck and chance, all these elements are important factors. Yet the possession of any or all of them, unaccompanied by a definite aim, a determined purpose, will not insure success. Men drift into business. They drift into society. They drift into politics. They drift into what they fondly and sometimes vainly imagine as religion.

If winds and tides are favorable for these men, then all is well; if not however, all is lost. Stalker says: "Most men merely drift through life, and the work they do is determined by a hundred different circumstances; they might just as well be doing anything else, or if they had their choice they may prefer to do nothing at all."

Successful men do know what they want. These men who have been conspicuously successful have all had one characteristic in common — doggedness and a rugged persistence of purpose.

It does not matter how clever a youth may be, whether she leads her class in college or outshines all the other boys and girls in her community, she will never succeed if she lacks this essential trait of determined persistence. Many men and women who

had the ability to become brilliant musicians, artists, teachers, lawyers, physicians or surgeons, in spite of predictions to the contrary, have fallen short of success because they were deficient in this quality of will-power.

Persistency of purpose is a great power. It creates confidence in others. Everybody believes in the determined man. "When he undertakes anything his battle is already half won, because not only he himself, but everyone who knows him, believes that he will accomplish whatever he sets out to do.

People know that it is useless to oppose a man who uses his stumbling-blocks as stepping-stones; who is not afraid of defeat; who never, in spite of criticism, shrinks from his task; who never shirks responsibility; who always keeps his compass pointed to the north star of his purpose, no matter what storms may rage on about him.

The persistent man never stops to consider whether he is succeeding or not. The only question with him is how to push ahead, to get a little farther along, a little nearer to his goal. Whether his path must take him over mountains or rivers, he will commit himself to the task. Every other consideration is sacrificed for this one dominant purpose.

The success of an “average” youth, and the failure of a brilliant one, is a constant surprise in American history. But if the different cases are closely analyzed we shall find that the explanation lies in the staying power of the seemingly average boy or girl, their ability to stand firm as a rock under all circumstances, to allow nothing to divert them from their purpose.

THREE NECESSARY THINGS

"Three things are necessary," said Charles Sumner, "first, backbone; second, backbone; and third, backbone."

A good chance alone is nothing. Education is nothing without strong and vigorous resolution and stamina to make one accomplish something in the world. An encouraging start is nothing without backbone. A man who cannot stand erect, who wabbles first one way and then the other, who has no opinion of his own, or courage to think his own thoughts, is of very little use in this world. It is grit, it is perseverance, it is moral stamina and courage that govern the world.

At the trial of the seven bishops of the Church of England for refusing to aid the king to overthrow the Protestant faith, it was necessary to watch the officers at the doors. It was feared that one would send food to a juryman, effectively aid him to starve the others into an agreement. Nothing was allowed to be sent into the juryroom except for water for the purpose of washing. But they were so thirsty they drank it all up. At first nine were for acquitting the accused, and three were for convicting. Two of the minority soon gave in; but the third man, Arnold, was obstinate. He declined to even argue the case. Austin, a well respected and influential man said to him, “Look at me. I am the largest and the strongest of the twelve; and before I will find these bishops libel, here will I stay till I am no bigger than a tobacco pipe." Arnold gave in at six o’clock the next morning.

SUCCESS AGAINST ODDS

> Yes, to this thought I hold with firm persistence;
> The last result of wisdom stamps it true:
> He only earns his freedom and existence
> Who daily conquers them anew.
> — Goethe.

"It is interesting to notice how some men create themselves," says Irving, "always rising to overcome every disadvantage, and working their way through a thousand obstacles."

Opposing circumstances can create great strength. Opposition gives us greater power of resistance. To overcome one barrier gives us greater ability to overcome the next. History is full of examples of men and women who have redeemed themselves from disgrace, poverty, and misfortune, by the firm resolution of an iron will.

Success is not measured by what a man accomplishes, but by the opposition he has encountered, and the courage with which he has maintained his struggle against overwhelming odds. It is not the distance we have run, but the obstacles we have overcome, the disadvantages under which we have continued the race; this will decide who receives the final prize.

"It is defeat," says Henry Ward Beecher, "that turns bone to flint, and gristle to muscle, and makes men invincible, and formed those many historic heroes that have provided their inspiration and examples of iron will to the world. Do not, then, be afraid of defeat. You are never so near to victory as when defeated in a good cause."

Governor Seymour of New York, a man of great force and character, said, in reviewing his life: "If I were to wipe out twenty acts, what should they be? Should it be my business mistakes, my foolish acts (for I suppose all men act foolishly occasionally), my grievances? No; for after all, these are the very things by which I have profited. So I finally concluded I should expunge, instead of my mistakes, my triumphs. I could not afford to dismiss the lessons I have learned from my adversity, the refinement I have gained out of sorrow; I needed these disappointments so that I could become the man who I am today."

"Every worthwhile journey, whatever it may be," says Channing, "has hardships, hazards and pains along the way. We try to escape them; we wish for a sheltered existence, for a smoother path, for admiring friends, and unbroken successes. But Providence ordains storms, disasters, hostilities, and sufferings; and the great question of whether we shall live to any higher purpose or not, whether we shall grow strong in mind and heart, or be weak and pitiable, depends on how quickly we learn from these adverse circumstances. Life's challenges are designed to test us. We either succumb to its pressure, or we rise to conquer it, so that we may live a life of virtue.

Sometimes these men and women of success seem to create new powers. Difficulty is the element they feed on, and persistence to overcome any challenge is their life's work. They derive a certain amount of satisfaction and self-esteem from having successfully confronted issues and obstacles in their path. They become confident in their ability to question the common beliefs

of the day in an effort to improve conditions, despite the unexpected changes of the times.

Men and women of success gain strength from God, they count on Him for guidance, but they count on themselves for action, as they pursue their great purpose in life."

> Better to stem with heart and hand
> The roaring tide of life, than lie,
> Unmindful, on its flowery strand,
> Of God's occasions drifting by!
> Better with naked nerve to bear
> The needles of this goading air,
> Than in the lap of sensual ease forego
> The godlike power to do, the godlike aim to know.
> — Whittier.

CHAPTER VII

The Degree of "O.O."

When Moody first visited Ireland he was introduced by a friend to an Irish merchant who asked at once:

"Is he an O.O.?"

"Out and Out" —that was what "O.O.'" stood for.

"Out and Out" for God — that was what this merchant meant. Without a belief in the Divine, which provides the guideposts for quality living, a man is not a whole man, a woman is not a whole woman. The man or woman who travels through life, dismissing the inner voice, unaware of the greater vision for humanity, walks alone and is but a hollow version of their best self. A welcoming ear for all that is heavenly provides us with a clearer knowledge of right over wrong. Our relationships are sweeter, our successes more fulfilling, our contributions more sacred, our generosity is strengthened and our expectations are tempered.

The earliest books have much to say about "The Valley of Decision" and the development of an "Out and Out" moral character.

Woefully lacking in our day, is the well-balanced man of character and will power; who stands side by side with moral servitude. We cannot have too many of these men and women of high moral-fiber, to set the standard, the example, to all who will follow in their footsteps.

Created in His image, what is more sane, more wholesome, more fitting for a man, than his rising up promptly, decidedly, to make the Divine Will his own will in all moral action, to take it as the supreme guide to go by? It is the glory of the human will to coincide with the Divine Will. In doing this, a man's Iron Will, instead of being an

indulgent selfish power, will be useful in uplifting all of mankind.

We search the world for truth; we cull
The good, the pure, the beautiful,
From graven stone and written scroll,
From all the flower-fields of the soul:
And weary seekers of the best,
We come back laden from our quest,
To find that all the sages said
Is in the Book our mother read.
— Whittier.

O earth that blooms and birds that sing,
O stars that shine when all is dark!
In type and symbol thou dost bring
The Life Divine, and bid us hark,
That we may catch the chant sublime,
And, rising, pass the bounds of time;
So shall we win the goal divine,
Our immortality.
— Carrol Norton

The End

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- **Master Action Plan (M.A.P.)** Keep your goals and next actions on one page.

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VOLUME FIVE	**Persistence: An Iron Will**

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