

steps. With whatever we have done then we must rest content. There is no helping the past. The past is of value only as it has been instrumental in forming the present; the present is valuable only as it may shape the future. The future, then, we make what we will. To this let every eye be turned, and for this let every nerve be strung. For life is too short to while away. A single effort may result in the conversion of the world. If this single effort should not be put forth, the world may go on in the same manner for ages. Few men perform all of which they are capable. If they should, we would have a very different kind of a world. Think of the John B. Goughs and the Bradlaughs that have died without a circumstance to call them forth. The human race is lazy. It is backward because each man has not made the most of himself. If we have a faculty, so much are we intended to influence our fellows. If we have a talent, let it bear the greatest possible rate of interest. God expects it. Our success demands it.

Dio Lewis said his book on walking should contain only four words. An exhaustive treatise might also be written on that long walk of life—yes, crowning success, in four sentences. Upon the first page I would write, Have a well defined purpose; upon the second, In selecting that purpose follow the strongest legitimate impulse of your being; third, Let that object be such as will be ennobling to your nature; then, Cling to your purpose with all the power that is within you. In defense of the first we bring the unanimous experience of the world. No man can work successfully without an aim. Without an object men make cabmen, temporary clerks, cobblers, third-rate pettifoggers, and our shifting pedagogues. With an object those same men, with the same work would turn out Stephensons, Watts, Whitneys, Choates, Websters, Emersons. Think of the toil and drudgery we go through, and die unheard of and poor, when we have no purpose, while

if the same efforts were applied with reference to an object, every effort would tell for perfection, for wealth, for fame! Only a few men follow the rules laid down. Only a few attain to success. No man can accomplish the whole work of his generation. He would be a fool who would undertake it. A single man can accomplish only a small part. Yet by selecting this part as his life purpose, he can make it, if he will, a step in the stairway of the ages over which future generations must climb. Such a man was Morse. Such was he who invented movable type. It is plain that our work should have a particular direction. Yet it is no less plain that that direction should receive the approval of our inward being. Every man, it is said, plays his own tune. But no tune should have a discord. You ask me then, what is success? I answer, making the most possible of your powers. We see this exemplified fully in nature. The acorn makes a success of life when from a mere germ it towers into the giant oak. The drop of water, also, when it runs from the mountain top to the sea. The Phoenix made a success of life when it wound up its days by building its own pyre in the temple of the Sun. Man is the only creature, the only object that does not always make success in life. Success, I repeat, is following the law of our being, and making the most possible of ourselves. This formula expresses with precision the good we do ourselves, the largest amount of mental cultivation and purity, the greatest possible physical vigor for which we are capable, and the greatest amount of good we can do the world, as well as fitting ourselves in the best possible manner for an everlasting existence. How comprehensive then does our term become! Yet how can we make it less? You ask me then, who has made a success of life? Very few. Did Napoleon? Apply the formula. Did Bacon? Do the same. Few men have reached it. Socrates did. Others partially; Newton, Luther,