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**THE PURSUIT  
OF  
HAPPINESS**





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George Hodges

THE PRACTICE

HARVARD

GEORGE B. ...

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MCMVI

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George Hodgson

THE PURSUIT  
OF  
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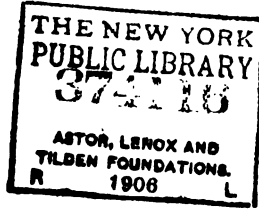
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GEORGE HODGES

*With frontispiece portrait*



NEW YORK  
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**U**  
J. S. H.





**THE PURSUIT OF  
HAPPINESS**

**PART I**



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## *The Pursuit of Happiness*

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### PART I

**I** PURPOSE to consider certain helps to happiness. Of these the first is *Determination*. I mean the will to be happy.

For happiness is largely an interior matter. "I have learned," says the heroine in "As the World Goes By," "that happiness is subjective; it does not depend on any particular environment. It depends solely upon our relation to the great currents of life. If we resist, there is friction and distress; if we fling ourselves boldly into the eternal tides, we are swept into every form of beauty and of truth."



*George Hodges*

**THE PURSUIT  
OF  
HAPPINESS**

By  
**GEORGE HENNES**

*with an introduction by*

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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of mastery? It was for the purpose of compulsion. The angel had a blessing, and Jacob wanted it. He fought for it. The angel tried to get away, but Jacob held him fast. "I will not let thee go," he said, "except thou bless me."

Determination wrests a blessing, as from sickness so from every other ill of life. Thus it deals with disappointment, with disaster, even with bereavement.

The quality of life depends upon determination. It is actually what we make it. "The event itself," says Maeterlinck, "is pure water that flows from the pitcher of fate, and seldom has it either savor or perfume or color. But even as the soul may be wherein it seeks shelter,



**U**  
J. S. H.



**THE PURSUIT OF  
HAPPINESS**

**PART I**

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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“O Brother Leo, if we were able to work miracles, so that we could make the blind to see and raise the four-days’ dead, that would not be the perfect joy.” So they went a little farther, and Francis said, “O Brother Leo, if we knew all languages, even the language of the soul, that would not be the perfect joy.” And on they went, and Francis said, “O Brother Leo, if we understood the courses of the stars, and the virtues of the plants, and were able to discover all the treasures of the earth, that would not be the perfect joy.” Still, Leo made no comment, and on they trudged under the cold sky. And Francis said: “O Brother Leo, if we could preach so well that our sermons would convert all unbeliev-

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ers, that would not be the perfect joy." Then Brother Leo said: "Father, I pray you in God's name tell me in what consists the perfect joy." To which Francis answered, "We are to spend the night at St. Mary-of-the-Angels. We are tired and wet and cold and hungry. Suppose that on our arrival we knock at the monastery door, and the porter who opens it does not know us. 'We are your brothers,' we say. 'Away!' he cries; 'you are two tramps, you would impose upon our hospitality. Begone!' And so he shuts the door, leaving us in the wet, shivering and starved. Then if we patiently endure all this without complaint or murmuring, possessing our souls in peace, we

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enter, Brother Leo, into the perfect joy.”

One need not be a saint to see that this is true. The perfect joy is the mastery of adverse circumstances by the serene acceptance of them as the will of God. For, as Piccarda Donati instructs Dante in Paradise, “His will is our peace.” To recognize that, to appreciate it, to realize it, to enter into a bitter experience with cheerful expectation, to wrestle with it till it yields its blessing, this is to find indeed the Perfect Joy, and to be at peace in the midst of tribulation.

## PART II





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## PART II

**T**HE second mile-stone on the way to happiness is *Regulation*. Thus shall determination be brought to immediate and concrete effect.

For a general resolution is like a general invitation. It does not call for a reply. The proper answer to the question, "Will you not come some day and dine at my house?" is "Thank you very much," and that is the end of it. The usual sequence of a resolution to be better, without details, is a passing glow of self-satisfaction, followed by the same behavior as before. The thing means nothing. It is a mere drift of moral mist, blown by the vagrant wind. In

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## THE PRESENT OF HAPPINESS

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HOW IT SHOULD BE SEEN, IT MUST  
HAVE DIMENSIONS AND ANGLES AND CLEAR  
DEFINITION.

YOU MAY COMMITMENT THE SUN TO  
KIND SKILL, LIKE THE GREAT JACKS IN  
THE BOOK OF JESUS. BUT THE SUN WILL  
PAY IN REVENUE WHATEVER YOU  
SPECIFY PRECISELY WHAT YOU MEAN.  
"SUN, SEND YOUR SKILL UPON GIBSON;  
AND YOUR MACH, IN THE VALLEY OF  
ALICE." YOU MUST PUT IN THE TOP-  
OGRAPHICAL DETAILS. WHEN YOU DO  
THIS, YOU WILL HAVE SUNSHINE EVERY  
DAY AND MOONSHINE EVERY NIGHT,  
UNTIL YOU WEARY OF HOT WEATHER.

WHAT I MEAN IS THIS. THE FIRST  
STEP TOWARD HAPPINESS IS TO DETER-  
MINE TO BE HAPPY. THE SECOND,  
WITHOUT WHICH THE FIRST MAY BE OF  
NO AVAIL, IS TO DETERMINE HOW TO BE

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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happy. How shall we so order our days that our life shall yield the Harvest of Happiness? In order to reap a Harvest of Happiness, it is necessary to plow the ground and harrow it, and put the seeds in and pull the weeds out. The garden will never be made to grow by sitting on the back steps and reading the *Garden Magazine*. Or, to put it in another way, how shall we achieve serenity of spirit? How shall we approach, ever more near as the years pass, to the perfection of peace? There is a peace such as the Israelites had in Egypt. Its principal treasures, as they themselves confessed, were cucumbers and melons and leeks and onions and garlic. It was the peace of a people

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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who had been conquered by their enemies and brought into a state of slavery. But true peace can be had only by victory. He had it perfectly of whom it was said, after He had triumphed over temptation, "Angels came and ministered unto Him."

The name of one of the enemies of our peace is Hurry, the name of another is Worry. They are both of them put out and kept out by regulation.

Hurry spoils both the quality of the work, and the temper of the worker. For the best work depends on personality. It is done well or ill, according to the condition of our nerves. No kind of profession or occupation can go on permanently and prosperously under the patron-

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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age of St. Vitus. I have not much admiration for the Sisters of St. Martha. They are "practical" persons, unwarmed and unlighted by the fires of idealism, and everlastingly busy; too busy to do some of the things which are most worth while in life. But I have still less pleasure in the Brothers of St. Vitus, whose only holiday is a month off every year or two in order to have nervous prostration.

"They went so fast that at last they seemed to skim through the air, hardly touching the ground with their feet, till suddenly, just as Alice was getting quite exhausted, they stopped, and she found herself sitting on the ground, breathless and giddy.

"The Queen propped her up

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THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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against a tree, and said, kindly: 'You may rest a little now.'

"Alice looked round her in great surprise. 'Why, I do believe we've been under this tree the whole time! Everything's just as it was.'

"'Of course it is,' said the Queen. 'What would you have it?'

"'Well, in *our* country,' said Alice, still panting a little, 'you'd generally get to somewhere else — if you ran very fast for a long time, as we've been doing.'

"'A slow sort of country,' said the Queen. 'Now, *here*, you see, it takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place.'"

It would make a good inscription for the title-page of Bædeker's United States.

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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Brothers and sisters, it is n't necessary, all this frantic haste. We are accomplishing no more thereby than our more leisurely neighbors. We would not need to hurry, if our work were definitely planned. The remedy is in regulation.

And then comes Worry. Hurry is the unresting demon of the parable, who goes out and brings in seven other spirits worse than himself. These seven are Worry. I mean the petty perplexities and annoyances, the consciousness of defect, the anticipation of defeat, which clog the wheels of life as the mire of the Red Sea tugged at the chariots of Egypt. For worry is in great part the pain of the burden

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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of duties undone. People are worn out not by the things which they do, but by the things which they do not; the calls which are not made, the books which are not read, the stitches which are not taken, the letters which are not begun — these are the evil spirits which give us sleepless nights. Not one of them can live in the atmosphere of regulation. They flee before a systematic ordering of life, as mice flee before the cat.

That is, the wise man who desires serenity and satisfaction will set about achieving them in the same sensible fashion in which he undertakes the erection of a house. He will draw up specifications. He will say to himself, "This is the sort of

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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thing I want, and thus and so will I do to get it." This requires a pencil and a piece of paper. It means a table of hours in which is set down at the beginning the moment when each day shall dawn — each waking and working day — and the moment when the shining sun shall be dismissed from its post of service over the heights of Gibeon. It means a clear understanding between the clock and the conscience.

"There is a time," says the writer of Ecclesiastes, "to every purpose under the heaven." "God," he adds, "hath made everything beautiful in his time." The deed, in order to be beautiful, in order to be a help to happiness, must be done "in his time"; that is, in the

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THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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part of the busy day to which it properly belongs.

What, then, ought I to do to keep my body strong and alert? Very well, that shall be one of my concrete resolutions. Every day, at such and such specified times, I will do this and that.

So with my mind. What books shall I read daily, and at what time of day?

So with my soul. What do I mean by my soul? I mean that which acts in imagination, in affection, in the perception of the unseen. Domestic happiness, the pleasure of pictures, of music, and of poetry, and the worship of God are joys which have their residence in the soul. The uncultivated soul goes stum-

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THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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bling about in beautiful places, knocking itself against the corners, and missing the best of life, and it is true of the soul; as it is of the garden, that its cultivation, in order to be successful, must be seriously and systematically undertaken.

That is what I mean by regulation. The victories of life are won, for the most part, in the Japanese manner, by pre-arrangement.



**PART III**



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### PART III

AMONG the qualities which will assist us to be happy, the third is *Proportion*.

By proportion I mean a true perspective. The effect of perspective is to magnify the size, and therefore the apparent importance of that which is in the foreground. Dr. Grenfell, in the deep sea off the coast of Labrador, took a photograph of an iceberg and a ship. The picture showed an enormous iceberg, through which you looked by a great arched opening and saw a little ship. Then he had the ship brought around in front of the berg and photographed the two again;



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kings' crowns. The barefooted children, with holes in the knees of their trousers, went home after their game to eat the tough meat of poverty, having vast riches in their pockets but remaining poor because they did not know the value of their possessions. That which Socrates said of wickedness is quite true of a great deal of unhappiness; he said that the root of the matter is ignorance. The most lamentable poverty is that of the people who are poor in the midst of riches, like the ship's crew in the mouth of the Amazon, perishing of thirst, not knowing that all the water in which they floated, fathom upon fathom, was fresh and sweet as the water of the well of Bethlehem. Diamonds of shining

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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joy lie glittering in every common highway, but most of the passers-by only stub their toes against them. To perceive the true value of things, to see the difference between a cobblestone and a Kohinoor, is a great part of the secret of satisfaction.

Proportion ministers to happiness because it restrains us from the exaggeration of excitement. They who lack it are like the newspapers which have used up all their biggest type in screaming bulletins of fights of petty ruffians in back alleys, and have nothing higher for a battle which is determining the destiny of nations. It is well to distinguish between a scratch and a surgical operation. It is well to save the

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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supreme emotions for the supreme event.

I do not mean an unnatural repression of feeling or of speech. I think that when "home they brought her warrior dead," she should have cried. That was a time for tears. I do not applaud the pioneer in the old story, who coming home and finding his house burned by the Indians, and his wife and children carried into captivity said: "This is perfectly ridiculous." The occasion demanded stronger language. The truth is, however, that the great joys and the great sorrows come but seldom. Let us not get excited every common day. Let us reserve some stirrings of the heart, as Izaak Walton reserved cer-

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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tain sweet landscapes for holy days. Even the great indignations summon us but rarely. Let us keep for them the elaboration and pomp and ceremony of our wrath. There is one kind of appropriate anger for the child who steals a ginger-cake and quite another for the legislator who steals a street. We invite unhappiness by getting mad at the wrong times. At the sight of this exaggerated indignation, the serene sky, the tranquil fields and the staid earth silently rebuke us, saying: "Little brother, little sister, why so hot?" Even our grief is sometimes like the tears of infancy. We are like children from whom something is withheld or withdrawn, the possession of which would be a peril or a pain. Think

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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again ; set it in its true proportion ; can you not get along without it ?

Proportion ministers to happiness because it preserves us from pessimism. Pessimism is an exaggeration of the evil of the world. It is the easiest of fallacies. Evil impresses the imagination deeper than good. It is commonly more dramatic, commonly more interesting. That is why the first page of the morning paper is filled with the stories of yesterday's suicides, murders and divorces. These tragic matters do not make up the greater part of life. They do not fairly represent the human day. On the contrary, they are the infrequent exception. Life, for the most part, goes on clear and peaceful. But

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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these loud cries attract an instinctive attention. The pessimist transfers this emphasis of evil from journalism to philosophy, sometimes to religion, and imagines himself in a vale of mystery. But it all depends on where one looks. The general world is at this day, and always has been, a good world. In spite of all the wars and in the face of all the injustice and oppression and of the resulting want and pain, this is, on the whole, a pleasant planet, and the great majority of us are glad that we came here to live. Dr. Grenfell says that one day the cook used arsenic instead of baking powder; they looked alike in the dim morning. And everybody who ate the bread fell sick. That, however, did not

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destroy their faith in the general excellence of bread. When they got well they went on eating bread. For it is only on rare occasions that the cook poisons the loaf. The pessimist finds a bitter crust and thereupon declares that all the bread of human life is bad. But if we have any sense of proportion, we know better.

Proportion ministers to happiness because it saves us from the ills of premonition. It helps us to distinguish between the substance and the shadow, between the actual to-day and the possible to-morrow. Most of us are able to sympathize with the man who said: "I have suffered much from many calamities, few of which ever happened." Take

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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out of life the fear of the future, the anticipation of disaster, the ills which live only in the imagination ; and the habit of enduring distress times, and the clouds are cleared from the sky, the sun shines through. The indubitable testimony of experience is this, that the event which we dread is very rarely so bad as we fear. To the timid passenger on the top of the coach, the road ahead seems to go down hill as if it fell over a straight cliff, but it is presently found to proceed in a gentle and altogether safe descent. All the reason for terror was an imagination. The suicidal angle was not in the hill, but in the mind of the traveller. The sense of proportion — magnifying the known, minimizing the unknown —

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strong, wholesome, reasonable, and serene, corrects all this and confines the evil to the day itself, declining with a smile to borrow any from the morrow.

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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## PART IV

**T**HE fourth corner on the Highway of Happiness is the gift of *Vision*.

Vision means imagination, rescued from the service of the devil and become the handmaid of felicity. She leads us, like Ariadne in the old story, out of the labyrinth of our perplexity. We escape for the moment from adverse conditions into other and happier surroundings. In the "Arabian Nights" this journey was assisted by a magic carpet, on which one stepped, declared at what pleasant haven he desired to be, and immediately was there. To-day this is effected by a book.

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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The opening of the pages of a good book is like the opening of gates into another world, into the gardens of delight. There for the time we live, and if we have any misery and sorrow, we forget them. Happy are they who have entered into the mystical freemasonry of letters, whose initiation is the learning of the alphabet, whose novitiate is spent in schoolrooms, to whose meetings the members are bidden by the advertisements of the publishers, and whose colors are the black and white of print and paper.

Thoughtful people have always refused to be contented with the world as it is. Though the heaven be never so high, and the horizon never so far, they have felt them-

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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selves confined and imprisoned. That which satisfies and exceeds the body cramps the soul. This world is not enough; there must be another, into whose lofty mansions the human spirit may escape out of these narrow ways and from under these low ceilings. And into this other world, accordingly, the soul has made its journey, sometimes guided by the priest, sometimes by the poet, sometimes by the teller of tales, always aided by imagination, and often finding the open door between the covers of a book.

When Thoreau said that to improve the quality of the day is the first of arts, this was what he meant. He had in mind that dignifying of

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THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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the day which is achieved when the common life is held in relation with all the environment of mystery; the seen with the unseen, the temporary with the eternal, earth with heaven. The quality of the day determines the joy of the day. It is the same commonplace day that it was yesterday, and may be to-morrow, and to your neighbor it begins and ends in dulness; but this is all upon the surface. They who have the gift of vision look beneath this wrapping, and behold, the day shines like a star. Then we understand that the new heaven and the new earth which are promised to the faithful are just our ordinary blue sky and green grass seen with a new sight.

To begin the day with a page of

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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a great book opens the eyes of the soul. They used to read the Bible before breakfast. That habit is not so common now, I suppose, as once it was ; but it is an excellent habit, proceeding from good sense as well as from piety, and worth reviving and maintaining. To begin the crowded day with a moment of sweet peace, attending to the message of the still, small voice, which speaks in those sacred pages as it has spoken now to more than thirty restless centuries, is to enter upon the round of duty with a benediction. Professor Shaler says that when his work took him into a mine, he used to stand for a few minutes at the top of the shaft and look at the sky and the sun, and breathe the breath of



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the fresh morning. Then he went down into the dark and the bad air, in the cheer and the strength of that vision of the good world. Our days, I hope, are not to be likened to the black corridors of a mine, but that draught of light, that swift comprehensive circumspection of the world, ought to be a fair symbol of our morning prayer and of the page of the book. And if the day is dark, and the contrary winds buffet us about, and we feel as if the pit had indeed shut her mouth upon us, then we may remember, like a miner, that nevertheless the sun is shining; we saw it in its splendor early in the morning.

The Bible will give us that enduring vision, and so will all the other

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bibles. I mean the books which speak straight to our souls; the poems which we have put to the test of experience, the great sentences in which in truth the Holy Spirit summons our spirit; the volumes on whose worn covers, as they lie on our table, rest little tongues of pentecostal flame.

Books however, are not enough. The book is closed, and we go out into the world. What we need is the transformation of the world. That, too, comes by vision. For vision means interpretation.

Imagination implies an element of unreality, but interpretation is understanding. We see not only another world, but this present planet with the sun and the stars shining

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upon it. The prophet and his servant stand in the midst of enemies. Whichever way they look, nothing is seen but the advancing lances of the besiegers. And the servant is terrified exceedingly. Then the prophet prays that the young man's eyes may be opened, and behold, all the surrounding hills are crowded, rank upon rank, with the embattled hosts of heaven. That is what I mean. It is by vision that the whole world is glorified, and we perceive that our life is lived in the midst of an environment which is the appropriate setting of the jewel of great joy.

The gift of vision helps us to be happy because it enables us to look through the visible into the invisible.

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It brings us into the society of the mystics, whose poet is Wordsworth, and whose apostle is St. John, who see that this world of brown and green and blue, embroidered with flowers and painted with sunsets, is of a truth the garment of God. Then we go about our daily business conscious of God, abiding in His presence, and thereafter the divine is natural and the natural is divine, and we know what he meant who said: "In Him we live and move and have our being." And the familiar experiences of the common day are touched with beauty, so that it is like taking a post of oak with the bark on, and smoothing and shaping it, and carving it from top to bottom with the story of a saint.

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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Vision helps us to be happy because it also enables us to look through the present into the future.

It blesses the scholar, who labors day by day at tasks which his neighbors neither appreciate nor understand, because he sees away off down this road the vision of the truth. It blesses the reformer, who endures contradiction and braves disappointment, and, apparently accomplishing nothing, is nevertheless confident and full of courage, because he is engaged in the service of his ideal; every sordid detail is illuminated by the shining of that sun.

Thus it is also with us, who are neither scholars nor reformers, but plain citizens and neighbors. We have stood with Christian and Hope-

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## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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ful on the heights of the Delectable Mountains, and have seen in the dim distance the gates of the Celestial City. Now all the weariness of the way is lightened by that sight. Christian and Hopeful had but a faint vision of the future. When they looked through the perspective glass, their hands shook so that they could see nothing clearly. "Yet they thought they saw something like the gate, and also some of the glory of the same." At least, they knew where the road ended.

It comes out at last, all this difficult way of life, into the blessed light. They who have the gift of vision see that, and are certain that the journey is worth while.



## PART V





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## PART V

**N**OBODY can be happy in any large way unless to determination and regulation and proportion and vision he adds the habit of *Ministration*.

For happiness is a social matter. People have sometimes carried it away for their own private delight, but they have never succeeded in keeping it. It has always behaved as in the fairy tales, where the gold and gems of selfishness are changed into brown stones and withered leaves.

I do not mean to say that nobody can be happy all alone; for that would be in contradiction to common experience. There is a joy in

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solitude. What I mean is that nobody can be happy very long in any selfish solitude. It is true that some of the most precious joys of life come to us in quiet moments when we have no companion but a book, or a green hill, or an expanse of shining water, or the sound of meditative music, or the consciousness of the divine presence ; but when we undertake to prolong this high pleasure in order to make it the chief occupation of our time, we find that the quality of it changes like the flavor of a cup of water which is taken from a brook. At the moment, it is like the nectar which the Greek gods quaffed on Olympus ; but at the end of the day, it is not fit to drink. It needs the motion of the general current ; as

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every human being needs the impulse of the general life.

St. Peter, on the top of the house at midday, has his shining hour. He sees a vision and hears words out of the sky. But there is a knock at the door below, and three men are asking if this is Peter's lodgings, and the saint must come down and go about their business. There is a time to see visions and a time to do errands. In Peter's case, the vision was for the sake of the errand. It interpreted the summons of the three men, and prepared Peter to obey it. The joy of the individual is always related in some such way to the joy of the community. It has its flower and its fruit in social service, without which it is a barren stalk. So in the

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Legend Beautiful — where an angel appears in the midst of the monk's prayers, and then the bell rings which calls him to his accustomed work — he hesitates between the angel and the errand. But when he returns, having done his common task, the vision says: "Hadst thou stayed, I must have fled."

Among those who listened to St. Paul at Athens were certain philosophers called Epicureans. They were applying themselves with all diligence to the attainment of happiness. Their only business was to have a good time. Being philosophers, they had easily discovered that there is a great difference between a good time which lasts for half a day, and a good time which continues on, shining with

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a steady light, into the far future. They had accordingly rejected some of the applicants for the position of Pleasure Maker. They had decided, for example, that appetite, while it has its place in the scheme of a good life, is not a satisfactory purveyor of joy. They lived on barley bread and water, and, when they had company, added only a bit of cythnian cheese. But they had no proper place in their philosophy for ministration. They were selfish persons. And the result was that they failed in their high endeavor.

The best known Epicurean in modern fiction is Tito in "Romola." There he lived, intent on pleasure, bound to get it, no matter at what cost to his friends and neighbors.

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At the sight of pain or grief, he turned away, lest he should sully the fair surface of his own delight. He did not wish his acquaintances to suffer; indeed, he honestly preferred that they should live in peace. But his one chief aim in life was to maintain the serenity of his own soul.

Then in time of tremendous stress and strain in Florence, when everybody was vehemently taking sides, he prudently took both sides and betrayed each to the other, in order that he might be safe. He would not have applauded the sentiment that there are occasions when "'t is man's perdition to be safe." Finally, after breaking the hearts of his best friends, he perished miserably. He was pursuing a selfish happiness; and

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in the unalterable grammar of life, that adjective and that noun may not be used together.

The same conclusion is stated in another way by those who say that happiness can be attained only by indirection; that is, by seeking something else. It eludes those who pursue it for its own sake. Stevenson speaks of the "great task of happiness," but nobody ever accomplished it as a task. It is a quality of life rather than an occupation. Happiness depends on helpfulness as health depends on air and food — because we are made that way. They who minister to their neighbors exercise one of the normal human functions, and enter thereby into the joy of a larger life. The shining hour shines



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by reflected light, getting a great part of its glory from the illuminated faces of good friends.

Ministration is a help to happiness because it widens out the circle of interest. In the old story of "Eyes and No Eyes," No Eyes comes back from a long walk, bored and weary, having done nothing for several hours but to set one foot before the other along a dusty road. But Eyes has found the monotonous highway an avenue of adventure; on this side and on that, birds, trees, and people have taken his attention. It is another illustration of the fact that happiness is an interior matter, an attitude toward life, depending on the individual soul. They who are intent on ministration, looking for

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opportunities to be of service to their neighbors, find the dullest places interesting. For the world is pretty well populated with people, even in the remotest rural districts, and they are all players in the universal human comedy or tragedy. Definitely to set about the betterment of any community or of any individual in it, is to enter into the company of all saints and statesmen, and to sit in the senate of philosophers. For all the problems which confront churches and nations are to be met in Lonelyville. The smallest village affords room for long and adventurous voyages of discovery. The whole human race inhabits it. Thoreau said that he had travelled extensively — in Concord!

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Ministration keeps happiness because it increases the area of affection. It takes off the chill of the cold world. It is an essential condition of satisfactory friendships, wherein one gives and takes; but first, gives. It justifies and confirms the great words, "Give, and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom." For they who are forever looking out for their own interests are commonly left by their neighbors in exclusive charge of that department. It is being so well cared for that nobody presumes to interfere. They who are serving others find themselves generously served by others. Their

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affection wins affection. The selfish person prefers his own company and walks by himself and wonders why he has no friends. The unselfish person lives in an environment of happiness, surrounded by those whom he has helped to be happy, and who in return are endeavoring to bring happiness to him.



**PART VI**



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## PART VI

I HAVE now considered five expedients for the attainment of happiness: First, Determination, whereby we resolutely set ourselves to go that way; then, Regulation, whereby our good resolve is translated into definite action; thirdly, Proportion, whereby we see to it that the rule of our life, thus made, is in true perspective; fourthly, Vision, whereby we are enabled so to judge of things as to know the true perspective when we see it. Then I spoke of Ministration. And thus I come, finally, to speak of *Religion*.

These two, ministration and religion, are not so much expedients

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for the increase of happiness as qualities of life on which happiness depends. They are represented by the two commandments which sum up all the law and the prophets.

Before I come, however, to discuss the place of religion in the scheme of happiness, let me answer the question of any who may still ask, Are we doing right when we put the emphasis of life on the side of pleasure? Is the pursuit of happiness a Christian occupation?

Some, instructed by a strict conscience, have appeared to answer this question with a stout denial. They have distrusted the virtue of a happy life, and have spoken in disparagement of smiling saints. According to their notion, a saint must never

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smile, unless he does so in a pensive or pathetic manner. He may smile in the midst of pain as a sign of his spiritual superiority to the vexations of the body, but he may not smile because he is amused. In this serious world, a consistent saint will never be amused. As for laughter, that is the perilous privilege of sinners. (See Eccles. vii. 3.) "Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better." Thus, I have seen a letter in which Lowell wrote to Starr King, "Providence at first intended me for a preacher, but spoiled the job by kneading in a quantity of humor." Deliberately, then, to undertake the quest of happiness, to resolve to enter frankly and freely into

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the joys of life, is not this an earthly, sensual and possibly a devilish adventure? It is true that the Bible speaks approvingly of a merry heart; but ought we not to interpret that bold adjective by St. Paul's advice, "If any be merry, let him sing psalms"? That, according to some, is the extreme limit of allowable jubilation. The number of such persons, however, has greatly diminished.

Not only is there a change in the estimate of the part which pleasure may properly play in a good life, but as we examine the matter we find a further change in the estimate of the quality of pleasure. Indeed, it is here that the difference chiefly lies between conflicting theories of life. Mankind has always pursued pleas-

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ure. In spite of their theories, their protestations, even their sincere beliefs, men have ever been intent on pleasure. They have differed mainly in their definition of happiness. For happiness is discovered in many unsuspected places.

John Henry Newman confessed that in his youth he "loved the garish day." When he wrote "Lead, kindly light," he had changed his mind. He had not, however, abandoned his pursuit of pleasure. Now he desired to

"Make the face of heaven so fine  
That all the world will be in love with night,  
And pay no worship to the garish sun."

But Juliet said that, and she was by no means a serious person. One is in love with day, another with

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night, but both are in pursuit of happiness.

In New England, a good while ago, they used to ask young people if they were willing to be damned for the glory of God. If they said that they were, they let them join the church. That seems about as far as one can go in the renunciation of all joy, both in this world and in that which is to come. But the truth is that this was only a very subtle and difficult form of joy itself. The New England saints were honestly convinced that nothing could be so full of secret satisfaction as to be everlastingly miserable for the glory of God. That was their conception of the Perfect Joy. For happiness, rightly understood, is the

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most desirable and the most important thing in life. To be thoroughly and abidingly happy is not only to get what we all instinctively desire, but to fulfil the purpose of our nature.

Thus I come, at last, to religion, the nature of which is to fill the soul with pure joy, now and forever.

I know that religion has sometimes seemed to hinder happiness. It has taught the terror of the Lord, and has gone about with a stern face, frowning on the jubilation of youth. But even this has been for the sake of sincere felicity. It has been a debate between the Epicurean and the Stoic, each of whom has his own idea of satisfaction. Morton, of Merrymount, and Winthrop, of Boston,

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had each his own way of enjoying life. And the honest truth is that the Puritan got more solid happiness out of his sober life than his hilarious neighbor. It is the business of religion to consider what kind of happiness is of an enduring quality and to distinguish it sharply from the delusive happiness which leads only to a headache or a heartache. This may sometimes have been done without just discrimination, but it is better to have it done bunglingly than not at all.

In the face of all petty vexations and complaints of the rigors of religion, let us remember Paul and Silas in the inner dungeon of the Philippi jail, singing songs for gladness of heart; and with them a great multi-

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tude, which no man can number, some of them with haloes and some without, to whom religion has brought light in the darkness. They were in pain of body or of mind, hopelessly remote from any of those paths to happiness along which people go when skies are fair and walking is good. The floods had come, the waves and storms had gone over them. Then this path opened, with crosses for guide posts. Into it they entered, and on it led, through all manner of tribulation, even through the valley of the shadow of death, into joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Religion ministers to happiness because it means revelation.

It answers our imperative ques-



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tions. One may, indeed, go on a long way in a serene life without the interposition of importunate questions. But sooner or later they stop every traveller, like the sphinx in the old story, and the reply, or even the lack of a reply, means light or darkness, success or failure, joy or sorrow. Is this world governed by God? Is God our Father, or our enemy, or is He indifferent to us? And after death what then? These are imperative questions. When they arise in the soul, they must be answered.

But nature has no clear reply; even human experience has no clear reply; even the words of the spiritual masters, Plato and Paul and the others, the apostles, the prophets,

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the philosophers, the poets, the men whose souls are sensitive to the voice inaudible — even their words carry conviction only to those who are convinced already. “Lord,” said the disciples, “to whom shall we go?” And they solved their own problem, turning to the Master, saying, “Thou hast the words of eternal life.” That is, they found the imperative questions answered in the words of Him of whom Unitarians say that He was a man filled with God, and of whom Trinitarians say that He was God filling a man, and of whom all agree that He brought life and immortality to light. There He stands, in the midst of all the creeds and the churches, and the confusion of old controversies, assur-

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ing us, with the serene confidence of One who knows, that God is, and is good, and intends good here and hereafter. That is the substantial basis both of faith and joy.

Religion ministers to happiness because it means redemption.

It delivers us from our besetting sins. The sting of life is sin. The cloud which drifts between us and the sun, darkening the shining hour, is the cloud of our own transgressions. And from this, religion delivers us. It is a fact which both eludes understanding and defies denial, like the cures which are effected by the physician. It is an evident phenomenon enacted within our observation, if not within our own experience. By religion, sinners have

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been changed to saints, and plain people have been rescued out of selfishness and overmastering temptation into newness of life. Thus religion brings with it a joy of its own. It has its own characteristic felicity, like books and art and music and achievement. This felicity passes definition, but they who have entered into it know how precious it is. They are poor who lack it. They who possess it are enriched beyond the accounting of imagination.

For the supreme joy is to be in free and congenial relationship with life. And religion is the completion of it. Here the circle of satisfaction comes round. Here the pursuit of happiness ends in perfect possession.

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