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***AMBITION
AND SUCCESS***

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Ambition and Success

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CHAPTER I

WHAT IS AMBITION?

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“Ambition is the spur that makes man struggle with destiny: it is heaven’s own incentive to make purpose great, and achievement greater.”

IN a factory where mariners’ compasses are made, the needles, before they are magnetized, will lie in any position, wherever they are placed, but from the moment they have been touched by the mighty magnet and have been electrified, they are never again the same. They have taken on a mysterious power and are new creatures. Before they are magnetized, they do not answer the call of the North Star, the magnetic pole does not have any effect upon them, but the moment they have been magnetized they swing to the magnetic north, and are ever after loyal and true to their affinity.

Multitudes of people, like an unmagnetized needle, lie motionless, unresponsive to any stimulus until they are touched by that mysterious force we call ambition.

Whence comes this overmastering impulse which pushes human beings on, each to his individual goal? Where is the source of ambition, and how and when does it gain entrance into our lives?

How few of us ever stop to think what ambition really means, its cause, or significance! Yet, if we could explain just what ambition is, we could explain the mystery of the universe. The instinctive impulse to keep pushing on and up

is the most curious and the most interesting thing in human life. It exists in every normal human being, and is just as pronounced and as real as the instinct of self-preservation.

I believe this incessant inward prompting, call it ambition or what we will, this something which pushes men to their goal, is the expression in man of the universal force of evolution which is flowing Godward, that it is a part of the great cosmic plan of creation. We do not create this urge, we do not manufacture it. Every normal person feels this imperious must which is back of the flesh, but not of it, this internal urge which is ever pushing us on, even at the cost of our discomfort and sacrifice.

It is a part of every atom, for all atoms are alive, and this upward impulse is in every one of them. It is in the instinct of the bee, the ant, and in all forms of insect and animal life.

The same kind of urge that is in the seed buried out of sight and which is ever pushing it up and out through the soil, prodding it to develop itself to the utmost and to give its beauty and fragrance to the world, is in each one of us. It is ever pushing us, urging us on to fuller and completer expression, to a larger, more beautiful life.

But for this desire to get on and get up, this God-urge, everything, even the universe itself, would collapse. Inertia would bring everything to a standstill.

If we obey this call we expand, blossom into beauty and develop into fruitage, but if we neglect or dissipate it, if we only half obey it, we remain mere scrub plants, without flower or fruitage.

That mysterious urge within us never allows us to rest but is always prodding us for our good, because there is no