
CURRENTS OF DESTINY

There are currents of destiny which we may enter or not, as we choose; but if we do, they will carry us irresistibly on to an end that is in harmony with their nature.

If it is a current of high ideals, it leads to a condition of happiness; while a current of evil runs to a haven of unrest and bitter disappointment. Like produces like. The forces of Nature act impartially, and either build up or tear down all who come within the range of their influence.

Happiness does not necessarily demand a mansion and a well-filled pocket-book; nor are a high social status and the plaudits of admirers essential. But he who has deep down in his soul the knowledge that he has always fought for the right, and that he never knowingly has wronged another, could not be unhappy though the whole world were arrayed against him.

The Cost of Something for Nothing

Brute force destroys alike the victim and the executioner. Slavery cursed alike the slave and the master. Oppression pulls down the oppressor as well as the oppressed.

Generally, retribution is slow, and its work is not seen until after decades have passed; but sometimes it is swift, and the hand of fate is seen at noonday.

Let us take the Boer war as an illustration of swift retribution.

When Gladstone made peace with the South African Republics, the aristocrats who live upon the labor of others, and monopolize the official positions in the army of England, violently denounced him. They demanded the conquest of that country on account of its gold-fields. The Tories then came into power; and although Mr. Chamberlain had at different times stated that the South African Republics were independent, and that England had no right to interfere with their internal affairs, he

The Cost of Something for Nothing

now appeared to join hands with Cecil Rhodes, the arch-plotter of South Africa, to wipe out two free republics. Jamieson was employed to make his raid, which failed; and then there was a clamor for war, and they got it.

Never before has England lost so many officers as in this war, and the aristocratic families who demanded the overthrow of the two republics are now lamenting the loss of their sons.

On our side of the Atlantic, a high government official assured England of our moral support in all that she might do, so that morally we became a party to her brutality. Our attitude, thus boldly announced to the world, prevented other nations from interfering on behalf of the Boers. Never in its history has our Republic been placed in such a false light. Had we been true to the principles of American government, the history of South Africa would be different. Some of those responsible

The Cost of Something for Nothing

for South African crimes have had swift retribution. What may our country have to pay for its share in the crimes perpetrated in those two sister Republics? Or is it possible that the tears and the denunciations of the many Americans whose sympathies went out to that brave people, fighting for their rights, will avert the punishment? God grant that it may be so. The doctrine that might gives right has covered the earth with misery for thousands of years, and has never benefited anybody or any country. While it crushes the weak, it also destroys the strong. The beginning of conquest marks the end of growth. The fruits of conquest are laden with death, and no conqueror ever yet escaped their poison. Both men and nations develop so long as they practice virtue and maintain equal justice, and both begin to decay the moment they assert their superior force and take advantage of the weakness or ignorance of others.

The Cost of Something for Nothing

The slaveholder begins to reap a harvest of damnation before the welt has healed on the back of his slave. While the lash first falls on the back of the weak, its stroke reacts on the strong and blights a whole generation.