

ADVICE TO THE YOUNG

E. H. Chapin*

Young friends, in whatever pursuits you may engage, you must not forget that the lawful objects of human efforts are but means to higher results and nobler ends. Start not forward in life with the idea of becoming mere seekers of pleasure, – sportive butterflies searching for gaudy flowers. Consider and act with reference to the true ends of existence.

This world is but the vestibule (entrance hall) of an immortal life. Every action of your life touches on some chord that will vibrate in eternity. These thoughts and motives within you stir the pulses of a deathless spirit. Act not, then, as mere creatures of this life, who, for a little while, are to walk the valleys and the hills, to enjoy the sunshine and to breathe the air, and then pass away and be no more; but *act* as immortals, with an *aim* and a *purpose* worthy of your high nature.

Set before you, as the chief object to be obtained, an *end* that is superior to any on earth, – *a desirable end*, A PERFECT END. Labor to accomplish a work which shall survive unchanged and beautiful, when time shall have withered the garland of youth, when thrones of power and monuments of art shall have crumbled into ashes; and finally, aim to achieve something, which, when these our mutable and perishing voices are hushed forever, shall live amid the songs and triumphs of IMMORTALITY.

Well will it be for you, if you have a *guide* within, which will aid you in every issue, which will arm you in every temptation, and comfort you in every sorrow. Consult, then, that Volume whose precepts will never fail you. Consult it with deep aspiration after the true and good, and it shall illuminate your understanding with divine realities.

Open your soul, and it shall breathe into it a holy influence, and fill all its wants. Bind it close to your hearts; it will be a shield against all the assaults of evil. Read it in the lonely hour of desertion; it will be the best of companions. Open it when the voyage of life is troubled; it is a sure chart. Study it in poverty; it will unhoard to you inexhaustible riches. Commune with it in sickness; it contains the medicine of the soul. Clasp it when dying, it is the charter of immortality.

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*Edwin Hubbell Chapin, 1814-1880, was an influential American Preacher, poet, writer and editor.

To what "Volume" does this advice refer?