

“What I Believe”

RUTH HOPPE

Life is an experience not to be missed. There are the rough spots in life of course, and then there are the smooth stretches when one is at peace with the world. One fine solution for the feeling of depression, insecurity, and futility is to stop and think, “Would life be full if it were a life of ease; would life have depth?”

As young as I am, I have my certain ideas on the fundamentals of life. My convictions are of the most immature type, yet they are mine until they undergo a metamorphosis.

Heading my standards is the quality of truth. Thoreau, in *Walden*, states, “Rather than love, than fame, give me truth.” It is most evident that only a minority of the people have an inner impetus while a majority of the people use the intellectual formula. Truth is a quality to be admired and sought after! All corruption would be banished if truthfulness were the dominant characteristic of every living human being.

Among the higher qualities of life is honesty which is also a quality to be admired and sought after. “A good man will avoid the spot of any sin.” Honesty is often abused; it is worn as a cloak and is thrown off like one. There are too many suspicious, untrusting, and distasteful people in the world today, who if they were honest with themselves and others, would find more faith in others.

Men are jealous fools, afraid that someone might have something that they are lacking. Our wars have always been based on jealousy, if not on a single human’s

jealousy then on the jealousy of one nation of another nation’s resources. Jealousy, not a quality to be admired, will reign as the source of all evil. Man may be what he wishes . . . for “man is man and master of his fate.”¹

Freedom is a luxury of life. “That man is free who lives as he likes; who is not subject to compulsion, to restraint, to violence; whose aversions are unincurred.”² Above all, I am going to strive for complete freedom. Man is like an animal; he likes to be free to do what he wishes, to roam where he likes, and to be suppressed by none. A life of freedom is a goal, yet freedom cannot be made the dominant quality of one’s life. To lead a harmonious life one must have a taste of every dish, to sample the tasty and the unsavory.

Most disturbing in our life is the shadow of the “Grim Reaper.” “Men fear death as children fear to go into the dark; and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales, so is the other.”³ Death is not to be feared, but it is to be looked upon as a stage in the evolution of mankind. Religion should be heeded and glorified in. We should receive comfort and knowledge from our teachings. The church helps to prepare us for our after life, and as school prepares us for our adult life, so should we make use of our religion. Shakespeare says in *Julius Caesar*, “It seems to me most strange that men should fear; seeing that death, a necessary end, will come when it comes.” I am trying now to adopt this as my philosophy of death.

1 Tennyson, “*Geraint and Enid*.”

2 Epictetus, “*Of Freedom*.”

3 Bacon, “*Lord Verulam*.”