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WRONG VIEWPOINT

Everywhere and under all conditions we hear people making excuses for their failure to get on. They are dissatisfied with their lot, miserable because of their seemingly inferior positions, and envious of the success of others. If they could only get somewhere else, into some other occupation, into some other school; if they could only have someone else's opportunity, some other fellow's chances, they, too, would be successful and contented. But they can never do anything where they are or with what they have. Each imagines that the other fellow has the best chance.

The people who do not get on in the world have a great deal to say about other people's good fortune and opportunities, and they do not think of putting the blame for their lack of success where it belongs. They excuse their own failure on the ground that those who have succeeded have always been "boosted" or "favored," someone or something outside of themselves "gave them a lift."

A young man who had risen rapidly from an office boy to the possession of a fine business of his own, and who owes his success entirely to his own pluck, industry and initiative, speaking of his experiences says that during his climb, first as a student and then as an employe, he was laughed at constantly by his comrades for working so much harder than he needed to for doing more than he was paid for, or was expected of him. When he worked after hours to clean up things and get ready for the next morning, they would tell him that he was a fool to do so much without overtime pay, that his employer would probably never know that he was working overtime, and that even if he did learn of it he would not appreciate it.

"And now," he said, "these same fellows are saying that my success is due to the fact that, from the very start, my opportunities were better than theirs; that even in the days when we used to work together the boss always favored me and was prejudiced against them. They positively resent my success, and seem to think that I have in some way injured them."

The tendency to underrate our own chances and overrate those of our fellow-worker is common among all classes of people. Wherever we go the same tendency to under value what we have and magnify the

value of what the other fellow has is noticeable. It seems to be an element of our natures. We have a feeling of dissatisfaction with what we have and a longing for what our more successful or prosperous neighbor has. In longing for what we don't have, or in looking forward to some big thing we hope to have, we miss much enjoyment that we could get from what we have and the multitude of pleasant things within our reach.

Happiness, fortune, opportunity, everything, somewhere else. The good things are for others. How much energy has been lost, how many lives spoiled, by this fruitless longing for other fields, other opportunities out of our reach; in dreaming of what we would do if we were in somebody else's place.

Students, do you realize that there are people all around you envying you your good fortune, your opportunity to get an education under the Government's supervision; your chance to procure vocational training as well as academic education without that great effort to pay the bills required of all white people? And yet we find so many students in our Government schools dissatisfied.

The good fortune and happiness for which you are looking elsewhere are right within yourself. Instead of wasting your energy in useless repining and in envying others what they have attained through hard work; instead of longing to be someone else, or have somebody else's opportunity, make the most of those you have. Do the best you can where you are and you will be surprised at the strength you will develop and the progress you will make, and how the obstacles that seem to discourage you will be overcome. Envy and inertia will never get you anywhere—they bring only discontent and unhappiness.

Everywhere there are discontented men and women who are more or less soured on life—because they could not get what they longed for. They feel that life has cheated them, when the truth is that they have cheated themselves. They are struggling along in an uncongenial environment, envying those who succeeded where they failed, railing at the fate which has robbed them of their own. They did not rely upon their in-

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