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DESERTING THE SHIP

All good sea-faring crafts have their rats—they appear as a part of the crew. It seems that so long as there are rats aboard the seamen feel assured of the seaworthiness of their craft. When a ship docks and the sailors see the rats disembarking, they, too, are inclined to "sign off." The deserting of the rats is an infallible sign—and sailor men are as a class firm believers in signs, good and bad.

A good ship may be likened to success—everybody wants aboard, rats and all. Success succeeds, they tell us, and we believe them. Success is always a seaworthy craft and never is there a scarcity of people who want to sail the ship—lots of captains can be found.

Strange, isn't it, to note how the world will boost for a project that has already succeeded? How willing the masses are to give assistance where it is not needed! But there is great skepticism regarding things that appear shaky, and often they are shaky only because of lack of boosting—dearth of enthusiastic support. Nobody can blame a rat for leaving a sinking ship, but we can blame a man for abandoning a righteous cause, in the final analysis of things, simply because others have not already given it support. Man should reason problems out and ascertain their merits or demerits. Many a fine undertaking has died a premature death because of lack of backing. We see evidences of this about us every day.

Start something and note your success, especially if it is new to the age or the place. On the other hand, observe things that are failing or flourishing about you. You will be forced to admit that more often than not the really finer projects go to the wall, while something not so good will survive. The sentence of life or death for the two projects lies in the power of the people and whether one or both appeal to the popular fancy—whether or not the "Joneses" approve. If a thing is already a success it is certain that the "Joneses" have approved and all the sheep in the fold want through the gate. Why not do your own thinking? Why should the masses let a worthy project fail? The majority are products of the herd formation idea and they think as the herd—or not at all. Think for yourself.

Let us get back to earth and consider some matters for a moment. If Chemawa has a fine band almost every boy in school will want to play some instrument in it.

If we have an unusually good football team it is no effort to put your finger on young men who are certain that they can shine as booters of the pigskin. If it is a mere matter of a good team of baseball players nearly every boy in school wants to "go to bat."

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Youth

YOUTH is not a time of life—it is a state of mind. It is not a matter of ripe cheeks, red lips and supple knees; it is a temper of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigor of the emotions; it is a freshness of the deep springs of life. ¶ Youth means a temperamental predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite of adventure over love of ease. This often exists in a man of fifty more than in a boy of twenty. ¶ Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years; people grow old only by deserting their ideals. Years wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. Worry, doubt, self-distrust, fear and despair, these are the long, long years that bow the head and turn the growing spirit back to dust. ¶ Whether seventy or sixteen, there is in every being's heart the love of wonder, the sweet amazement at the stars and the starlike things and thoughts, the undaunted challenge of events, the unfailing childlike appetite for what next, and the joy and the game of life. ¶ You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt; as young as your self-confidence, as old as your fears; as young as your hope, as old as your despair. ¶ In the central place of your heart there is a wireless station; so long as it receives messages of beauty, hope, cheer, courage, grandeur and power from the earth, from men and from the Infinite, so long are you young. ¶ When the wires are all down and all the central place of your heart is covered with the snows of pessimism and the ice of cynicism, then are you grown old indeed and may God have mercy on your soul.—Anonymous.