

virtuous determination. The resistance to this force on the side of vice is weakened, in proportion to the frequency wherewith that train of suggestions which would have led to a vicious indulgence, is broken and discomfited. It is thus that when one is successfully resolute in his opposition to evil, the power of making the achievement and the facility of the achievement itself are both upon the increase; and virtue makes double gain to herself, by every separate conquest which she may have won. The humbler attainments of moral worth are first mastered and secured; and the aspiring disciple may pass onward in a career that is quite indefinite to nobler deeds and nobler sacrifices.

9. And this law of habit when enlisted on the side of righteousness, not only strengthens and makes sure our resistance to vice, but facilitates the most arduous performances of virtue. The man whose thoughts, with the purposes and doings to which they lead, are at the bidding of conscience, will, by frequent repetition, at length describe the same track almost spontaneously—even as in physical education, things laboriously learned at the first, come to be done at last without the feeling of an effort. And so, in moral education, every new achievement of principle smooths the way to future achievements of the same kind; and the precious fruit or purchase of each moral victory is to set us on higher and firmer vantage-ground for the conquests of principle in all time coming. He who resolutely bids away the suggestions of avarice, when they come into conflict with the incumbent generosity; or the suggestions of