

Distrust a perfect-seeming success, but when having succeeded thou findest still much to do, rejoice and go forward; for the labour is long before the real perfection.

There is no more benumbing error than to mistake a stage for the goal or to linger too long in a resting place.

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Wherever thou seest a great end, be sure of a great beginning. Where a monstrous and painful destruction appals thy mind, console it with the certainty of a large and great creation. God is there not only in the still small voice, but in the fire and in the whirlwind.

The greater the destruction, the freer the chances of creation; but the destruction is often long, slow and oppressive, the creation tardy in its coming or interrupted in its triumph. The night returns again and again and the day lingers or seems even to have been a false dawning. Despair not therefore but watch and work. Those who hope violently, despair swiftly: neither hope nor fear, but be sure of God's purpose and thy will to accomplish.

The hand of the divine Artist works often as if it were unsure of its genius and its material. It seems to touch and test and leave, to pick up and throw away and pick up again, to labour and fail and botch and repiece together. Surprises and disappointments are the order of his work before all things are ready. What was selected, is cast away into the abyss of reprobation; what was rejected, becomes the corner-stone of a mighty edifice. But behind all this is the sure eye of a knowledge which surpasses our reason and the slow smile of an infinite ability.

God has all time before him and does not need to be always in a hurry. He is sure of his aim and success and cares not if he break his work a hundred times to bring it nearer perfection. Patience is our first great necessary lesson, but not the dull slow-