DEMAND THE BEST!

WHY not demand the best of life,—not the largest or the finest, not the richest or the greatest, but the best?
The best is none too good for you or for me,—it is none too good for any human soul,—
But it may only be had by a stern demand, and a conquest yet more stern.
Health is one of the best things of life:
Let us demand it, therefore, of ourselves and for ourselves, health of the body and of the mind, for the sake of the race:
The triumph of the mind is one of the best things of life;
The triumph over nature and adverse conditions, over the body for the sake of the whole person, over the self for the sake of justice.
Let those who desire the best for themselves secure the triumph of the mind by daily mastery.
There is then the triumph of the loving human spirit over mere mentality, which should be attained by all:
To this end let us set our telescopes toward the wide skies, and forget that there are microscopes with which to examine the affairs of the selfish.
Fulfilment is one of the best things of life;—the task accomplished, the promise kept, the complete cycle wrought out, as of a plant from seed to seedpod.
For, being set as an individual pattern, each alone and distinct in the universal scheme of things, we are bound to fulfill the design as a sacred duty, and in this is great joy.
Friends are among the best things of life and the love of mate and child will be holy to the end.
Let us demand love, therefore, by continual knocking at the doors of hearts;
For we may be friends with those who give us much, or by just exchange, or we may also be friends where we ourselves have given most abundantly.
These, therefore, are the best things; health, control, fulfilment, love.
If we spend ourselves to attain them, we shall try our strength in an arena by war against other desires for those things which are less than the best.
Are we handicapped by inheritance? Are we weakened by unprofitable civilizations? Are we led astray by environment?
Let these thoughts add fuel to the fires of our energy.
But to win the best, even in large measure, is not enough.
The ultimate beauty is to yield it again in full measure, becoming sharers of illimitable bounty, breaking for all men and women the bread of God!

MARGUERITE OGDEN BIGELOW.