SON OF ADAM

When evening comes, I grow weary... I would gladly go to rest but there are still many things that really ought to be done. I work from habit and any attempt to concentrate my mind on a definite subject paralyzes my brain and makes me sleepier than before.

A vacant mind not plagued by conscience, worry, fear, is a placid animal existence. It is a nice way to live one's life. Yet, having lived it, what has one accomplished? One might as well have been a cow, standing in the meadow chewing her cud. A cow is forced to be of some use in spite of herself. Yes, that is a life of contentment, of physical pleasure, never feeling any deep sorrow—and never feeling a deep heartfelt soul-satisfying joy.

Is that the kind of man God intended the children of Adam to be?

Let me live a life of misery, disappointment, danger, and insecurity. Let dangers make me feel alert, conscious that life exists around me and that I am part of life. Let me feel responsibility, uncertainty, make me meet temptations and conquer them, meet obstacles and surmount them. Confront me with difficulties and force me to make decisions and choose between alternatives with every muscle and nerve coil alert and aroused and awake, living a day every hour and a lengthening life many years even though the days be less.

This does not sound so bad on paper and I would not actually care for it. But I shall choose it. Time and again I shall put myself in a pickle where I will use all my powers and develop new ones to avoid submersion. I will conquer my cowardice and develop my talents. Maybe I will. The easy way is the easiest, but it is also a total loss. Will my life be a total loss, or will I pay the price?

- A boy in the 1938 class -