

**MAUD POWELL'S RECIPE FOR SUCCESS***The Lady***February 22, 1900**

Were it possible to give a recipe for success, one might state it thus: One part talent, nine parts will-power; mix thoroughly.

In my own case, possessing perhaps the artistic nature and a reasonable share of brains and talent, together with excellent health, I have, through determined and purposeful application of energy, "arrived," or at least brought myself to a point where some of the mystery, the truth, the inner meaning of the Holy Grail of Art stand revealed.

Determination to win gives one concentration of thought and purpose; makes one alive to every opportunity for growth and advancement, gives one the eagerness to grasp and assimilate helpful, ripening knowledge and experience; it makes life vital, interesting, and work absorbing, glorious. Serious reading this, mayhap, for casual eyes, yet I feel the necessity of approaching the subject with all seriousness. To all who wish to enter the professional ranks, let me say: Don't attempt it unless you possess an all-absorbing and unselfish love for the art per se (not for its trappings), and are willing and glad to make every sacrifice for its sake. If you honestly love your art, and only then, will you have sufficient courage to combat the buffets, the injustices, the bitternesses of public life! Art is its own reward, and, looked at less selfishly, is it not worth much to be able to dispense "sweetness and light," to open human hearts, to stir the highest sympathies of one's fellow-beings? To me the following episode is worth days of toil and a dozen disappointments.

Practicing one day in my mountain cottage in the Catskills, the summer sunshine and the fragrance of the garden pouring in through open door and open window, I suddenly became conscious of the presence of a little barefooted Negro lass, who had slipped noiselessly into my room drawn thither by the sound of the fiddle. There she stood, listening with her whole being, strongly approving of the chords in the Bach "Chaconne," which she said were "like an organ," and her eyes fairly dancing out of her head at the "plunky-te-plunk-plunk" of Sarasate's "Gypsy Dances." She volunteered to dance – marvelous tricks of steps did she trip, too, – and calmly informed me I didn't play as well for dancing as her dusky mother. When we said "Goodbye," and she took herself off, I supposed the incident closed. But, no; the next morning a single glowing hollyhock blossom found its way mysteriously to my desk. Glancing out of the window, I espied the little black form scudding away down the garden path towards the gate. I have the flower still, while its touching message I shall treasure in a warm corner of my heart as long as I live.

*From the Archive of The Maud Powell Society for Music and Education*