

**LIFE**

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Life by John Rankin Rogers

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**JOHN RANKIN ROGERS**

**LIFE**



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*J. M. Rogers*

# LIFE.

*Life is a struggle; a school; a test of fitness.  
No struggle, no school. No school, no fitness.  
No fitness, no future—either in this world  
or in any that may follow.*

BY  
JOHN RANKIN ROGERS.



SAN FRANCISCO,  
THE WHITAKER & RAY COMPANY  
(Incorporated)  
1899

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## THE INDIVIDUAL LIFE.

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**H**ERE are, I think, but two ways in which we are able to form opinions, or to judge of new thoughts as they are presented to us for consideration. One, the usual, common and vulgar method, adopted, too, by many who consider themselves as educated men, consists in approving or disapproving a thought in accordance with an opinion previously formed of the character of the utterer. If we have been favorably impressed by a man, or the school to which he belongs, we commonly approve what he says. If we dislike him, or his school, we have no liking for his thoughts. This is the short and easy method in ordinary use. It is not confined to ignorant men.

## TO MY ANGELIC LIFE

The other course consists in diligently and conscientiously comparing the new thought with our own. If, after this has been done, we come to the conclusion that the new is superior, that is, truer, we proceed, without regard to consequences—and the consequences often involve great present calamity,—to substitute the new for the old.

Those who do this, in greater or less degree, live *The Individual Life*. From their ranks have come all the poets, prophets, seers, discoverers, thinkers—all the truly great ones of earth! These have possessed the courage of their convictions. These have dared to differ, and differing have supported their opinions at the cost of whatever opposed. These have known from the beginning that one man and God make a majority. From them the world has learned all it knows to-day.

They have dared to stand alone!

I have never ceased to admire the motto of the English coat of arms: "God and my

Right." It expresses much. First: God, justice, absolute equity. Next: my right, my opinion, my individuality. Eight hundred years of forceful, successful advance may be read in that short phrase. I believe no nation, no college class, can take that as a motto, endeavoring to live up to it, without turning out many who will make their mark in the world. Individuality is everything. To be without it is to be nothing.

The only fly in this ointment of otherwise immeasurable value is this: One man's right has been wrongly made to include that of many others. But this is an infringement, a misstatement and a plain contradiction in terms. The assertion of individual right in matters religious was great Luther's contention. The declaration of individual right in matters political, each man for himself, was the remedy our fathers found, and I may add, as has been well stated by another, we shall find no other. The later declaration of Herbert