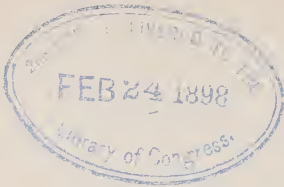


All's Right with the World.

CHARLES B. NEWCOMB





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ALL'S RIGHT WITH THE WORLD

BY

CHARLES B. NEWCOMB

The year's at the Spring,
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in his heaven —
All's right with the world.

— ROBERT BROWNING

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

— SHAKESPEARE

♣

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CHARLES B. NEWCOMB

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DEDICATION.

To my gentle comrade of many wanderings among the fields and forests, the lowlands and the uplands of thought-life, I lovingly dedicate this volume.

P R E F A C E.

IN passing over a mountain trail one's point of observation is often changed. Sometimes the traveler finds himself upon the edge of a precipice, looking down into dark and narrow valleys. Sometimes he climbs the heights and looks abroad over a superb and varied panorama of grand peaks and broad horizons. In our experiences of life we find that everything related to our happiness depends upon our point of view. We may lift up our eyes unto the hills even when walking in the valley of the shadow. We have wings; like the dove we can fly away and be at rest. We can dwell in the confines of personal suffering, or gain the higher table-lands from which we can see the glory that excelleth in the universal life spread out before us.

The world is wearied with complaints of "hard times," "financial depression," and "social discontent." We are always looking to the future for remedies that never come. Let us open our eyes awhile to the possibilities of the present, and lay aside the smoked glasses of prejudice and ignorance through which we have looked at life. Let us identify God and man as inseparably united,—learn to unfold our latent powers and study the higher gospel of true worldliness. We will perceive that the Banquet of Life is always spread. Nature herself goes out into the highways and hedges to compel us to come in. None is really shut out from the feast except the self-exiled. All cause of suffering is in the individual himself. Life in very truth is opulence and equity.

CHARLES B. NEWCOMB.

Boston, Nov. 1, 1897.

“The Bacon, the Spinoza, the Hume, Schelling, Kant, or whosoever propounds to you a philosophy of the mind is only a more or less awkward translator of things in your consciousness which you have also your way of seeing, perhaps of denominating. Say, then, instead of too timidly poring into his obscure sense, that he has not succeeded in rendering back to you your consciousness. He has not succeeded, now let another try. If Plato cannot, perhaps Spinoza will. If Spinoza cannot, then perhaps Kant. Anyhow, when at last it is done, you will find it is no recondite but a simple, natural, common state which the writer restores to you.”—*Emerson's "Intellect."*

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I.

THE HORIZON OF NATURAL LAW.

When we have new perception we shall gladly disburthen the memory of its hoarded treasures as old rubbish.—*Emerson.*

WHAT is “nature’s law?” Is it not simply the horizon that limits our knowledge of today?

Tomorrow we will have climbed higher—we will have a more elevated view—we will restate the law.

Yesterday we discovered gravitation. Today we are discovering magnetism. Yesterday the bit of metal fell to the ground. Today it rises to the magnet in obedience to an occult law of levitation which has apparently transcended for the moment that of gravitation.

We must not be too arbitrary in our definitions. We need not hurry to reach conclusions.

In the end we shall doubtless find that spirit governs every element and is absolutely free of limitation.

This seems to be a good working hypothesis to-day, and we find every encouragement in its application.

So let us not overvalue what we have called “conservatism,” or cling too tenaciously to the

conclusions of past thinkers. Every human being must breathe and eat for himself. We must not lean too much on one another in things intellectual or spiritual, or be afraid to move forward confidently.

We do not hold to yesterday's breath or yesterday's dinner. We may safely let go, perhaps, of yesterday's opinions.

Let us remember the manna in the desert. It was fresh every morning. He who gathered much had nothing over. True wealth is not mere accumulation, either mental or material.

Men and women often work like pointer dogs. They make wide ranges in the fields of philosophy, science, and religion—then stop rigidly on some small game, and cannot be induced to move till it is "flushed."

We are too often magnetized by petty theories. They are like small game on the ground. We can never be free till we learn that our true horizon has no bounds and the soul no limitations.

II.

FROM DAN TO BEERSHEBA.

MILESTONES IN A PSYCHIC PILGRIMAGE.

Look within. Within is the fountain of good, and it will ever bubble up if thou wilt ever dig.—*Marcus Aurelius*.

IN the usual reaction which follows a new and radical discovery of truth, the first impulse of the student is to distrust all that he has previously accepted, and commit himself ardently to the school which claims him as a disciple. In the end he too often finds that he has simply changed his label or entrenched himself in a new position which he is pledged to defend.

The truth-seeker should be a traveller, carrying very little baggage, trusting for his supplies to the resources of the country through which he journeys. If he become merely the disciple of a "cause" and the champion of a "theory," he will inevitably find himself so engrossed with personalities that he cannot make much progress in the field of discovery.

Let us trace the usual course of the "investigator" of psychic forces.

Our pilgrim starts perhaps from the church. There he has been taught the theories of special

creation, human limitations, and the "scheme of redemption," in which his chief responsibility is an act of faith.

He becomes interested in the discovery of spiritual forces and intelligences, which revolutionize his philosophy of life with all his former views of earth and heaven. His first step forward brings him into the mysteries of hypnotism. Here he receives a lesson in the possibilities of mind control through a subtle force which dominates heart and conscience, and like electricity sets at defiance time and distance, those two most important factors on the lower planes of life.

From the study of hypnotism he passes quickly to that of spiritualism.

He now obtains evidence of continued existence which science and theology have failed to reveal to him. He discovers at the same time that the conditions of that existence differ widely from all the ideas in which he has been instructed. In place of fixed states of happiness or misery, he learns that life means progress, and that every thought and every word and act has its legitimate and inevitable consequence which is neither "reward" nor "punishment," and which is itself capable of being changed by bringing new causes into operation.

He discovers also the possibility of supplementing his human intelligence with that of better informed and sympathetic friends in the unseen.

Here he encounters a real danger. In hypnotism he has been tempted by the power of dominating other minds at the sacrifice of their individual freedom. In spiritualism he endangers his own liberty by an unreasonable submission to minds that have dropped their mortal bodies. He has entered the realm of psychism. For a personal God he has substituted personal Will and the inexorable "Law." The belief in a personal Devil has given place to a fear of obsessing spirits, malicious magnetism, and elementaries. It is only a few days' journey beyond materialism. In the prayer meetings of the church he has been taught to throw his responsibilities upon Jesus as a Saviour. He now exchanges the prayer meeting for the seance room, and is in danger of throwing his responsibilities upon the "spirits." He learns that Jesus was a "medium," and he himself, perhaps, sits for development as a "sensitive."

After an experience of negative suffering, he seeks for higher thought in Occult Science and Theosophy. He discovers that the secret of spiritual power lies in the development of his own soul forces and in the realm of the positive.

From the seance room he passes into the occult circle. The "spirits" he now exchanges for the "masters" who also dwell in the unseen, though the Himalayas do not seem so remote to him as the spiritual spheres. Again he learns a new al-

phabet and new shibboleths, and is taught that Jesus was a "Hierophant."

Our pilgrim has travelled a long journey to discover at last that "the kingdom of heaven is within." Here he finds his true spiritual centre and reaches the place of wells—"Beersheba." He has successively passed the milestones of ecclesiasticism, materialism, and psychism, and arrived at last at the borderland of higher spiritualism. He has come from the colder north to the sunnier south of his Holy Land, to find in himself at last the "well of water springing up unto everlasting life." He has discovered the meaning of the words: "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life."

Henceforth that Light is the glad star of his spiritual pilgrimage. "The Star which they saw in the East."

A spirit of controversy is not favorable to spiritual progress. We must at least accept a proposition as a working hypothesis, assuming it to be true, pending its demonstration or disproval. An unreasonable denial is as illogical as baseless assertion. An unfriendly attitude is not possible to the truly scientific mind. Such is not the attitude of the student in chemistry working in his laboratory, or of the mechanic in his workshop. Starting from a point of indifference, without prejudice, each of them seeks only to discover the law which governs in chemistry or mechanics. In mental science a principle begins to demonstrate itself at the very moment it is recognized, for then the student has committed himself to its action. Recognition is acceptance, and the harmonies of truth inevitably follow.

III.

MORBID TENACITY.

He in whom the love of truth predominates will keep himself aloof from all moorings and afloat. — *Emerson.*

LIFE is inspiration and expression. If we fail in one, we fail in both. We often close ourselves to fresh thought by our tenacity of the old. The attempt to harmonize the old and the new thought is as if a tree were to cling to its dead leaves and expect at the same time to renew its foliage. When good reason is shown for doing so, we must be willing to let go favorite ideas and prejudices. As long as we hold on we cannot move forward.

We have been taught to "hold fast that which is good." It is of equal importance to let go of whatever has served its purpose. Having gained a higher thought, why still cling to the lower? Life is not accumulation; it is circulation. Must existence, therefore, necessarily include unrest and disease, disappointment and loss? We fall easily into the habit of believing life to be chiefly discipline and trial. Is this the whole truth? Is not perfect peace possible here and now? Must work be always anxious, and rest without repose? Must we continue to hasten through our occupations without any real enjoyment, but only a feeling of dissatisfaction because of deficiencies?

We dwell too often in the negative conditions of life. We labor day after day, with no hope except the chance of attaining an indefinite goal called "heaven." "Such is life," we say to one another, as we limp along with heavy hearts, dimming eyes, and wrinkled faces. In our ignorance we pride ourselves that we can say, "Thy will be done." We imagine sorrow and trouble are sent by God, and we moan with one another in "sympathy." Truly, Emerson might say that men are "like gods playing the fool." Let our eyes be opened and this nightmare be dispelled. We are but in the morning, and the long day stretches out in a glorious perspective.

Heaven can never be found through death. Death of itself brings nothing. It is an error to believe that death in the mortal sense is "gain." Through death we will not find treasures or lamented friends unless they and we, through the harmonies of truth, are drawn into spiritual companionship. Upon the other shore we shall find what we take with us. Gain comes only through development.

Environment is not a fetter, though often professed as an excuse for the poverty of our lives. Such thoughts act as opiates to personal dissatisfaction. In bondage we may be, but, if so, as willing captives—slaves to many masters who all serve under the one great potentate of selfishness. We

desire power, and yet are ruled by self-appointed taskmasters. Toiling and sweating under heavy burdens, dare men submit their troubles to an honest spiritual analysis and be ready to let them go? This is a searching question. Self-pity is carefully nursed and enjoyed with morbid satisfaction.

There was once a young man in Galilee who thought he desired eternal life till he was bidden to relinquish his accumulations. He went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. This is the case with many who are attracted to the new thought of the day. They make but little progress, and the reason is not difficult to find. They are not willing to let go. They want to hold on to old ideas, old standards of living, and old habits. They are afraid of finding themselves cut loose from the old moorings of thought. Anchored so many years, their anchors are embedded in the mud, and their life-craft is covered with barnacles. It would take a serious effort to cut their cables—to put the ship in order and be ready to sail on a voyage of discovery. Pride and indolence forbid. What would people think of such unusual preparations? The ocean of Truth is very wide. How can they, with a new pilot, sail away from the haven where a fleet of friends lies idly swinging at anchor? At last a storm arises and breaks the cable chains. The conservative mariners are driven out to sea by some event of life—a death, or an illness,

possibly a bankruptcy. Their seamanship is tested as never before. It is found, alas! very sadly at fault, and navigation must be studied anew. Ballast has not been stowed away, and, as for cargo, it must all be thrown overboard to right the ship.

Then begins the great lesson of letting go. Adrift and not well provisioned, men realize that their so-called "faith in God" was only faith in friends, in bank accounts, in church, or social position. Their "great possessions" prove to be like the "emigrant's gold" — the iron pyrites of the mining regions that are carefully hoarded by the tenderfoot until he learns that "fool's gold" can buy nothing.

These fancied riches may be the self-righteousness of the pietist, the intellectual treasures of the scholar, worldly friendships, or influence and business credit. All these would be sadly compromised by any association with new cults. So men prefer their bondage, and indulge their indolence rather than let go. For the future, they are consoled by the expectation of a paradise where all treasures will be found; for the present, they cling to the bric-a-brac of life—things and friends and reputation.

But what is highly esteemed among men is but lightly regarded in the kingdom of good. Humanity can only postpone the day when there will be petitioners in bankruptcy mournfully crying, "Who

will show us any good?" Men must begin some time and somewhere as little children, before they can enter the kingdom of Truth.

We need not be either "tempest tossed" or "fog bound" upon any day of our human existence, for we are spiritually equipped for every possible emergency of life, and need only recognize the divine power and intelligence at our command, to give us soundings and bring us into port.



It is always we *ourselves* who raise the billows that threaten to engulf us, and the fogs that shut out our horizon, through our own mental agitations. In the severest storm, that ship rides easily that is encircled by the oil thrown out from its own cargo.

IV.

CHRISTIAN TRANSGRESSORS—THE DISEASE OF CONSERVATISM.

No truth is so sublime but it may be trivial tomorrow in the light of new thoughts.

People wish to be settled; only as far as they are unsettled is there any hope for them.—*Emerson.*

PROGRESS is from the Latin “pro,” meaning forward, and “gradi,” to step. Retrogress is from “retro” and “gradi,” meaning to step backward, and transgress is to step across.

“The way of the transgressor is hard.”

This is true of all who abandon progress and undertake to swing across the tides and currents of fresh thought, preferring old beliefs and prejudices.

No matter how closely they are allied with religious creeds and organizations, they may be “transgressors,” and, if such, must inevitably suffer for what, perhaps, they mistakenly imagine to be wise “conservatism.”

Conservatism of error is never wise, and such suffering can in no sense be called “divinely appointed.”

The only remedy is to recognize the harmonies of progressive thought, and accept the truth that “in good we are moved and have our being.”

The modern transgressor usually prides himself upon his loyalty to thought that has really been outgrown by awakened minds. He enjoys the posing as a "conservative," and very likely at the same time insists that he is "liberal." The doctors and clergymen find their largest clientage among this class, for they are often chronic invalids, and their families are usually ailing and delicate.

Mental science finds no difficulty in the diagnosis of such cases.

The modern transgressor takes more counsel of his fears than of his confidence. He dwells upon his weakness rather than his strength. In politics and finance he is sure to consider every possibility of disaster and defeat that he can conjure up. These he exaggerates and magnifies to the greatest degree. The elements of success he considers last. He denies all recognition of his highest intelligence — the intuitional faculties. He prides himself on being "practical," and considers himself entitled to great credit for his "common sense."

And so with bat-like blindness he knocks himself against first one difficulty and then another, often losing everything except his egotism.

At last he leaves the body, wearied with what he imagines to be the necessary "conflict of life," and when his friends are saying he has "closed his eyes in death," those eyes are being opened for the first time to the meaning of real life, to which they have been always persistently and obstinately blind.

There is a curious fiction in the line of that old hymn :

“When mine eyelids close in death.”

As a matter of fact the eyes of the dead persistently open wide, and it is difficult to close them. It is as if nature herself intended to show that instead of the “sleep of death,” of which we hear so much, the change that has come is one of real awakening to a life of progress.

V.

BRIC-A-BRAC BONDAGE.

The man or woman who would have remained a sunny garden flower, with no room for its roots and too much sunshine for its head, by the falling of the walls and the neglect of the gardener is made the banian of the forest, yielding shade and fruit to wide neighborhoods of men.—*Emerson.*

AN owner of ground sometimes sees his opportunities and clears away dilapidated buildings, replacing them with better ones.

Sometimes he is neglectful, and a conflagration sweeps his property clear and shows him plainly that it is for his interest to build larger, fairer, and more commodious structures, better adapted to the wants of the day.

The fire is often a spontaneous combustion from accumulated rubbish.

Can we not see how these experiences are typical of life ?

How often do we find our fortunes swept away as by a conflagration, or ourselves prostrated by disease, or transferred by death to new activities.

Doubtless, we suffer just as much to be taken away from all we have cherished in life, as to have our possessions taken from us while remaining here.

There can be no doubt that the awakening after

death is often to a sense of complete bankruptcy and irreparable loss of friends, property, and influence. What then remains to the spirit, whether here or there?

Simply to build again upon more solid foundations—to construct a more stately home for the soul, either in mortal or immortal realms—to so change the thought of life that its vibrations will attract, as a magnet, a more opulent and imperishable environment.

We can never truly enjoy or possess till we have awakened to the truth that all we have springs from what we are, and that no plane of life has yet been discovered upon which this law does not govern.

Let us not be in bondage to our bric-a-brac—to the selfish routine of life—or the claims of mistaken friendship. Let us not be slaves to any rigid purpose or ambition which could cramp or hinder us in our soul's progress. Let us not be fettered by opinions.

If one has had a glimpse of the eternal equities, his brow can never again be clouded with anxiety and care; his heart can never be heavy with a sense of fear or loss.

We are the rightful masters of the universe and make its laws.

When we become sensible of our limitations (which we have made ourselves), we call them natural law, and intrench ourselves behind what is

but the phantom of our ignorance. This we hasten to embody in the text-books of our sciences.

No wonder that we are so continually obliged to revise and revolutionize our "scientific conclusions," so that yesterday's "standard work" is valueless today.

Our horizon line recedes as we advance. The limits of our atmospheres are not so easily reached as we imagined, and their composition is not so simple as we thought. The laws of storms are not so readily defined as we supposed. The forces of nature are not limited to the few elements with which we have made acquaintance. The simple wild rose can be differentiated by our new botany into thousands of varieties.

The universal life is found to be a plastic force which we ourselves are learning to direct — to limit and expand at will in its relation to ourselves.

The latest revelation of these closing days of the century, is not only that man is his own creator, but that he is the creator of all subordinate forms of life, and that no element yet discovered wholly defies his control.

Principles are the only absolute laws.

Fixed opinions are dangerous, whether of persons or things, of ourselves or one another. They take no account of the laws of growth or of the fact, as Emerson says, that all nature is "fluidic."

Even the "everlasting hills" we know to be for-

ever changing in disintegration and reconstruction. Periodic cataclysms remodel the entire face of the globe and bring forth new worlds of plain and mountain. So does man change. He needs continually to renew acquaintance with himself and his fellows.

The real science of life is ever fresh adjustment. We never truly know ourselves or one another.

We are never really the same in two successive days. Nature abhors fixity as much as she abhors a vacuum.

Conservatism is an impossibility ; it is a purely fictitious quality.

Even our conceptions of good are never quite the same at successive periods of our development.

They advance with our knowledge and experience of life.

No two mortals can possibly worship the same God or hold to exactly the same standards, for both are the results of different experience.

We begin by believing in the despotism of a personal God, whom we distort into a demon. We call this "religion." As we progress we substitute for the tyranny of a God, the tyranny of a "law."

We call this "science." This is only changing the name of our deity.

A step forward enlarges our horizon. We discover that the law of our being is all we need to recognize ; it reveals the universal and interprets all.

We must be polarized to principle and not to theories and dogmas.

When we are thus in equilibrium, we can take our compass into any waters, and it will always show us the true north.

When magnetized by ideas and prejudices, we cannot voyage beyond the length of our cable chain.

All our experiences serve as mirrors to reveal us to ourselves. We gain little from books, but the revelation of our own minds, and no real help from people but aids to self-discovery. No satisfaction from experience except as it results in self-development. Plato has said that all knowledge is reminiscence.

The mirror adds nothing to form or feature of the one who stands before it.

It takes away nothing except in appearance, if it be concave or convex. If it is a true reflector, it shows the man to himself and as he is.

Life brings the awakening to spiritual consciousness on the objective plane. Can there be any question that it is well worth living?

“All that we are is built out of what we have thought.”
— DHAMMAPADA.

It is well that life makes such demands upon us and will not be satisfied with an easy discipline, nor confer upon us her degrees of honor till we have thoroughly proved our right to hold them. It is well worth while to be a graduate in all her schools. Her courses are severe; but she never fails to put her faithful pupils in possession of illimitable powers, through unfoldment, which is the only education.



A memory that etches anything too deeply into our brain-cells only cramps and hinders us. We should not fear to lose anything we really need to hold.

If we gave less attention to the holding we would find ourselves more free. A true spiritual poise is never possible where either memory or expectation is unduly indulged and becomes habitual.

Confident concentration at the point of personal indifference puts us in possession of the largest spiritual power. This is the inevitable result of knowledge.

VI.

POSTPONEMENT A DELUSION.

“Tis life of which our nerves are scant—
O life, not death, for which I pant,
More life and fuller that I want.”

I PREACH a gospel of true worldliness. Let us eat, drink, and be merry with the fruits of righteousness, and know that we shall not die tomorrow.

We err in thinking spiritual good can be purchased by self-denial. Life is not a matter of barter: a meal the less, a virtue the more; a material indulgence sacrificed, a spiritual illumination gained; this world denied, another world secured as a reward. Let us recognize the full value of the here and now.

Too long have we postponed our highest good to an uncertain future. We have thought life an illusion, and lived in a dream of “heaven.”

We have been reluctant to face our responsibilities of today.

Our piety has been largely indolence. Rather than reconstruct the world in which we find ourselves, we have been willing to postpone our good things to another, which we pictured as ready for our habitation and peopled with congenial spirits enjoying their reward. Yet we have no reason to

think that death releases any soul from even the least of its responsibilities. Rather must it open its eyes to a larger recognition of them.

Can we not understand that the work we are postponing is not to be escaped by death, but that after death we shall demand infinitely more of ourselves than we do now, as a necessary condition of the peace that we desire?

If we could realize this, would we not take up more gladly the life that now is, and work out its problems with greater satisfaction and cheerfulness?

The religion that feeds itself on the emotions, and talks of the life that is to come rather than apply itself to the duties and privileges of the hour, must prove worthless at the last.

The wedding feast is open only to those who are equipped for its festivities.

Heaven is doubtless a very great disappointment to most people.

Many a saint whose body lies buried beneath a solemn monument sculptured with some text of promise and reward, whose friends imagine him to be among the very chosen ones around the throne, we have every reason to believe is groping sadly for the light of truth to which he denied recognition in this life, and seeking to undo, as far as possible, the work that was most loudly praised among his fellow men.

This is no fanciful speculation.

This world is our problem. If we focus upon it all our spiritual powers, we will discover that it is not the "desert" we have named it.

It is a garden of delights, a veritable Eden to those who are not blind and deaf.

What right or reason have we to suppose a "Paradise Lost," or anticipate a "Paradise Regained?"

It is a shuffling evasion of the truth.

The promise of a millenium in the infinite perspective is a moral anaesthetic, with which we hush the clamor of our souls, demanding better things of us in the present.

All responsibilities and possibilities are ours *today*.

Let us have done with this affectation of aversion to the world in which we live, this indefinite postponement of our happiness and powers. Let us cultivate worldliness, and learn truly what it is to enjoy the present.

There is no problem that belongs to our time which we cannot solve.

But we must work on the line of principle and not of precedent. Power does not come through policy and compromise.

We cannot build in the external till we have fashioned the architecture first in mind.

Sociology is a science of root culture. It will

never prove possible to paint the leaves and color the fruit successfully, except through the juices of the tree.

We have all the factors of an earthly paradise within ourselves.

The great temple of humanity will never be built by any other than human hands.

Let us learn to mix the mortar and cut the blocks and plant our derricks, with confidence in our ability to build.

Let us work with song and gladness. Let us rejoice in all the life that is ours.

Then we will no longer exhaust ourselves in fighting shadows.

We will find the Tree of Life standing in the midst of our garden, like the orange tree of the south, bearing at the same time bud, blossom, and fruit, and know that "God giveth us richly all things to enjoy."

Nothing can delay or hasten us except ourselves. Nobody can hinder or obstruct events related to us. It is the interior condition of the individual that governs absolutely all and everything related to his life.



Realization is possession. Postponement is the only obstruction. Both are in mind and govern "circumstances."

When we come to the moment of interior realization of either health or opulence, we enter into full possession, and our thought becomes externalized as surely as fruit follows blossom.

VII.

COUNTERFEIT BODIES.

A STUDY IN VIBRATION.

In nature all is useful, all is beautiful. It is therefore beautiful because it is alive, moving, reproductive. It is therefore useful because it is symmetrical and fair.—*Emerson.*

It is claimed by certain schools of metaphysicians that our bodies are counterfeits and not realities. If this were true, would it not follow that *all* bodies were counterfeits, those of animals and vegetables, and even the planet itself, and all other planets as well?

We would live then in a counterfeited universe which could have been created only by a supreme counterfeiter, a spirit in whom we could put no trust; for he must have issued an incalculable number of spurious coins, and put them in circulation for some inscrutable and illusory purpose of his own.

We sacrifice much in regarding mortal life as an illusion and *postponing our realities.*

If this life and these bodies are only "seeming" and not actual, what reason have we to think that we shall ever enter into real life and real bodies;

and how can we be sure that we would ever know them to be real?

It is like postulating the unknowable. How can we know that anything is unknowable?

Such a condition of mind cannot result in harmony.

It is not sanity.

It does not show a mental or spiritual poise.

Real spiritual illumination reveals life in the eternal now, and finds in it no counterfeits.

It discovers the accurate operation of vibratory laws which *continually* manifest the spirit, and so truly that it proclaims itself in every tone we utter, in every movement that we make, in every angle and curve flowing from our pen. It manifests itself in all the lines graven in the face and hand, and all the outlines of the body.

It radiates in our atmosphere. We open the book of life to our neighbor's vision in a thousand ways. We cannot conceal ourselves.

A student of the science of expression is never blind to the real self of any fellow-man with whom he comes in contact. He reads it with his eyes, with his touch. Its revelations come to him through every avenue of sense.

Spiritual senses are not limited to five.

In a clearer atmosphere than that of our Western world we find more stars in the Pleiades than are named in our astronomical text-books.

In the finer vibrations of spirit the perceptions take a wider range than on material planes.

We change our narrow definitions of both material and spiritual things. We no longer scorn the one, nor unreasonably exalt the other. We recognize their *unity*, and find their *differences only in the rate of their vibrations*.

We find no arid wastes or desert lands in life except those of our ignorance. Tracts we have marked "unknown" on our geographies we boldly enter as discoverers now, and plant our flag of conquest and dominion in every province of the Holy Land of human life. We no longer organize crusades to capture empty sepulchres.

The universe is ours.

We are not held back from possession by that most imbecile excuse for ignorance, "We are not intended to know." We are not frightened from the analysis of truth by threats of danger to a "critical spirit," or by the bugaboos and scarecrows of theology. We are not struck by panic at the report of giants in Canaan. We refuse to be driven by our fears from the borders of the promised land, to wander for another generation in the wilderness.

We have found the lines of correspondence running through all the warp and woof of life.

If we watch the chemist in his laboratory we find him studying the law of chemical affinities.

This is the law of sympathetic vibration.

It deals with atmospheres and ethers, with alkalis and carbonates, condenses atmosphere, precipitates moisture, freezes water, reduces solids to fluids and changes them again to solids, even making objective that which has been invisible and intangible. A solid bar of steel is dematerialized by the electric current.

We call these "chemical changes."

What has taken place? The rate of molecular vibration has been slowed or quickened, bringing matter within the range of sense perception, or carrying it beyond.

Yet everything is *real* and has proceeded in exact accordance with the laws of chemics.

Does not this throw light upon the problem of the mortal life?

We have said that matter and spirit differ only in the rate of their vibration.

The body is as real as the spirit. All our experiments in physics have shown matter itself to be imperishable. We have found abundant reason to believe in the absolute indestructibility of atoms, in their persistent energy, the conservation and correlation of their forces.

Is it not, then, a serious error to assert that we are here for the purpose of "spiritualizing the material," without asserting at the same time, as a

companion truth, that our work includes and necessitates the *materializing of the spiritual*?

It seems to be the purpose of life to externalize spirit in matter; and in the process we awaken to a spiritual consciousness, and become the masters of matter and architects of its forms. Can we do this if we despise it, and consider it beneath our spiritual dignity to recognize and deal with it? Can we do this if we imagine all material life to be illusory?

Are the toys and picture alphabets of the kindergarten useless?

Are they not rather the necessary preliminaries to the study of the sciences in books?

How would we answer a child who demanded the books before he had learned his letters?

The illustration of the diver suggests some things for our consideration.

He desires to enter an element more dense than that in which he lives. He seeks treasures at the bottom of the ocean. Being too buoyant for the element of water, he constructs a more material body than his own, which is better adapted to the work before him. His diving suit is not as light or elegant as the clothes he wears among his fellows in his ordinary sphere of life; but it is just as real.

It is made heavy with metal to give weight suffi-

cient to drop him to the bottom and resist the pressure of the waters. It is provided with glass windows through which he can look out, though dimly. It has an atmosphere supplied through breathing tubes connected with the upper air. In the density of the salt water he walks easily in this heavy suit. He completes his work, rises to the surface, and removes the armor in which he has been encased.

He remains the same man as before, with only the addition of experience.

Let us apply this figure to the mortal life.

We need to come into the atmosphere of Earth, which is too dense for the spirit in its normal state.

We materialize a body at birth, probably chosen and equipped by the spirit itself from a point of higher intelligence than the mortal for its especial work and needs in earthly life. It is a tool with which to work in matter. Its problem is to *materialize spirit* and make it manifest in many ways.

Having done this first at birth, the process is continued with every atom that we build into our bodies and throw off.

This requires a slowing of vibration, which separates the spirit for awhile from close and conscious relation with its fellows on immortal planes, yet makes it necessary to draw from those planes its vital atmosphere.

Death comes when work in the objective is finished for the time, through lack of knowledge to prolong the process.

The coarser body is laid off, and it steps out of its encasement into the finer vibrations of the spiritual planes. In this work which it has done the Earth environment made it as necessary to materialize spirit as to spiritualize matter.

In the last analysis we shall doubtless find that spirit and matter are identical.

How, then, can we call this a "dream life" and assert that we live in the unreal? Does not this very attitude result in an unbalanced mind?

"Life is real" — *death is the illusion*. Our lessons in matter are not to be evaded with "denials." As well might the schoolboy "deny" his alphabet and his tables in arithmetic because he had not yet discovered their relation to philosophy and the propositions of Euclid. Let us *learn the fundamental principles of life*, and we shall understand at last the macrocosm.

The different experiences of our lives are like chapters in a book.

Taken separately they seem to have but little meaning to us.

Their real significance comes from the chapters that went before and those that follow.

When bound together in a completed volume, we can see the relation of one experience to another. We will then perceive the harmony and understand the narrative.



Do not lament that your friend is on the "animal plane." It is a great thing to be a good animal. Many who think themselves beyond that point of evolution have not reached it yet. There is no phase of growth that should be despised. All are alike good ; all men pass over the same road, and sight its milestones at the same points of the journey, though in different hours. Some loiter and others press on more earnestly. We should not quarrel with the wayfarer who lingers by the roadside. It is his privilege ; and at some other point beyond, his pace may take him far ahead of us. There is no reason for haste. Every soul knows its appointed times and places.

We need not regret that those of others do not always coincide with ours.

VIII.

A PIVOTAL PHILOSOPHY.

“The light that is within thee.”

THE scientific world is just beginning to conjecture that light is an interior condition. The cat sees in an atmosphere that to the human eye is darkness. Among men there is an infinite variety of vision. An environment may be opaque to one and transparent to another.

The discovery of the X-rays has demonstrated the existence of a radiant energy that infolds us, a light within the light, and of a vibration so rapid that it is invisible until we have provided special conditions for its manifestation. Spectrum analysis has revealed more of the nature of light and color than we had ever dreamed possible to discover. The man with the seeing eye lives in a different world from that of the blind man. Let us study the correspondence of this truth in philosophy.

We hear much of the New Thought. What is “new” as distinguished from the “old”? In the old thought we sought cause and consequence outside ourselves. We had an absent God in a far-off heaven. We had a Devil, who “went about as a roaring lion.” We had a Mediator, who “came down” from heaven as a sacrifice for sin and re-

turned to make intercession for us. We had a Holy Spirit that must be implored to "descend" upon us. We dwelt upon Providence, fate and destiny as governing powers. Heredity and environment were influences which relieved us to a large degree of personal responsibility. Disease, poverty, and sin were from without, and were contagious, infectious, and epidemic. Our motives were almost wholly in the external. "What will people think?" was constantly in our minds—implanted in the nursery and developed in society. "Henceforth remember that the eyes of the world are upon you" was solemnly enjoined upon the convert at the altar rail. We lived in fear of God, of the Devil, and of one another; as the old hymn so aptly expressed it, "Fightings without and fears within." This was considered the divinely appointed order of things, and we were taught that our salvation must be worked out "with fear and trembling." Man's hope of salvation was mostly from without, and his only dream of a real happiness lay in the misty realms of a remote paradise. So much for the old thought.

The new thought may be truly called a pivotal philosophy. It changes all the old bearings of life and brings everything to a centre within the individual himself. It teaches him to think. It brings him to a poise—a pivot in himself. It withdraws his scattered thought-forces from the externals of

life and shows him limitless results to be accomplished through concentration. It teaches absolute freedom, with absolute responsibility for all the past, present, and future.

God exists within; and, as a fountain cannot rise higher than its source, the only conception of God possible to each life is limited by its own experience of divine impulses. Every human life is a magnet which, through the law of vibratory affinity, must draw to each man precisely what he elects—no more and no less. We owe neither our good fortune nor our so-called misfortune to one another. The supreme motive of life is the realization of being.

The New Thought teaches that all heredity, environment, and interior conditions are controlled by the soul, and that man's life is not governed to the least degree by any outside circumstances. He simply responds to these as they touch the chords of sympathetic vibration within himself. The New Thought reveals to him the absolute equities of existence. It shows the objective life as plastic clay moulded at will through the intelligent use of subjective consciousness. It increases activities by revealing powers and showing man how to keep his hand upon the lever. It places under control the marvellous forces of a universal energy. It radically alters all man's relations to God, to himself, and to his fellows. It teaches him to live at the

centre rather than the circumference of life; to live in the now rather than in the past or the hereafter. It reveals man as the true son of God, and as such having absolute control over destiny.

It finds in the story of the Christ a revelation of one's own subjective experience upon the higher spiritual plane.

Finally, the new philosophy proclaims that the great solvent of all truth, the centre of all power, the source and ultimate of all being, are found in the harmonies of love. Only through love can man enter the realms of perfect peace. Fear is the only cause of illusion. What, then, can death add? Man has already found heaven by simply opening his eyes to the light within. His spiritual faculties have been sensitized and developed to a point of power heretofore ascribed to the supernatural, and considered quite beyond the possibilities of human life. He need not postpone to the revelations of the future the things he desires to know today. He has sought, and he has found. He has knocked, and it has been opened unto him.

If we only realized how petty are our customary drafts upon our spiritual, mental, and physical forces, as compared with the illimitable reservoir of strength and life upon which we may draw at will, we would perceive that our chief necessity is in learning to recognize the true *nature* of that which we call "life."



Our friends are always very ready to remind us that we are "human," instead of suggesting the higher fact that we are "divine."



When a man becomes sufficiently deranged to forget the usual limitations he puts upon himself, his strength and endurance become incalculable, as is frequently shown with maniacs.

IX.

BITTER MEDICINE.

The wise man always throws himself on the side of his assailants. It is more his interest than it is theirs to find his weak point.—*Emerson.*

Before the eye can see, it must be incapable of tears. Before the ear can hear, it must have lost its sensitiveness.—“*Light on the Path.*”

THE first condition of mental healing is that the patient should be willing to take his medicine. With this assured, and a healer capable of intuitional diagnosis, there is no disease that is incurable. It has been abundantly demonstrated that all disease results from fault of disposition.

It follows that all healing is correction of the character.

It has been wisely said that character is formulated will. To correct the will is to change the disposition. The result is always harmony and health.

Before the patient can be really healed, he must be told the cause of the disease. He may be temporarily relieved by silent treatment, the difficulty may be alleviated. No cure can be established without teaching; for otherwise the cause has not been reached.

It is not comfortable to face our faults, to recog-

nize our weakness. It is not pleasurable to submit to the surgeon's knife. In the matter of poisons no one hesitates to use emetics, however distasteful. In case of necessity we sacrifice an injured limb without seriously considering the pain of the operation. We are willing if our eye offend us to pluck it out; or if our hand or foot offend us to cut it off and cast it from us, that we may save the body. Shall we then object to the scrutiny of our mental ailments, when we once have found in them the cause of all our troubles?

The most skilful surgeon has the strongest hand, the practiced eye. His tools are keenly edged. He depends upon his knowledge that has come through study and experience, and does not appeal to his patient's whims, or ask his opinion upon the details of the necessary operation. He is employed to reach results. He follows his own methods, stipulating only that the patient shall submit himself obediently to his directions.

If anyone thinks that mental surgery is painless, it is because he has never been subjected to it. As to the "old school" treatment of an invalid, blue pills and calomel are as clover honey compared to the black draughts of mental medicine, when faithfully administered.

The causes of sufferings lie deep. The remedies must reach the vitals. All our artificial sentiments must be swept away. Our self esteem must often

be ruthlessly destroyed. Our bandages must be removed, our sores examined. We must face ourselves, come out into the open, and no longer seek concealment or evasion.

Will we meet this test? If not no cure is possible.

If we have suffered sufficiently we will not desire to deny or excuse our faults. We will not defend or extenuate. We will not run to shelter. We will not flinch though we may suppress a groan, for the suffering is acute and real.

If we have reached the point of desiring truth above all things, we will throw ourselves upon the side of our critics. We will forget the extreme "sensitiveness" upon which we have prided ourselves. The "bitter tears" will no longer come to our eyes. We are ready to hear and to see the things which are spiritually discerned. It is the real self we seek to know. The personal self is not now an object of solicitude or pity.

At last we know the meaning of those old words of the psalmist, "Great peace have they who love thy law, and nothing shall offend them."

We are now ready to be healed.

Truth, passing by Bethesda's pool where we have lain so long, commands :

"Arise, take up thy bed, and walk."

At last we see, we hear, we live.

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do.” Neither illness nor poverty can result from the work of good. Good does not work meanly. The only gauge of life is our capacity to receive. The source of good has never been fathomed. It is a bottomless ocean. But we are never compelled to embark upon it.

Man’s freedom is complete. No power in the universe compels him to be good. But when he has chosen good, he is invulnerable at every point.

No floods can overwhelm him.

Underneath are “Everlasting Arms.”

X.

DOMESTIC DESPOTS.

THE spreading of new thought reveals a phase of domestic tyranny which is rather startling in our nineteenth century. In many a home circle there is marked resistance to the effort of the child or companion to study on new lines. This opposition always springs from jealousy—from a fear that the student will come to find the old affections and domestic influences weakened by entering on independent paths and gaining new associates and views. It is a fear of free thinking which instinctively protests against the breaking of old fetters. It asserts its selfish domination of the other's mind with ruthless despotism, in the name of love.

How shall such opposition be met? This depends upon the value that we set on truth. It may be necessary to choose, as Emerson says, between truth and repose. Perhaps the alternative is offered us of a comfortable bondage and an uncomfortable assertion of personal freedom. It is a matter to be determined by the individual himself.

But there are principles involved which ought to be considered. True affection never plays the tyrant. The highest wisdom never yields to

tyranny. The soul must be its own master. Paradise admits no citizens, but freemen. We talk much of bodily freedom. To be free in thought is to be free in action.

There is no other freedom possible. Truth admits of no compromise. It scorns the service of a coward. To indulge a despot in his despotism is the worst injury we can inflict upon him. To submit to any bondage in our own thought-life is the worst wrong we can inflict upon ourselves. The true man or woman desires no power over another. Self-government is a necessity of life. We need not ask it as a privilege of anyone. We are never alone when we step forward in the paths of truth. The spirit of love is both wise and fearless. It claims all things for itself, that it may richly share with others.

The fact that any persons or experiences have come into relation with us is sufficient evidence that in the equities of life we are to receive from them and give, as a necessary part of our own development. In this thought we should welcome all alike, and thus find them to be friendly to us.



Beware of intruding upon other's mental premises.

A healer has no more right to force his thought currents upon another than he has to go into the house of a friend and insist on giving medicine that is not wanted, or injecting secretly into the morning coffee something he believes will be beneficial to the family.

We have no right to urge unwelcome benefits.

Nothing is good that violates a principle.

Absolute freedom of the individual is necessary to real development. Good is a matter of conscious choice.

XI.

SELF-SACRIFICE—A NEW DEFINITION.

GOD can give us nothing less than the *best* at any moment of our existence—the best we are *capable of receiving*.

How, then, can “self-sacrifice” be possible if it is the fulfillment of our highest good?

Let us not confound self-sacrifice with service.

We gain the highest development through service, but God’s service can never require the sacrifice of self.

His resources are not so limited as to make that necessary.

Why should it be thought nobler to live for the development of other lives than for our own? What is service?

Is not service the yielding of ourselves to the expression of the divine? and why may not the divine express itself equally through all?

Let us recognize the fact, that *all* life is divine, and that each lives for his own unfoldment equally with that of others; for divine humanity has its home in a *universe*; it is not *diverse*, for God is one.

“Love thy neighbor *as* thyself.”

To do more or less fails of the balance of perfect equity.

Let us not glorify our faults, as if they were virtues; for even "unselfishness" may be a vice, and only another name for the most subtle and insidious of vices—self-righteousness.

It cannot be true that "even Christ pleased not himself," or that he was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

If he possessed at all the ideal character attributed to him, he must of necessity have found the highest gladness possible to our divinely human nature in the royal opportunities of service that were given him.

Nor could he have "sorrowed" for *others*, knowing the grandeur of their destiny, and that at every moment of existence *all* things work together for good to *every one*.

True sovereignty is in service, as every spiritually awakened nature knows; therefore, *in* such service one fulfills the highest harmony of being, and secures to himself the greatest pleasure possible, the highest joy, and the furthest removed from "grief."

If we find such opportunities ever wearisome and irksome, and are minded to "count the cost," deeming them "self-sacrifices," we may know we have not yet struck the true keynote of love; else service would never seem a discipline or self-denial.

It is our egotism makes the discord, and the value of our doing is not in the benefits we secretly

think that we confer, so much as in the gradual awakening of our own spiritual intelligence, which brings us finally to understand that *real* being and *real* doing are identical.

Why should we look for gratitude in others?

It should never occur to a true life even to desire it.

It is as if a tree should count the blossoms it sheds or the fruit it bears, or the fields concern themselves with the question as to who gathered and consumed their harvests.

The purpose of life is growth, not gratitude.

He who has permitted me to serve him has furnished me a valuable opportunity. He has rendered me a benefit, which I can only repay to some other soul in need of like expression.

A true soul asks nothing of its fellows but to be allowed to *give*.

All that it *gets* is from good, and this resource is never limited. The source is infinite and its channels innumerable.

XII.

VICIOUS VIRTUES.

The terror of reform is that we must cast away our virtues.— *Emerson.*

SUFFERING is the effort of nature to restore its equilibrium, seeking to detach from itself dead tissue of matter or mind, of flesh or thought.

Life can hold only that which is beautiful and gladsome.

Life is joy, is love, is good. All troubles are parasites.

The service of good is *perfect freedom*. "Conscientiousness" is only a virtuous name for a vicious mental state. It is really egotism masquerading as a virtue, and holds one in a state of anxious bondage.

The introspective thought is far removed from self-forgetfulness.

It is a curious fact that truth is usually the exact reverse of our popular standards.

If we challenge the ideas that have long paraded themselves as "Christian virtues" and strip off their masks and dominoes, we shall find in many instances that they should be avoided. They reveal virtue only by contrast with themselves.

Thus "resignation," if accepted, is an apathy

which can only paralyze all earnest effort for betterment.

It is really the vice of indolence. "Meekness," "humility," and "contentment" are stolen robes in which this same indolence too often hides itself.

Self-depreciation is as mischievous as slander of another. It is a mental suicide, when sincere, though it is oftener an affectation and pretence of modesty, perhaps not even recognized as such by the pretender. This, too, is one of the many subtle forms of the vice of self-esteem.

The healthy nature does not wish to conceal its talents or deny its faults.

"Conservatism" is often a refuge of weak minds, a respectable shelter for those who have not the courage of their convictions, or are entirely without opinions, never having learned to think. It is a sort of "institute" for the feeble-minded, a "retreat" for genteel poverty of thought.

"Sympathy" degenerates into a morbid sentimentalism that brings no stimulus to healthy effort and encouragement.

No true soul will tolerate "pity" for himself, either in his own mind or the mind of a friend; nor will he inflict it upon another.

Domestic tyranny conceals itself in "parental affection," while morbid selfishness is disguised as "grief."

"Toleration" is but a synonym of self-righteousness and self-conceit.

“Patriotism” is the old vice of clannishness under a more pretentious name, — whenever it appeals to passion and arouses jealousy of border lines.

In the spiritual vocabulary there can be no such thing as “righteous indignation.” It is the desire of resentment for revenge.

“Caution” and “prudence” are often cowardice disguised. “Hope,” of necessity, implies a fear. “Consistency,” as Emerson says, is but the “hobgoblin of little minds, with which a great soul has simply nothing to do.”

Artificial virtues are the moral anodynes with which we seek to drug our spiritual consciousness.

We hear much of the terrible “responsibility” of parents, of teachers, of rulers. We grieve and distress ourselves with the fear that we may overlook and neglect our highest possibilities, may fail to discern our opportunities. We are under constant strain and worry from this thought.

We should know that we can have no responsibility that we need fear, either for ourselves or others.

Every activity should be a joy; none a source of anxiety.

What did God do before we came? What *will* he do when we are gone?

We meet the requirements of the hour by directing our spiritual forces upon the work in hand.

We have nothing to regret, to fear, to hope.

We know that the supreme good works in us always to will and to do.

We may move in our life orbits as serenely as the planets.

If we permit the universal will to guide us and its power to act through us, we cannot fail to discern or improve any occasion of good service or development.

As the light shines through our eyes, the air breathes through our lungs, and the blood circulates through our system, so will the universal intelligence manifest itself through our daily lives if we only "give passage to its beams."

If we are filled with love there is nothing in us to respond to a false note. Disease is impossible. We cannot deceive ourselves, nor be deceived by others.

It is generally through deep suffering that we learn to detach from us the thought of self.

Not until this has been done can we enter the realms of perfect peace.

Vices are distorted virtues, virtues inverted through misdirected force.

They are an evidence of power rather than of weakness, like fire that has broken from its barriers and consumes rather than warms.

We should not deal with vice as weakness, but should teach the vicious to recognize and wisely apply the energy that has been scattered.

When weeds are brought under cultivation they often become our favorite garden flowers.

XIII.

VIRTUOUS VICES.

The secret of genius is to suffer no fiction to exist for us; to realize all that we know; in the high refinement of modern life, in arts, in sciences, in books, in men, to exact good faith, reality, and a purpose; and first, last, midst, and without end to honor every truth by use.—*Emerson.*

It is a custom of merchants to have an annual "taking account of stock." At such times they examine carefully the goods on hand, clear the shelves of unsaleable articles, mark down those that have become shopworn or out of season, and put new values on all for which there is unusual demand.

Just so in the thought life of a community, we find that periodically there is by general consent a taking account of stock. Old standards and ideas are removed from the shelves and carefully examined in the light of new discoveries, their character and usefulness are challenged, and their condition tested.

If they have become unserviceable for any reason, and higher thought has led to higher standards, the old theories and views of life and conduct are soon laid aside. Their defects have become apparent, and better things are in demand.

At the same time some ancient truth or teacher that has been long labelled "pagan" and put upon

a shelf comes suddenly into notice ; new meaning and unsuspected value are found in the proscribed philosophy. It throws a fresh light upon all the ethical problems of the day, and is in danger of becoming popular.

In this moral stock-taking we are often surprised to find the necessity of a new classification of what we have called "virtues" and "vices."

In the light of higher principles and larger knowledge we find we must change the tags that have been carelessly put on. Some virtues do not hold their color in the sunshine of the new century. Some vices prove to be "all wool and will wash."

What we thought wine has turned to vinegar; while an occasional cask we have looked upon suspiciously and placed in the darkest corner of our cellar, we find to be from some rare old vintage, when brought to the light of day, with sparkling color and a beautiful aroma.

Let us examine anew some of these things we have thought vicious, and revise our definitions where we find it necessary.

A stammerer puts his emphasis upon the words he finds most difficult to pronounce. The average man or woman will be most emphatic in his thought and conversation in condemning those qualities in which he secretly finds his greatest difficulties. He will commend the things which he most lacks. So true is this that it provides us with a pass key

to character. If we judge men by the opposites of their professions, we will often get the wisest understanding of them.

They bluster always, if at all, at their weak points. A quality in which we know we are strong is one we rarely need to assert. The virtue that we praise the most is the one in which we are deficient.

The place for us to post our sentinels is where we are supposed by ourselves and our friends to have least need of them.

True virtue is unconscious of itself. It is a normal condition. Consciousness of virtue indicates vice.

Consciousness of vice suggests a truly virtuous spirit struggling for the mastery.

One of the most abused words in the language has been "freethinker," with its synonyms of "infidel" and "skeptic."

We speak of "freedom" with enthusiasm when applied to liberty of movement — emancipation from political bondage, from the tyranny of civil government.

But we have almost universally condemned "free thought."

The time has come for us to frankly admit that there is no grander term in the language than that of "freethinker," one who is truly emancipated in his thought, free from fear of opinion, from preju-

dice and superstition, open to perceive the truth in any quarter, without limitation of his own.

"Infidel" has been a name of reproach. It is only a geographical distinction. It is applied to one who does not accept the popular belief of the country in which he lives. It is a matter of latitude and longitude. I have a friend who has been stoned in eastern countries as an infidel, and called a "dog of a Christian," because he was not a follower of "The True Prophet," and has suffered almost the same reproach in our western world, because he could not subscribe to the theological opinions of his orthodox associates.

"Skeptic" is from the Greek. Its root meaning is "one who is looking for the truth," "who is thoughtful," "who considers," "an inquirer after facts." Yet we have warned each other against "skepticism," and abused the skeptic as a criminal because he would persist in declining to accept as truth, without inquiry, what we considered facts, embodied in religious dogmas.

The only "infidelity" is the worship of the golden calf, the reverence for things material rather than things spiritual.

This it is which results in the "quenching of the spirit."

It leads to dishonest professions of faith and creeds, which are required by conventionality, but not accepted by the heart.

A "radical" is one who seeks the roots of things. He is not content with mere assertions and superficial opinions.

A "rationalist" is one who insists upon the right to use his reason.

All these terms have been persistently hurled as epithets of abuse by the majority, against those who would not recognize their tyranny in matters of religious thought and quietly accept their opinion as authority. The things for which these seekers after truth were made to suffer have been considered "vices," have been labelled "dangerous," and deemed just grounds of suspicion, regardless of his life and character who dared to question the conventional opinion.

"Frivolity" is another virtuous vice. Under the régime of puritanism which has dominated New England for many generations, mirth and levity have been discountenanced and suppressed. Life has become so serious that many have lost the sense of joy and buoyancy which characterize the normal human animal. We have lived under an exaggerated thought of our responsibilities. No wonder that the land is filled with nervous invalids. The only medicine that many need is the vibration of a gladsome mirth, a frank and hearty laughter, more frivolity and levity of disposition, and less thought of personal salvation.

We need to cultivate the "carelessness" of which

we have been so often warned; to build it upon the confidence that life is really beautiful and to be enjoyed, and not to be gotten through quickly and put off as a shoe that pinches.

Let us "take no anxious thought for the morrow." It does not help us. It befogs and wearies us most uselessly. Let us learn the meaning of "divine recklessness" and the "negligency of that trust which carries God with it."

For heaven's sake let us get away from that bondage of system and method in which we have felt so cramped that no pleasure was welcomed, unless it came within our program of the day's duties and was included in our "stint." A bit of "laziness" would soften and improve many a stern New England character.

No wonder we have become restless and discontented!

"Unrest" and "discontent" are changed to virtues when they stimulate us to seek better things.

And so we find as we progress that many of the fields that are marked "no thoroughfare" will open to us the King's highway, and many of the things marked "dangerous" conceal our highest good.

When we subject to honest analysis the fixed opinions of our day and generation, we discover vice in many virtues and virtue in many vices.

It is high time we took a new account of stock, and applied the test of *principle* to all things we have accepted as truth.

We often speak of evil habit when we ought to speak of the evil of habit.

It is doubtful if there is any such thing as a good habit.

When action has no reasonable cause behind it as a motive, and becomes simply automatic, there can be no life remaining in it.

It is not good habits but *principles* that we should teach our children.



Moral obligations to others are at least of equal importance with financial responsibilities. Yet there are many who lose sight of the one while eagerly insisting on the other, upon which they pride themselves as a special virtue, the maintenance of "business credit."

There are other bankruptcies than those which are recognized in courts of law. There are other courts from which there is no appeal and in which the prisoner is his own stern judge.

XIV.

MISERABLE OFFENDERS.

My peace I give unto you. — *Jesus.*

The objection to conforming to usages that have become dead to you is that it scatters your force. It loses your time and blurs the impression of your character. And of course so much force is withdrawn from your proper life.—
Emerson.

SUNDAY.

We have done those things which we ought not to have done, and we have left undone those things which we should have done, and there is no health in us.

O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders.

Be pleased, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.

MONDAY.

We have done those things, etc., etc.

Miserable offenders.

Lord, this day without sin.

AND so, *ad infinitum*, through all the days and weeks and years, do many people, claiming to be intelligent and reasonable, renew and alternate confession and petition, without a thought of the mockery of asking to be kept “without sin,” while holding persistently to the confident expectation of returning the next day to confess their “sins” and pose again as “miserable offenders.”

Evidently their God is powerless to “keep them,” and they know it; for he has never yet

kept them a single day without sin. But why do they go through this miserable form of pretence, and imagine in their pagan childishness that it is pleasing to their deity and helpful to themselves? One would think the salt would lose its savor, and the pious fraud would cease to satisfy their own minds. These religious nostrums of the Prayer Book have been the patent medicines and cure-alls of the last three centuries. They are the bromides and opiates with which we have dulled the spiritual consciousness in order that we might slumber a little longer.

We have magnetized ourselves with the sound of our own voices in the Litany, but the sun has climbed so high we cannot longer sleep. We are compelled at last to open our eyes, and perceive that a new day has dawned.

The only point of these routine confessions which is of any special consequence is that "there is no health in us." After many repetitions it becomes an accomplished fact, a thought externalized. So true is this that the physicians find their most profitable employment among the most "devout." It is the "good" people, the "religious" people, who are usually the habitual invalids. Their mistaken thought has borne its legitimate fruit. Nature has arraigned them as transgressors. It is not for our acts we need to make atonement with ourselves, but for our thoughts. We attach

too much importance to what we do or fail to do, because we overlook the fact that all cause is in mind. The important matter is to permit no obstruction in ourselves to the best things, but to root out all unrighteous thought as it presents itself.

When we are habitually impatient to declare our own views rather than to listen to those of others, we show plainly that we are not learners. It is useless to talk of spiritual truth to those who are hypnotized by prejudice. They simply cannot hear. The thought will fail to reach them, and result only in irritation. They must be awakened from their trance by some shock of life, before their ears are open.

Let us beware of missionary zeal. It is delusive. People we can help will be attracted to us. We will be led to others who can do us good. We can trust this law of spiritual attraction. It is the manifestation of divine wisdom. There can be no doubt of a personal God, but we must enlarge our ideas of "person." Something of good is manifest in every life, and every person is a part of the "grand man" which all humanity embodies as the Supreme One, the Divine. "God" is our highest possible ideal of character. It can include no trait that does not manifest itself in some individual of the race. Otherwise we could not conceive it. God is the incorporation of our largest thought.

Every soul with earnest, honest purpose may be sure of finding the truth he seeks.

It will often seem to be by paths and methods he would not have chosen.

We sometimes discover the obstructions we must surmount by running our heads against them.

The muscular system of the spirit needs to be developed as well as its perceptions. This appears to be one of the chief uses of our objective world.

We have no reason, however, to fear failure in anything we are really called to do. We will find ourselves equipped for every work for which we are responsible.

The principle of muscular development is found in the overcoming of inertia. All gymnastic apparatus has this end in view. The pulleys are weighted; the vaulting-horse stands in the way, and must be cleared at a bound; the muscles must meet resistance,—persistent and severe. In this way they acquire strength and flexibility. This is equally true of intellectual and spiritual development. We find that the same law governs alike upon all planes of life. The law of correspondence is an invaluable key to the problems of existence.

All life demands expression. There is no expression possible without resistance. Man could not walk without the resistance of the ground. He could not speak without the resistance of his teeth and lips to differentiate the sounds he utters. The

bird could not fly without the beating of its wings against the air. The fish could not swim without the pressure of the water on its fins. What we call the "trials of life" are the elements that make possible, through resistance, the multiplex expression of our spiritual nature. Without them life itself would be inane and barren of opportunity or results.

To desire an easy life, to pray "lead us not into temptation," is to ask that our schoolbooks should be taken away, that we may spend the hours in sleep. It would take us out of the objective into the subjective state, and defeat the very purpose of existence. Every playground and athletic field shows the importance of this principle.

Upon the other hand, disease is often caused by an unwise resistance, which may be conscious or unconscious. The fall of a drunken man is usually harmless, though it might easily result in broken bones if he could rally his muscular and nervous forces to resist. It is well known to every acrobat that one who falls without rigidity will seldom suffer. We too often pride ourselves on that which we ought really to let go. Egotism results in a nervous irritation, which is the resistance of pride.

The vital currents will not fail to flow through us when we have removed the hindrance of our selfish thoughts.

It is the yielding of the southern forests to the tropical storm that saves them from destruction.

It is from our own idea that life must be a "struggle" that we suffer most. The antidote is peace. It comes with the confidence that all is well.

He who would get, must give. He who would learn, should teach. He who would rule, should know that the highest sovereignty is gained through service. Perfect peace is perfect power.



If we could only understand that at *every* point of our lives "all is good," we could find no excuse for anxiety.

It is always our *atheism*, or distrust of good, which is responsible for our trouble. Let us be honest, and not say "we believe in God," while the fear of evil is upon us; but let us confess that we do *not* believe in God, and admit that that is the whole cause of our distress.

Why should we so often in our fearfulness take only a half loaf of truth rather than recognize the complete and radical statement of a principle followed to its logical conclusions, and offering a substantial stepping-stone to higher planes of thought and action?

XV.

CHRISTIAN ATHEISM.

We will learn one day that our own orbit is all our task, and we need not assist the administration of the universe.—
Emerson.

GOD is sufficient to all mankind. No one is ever dependent for his highest good or happiness upon a fellow mortal. Each and every life is truly independent, whatever may be its seeming. The highest duty of each is self-development, through service, but not "sacrifice." We can trust our children and friends to God, and unfold our own lives to their highest possibilities, following the laws of growth and being we see in tree and flower.

"*Love* is the fulfilling of the law." What is the law? Emphasize God and you easily lose sight of the mortal. Emphasize the mortal and you are apt to lose sight of God. Do not flatter yourself that you are the only agent for God's special work. He has a thousand in reserve; and if you fail to appreciate the privilege of the service, his work will not fail, only it will be your loss of opportunity, not God's or that of others. The law of all true service is self-development, and can never hinder, or cripple, or obstruct. You are never called to service that brings such results as these, and should refuse and

deny any "duty" or environment that has this tendency. God's service never requires loss of spiritual enjoyment, or sacrifice of self-development. Do not be afraid of "self-seeking" on the highest lines, for when you have found self you have found God, and fulfilled the very highest law of being. It is only when in harmony with this law that we are really "useful." God's service is too often thought to be a matter of bustling endeavor and material "doing" or "denying" on the material plane. The flower fulfills its highest mission in perfecting its fragrance, and leaves it to God's winds to scatter its odors. Even the scents, colors, and honey of flowers, which we have somewhat ostentatiously assumed were provided for the delight of mankind, appear now to be primarily evolved from the plant for its own distinct benefit, and for the purpose of attracting those insects which would best accomplish its fertilization.

We do not realize, as Emerson says, that "character teaches above our will," that if we would listen we could often hear the voice of nature saying to us in our burdened hours of artificial responsibilities, "So hot, my little sir!" When we remember God we wait and listen, and are confident in the love that notes the fall of every sparrow. We know that Divine intelligence is never blind, that Divine power has no moments of weakness, and that Divine love is the mainspring of the universe.

If we believe that God governs our own lives, why cannot we believe that he governs equally those of our friends and children, however they may appear to us for the moment? Why should we disturb ourselves? Let us honestly admit that no distress can vibrate in a mind that is filled with God's harmonies, a mind that is persuaded that God is neither blind, nor deaf, nor powerless, nor failing in love.

Let us, then, attend more carefully to our own flower beds, and not intrude so often into those of our neighbor, even though that neighbor be a member of our family, and we see that he is neglecting his borders, and that his plants are wilting for want of proper culture. He, too, is a chancery ward, like ourselves, of the Universal courts, and his estates will not be wasted. He, too, is a pupil of the Universal Gardener, and freedom to do wrong is just as essential in nature's school as the freedom to do right. The world suffers much today, especially in its family and church life, from the despotism of mistaken kindness, insisting upon the use of its own methods, and secretly applauding itself for its foolish anxieties concerning the welfare of others. This is "Christian atheism," and it has many disciples who suffer from a daily bondage to mistaken duty, and oppress their loved ones through an undiscerning sympathy which forgets that God is still at the head of the universe, and insists upon tyran-

nizing and worrying themselves and others "in his name." We forget the eternal equities. No life can become a "victim" to another, else God does not govern absolutely. Yet we claim the supreme government is universal, and extends to all worlds and all times. Indeed, if we cannot believe that God governs in this world and at the present time in every life, what assurance have we of such government elsewhere, or at any future time? Let us be reasonable and accept all logical issues. If God governs, we may be strong and confident in that knowledge, whether we interpret God as a person or law. If such government cannot be demonstrated, let us at least be consistent and honest in our atheism, and not masquerade as "Christians" with the beliefs of "Atheists."

Another very common form of atheism is a distrust of self, a want of confidence in the inner voice of one's own intelligence—which is God within—and in one's own forces, which are but the expression of the Infinite. If God is without, he is equally within, else he does not fill all being. To doubt the God outside of one's self has been always called "atheism," and self-distrust has been considered a virtue. Yet how illogical is this position. "Self-trust is the essence of heroism," says Emerson. It is also the essence of theism. Jesus says, "Enter into thy closet and shut the door." How strangely is this explained by our latest dis-

covery in science! When we wish to communicate with friends by the telephone we enter into the closet and shut the door, and operate from our centres, without effort, and the voice goes afar to illimitable distances. Yet we might stand outside and cry ourselves hoarse; our voices never would be heard. Let us find God within ourselves, and we can then discern him in all outer life. Let us trust our own intelligence to guide us, and our powers to fulfill our purpose, knowing that in these is the law of the universal manifested to just that extent to which we open our minds for illumination and let the Divine work through us.

The test of courage can be made only in the presence of danger. Muscular strength and agility are developed in the gymnasium through weighting the pulleys and raising the vaulting-bars, thus providing gradually severer conditions of resistance which must be overcome. Spiritual forces follow the same law and require real difficulties for their development, — difficulties in which we are deprived of usual supports and material resources. Otherwise there could be no danger to test our courage and principles; no conditions affording opportunity for the highest development of spiritual faculties. Why, then, should we moan and whine over every uncomfortable situation that life brings to us? Why not recognize it as the necessary problem of the hour, which shows not the neglect, but the careful thoughtfulness of the God in whom we have claimed to put our trust, and who has made provision for every requirement in the spiritual gymnasium of life?

XVI.

THE LOGIC OF FAITH.

All those things at which thou wishest to arrive by a circuitous road thou canst have now if thou dost not refuse them to thyself.—*Marcus Aurelius.*

EVERY act of our lives is an act of faith, based upon experience.

We take food and drink into our mouths without thought of the process of nutrition, or understanding how waste tissue is restored.

We take air into our lungs, though ignorant of the chemistry by which it will oxygenate the blood that supplies the arterial and venous system.

We fall forward as we walk, depending on our unconscious will and muscle to maintain our centre of gravity. We direct our steps to a distant point without anxiety lest our brain should become confused and fail to lead us back.

As the jingle rhyme so quaintly puts it—

My feet they take me through the house,
They hoist me up the stair;
I only have to steer them,
And they take me everywhere.

We fall asleep without concern, surrendering all consciousness, and confident of a fresh awakening in the morning.

We need not fear to trust too much to God, when we are sure it is God we trust. Our *only* limitation is—like Peter's walking on the waves of Galilee—in our want of knowledge which is the basis of all true faith. When we cut a finger we know that nature begins at once her work of healing, and the coagulated blood protects the newly forming tissue. The infallible law of attraction draws from the universal life every element required to restore the flesh to soundness.

Why cannot we as easily accept the truth that this same law governs our environment, and will just as surely bring us everything we need?

In the case of the flesh wound, we know that our anxious thought can inflame the injured part and retard the cure.

This, too, is true of our material conditions. Our worries never fail to hinder our prosperity, though we do not yet understand the law that operates to retard or hasten.

We are just beginning to recognize as a scientific fact that "all action is in mind."

We have dealt mainly hitherto with the external expressions rather than with true causes. The science of thought has not been included in our studies.

All our life as yet is "miracle." All its processes are complex and inexplicable. Who can pretend that it is otherwise?

The universal discontent is an admission that as individuals we have failed to understand and control its conditions. Where then is the intelligence that has controlled?

Are we ready to admit that life is governed by accident and is chaotic? Cannot we extend the faith of which we have such constant illustration in our relation to the body, to include the "circumstances" of our life as well.

If we do the thing that lies at hand we cannot fail to find our place in the system of humanity.

We will fulfill our destiny at every point. Life is an intelligent design. We may not yet see the right side of the pattern that is being woven. The looms seem often cruel.

But as Emerson says, we lie in the lap of an immense intelligence, which makes us organs of its activity and receivers of its truth.

Receptiveness must come before illumination.
Activity will surely follow.

We need only open our eyes to perceive the universal opulence.

Confidence is better than courage. Knowledge leaves no place for hope or fear.

Growth is realization.

How can we talk of the need of "courage" in life if we have confidence in the sovereignty of an absolute good that is perfectly related to our individual requirements?

Courage presupposes fear. Both courage and fear have lost their meaning when we have come to the true understanding of life.

We simply *know* and are at peace. Our boat may be full of water, but we are sure it cannot sink; and we can even sleep on the tossing waves—like him of Galilee.

XVII.

HIDDEN TREASURES.

Give thyself time to learn something new and good, and cease to be whirled around.—*Marcus Aurelius*.

PLATO claimed that all knowledge was reminiscence.

It is a curious fact that the universal belief of the world anticipates in the next stage of existence a complete provision for all individual wants, without the employment of mechanical aids.

Why this entire confidence in the ultimate power of spirit?

May it not be an intuitive recognition through unconscious remembrance of the innate spiritual forces?

If these forces are latent, is there any reason to postpone their development?

Why should we marvel at our mechanical discoveries as evidence of progress? If we possess this spiritual power, it is only our blindness that makes mechanics necessary as a makeshift.

When a man has his eyes open he does not need a cane to find the road. When he has learned to walk he does not want a crutch.

All progress in mechanics is toward simplicity. The last discovery brings us always to the revela-

tion of our own interior powers, and makes the coarser instrument a superfluity.

Telepathy dispenses with the wires and batteries of telephone and telegraph and all the cumbrous organization of the post office department. Psychometry does not require telescope or microscope or chemists' crucible for its analyses, which are far more complete and accurate than our laboratories or encyclopædias can furnish. The X-rays revolutionize our theories of solids, but clairvoyance and clairaudience are more useful and important facts.

In mature years we do not pride ourselves and congratulate each other upon the production of a new primer. We no longer find the primer necessary. We can read without its help. We have learned to write. Our vocabulary has been increased to many thousands of words, and we coin new ones for more advanced requirements.

Why then should we linger so long in spiritual kindergartens?

Let us recognize our latent powers and boldly devote ourselves to their unfoldment and use.

The average man gives far too much time to the artificial demands of his personality, to the supply of his imaginary wants, to the maintenance of his so-called "self-respect."

Much more could be accomplished if this absorbing thought could be demagnetized and reversed and turned into spiritual and universal channels.

The swimmer sinks when his thoughts are too intensely directed upon himself. When he remembers the buoyancy of the ocean under him, instead of its depths, when he fixes his eye upon the headland beyond with confidence in his own wind and muscle, he finds his skill sufficient to propel him easily in the direction of the shore, and he moves fearlessly forward.

We cannot demand too much from our spiritual forces.

There are inexhaustible storage batteries in every human being.

Nature has endowed us with incalculable riches.

It is our own choice if we masquerade as paupers.

Each has his private treasure house. We have only to clean our windows and let in the light, to disclose the rare value of our spiritual gems.

All the magic treasures of the Arabian Nights tales are but feeble types of our own latent powers. But let us not mistake psychism for spiritual development.

The lesser is included in the greater.

Recognition and appropriation are the keys to an inexhaustible treasury.

Will we never learn that "in good we live and move and have our Being"?

We lose much through our timidity.

Truth can work us no harm, and the soul is not easily deceived.

Good never results in sorrow. There is no pang from the cradle to the grave in the life of any human being of which the cause is really outside himself.

Life should be as simple and easy to us all as it is to the tree or flower. Can we imagine growing pains in plants? "Consider the lily, how it grows. It toils not, neither does it spin."

Why must we crucify ourselves and one another? Why talk continually of life as a "conflict" or a "pilgrimage."

If all things work together for good, why should we fear lest the law fail of operation at some moment of our lives that we regard as critical?

Shall we trust it only as far as we can see, and be thus governed by the judgment of the senses?

XVIII.

ANTIDOTES TO WORRY.

It is only the finite that has wrought and suffered, the Infinite lies stretched in smiling repose.— *Emerson.*

OUR lessons of today are in the present tense of the verbs to be, to do, to have, to know. We must not turn back to the lessons of yesterday, or forward to those of tomorrow. We are not studying to say "I shall be well," "I shall be opulent," "I shall have," "I shall know." To realize these things we must insist upon the present tense, "I am," "I have," "I know."

The roll is called for recitation. Come now. We do not flinch or ask for longer time to prepare our lesson. We have already learned that "all is good." Yes, that was the first page of our primers. Listen to us then, as we roll out these grand, true, positive assertions:—

"I am well."

"I am opulent."

"I have everything."

"I do right."

"I know."

There, now we are deaf to our fears, to the nerves that clamor, to the bank book that has bullied us with its petty balances so long. We

prove truth by first accepting principles, precisely as we work in mathematics and in chemistry. We look with never wavering confidence for the results to which our poor old fears are always blind. Is this fanaticism? Then there is a rapidly increasing brotherhood of fanatics who began this way and are today radiant with health and success. Their first doses of truth, perhaps, were in hypodermic injections; but they killed the microbes of fear and changed the entire circulation of the blood.

Oh! if we could have a "worry club," a "worry trust," a syndicate that would enable us to barter and exchange our private worriments in a good buoyant market.

We can endure quite calmly other people's troubles, and show a beautiful fortitude and resignation to them. They do not hurt so much as ours because we do not pack them so closely or bind them so carefully to our shoulders. We carry them easily, in fact, because they don't belong to us through sympathetic vibration.

Now, can't we reach the same position in relation to those we call our own? Can't we get quite outside of them, and insist they don't belong to us at all? They certainly do not if we are free, and if we are not free, it is because we have not yet got through the alphabet of Mental Science.

It wouldn't make a bit of difference to the aver-

age man to be loosened from his worries by an emancipation proclamation, unless he issued it himself. If his troubles could drop off without a change of thought today, they surely would fly back again tomorrow, as promptly as the filings to the magnet. We are beginning to call this now the "vibratory law," the law of attraction. It absolutely governs life.

But if we can't get up a "worry syndicate," we can at least organize an "anti-worry club," on the lines of prohibition work, to legislate against the indulgence of anxiety. We will not depend on numbers for success. A membership of one is quite sufficient. Two in some cases will be better, and possibly four or five, if there are so many in the family. The fines and penalties should be severe, and might be devoted to the purchase of breezy literature that would assist "the cause" and forward the objects of the club.

There should be no tenderness shown to defaulting members; for worry is a disease that needs heroic remedies. We must be as merciless to our worries as to Canada thistles. It might be well even to offer bounties for their extermination. We must radiate an atmosphere in which they cannot live. If we do not master them, they will certainly master us.

If worry is not driven out of the blood, it is surely fatal and "only a matter of time." "Killed

by worry," would be a truthful epitaph over multitudes of graves. It is not heroic to die by worry; it is Christian suicide.

All trouble in life comes from a distorted perspective, together with too much foreshortening. If we could at all times see things in their proper relations to time and distance, we could never suffer unhappiness. It is only when we magnify and exaggerate some line or shadow of our life that we create fear and worry. We allow ourselves to become too intensely interested in the immediate issue, or focalize with too strong a lens upon the future more or less remote.

It is a curious fact that any advance in spiritual knowledge is usually followed by a fresh test of trying experience,—suggesting the “term examination” of the schools. If this test is fully met the student finds himself in possession of new forces, and passes on to further illumination, but otherwise the old lessons are continued.

Dame Nature is a wise teacher and never allows us to leave a task until it has been learned. But on the other hand, we may be sure no troublesome experience will last a day longer than is necessary for us to find and recognize its lesson. And then the page is turned. So let us waste no time in the sentimentalism of self-pity, but search with earnest purpose for the *meaning* of the hour, responding boldly to its challenge.

We are slow to understand the importance of learning to depend entirely upon the *within* and the *now*. The slightest deviation from this principle of self-reliance impairs our perceptions and scatters our forces. It places us outside the harmony of the spiritual law which governs our being. We must not depend upon other intelligence than our own. We must not postpone results. *Absolute confidence* in the wisdom and power of the good within us is necessary to the attainment of our purposes.

XIX.

MENTAL MICROBES.

It is not fit that I should give myself pain, for I have never intentionally given pain even to another.—*Marcus Aurelius.*

SMALL annoyances are the seeds of disease. We cannot afford to entertain them. They are the bacteria,—the germs that make serious disturbance in the system, and prepare the way for all derangements. They furnish the mental conditions which are manifested later in the blood, the tissues, and the organs, under various pathological names.

Good thoughts are the only germicide. We must kill out resentment and regret, impatience and anxiety. Health will inevitably follow.

Every thought that holds us in even the slightest degree to either anticipation or regret hinders, to some extent, the realization of our present good. It limits freedom.

Life is in the present tense. Its significant name is "Being."

A normal nature does not need the stimulus of hope. "Hope" and "try" are words that drop away from us when we have got to spelling in two syllables. They are like milestones on a mountain road that mark the point to which we have climbed. When we have reached a higher outlook, we say "I know," "I do."

We no longer waver in our purpose. We do not believe it necessary to vibrate between hope and fear, effort and failure. We are not searching for the unknown quantity in the algebra of life,—the “*x*” which stood for happiness, success, and health in our experimental days. We work now with more positive propositions, and know that in our problems there is no doubt of the results. We enjoy the happiness the moment brings us, whether we are in sun or shadow to other eyes.

Our vision is open to the changing lights of sunrise, noon, and sunset, night and morning. All have beauties of their own. When we have adjusted the sounding-board and mirror of the mind, the scales of tone and color bring us inexhaustible harmonies.

Sympathetic vibration is the key of life. Every experience is limited by its responsive chords. Nothing can reach us from without, except as it awakens vibration within. This is equally true of joy and sorrow.

We often fail to value our little difficulties truly. We cannot overestimate their usefulness in the practical application of principles. We cannot learn to read if we neglect the primer. We cannot build till we have laid foundation stones. We add to our foundations every time we meet a little difficulty well. This is the way to fit ourselves for larger work in the emergencies and opportunities

of life. Let us overcome vexation of all kinds. Let us be always tranquil and serene in every provocation. It is possible to the *great* soul.

None is ready for the higher outlook till this triumph of principle has been achieved.

Ponderous and marvelous machinery is sometimes thrown out of gear by small obstructions. Express trains can be easily derailed. Either the obstruction is demolished, the obstacle is brushed aside, or great disaster follows.

Every unpleasant thought must be immediately crushed out and thrown away. We cannot permit it to produce a mental jar, or interrupt our spiritual progress. It is the test of spiritual will.

Passive resentment to people and events is perhaps more subtle and injurious than open protest. We do not require resignation; that is only a masked vice. We want cheerful and bold acceptance of the problem. By this alone will we ever overcome and prepare the pleasanter conditions we desire.

Let us learn to actually forget an injury. It is the only true forgiveness. To forgive is to forego, and to forego includes forgetfulness. In the same way we must forget all trouble. Our recollections cause our mental inflammations and congestions. Real forgiveness does not assert, "I can never forget."

Regret is self-resentment. When we have come to maturity we do not grieve over the blots and crooked pothooks in our copy-books. When we were learning to write, they may have caused us many tears. Regrets would fade as we grow if we did not weave them into a hair shirt to wear against our skin.

Nature is quick to wipe out all unpleasant sensations and retain only what is agreeable in life. Our penances are self-imposed; we gain from them a certain selfish gratification. They turn our thoughts inward and backward, when we ought to turn them outward and concentrate them upon the present.

All fear includes resentment; we resent what we fear, and will discover it in an honest analysis. Perfect love will cast it out. Regret and resentment bind upon us heavy burdens, from which we should cut loose.

Forgetfulness is the chief remedy we need for most of our diseases. It is a cleansing medicine for the blood. The links of memory compose the chain that fastens to us the disease from which we suffer. When we have cast off the remembrance of our troubles, we are no longer distressed by the power of association. Resentment and regret have vanished; the congestion and inflammation have disappeared; the cramps are gone. A new life and buoyancy have come to us, such as we have not

felt for many a day. We find ourselves surprisingly light-hearted. The sunshine has grown brighter and the air clearer. We are glad we are alive. The only change has been in our emancipation from resentment and regret.

We overlook the dangers of annoyance,—mortification, disappointment, indignation; as long as these impulses tincture our mind to the slightest degree we suffer unrest and fear. We dwell too much upon the thought of consequences,—“What will be the result of this act, this word, this letter?” How will it be regarded.

We forget that if our purpose is truly wise and righteous, its fruit must be eventually good in the nature of things. Let us stoutly refuse to be alarmed, though the whole world should disapprove. Let us trust the soul's intelligence. The good within us is our judge. Perfect peace is the touchstone of true living, and it *abides* with those whose minds are “*stayed on good.*”

In astrology we often hear of "good" and "evil" days,—of "benefic" and "malefic" influences. In every-day life we easily fall into the habit of looking forward to "better things." If one day, or one event, or one place could be better for us than another, does it not follow logically that God is changeable, and does not govern our lives at all times and places with equal wisdom, but that "accident" and "mischance" intervene, which are beyond either his power or desire to prevent? If this be true we cannot depend *always* upon God, for other influences exist which are stronger than he. If, on the other hand, we admit that God *is* love, it follows of necessity that all *is* good, if we include also a belief in the absolute sovereignty of God. Everything that Supreme Love can devise and accomplish for its creatures is being fulfilled in *every* life at *every* instant of its existence. May we not, then, safely claim that nothing can limit the good that comes to us except our own lack of recognition?

XX.

THE FOLLY OF RESENTMENT.

It has been wisely said, "There are no penalties to virtue."

If we suffer through another, it must be because of some responsive chord within ourselves which is not well attuned. The suffering is nature's signal bell. If we are bruised, there must be some sore spots that need attention, not as the result of our fancied injury but its real cause.

When we are spiritually sound, no thought, or word, or act of another can arouse vibrations of pain.

Nature's work is not so incomplete. It cushions us against all suffering from without and responds only when kindred chords are touched in the same key. We have absolute control of our own instrument, its harmonies and discords.

The same law that protects us from needless suffering, produces in us the reaction of every evil thought directed toward another.

When we strike a surface that is harder than our tool, the reaction makes our nerves tingle. We get no satisfaction in hammering material in which there is no responsive vibration.

When we direct an unkind thought upon another

and it finds no lodgement, the whole force of it returns immediately upon ourselves, while the other is unhurt.

Every thought that is not in harmony with the law of love must surely be expiated with much suffering by the thinker.

There can be no evasion of this law and no vicarious atonement possible. We could not learn our lessons through the experience of another. Life is a patient creditor, but is inexorably just in its exactions. Cannot we see the folly of all indulgence in malice and resentment, which can only poison our own lives and bring suffering to ourselves?

Is not the unerring operation of this law a complete guarantee of the ultimate salvation of all mankind?

A sane man will never persist in perpetual bankruptcy. We do not find any satisfaction in self-torture when it does not even bring us sympathy.

We need not punish ourselves with "righteous indignation." It is a popular delusion. No indignation can be righteous. "The ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

Congestion and inflammation are not possible where there is a truly loving spirit.

Such symptoms indicate deficiency in circulation, due to the irritation of some fear.

Fear cannot exist where there is the confidence of perfect love.

None can bestow upon us and none can draw from us except according to the spiritual law of our own centres. This is always seeking to establish equilibrium of forces.

We receive through giving and not through self-seeking. Relax the selfish thought, and the trouble disappears.

XXI.

EMOTIONAL BANKRUPTCY.

The soul is raised over passion;
It seeth identity and eternal causation;
It is a perceiving that Truth and Right are.
Hence it becomes a tranquillity out of the knowing that all
things go well. — *Emerson.*

WE find many in middle life who are positively bankrupt in the emotions. They have lived on the emotional plane rather than the spiritual. They have mistaken feeling for principle, and indulged it to exhaustion. Their natures are barren and stagnant in consequence.

The spiritual pulse should be as regular as the heart-beat. It is only the fevered and abnormal condition that produces an irregular pulsation. It is a sign of disease, and not of health. Ecstasy is hysteria and catalepsy. It is often mistaken for spiritual exaltation. The sufferer secretly prides himself upon his sensitiveness, and his "deeply religious nature."

If we live in the sunlight we are not depressed by every cloud that floats across the sky. If we live in the light of truth we are not disturbed by the shadows of error, nor surprised and excited by the progress of righteousness. In these we

recognize the steady course of evolution as plainly as the movements of the planets in their orbits. We are confident and calm.

Emotion is a will-o'-the-wisp. It leads us into the lowlands and mires us in the swamps of feeling. It is purely sensual, and lacks spiritual principle. It alternates between elation and depression.

We should distrust all religious influence or sentiment that has no basis of real knowledge,—that which says: “I don’t know *why* I believe, but I *feel* that I am right.” True faith must be built upon foundations of knowledge and experience.

We cannot have faith in any person without a reason proceeding from the person himself. It is only as we *know* God that we can believe in God, but the revelation comes to us from within and without in all the life about us.

Apathy and ecstasy are alike untrue. We do not go into hysteria over the sun,—do not applaud its rising or weep at its setting. We know that night and day will surely alternate, and that they are alike good. Let us have equal confidence in being. Let us be sure of every moment of existence, knowing that *all* is well, whether to our eyes there be twilight or sunlight, black darkness or perfect day.

We need not mistake our ideality for complete truth, but must beware of emotion and distrust feeling. Doubtless, most of the religions of the

world appeal more powerfully to the emotions than to reason, which is, perhaps, the explanation of the fact that their following is so largely among the emotional sex.

Hysteria with men manifests itself in business, in their booms and panics, and political conventions. We talk of "emotional insanity;" there is also abundant evidence of emotional dishonesty.

Let us put our emotions into the crucible of truth,—try them by its fires, and dare to examine the analysis. We may be sure there is no foundation for any "belief" we hold which we have not courage to submit to the most critical investigation, or cannot state in honest language.

No true man can preach or accept a faith which appeals only to the emotions. Much of the work of the pulpit and platform is mere hypnotism.

If we are governed by our feelings, we are befogged in the realms of the unreal.

We look too far afield for God. We do not need to take a telescope or microscope for what is closer than the nearest fellow creature,—nearer than the air we breathe, or the food we eat; for we live *in* good.

XXII.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

Now in the name of all the gods at once, upon what meat doth this, our Cæsar, feed that he is grown so great?

— *Shakespeare.*

WE are often told of late that "thoughts are things." This is only a partial statement. Thoughts are living entities.

We may even bring them into the objective life, by proper and persistent concentration.

It becomes, then, a vital question, "How shall thought be fed?" What is its proper diet to produce the best results? The matter of thought diet is of greater importance than we realize.

Disease results from thought; health is restored and established by thought. What best nourishes the largest life? Let us proceed to a study of mental diet.

We will find that disease has a large menu, while the diet of health is simple and strong.

Here is a list of some things that should be avoided in order to bring a sickly mind to a normal condition. We may find in it some items that are generally allowed, and have not usually been suspected of containing poisonous elements.

We must immediately strike out from the bill of

fare all unpleasant recollections, every memory of past struggle or weakness.

It is better even to forget our victories.

“True conquest is the causing the black event to fade and disappear as an early cloud of insignificant result in a history so large and advancing.”

Emerson is right. It is the highest ideal of life.

We must avoid all emotions of regret, resentment, and self-pity.

We must not indulge in self-congratulation.

We must banish every sentiment of resignation, hope, anticipation, doubt, and fear.

If we analyze these carefully we will discover that every one of them has fed our restless thoughts that have prolonged and nourished the disease against which we were struggling; they have subjected us to the alternations of elation and depression. These are the storm winds of emotional latitudes. They are found in our tropical, and not in our temperate, zones.

We must sail out of them into the higher latitudes. We must establish ourselves in a sturdier life. We must reach the spiritual planes which are far beyond the emotional experience.

To do this we must let the old thoughts die away, must kill them by starvation.

The new thoughts thrive on different food. They have a different appetite, — normal and vigorous.

They demand knowledge of good, and not of evil. They have no interest in pathology or the dissecting room.

Knowledge brings confidence.

We are glad and strong in the life of today in consequence of learning that "the soul becomes a tranquillity out of the knowing that all things go well."

We make too much of our faults and failures. We take ourselves too seriously. We suffer needless pangs of disappointment and discouragement.

If we have failed, let us scramble to our feet, and not spend time on our bruises and bandages. Bruises do not heal by looking at them. We are still too keenly alive to the troubles of the past, and cherish its resentments, though perhaps unconsciously.

It is no wonder that the previous chapters of our book of life were closed to us at birth. We are not handicapped with the recollection of all that went before in our long rounds of evolution.

Let us cultivate forgetfulness as a fine art. Let us lift up our eyes with confidence to the hills, to the heights of our better nature, which is thoroughly equipped for all our times of need.

XXIII.

SYMPATHY AS A VICE.

We come to them who weep foolishly, and sit down and cry for company, instead of imparting to them truth and health in rough electric shocks, putting them once more in communication with the soul. — *Emerson.*

IT is a curious idea of friendship that demands attention to personal ills for the mere sake of indulgence in their recitation. How many there are who fill their conversation and their letters with the details of their weaknesses and troubles. It would be just as kind to pump the contents of their cess-pools into their neighbors' gardens. The very thought of illness and suffering is a depressing influence from which we should wish to deliver our friends rather than oppress them with it. It is no kindness to permit one to turn such a thought upon us, only to provide him with the morbid satisfaction of rehearsing his difficulties. It does not stimulate to better things. It weakens the narrator, and etches his troubles more deeply into his own consciousness. Such sympathy is vicious and not helpful. We do not jump into a bog or quicksand to save one who is struggling there. We know that in order to help him out, we must keep our own feet on firm ground, and on the confident thought of rescue.

We believe the greatest kindness in the sick room is to disinfect the atmosphere. Sympathy, as generally understood and practised, feeds infection. Love demands the disinfectant of true thought, as well as kindly service. Sympathy is a poor tuning-fork. It does not strike the keynote of a harmony; it only spreads the discord.

Trouble is infectious and discordant. Nothing can correct it but strong, wholesome confidence in life, and self, and one another. To pule and whine in sympathy at the demand of a sick mind is not the office of a friend.

A little mind always thinks its own trials are peculiar and demand a special recognition. This is nothing else than egotism. When one looks abroad he is sure to discover that he is not the only pupil in the class who has found difficult problems on his slate. It makes no difference that some of our classmates are dressed in better clothes, and have richer bindings on their school-books. Their problems are just as hard as ours, and often very much the same. We will not envy them.

Let us work faithfully at our tasks, give all the cheerful stimulus and help to others that they will accept, but firmly refuse to listen to the talk of trouble when we cannot aid. Let us decline correspondence with such *friends* as fill their letters with their sicknesses. Let us never write a line or word that needlessly suggests unhappy thought.

Let us take the black borders from our stationery, and gild our thoughts and words with love, and confidence, and knowledge in the realms of *Eternal Good*.

We will not, then, mistake the vice of so-called *sympathy* for the virtue of encouragement, which brings always health and gladness as a welcome guest.

We are not only like "ships that pass in the night." We are like wandering breezes filling each other's sails.

Our thoughts and words carry cheer and power that help others for a little way upon their voyage, or operate as contrary winds that tend to drive them off their course and make their navigation difficult.

XXIV.

THE SELFISHNESS OF SORROW.

A son is dead. What then?
A son is dead. Nothing more? Nothing.
But Zeus does not order these things rightly.
Why so? Because it is permitted you,
While you suffer them, to be happy.
— *Epictetus.*

WE seldom read the resolutions of a Christian society upon the death of a member without finding such phrases as these: "We mourn the loss," "we bow our heads," "we sorrow," "we grieve."

Yet Christians profess to believe that "to die is gain." They talk of "the glory of the immortal." They speak often of life as "a wilderness," and sing of "pilgrims through this barren land."

Why, then, should they mourn when a beloved one has "gone home" to all the celestial glories which they picture in what they call "the other life"?

Is the explanation found in skepticism or selfishness? Do they really doubt the happiness of the heaven they have promised as a reward to the Christian believer, or are they so selfish as to forget the joys of the departed one in the temporary loneliness that has come to themselves?

When our friends sail for a sojourn in foreign

lands, where we expect to join them after a brief separation, we do not break our hearts over the event. We dwell upon their great advantages of study, the delights of travel, the gladness of the new experience that lies before the voyager, and the joy of the reunion later. It does not occur to us to put on garments of woe, to darken our homes, to seclude ourselves from our friends, abandoning all our usual occupations, or engaging in them with sad thoughts and faces. That would appear to us absurd, and our civilized customs do not require it.

When our loved one passes through the portal of death, if we really believe that he has stepped forward and upward, if we really think he has gone into a larger, brighter life than that of earth, and entered upon a career of more active usefulness and increased happiness, we surely cannot sorrow for him as those who have no hope.

What, then, is the root of the grief we are so ready to manifest in the presence of death? Is it not found altogether in *self pity*? and what is that but the disease of selfishness?

Are we willing to accept the alternative and admit that we do not quite believe in immortality or think that there is any gain in dying,—notwithstanding our professions,—and thus stand confessed as hypocrites?

Perhaps we answer that we *are* persuaded of the

gain to the departed one, but that the event to us is one of loss, irreparable loss.

Have we, then, so small an ideal God as seriously to believe that the good of any human being must be purchased by the sacrifice of another?

Surely such a definition would justify the atheist.

Or will we honestly admit that death can be *no evil*, if it brings the recognition of a larger life to both? and will we renew our assurance that all things work together for good, whether or not we can solve on the instant every problem in spiritual arithmetic?

If we have reached this point, and freely accepted this proposition as a principle of life, we shall go on our way rejoicing *because* of our great love, and know that death can bring no loss to us or to our friend.

"Love can never lose its own." In the kingdom of good there are no mourners. The seen and the unseen are alike within that kingdom.

If every star and planet is held true to its orbit, can there be danger that any human life will miss its course? Can death be premature if life is governed by absolute law?

Are we quite sure of the right rendering of that passage in the burial service, "For this corruptible must *put on* incorruption, and this mortal must *put on* immortality"?

We have no good reason to think that death in itself brings us anything more than life,—of which it is an incident; but we find that in the change, which is altogether chemical, we *put off* the old mortality and the material corruption.

Let us, then, be *glad* of the new day, when it dawns upon us or upon our best beloved, and wish with Tennyson that there “may be no moaning of the bar,” when we “put out to sea.”

And let us do away with graves,—in memory and in reality. We need not dwell upon the shady side of Sorrow Lane.

We are not dependent for the sunlight on the other planets in our system; nor on the interplanetary spaces.

It radiates from the grand central orb itself,—the sun of the entire system.

We are not dependent for our cheer and happiness on our surroundings; nor on any individual outside ourselves.

Each has within himself a complete planetary system, of which his own spiritual will is the vitalizing centre.

XXV.

THE GATES OF SORROW.

AN EASTER WHISPER.

Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress trees.

— *Whittier.*

WE can truthfully say there is no such thing as a real trouble in the world.

We are fighting shadows,—false appearances.

A very shapely man will often cast a shadow that is Titanic and grotesque. The effect is the result of his relation to the light. “The shadow proves the presence of the sun.”

Our troubles have no more power than we ourselves ascribe to them. When looked at in the light of a true philosophy, they no longer seem distorted incidents of life, but fall into their proper places and proportions.

We discern our real relation to them and find their cause and consequence. Every one of them has a lesson for us. We should receive and welcome it.

Kings' messengers are often splashed and stained; and oftenest when they have ridden fast and hard as bearers of important tidings.

Our troubles are not sightly when they stand before us. But they can always bring us tidings of great joy, revealing to us spiritual treasures that have been hidden; awakening in us a sense of power and freedom we had never suspected possible, provided we receive them rightly, and boldly demand their message.

We learn these interpretations by looking into graves,—the graves of loved ones dearer than life; by going down ourselves into the valley of the shadow; by walking among the cypress trees that grow above the tombs of dead ambitions, broken purposes and disappointed hopes.

When we look up again we see the stars of morning shining through the evergreens, and presently the day breaks and the shadows flee away.

We walk out of our cemeteries into the open and find again green pastures and still waters, with the bright blue skies above us, and the fresh, sweet breezes stirring all our pulses to new vigor. Then we know that life is not a failure. We are truly conquerors.

Nature is quick to hide her scars. The grass springs up on all her battlefields. She turns her volcanoes into flower gardens.

No alpine valley is more beautiful, no soil more fruitful than that of the extinct crater, clothed with forests and vineyards.

When we consider the lily *how* it grows, we may often find another lesson in the *where* it grows.

No life need abide in the shadows.

The garments of woe do not belong to us when we have seen ourselves as gods.

Our crumbled sorrows should prove the richest soil for fragrant flowers and refreshing fruit.

The finest wheat and most delicious grapes spring from the pulverized lava that once scorched the mountain side and killed all vegetation in the hour of eruption.

O troubled spirit! let the sunlight and the showers come to you; let the soft winds of heaven comfort you; and you will some day find that your richest harvests have been grown from the soil of the years that you thought blasted.

So we are thankful for the shadows we have called our sorrows.

They curtained the gates of gold beyond the "Via Dolorosa." through which we passed to larger understanding. In the light of the new day they stand revealed and open.

"Weeping may endure for a night; but joy cometh in the morning."

We fear to trust our wings. We plume and flutter them, but dare not throw our weight upon them. We cling too often to the perch, and excuse our timidity by saying we are chained by "circumstances." Yet there is the great, buoyant atmosphere enfolding us, and we are provided with strong spiritual pinions fitting us to float in it. Courage is all we lack.

Be like the bird that, pausing in its flight
Awhile on bough too light,
Feels it give way beneath it, and yet sings,
Knowing that it hath wings.

—*Hugo.*

XXVI.

THE PROBLEM OF LIFE.

He who is immersed in what concerns person or place cannot see the problem of existence.—*Emerson.*

WE have heard much of the “conflict” between science and religion.

There can be no inharmony between true science and true religion.

The conflict is always between “sciolism” (or false science) and religion, or between science and “superstition,” which is false religion.

There is no such thing as “religion” or “science” taken separately.

Science is true knowledge. All true knowledge is divine, and relates us to the infinite through the understanding.

Consequently all true science comprehends religion, and genuine religion *must* be scientific.

There is no philosophy or creed without a plank of truth in it; no science or religion that is altogether false.

Our theories may be wrecked upon the shoals of error; but like Paul and his companions on their eventful voyage, it will come to pass that we will find some boards and broken pieces of the ship on which we will all escape safely to land.

There can be no antagonism between spirit and matter.

If we find in matter the manifestation of spirit, we can surely have no quarrel with it.

The "conflict" of life resolves itself into the problem of life.

The sculptor does not despise the clay or marble which he moulds or chisels into form. He does not resent the fact that it is necessary for him to spend his time and effort in the work.

It is his chosen art, and the materials he uses are those that are best adapted to his purpose.

The "conflict" we experience is between *mind* and matter, when the mind has been misled by false instruction to regard matter as its natural foe.

Or it may be between spirit and sensuality, when the senses rebel at the dominion of the spirit.

This is the cause of all disease, and the house falls because it is divided against itself.

Harmony of all our functions can result only in health.

The attempt at strangulation will bring always conflict and disease. Symmetry is perfect and abounding life upon all planes of our being.

One may have an educated mind without a liberal spirit.

Our virtues manifest on the different planes of humanity with varied appearances and results.

What is a virtue upon one plane may be a vice upon another.

No symmetry of character is possible until the physical, intellectual, and spiritual phases of our nature have been all recognized and harmonized.

Until that point is reached we cannot be well poised or centred, and are not accepted sovereigns in our own domains.

The unfoldment of mankind is through the carnal mind and mortal body, its material expression,— the psychic mind and astral body which obeys it, and the spiritual mind of our true ego with the spiritual body which incorporates it, and of which all else is but imperfect manifestation of the great central force.

The majority of the race knows nothing beyond the material or animal plane. A few have discovered the existence of the psychic, and remain attached to its material phenomena.

The truly awakened spirit seeks good as the chief aim of its being and enters upon the uplands of the highest wisdom, advancing toward an ever-receding and broadening horizon.

All the impulses of nature are toward righteousness.

No right use of any faculty or organ can exhaust or weary. Life is inexhaustible.

Health is harmonious vibration. It draws always through the negative in exact proportion as it expresses itself through the positive.

If the feed pipes of a reservoir are not as large

as the outflow, the result is emptiness. If they are larger, it is congestion.

When the positive and negative channels of our being are properly adjusted to one another, harmony can be preserved and life perpetuated.

When supply and demand are perfectly balanced, waste and repair are exactly maintained. The issue can be only life.

Death has then become impossible. We cannot afford to neglect either pole of our activities.

We must not stagnate in the intake or the outflow.

The anxious thought of the personal self closes the valves of receptivity and outward movement.

These valves are automatic and most delicately adjusted. When either is closed, stagnation and death follow.

A drop of blood is chemically the same in the foot as in the brain, and circulates through both. It is of as much importance in one place as another. It is desirable to walk as well as to think. The gait is the expression of the thought.

We do not need to limit and strangle our senses. It is better to enlarge and extend them. We are only half alive, and yet there are those who insist that truth requires us to stultify and cripple ourselves further by asceticism,—to put out our eyes and stop our ears. This is the method of ignorance, but never of enlightenment. It will not

succeed, as the external is but the expression of the interior life and has its perfect correspondence. Until an organ or a function is perfected it should not fall into permanent disuse. Higher forms are evolved through the perfection of the lower. It is the method of evolution.

Heretofore we have classified as separate factors of life "religion," "science," "business." We have made arbitrary definitions, which have always produced confusion and inharmony. We have been afraid of our chemicals; we have not dared to bring them into close relations in our alembics. We have feared that religion would neutralize business and society, that there was no chemical affinity. "Business is business" has been the motto hung upon the walls of our laboratory of life. We have had no real knowledge of spiritual chemistry. Explosions in our retorts have been of frequent occurrence.

We have now begun to study life in the science of thought, and from an entirely different standpoint.

We have discovered new formulas of chemical analysis. We have found new properties in our acids and our alkalies.

We have learned of solvents which make it possible to unite the primates in fresh and powerful combinations.

Love is the strongest solvent, the mightiest reagent in the chemistry of life.

It neutralizes all resentment ; it clarifies the atmosphere of all malarial emotions ; it is the great deodorizer ; it is a divine ozone.

None of us are above the foundations of our lives. Yet we sit down before our work and imagine ourselves the chosen architects of royal structures.

We worship our ideal facade as if it were a temple we had already built at the divine command.

We are only stone masons after all as yet, and need to learn our trade and lay the stones of the foundation level and plumb.

We must not despise the material conditions, or fancy that we have no longer any use for them. It is a common form of spiritual conceit. The fact that we find ourselves existing in a world of matter, in spite of all "denials," is sufficient evidence to a reasonable mind that it contains the elements we require at the present point of our development, and none of them are to be depreciated.

The lotus flower (the spiritual symbol of the East) is rooted in the mud. It is quite as much indebted to the mud and water for its beauty as to the air and sunshine in which it blooms. We must not scorn the study of root culture, or neglect it in enthusiasm for the beauties of the orchid ; for though that exquisite flower is an air plant, it needs to attach itself to a sturdier growth that is rooted in the ground and draws its nourishment from the

soil to feed both itself and its parasite. The tree will outlive many seasons of orchids.

Let us attend carefully to all the homely affairs of the present life, for therein will we find our spiritual lessons.

Defective physiology ought no longer to be mistaken for spirituality.

A good tree does not bring forth corrupt fruit. Until we have *perfected* our material bodies, we have no reason to think we have outgrown the need of them ; until we have learned to be faithful over the few things, we must not deceive ourselves with the idea that we are chosen to be rulers over many things.

We are threefold beings, functioning upon planes of material, mental, and spiritual activity.

None of these activities need to be sacrificed to another.

All should vibrate pleasantly together, else we can have no true holiness, no "perfect peace."

Health is the key to character. The converse of this is also true. Character is the key to health. It is a good rule, and works both ways.

Name the disease, and a skillful mental healer can often diagnose the character. Give a truthful description of the character, and the healer can describe the disease which is most liable to manifest itself when the occasion is presented.

Life is no tangle when we have come into the realization of principles.

Our lives are too often fragmentary; our thoughts and purposes are broken and uncertain. We do not sight our telescopes long enough on single truths and follow them boldly where they lead. Else we narrow the orbit of our instrument by shortening its leverage and contracting its base. We do not keep our lenses clean and clear.

We lack steadiness and courage. We need to withdraw ourselves from the tumult of environment. We must concentrate on the study of the larger universal system.

We remain too often in our basements. Let us mount to the calm solitude of our observatory towers and look abroad into interplanetary spaces.

We must focus our spiritual vision. We have scattered ourselves and dissipated forces that are of incalculable power. It is the thought turned in that is the cause of all disease. It is not strange that we have so feeble an understanding of the problems of life, when we have lived so selfishly and so exclusively in the externals.

We have preferred the shadows to the substance, the illusions to the realities.

But these problems must be met. They cannot be longer postponed.

We may play truant for awhile and spend our time on the playground. But dame Nature will surely bring us back to our tasks. Death will usher us, not into the fool's paradise we have ignorantly fancied, but into the truant's court.

Wasted opportunities will be the charge.

If we fail to respond nobly to any of the demands of our daily life, we involve ourselves in still more trying conditions.

Nature never overestimates our capacity, and never sets for us a harder problem than we can solve. We will not be dismissed until our task is done. So all our interests unite in urging us to the fulfilment of every opportunity of good presented to us — today.

XXVII.

SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION.

To me the converging objects of the universe perpetually
flow;
All are written to me and I must get what the writing
means. — *Walt Whitman.*

In passing through life we encounter in our fellow-men all the dangers of the forest and jungle.

In all men there linger some of the distinctive characteristics of the brute creation, and in some they absolutely govern. We sometimes meet in human form wolves and tigers as rapacious as any in the forests, serpents as poisonous and foxes as cunning as any of the specimens that are caged in the menageries. Instruction in natural history is almost a necessary part of our education. We must learn to distinguish, classify, and control all these wild animal forces in ourselves and others. Else we shall easily fall a prey to them.

They disclose themselves to the practised eye and become obedient to spiritual intelligence.

All these things are subject unto man.

We need not deceive ourselves, however, as to the point of evolution humanity has reached.

Mankind is capable of deeper baseness and higher nobility than we dream. We scarcely begin to

know ourselves. We are nearer both to the good and evil within us than we understand. We often surprise ourselves at the sudden revelation of our possibilities in both directions.

The creeping things live upon the earth and burrow into it.

The fish lives in its native element of water, yet feeds upon the lower element of matter in solution.

The bird lives in the air, yet walks upon the earth, floats upon the water, and takes its food from both.

Man partially controls all elements.

Not yet absolutely, for want of knowledge.

He possesses the combined powers of all orders of creation,—beast, bird, and fish.

He can walk the earth and swim the water. Why does he not unfold the power to propel and poise himself in the air? It surely must be latent in him, and the day of its perception and development should not be far away.

The theory of evolution is accepted today by most intelligent minds. It is the best working hypothesis that has yet been suggested to account for development of form in nature.

No scientist claims for it a complete demonstration.

The theory of reincarnation is rapidly meeting with acceptance by advanced minds as the most

reasonable hypothesis in the world of spiritual development. Like evolution, it is incomplete in proof. It can, however, furnish abundant evidence of being practical and helpful. Using it as we use the x in algebra, it seems to assist the solution of many of life's problems.

It is a cheerful and optimistic theory. It recognizes no failure. It regards no limits of time. It assures every soul of an infinite opportunity for working out its problems and obtaining its desires.

It affirms everything. It denies nothing except annihilation and eternal fixity. It perceives an absolute equity in life. It regards an earthly existence as only a single day at school.

The day may be rainy, the schoolhouse cold, and the playground wet and disagreeable.

The scholar may feel ill or dull and everything seem to go wrong.

But there will be another morning, when the sun will shine, and all the tasks be pleasantly accomplished, and the pupil happy with his comrades in the playground.

There will be an intermission, and when the summer holiday is over, what healthy boy does not come back to another term eager for fresh achievements and full of lusty gladness for the opportunities his school life offers him?

When the school term has begun again the pupil takes his rank upon his record of the past. The

uncompleted task awaits him. He must open the book where he closed it last, and though the slate be newly washed, the old problem that he failed to solve must now again be put upon it. The pleasure and success of the new year depend to great extent upon the thoroughness of the old work.

Has it been well done? The scholar then is ready for higher classes and different occupations, "fresh fields and pastures new." Was it sacrificed to indolence and self-indulgence? Then the entrance examination must determine his new grade, his studies, his associates, and all the disadvantages of neglected work must now be met and overcome.

His deficiencies cannot be concealed or the consequences evaded. If he is ever to graduate with honors, it will be only after faithful effort.

There is reason to believe that after the spirit has parted with the mortal body it discovers itself to be the vibratory centre of all thought-currents related to it,—a spiritual audiphone, upon which vibrates all the thought-life of the past and all the critical and loving reflections awakened in the minds of enemies and friends.

Thus the spiritual nerve-centres are both audiphone and phonograph of accurate and inexorable record.

This appears to be the spirit primer of the new life upon which it has entered and the review of

the lessons of the schoolroom from which it has so lately passed. In its newly acquired sensitiveness its vibratory field is greatly enlarged.

The keyboard of its instrument is lengthened and includes new octaves.

Counterpoint, thoroughbass, and harmony must be more thoroughly acquired. The spiritual ear becomes alive to the discords and imperfections of the past before it can attune itself to heavenly choirs.

Our thought-vibrations will certainly carry us just where we belong, as unerringly as water finds its level, or atmospheres, their proper strata.

If we are not satisfied with our conditions we must change our thought.

The same law governs in our sleep as in our waking hours.

We are no strangers to the world of spirit.

Doubtless after death we will recognize much that is familiar. No life is wholly objective and material or subjective and spiritual.

We alternate between the two conditions. Our being is rounded like the planet. As the earth turns first toward the sun and then away from it, bringing successively every part of its surface through the alternations of day and night, so do our lives revolve through all the range of the objective and subjective states until such time as we can retain spiritual consciousness upon both

planes and thus identify and control them altogether.

“This is the victory that overcometh the world.”

There is no problem of life that can come to us without bringing its own factors of solution, for life is organic mathematics. It is a universal principle, which never fails in any particular application.



It is easily within our power to live amid the noisiest activities and yet possess repose, to dwell in all the tumult of a business or a social life without disturbance to ourselves, because our ears have been attuned to higher harmonies which penetrate and rise superior to every discord,— as Roentgen rays illuminate the solids with their wonderful vibrations.

“The great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.”

When one has spent a hot day in climbing to the top of a Swiss peak to see a sunrise the next morning, he may find that the fogs hang so heavily about the summit that the beautiful landscape is shut out. A few days' patient waiting may reward him, for the clouds will lift. But perhaps he will go down again into the valleys, disappointed in his purpose.

We are sometimes surprised when we have attained some height of spiritual knowledge to find we cannot see the landscape we had hoped for.

The fogs of selfishness have not yet lifted. They linger long about the mountain top and till they go we cannot see abroad. But confident and patient expectation will reveal at last more glorious visions than we dreamed.

When we have turned our eyes away from self the glories of the universal life appear to us.

Let us not go back into the valleys but camp on the heights and wait for sunrise.



Whatever we may experience in the circumference of outward conditions, there is always blue sky at the centre of our being, where our ego dwells with good and we are "at home with the soul."

XXVIII.

SPIRITUAL MATHEMATICS.

That which is not good for the swarm,
Neither is it good for the bee.

—*Marcus Aurelius.*

UNSELFISHNESS is freedom. It is a state of mind that looks abroad. It does not need, however, to seek for itself the gratification of public activities.

The reputation of "unselfishness" often suggests a subtle phase of a selfish nature. Many feed upon the contemplation of their own acts, and require the approval of their fellows.

We must candidly admit that at our present point of evolution selfishness predominates over love. Humanity as yet is but a shrub,—not a full grown tree. It is in process of a development which never really ceases. Even its dark ages mark a period of growth in history as well as in the individual. Evolution vibrates with a double movement like that of the tides. We should not be distressed at the ebb, or elated at the flood. There is no retrogression in reality. The appearance is a phase of progress. Nature moves in an orderly way.

Standing at any point upon the surface of the

globe, we cannot see far in any direction. We cannot judge or measure by the eye the entire circle of twenty-five thousand miles. This is equally true of individual lives. We cannot look forward or backward for any appreciable distance. We cannot measure the arc line of our infinite past, nor that of the infinite future. The one little standing point we occupy today is not sufficient in its altitude to enable us to solve our problems in the spiritual trigonometry,—the higher mathematics of our being. One mortal incarnation is but an infinitesimal point in the great circle of existence.

A truly divine revelation is that which brings to us through experience a knowledge of ourselves, and thus a knowledge of the universal life.

Few mortals could endure a distinct view of their past or future. Nature drops the veil until such time as we are strong enough to raise it, as parents conceal from a child the suffering of its past which might sadden its young heart and the anxieties possible to its future. Let us attend to the dinner of today; we do not need to remember in detail yesterday's bill of fare; it is too early to prepare the menu for tomorrow.

In this present moment we unite free will and destiny. We are experiencing results of which the causes lie in our past thinking, and in the living of today we arrange the consequences of tomorrow.

We very soon learn to choose our food with a view to results upon the system. The palate has a use of its own, but we do not allow it to govern exclusively our choice of diet. So with the pleasures of existence. If we are wise we do not make them our chief aim. They come as incidentals of true living.

When we are half blind we cannot judge accurately of perspective and proportion. In the earlier stages of growth we consider chiefly what we are to get, and imagine getting to be the true object of life. We are at the negative pole of our being, and are easily drawn into the stronger magnetic fields of others. Later we discover the positive pole, and learn that we obtain chiefly through giving. We begin to operate from our own centres, and being lifted up draw others to us. A perfect understanding results in the command of both the positive and the negative, the discovery of the right relation between giving and receiving, the equable flow of the universal currents through our individual lives. True living involves neither accumulation nor impoverishment. Egoism and altruism are equally wrong and hurtful by themselves. Neither is a principle of being. In the first the thought is magnetized by the personality of self, in the latter by the personality of others. The true balance lies where the thought is neither inverted nor scattered. Egoism and altruism are really one.

When the soul has learned that its own highest good is fulfilled only in the service of others, the man knows that he has no separateness from his fellows, but is a part with them of the same great unity of life. Thus we pass in the evolution of ethics from the tribal and clannish ideas of a pastoral race to walled towns and patriarchal governments. At the next step of progress the walls are thrown down, the moats filled and changed to gardens, the drawbridge lowered and portcullis raised. Then come the confederacies of states and the study of sociology as a science of the common good. In these closing years of the present century we have removed the fences between neighbors, throwing their grounds together in our landscape gardening. We have opened magnificent park systems to the people. This recognition of brotherhood is significant. As man develops he perceives that perfect equity blends and harmonizes the love of himself and the love of his neighbor.

The true life is neither that of the altruist nor that of the egoist, but that which includes and governs both in perfect equipoise, identifying the interests of self with the interests of all.

The thought of anything as a necessity always involves a fear lest we should fail of its possession.

To the emancipated soul there is no such word as "necessity." Our resources are infinite, and consequently have no limitations. What is truly desirable is always within our reach.



True education involves most of all the development of the receptive faculties. The first condition is the simplicity of childhood.

XXIX.

VIBRATORY AFFINITY:*

A STUDY IN HEREDITY.

The soul looketh steadily forward: creating a world always before her, leaving worlds always behind her.—
Emerson.

THE true science of mind is found in the study of thought vibration. When we have once admitted that all growth is from within, and that the external is but the expression of the interior life, we are logically led to the conclusion that in the history of the soul the facts of heredity and environment are but the *registration* of its *progress*. They cannot be positive factors that govern its development.

If we recognize the absolute freedom of the spirit, it must choose its own pathway and its own methods of development at every point. Our parentage then becomes a matter of personal election. "Circumstances" are the conditions arising from it. They can never involve injustice to the individual, whatever may be the appearances. They must operate in harmony with the law of vibration, which manifests itself in all the forces

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of the universe that we have yet discovered and governs every detail of our lives. When we admit that all vibration is ruled by thought, we perceive that there is no force of which we do not hold the lever.

Vibratory affinity offers us a key to the vexed problem of heredity. Like chemical affinity, it inevitably draws to itself its sympathetic complement. Is it not probable that the ego, seeking a rebirth, is led by the force of its own nature to choose for parents those that vibrate at most points in harmony with itself? It thus moves upon the spiritual lines of least resistance. It secures the most fitting opportunities for the study of those mortal lessons in which it has recognized its greatest need. In this view we are not subject beyond our choice to hereditary influences or environment. We choose these with the intelligence of the free spirit,—as a scholar selects his university and tutors.

As a result of this theory, sex in offspring must be determined by the thought life of the parents, not their preference. The character of children must follow the same law. A child is the materialized thought of its ancestors,—an entity that has been drawn by its own responsive vibrations into the mental life of its progenitors and so launched upon the ocean of objective being.

If we study carefully the traits of our children

we will easily discover the mental phases and experiences of our own life which each represents and reflects, and through which we were passing at the period of their conception. Every child is a revelation of his parents in some points of their character and shows both their faults and virtues. It will frequently be found that the first-born embodies most of the ideal, and later children the more practical phases of their parents, as they advance toward the years of maturity.

The experience of death, which is the birth into the subjective state, must be also governed in all its circumstances by the same law that determines birth into the objective conditions. It must be a consequence of previous thought action, and unconsciously determined by the individual mind,—whether slow or sudden, violent or peaceful. It is the natural and inevitable result of the life that has gone before it. The law must be as infallible in death as in birth. There can be no accidents in a universe governed by law.

Whatever may be the attitude of ignorant man toward what he calls the phenomena of life, it must be true that nature itself knows no caprice. Every act is at the same time a consequence and a cause. Every circumstance is a link in the chain of being, forged by the individual himself.

In the name of science and of the eternal equities, we deny hereditary limitation. We also

deny that any life can be enslaved by its environment.

These same vibratory forces dominate the religions and the politics of the world. We can no longer call them tyrannies if they are the choice of the people themselves and the manifestation of their point of evolution. When better things are demanded they are always attainable. The mercury in the bulb of the thermometer is not responsible for the temperature it registers. The hands of the clock are not the cause of the hour. Heredity, environment, religion, politics, society,—these are but signs that mark the spiritual temperature. They are the hands that point to the hour on the dial of human progress.

Higher spiritual atmospheres are always accessible to those that desire to inhale them. Every soul surrounds itself with its own atmosphere. Nothing can set aside this law. The flowers that grow in desert sands are nourished by the same sun that shines on palace gardens. The desert flowers develop a rare and delicate beauty with wonderful variety of form and color,—even in a soil that we call barren. Doubtless it is the soil best adapted to their particular growth. Their own rate of vibration attracted and rooted them there.

If we are not controlled by our heredity or our environment, which relate us to the com-

munity in which we live, neither can we be controlled by so-called "planetary influence," which relates us to the universe through the planetary system. Doubtless the planets also register our progress and indicate results. In a certain sense they seem to be an index of our lives,—as the study-card of the collegian is an index of the course of lessons he has elected to follow in the university and an indication of the progress he has made in former schools. But the index has no active relation to the university course. It is not a governing influence in the student's life. It is always subject to his will.

The principle of personal responsibility is the chief corner-stone of all spiritual work. We can build nothing of value or stability in our lives till we have accepted this fundamental truth. Whatever we are, or wherever we are, is the result of our spiritual choice, whether made consciously or unconsciously. It matters not that we have not yet succeeded in tracing all the steps of the long road we have traveled. If our theory be true, it must apply equally to all planes of existence.

We often hear of "lower" and "animal" planes, as distinguished from "higher" and "spiritual" planes, and we are told that planetary influences govern them. All planes are spiritual, and we have no reason to think that at any point of our development have we been exempt from

this law of personal responsibility. It is the eternal and unchanging law of evolution, which is being emphasized with every new discovery.

If we admit that birth, life, and death are the legitimate consequences of thought, then there can be no such thing as danger. A man is just as safe upon the battlefield or amid wreck and ruin by sea or land as in the comfortable seclusion of his home. The event may provide occasion but not cause of death. Man can never really be a martyr or a victim. Each life determines its own issues. It comes and goes as the result of the workings of its own spiritual will. Is not this the only true meaning and possibility of freedom? Does not this view of life also take away all our old, miserable thought of burden bearing?

We do not encourage the child at school, whose lessons have been carefully selected and adapted to his age and aims in life, to whine and lament the burdens of his spelling-book as soon as he comes to words of two syllables, or to grieve over his sums in long division after he has learned his tables. We know they are the very things he needs to develop the powers that will win him success in life, and to secure for him all that his manhood will deem most desirable in possession and accomplishment.

Self-pity is a grievous fault and weakness. We cannot see straight nor clearly while we permit it

to remain. It must be destroyed in all its roots and allowed no tendril or hiding-place. Nothing but the recognition of our freedom and responsibility at every point of our existence can destroy this thought. If we build our lives upon these principles we work with confidence and satisfaction, —even though it be sometimes true, as Matthew Arnold writes, that—

“With aching hands and bleeding feet
 We dig and heap,—lay stone on stone;
 We bear the burden and the heat of the long day and wish
 ’twere done.
 Not till the hours of light return
 All we have built do we discern.”

Perhaps the largest part of our experience is in the field of the subconscious. A trait or purpose is developed there long before it appears above the horizon of our perceptions. Long after we have denied a habit or opinion it is apt to linger there and color or actuate our life, as the sunrise is preceded by the dawn and the sunset is followed by the evening twilight.

XXX.

VIBRATORY FORCES.

Love took up the Harp of Life
And smote all its chords with might,
Smote the chord of self, which trembling
Passed in music out of sight.

— *Tennyson.*

The right punishment of one out of tune is to make him play in tune. — *Emerson.*

HARMONY in music is a blending of chords, a joining of notes, a fitting together of sympathetic vibrations through which the melody runs as “motif.”

A well-trained orchestra or military band is a wonderful illustration of the power of harmony. Each player keeps carefully to his score and interprets the “motif” of the piece through his individual instrument. Each is rendering the same thought in a different way. Each has studied in a different school with masters of his own. He has developed skill of eye, ear, lip, and finger, with a view to the interpretation of musical thought. These musicians come together with one purpose. With one sympathetic effort they produce a volume of sound which thrills all pulses, awakens all human emotions, and moves to laughter and to tears.

It is a grand suggestion of the possibilities of expression.

So with the orchestra of our humanity. The "motif" of love runs through all life. Our daily experience fits us for the individual expression of the central thought. Some express it feebly, while from others its harmonies flow as grandly, as sweetly, and as smoothly as the strains of a skilled orchestra, arousing into action all that is best in their fellow-men, and moving them to noblest aspiration.

Above all the noises of the storm on Galilee a gentle human voice commanded, "Peace, be still."

Immediately there was a great calm. The Spirit of gentleness was master of the tempest.

Mind dominates all nature's forces. It draws at will upon them all. It is itself the lawgiver and sovereign.

It is greater than the cyclone and the tempest, tidal wave or forest fire.

But it must learn its power in the silence, in the stillness in which all power has birth.

When peace commands there are no winds or waves of life that will not recognize their master. There are no storms it cannot quell, not even though the ship be full and foundering.

But how dim is our recognition of the forces we embody, and how feeble is our utterance!

With knowledge comes the power of expression that will still all storms.

Both amiability and irritability are magnets which

draw to themselves of their own vibration. If we are loving, we find abundant stimulus to love. If peevish and anxious, we do not have to look far for occasion to indulge our weakness. It meets us at every step and follows us with strange persistency.

If we do not breathe easily in any atmosphere, we must climb to higher planes where the air is clearer.

We need not rush hither and thither on the accustomed levels. We will only find that all earth's atmospheres have the same component gases.

We must rise to heights of spiritual ozone, where our better nature will find refreshment, and our bodily organs will respond. If there are mists in the valley, we must mount to spiritual lookouts and flash our search-lights around a wider horizon.

We will thus breathe and see clearly, and discover all that we desire.

Love is the tuning-fork of life. It gives the keynote to harmony in every situation.

Nothing is impossible to love, but it must first be clarified from every element of selfishness.

Our love draws to itself its corresponding quality of affection.

We never can be unloved if we are loveable.

"Depend not on external supports," says Marcus Aurelius, "nor beg your tranquillity of another."

Independence is the essence of true friendship.

We can never fully enjoy a friend till we are wholly independent of his affection.

We cannot be entirely happy in the thought of anything so long as there exists a fear of losing it.

Love must become the great magnet of our life. It will draw to us all we need, and permit nothing of evil to approach in either spiritual or material conditions. It is like a dynamo at the centre of our being. There go out from it, projected at our will, electric currents which drive away all things undesirable. It has an illimitable radius.

Before we can control and operate such a force we must have learned that the great secret of life is *absolute confidence in the Infinite Love*.

God is Love.

This proposition includes all forces, for God, Love, Life, Truth, Wisdom, Power, are but synonyms.

The magnet is always true to the north. We never fear it will not find its pole, however much the needle vibrates.

Love need never seek. If we make ourselves loving and lovable, we may be sure that all hearts attuned to the same chord must vibrate responsively throughout the universe.

Jealousy is impossible to love, for "love seeketh not its own;" and jealousy is always selfishness.

It is the root of most domestic trouble. It

claims to be an evidence of affection, and hides behind the thought of parental or connubial devotion. It is simple despotism and wilfulness. It seeks to control, and craves for evidence of its power.

The touchstone of true love is self-forgetfulness.

Both God and man respond to the vibrations of trust and distrust.

We receive from both what we confidently expect.

Let us recognize the best in everything and everybody.

When perfect love has cast out all fear from our hearts, then, indeed, we have come to the kingdom of good. With fear goes all anxiety, resentment, and greed. For the first time we have really become as little children.

We no longer crave for the possession of any person or thing in the ordinary sense. We do not fear to miss it, for we know that all is ours.

Then have all things become possible to us. We cannot confound the substance and the shadow, the ideal and the actual. No doubt can ever again arise in us that God's will is always accomplished without hindrance at every instant of time and in every place, as the lightning cleaves all clouds.

A small particle of gas can vitiate volumes of atmosphere. A bit of poison can permeate large bodies of water; a fine chemical can change the

color of flame; so an unrighteous thought can paralyze the spiritual powers.

When love is enthroned the eye is no longer dimmed by personal emotions; the ear is no longer deafened to the truth by its sensitiveness to self; the tongue is not palsied by the poison of the power to wound; the feet have been washed in the blood of the heart, and trodden down all selfish desires; the whole being is alert with new spiritual life. It sees, speaks, and stands with the soul. It has developed adeptship, and can be entrusted with the native powers it has unfolded.

It vibrates to all the harmonies of life. The at-one-ment has been accomplished between the mortal self and spiritual ego. The man has come to himself.

He has learned the spiritual chemistry.

He finds that the elements of earth, water, air, fire, ether, and spirit are but different rates of vibration in the harmonic scale of Being. Spirit is the finest and highest, and governs all the others; fire is the highest of the four material elements, and possesses the power of resolving each and all of the lower forces into that above it by a quickening of its rate of vibration.

In chemistry instantaneous results follow the completion of conditions.

When the last element has been added to the mixture, it sets free the gas which produces the explosion.

In the science of mind the conditions for changing either body or environment may be a long time in preparation. The healer or the sufferer may be slow in perceiving the necessary thought. When it has been found and applied the cure is instantaneous. It cannot be delayed if the patient is receptive.

Is there any suffering that does not come through fear?

Fear is the cause of all wars, greed, and sensuality,—fear of not obtaining all we want and to which we think ourselves entitled.

Fear is the root of all anxiety, of all resentment.

We may even find it in the germ of all disease and death. We already recognize it as the direct cause of many acute and chronic troubles.

What is the remedy for fear? What but the realization of the nature of good, the recognition of the fact that we actually do possess *all* things and live *in* good, in perfect freedom; that we have nothing to desire or expect but our own unfoldment, and that we absolutely govern the time and method of that ourselves.

O friend, never strike sail to a fear. Come into port greatly, or sail with God the seas.—*Emerson.*

Environment may color but it never moulds the character. It gives nothing more than a veneering, and the natural wood will show through sooner or later. Its grain cannot be concealed. The hero is not hidden in the slums. The scoundrel cannot hide himself amid luxurious surroundings. Each will work out his own true character in spite of birth and position.

We are creators of circumstances, not its creatures.

Are the problems of today beyond our mathematics? Not if we are one with Wisdom. "I am" is a sufficient confession of faith.

XXXI.

THOUGHT VIBRATIONS.

“Neither be ye of doubtful mind.”

It is a significant and helpful fact that business etiquette requires signatures implying truth and honesty in our relations to each other. “Yours respectfully” and “Most truly yours” suggest a bond of sincerity and service that is more than a mere formality. The vibrations of such words are both agreeable and stimulating. We should be careful never to use them but with honest meaning. They are cushions to the severities of business correspondence that relieve and soften many jolts and jars.

The almost universal phrase “all right” is the unconscious testimony to a true philosophy of life, the popular echo of its highest thought. On the other hand, “too good to be true” is a pessimism we should never use. Goodness and truth are never found apart. “Good enough to be true” is the real tone of an optimistic mind. Let us live in confidence of the best and not the worst that we can draw to ourselves. Let us change another proverb and truly affirm that “*all* news is good news.”

We no longer say “Providence permitting,” be-

cause we have learned that Providence can do nothing in relation to us except what *we* permit. Napoleon was right in principle when he asserted "I propose and dispose too," although he may have failed in his integrity of purpose and thereby brought disaster in the issue. When we identify ourselves with the creative power we dismiss all former limitations. It is not impossible that we may yet discover that the very orbit of our planet has been determined by the action of the human mind, and that the weather itself is but an ever varying expression of our thought vibrations. In arctic regions the breath of the traveler falls to the ground in snowflakes. We have thought climate responsible for character. Why not reverse the postulate, since we have failed of proof, and ask if character may not be a cause of climate? A disagreeable person certainly makes the air vibrant with discomfort, as we all know from experience. We are getting new theories for the laws of storms.

"He that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast." Yet we foolishly say, "A short life and a merry one," when we know right well that merriment is a most desirable tonic to one who wishes length of days.

Our common salutation, "How are you?" implies a doubt of health. It was, perhaps, adapted to the old days, when we filled our conversation

and our correspondence with accounts of our own ills and those of our families. Now that we recognize health and happiness as the inevitable results of a true life, and anything else as a signal bell calling for immediate correction of our thought, we need to change some of our current phrases. We want to express confidence and gladness, rather than doubt and sympathy. We must drop many of our commonplace remarks. They do not strike the tuneful keynote of best things. In our anxiety for the body we have been like workmen spending more time on their tools than on the work for which they were intended. To hear our constant inquiries for one another's "health," it would appear as if "health" were quite unusual. The marvel is that with all the vitalizing forces that envelop and permeate us we can be ever ill. It would not be possible except that our aims and methods of life were at fault. These can be corrected only by changing our mental attitudes to our work and our associates.

We do not strive for air to fill our lungs. We need not strive for health. It is the normal condition of life. We need not pine for love. It is the universal atmosphere. We draw to us all minds and hearts in the seen and the unseen that are keyed to the same thought and purpose as ourselves. We have more companionship in every hour than we realize. Our brains and hearts are

fed from everlasting springs rather than from the books of schoolmen. An artesian well of thought life may be opened in our inmost being. We may draw from it at will.

When the incandescent light of the awakened spirit has been kindled, we can turn it in the silence upon any problem of our life. We need never walk in darkness. *We are creatures of the Light.*

We must not be surprised if many friends and things we have held dear become estranged from us when our vibrations have been tuned to higher thought. It could scarcely be otherwise. We seem, perhaps, to travel through the wilderness that lies between Goshen and Canaan. It may be a long and trying period before we fully manifest in our externals the newly acquired power. But that manifestation will appear as surely as the noonday follows dawn. All that we seemed to lose will be returned to us in fresh beauty and larger abundance. The best and dearest friendships of our lives await us with their welcome. Unexpected opportunities stretch out before us. Hidden treasures will be uncovered. We will have no regrets for lost possessions or unfaithful friends. Spiritual truths assert their power in our lives, and we can only wonder at the new conditions we have reached by growth.

Spiritual development leads us from the anxious

thought of the particular into the larger domain of the universal. It shows us that the higher laws when recognized compel the accurate and orderly adjustment of all private and personal issues, as the masterful current of electric force draws to its poles all the steel particles within its magnetic field. They are brought into beautiful and orderly arrangement by the grand sweep of irresistible forces. We cannot have too much confidence in the Supreme Mind that governs, and which manifests itself through our individual intelligence upon demand. If we turn our thought with fear and distrust upon any organ of our body, we obstruct and paralyze its action. The relief is brought by diverting these currents outward and leaving the organic operation to the forces and intelligence which vitalize and govern them. The same law may be discovered in our so-called "practical affairs." Intense and anxious thought always complicates and obscures. Confidence in the law of harmony which rules will bring order out of chaos, will lead us to clear seeing and right action.

We care little for the height of the waves or the fury of the storm when we know we have a good ship under us and a commander that was never wrecked in any gale and has sailed all seas. We may safely put this trust in our higher ego, which is our true "Father in heaven" and incorporated with the Divine Essence of the universe. Good

can never fail. It knows nothing but success. Sun and tempest are alike to it. It is sovereign of all. Our little boat was built to sail these seas. It can never founder. In due time we will come safely into port. The storms cannot destroy or cripple us. They cannot drive us from our course. "Why are ye fearful?"

Avarice is the expression of a fear of poverty. Ambition for fame involves the fear for reputation. Disease is the externalizing of a fear of death. The thought of spiritual freedom is an antidote for all. Spiritual forces in harmonious relation to us can bring nothing but pleasure. We fear receiving too little or too much. We fear that we may give too little or too much. We hold continually the thought of repletion or exhaustion. It is these whimsical doubts that bring the suffering. Harmony is equilibrium. All disturbances are in the intellect. This is the surface of our lives. Storms never reach the ocean depths,—they agitate the surface only. The deeper the pool the less is it susceptible to action of the winds. True recognition of the spiritual forces we embody gives us command of perfect peace, through a sense of *perfect power*.

No thought can bind us but with our consent. Many men are anchored to their fears. They hold them fast and paralyze their action. Many more are hindered by resentments and regrets. Most of

us are magnetized by a thought of weakness. Yet we say "all men are born free." This is doubtless true. Its strongest evidence lies in the fact that in a world of good and opulence, a planet teeming with life, we have the power to make ourselves blind and deaf and to create conditions of disease and poverty. What better proof of sovereignty could we desire?

In our spiritual nature we are like automatic valves. As long as we open ourselves to the lower motive and indulgence we close ourselves to the higher by that very impulse.

When we close the lower, we open the higher.
The choice is always ours.

Many of us are afflicted with a disease of prematurity, which is only one of the most subtle manifestations of fear, to which we are all subject, in some form.

We are anxious to meet a train, or take one; our thoughts of possible contingencies so weigh upon our minds, that we lose more time in habitual waiting at the depots than we could lose if we missed many trains. We have a matter of some moment to consider in the near future; we allow it so to burden us, that it disturbs our equilibrium for days before the hour of action or decision comes, and, when it arrives, we are really less fitted to meet it, fairly, than if it had come upon us unexpectedly. When will we learn that life is something of the present moment, and that it is a serious loss of power, as well as happiness, to do everything with a view to being "prepared for the worst," upon which so many pride themselves. "To take no anxious thought for the morrow" is to focus our highest power on today, and know that we have spiritual reserves for *all* contingencies of life.

"Write on your doors the saying :

Wise and old,

Be bold! Be bold!

And everywhere be bold!"

XXXII.

THE HYPNOTIC POWER OF WORDS.

It is well known to all students of the science of vibration that certain hypnotic influences are conveyed through sounds as well as sight.

Such influences can indeed be developed through the avenues of any of the senses.

The sound waves of a clear-toned bell will place a sensitive subject almost immediately in a trance condition; so will the dripping of water or the ticking of a clock.

In states of weariness the most positive person will find the humming of a bee or the chirping of a cricket bring a sense of drowsiness and languor which is the first stage of negative conditions.

On the other hand, the shrill notes of the fife and the beating of the drum in time of war will arouse the populace to a condition of patriotic hysteria and produce the frenzy necessary to soldiers before they will expose themselves to the inhuman conditions of the battlefield.

Yet we do not often realize the power of sounds in words.

Every word spoken by human lips carries with it in the utterance a concentration of hypnotic force applied through its vibrations.

These vibrations meet with a response from every mind attuned to a sympathetic key.

Thus is the power of thought concentrated in a word and transmitted by a breath.

In words we find both sedatives and stimulants of all degrees of force, which is largely varied by the tones of speech.

There is no word in any language without this vibratory power.

All students of the occult know the use made of this principle in Oriental religions. The central thought of the Hindoo is concentrated in the syllable "om," while in the Hebrew the most sacred of the names of Deity was never allowed to be pronounced.

It is even claimed that the vibrations of certain words will produce physical results as great as those reported of the shouts and trumpets of the besiegers before the walls of Jericho.

The secret passwords of masonic orders are given always in a whisper, while the most careful conditions are prescribed for the utterance of others, all of which is of an occult significance but little understood in our secret societies of the western world.

It is a scientific fact that certain chords upon the violin will produce results of almost incredible force.

The words we use so lightly are possessed of

truly magic powers to him who knows their secret application. When hurled with the force of passion or breathed with the gentleness of love, they wound or win beyond our expectation.

In the science of mind it is an essential help to right development to make the air about us vibrant with such words as "freedom," "truth," "love," "health," "opulence," and "wisdom."

A wealth of words rightly applied and carefully toned is a mental medicine-chest of incalculable value. A word may have all the fabled power of an amulet.

The success of any popular movement is greatly forwarded by a discreet choice and use of names and titles.

This is curiously shown in two of the most remarkable organizations of the century: "The Salvation Army" and the "Christian Science Church."

Let us analyze the words by which they conjure and examine the conditions under which they have been developed.

The Salvation Army works on the lowest social planes of human life.

It had its origin among a people who had always been familiar with the armed forces of the European governments which were daily paraded before their eyes.

In these they had no part because they were of

the class which General Booth has named "the submerged tenth."

To them the king, queen, commander, captain, soldier, represented power in which they could not share, but to which they must always submit; while the clergy preached the dangers of an unknown future from which they could escape only through acceptance of a creed.

Thus for their salvation they must look to another life where they, too, could be kings and priests; the rulers, instead of the ruled.

These two words, "army" and "salvation," thus appealed to the two governing motives of their lives, the desire to be identified with massed forces representing power, and to be assured of "beer and skittles" in the next world (glorified to "harps and crowns"), which they had sadly missed in this.

To such minds the "army" stands on the physical plane as the type of strength and safety, while "salvation" promises deliverance from all their fears of the hereafter.

The changes rung on these words form the burden of the constant services of the Salvation Army.

All their methods appeal to the senses: drums, trumpets, cymbals, assail the ear, while flags and uniforms attract the eye. War cries and exhortations impress and stimulate the mind that has been sensitized by poverty, dissipation and distress.

Christian Science works at the other social extreme and appeals to the intellectual classes. Its chief instruments are two books with singularly well-chosen names, added to a constant reminder of its leader as the "discoverer and founder."

To the intelligent mind of the nineteenth century Christianity and Science embody all that is worthy of aspiration.

The strongest efforts have been made to harmonize the two, and to make the one the interpreter of the other.

Christian Science boldly claims the monopoly of both in its fraternity,—a sort of "religious and scientific trust."

No combination of words could be more effectual than those found in its titles to him whose most earnest desire is to solve the problem of the "at-one-ment," and whose investigations of the Scriptures have left the longing for a "key."

To many such the unprofitable conflict between science and religion has only ended in their own minds in disease.

Having failed to find satisfaction in the church, they turn to the new cult, and accept in place of the "Revised Version," which they hailed with approval a few years since, the latest "Key to the Scriptures," duly copyrighted and stamped with the name of the discoverer and founder,—sole proprietor,—a bunch of keys, indeed, for with it

goes "Science and Health,"—a combination claiming to open with its patent wards, the treasure-house of health and happiness, of mind and body.

Are we to wonder that with the successful experience of these suggestive forces which have been so useful to the cause of Christian Science, its discoverer and founder should so persistently warn her followers of the dangers of "malicious magnetism," notwithstanding "all is good."

This is the new devil of the new religion, the very suggestion of which compels its devotees to cross themselves with daily treatment and repeat their "Ave Marias" with the fear and trembling of the monk of the middle ages, pronouncing his exorcism of the hosts of Apollyon.

"Malicious magnetism" is found in every thought and word of criticism to the new religion; consequently all literature is proscribed except that provided by its canonical books.

The panacea for this danger is the new "Hail Mary!"

Far be it from us to be inhospitable to the grand central thought of Christian Science, or the noble purpose of the Salvation Army.

With both of these all intelligent minds must find themselves in fullest sympathy.

We would only divest these movements of their personality and meretricious aids and build them upon universal principles.

Truth is something infinitely beyond our petty personalities and egotistical limitations. It is far above all definitions of the broadest minds that have ever lived.

It "is not an infant," as Dr. Holmes once said, "to be carefully wrapped up every time it is taken out for an airing lest it should take cold."

It does not need the organization of a "church," or "army," or "keys" fashioned by mortal minds to unlock its treasures.

It does not need the fostering care of any "cause."

It comes in the silence into every heart that it finds open for its reception,—or rather it opens gently our heavy eyelids to perceive that we live amid its glories and in its very courts, that it broods and permeates us like the very atmosphere we breathe, this "light that never shone on land nor sea."

We simply have learned that "good is love." We have no more desire to organize and proselyte than we have to bottle up the sunshine and paste on our own labels.

Our only aim is to unfold our being, as the flower opens its petals to the light and dew.

The science of mind brings us to a larger recognition of our own thought centres.

When we rest in these our equilibrium is never disturbed by the hypnotic thought or word of any

leader or discipleship,—“we do not throw away our legs to go upon crutches,” as says Marcus Aurelius.

We have found the “power of good unto salvation.”

We have recognized in ourselves “the image and likeness of good.”

We have learned to confess that “all things are ours.”

This is the “truth that makes us free.”

It is the full perception that in “good we live and move and have our being.”

It is the answer to the watchman’s challenge
“What of the night?” “The morning cometh.”

There is much in life suggestive of a shadow pantomime.

A hypnotized subject can be sometimes influenced to an attempt at robbery or murder. We smile at the mock act, but to the performer it is real.

In actual experience can we deprive another of his life, or property, or anything belonging to him?

Does the murderer ever reach the real life of the one we call his victim? Is not all crime but a shadow pantomime in which the only sufferer is the criminal himself who has been mesmerized by a false and vicious purpose?

The law courts are beginning to recognize hypnotic suggestion as an incentive to crime.

The next step will be the recognition of responsibility in the criminal for the conditions that made it possible for him to be thus influenced.

We may all become self-hypnotized. All crime and disease are the results of that condition.

In shadow pantomime the figures grow in size as they recede from the canvas. In real life we easily exaggerate the size and proportion of our fellow-men as their perspective lengthens.

We often find them shrink in size as they approach.

Until we learn to recognize the real man in ourselves and in our fellows we are subject to many illusions.

XXXIII.

INSOMNIA.

Dwell up there in the simple and noble regions of thy life. Obey thy heart and thou shalt reproduce the foreworld again.—*Emerson.*

Who of us has not suffered from sleepless nights? The subjective life in which, as Macdonald so quaintly suggests, our souls go home to their father's house to gain refreshment for the morrow, is often sacrificed to the anxieties of the objective day which chain us to our tasks.

This is not right; consequently it is not necessary. We offer many explanations: business cares, regrets for the past, anxieties regarding the future, perplexities of the present. We are oppressed with sorrow, troubled by criticism, depressed by seeming helplessness and inability to carry out our purposes. So we toss wearily through all the long hours of the night; and even dread, perhaps, the coming of the day, with its responsibilities. We feel we cannot meet the problems that will present themselves.

Let us make a diagnosis of insomnia, and prescribe a remedy. We are reluctant to admit it, but there can be but one cause: it is the thought of self,—*egotism*. This is the root of every fear

and the single cause of all unbalanced mental conditions. The first indications are self-consciousness and diffidence, which is sometimes mistaken for a virtue, and offered as evidence of a modest spirit.

When we conceive justly of ourselves, the fault of self-depreciation is as impossible as egotism. To indulge in either is to produce thought vibrations which are not the harmonies of true life.

Harmonious vibration brings us peace. It manifests serenity and confidence in every situation of the objective life, and makes it easy and delightful to pass into the tranquillity of sleep. We learn to identify ourselves with both universal energy and universal repose. We become sensible of the rhythm in which we alternate between subjective and objective, night and day, mortal and immortal. We feel no painful sense of separateness in any phase of our existence. The great life of the universe throbs in us joyously. We are never helpless nor alone.

If in any hour we feel disturbed, we know that our vibration must be changed. Here, then, is our remedy for restlessness.

We control our vibratory life through thought. Let us take up a new thought and we will find the entire system will respond to the change, and attune itself to the new keynote. The experiment is easily made. We will choose for every night a mental sleeping draught,—some word of the phi-

losophers or poets that appeals to our especial need. We will soon get into the tuneful vibrations of the thought, and find them infinitely more effective than bromides and opiates, for the simple reason that they feed the true soul life, and bring us into harmony with the greater life of which we are the individual expressions.

Requiescat in pace.

The heart of being is celestial rest.—*Edwin Arnold.*

Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.—*Peter.*

In nature every moment is new; the past is always swallowed and forgotten; the coming only is sacred. Nothing is secure but life, transition, the energizing spirit.—*Emerson.*

Think how worthless everything is after which men violently strain.—*Marcus Aurelius.*

We sit and weep in vain. The voice of the Almighty saith, "Up and onward forevermore."—*Emerson.*

In the morning when thou risest unwillingly let this thought be present: "I am rising to the work of a human being. Why, then, am I dissatisfied if I am going to do the things for which I exist and for which I was brought into the world?"—*Marcus Aurelius.*

Think not so much of what thou hast not as of

what thou hast. But of the things which thou hast select the best and then reflect how eagerly they would have been sought if thou hadst them not.—*Marcus Aurelius*.

Let it make no difference to thee whether thou art cold or warm if thou art doing thy duty; whether thou art drowsy or satisfied with sleep; and whether ill spoken of or praised, and whether dying or doing something else.—*Marcus Aurelius*.

A man who stands united with his thought conceives magnificently of himself. He is conscious of a universal success even though bought by uniform particular failures.—*Emerson*.

Nothing can work me damage except myself.—*St. Bernard*.

It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.—*Jesus*.

Fortune never helps the man whose courage fails.—*Sophocles*.

Do not disturb thyself by thinking of the whole of thy life.—*Marcus Aurelius*.

The voyage of the best ship is a zigzag line of a hundred tacks.—*Emerson*.

Great peace have they that love thy law.—*Psalms*.

Keep to the score and thou hast naught to fear.—*Ella Wheeler Wilcox*.

Trust thyself. Every heart vibrates to that iron string.—*Emerson*.

“If my bark sink, 'tis to another sea.”

I affirm that tranquillity is nothing else than the good ordering of the mind.—*Marcus Aurelius.*

And I smiled to think God's greatness
Flowed around our incompleteness,
Round our restlessness His rest.

—*Mrs. Browning.*

I see not any road of perfect peace which a man can walk but to take counsel of his own bosom.—*Emerson.*

No longer be either dissatisfied with thy present lot, or shrink from the future.—*Marcus Aurelius.*

Do that which is assigned thee and thou canst not hope too much or dare too much.—*Emerson.*

Be like the promontory against which the waves continually break.—*Marcus Aurelius.*

Think not that with the day thy work is done :
Through all the night thou'rt moving toward the sun.



It is within the province of every divine man to command with authority the waves of life with “peace, be still,” and to issue the edict also, “let there be light.”

XXXIV.

PILLOW THOUGHTS.

OR, MENTAL SLEEPING DRAUGHTS.

Prescription—To be taken nightly.

Today I have got out of all trouble ; or rather, I have cast out all trouble, for it was not outside but within, and in my opinions.—*Marcus Aurelius*.

It is well to acquaint ourselves with the laws of storms in the domain of the spirit, as well as in the material universe.

The shores of self show often the violence of the tempests that have raged in the deep seas of the mind.

Often the waves break upon these shores and vex them long after the tempest has been forgotten. This is shown in the discomfort of the body.

To relieve it we must launch our thought-boats through the surf and pass out into the open sea of universal life, where we always find still waters.

Leave the shores of self. Get away from the noise of the breakers, and pain and restlessness will cease.

When the navigator comes into rough sailing, he knows the wind has been blowing a gale in some

quarter, even though his own course has lain in smooth latitudes.

We can learn to control the storms in both our conscious and subconscious selves, and make all winds and waves obey us.

When the mariner finds himself befogged he sails from "dead reckoning." He examines his log, heaves the lead, and works his tables. He studies the depths below instead of the heavens above, with full assurance that soon the fog will lift, and he can again sight his sextant on the sun, make his observations clearly, and correct his course.

We need never really lose our reckoning, or fear the eclipse of the sun and stars of truth, though hours come to all of us when we seem to sail through banks of fog.

"No star is ever lost we once have seen ;
We always may be what we might have been."

Our lives are chiefly constructed of seeming failures and disappointments. Out of these we fashion the very best of building stones, when rightly treated.

The strongest characters spend no time in regrets, but build the cabalistic words "I am" and "I will" into the keystone of their arch, in largest recognition of the universal energy and power which is focused in themselves.

When the full daylight falls upon this work of our earthly life, we are sure to find that many of its chief corner-stones are those "rejected by the builders."

"No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

Let us examine ourselves and see if this does not explain our poverty, instead of denying the good things as sour grapes beyond our reach, like the fox in the fable.

"Whom to know aright is life everlasting." Why should we talk so continuously of our "doubts" and "fears" when we can *know*, if we allow the inner light to shine.

Light is positive and radiates. Darkness is negative and absorbs. One is powerful, the other powerless.

So with good and evil.

We underestimate the power of good.

We exaggerate the power of "evil."

Evil is the weakest thing in life. It is a mirage, a temporary appearance only, and contrary to all the tides and currents of the universe.

Good has all the forces of the Infinite behind it. Its power is incalculable. It never fails.

What unsubstantial things are clouds,—mere

mist, a thickening of the atmosphere. Yet they sometimes shut out the sun. But not long. Sunshine *always* follows the rain. Day always follows night. The twilight is always brief.

So with the perplexities of life. If we are wise, we are content with knowing that the sun *always* shines, and that, as Emerson says, "There is a soul at the centre of nature."

How clear and bright the air seems to us when we arise in the morning after a night of storm. To what distances we can see in all directions.

Just so do our spiritual atmospheres brighten as we climb out of the fogs up to our spiritual tablelands, where the air is *always* clear.

We can then look back and discern plainly the windings of the road we have traveled.

We can see the necessity of every path that seemed so blind a mystery when we set our feet in it. Looking forward, we perceive the heights toward which we journey, and which have been obscured by fogs and overhanging clouds.

In olden days the warders of the city gates would call the hours of the night, and add the comforting cry, "All is well!"

If we waken and are restless on our pillows, let us listen for the voice of our higher consciousness, a watchman that never sleeps :

“Twelve of the clock! Twelve of the clock, and all is well!”

“Three of the clock! Four of the clock! The morning cometh, and all is well, all is well!”

“’Tis always morning somewhere in the world.”

Be cheerful, also, and seek not external help nor the tranquillity which others give.—*Marcus Aurelius*.

Action and inaction are alike to the true.—*Emerson*.

The mill will never grind with the water that is past.—*Old Proverb*.

I am firm. I trust in Him who governs.—*Marcus Aurelius*.

Lead me, O Father, holding by Thy hand,
I ask not whither, for it must be on.

—*Macdonald*.

Let not future things disturb thee; for thou wilt come to them, if it be necessary, having with thee the same reason which now thou usest for present things.—*Marcus Aurelius*.

Adapt thyself to the things with which thy lot is cast.—*Marcus Aurelius*.

Take away, then, when thou choosest, thy opinion; and like a mariner who has doubled the promontory, thou wilt find calm, everything stable, and a waveless bay.—*Marcus Aurelius*.

God will not manifest himself to cowards.—*Emerson*.

Look round at the courses of the stars as if thou wert going along with them. — *Marcus Aurelius*.

I will fear no evil. — *David*.

Let the soul be assured that somewhere in the universe it should rejoin its friend, and it would be content and cheerful alone for a thousand years. — *Emerson*.

This is not a misfortune ; but to bear it nobly is good fortune. — *Marcus Aurelius*.

Consider thyself to be dead and to have completed thy life up to the present time. — *Marcus Aurelius*.

Let a man believe in God, and not in names, and places, and persons. — *Emerson*.

It is very possible to be a divine man, and to be recognized as such by no one. — *Marcus Aurelius*.

There is a guidance for each of us, and by lowly listening we shall hear the right word. — *Emerson*.

In the same degree in which a man's mind is nearer to freedom from all passion, in the same degree also is it nearer to strength. — *Marcus Aurelius*.

What I must do is all that concerns me, not what people think. — *Emerson*.

Man cannot be happy and strong until he too lives with nature above time. — *Emerson*.

And as the evening twilight fades away
The night is filled with stars — invisible by day.

— *Longfellow*.

When I fall I shall arise ; when I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me. — *Micah.*

Faith is the covenant or engagement between man's diviner part and his lesser self. — *Light on the Path.*

There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. — *David.*

In the beautiful seclusion of our homes we may listen to sweet music, and look out through our windows upon the noisy, bustling crowd in the street below.

We do not hear the tumult of the city ; we only see its movement, while those without are deaf to the melodies that delight our ears. Here are two worlds, one within the other, separated only by transparent glass, yet wholly distinct in aim and occupation, and with very different environment.

AN HONEST GRAVEYARD.

“Death does not differ at all from life.”— *Thales 640 B.C.*

IN Turkish cemeteries the stones are carved with the turban or head-dress of the deceased, to show the class or profession to which he belonged in life. In Christian cemeteries the monuments are often surmounted by the statue of an angel holding a crown or pointing to the skies. This is suggestive of a condition and a place to which the wildest flights of the imagination can seldom follow the individual interred beneath the stone. The inscription generally suggests an ideal rather than an actual character to those who really knew the departed one.

If we could find a graveyard in which every stone and monument contained an honest record of the life and death of the deceased, what curious revelations we should have! We are beginning to understand that *death in any form is suicide*; This has already been asserted by Charcot. We may truly claim that no one dies except as the result of his own thoughts and deeds; that death is a consequence, of which the cause has been always within the individual and subject to his own thought life.

We are perfectly aware that, to many, such a proposition sounds absurd. It is as incredible as the theories of Copernicus and Galileo to the century in which they lived, and for precisely the same reason,— that it tends to revolutionize the theology and science that have been so long believed.

But every fresh experience in either physical or mental science tends to confirm the theory of unlimited human responsibility by disclosing the power which man wields.

With this thought in mind let us enter the honest graveyard where we have imagined truthful records carved upon the stones.

Here we find that many men and women killed themselves with worry; fretted themselves to death by their antagonism to the conditions in which they lived and for which they found no remedy. They were slain by the fears which they had nursed in their own breasts. The doctors called their trouble "nervous prostration" or "pneumonia."

Here are others that poisoned themselves by temper, which they never learned to govern. They lived in pride of their "strong wills." They were determined "never to be imposed upon."

These had never learned that the only real sovereignty is that that comes from the mastery of self and the service of others. They resented every circumstance and person that came into their lives that they could not control. Their anger and im-

patience brought them down at last with what was really a blood poisoning, though probably their death certificates named it "heart failure," "erysipelas," "apoplexy."

Here are many records of death from sensuality, yet they were very "nice" and "spiritual" people often, whose friends said they were victims to "consumption," or "cancer," without suspecting the real character of the consuming or cancerous thought of which they died.

Egotism is written over most of the graves. In the extreme cases it was diagnosed as "insanity," or "melancholia."

Disappointment, mortification, grief are the inscriptions upon many monuments. They can be truly changed to atheism, distrust of good, fear of loss of position and influence, extreme selfishness. Yet many of these sufferers were loudly praised for their ambitions, their achievements, their "success," their affection, and their steadfastness to old beliefs.

Here are some who died with paralysis, others of congestions, without a suspicion of the mental paralysis which preceded the physical, or the obstructed circulation which resisted every new thought and clung obstinately to its old prejudices and errors.

Here are the remains of people who were blind, and deaf, and crippled. But the causes were really in their spiritual conditions.

Here are others killed by "accident." What but their own vibrations made it possible? Babes there are innumerable. But who knows the long journey they have traveled before they reached this point, or the accumulated causes, of which mortal friends caught only a brief glimpse in the earthly consequences?

Truly such a cemetery as this we have pictured would be a veritable school of suggestion. It would be a spiritual dissecting-room with valuable lessons in causes and consequences.

We can no longer fear Death as a mysterious and invulnerable enemy, when we have torn off his muffled wrappings and revealed — ourselves.

A world in the hand is worth two in the bush. Let us have to do with real men and women and not with skipping ghosts.— *Emerson.*



Every selfish thought and purpose tends to blind the spiritual perceptions and paralyze the spiritual powers.

Egotism is a slow paralysis or a creeping palsy. Its extreme development is often in insanity and softening of the brain.

XXXVI.

SUICIDE: IS IT WORTH WHILE?*

I am Knowledge Absolute, Thought Absolute, Bliss Absolute; I am IT, I am IT.—*From the Vedas.*

THERE is a marked increase in the tendency to suicide. This tendency develops oftenest among men. They furnish more than two-thirds of the subjects, and are generally men of intelligence and in responsible positions.

There is but one motive that can drive a man to suicide: *it is fear.* This incentive manifests itself in many different forms. It is generally a fear of the consequences of a man's own acts,—loss of reputation, property, health, or happiness. It is an act of supreme selfishness in any case. Suicide is evasion. It is not necessary to offer insanity as an excuse. If it were, we must admit that insanity itself is but the result of egotism. It proceeds from a morbid condition of mind, a danger to which we are all subject when our thoughts dwell too persistently upon ourselves, when we look in instead of out,—the danger of inverted thought.

This can arise only from a misconception of life. The remedy lies in a fresh statement. We have lived too much in the marshlands and among the fogs. We have lingered too long in the cemeteries

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of dead faiths. We have been led astray by the fireflies and *ignes fatui* of false ambitions.

Every individual is a complete judicial system, an autonomy within himself. He is his own law-maker, prosecutor, judge, and jury. We are our own jailers. We apply our own thumbscrews. We stretch ourselves upon the racks, and handle the levers. It is not "fate," nor "Providence," nor "circumstances" from which we suffer. There is no despot but *self*. Every act of a man's life is sooner or later passed upon by his own conscience. All expiations will be assessed and painfully worked out by and for himself with perfect equity. He governs in his own system myriads of cell life, microbes and elementals, each endowed with an intelligence of its own, but subject to his rule. This is the true field for the discipline of his powers before he seeks dominion over others. In his own kingdom he must learn to reign supreme. His *purified will* must be accepted as law by the subjects of his personal realm, his own body and own mind.

Life is flexible and is shaped by our thoughts. Man is at the same time a pupil and an architect. Let him accept the proposition that all things work together for good, and he will find abundant confirmation of it in his daily experience. When we humor our weaknesses they force themselves continually upon our attention, like spoiled chil-

dren. When we assert our mastery of ourselves and compel its recognition, we stand secure in our sovereign rights.

The supreme folly of the suicide is in the delusion that by breaking the slate he can solve his problem or escape it. He may for a time attempt the rôle of truant from life's school, but, like the schoolboy, he only delays his task and complicates it. Sometime, somewhere (and doubtless sooner and nearer than he thinks), these problems of today *must be worked out*. There is no reason whatever to suppose that any lesson of life can be really evaded. Dame Nature is an honest and expert accountant. Her debits and credits are kept with unerring accuracy. She herself meets every obligation promptly, and in her turn exacts the same of us, and will not be cheated of her dues. How can we be so stupid as not to see that this planetary schoolroom is very beautiful indeed, and contains every appliance helpful to our education? What apparatus is lacking, and where could we find more delightful and entertaining classmates? How unreasonable to whine continually about a distant heaven, like a homesick schoolboy crying for his holiday! Why not improve the golden opportunity of the class-room, and the buoyant life of the playground with the keen zest of a wholesome, healthy nature?

“The world is so full of a number of things,
I am sure we ought all to be happy as kings.”

To the mature and well-balanced mind every moment of existence is the best, every present plan and circumstance is the one most favorable to its purpose. It looks neither forward nor backward, knows no longings or regrets, experiences neither elation nor depression. It simply *lives*, and life is gladness, strength, and peace.

Life is often called a voyage. Yet on a voyage one would scarcely fling himself overboard because of a foggy day. It has been truly said that “he is a bad sailor who thinks there is no land because he sees nothing but ocean.” A good sailor is indifferent to weather. He is as confident in storm as in calm, for is he not equipped with nautical education, experience, and instruments adapted to all the emergencies of the voyage? If the heavens are clouded above, he sails by sounding the depths below. He has learned the science of “dead reckoning,” and he knows no fear. He remembers that

“That night is long that never finds the day.”

We often speak of life as a hard taskmaster and as something we should be glad to have done with. We call it an illusion and a dream. But we are beginning to learn (and every discovery of science emphasizes the fact) that death is the only “illusion,” and that life in ever varying form goes

on forever. We *cannot* put it away from us. No man can be really burned, drowned, frozen, or buried. He may change his garment, but *he must live on*. Through all experiences he comes unscathed, untouched, and *conscious still*.

Doubtless among the greatest surprises that await us in the future is the realization, with a clearer vision than we possess today, that life is infinitely kind and tender, and wonderfully wise in its adaptation of our experience to our necessities. We shall yet admit that it has been a skillful surgeon, performing the necessary operation as gently as we would permit, and alleviating to the utmost the pains of the sufferer. Life itself inflicts no pain upon us. All suffering comes from within. It proceeds from the inharmonious conditions of our own souls. No pang can endure beyond the moment when we have restored harmonious vibration to the mind,—have adjusted our own relations to people and events. The necessary and infallible result of mental harmony is health of body, opulence of environment, and love of friends.

Love is the keynote of life. Its harmonies are sublime. It is a magnet of irresistible power which draws to us all things desirable.

Destiny there surely is, but it is a consequence of an inner cause. It is not the arbitrary government of another intelligence.

When one is lost in the forest, and the night

comes on, it is wise to "camp down" and wait for morning. The old huntsman makes himself comfortable by the bivouac fire and lies down cheerfully, knowing well that if he were to keep in motion he might only travel in a circle and exhaust himself in vain. - Is not this a wise suggestion for all hours of uncertainty in relation to the affairs of life? We must not be "driven." When we cannot act we must learn the science of waiting, and of waiting cheerfully and confidently, beside our bivouac fires. We need not wait in the darkness. A few dry boughs, a flint and steel, will bring us warmth and light, and daybreak is never far away. A little further on, when the planet has traveled a bit further in its revolution toward the sun, how differently will appear the problems of the night. A little distance only is necessary to evolve harmony from any discord. Nature skillfully readjusts and blends all the vibrations of life in her atmospheres, transforming all to rhythmic chords. Even the deafening noises of the boiler shop, with its hundreds of busy hammers, are turned into a symphony to the listener just across the field.

If we were to dwell long upon the fact that we live in our mortal bodies under a constant atmospheric pressure of fifteen pounds to the square inch we should feel crushed and suffocated. Why do we not suffer? Because the resisting power of

the atmosphere within is always equal to the pressure from without. We are permeated and upheld by the same force that surrounds and overhangs us. So in our life of daily responsibility. When we consider only the care that comes from without we feel under constant and violent pressure. When we remember that we live *in* good we know that the universal force can never fail us. It works constantly in and through us as tireless energy. The human life is as real and important a thing in its orbit as the planetary life of which it is a part. In a sense we ourselves do not breathe. The universal life breathes through us. We do not carry the world on our shoulders. It is the pressure within and without that maintains our centre of gravity and makes life possible and pleasurable.

God, Love, and Life are synonyms. Each comprehends the other, and is a complete term for the Infinite Energy. We are each a part of the life-blood of the universal system. We are a part of its sensoria and ganglia.

In the great ocean of life we do not need any artificial life-preservers. The depth is so great it has incalculable buoyancy. We cannot sink. We need not struggle. Every man is by nature a swimmer. Fear often delays the discovery for years. Many a man goes down in sight of shore because he does not know how to throw himself on his back and wait quietly for the relief just at hand.

Any day of life, any moment of time, may be made the starting-point of success. Let us "rejoice as a strong man to run a race."

And should the twilight darken into night,
 And sorrow grow to anguish,
 Be thou strong,— thou art in God,
 And nothing can go wrong which a fresh life-pulse
 Cannot set aright;
 That thou dost know the darkness proves the light.

The winds and clouds are the transitory and unsubstantial phases of nature. Back of them are the great enveloping atmospheres of earth and the fixed orb of the sun.

In spiritual correspondence if we regard the opinions of men and the apparent obstructions of the passing hour instead of the realities of truth, we must always fail of progress. We will be forever living in the externals or environments, forgetting the great unseen forces which govern all the movement of life.

Truth is the searchlight which illuminates the road we have passed over and the way that lies before us. We can flash it upon every part of the horizon. We need not stumble in the darkness, nor wander uncertainly and aimlessly, as in the days when we depended on a tallow dip that scarcely showed us where to set our feet.

We may move on confidently. We will not miss the road.

XXXVII.

PRESENT IMMORTALITY.

We grizzle every day. I see no need of it. Whilst we converse with what is above us we do not grow old but young.—*Emerson.*

Every man is a divinity in disguise: A god playing the fool.—*Emerson.*

THE greatest discovery of the nineteenth century is man's discovery of himself, the recognition of the fact that he possesses all the powers which he has ascribed to God; that they are natural and latent, awaiting his development and not the supernatural acquirement of a future state.

We no longer speak of being "imprisoned in the body," because we know that the less cannot contain the greater, and that we are no more in the body than in any other tool that we have made and use for our own purposes.

We do not repeat in our confessions of faith as formerly, "It is he that has made us and not we ourselves," because we have learned that the exact reverse of this is true.

We drop the old phrase, "Life is too short," when once convinced that it is within our power to lengthen it at will.

We do not recognize our traditional limitations.

It has instead become an axiom that any purpose man is capable of forming he is capable of carrying to fulfillment.

We have begun to study as a science the new dogma of *present immortality*.

We do not now hang our harps on willow trees, even figuratively. We have taken them down and begun to tune them to the symphonies of nature instead of Hebrew lamentations.

We are not "exiles" weeping when we remember Zion, and praying for release from "captivity."

We have emancipated ourselves and find good reason to believe that we are quite at home in the planet earth and have nothing to gain by leaving it. We do not sigh for liberty since we have learned that we possess it. We do not talk of poverty since we have come to know that we are preferred stockholders in a universe of good with cumulative dividends subject to sight draft.

These dividends are real and can be cashed and materialized at pleasure.

The beautiful discoveries that have come through spiritualism have given us the actual experience of multitudes who have passed through death, enabling us to know for the first time the real character of what we have always called the "life beyond."

This knowledge has revolutionized our former thought. It has shown us the operation of the law of cause and consequence. It has proved that "*What-*

soever a man soweth that shall he also reap." It has made it plain that we live in a universe governed throughout by perfect laws that work with entire equity and marvelous accuracy in all places and conditions. It has shown life to be progressive, and confirmed the theory of evolution. It has identified the life of spirit with the life of mortal, the hereafter with the here, and taught us to study existence as a problem of the now. Perhaps the most important result of all is to destroy the sophistry of living for the future by showing that death itself leaves us unchanged, that it adds nothing to us and takes nothing away. It only brings us to a larger consciousness of life.

This consciousness may be developed now, with all the knowledge and power we have associated with the "spirit spheres."

We need not wait for supernatural opportunities or gifts.

We know that the only crown we will ever receive is the crown of character, and that it is ours as soon as we choose to wear it.

Happiness will not come by dying. We arise from death as we arise from sleep,— to face our own old selves. The problem ever remains the same. If we idle away our days we will find our "treasures in heaven" do not keep us from the sufferings of poverty in that ideal sphere, and that the problem still confronts us after death,— how to work out our sal-

vation. We have not escaped it as we idly fancied. It was only postponed. The task becomes more difficult, as is always the case with a neglected duty.

As intelligent beings we can no longer speak of what awaits us in the spirit life with the old doubts and questionings. It has to a great extent ceased to be a speculation, as much so as the character of any country with which we are made familiar through the reports of travelers. It is the mark of a narrow mind today to be uninformed in the philosophy and facts that spiritualism has revealed so clearly. No person claiming to be intelligent can fairly plead such ignorance.

We need all the light of the new day that has dawned. We have been living in the revelations of a remote past and among the tombs of old "beliefs."

Immortality in the flesh is only learning to keep on our feet a little longer or lie down at will, instead of being tumbled over through not knowing how to adjust ourselves to the law of gravitation, to keep the line of direction within the base.

The race is still in its infancy and creeping when it ought to walk.

The folly is in saying we were not intended to walk.

The world is already flooded with the light of the resurrection morning.

The stone is rolled away at last from the mouth of the sepulchre. Let us awake and arise. The last enemy has been overcome. It remains only to enjoy the fruits of the great victory.

God screens us evermore from premature ideas. Our eyes are holden that we cannot see things that stare us in the face until the hour arrives that the mind is ripened. Then we behold them, and the time that we saw them not is like a dream.—*Emerson.*

XXXVIII.

THE DASH FOR LIBERTY.

WE have discovered that disease is the result of misdirected thought, an inverted current turned upon ourselves with a force of which we have but little comprehension.

The remedy lies in realization of the universal life and our personal relation to it. We must change our mental polarity, demagnetize our thought.

We too often call ourselves and one another "prisoners of poverty," "creatures of circumstances," "victims" of "injustice" or "disease."

All our prisons are mental. Truth gives us the pass-key to all doors, the control of all environment, deliverance from all injustice and disease.

Freedom comes only through full recognition and admission of truth.

"Who would be free, himself must strike the blow."

When a prisoner has dug through the wall of his cell, it remains for him to "make a break" for liberty. If his courage fails him at this point, all the months of weary toil removing stone and mortar count for nothing. It has only been in preparation

for this hour. High walls are yet to be scaled. Guards with loaded guns must be evaded or encountered.

These are literally trying "circumstances" to be overcome.

What will the man give for his freedom *now*?

This is precisely the point to which comes every follower of the Science of Mind. He has spent months in breaking through his mental prison walls. His jailers are named Prejudice, Disease, or Poverty. They are embodied in his personal conditions,—the "circumstances" of his life,—which he likes to think offer peculiar difficulties in his case.

Will he have the courage now to make the dash for liberty? He has been creeping slowly toward the light. The hour has come for a supreme test of his newly adopted principles.

Will he throw off his last fear, forget the past, risk all, and leap boldly forward to *complete emancipation*?

XXXIX.

STRONG SWIMMERS.

“Diving and finding no pearls in the sea,
Blame not the ocean, the fault is in thee.”

Truth is our element of life. — *Emerson.*

WHEN we are ready to learn to swim we go into deep water, where we cannot touch the bottom and are “beyond our depth.” We lie over gently and strike out, with confidence in the buoyancy of the sea and our power to keep afloat and direct our movements.

From that hour “wading” has lost its charms. We no longer care to hold each other’s hands and jump up and down — making believe we are enjoying an ocean bath while choking with brine and nervous with the roar of the surf. We have found out that the quiet waters lie *beyond the breakers*, and that the greater the depth the easier for the swimmer.

We have become indifferent to the sight of shore or touch of bottom.

The strong swimmer is fearless. If he is wearied, he will float. He can diversify his stroke, swim on his back, tread water, dive, do anything but sink.

And what a glorious life electrifies him! What

a sense of power over the new element, gained simply through his fearlessness! His movements are all natural and free.

Many of us venture into spiritual thought with something of the same anxiety we feel in taking our first surf bath. We hold to one another's hands and shout as the waves roll in.

We wet our feet and wade in shallow water. Perhaps we get into a bathing machine, and are pushed out among the wavelets by a "course of lessons," or possibly we even venture with the corks. But what do we know of the glorious ardor of the confident swimmer in the deep seas beyond the breakers, with only the great, buoyant waters underneath, the beautiful blue sky with fleecy clouds above us, and the sea gulls circling about.

Would we exchange the exhilaration of such an hour of strong and gladsome solitude for the companionship of the throngs of promenaders on the beach or the bathers in the pools?

We are only wading yet in the new thought, and many are simply shivering on the sands. The hidden treasures of the deep are but faintly suggested by the fragments strewn along the shore.

We are slowly awakening to the realization of our power, and of the infinite depth and riches of that which is our native element, in which we have our being. Let us cast fear to the winds, and know ourselves as buoyant swimmers. We have

no need to sight the shore or touch the bottom of the Sea of Truth.

“In thy *presence* is fulness of joy.” This should give us the keynote of existence. We expect the joy as the result of what we call “success.” We think we can be happy when our purpose is accomplished.

Let us reverse our methods, and expect the “success” as the result of the joyful mind in which we live.

Let us look for the fulfillment of our purpose because of the happiness in which we work. A joyful spirit radiates a clear atmosphere, in which we can see afar; an anxious mind befogs us.

There can never be an honest excuse for worry, though no one ever lacks occasion for it. There are no conditions of life possible where we need be joyless after we have learned life’s meaning, and opened our eyes to the presence of the everlasting good in which we live.

Life then becomes a continual feast. Until then we are paupers, even though our poverty is hidden by what the world calls “wealth.”

The "rich" have many sorrows. No poverty of any sort can spring from spiritual life. It is *fulness of joy*.



There is somewhat low even in Hope. — *Emerson*.

Hope is certainly to be preferred to despair. But at the best it is only a mental bromide which tends to quiet our anxieties, aroused by fear.

It is a makeshift, after all, and could find no *raison d'être* except for our timidity. It is not a food essence, though it may act as a temporary stimulant. The normal constitution never requires stimulants or desires opiates. A healthy mind feels itself abundantly able to control and sustain the body without artificial aids.

Why, then, should we cultivate hope when a simple understanding of life endows us with the knowledge that no ill can befall us? When we get close to the heart of nature we gain the confidence of assurance. We know that the universal forces are unlimited, and furthermore, that we can draw on them at will. This leaves no standing ground for any fear, and consequently no use for hope, its antidote.

We are not saved by hope. We are saved by knowledge, which comes to us always from within ourselves.

It is a common error of belief of the novitiate in Mental Science that it is necessary for him to watch his thoughts and "treat himself," in order to maintain his equipoise in righteous living.

The habit of mental dosing is quite as pernicious as that of the pills and powders of the past. It draws the thought to self, when the very essence of all healing is to demagnetize such thought, and lead it to merge itself in the Universal Life with absolute repose and confidence. Our health is found in the thought of the unity of the Supreme Being, with the infinite diversities of its expression. This is harmony.

The sailor on the masthead feels no dizziness when he looks off into the blue above him. If he looks down upon the tossing deck of his little craft he often "loses his head" and falls. We must learn to enlarge our horizon; to look aloft; to take in the grand sweep of the arc, of which we find ourselves a part; to enlarge our definitions of "today" to include an infinite past with an infinite future; to dwell upon the buoyancy of the shoreless ocean, in which we are afloat, and of the boundless ether, in which we are learning to use our wings.

XL.

POVERTY AS A DISEASE.

Wisdom is better than rubies. — *Solomon.*

Truth alone makes rich and great. — *Emerson.*

ONE of the most subtle fallacies of the day is the common belief that wealth is power. Wealth is not power; it is only an evidence of power. The ruby is a precious stone, but the wisdom that discovers and extracts it from its native rock is of incomparably greater value. The same wisdom can discover and produce other precious gems. The producer is always greater than the thing produced. Truth is the great producer, and is the first cause of all riches and greatness.

For many centuries King Solomon has stood as the type of wealth and wisdom. It is related of him that he was offered the choice of supreme good in any form he might desire. He simply asked for wisdom. In consequence of that possession, but not as a reward of merit, as has so long been taught, his wealth and power became truly fabulous. For centuries, also, we have read the teaching of the Nazarene: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." And again, in the words of the great apostle: "Godliness is profitable unto

all things, having promise of the *life that now is*, and of that which is to come." Yet we have continued to associate disease and poverty with godliness. We have ascribed them to the mysteries of a "Divine Providence," and even professed to believe them necessary to the evolution of righteousness.

We are only just beginning to open our eyes to the fact that poverty and disease spring from the same cause, and are subject to the same remedy. We are beginning to admit that both cause and remedy are within the individual himself, and proceed from a condition of mind. We have satisfied and excused ourselves with theories of "heredity" and "environment," and "circumstances" have often served as a scapegoat.

It is, perhaps, a bold and radical position to declare that poverty and disease are crimes, for which the sufferer is alone responsible; yet it is true that they are crimes,—of ignorance. We do not find the average mind willing to accept any imputed increase of responsibility, after a habit of dismissing it with the thought of "Providence," "fate," "destiny," or "accident." We have discovered in the study of the science of mind that the only real healing can be developed from the foundation of a teaching of personal responsibility, resulting from the absolute freedom of the individual. Man is free; hence he is responsible. Man is responsible;

hence he must be free. In a logical philosophy of life, we cannot admit either proposition without the other. If man is free, then he must always have been free; else the responsibility would be lessened by every moment of bondage in the past which must to some degree have weakened him.

Mental Science claims that every disease is but thought externalized. It produces health by correcting the thought. Experience has certainly justified the theory. In the same way, it follows that a diseased or uncomfortable environment must also be mind externalized, and can be remedied only from within. This is contrary to the popular thought and method, which always attack externals and exhaust themselves in frantic endeavors to win fortune by grappling with material conditions. What are the results of such efforts? The large majority of men fail altogether, and disastrously. A few accumulate the fortune, but without the satisfaction that had been expected to accompany it. It is not actually possessed by its reputed owner, but rather possesses him. It proves to be a fickle master. "Fickle fortune" is the significant title of worldly riches. "Misfortune," perhaps, would as well define them, judging them by their fruits; for they are painfully gained, frequently at the sacrifice of health, honor, and affection, and retained through anxiety, or easily lost.

When we study nature we find ourselves im-

pressed with a great power, not with a great effort. Nature accomplishes her aims easily; her processes are agreeable. Their results are always found in the evolution of better things and higher types. Nature shows a marvelous prodigality in all directions, and a fertility of resource which to our narrow minds seems incomprehensible. Opulence is her crown and sceptre. She does not struggle to obtain or to hold it. It is her possession by divine right. It is not a gift, nor a reward, nor a wage. It is the keynote of her divine harmonies.

Why, then, are we, in our humanity, so sadly out of tune? Is it not because we have not studied harmony? We have not learned the score. We have been cramped and mean in thought. We have been cowardly and selfish in spirit and action. We have reversed the teaching of the truth, and sought first the things we wished "added unto" us, promising ourselves that afterward we would "seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness." We have foolishly imagined that the "things" applied to this life and the "righteousness" to another. We have failed to comprehend the statement as a scientific law, and have dismissed it as a "moral" law, with which, perhaps, we were little concerned. We have postponed heaven as a factor of what we called eternity, and failed to realize that time and eternity are really one. In our silly definitions of life, we have overlooked life's unity.

Now, however, we are beginning to study the alphabet aright. We find that when we get into words of one syllable, past and present are merged into the "now;" that cause and result are in ourselves, and that reward and punishment are only synonyms for consequences. Loss and gain are impossible to those who possess all things in truth. Finally we discover that environment and fortune are simply indications of our state of mind. These can be changed by setting up for ourselves new standards, and making fresh statements of the principles of life. Discord cannot result from the right interpretation of the notes of a master in harmony. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit. Disease and poverty are not expressions of an enlightened mind. We cannot associate either with an infinite goodness, nor conceive of a supreme power without opulence. The attempt to do this is the source of all scepticism and atheism. The nobility of the human mind revolts at so unworthy a conception of Deity.

Can we wonder at the failure of ecclesiasticism, after a struggle of eighteen centuries based upon a sterile and ascetic philosophy, with its grotesque idea of supreme good? The growing light of the present day exposes the veneering of religious systems which easily satisfied the twilight of the Dark Ages. We insist upon a larger interpretation of life. We are content no longer to creep through

our earthly paradise like worms, or to crawl upon all-fours. We are not willing to prostrate ourselves before the idols of churchly superstition, and to debase ourselves before persons and places claiming to be holy. At last we have found our feet. We stand upright, with eyes uplifted to the sun and stars, ears attuned to the symphonies of the gods, and every sense open to the glories of the here and now. We recognize in ourselves the likeness of Divinity, — the God of health, freedom, and opulence. In wisdom we find independence and truth, — the royal road to health and power, — and know that comfort and success in life depend on spiritual perception.

“Ye are not bound; the soul of things is sweet;
 The heart of Being is celestial rest.
 Stronger than woe is will; that which is good
 Doth pass to better — best.”

To prepare ourselves for the best conditions for attracting opulence, we must first be rid of the eagerness of desire. A feverish mind is not a good magnet. The point of equilibrium is the beginning of success, for it is at that point we realize that material wealth is not in itself an element of happiness. Unhappiness comes always from a failure to discern the right relations of things. To the infantile mind it might appear that the object of kindergarten life was found in the accumulation of bright-colored toys; but later the toys stand as

tools for teaching principles. To the undeveloped adult "riches" are often like the colored toys of the kindergarten,—mistaken as the aim of life, rather than understood as its tools and illustrations.

Unhappiness is of the mind, and is governed from within. When this lesson has been learned, we have reached a point of independence never known before. We have been demagnetized of the greed of gold. We are ready to find it but a simple instrument, and only one of many. We are confident that it has no influence upon ourselves. It cannot deflect us from the line of principle. We are polarized to truth. Wealth is now our servant, not our master; and what we draw to ourselves we cannot lose. We have learned that hope and fear are of the emotional, not the spiritual, plane. They cannot exist where spiritual growth has reached the plane of knowledge.

True knowledge is not subject to emotional vibrations, with their alternations of elation and depression. Every one of us, as Emerson says, is "dear to the heart of Being." Every one of us is God's chosen, and none of us is ever forgotten or overlooked. We are never denied anything we really crave. The power to wish and the power to execute are one and the same. All things are ours as soon as we recognize and appropriate from the universal life. This is done without cost or deprivation to our neighbor.

We need not beg or supplicate when we live in the midst of plenty. What are millions of money when we remember the teeming fecundity of life, and realize that as yet we have not begun to mine for the precious metals, but have only scratched the surface of one of the smallest planets of the system?

Those who pride themselves upon superiority in wealth or position have no better basis for their claims than the pebbles on the beach, which might be supposed to plume themselves on being better than their neighbors because of their larger size. Yet they will not endure longer, nor even take a higher polish, as the waves roll them around together. And how microscopically small do they appear when measured by the towering cliffs above them, of which they are only tiny fragments! Truly, to such pride we may say that "all is vanity."

We have no riches except in ourselves, no power except as we develop self-government. All else is illusion, like the tinsel of the stage. Every desire is its own prediction of fulfillment. Even those things that are hurtful are not kept beyond our reach. As Lowell wittily says: "It must be that the framework of the universe is fireproof, or the Almighty would not have left so many Lucifer matches lying around loose." "God" and "gold"

are differentiated by one letter only, but the addition of that one letter shuts out God. We do not need the gold to make God possible. Yet "God," and "gold," and "good" are all closely allied, as expressions of one universal principle.

The remedy for suffering from either disease or poverty is to enter into the sweep of the great tides of life in their irresistible flow, knowing that their movement is one of perfect harmony. In their larger currents, all thought or care for the personal self and its illusions is carried away. Peace flows in wherever these tides govern. There can no longer be any thought of loss or gain, for the soul knows that all is well, and that life is simply Being. Its environment is not a real factor in its problems. Time and place are results, not causes; they are but tide-marks, having nothing whatever to do with the flowing of the waters.

Until a man has become wholly independent and careless of his environments, he has not learned to live. When he has reached that point of development, he finds that it is the point at which he absolutely controls and directs his own surroundings as the result of his spiritual progress. "He that findeth his life shall *loose* it." "He that *looseth* his life . . . shall find it." We first love it and lose it in the fashion of mortals, and thus we learn to "loose," or to let go of it, for truth's sake; thereby entering into newness of life, which can

never be taken away from us. Adjustment of ourselves is the secret of happiness and opulence, not the adjustment of circumstances. The second is the result of the first ; together they are cause and consequence.

Every man is his own destiny. No happiness is secure as long as it depends to the slightest degree upon anything or any person outside of ourselves. It is well worth the price, if we lose all we think we have possessed, and are thus awakened to the fact so often stated, that "the kingdom of God is within," while we have been always expecting it from without. There is no real possession possible until after we have attained self-possession. When this has been accomplished, we will know that we cannot fail to win or to hold anything belonging to us, and life will manifest affluence.

" The stars come nightly to the sky,
The tidal wave unto the sea ;
Nor time, nor space, nor deep, nor high,
Can keep my own away from me."

As Emerson declares, in his essay on "Spiritual Laws :"

"What a man does, that he has. What has he to do with hope or fear? In himself is his might. Let him regard no good as solid but that which is in his nature, and which must grow out of him as long as he exists. The goods of fortune may come and go like summer leaves. Let him play with them and scatter them on every wind as the momentary signs of his infinite productiveness."

“Circumstances” is a good word when rightly applied.

We are neither the creature nor the slave of circumstances, though we have been taught to think so.

Circumstances have their rise within us, — *always*.

They are reactionary conditions which hold us to our orbits till we have consciously become their master by the recognition of our own divine intelligence and power.

XLI.

OPULENCE THROUGH GROWTH.

Henceforth I ask not good fortune. I myself am good fortune.— *Walt Whitman.*

Undeniably it is the inner life which is master of the outer, just as a man's brain guides the movements of his lips.— *Light on the Path.*

No two men are exactly alike ; the same is true of their works.

From the foundry to the machine shop no two parts can be produced that are really duplicates in every minute point. In consequence, every steam engine has its own particular conditions under which it can attain its greatest power.

The engineer must have an intimate personal acquaintance with his machine to learn to "speed it," to the best advantage.

Every individual has his own particular vibration, or "rate of speed," which enters into his every act and determines the method in all his works. Hence the necessity of absolute freedom to obtain the best results.

We should not wish to compel others to the acceptance of our thoughts or methods. Each instinctively finds his rate of speed, or keynote. The process is often an unconscious one.

A bigot is one who insists that his own opinions shall be accepted as the standard of truth. It is very easy to imagine that we are wiser than our neighbors.

Let us enlarge our world by expanding ourselves.

The alphabet has only twenty-six letters, yet we find them sufficient to spell over three hundred thousand words and express an infinite range of thought.

Between the ignorant peasant to whom three or four hundred words are a sufficient vocabulary for his simple wants, and the mature scholar who draws upon an unabridged dictionary and daily coins new words for his especial use, the difference is only one of unfoldment; we call it "education." The alphabet is sufficient for both, but their requirements of language are in proportion to their experience of life.

All mankind has endless opportunity. Our limitations are always those we make ourselves. Life itself has no bounds, no walls, no doors. It can maintain no secrets or monopolies.

We may dismiss our fear of "trusts" and "syndicates." The peasant does not cry out against the scholar because of his larger thought and speech.

The scholar is the master and compiler of a dictionary. He wields a power of language far beyond the small attainments of the ignorant mind, but he is no monopolist of educational advantages, no more

than of the air and water. He should not be an object of suspicion and dislike because of his greater knowledge.

Life is perfect freedom, perfect equity. All our suffering and deprivation come from our interior conditions. When we have accepted this great truth we will treat causes, and not symptoms, in our political and social economics.

We call ourselves "practical" while leaving out of the statement of our problems the great factors of God, of man as his image, and of the countless spiritual intelligences whom we draw to us from the unseen through the law of sympathetic vibration. All these influences are interested in the accomplishment of our highest good.

What have we to do with "hard times" when we realize that we have no obstructions, no delays, and no antagonists,—that all things help us on our road?

•We make our own postponements needlessly. Nothing can hold our ships down when the tides come in. The tides are subject to our command. They are not governed by public or private "conditions." They are created by the mind and are only the manifestations of its moods.

"Let a man, then, know his worth and keep things under his feet."

It is the crookedness of our ways that makes life so difficult.

We are out of harmony with the divine Self. We evade and flinch from the truth for the want of confidence in the Eternal. We think our little managing ways are necessary to what we call "success" in "this world" and under "existing conditions of society." We do not feel the ground firm under us, because we do not trust in *Principle*. If in our physical walking we should pick and mince our steps thus painfully we would soon lose the use of our feet. Spiritual paralysis is just as sure to follow this cowardly anxiety in the affairs of life. "Neither be ye of doubtful mind" contains a whole volume of practical scientific philosophy.

Riches and poverty are not arbitrary factors of experience, as popularly supposed. Like heaven and hell they are states of mind which may externalize themselves upon any and all planes.

Fortune often presents herself in mask and domino. She tries her candidates unknown to them. Before she dispenses her bounties she wants to ascertain their fitness to be intrusted with her treasures. Perhaps we fail oftener in such examination than we know. But we cannot really miss our work or opportunity.

When *we* are truly ready the hour strikes, the scales fall from our eyes, we find ourselves before the festal board. Our seat is prepared and waiting for us. Meanwhile let us be employed in helping to feed others, and forget that we are hungry.

We will not belittle ourselves by asking the invitation we would so much enjoy. We will not go up the back stairs to Fortune's dwelling. When we enter her mansion it must be with head erect, because we have been sought as worthy guests. We will not beg a place at the feast.

The longings for fame, for wealth or knowledge in themselves are equally morbid and selfish.

When these things come to us as solid realities and not as shadows, it is because they are the legitimate fruits of a true life. Then only do we possess the peace which they can neither give nor take away. They do not come within the realm of causation.

We have no reason to be afraid of wealth.

We do not limit the air we breathe, or measure the food we eat. We are not afraid of too much health. Why should we limit ourselves in opulence? We want all we can use to the advantage of ourselves and others.

Our capacity of unfoldment is unlimited. The possibilities of wealth have not been conceived. When we begin to learn their true significance and uses upon the lines of spiritual mathematics, it changes all our former propositions in political economy.

We are beginning to construct our theories of life anew. We are engaged in larger problems. We do not need to throw away any of the factors, but only to change their relation to each other, and to ourselves.

There is a great difference between growing an orchard and robbing one.

We must grow into realization of opulence, and not seek it through robbing others, even by the approved and conventional methods of dishonesty.

No leaf upon the tree excludes another from the light and air. The winds minister to all alike.

True opulence is always the result of the growth of the soul. It is a real and lasting possession, and includes far more than we have ever yet imagined in our largest dreams.

We treat God as if He were cashier of a penny savings bank with very small deposits to our credit, which we have accumulated at infinite pains and must be very careful in expending. The petty drafts we make are too absurd for reasonable men and women who are continually prattling of the Infinite.

XLII.

TELEPATHY — THE CIRCULATION OF MIND. *

THE study of telepathy is a study of the tides and currents of mental forces. A knowledge of the laws that govern them would doubtless explain all psychic phenomena. This appears to be the pass-key with which we could unlock the mysteries of hypnotism and all forms of mental healing, could understand communication between the seen and the unseen, and explain the mysterious influences through which human minds dominate each other in the complex relations of life.

May we not fairly claim that the discovery of the *circulation of mind* is the greatest discovery of the nineteenth century, as that of the circulation of the blood was perhaps the greatest of the seventeenth? We are beginning to understand that not only are all men of one blood, but that all are of *one mind*,—not only that all are of one origin, but also of one destiny. The solidarity of the race is one of the great lessons of the day. Every human being is a *nerve centre* of humanity, a ganglion of the universal body, and sensitive to all the vibrations of the human system.

Is not, then, the study of telepathy the study of

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those subtle forces which telegraph sensation in the individual body between the brain, the organs, and the muscular system? Is it not simply an extended study of nerve force,—communication between the *human sensoria* in the larger body? Will not a discovery in one field be found to be a discovery in the other, completing the analysis of the nervous system of the universe?

Science as yet has made us acquainted only with methods, and in all fields of discovery has failed to interpret causes.

We begin our march of progress with coarse tools, but after the work of the sappers and miners has been done, after the spade has turned up the earth and the axe has cut down the forest, after the geologist's hammer has broken the rock and the miner's pick has uncovered the vein, we complete the finer work of analysis in the laboratory, and with crucible and electric battery and microscope we penetrate further into nature's secrets and learn her processes of construction and operation. To-day we accomplish, with simpler machinery and methods, more work in all mechanical fields than was possible half a century ago. This is in proportion as we have replaced muscle with mind.

Many such advances are preceded by examples of results without machinery, by the simple employment of mental forces. We discover the telegraph,

and flash the cable signals under oceans that divide the continents. We apply the electric current to the telephone, and the human voice becomes audible between cities separated thousands of miles. We carry these applications of electricity to a higher development, and the range of the human vision is extended in the same way as the vocal and the auditory power. It is claimed that the latest discoveries in electric science make it possible to see to immense distances, and to photograph persons and objects far removed from the camera. Yet many of these results have already been obtained without the employment of any wires or batteries.

What, then, is the *fundamental law* by which these seeming phenomena are accomplished? Is it not *harmonious vibration*? Two violins are tuned to the same key; one is placed upon a table, and a bow is drawn across the strings of the other. The one upon the table responds and vibrates to every chord awakened by the player. This harmony appears to be the first condition of response in all mental communication. The subject and the operator must be in accord. It is often observed that people in close sympathy speak the same thought almost simultaneously, but it is not always possible to tell in which mind, if in either, the thought had its origin. The same inventions and ideas are often developed at the same time in differ-

ent parts of the world. Thought waves appear to spread and widen in their vibrations very much as those of sound or light. They are also intensified in their power by being brought to a focus, as are the sun rays by a burning glass.

What, then, are the best conditions for projecting thought? Experiment in this field has been so limited that as yet we have reached very few definite conclusions. It appears that the conditions which have produced the most satisfactory results at one time are by no means certain to produce the same results at another. From this it follows that the problem contains some undiscovered factors.

It appears, however, certain that first there must be *harmony* between the operators, to admit of reciprocal vibration and produce the best results; secondly, that the mind must be *free* from the disturbance of anxiety, and *confident* in its power to send and to receive thought messages. It must also have developed the power of *concentration*, in order to obtain a focus of the mental forces and project the thought as sender, or perceive it as recipient.

How far the currents of the air, or ether, may facilitate or hinder thought projection is perhaps an open question; also to what extent electric and magnetic forces have a part in the phenomena, and whether or not it is desirable to consider the points

of the compass. We have good reason to believe, however, that mental force is the subtlest and most powerful of any element yet discovered,—that it can dominate all others and act with entire independence of them.

In an experiment I made some years ago for thought transference between Chicago and Boston, the following conditions were arranged: The parties sat by appointment, making careful allowance for the difference in time between the cities. It was agreed that each should act alternately for fifteen minutes as sender and receiver. In order to assist concentration, each had placed before him a photograph of the other, upon which he fixed his earnest attention. With a view to establishing magnetic relations, each held in his hand a lock of the other's hair. Pencil and paper were provided, and a careful record was made at both ends of messages sent and impressions received.

The experiment was particularly successful. Not only was the substance of the messages received, but with a precision that was remarkable. I had dwelt emphatically upon each word of my message in Chicago, repeating it many times in a low tone. My voice was actually heard in Boston, as though I had been calling through a telephone. In this case the parties had been in relation of operator and subject in a series of hypnotic experiments lasting many months, and relations of harmonious vibration had been well established.

Other experiments were made at closer range, several between Boston and New York, and always the substance of the message was received, though with varying precision. These experiments were by appointment, though without the other conditions which were used in the Chicago trial. Sometimes the hour would find me on the street instead of in the quiet of my room. In such case the required concentration was naturally more difficult, yet I do not recall any instance in which the signalling failed.

Upon several occasions I made the effort, without warning, to throw my subject into the hypnotic sleep when we were separated by distances varying from one hundred to three hundred miles. In this I invariably succeeded. The influence would be immediately felt as a peculiar tingling sensation. This would be quickly followed by the hypnotic condition, which would sometimes last for several hours,—in one case breaking up an entire morning's engagements, as I had neglected to throw off the influence. In these experiments careful note was always made of time, and the effects produced were found to be at the exact hour of the trial.

Such experiments as these have certainly established as a scientific fact the conclusion that *thought can be projected* to great distances. It may be definitely recognized by the recipient, or its effects produced without the conscious recognition. The

will of the operator is the projecting force. Time and distance do not appear as factors.

But there is another phase of telepathy which is still less understood than this we have considered, viz., the *unconscious* field, in which the thought passes from one mind to the other at a distance, without intention, and registers itself in a resulting action. This is illustrated by the following experience. A gentleman in Chicago was sitting quietly in his room when he felt an inclination to yield his arm to automatic writing. A letter was thus written addressed to himself and signed with the name of a friend in San Francisco. Five days later the mail brought to him from San Francisco the original letter, of which the writer had unconsciously projected the duplicate at the time of writing. Here again appears to be the germ of the "auto-telegraph," operating without battery or wire.

From such experiences we may reasonably infer that every individual is at the same time a human dynamo, containing magnet and induction coil, receiving, generating, and transmitting mind-forces, consciously and unconsciously. Doubtless the largest field of operation is the realm of the unconscious.

This brings us to the recognition of the universal life through which these thought currents circulate. We perceive that not only is every individual a human battery of many cells, but that he is also

only a single cell of the larger battery which includes all humanity, and perhaps an infinitely wider range of life of both higher and lower orders, seen and unseen. As "the wind bloweth where it listeth" and we cannot tell "whence it cometh nor whither it goeth," so is it true of the thought life which pervades the race. It is apparently the *circulation of a universal system*. It defies all efforts to trace it to its source, and at no point can we draw the line and say, "This is from incarnate mind and this from excarnate; this is from individual and this from associated minds." *All* life is "inspirational," and never was book written or line penned that could honestly claim the copyright of exclusive authorship.

Here is the great problem of life,—to arrive at conscious development and control of these thought forces, to purify them of every hurtful element and divest them of all destructiveness, and finally to apply them intelligently and with greatly loving purpose to the symmetrical construction of the temple of Divine Humanity.

Our thoughts should be like flowers in their choice varieties and fragrance, or like æolian harps in their soft harmonies.

Nature is melodious in all of her expressions. If we would tune our instruments to the keynote of love, a new world of harmony would be speedily opened to us. The music of the spheres is more

than a beautiful metaphor to ears that are not deaf.

Vibration is a grander science than many have yet perceived.

Every human being is said to throw off eight ounces, troy, of solid carbon every day, which is about six and a half tons in a life time of seventy-five years. This carbon is used continuously by the race. Is it not equally reasonable to believe that we derive from the Universal Mind a circulation of thought like that of the blood corpuscles, which are formed from the universal atmosphere?

Each of us, then, is personally responsible for keeping that thought system pure and undefiled. In this way only can we be "Children of the Light and of the Day."

XLIII.

MENTAL DYSPEPSIA.

CURIOUSLY enough, we find many of the errors and diseases of the physical plane and of the ecclesiastical schools repeating themselves on progressive lines in what is called the "new thought." We do not escape them, as we should, in passing from one to the other. They change their mode of attack, and we encounter them in a new form. The fevers and distempers of the body only externalize those of the mind. Mental dyspepsia, or indigestion, is perhaps one of the most common of these troubles.

In changing the diet as a result of a change of taste, the student too often lacks discrimination, and overloads the metaphysical stomach. In such a radical transition he does not realize the importance of simple habits of thought. A feverish appetite is awakened, and a mental greed sets in which can bring only an unsettled and unhappy state of mind. A process of digestion and assimilation is quite as important in mental as in physical development. In this morbid state the sufferer flies to books and teachers, as does the material dyspeptic to digestive remedies. Instead of this, he should simplify his diet, learn to "stay at home with the soul," and trust to the God *within*. By

these means he would be able to eradicate his morbid desire for demonstrations of unripe faculties, and learn that the soul, when polarized to truth, will invariably find its loadstar. He would reach the position really desired in less time, with less effort, and without that waste of energy attendant upon his usual course.

Spiritual health is a condition of perfect equanimity, freed from all uncertainty, anxiety, and impatience. It perceives the Eternal Equities. It is the normal condition of the soul, *here* and *now*. It is the "heaven within."

Those who observe closely are beginning to realize that the so-called "higher thought" is often the old self-righteousness in a new dress, which, if selfishly indulged, brings in its train the pharisaism of Jesus' time, and the asceticism and bigotry of the Middle Ages.

It might be well at this stage of the proceedings to take a few hints from Montaigne, the sceptic, as reviewed by Emerson, — not that the sceptical view is necessary to metaphysical advancement, but that "moderation in all things" is a safe rule, especially on new and untried ground :

"Shun the weakness of philosophizing beyond your depth."

"Why exaggerate the power of virtue?"

"These strings wound up too high will snap."

"Why fancy that you have all the truth in your keeping?"

"There is much to say on all sides."

Do not be sure of the arbitrary definitions given of "mind and matter," and of the "higher" and the "lower" natures; nor draw too fine distinctions between the animal and spiritual planes, without thoroughly examining both.

Are you positive that you really know the meaning of these things? While posing as masters of the occult, can we afford to ignore the higher mathematics, the very first principles of logic? Do not in over-enthusiasm be too eager to discredit intellectual power.

Be reasonable; this is the only road to a just conclusion. In the effort to develop the spiritual nature, remember that man is a triune creature. Melody is not produced by harping on one string. Our *three* natures must be symmetrically unfolded before we can attune ourselves to spiritual harmonies. The alphabet is necessary to the expression of even the profoundest thought. The multiplication table is not "common" nor "unclean" to the student of differential calculus. Man the animal is one with man the intellect and man the spirit. All is Divine. There is no lower and no higher in God's marvelous kingdom.

When the balloonist wishes to rise, he throws out sand. When he wishes to descend, he lets out gas. There is danger of passing into atmospheres too highly rarified for human lungs. There is, also, danger of too rapid and violent descent. Both demand judgment and skill in the navigator.

In our metaphysical ballooning these dangers frequently appear. Let us not move into the clouds too rapidly, and imagine that we have no longer need of the earth ballast ; rather let us keep one hand upon the valve-rope, letting out the gas occasionally to descend to earth levels, and touch elbows with our friends and fellow-mortals who may need our help in their struggles upward, as we certainly need theirs.

Our grandest philosophies are only pigmies of thought, and generations of spiritual evolution will be necessary to their full development before we can safely soar away from the planet on which we are now obtaining an elementary training.

Meanwhile, let us thank God for "the life that now is," with its lusty joys, as well as for "that which is to come," neither belittling the one nor ignoring the other ; enjoying the promise of both, while remembering Paul's assurance that "godliness is profitable unto *all* things."

XLIV.

RESTLESS ASPIRATION.

“In quietness and confidence shall be thy strength.”

“Thy strength is to sit still.”

“Be still and know.”

THERE is a curious restlessness frequently to be observed among students in the science of thought. It is displayed in a greed for books and lectures which is never satisfied. This is a consequence of working upon the old lines of action and seeking truth in the externals. It is an expectation of good from others, a looking for something outside of one's self, a demand for a “revelation.” These eager ones have developed an abnormal appetite and are suffering from a metaphysical fever. This is a purely intellectual disease. It results from a mixed diet. If the food were analyzed it would include a curious combination of the occult, spiritualistic, theosophical, and religious elements indiscriminately combined,—a sort of metaphysical hash, which has resulted in a mental dyspepsia. The sufferers have stumbled at the simplicity of truth. They have mistaken theories for principles. The principles of life are few. Though “he who runs may read,” they are best learned in quiet meditation.

Most men distress themselves with interminable speculations and complicated mathematics. They have not found the factors for the solution of life's problems. They mistake the problems. We are not yet ready for the higher mathematics; we are still studying the tables. We are too intense and anxious. It is not necessary to weigh and measure spiritual food. It is not desirable to examine our own pulse and temperature, and get upon the scales to ascertain if we are gaining in spiritual condition and avoirdupois. We regulate our watches by a gentle touch of a single lever that governs the vibrations of the hairspring. We do not waste our time by continually pushing about the hands upon the dial. The regulator is concealed within the case. The works that move the hands are seldom seen, but in them is all the power concentrated. It is our thoughts that require our care, rather than our actions. We regulate our thoughts by *forgetting* ourselves and giving no heed to appetite or diet. We breathe truth as we breathe the atmosphere,—by simply letting *good* work in and through us without effort. "Kill out the hunger for growth." It is a feverish longing which enervates and hinders. It is not a condition of spiritual progress. We must learn to spell "Peace" in capital letters and etch it in every cell of brain and heart, in every corpuscle of blood that flows through them.

The "still, small voice" is never heard when our vibrations are disturbed by worryment. We are like captive balloons. It is our nature to rise to higher levels. The ground anchors that hold us are our troubled thoughts.

"Rivers to the ocean run,
Nor stay in all their course;
Fire ascending seeks the sun,
Each speeds it to its source."

If we will only let go of ourselves we will easily come into the harmonies of being. It is because of egotism that we are "ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth." It takes us such a long time to discover that the ocean of truth is buoyant and we cannot sink in it. How we bob around with our old-fashioned life-preservers instead of boldly striking out as swimmers! Our tenacity of fear and our self-consciousness are truly wonderful. Our artificial aids are our worst impediments. The water is one of our *native* elements. We have in ourselves all the buoyancy we need. All we lack is *boldness to move forward*. Spiritual development brings us into more and more direct relations with the all-pervading good. Is not one step in a journey as good as another if all lead toward our goal? Can any step lead us away from good if good is everywhere? Does not all experience in-

crease our realization and promote spiritual consciousness in the end? Action, reaction, and adjustment are the operation of the law of progress. When we have adjusted our lives to right purposes every experience will be transmuted into wisdom. We will learn something from every book that is opened to us in our daily life.

There are two distinct methods of obtaining results. One is through the strong exercise of personal will, and one is found in the true philosophy of "letting go." Willing and letting. The purely human impulse is to will and act. A higher spiritual development discloses to us that the tides and currents of human life move with an irresistible power and always in the right direction. To gain the best results we have only to put ourselves fearlessly in the stream and move in harmony with spiritual law. We can never obstruct, but we may be, through our own act, in such uncomfortable relations to these tides and currents that we suffer discord in ourselves. The personal will of itself can change appearances. It never reaches real results. The spiritual will is omnipotent. We fail to recognize its power. Many are even ignorant of its existence. No true work can ever be accomplished until purposed and directed by the spiritual will. Such work can never fail. Success is its inevitable result. We need not spend our time in looking for it. Its demon-

stration will be prompt and thorough when we have made it possible through harmony of thought. The spiritual will is the Divine. We need only allow its powerful currents to flow through us. This is "letting go." Obstinacy is diseased will. It does not show strength of character. It is the expression of a weak and sullen nature. True determination is like finely tempered steel, which is extremely flexible because of its great tensile strength. If it were brittle it would be at the same time rigid.

When one is conscious of a power he is always confident in its possession. He does not think frequent assertion or special demonstration necessary. He is not troubled at the thought of scepticism in others. His feeling of serenity cannot be disturbed. The highest character yields easily and pleasantly to the preferences of others in non-essential things, for the simple reason that it knows its own resources are inexhaustible. Its pleasure lies in giving satisfaction and conferring benefits. It does not act from a weak motive to please, but as the natural expression of its own rich nature which has outgrown the petty thoughts of self. It yields abundantly because its growth is opulent and its vigor tireless. It has no careful, anxious thought for others any more than for itself. It is utterly indifferent to another's opinion where action involves a principle. It trusts its own

motive and acts without question of results. The mercenary spirit shows itself as truly in the greed for spiritual and intellectual power as in the greed for wealth or fame. So long as it is power that we seek our aim is selfish and deplorable. Aspiration is no better than ambition if it is rooted in selfish desire. Simple and true Being is a condition of spiritual equipoise which recognizes that there is no "higher" or "lower" in infinite space nor in the kingdom of Good. Nothing to be "lost" or "gained." No "goal" to be attained, no "conflict" to be won, no "hope" nor "fear." Nothing that relates to the emotions. Only a life to be lived. It is one of our pet delusions that we have "much to contend with." There is nothing to "contend" with in a true life. "But I say unto you that ye resist not evil" is more than a moral injunction. It suggests a truth that is both scientific and philosophical. We "fight" with shadows. Truth is never embodied in a "cause" demanding our defence. It does not need us as its "champions," either in society or the domestic circle. We are not to consider that we are retained as its especial advocates. All men can see the sun. It is of no consequence to any other than ourselves if we choose to hide in the shadows. Truth needs no torch-bearers. It scorns our puny telescopes, searching for the spots in the sun. Truth is opulent. It has an unlimited wardrobe. We need not insist that it

dress always in the colors of our choice. Some would clothe it in black, to accord with their own sombre thoughts; some in gray, and some in all the vivid colors of a joyful mind. But Truth itself, when fully seen, is clad in the white robes of the perfect light, combining all colors in radiant harmony. Truth has many names. It is best known as "Love."

Many of us are troubled by a missionary spirit which keeps us in perpetual anxiety for the "cause" of the new thought, or in an eager desire that it should be recognized by certain individuals who seem to us to greatly need it. We should have no such anxious care. When Truth offers us the privilege of its expression and employs us among its many voices, we can never fail to know the hour. We will respond, like Samuel, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Meanwhile, let us rid ourselves of "missionary zeal." It is a most pernicious influence. It has no proper place in an enlightened spirit. Let us slow down our vibrations and test our thought cells and secretions under the microscope when we begin to think we "have a mission," or have received the visits of spiritual celebrities. All highly developed spirits, in the form or out of it, have grown to be impersonal and lost all thought of fame. The desire to be known is certain evidence of an unregenerate mind. There is much missionary zeal that is only

inflamed ambition for notoriety. We are misled by the thought of "fame." We imagine special power and grandeur in the personality, and do obeisance to it in our hero worship, as though it were some great thing in itself. When we look at the glow of the incandescent lamp we remember the powerful engines and dynamos from which the electric current is produced. We remember that this same current illumines countless other lamps. It flows always in the direction of the least resistance. The lamp is only one small manifestation of an inexhaustible power. Its particular film must be free from obstruction, and a good conductor, else it will not shine at all and illuminate its own little radius. If the electric current is too strong, it burns out its wires and does not hold. We must not forget to keep our circuits open. If we suffer, we may be sure that something is wrong in our spiritual circulation. We must pass the current on. Yet it is also true in electricity that the most brilliant light is often at the point of obstruction. In our experiences of trouble we manifest the character of the light that is in us.

It is not of so much importance as we are apt to think just what we do or fail to do, — whether we eat much or little, dress in gay or sober raiment, read or meditate, are active or inactive. The vital matter is the character of our thought life and the

purity of our purpose. If these are true, all circumstances and environments will quickly respond and adjust themselves harmoniously. We need not fear to aim at the highest good for ourselves and others ; but we must be confident of its attainment, without reserve or limitation. We are too ardent and intense, and, in consequence, near-sighted. The eagle's eye is telescopic ; he sights his food when flying high. If we do not obstruct our spiritual vision through our petty desires, and tempers, and fears, there is no instant of life when our perceptions will be dim. We must be as content in waiting as in action, as well satisfied in one place as another. We must learn to regard all persons, places, and occupations with the same tranquillity. This is more than "patient endurance," more than "toleration;" it is that confident love which brings the *peace that showeth understanding*. Only when we have reached this point are we polarized to truth, and beyond all disturbance from without. We are then for the first time truly alive, in full vigor and with a boundless horizon.

One of our severest lessons is to learn to wait, we have been so hypnotized by the popular thought of doing. And so we fuss and fume, and build card houses that are forever tumbling about our ears, and pride ourselves on our "activities," without knowing that all real activity is in mind. When we remember the tireless energy of the

universal life of which we are a part, we know that it can never fail us. We need not carry the world on our shoulders. If we have a true understanding of life, we are never wearied. Life and happiness are possible under all conceivable conditions. Good is infinite energy, and in good we live. It is also infinite repose. In good there is no "great" and no "small." No work is "insignificant" or "splendid." No day or event is of greater or less "importance" than another. We cease to compare, for all is life, and all is good. In spiritual chemistry "being" is the true primate; "doing" is its manifestation. The first impulse of newly awakened spiritual life is often (following the old lines of thought) to obtain and expend money for "good work." Of this we may be certain, God is opulence. Good work can never be really obstructed or delayed by lack of material means. We must not be deceived by appearances. Spiritual work requires spiritual tools. When the soil is ready flowers grow. The finest of flowers bloom in the sandiest of deserts as well as in the hothouses. God is the one gardener. Our responsibility lies chiefly in the cultivation of our own fields and orchards. If we are wise and faithful in this, the harvest will feed and delight the world. We will no longer be "sorry" for ourselves or others when we have learned that at every moment of existence every human being

is experiencing exactly that which his development requires. The experience passes just as soon as the lesson is learned. This has been curiously illustrated in our national life. The tide of civil war rolled back from the time that we recognized the moral issue involved in the struggle and proclaimed emancipation of the slave. If "being" in us is symmetrical, we will never be distressed about the lack of opportunities in doing. We will never falter.

"Thou hast the truth,
Thou hast the life within thee, —
It shall guide aright.
Trust then thy promptings day by day
And safely they shall lead the way."

We are often told that human life is limited by its pre-natal conditions.

This is doubtless true in a sense, for we are the consequence of previous causes. But we are beginning to understand that the causes were in ourselves rather than our ancestors.

We are now moulding the pre-natal conditions of what we term "the next life."

Certainly these are within our control. When we open our eyes in the subjective realms to the discomforts we have entailed upon ourselves, shall we still be pleading pre-natal conditions in excuse?



We always see a mountain peak long before we reach it.

On a clear day it seems much nearer to us than it really is.

It is often so with our realization of truth. We perceive it in the distance, and the journey toward it is an experience of education. But we are apt to crawl painfully over the rough ground and forget that we have wings as well as feet.

XLV.

GO FORWARD.

Seek the way by retreating within. Seek the way by advancing boldly without.—*Light on the Path.*

Look not mournfully into the past, it comes not back again.

Wisely improve the present, it is thine.

Go forth to meet the shadowy future without fear and with a manly heart.—*Long fellow's "Hyperion."*

No sea more foreign rolls than breaks each morn

Across our thresholds when the day is born,

We sail at sunrise daily "outward bound."

—*Helen Hunt Jackson.*

WHY should we be discouraged by the past ?

Every day is a new incarnation. It places us in different relations to all persons and events.

The planet on which we live has moved steadily while we slept.

It has wholly changed its orbital point and its relation to the planisphere.

Every life meanwhile has built for itself new cells. It has thrown off something of the old accretions.

At the end of a few months the body of today has altogether vanished. Our motives and opinions have changed, our purposes are greatly altered.

Nothing but our individuality remains.

We need not cling so fearfully to the inheritance of the past.

We are not compelled to mortgage the present to redeem it.

We begin anew. We live in today.

Our opportunities were never better than they are. We will not weary ourselves with regrets. We will make with every fresh day as it dawns a new declaration of independence.

We need not live always at the bottom of the mine.

The mineralogist, geologist, and miner, for purposes of their own, put on coarse suits of clothes, fix candles in their caps, descend in a cage to the foot of the shaft and explore the underground levels.

When they return to the surface and sunlight, it will be with fresh material,—minerals for the laboratory work or college museum, ore for smelting and coining.

They have not degraded themselves by the explorations underground.

They were not impatient to return.

They simply valued their opportunity and improved it to the utmost.

Have we not here suggestion of our proper attitude as spirits that have clothed themselves with matter in the temporary incarnation of an earthly life?

The old thought looks upon heaven as a great having, rather than a great doing or being, for the thought of the world has been always to get.

We are beginning to learn that the secret of the highest happiness is to give.

Circulation is the law of life. Stagnation is death. According as we give we have, in thought or substance. According as we hoard we fail to possess and are possessed.

We cannot realize our riches until we have got beyond a personal desire for them as a selfish necessity.

Whenever there is a real want we may be sure that the supply is not far away.

The recognition of the want brings us within view of the supply.

Confidence in the operation of the law insures its realization.

Why should we grieve over the error and darkness of human lives?

Is not God in the mud as much as in the lily? Do we sorrow because some seeds have to be buried under ground and work their way up into the sunshine before they can flower, while others lie upon the surface and germinate in the light?

The tree or plant that grows the tallest and lasts longest is the one that strikes its roots down deepest and draws its life as much from the earth below

as from the heavens above. The glory of good is just as manifest in the gutters as in the high places of the land.

We need not think of animal and divine conditions as separate things.

The unity of good is the most apparent truth in life.

When we have learned the first page of the primer we begin to perceive this and it becomes more manifest every day.

All potentialities are in ourselves, just the same as they are in the acorn and unfolded in the oak.

All winds and weathers are favorable to the development of the sturdy, well-rooted tree. Even the hurricane which strips it of its leaves and branches quickens all its vital powers, challenging it to put forth greater strength.

If it is cut down in part the result is a sturdier trunk and a more compact and symmetrical growth thereafter.

Even if it is toppled over by the storm its acorns are scattered and become the seeds of the forest.

In its ruin it goes back to the soil, from which spring other trees.

No life can be lost; conservation of forces is the law of nature.

Can we imagine a mechanic who would build a beautiful and intricate machine without a definite plan for its usefulness and provision for keeping it in operation?

Is it not equally unreasonable to believe in a supreme mind equal to the production of a mortal life that could neglect all provision for its necessities and leave it to fail in its intended purpose through the poverty of its resources?

There are no failures in the kingdom of good.

Our highest development comes often through our deepest disappointments.

Disappointment is the discovery of obstructions to ways we should not travel,— or the removal from our paths of things we ought not to have.

If we are truly balanced our needle will always find the north, but we must give it time to settle. We need not fear we shall be left in doubt. The right way will surely open though we may try a hundred doors meanwhile and find them locked. Nothing can close against us the door we should pass through.

We cannot miss our gates of opportunity. We must look for them first in our mental conditions.

The lowest step of the ladder is just as useful and necessary as the highest. In the evolution of life we find no bottom and no top stair,— only an eternal progress of realization, in which there can be no “better days” and no “unfortunate events.”

All days and all events are built into the symmetrical structure of our lives.

The smallest stone in the mosaic picture is as necessary as the largest to the finished work, though it add but a single point of color.

It has its place, and its significance, which cannot be dispensed with without marring the mosaic as a work of art.

There is no individual, no community or nation, no period of time, no work of man that is wholly good or wholly bad.

The warp and the woof of life are many tinted. Why should we be so quick to commend or condemn because our taste in color is gratified or offended?

Praise and blame are alike undesirable to one who knows that no true judgment can be ever reached except when we judge ourselves.

Life is an experience of ripening. The green fruit has but small resemblance to that which is matured. Our judgments of each other are necessarily imperfect as our experience and knowledge of any human life is very limited. As our horizon widens we become more charitable and patient; we learn to understand the beauty of that Hindoo proverb, "To know all is to forgive all."

The greatest service one can render another is to believe in him.

Let us persistently refuse to take each other seriously when we express anything but our best; to think meanly of another tends to lower his tone and relax his hold upon himself.

It is a great loss to lose the good opinion and

confidence of one's fellows. It is a far greater loss to forfeit even for a moment one's right to think well of himself. But even this is not irreparable. Though all the rigging of our ship of life has gone by the board and nothing but the hull remains to us, we may yet come safely into port and with a new outfitting sail on more prosperous voyages.

Infidelity to self is infidelity to God.

It is through defeat that we are schooled to victory.

Broken bones when well knitted are strongest at the points of fracture.

In spite of all our seeming failures and the bitter disappointments of our purposes, we will none of us find at the last that our life was altogether fruitless; many things of which we thought but little will bring to us the greatest satisfaction; many friends whom we esteemed most lightly will doubtless stand revealed as of the noblest stature.

He who has learned a single letter of the alphabet has not entirely wasted his opportunities; he may indeed have neglected his spelling and possibly require many mortal lives before he learns to read in the Book of Truth.

We must get done with watching for fruit; it is not the aim and end of our existence, but only a single point in the infinite circle.

Let us allow a sentient life to the tree and follow

the course of its growth from the seed to fruition, through the root life, the trunk, the branch, the leaf, bud, blossom, and fruit. The fruit embodies future growth, and is perfected that it may fall to the ground and deposit the seed for further evolution. At what point can we claim any higher satisfaction for the tree over any other point of its development? Cannot we see that at every moment it fulfils its law of being? It is doubtless as well satisfied in striking its roots down as in spreading its branches out. It must have just as much pleasure in its leaves as in its fruit,—all these are the varied expressions of its life, which never dies but moves in an eternal round of growth, decay, and resurrection.

Let us value the passing hour and concentrate on it all our forces.

Anticipation and regret will only scatter them.

We can never reach the point of present realization till we have broken both these fetters.

Realization comes through the concentration of the spiritual power that has been wasted on our "feelings."

When we focus sunshine through a concave lens, we can fire a forest or a city.

"Speak to the children of Israel, that they go forward."

Let us move on and step out boldly, though it be into the night and we can scarcely see the way.

The path will open as we progress, like the trail through the forest or the alpine pass, which discloses but a few rods of its length from any single point of view.

Press on! If necessary we will find even the pillar of cloud and fire to mark our journey through the wilderness.

A higher intelligence than the mortal sees the road before us. We do not have to strive for good, but only to go forward and possess it. Good awaits us at every step.

Nothing but fear can blind us.

There are guides and wayside inns along the road. We will find food, clothes, and friends at every stage of the journey, and as old Rutherford so quaintly says:

“However matters go, the worst will be a tired traveler and a joyful and sweet welcome home.”

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