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THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA

OR

TRUTH, LOVE AND FAITH DEFINED

JUSTRUTH

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OR

TRUTH, LOVE AND FAITH

DEFINED BY

JUSTRUTH

AUTHOR OF

"CHRISTIANITIES' INEVITABLE DECEASE"
A true, heroic and unbiased analysis of the New Testament

"CHRIST PROVED A MYTH"
Beyond all reasonable refutation and from the New Testament

"ASSUMPTION SEEKING GLORY ON A DONKEY"
A reply and analysis of William Jennings Bryan's "Prince of Peace"

"It's easier far the better path to roam
Than hew one out and tread it all alone,
Yet to him who venture and all alone persists
May be a hero, prince, or his own King
With for his subjects every living thing."

—JUSTRUTH

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Preface	5
Introduction	11
Fable	15
Mythology	19
Hearsay	22
The True Philosophy of Faith	25
The Truth of Belief	58
The Light of True Love	80
The Casket of Knowledge or Experience	126
Wisdom	151
Reason's Address to the People	167
The What and Whereof of Truth	181
The Virtues of Truth	234
The True Philosophy of Life	296
Just a Word	324

PREFACE.

It has been the author's aim in this work to 'speak' the absolute truth, secured from observed facts, regardless of every faith, creed or dogma now in use, and in doing so have reversed in a great measure, all the philosophy of the past and present, including the recognized great 'masters' of religious teaching. This I have done without fear or favor towards any sect, class or denomination known to the writer. I have 'spoken' the truth just as I have found it, and have relied on no source for any knowledge apart from observation secured through comparison. I have not bowed to the shrine of any supposed master, nor taken anything for granted, and therefore "believe" absolutely nothing, yet deny nothing spoken or written by another unless through evidence I am permitted to prove the same to be a fact. For I know that to do otherwise is to allow the thin edge of the wedge of unreasonable "belief" to denominate one's reasoning powers, which invariably results in our becoming but a slave to the many foolish and irrational word-pictures of the dogmatic dreamers who are as common as ignorance and dishonesty, and who daily seek for the control and humiliation of the innocent and illiterate souls who abound in great numbers, and who are being thus kept by the false words spoken from high places.

The work has been well criticised before appear-

ing in print, and I am therefore quite willing that the statements made herein be challenged by all men of letters, or those interested in the subject, be they philosophers or scholars of the very highest standing. In fact, I invite their searching and honest criticism from every standpoint, for I feel sure that they cannot through any reasonable arguments or facts disprove in any vital particular the main course of my contentions.

I have not allowed the foolishness of the common sympathy with generally accepted beliefs to in any way interfere with my work, and have accordingly condemned where reason and evidence permitted me to do so, while always bearing in mind the welfare of the vast army of the unfortunate, who are living in complete ignorance of what is daily going on around them with regard to the principles and conduct of life. They are thus kept in a seeming blissful state of ignorance as to the powers within themselves, through which alone they can come into possession or realization of the greater joys of life, which are the product of their own individual thoughts. It is they and they only whom I seek to enlighten, knowing, that with their enlightenment must come a better and truer condition of things to us all.

Many I know will severely condemn me for having so written, but only I hope for a short time until they come into the true realization of the light of my words. For I have written them with no other purpose than the general good, and I ask no one to *"believe" without weighing my thoughts,* for they can be put aside as foolish (if you will) if you cannot realize them in the light and sense in which they are written. Therefore, come what will, I fear nothing, for I have 'spoken' but the

truth, which I feel will be gladly received by every honest and unbiased mind or those free from the bondage of "belief." For he who foolishly holds as truth the mere words of others, knows not the how, the why and the wherefore of truth, and cannot therefore know whether he be honest to himself or to others. To know you are truthful is to know you are honest, but to merely believe, and then proclaim your beliefs as truth is to be most surely dishonest, for you have no evidence with which to prove your contentions. It follows, therefore, that your beliefs are but mere hearsay, and perchance only falsehood.

What I have written herein, will no doubt, disturb a certain class, but only in the measure of the 'truth' and justice of my words, which will, I hope, eventfully compel them to a truer and more reasonable fulfilment of their duties to their fellowmen.

Therefore, many of the present beliefs and tendencies we must discard before the masses can possibly come into the newer and truer light of perfect manhood, found in truthfulness and honesty of purpose. For such they cannot do under the illusory dreams of our present system of beliefs, found in the foolish and fallacious word-pictures of past or present philosophy, which I have endeavored herein to expose.

Further, he who cannot read the contents of this book without feeling grieved or disturbed condemns at the same time his own system of belief as being shallow, useless and easily to be controverted, and accordingly without any foundation in fact. For if such be really founded on truth, the same must contain the virtue of true and lasting value to him and his peace of mind. Otherwise, should your "faith" prove to be baseless in the light

of truth you should rejoice, for through truth alone can you surely and truly progress.

Furthermore, he who is not willing to discard his old or hereditary thoughts for the truth is dishonest with himself; for he robs his inner self of the pure and true thoughts with which he must build his just and wholesome desires and aspirations. For without thought there can be no desire; consequently the purer our thoughts, conscious and subconscious, the purer our desires.

It is true that thoughts are men's only forces which make or unmake his life, and allow him to attain to that which is either worthy or unworthy.

The only forces that can possibly hold and unite men and women truly together, in peaceful association is found through truth and love, in the principles of right and wrong. For I care not what your belief, creed or religion may be, if you are not just with your fellowmen you, and your religion are but dishonest and selfish chaff, 'Signifying nothing! or much worse.

Therefore, in reading this book I would ask you to be just and honest with yourself, *by doing unto others as they should be done by, for the true welfare of all.* For in this precept you will find a great and true principle if you but grasp the spirit and true meaning of the thought expressed therein; for it means, thinking not of self or a few, but of all. And should you come across something that seemingly tends to disturb you, set it to one side, while you charge yourself with uneasiness, for all being in possession of their own thoughts make or mar the joys of their own mind. Having honestly done this, and considered the matter in the light of your own reason, you will most surely experience an uplifting strength of love and kind-

ness, which will enable you to read what is herein set down, in peace towards the end. For to know the other side of a question is either to confirm your own views, or to have them removed by those nearer to the truth, of which I am sure you truly desire to realize, for in and through truth only can you increase in knowledge, and grow in wisdom.

INTRODUCTION.

Truth is, no doubt, the most important asset of the mind of man. For, as we look with an observing eye through the dim haze of history into the distant past, we see his constant struggle to 'grasp' it, even giving up his very life to uphold it. But, alas! how often has he sacrificed his life, not in the interests of truth, but of fable and falsehood, which through subtlety, present a glittering and deceptive appearance before the eyes of mere fancy. Thus are fable and falsehood often mistaken for truth, the most precious possession of man's mental endowments, with which, alone, he can do or become that which is worth and wise. For without it there can be no knowledge, faith becomes crippled, reason is destroyed, whilst constructive imagination becomes a dream or vapor, vanishing into the oblivion from whence it came, and leaving us in a condition no better than the beasts of the field.

But man, having acquired the power to 'build,' truth upon truth, has so advanced that he finds its realization to be a crown to his head, a guide to his feet, and a most searching and brilliant light to his path. Yea, it lifts him up when he has fallen and supports him with strong protecting arms. It smooths away sorrow, relieves him of fear, and converts for him, as it were, food out of trouble. It clothes him with impermeable joy, and shows

him how, through kindness, his weakened fellows to help. It turns faith into a bright light, leading him to reason the builder of the mind—the kings and princes of all the just, the noble and the truly loving.

Through its agency, love becomes like strong steel which death alone can rend. It is life itself, for without it there can be no honesty in life.

We know also, that without truth it is impossible to accomplish anything durable, whether physically, materially, mentally or what we term "spiritually."

For the latter can be traced to the emotions of the mind, which when impressed with the importance of certain thoughts or actions, is compelled through the intelligence, rightly or wrongly, to defend, support and uphold them for the welfare of self and of others. We well know that men in the past have given, would give even today, their very lives in defense of their principles, based on what were and are still known to be none other than myths and fables, the work of subtlety, or perchance a story written with the ostensible object of revealing some truth intended to create some good.

It is therefore, often claimed, and imposed upon the unthinking, not through the medium of knowledge but of mere belief, that certain works are "spiritual revelations," the medium, through inspiration, between the "Supreme" and man.

When such lack of true knowledge and truth prevails, is it not time for us to arrive at a definition of truth which shall be accepted by all reasoning minds as final, through which all may be guided, and so prevent us from disturbing the wealth and great beauty of a life of truth which all desire and strive after? Do we not all want to ascertain the

what, why, and wherefore of such a valuable asset to our store of knowledge?

To know all, is to master all, and although no man can expect to reach such perfection, yet those of us who have the greater measure, must in course, become the most useful to ourselves and to others and so be enabled to perform the greatest good among men. Is not such work Life's greatest joy and most consolatory blessing? Is it not better and more pleasing to be ever giving than to be continually asking and receiving? Do not all, but the miserably selfish, agree to this?

For it matters not how great may be your possessions, how exalted your position, or how extensive your store of knowledge, if you have not a loving heart (which is the true spirit of giving), and truth upon your lips, you will avail and amount to nothing.

Let truth prevail! For those who will not are ever leading astray the simple and innocent for the purpose of increasing their own glory or material gain, and they are the mental, if not the material robbers of today, as they have been in the past. They seek to deprive the simple and unfortunate, but just and confiding, of the honey which they have laboriously gathered, whilst they themselves live luxurious but profitless lives.

And yet such consider themselves men; their robes being fine, their purses distended with gold, and their positions being exalted they are respected and honored by those who cannot see beneath the surface.

To all of such I would earnestly exhort to cleanse their minds and purify their hearts in the pure and sparkling waters of love, truth and justice. For in these consists true manhood and honor.

True manhood and unblemished honor are of more value than untold material treasure or all the glory and applause of men.

Now before entering into the subject matter of what truth is, it will be necessary for us to remove from our path a few thoughts which may tend to interfere with the general conception of truth, such as are contained in mythology, hearsay, fable and belief, which are even today the chief obstacles on our road to greater intellectuality, better material possessions, and, in a great measure, our physical welfare and comfort. When these are all swept away, we will proceed to deal with faith, love, reason, fact, knowledge and wisdom, all of which are more or less related to, or connected with, the object of our words, which is "Truth Defined."

In this way we shall be the more able to remove, as it were, the whole house without disturbing its inmates, who may after all, be most honest and loving whilst yet misled.

For in truth many tell us that faith should be blind and our reasoning powers imprisoned, while they hide or obscure the way which leads to freedom, where those who themselves seek and know find true joy, happiness and consolation. And those who honestly show us the true way, do so not with sword or gun, or by words of dogmatism and vain mysticism, but by reasonable, just and pursuasive-exhortation. Yet, is it sometimes necessary to shake those who, though naturally kind and good hearted, have fallen asleep in the errors of fable, so that when awake they may be helped towards a realization of truth.

It is with this sincere object in view that we should now proceed to consider the subject of fable.

FABLE.

Fable is fiction flavored with the actions of life. It is a picture drawn to reveal a truth, and although the colors may be bright, and may attract the simple and ignorant, the perspective is wrong, for therein is contained the elements of fiction.

The foolish, with fables, preach in the highways and byways and from high pedestals, whilst the wise and honest take counsel together to find the truth, which having found, they never misuse in order to promote their own glory or increase their gain, but, on the contrary, seek to dispose freely and without the semblance of suggestions nor of alms.

Therefore are such willing and ready to meet an honest question. For such is the life and intent of the truly honest, while the fable monger and the fakir fear to have their pet ideas and cherished misconceptions challenged.

The wise profit through chastisement, the foolish are enraged.

The method or system of revealing truth through the agency of a fable is of most ancient origin, being used in bygone days to establish religious orders, and in cases where the imagination served to carry them farthest, they were most successful, as may be seen in many of such documents as are still preserved in our Archives.

No doubt, the reason for the universal use of

such a method was to captivate the masses, who to this day are amused and attracted best by the hidden mysteries in life and become enslaved by such phenomena.

Truth never was, is, nor can be worshipped. And why? because as we will later endeavor to prove, it is only to be found in our own mind.

For what is a truth to me cannot become a truth to you until you realize it as a truth; and so, the moment in which you realize a truth it becomes unnecessary for another to keep constantly reminding you of it.

In order, therefore, to prove the amount of evil and sorrow which this system of expounding truth through fable has wrought, we have only to look back through the ages and there see men and women reviling, persecuting, crushing and killing one another in defence of it, which, as the years have rolled by, and the master eye of reason has seen, has proved itself to be nothing short of falsehood. And so in the centuries gone have countless people suffered and died, through the leadership of those as ignorant as themselves.

They have, and actually do still, worship wood, stone and iron, the sun, the moon, the stars, and nearly every other thing within the scope of their thought and imagination. It is true that the majority of mankind have long since eschewed those pagan ideals, having discovered the folly of obtaining through their medium, the benefits and pleasures of life.

But in what manner do most people nowadays differ from such heathen worshippers? Are we not also worshipping the outcome of that which is

founded on fable? For I contend that the Lords, the Saviours and the "prophets" which men now worship derive their inspiration from fable, which is opposed to the rational and reasoning mind.

Have we not, also, many preaching fables, well knowing it to be so? And in so doing are they not as false as the impostors of bygone ages? Or is it merely because they lack the courage to "speak" the truth? Or can it be, I wonder, that they are merely innocent and ignorant? If so, should not our seats of learning come in for just condemnation for allowing such men, who are ignorant of what truth is, or without the necessary courage to proclaim it, to pose as teachers of the poor, from whom they draw their salaries?

For I herein challenge every orthodox preacher to stand in his pulpit and "tell" the honest truth, as to what truth is, where it is to be found, and how to find it. For if he will conscientiously do so, he cannot help confounding every religious "faith," cruel and dogmatic, known to the mind of man. And should he lack the necessary courage, what think you can he tell us if not fable? For fable has been a great evil in the past, and still is, for it robs the people of truth.

Do we not live in a free age? Not until we are freed from the pernicious influences of fable, which so plausible emanates from teachers.

How long must the simple and innocent be thus led astray?

When, I ask, are they to be set free with the warm, life-giving breath of truth which they struggle strive and ever pray for yet never find? The time must surely come.

The foolish, alone, delight in lagging behind to listen to the stories of fiction and fable. Such only awaken the emotions which are those of a blind or disordered train of thought. Yet, can we blame them when in their innocence and ignorance they cannot see otherwise? If not, then who else is to blame if it be not our teachers who teach falsely and thus impose?

And it is for the reason that if we truly sympathize with the poor, the simple and the innocent around us, we should strive to accomplish the exposure and overthrow of the false, and the consequent revelation of truth.

Honesty never yet wore the robes of subtlety, suggestion, glory or ostentatious display. It never stoops to such vanity.

He who would employ fable as an instrument of gain is either ignorant or a knave, most probably the latter, for its ways lead not unto truth.

And now let us consider the kindred subject of mythology.

MYTHOLOGY

Mythology is the food of all religions upon which is founded all their fruitless belief, and which is ever found to be blind.

It is a well-known fact that wherever we find men and women worshipping the mysterious phenomena of nature, we also find them not only irrational but intolerant. Why is this so? It is simply because that whenever the mind becomes absorbed or captivated by the mysterious, it must necessarily lose sight of the better things in life, found by reason to be within the sphere of attainment. For those things we desire most, we, consciously or unconsciously, revere and in some measure come to resemble and assimilate.

It is therefore evident that he who worships mythology must become, to the rational and reasoning man, himself somewhat of a phenomena. For such adoration has the power to weaken the intellect and destroy the reasoning faculty, making dull our sense and appreciation of the true and noble aims and conditions of life, its joys and consolations, which are within our reach and comprehension. The study and investigation of mythology may be of interest, but a belief in, and worship of, its errors and delusions can only result in paralysis of the intellect.

And he who worships the mysterious likewise displays weakness and selfishness, being greedy for the unknowable and discontented with the good

things around him, and loses sight of the true joys of life found through sight and reason to enrich our very being. Birds, beasts and the lowest creatures of life have more sense than many of mankind in this respect, being content with the bare necessities of existence and enjoy life itself. Transport your thoughts, therefore, from the heavens and learn from the bee, the ant and even the plant. For from them you can ascertain much which will put you to shame in your malcontent.

To be ever gazing into space, seeing you know not what, is to walk, trip and fall over the greater things in life with which we must build our comforts and secure our happiness.

The most practical are the most useful and contented, for they have no time or thought to waste upon the foolish winds of fancy. They are ever busily engaged making our comforts, and bettering the conditions around them. What to others may sometimes seem their "castles in the air" they conceive and construct upon the earth, being content to utilize the resources of nature.

It is true, however, that to many the strange and mysterious is more captivating and absorbing than the simple and practical matters of life. Yet when we allow ourselves to become thus enslaved, just so sure does our reason depart, whilst our faith in the things most necessary for our well being grows faint, and life becomes like a ship without a rudder, without a captain on the bridge to direct our course towards the attainment from which comes our greatest joys.

So, then, let us grow through faith unto reason, from which we procure or come into the realization

of truth, knowledge and wisdom, and through which we arrive at the blessed realities we can see, handle, know and fully understand around us.

For to know ourselves is to know all living creatures. We are, unknowingly, walking encyclopaedias of the history of a world, as well as of all life, which we must read, study and perfect if we would become wise. What more could you wish for? What more could you ask? Let the mysterious be your amusement and your pleasure, but envelop such entertainment with the beautiful robes of a smile. For realities must ever be your real gain.

Oh, for a smile, the beauty, the strength and joy of a smile! It is one of the greatest comforts and blessings of life, which, if we truly cultivate, will make life worth living.

HEARSAY.

Hearsay may be likened to a snowball, which, when pushed along, gathers, increases and changes in size and shape.

It is the mental food of the foolish, and the wares of the unjust who proclaim such as fact.

It is the soil in which "Believers" grow, and that in which their reason is daily being crushed, and their knowledge retarded and choked. For such, as it were, can only be but phonographs that receive and impart the words of others, without either knowing or understanding their meaning and true intent. In like manner does ignorance grow and spread, while a few profit to the detriment of others.

It is therefore foolish in us to take things for granted merely because someone has ventured to make such and such a statement. For those of us who rely upon such sources for our "knowledge" become but as little children in thought, word and deed, to those who use their reasoning faculties and power of perception.

Hearsay is the field in which the designing and dishonest ever work, and in which the traps are laid for all simple, unknowing believers. Is it not a crying shame that our laws and public opinion should permit such impostors to flourish and thereby keep the people ignorant of the realities of truth? For it cannot be denied that the great majority of people rely on this source for their most valued thoughts and ideas, by which means they are cruelly

misled, only for the interest and glory of others who claim and pronounce such parrot talk as "Divine" truth, when it is but the works of the imagination designed to enslave the innocent.

When the people begin to know and understand the true meaning of what right thinking and reasoning is, our false "prophets" will then have much trouble in selling their wares of falsehood and deceit in the markets of our minds, from their high pulpits and pedestals. Even now they are only tolerated through the subtle veneer of false suggestions, manipulated for the apparent benefit of simple hearers and readers, and through the medium of position, vestments, and a prostituted university education.

Would that all could get a glimpse behind the shrine of this ostentatious display of seeming respectability and authority. For there would be few who could stand the rigid test of honesty of word and purpose. Let us therefore quietly employ a vacuum cleaner to the accumulated dust upon the altars, that they may be purified and cleansed and naught remain but truth, which is the light, life, and substance of our well-being.

Should there be any of our "prophets" or teachers who object to such treatment, then we can only conclude that they are themselves untrue, for such is but a house-cleaning for the good of those who pay the rent and taxes.

He who would declare mere hearsay to be truth is himself dishonest, doing not good but harm to the simple and weak whom we entrust to his care and guidance; and the law should step in and put an end to the imposition.

The law! It cleans our lanes and sweeps our streets, but the thrones of seeming truth it leaves untouched, and is careless of its building or maintenance.

Our goods and gold are of little value compared with our thoughts of truth, which at the present are being stifled and crushed by this foolish and universal system of hearsay, fable and belief.

Hearsay may be, when at its best, distant knowledge which we ourselves must realize before it can possibly become a truth to us. Therefore let us be ever on our guard as to the reality it would locate. For many are the good, yet simple "souls" who are being controlled by its use, for naught but the gain or glory of the seeming wise.

It is high time the hand of truth should be raised to forever stop such unmanly practice as found in the stories of hearsay. For such belittles us through the destruction of our nobler characteristics, found in truth, love, faith and reason, without which we are as naught and therefore useless to ourselves.

THE TRUE PHILOSOPHY OF FAITH.

Upon the subject of Faith many volumes have been written, and many great and beautiful thoughts gathered around it. These we may have all more or less read of or heard spoken, and still ask ourselves, "What is Faith?" Much that has been written is of a vague and indeterminate character; many thoughts of poetic beauty; much disquisition of a philosophical and abstruse nature, and yet more, religious and polemical. All these phases of faith may have their value and interest to different minds, but do not always give a simple and clear definition of faith and its influence on the conduct of life. Written or spoken words, however beautiful or erudite, are not truth to us unless they convey a distinct impression of their meaning to our minds. Eloquent and flowery language, subtle discourse and the sophistry of reasoning may captivate the emotions to which they appeal, but are worthless in elucidating truth. It is the truth about "Faith," as an attribute of the mind and its relation to our thoughts and acts that we want to learn.

Faith, we are told by the leaders of one school of thought, is above reason; that to have faith it is unnecessary to have also material or logical proof of its truth. But is not reason or judgment the only true means by which we can realize the difference between truth and falsehood? For all intelligence is born of reason through comparison, which through repetition, habit or association in time be-

comes instinctive or intuitive, and is perpetuated through what we call hereditary traits. Those things we apparently do without thought we commonly term "instinctive acts," "natural habits," or individual predispositions. How necessary is it, therefore, that we should exercise our reason in acquiring the knowledge which may become the instinctive and dominating influences in our character.

Past knowledge, though for the time being apparently lost to the reasoning faculty or conscious mind, still lingers in the memory and there forms what may be termed the "light of past knowledge" and future truth. For with the measure of our present and past knowledge alone is it possible for us to construct through our reason a future truth, actuality or reality.

Without the knowledge of bricks, stone or other building material we cannot have the brick wall or the stone mansion. And so to aspire, plan or build in the future we can only do so through the adaptation, rearrangement or modification of our past and present knowledge.

Now, what is our knowledge and comprehension of the attribute of faith? Faith we may call the advance agent of truth, knowledge, reason and all our higher attributes, and has, therefore so vital an influence in the conduct of life that it is well worthy a deeper study than it usually obtains. Let us first consider the general conception of faith as given in a standard dictionary. Dictionaries, however, are not always infallible in their definitions of words. Their compilers (Dr. Johnston, for instance,) not always being free from personal opinions and predi-

lections. The meanings of words given are also often inadequate, as in process of time and usage their old construction undergoes change or modification and new and revised interpretations grafted thereon.

Let us, however, see what Webster has to say about the term "Faith": "Belief; trust in the honesty and truth of another; the assent of the mind to Divine revelation; unshaken adherence, fidelity; honesty; a system of doctrines or tenets."

Here we are told that, first, "faith" is "belief"; and referring to the latter word we find that the same authority gives the meaning of "belief" as trust, acceptance or confidence in anything spoken or written, such as creeds, dogmas, etc., "without personal knowledge." Let us briefly analyze these meanings: "Trust in the honesty and truth of another," may or may not be founded on substantial grounds; "unshaken adherence" may be that of blind belief, or the outcome of personal knowledge; and "the assent of the mind to divine revelation," which is, as far as I have been able to discover, based on tradition, dogmatism and mystery, of the truth of which mankind can have no knowledge. We are also told that "faith" is a "system of doctrines or tenets," which may be true or otherwise. Such are the general ideas of the meaning of faith.

But let us see if we cannot arrive at a clear conception of the "how, where and why of faith, and its profound bearings on life. Let us, as a great writer said, "first clear our minds of cant," and consider the subject from an honest and unbiased point of view. To be partial is to be unreasonable, and to be sectarian is to be local, prejudiced and often

bigoted; all of which, although it is a truism, tend to retard the acquisition of truth and knowledge. The open, unbiased mind is always ready to discard the old and false for the new and true. To submit to the yoke of established authority without the adhesion also of our individual reason is to warp our intellect and stunt our moral growth.

Our faith, therefore, must be realized, absolutely without prejudice and through honest conviction. Without, however, some kind of past knowledge, conscious or unconscious, we cannot acquire faith in the realization or acquisition of any future actuality or reality. As is elsewhere explained, I use the word "actuality" as that which exists of substance or matter, and "reality" that which appears only in potentiality or possibility.

For example: With the past knowledge of the elements of architecture we can build in the present, through constructive imagination, a house, castle or city hall. And with our past and present knowledge, and through its modifications, we can with the perseverance and determination induced by faith bring about future potentialities or possibilities, and become a great architect, builder, statesman, musician or author. These potentialities are such because they appear to us real (or realities) only as mental conceptions, and through the mere motion of a subject or object.

Thus it will be readily seen that there is a potent element which lights our path toward all future contemplated accomplishments, and without which there could be no future actualities or realities, conceived in the present.

That indispensable element is knowledge, the light

of which is faith. The will, of course, is an important factor in all endeavor and achievement. But if there is no previous knowledge of the subject or thing to be accomplished, the will would have no clay with which to make his bricks or no mortar with which to cement his work.

The will, therefore, can only be put into motion by knowledge and through faith, its propelling power. And the greater our knowledge the stronger becomes our will power.

Some people have greater will power than others; it is a quality the native force of which is largely inherited, but can be acquired and strengthened. We may possess a knowledge of the things to be attempted or achieved, and yet think that we do not possess the ability to carry them into effect. That, however, is partly because of a lack of interest in the particular direction in view, or an inadequate knowledge of how to proceed.

Take a simple illustration: If a man is able to swim half across a river, he may venture, with the faith he possesses of his ability in that art, to accomplish the full distance, but without prior knowledge or experience of swimming he would not attempt the feat. And so likewise in all intellectual, as well as physical endeavors. There cannot be true faith without some knowledge or experience relating thereto, although we have some unreasoning belief in our ability to do things of which we have no such knowledge. Faith, therefore, is born of knowledge, and as there is no reason without knowledge, it follows that truth, knowledge and faith are dependent on our reasoning faculty. Without, moreover, a higher degree of reason, gained

through exercise, we can only possess what is termed instinct, fashioned (as previously illustrated) from past knowledge, finding its abode in the sub-conscious mind, thus as it were, relieving the conscious mind from being overtaxed or burdened. For such is the mind's law of attainment.

In using the term "mind," it is understood as being applied to the brain's conception of things, which, of course, may be true or false according to our power, by reasoning, to distinguish between the two. Thus if we have been in the habit of believing or accepting assertions without question or concern as to their fact, our reasoning faculty becomes crippled and our acquisition of truth and knowledge is retarded. Belief, therefore, does not contain knowledge or truth.

Faith, however, is the light of past knowledge. Faith in other people, for instance, is acquired by experience. It may be that we take an "instinctive" dislike to someone we meet, without for the moment being able to give any reason for an impression. sciously or unconsciously experienced certain characteristics which appeared then to us either true or Why is this so? Because in the past we have confalse, and which are reproduced or recalled by the person indicated. Or suppose we apply for some particular occupation, and find that some special art, such as stenography, is required; if we do not possess such knowledge we shall probably find our application a failure. We lack faith, and no amount of "belief" in our capacity to "fill the bill" will serve as an adequate substitute.

Herein lies the difference, as I will now endeavor further to demonstrate, between belief and faith,

whether as applied to religion or material affairs. Elsewhere (see article on Belief) I have dealt with this vital distinction.

Permit me to give a simple illustration of this point. We meet someone, plausible of speech and manners, of whom we have had no previous experience. But attracted by his appearance and "personality," we "believe" in him to the extent of entrusting him with money to invest in some scheme, the golden opportunities of which he has persuaded you. Later the "scheme" turns out bogus and you lose your money. You have, therefore, only yourself to blame, for you have acted upon mere appearance, without previous knowledge, but have relied upon your "belief." In this way belief is credulity and ignorance of the real or actual. And so it is with every other form of belief.

It is true that we may live in peace under the wing of some religious belief. There are thousands of people who live and die with belief in the strangest delusions other than those of religion.

Take, for example, the "Faith Cure." Here is a "faith" or "belief" which may be said to be composed of two elements. First, there is the blind acceptance of the words of others without personal knowledge as to their truth or falsity. Second, there may be the knowledge that by suggestion the will is capable of removing from the mind imaginary and nervous ills, and also assists nature to cure, in due course, even real and serious troubles of mind or body. And it is also a fact that in the success of such cures, there are subsidiary or complementary influences at work, such as a sanguine disposition,

or a rigid regime which accomplish what possibly even drugs may not achieve.

Faith must know; for it is born of reason acquired through contact with and deduction from past knowledge, conscious or otherwise. When faith is instinctive, it is so through the light of past knowledge, guiding us in our present and future thoughts and acts. Belief when instinctive is so through blind impulse—the influence of the emotions rather than the reason. Therein lies the essential difference.

Having arrived at this stage of our inquiry, permit me now to offer a definition which I hope will be accepted as being reasonable and logical, namely: that True Faith is the consciousness and subconsciousness of past experience, or acquired knowledge directing our acts and intentions towards accomplishment, and when prompted by the attribute of Love, tends to bring about that which is worthy and wise for the true welfare of ourselves and others.

With this motive as our guide, let us now consider some of the qualities of faith, its influence over our lives and its relation to truth, knowledge and reason. For without reason it is clear that there cannot be conscious truth to us and therefore no knowledge (an accumulation of truth), without which also there can be no faith.

Suppose we tie a bandage over our eyes and ask some stranger in the street to lead us whither he wills, we should act so from lack of faith in ourselves, and a blind belief in someone of whom we have no knowledge, and it would not be strange if we were led astray and robbed. And such would

be equally true from an intellectual or moral point of view. If we blindly believe in the words or assertions of others, without exercising our individual reasoning faculty, we need not be surprised if we are imposed upon through sophistry and dogmatism.

The illustrations which are given in the course of this article may appear simple, but they are purposely so; for I hold that the simpler our language and method of reasoning the sooner is truth "realized." Sophistry and fine spun metaphors are but hindrances to clear exposition.

Now, let us consider faith and its relation to religious "belief." In the propagation of such belief, the assumpton of "divine revelation" or "inspiration" is the coping stone. Only by believing in, or accepting such "superhuman authority," are men induced to worship "God," whom man has made to say that "he who believeth not on me shall be in danger of the judgment, hell-fire," and of other sentiments which no supreme being, if he were all-powerful, just and merciful, would ever pronounce.

Many who teach such doctrines are no doubt sincere and devout in their mission, but that need not prevent us from criticising the methods of their propaganda, or of inquiring into the truth of their creeds or tenets. Only by such honest inquiry can we arrive at the truth, which by discussion and investigation is revealed to him who seeks.

Now, some of the methods by which these "beliefs" are disseminated strongly appeal to the emotions of mankind. The insidiousness of sophistry; the attractiveness of ritual; the gowns, surplices, cassocks and trappings of clerical and priestly officials and all the other paraphernalia of public wor-

ship have the effect of captivating and impressing the popular mind. They all serve to enhance the influence of dogmatic or sophistical preaching, surrounding it with factitious mystery and authority, and preventing free inquiry or questioning. At a political meeting or a popular lecture on non-religious matters, any one of the audience can intervene and ask questions or express dissent as to what has been uttered. But not so in a church where such audacious exercise of the gift of free speech would be quickly suppressed, and certainly is not welcomed.

Faith, however, if founded on truth and reason, fears no examination or inquiry. It requires no trappings or vestments with which to enforce or aid its "realization." Being the outcome of knowledge, it invites the fullest elucidation and explanation.

Better to doubt and believe not until you know the how, the why and the wherefor. By individual inquiry, which is merely the honest exercise of the reason, we help both intellectual and moral growth. But to supinely believe in any creed or doctrine, of which we have "no personal knowledge," is to stultify our progress in those higher qualities which alone render life worth living.

It is a common weakness of humanity to disregard the wise words of those near to us, exemplifying the truth of the saying that "familiarity breeds contempt." But it should not be so; for often lying at one's own door are the truest means for our aid and happiness. Familiarity should, on the contrary, enhance our knowledge, love and respect, otherwise there can be no truth or faith. If a more intimate knowledge of anything, a creed or a

personality, engenders "contempt" or indifference, there may be two reasons for that result: Either there is no truth therein, or we ourselves lack sincerity and steadfastness of purpose.

Why, therefore, do such "beliefs" create this atmosphere of aversion to inquiry and investigation? Why resent the honest "higher criticism" as contrary to "divine inspiration" and authority?

Faith is the ever present eye that sees, the light that guides towards endeavor and achievement. It is the light itself of all knowledge, that produces the evidence that calls our reason and will into action by which we realize the highest aspirations of our nature. It is the light that never fails us save through our own lack of will and steadfastness.

Faith does not merely "believe," but realizes through past knowledge, present perception and deduction. It does not wait for experience, but makes its own opportunities. It neither lags nor rushes ahead, but secure in knowledge and reason pursues its even way. The man, therefore, who possesses faith, while not disdaining questions or inquiry, but duly giving consideration to them, will confidently proceed to action. It is this faith which really "moves mountains." Being built on reason, it begets confidence, and possessing knowledge for its tools, it enables us to accomplish things which mere "belief" could never induce us even to attempt. It is this confidence which faith inspires and which belief does not create, which marks in my opinion the vital difference between the two attributes.

Faith is therefore confidence or assurance born of reason dwelling in the sub-conscious mind, and which, regardless of the time occupied in forming

the judgment of things, is at one time or another brought into the region of consciousness. Thus, according to our mental training, we instinctively choose, seemingly without a thought, between right and wrong. Hence instinct is simply the consciousness of past knowledge, presumably acquired or hereditary. For once the brain is in conscious possession of a truth, or what is considered a truth, in process of time it becomes sub-conscious, and the cells of our memory are the storehouses of such knowledge. According, therefore, as we store up the kind of thoughts, shall be the tendency of our instincts, good or bad, honest or untruthful. And so also, according to the degree of our exercise and culture of our reason, shall be the extent of our general knowledge.

Honest doubt may seem to be antagonistic to faith; but before we can arrive at true faith, as distinct from mere belief, we must first doubt and question until our reason is convinced. For truth and faith are co-related. We must individually realize from a rational standpoint the truth of a "faith" before we can honestly acclaim it, possess it, or act upon it. A Swiss guide, who has once led us across the most dangerous parts of the Alps, possesses our confidence and faith in future undertakings of the kind. But before we make our first journey we do not possess that faith, although we may believe, from what others have told us, that he will safely guide our footsteps. It is individual knowledge or experience which creates faith; belief is reliance on that of others. We must possess the truth ourselves before we can have real faith. And truth is our own mind's true realization of the actual

or real, past, present or future, of which faith through reason or judgment is composed. For according as we use our judgment shall our faith be strengthened.

Perseverance is a child of faith. There cannot be, as a general rule, perseverance, without evidence, or that innate feeling of confidence acquired through experience and observation. A man perseveres in a task because of his past and present knowledge of and faith in his ability, knowing that every attempt brings him nearer to his goal.

Faith conceives, perception finds the material. While reason builds the bridge; but we must persevere, despite difficulty and discouragement, else our faith must be weak. Confidence, perseverance and determination all take their root in the sub-soil of faith, and as they grow they are inspired, as it were, by our reason in the direction of endeavors and accomplishments. The astronomer Halley was enabled by his mathematical knowledge of the passage of previous comets to fix the date of the return of the comet of 1910 across the path of this earth. His faith was justified, because it was founded upon past knowledge, but he had to exercise his reason and persevere in his research before he could demonstrate his faith.

Faith, therefore, realizes and locates, while reason secures, demonstrates and builds, no less in intellectual or moral questions than in those of a physical character.

Faith must be ever-present. We can learn from the past, but we must build in the present, and thereby lay the foundations of our faith in the future. Faith gives us reason for planting to-day

the acorn of truth, knowing that to-morrow it will be a tree of knowledge.

True faith enables us to discern beauty and virtue in that which appears the opposite to others, seeing good growing out of evil, and strength in what seems to the superficial enquirer weakness. Thus to a man strong in his faith in any subject or endeavor, his moderation and restraint in word or action is mistaken for weakness, when it is essentially latent power.

All men are born equal in the sense that they have equal rights of justice, truth and all the higher compensations of life, and they become different and diverse only through the nature of their thoughts, which are potentialities, fashioned of the things we see, feel, know and comprehend. But to realize the truth of anything we must possess past or latent knowledge or experience which enables us to connect and perceive its true significance. Thus if we are told that the earth is round, we can only realize it, apart from mere belief, by the simple demonstrations, such as the disappearance of a ship on the ocean, and the last sight of its masts, or a personal trip around the world.

We then possess faith in that natural fact.

Our faith must therefore depend upon our thoughts, which again must be governed by our reason, in order that we may distinguish between what is true and what is false.

It is this law as regards the realization of faith which the scriptural "prophets" of old ignored in teaching beliefs founded on tradition, fable and mystery. They appealed not to the reason, but to the emotions and imaginations of mankind, and

thereby kept their followers or believers in a condition of moral and intellectual bondage. Not content with the sophistry of unproven doctrines of their own times, they bolstered them up with stories of miracles and supernatural signs of "divine revelation" and suppressed or discountenanced all inquiry or investigation. And in all times, the multitude are ready believers in mystery, hankering after what Spencer calls the unknowable.

But faith probes into what appears mysteries, and if they are knowable, converts them into realities and only by the exercise and cultivation of our reasoning faculty can what seems dark become light.

Faith being thus grounded on truth, is essentially unselfish. For whatever emanates from truth,—faith, love and all the higher attributes—are inimicable to selfishness.

It is the law of selfishness to stunt and impede moral and mental growth; it is antagonistic to intellectual progress. The greatest men in ancient philosophy, such as Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, Bacon and Confucius, still teach all modern thinkers the truest principles of rational philosophy. Their teaching was based fundamentally on the government of reason and the social regeneration of mankind was their true and unselfish aim.

Honesty is inseparable from true faith, for here again we can observe how intimately connected are all the higher qualities of the mind, such as truth, unselfishness, honesty and love, with faith.

But it should always be borne in mind that we must possess the faith ourselves. To rely upon another one's faith, even if true, without our own inner conviction of its truth, brings us back to the

leading apron of belief. There are always men who aspire to lead and dominate, too often from selfish and vain-glorious motives. They believe in certain things, sometimes quite honestly and conscientiously, but with whatever purpose they still seek to impose their ideas and opinions upon others by mere force of dogmatism. We cannot always tell the real motives of such self-elected leaders; we can only judge from results—the ultimate benefits of their propaganda to mankind.

It may be asked how are we to realize the truth of the words of those who are generally held in high esteem for their honesty of purpose, and whose faith is shared by many others. Even so, granting the purest of intentions on their part, we must still seek to realize the truth of the faith which they would desire us to accept.

No great exercise of reason, however, is necessary to show us at once that any belief or "faith" founded on tradition and mystery must be fundamentally fallacious and unreliable. From a practical point of view it must seem obvious that the ideas based on the tradition and conditions of the past cannot necessarily be equally applied to the present day when conditions are so different and the advance of free thought so vital and significant.

We have our problems of the present; let those of the past dead bury their dead. By thinking of and acting—with truth and faith for our guides—in the present, we prepare for the future. But we must clear our minds of cant, discard the fallacious theories and conceptions of past "beliefs," and give a reasoning ear to the "higher criticism" of the day and the developments of modern research.

We are all, however, too wont to rely upon the words of some book or books or the speech of others for our knowledge, instead of weighing and considering them by our own individual reason. Bacon was well aware of this disposition of most readers of books when he, himself a great scholar and reader of books, left for our guidance his wise advice on reading. For there can be no truth or otherwise (to us) within the pages of any book until we realize it within our own minds.

And I would again repeat that a truth to me cannot become a truth to you until you have truly realized the actuality or reality from which I have obtained that truth, and which you can only realize through experience, or the modification of the knowledge you yourself possess, apart from all mere belief or appearance.

The reading of history is an interesting study, and often increases our store of knowledge, but only in so far as it directs our attention to things about us which we can ourselves truly realize. Otherwise history is but tradition or hearsay. To many, any legend or fable is invested with the authority of an established and recognized historical fact, when there is really no foundation for the belief, and nothing within their knowledge or experience to justify belief. Such legends and stories are, however, the stock-in-trade of the "prophets," oracles and those who would beguile the unwary and unreasoning, knowing full well that they cannot stand the honest acid test of truth. When the literal meaning of the words suit their purpose they let them stand, but if they do not, they can always give interpretations to meet the exigencies of examina-

tion and challenge, thence it comes that certain books, or so many parts therein, are open to different constructions and are to this day the source of misunderstanding and dissension. And out of this diverse interpretation of the Scriptures, for instance, has grown and multiplied the various creeds and denominations of religion, Jewish, Christian, Protestant, Roman Catholic, and the various sects of Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists and the others. There are besides numerous other creeds, such as Mohammedanism, Mormonism, theosophy, spiritualism and other "isms" which are based on tradition and mysticism and "belief" in which can have no foundation in fact.

It appears, therefore, to be a misunderstanding and misconception of the true meaning of the word to call such beliefs "faiths." And it is for that reason among others that I have endeavored to show the distinction between the two names, or between that which is founded on truth and reason and that which is based on tradition and mystery.

When an honest inquirer challenges the truth of these dogmas and tenets, why do the various religious sects resent and evade discussion or sum up their answers with the usual formula of "Believe and doubt not"? It is because we are expected by these leaders of "morality" to examine not our reason but our credulity, in so far at least as their particular dogma is concerned.

Through suggestion, sophistry and mysticism, traditional belief still holds widespread sway over the minds of the many who take their religions ready-made for them by those whose profession it is to live by such means. And what has history

shown us as the results of all these religious beliefs? 1. That belief in the mysterious or unknowable has been the cause of innumerable wars, persecutions and martyrdoms, and all perpetrated in the name of "God," or a supreme being. 2. That at the same time such "God" is all-powerful, loving, merciful and just, and yet permits all this strife to take place. 3. That those who, through ignorance or honest doubt, do not believe in certain dogmas are doomed to suffer eternal punishment.

It is often claimed by religious leaders that good morals are impossible to those who do not believe. Such morals are referred to as truth, honesty, charity and unselfishness. But the known lives of many "unbelievers" have proved that this assumption is utterly untenable, for the names will occur to any reader of such having been among the greatest benefactors of humanity. And there are many thousands of those "without the pale" who are now living more honest, upright and unselfish lives than multitudes professing various religious creeds and dogmas.

As in the past, so in the present, the self-appointed leaders of religious dogma have ever sought to enforce their beliefs on others by every method save those of truth and reason. And when they are met by doubters or honest inquirers as to the fact of their creeds, they can produce no evidence that will appeal to a rational mind. Being unable to convince such inquirers or doubters, they fall back on words of (practically) excommunication, such as infidel, scoffer, skeptic, heretic, agnostic, and the like, all of which terms are supposed to place those so named

beyond the pale of present toleration or "future salvation."

And is it not, after all, merely position, ritual, vestments and the trappings with which these beliefs are surrounded that so many really worship, instead of the truth which they imagine those things represent? For truth is our servant, and cannot be worshipped, being but the simple realization of the actual in life and nature.

Neither in books inspired chiefly by tradition, nor in the words of the subtle and sophistical orator, however eloquent or high-placed in authority or reputation shall we be able to acquire truth, if our individual reason does not produce conviction. Without such conviction there can be no truth nor faith to us, and consequently no moral growth or intellectual development.

Before we possess true faith there must be doubt and questioning, otherwise we should be unable to distinguish the true from the false.

Faith is the eye that sees and the light that guides towards accomplishment and possession. If we propose to perform some task which requires time and effort to complete and are strong in our faith, we at once set about to gather our material, material or mental. We may meet with recurring difficulties and conditions arise calling for new treatment and renewed efforts, but we persevere until the object is achieved, because we have faith within us. Being strong in faith or confidence, we are enabled to cope with the new developments, knowing that they are the inevitable accompaniment of progress. With faith as our inspiration and support, we encounter difficulty and trouble with courage and persistence,

and apparent failure is transformed into success. Here is where past knowledge is brought to bear on our present thoughts and acts, leading to the attainment of new knowledge and the power to meet the requirements of new conditions.

Hence we see how past knowledge or experience, stored apparently in the cells of our memory and apparently forgotten, is called into action by our faith, in the midst of the fight—and aids us to accomplish what we endeavor. For we cannot possess faith without this conscious or sub-conscious knowledge.

It is, therefore, incumbent upon us to see that the knowledge we acquire and store in our minds should first be of such truth and virtue as will strengthen our faith in ourselves and enable us to reason justly as to the truth in others and the things around us.

For if we are irrational and unthinking, allowing the specious and the false to become instinctive, we consciously or unconsciously fetter our reasoning faculty and impede our moral and intellectual development.

Had this law of instinctive knowledge, as regards true faith, been honestly taught in our schools of ethics, and by religious sects, there would not be any occasion for the differences, discussions or misunderstandings so prevalent in the various religious creeds or denominations. And if such reason had prevailed in the past, what strife, misery and sorrow would have been spared in the struggles for clerical domination and leadership or the vain strivings after and worship of the mysterious and unknowable. But we still, many of us, worship the gods of Mammon —money, position, appearance, leadership and

notoriety, whilst at the same time we profess (contrary, even, to the advice of the Scriptures) to worship "God, the Supreme Being and Creator of all things." How much better are we than in the days of other "gods" and "prophets"?

For if we are not worshipping gods of "stocks and stones," or the mythical deities of the ancient Greeks, Romans or Egyptians, many of us pay homage to equally imaginary ideals, and sometimes those of a more sordid conception. It is not one particular religious belief, but all those founded on the negation of truth that are contrary to all true faith and rational understanding.

Such beliefs, as indicated in the foregoing pages, besides their adverse influence on moral and intellectual growth, have also the tendency to create self-satisfaction in the favored believers, who revolve all their lives in the narrow circles of their sects or cliques. They endanger a spirit of dogmatism, and of intolerance of the vivifying light of free thought and honest inquiry. They manifest a weak disposition of confirmity to established notions and fashions of thinking, and are inimical to the free assertion of doubts and independent inquiry.

Faith is the light of all science and the inspiration of endeavor and achievement. We cannot separate faith, which emanates from truth and reason, from science, with which, as far as our present knowledge goes, we realize the actual or real. Rational reasoning may be also termed scientific reasoning. By the aid of our past knowledge, or its modification and adaptation to the present we are enabled to construct realities for the future. By the exercise of the constructive imagination, the greater achieve-

ments of science are made possible. But it is by faith that we are encouraged to persevere and overcome the difficulties that cross the path in all efforts of independent research and endeavor.

Edison, through the strength of his faith, builds for months and years, "castles in the air" (apparently) before his marvellous conceptions are transformed into actualities.

Demosthenes, through faith in his own innate ability, and by the aid of practicing speech with pebbles in his mouth, overcame his weakness of stammering and became the greatest orator of his day.

Numerous other instances of the triumphs of faith will doubtless occur to the reader.

And they all demonstrate the truth that faith makes its own opportunities, and does not, like more "belief," wait until something turns up. It inspires research, promotes initiative and guides the vanguard of progress.

Its chief quality is fore-knowledge, and through perception, deduction and comparison, we are enabled to anticipate experience.

As it is in material things, so it is in matters of ethics. If we possess true faith, based on the indestructible rock of truth, no effort to destroy it need disturb us. But if we supinely rely on blind belief in the fallacious doctrines of religion, our reasoning faculty becomes impotent and our moral and intellectual progress is retarded. With true faith, as was truly said, one can "move mountains," but while with belief cannot move a molehill.

Through true faith, and demonstrations of scien-

tific truth, Galileo discovered that the earth moved, although the world believed it was still.

Many "prophets" have arisen who believed that this same earth would come to an end at a certain date, but their prognostications have somehow always miscarried.

When knowledge, the wick of our faith is kept well trimmed and replenished, the oil of reason enables it to burn with a steady light, guiding us with assurance towards the attainment of truth in all the relations of life. By faith only can we realize and possess all the higher compensations that make life worth living—friendship, love, honor, and the happiness of ministering to the welfare of others and the joy of rendering service to humanity. It is well to help our friends and those we come in daily contact with; it is still nobler to endeavor to help those of mankind beyond.

We cannot truly help others by endeavoring to impose our beliefs upon them, whether by methods of dogmatism or by the subtler weapons of sophistry, assumption and suggestion. We can, however, whenever opportunity offers, aid in spreading the light of true faith, and help others in realizing the fallacy of belief in the irrational creeds of tradition and mysticism. If these beliefs are shorn of the element of mystery, miracle and "divine inspiration," what remains of such "faiths"—so called? And yet, while no teacher of these creeds can give any reasonable foundation for the legends of the "miracles performed" in the interests of their religion, they continue to propound to the multitude the dogmas on which they are fundamentally based.

We read in the papers that some great exponent

of this species of religious belief is to give some illuminating sermon or lecture, and we go to hear some "enlightened" discourse on the truth of his "faith." But we hear only the old platitudes, the stereotyped ideas that have been utilized for ages in trying to square the circle; in propounding the "unknowable."

Our reason is not appealed to, we are not asked to realize the truth of his dogmas for ourselves, but to lay his words to heart, "doubt not and believe." Nothing could be simpler; it relieves us of the task of thinking for ourselves, and we need not trouble to ask any questions. In the past the honest doubter, the heretic, suffered persecution and death for venturing to question such beliefs, and even in the present day he is ostracized and maligned if he is known to question the "truth" of the "divine inspiration" of the different religions that hold sway over mankind.

The agnostic who will not surrender his reason to the beliefs and traditions of these self-appointed authorities on "divine revelation" because he is honest enough to declare that he does not know, is held up to reprobation as an outcast from polite, religious society, "without the pale" of possible salvation. Such is the idea of toleration of those who imagine themselves safely "within the pale;" such is their conception of charity of opinion, the noblest of virtues and the least practical by professing religious believers. Surely they cannot have much faith in their creeds when they fear the spirit of true inquiry.

True faith fears no opposition and welcomes inquiry and investigation. She has no need to dog-

matize, but speaks with reserve of what she knows, and is glad to impart her knowledge; but belief is always most sure when lacking evidence, and thus is always untrue. We can excuse ignorance or innocense in speaking an untruth on the authority from which they derive their apparent knowledge. Yet it should always be borne in mind that an unwitting falsehood is as injurious as a wilful one. Good intentions may palliate but do not prevent the evil consequences of untruth.

Without faith there cannot be true character or personality. Such is attained from our thoughts and acts, which must be grounded on truth. To possess only the thoughts of others, without realizing "within" ourselves their inherent truth, is to stultify our own individuality.

He who would have us blindly follow or imitate him does so for his own glorification or from ulterior motives. But he who would guide us in the way to build up our own character or personality through truth gives evidence of his concern for our welfare.

The pages of history are full of the glorification of this kind of leadership, the "prophets," despots and demagogues who sought to keep the multitudes in subjection to their creeds and dogmas. In religion, as well as in civil governments and social conditions, these leaders always aimed at selfish power and gratification at the expense of the people. It was their business to assume authority, "divine" or otherwise, and they imposed their domination on their subjects or followers by various means, by the sword, persecution, intimidation, dogma and sophistry. And in the present days, while the methods used are not of quite so drastic a character, as the

days when "might was right," there still remains largely inherent in mankind this ambition for power and influence over others. In religion it takes the form of subjecting people to various creeds and dogmatic beliefs, which are essentially exclusive, intolerant and opposed to all rational faith. They assume that good morals cannot be acquired except through their medium and daily fresh restrictions are placed on free thought, free speech and the natural enjoyment of life.

To truly teach good morals, through faith, truth and reason, such fallacious inspiration or authority is not required. To speak truly, to act honestly, and to deal justly wtih our fellow-men, can be learned in daily life without recourse to church, synagogue, temple or mosque.

It may be said that most people are not prepared to dispense with the forms of religion and the habits of public worship, that they are a guarantee of social order and an apparent help and consolation in the affairs of life. That may or may not be; mental delusions are often an apparent source of comfort and happiness. "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise," is a maxim that will naturally encourage some men to "continue in their folly." But instead of weakly cherishing our illusions, is it not in the long run better to shed them as worthless, and seek to replace them with a true realization of the actualities of life?

But men in high places, the would-be leaders of religious and social circles, find that their positions of authority and dictation can only be maintained by the credulity of the multitude and the unquestion-

ing reliance on the "obsolete" beliefs of tradition and mysticism.

And naturally they do not encourage the individual exercise of reason and inquiry.

Sectarianism is too often the seat of bigotry and intolerance, and the pregnant course of strife and differences between man and man, in both his public and private intercourse. We have seen that in the past it was the cause of many a religious war, and in the present it is still the source of dissension, selfishness and self-righteousness. Any particular creed is assumed by its followers to be the only true "faith," and they themselves the chosen and elect depositories of the truth. There is, perhaps, an outward tolerance of other sects, or those which do not materially differ from them as to fundamental hypotheses but there is always an undercurrant, and often a perceptible spirit and tendency of hostility or ostracism towards those "without the pale" of their particular "belief." There is also too apparent a rivalry between the various denominations which resolves itself, at the last, to a mere matter of new and costly buildings and the seeking of alms, bequests and increased stipends. It is not denied, of course, that, as the social fabric is now constituted, that there must be financial ways and means of carrying on every religious or other propaganda; the salient point is that lucre is most often the governing and actuating factor.

Faith feels her way when she cannot see, and doubts what she cannot comprehend. In no other way can progress be made in truth and true love, through the guidance of reason. For without faith there is no reason, faith being the atmosphere in

which reason must live, without which no progress can be made morally or intellectually and no true achievement. But it must be truth faith, which it has been endeavored to explain, and not mere factitious belief.

But the essential effect of the teaching of most religious beliefs is first to ignore the reasoning faculty, and secondly, as a natural consequence, to render true faith impossible.

Reforms and investigations into every conceivable condition of life are daily prosecuted, but great is the apathy as to the truth or otherwise of the creeds and dogmas preached from pulpit, rostrum or platform. It may be said that people are not forced to listen to such utterances, nor compelled to embrace any particular "faith" or "belief." And so a demagogue may incite to anarchy without legal restraint and yet be morally responsible for the subsequent acts of too credulous auditors. If, therefore, we would see true faith desseminated and false beliefs exposed, there should be searching examination of the religious tenets promulgated in our temples and tabernacles.

The trouble is that when false or disputable doctrines are preached from the pulpit, they are proclaimed as "inspired" truths, of which "there can be no question" and no one of the audience is invited or even tolerated to express doubt or request reasonable proofs of their actual fact. And if such honest investigation is denied, is it not because it is known or felt that such dogmas will not stand the test of reason, and that consequently beliefs based upon them are not of true faith? For if they were established upon truth as a rock, no amount of dis-

putation or questioning could shake their foundations. Is it not because they are built upon sand that screens and shutters are put up against the "least" breath of doubt, or enquiry?

For ages past we have been asking for and seeking the bread of truth, and have been handed by many well seeming people the stone of belief, the legacy of tradition and myth. Much knowledge can be derived from past history, and which, we can realize as connected with the actualities of the present. But religious "faiths" which are founded upon "miracles" of the past, and upon mysteries which are as "unknowable" now as then, cannot satisfy a reasoning mind and must surely be but broken reeds to rely upon in the conduct of life. For truth faith should enlighten our path towards truth, support us in our days work and inspire us in our future undertakings, so that with the aid of reason we may be enabled to distinguish between the false and the true.

Faith, in fine, is confidence born of reason evolved from the knowledge stored in our mind; and by perception and comparison we are enabled to form our judgment between right and wrong, pure and impure.

All desires spring from our thoughts, and so our actions are dictated. How vital it is, therefore, that our minds should store only those thoughts which are true and uplifting, so that our actions may become instinctively true and noble. For what we call instinct is only the subsconsciousness of past knowledge, acquired through personal or hereditary experience and its modifications. For when the conscious mind is impressed with a truth it is in

process of time transferred, as it were, to the subconscious memory, and permeates our apparently, unconscious habits and instincts. Thus our subconscious memory, the storehouse of instinct, derived from past knowledge or experience, inspires and constitutes our faith, and which will be true or false in accordance with the thoughts we harbour and allow to become instinctive. Hence the necessity of vigilance in seeing that we do not imbibe and adopt the thoughts and, ideas of others without realizing their true import. Only thus can we come into possession of truth, knowledge and wisdom and so strengthen our faith, the beacon light of progress.

Perseverance is a child of faith. For there can be no perseverence without knowledge or evidence, or that innate feeling of confidence which emanates from observation and experience, and which by virtue of our reason constitutes our faith. Faith and reason therefore form a connecting link by which we acquire the confidence, determination and perseverance which enables us to accomplish our aspirations and grow in moral and intellectual power.

Faith not only gathers and perceives, but conceives, builds and produces. Its glory is in action. It inspires a man to achieve what to others seems impossible. It was faith which prompted Napoleon to say "There shall be no Alps" and then set about building the ways and means of enabling his army to cross what seemed to all others insurmountable barriers. Here was a practical demonstration, more eloquent than words, of the ancient saying that "faith can remove mountains." Napoleon, through all his marvellous achievements was in-

spired, as he often said in faith in himself or in the "Star of his destiny." When his faith was strong, before the retreat from Russia, it carried him through from success to success; when it began to weaken, through various causes, defeat and discomfiture assailed him everywhere.

By faith a man realizes value in what others think worthless. The faith of Watts and Stephenson in steam, considered by all the world as useless beyond indicating the boiling point of a kettle, was the means by which we are now enabled to gird the earth so rapidly. And so as regards electricity, wireless telegraphy and all the other latent forces which nine men ignore and the tenth man uses, develops and masters for the service of mankind, through faith in their potential power.

By faith we are enabled to appreciate true love,—that which is noble and unselfish. By faith we are able to see the good that there lies, apparently concealed, within the worst of men, and the real beauty and intrinsic worth of what seems ugly, uncouth and repellant.

Chiefly, however, we must rely upon ourselves and not upon the mere words of others. We must find the truth within ourselves or we can possess no real faith. Finally, faith must be found in, and governed by our reason; all else that cannot run that gauntlet is but irrational belief. It cannot pass the muster of truth unless it can stand honest investigation. Let us be strong in faith and we shall not only grow in moral and intellectual strength ourselves, but also be enabled to help towards the welfare of others in the conduct of life.

In the foregoing pages an honest attempt has

been made to give a clear and simple definition of "faith" and its great power and influence upon our lives, and its vital difference with mere "belief," whether religious or non-sectarian. For the habit of "belief," as regards material things has the same origin as in subjects of ethics; the spirit of credulity and the non-exercise of the reason faculty.

As believers we too confidingly lean upon the words of "prophet and book," thereby neglecting the true realization within ourselves of the men, things and conditions around us. By belief in tradition and the "unknowable," we waste our time in vain imaginings, and are heedless of the actualities of life, and the present demands of social conditions.

Here, at the present time, are problems to be solved, and difficulties to be overcome, only by true faith in ourselves, and a just discrimination between what is true and false in all the relations of life.

Let us therefore be strong in faith, but let it be founded on the impregnable rock of truth, which we can only realize through the honest exercise of our own reasoning faculty.

THE TRUTH OF BELIEF.

"Believe in me and in my words,"—"accept all and ask no questions," or in other words "Be a sheep that I may be your shepherd and lead you whither I will and if it appears only to further my own ends, still believe that it is for your own "good." Such, indeed, is the simple meaning of "belief" as it was with the past, and is with ninety and nine of our present, so called religious moralists who vainly endeavor to make ancient and absolute conceptions of ethics conform with existing conditions. For the thoughts and teachings with which they would influence the multitude are based on mere tradition and fable, which they proclaim to be the inspiration of "divine truth," but of which they can give no rational evidence or proof to a reasoning mind.

And this instablilty of foundation for their "belief" is especially made manifest by their evasive answers to, or shirking of the questions: "How do you know?—"Why?"—"How?" and "Wherefor?" Or they may seek shelter under the sophistical words of some book, glibly quoting the dogmatic pronouncements of some ancient authority which may or may not contain some element of fact, but which more often are full of fallacies and misstatements as compared with the advanced thought of the present day. It is such belief that hinders the development of the reasoning faculty which alone distinguishes men from the lower animals,

and in various parts of the earth there still exist human beings, who from just this absence of reasoning power are on no higher intellectual plane than the beasts of the field. For it is by the development of our reasoning faculty that we attain, through the realization of truth our higher attributes. Thus then, let us consider the nature or quality of belief that we may know what virtues, if any, it contains, and what relation it bears to truth and knowledge.

Through truth and knowledge we acquire language by which we are enabled to interchange ideas with others, and attain the qualities which emanate from love (see love), honesty and honor, as well as the aspiration and will to accomplish those things most worthy for ourselves and others.

As it is by the exercise of our reasoning faculty that we acquire truth, it behooves us to be on our guard against belief which is one of the greatest hindrances to the development of our intellect.

As it is by the exercise of our reasoning faculty that we acquire truth, it behooves us to be on our guard against belief which is one of the greatest hindrances to the development of our intellect.

Consider, for instance, the conditions of primitive man who worshipped and humiliated himself before his gods of wood and stone, fashioned by his own hands. Why, we may ask, did those earthly progenitors of ours prostrate themselves before such worthless clay? The answer may be lightly given that it was simply because of their ignorance. But the truth lies deeper, and is worthy of reflection. These benighted pagans afford us a useful lesson. They did not use their reasoning

faculty and were governed by their emotions, sensations and imagination. They were ignorant of the real or actual from which alone truth can be secured. Desiring something, perhaps, which they imagined they could only obtain through the intercession of their gods, to avert some threatened calamity or to cure some disease, they worshipped and sacrificed to these stocks and stones. Such was their "belief." They imagined that their idols possessed some mysterious power, and offered up their supplications for its aid. They did not know that it is impossible for one to worship that of which he has come into the truth or knowledge.

Truth as realized by the brain is its servant and it is obvious cannot be worshipped; nor would any just "God," who in all ages is supposed to be the embodiment of truth seek the humiliation or supplications of poor mortals. But these idol worshippers, nevertheless, prostrated themselves before the shrine of mystery as evolved from their imagination, and sought for "superhuman" help through their various selfish desires.

It will be seen, therefore, that the dominant element of worship is that of the "unknowable." But these early "believers" in the mysterious power of gods of wood and stone, having acquired more knowledge, advance to the extent of discarding their brazen images and begin to worship the sun, moon, stars, fire, or anything which appears to possess unknown power. And as their knowledge widens and extends, and finding no satisfaction in their useless worship of these later gods, these they also renounce and adopt other gods for their religion.

Now, all these various "beliefs" are founded on superstition. They are the inevitable result of allowing the imagination to govern the mind instead of the reasoning faculty, through which alone can be attained the higher attributes of moral and intellectual power.

Just as belief, induced the pagans to worship their imaginary "gods," so is it the prop and mainstay of the creeds and dogmas of these latter days.

Let me give a simple illustration of belief as distinct from the realization of truth. Suppose that while out sailing in a boat some miles from shore I fell overboard, and I relate to you that without being able to swim, and with no possibility of regaining the boat, I walk on the waters and so safely reach the shore: And having heard from many sources that I was incapable of telling an untruth, and on the strength of such apparent information you state that you "believe" my assertion—what foundation of truth do you possess for your ready belief? You have not experienced, yourself, such a "miraculous" feat nor witnessed one, and you have no past knowledge (faith) in your subconscious mind to permit you to accept such an impossible story as being a true statement of fact. Consequently you cannot honestly accept my story as being true, and should you dogmatically state to others that you believe the report you would be unwittingly retailing what is false, and induce others, perhaps, to likewise believe in the statement. And in this way are erroneous "beliefs" propogated.

In the same manner are the legends of tradition employed to disseminate false creeds and doctrines. Something may be learned from tradition,

fable and mythology, but to found a "faith" on such illusory premises and to proclaim it as truth is to impose on the credulity of the ignorant and trustful.

Probably, however, you declare that not for a moment would you believe the story referred to, not only because the occurrence was physically impossible, according to the known laws of nature, but also because you had no experience or past knowledge in your own mind of the truth of such an incident. If, therefore, your common sense and exercise of your reasoning faculty will not allow you to accept such "information" when it is related as an occurrence in your lifetime, and not connected with religion, why should you or anyone except the "miracles" which are part of the various "beliefs" or religion? For it is the mystery connected with the beliefs that induce people to ignore their common sense which otherwise they exercise in their daily occupation.

Suppose, again, that you have been brought up from childhood under the wings of tradition and hereditary predelictions, and I submit certain truths which appear contrary to your "belief": It is quite likely that you may resent the expression of my views and pronounce me a "non-believer," an atheist, heretic or kindred names. This, of course, is a mere assumption, but it is nevertheless, the usual method by which "believers" meet any argument they cannot answer, however kindly the spirit in which the questions are conveyed. The tendency, therefore, of belief is to neglect and deny the power of reason in endeavoring to arrive at truth.

But, after all, it is through enquiry, investigation and disputation that truth is arrived at, and the acquisition of true knowledge and wisdom facilitated. On the other hand, blind belief evades rational consideration and rejects enlightenment. Moreover, to shun discussion and to close the eyes to the light of new knowledge is to impede intellectual and moral development, and to breed bigotry and dogmatism. It is also, no doubt, a matter of conformity. There are millions who adhere to their beliefs because they dislike to be out of the fashion and are fearful of differing in their opinions with others. From the force of habit also, they frequent the "palaces of belief," vaguely hoping to find truth disclosed therein from the mouths of the professors of morality. But they seek in vain. For a truth to me cannot become a truth to you unless you also truly realize the actuality or reality from which it appears to emanate. And when you cannot question the fact of the words and statements expounded, by the means of your own individual reason, how can you arrive at truth?

We should not fear to doubt, for honest doubt and an enquiring spirit help towards the realization of truth; it enables us to discard the false and attain the true. But belief, or the unquestioning acceptance of the mere words or assertions of those who assume the authority of the only accredited dispensers of truth, can only result in the paralysis of the reasoning faculty and the retardation of knowledge. For truth and knowledge can only grow through the exertion of our individual faculties. Mere belief is, therefore, funda-

mentally opposed to moral and intellectual progress. Without research there can be no discovery; without experiment and investigation no acquisition.

Position and established authority, have, however, still their powerful influence in the popular subjection to blind belief in various creeds and dogmas. It is a weakness of humanity to defer to the voice of "authority." What is declared to be truth from the palace of king or bishop, or the "Whitehouse" of president is eagerly accepted as "gospel truth," when the words of the dweller in the suburban house or country cottage is received with doubt, denial or indifference. Better to dwell within a humble cottage or shack where truth is, than in a mansion built on the sands of dishonesty. Better, also to be dumb and honest than eloquent in falsehood. The greatest thinkers and benefactors of mankind have not been always those in high positions—"in the seats of the mighty"—but often of low degree and humble circumstances. But they have been rich and powerful in knowledge and wisdom in seeking to arrive at truth and disclose it to mankind. Such a benefactor of humanity was Socrates who was unable to resign himself to death from the deadly cup of hemlock and yet serenely declare: "I am at least an honest man who lived to love all others"—or words to that effect.

Our habitual, cherished or hereditary beliefs are hard to move. Not until we reason for ourselves can we overcome the natural tendency to adhere to pet ideas and preconceived opinions. Egotism and selfishness are latent and inherent in most of us, and require self-discipline to be controlled and mastered. Only by cultivating an open and un-

biased frame of mind can we arrive at the real truth in all the problems of life: When we resent the well meant efforts of others to convince us of the fallacy of our beliefs it is evident that we are still in a state of subjection to habit tradition and environment. And how do people arrive at the condition of unquestioning belief? It is, no doubt very often, in the first place, hereditary and they are prepared to accept the dogmatic pronouncements which favour their personal inclinations. Therefore, when men in high positions of reputation, appearance and distincton lay down the law in matters of such belief, they accept it all without doubt or question. They allow in fact the most vital questions of ethics to be settled for them by the glib tongues of others. For one thing at least is clear: it saves a lot of individual thought and reasoning out. But it is none the less also clear that they thus become dependent on the will and words of others by such ready and blind belief.

The common multitude like to worship their heroes from afar,—those in high positions and pinnacles of renown. The man, also, in the pulpit or rostrum has always the advantage in imposing his ideas on his listeners for few, if any, have the courage or initiative to challenge his assertions. They are told in authoritative language to "believe in me" and ask no questions nor reason why. But why after all should honest enquiry be shirked and reasonable doubt be not investigated and considered?

"But," you may say, "would not this make of us all doubters? That may or may not be; but bet-

ter is it for us to be honest doubters and enquirers than irrational believers.

There is, of course, this connection between belief and unbelief, that through a knowledge of one you may find the other by presenting a fact contra to belief.

Those, therefore, who seek to refute the words of truth from the position of belief in authority without themselves possessing evidence within their own minds of the truth of their beliefs are untrue to themselves as well as to others. "To thyself be true" is one of the wisest of admonitions: But it may be asked, "Must I doubt when I cannot myself prove the assertions of another to be fact as agreeing with my own realization of the actuality from which it emanates?" That certainly is the most honest and wisest attitude of mind to assume, for otherwise we can never be sure of the difference between truth and mere belief. For it should not be forgotten that there cannot be a truth to us except through one own mind's true realization of the actuality or reality from which it springs. In other words, the thoughts or ideas of others can only hold for us either fact or falsehood, when we realize such as agreeing with or differing from the actual or real.

It is not necessary, however, in doubting the statements of others to be captious and financial. If the spirit of our inquiry be honest and conscientious, there can be no reasonable cause for complaint. Nor is it the intention of the writer to seek to shake the faith of readers in everything they may hold dear and precious. It is his honest purpose merely to help towards a better understanding

of the factitious forces and influences which appear to be directed in the service of morality but which when examined will be found to tend towards the suppression of free and correct thought.

Much can be learned from the history of the past, but it can only be truth to us when related to the conditions of the present, by which we can make comparisons, and through perception and the right exercise of our reasoning faculty, arrive at knowledge.

To grow in truth and knowledge, therefor, whether it be based on historical records or derived from our fathers, we must, if desirous of arriving at truth according to the conditions of the day and the advance of thought, cultivate assiduously an unbiased and broadminded spirit of enquiry. If also, we meet with contention and censure, we should learn to bear ourselves with composure, for we need not be disturbed as long as we possess the truth which is immovable and indestructible. And, should it happen that what you consider as truth is clearly and indisputably refuted by others, the honest course is to admit your conviction and accept the true elucidation which you have realized. For to hold fast to an opinion for the mere sake of argument, or from inborn stubbornness of disposition is contrary to a well balanced mind. It is well to be steadfast in truth; but it also requires courage to discard ingrained ideas and convictions, and cheerfully accept the new but true demonstrations of truth.

Then there is hereditary belief! Suppose, for example, that your parents, and family circle were brought up in a certain religious belief and were

content so to remain, except one of the number who expresses doubt as to the "truth" of their creed and questions them, in a kindly way, on what appears to him the fallacy of their belief. And should there result, as happens in many a home at present friction and disagreement in the home, to what must we attribute this disturbance? The dissenting member is seeking only the truth, and is open to conviction. It cannot surely be the presence of truth in the minds of all that circle. We are, therefore, compelled to conclude that it is the presence rather of belief, which will not stand questioning or examination. It is in fact, the absence of evidence or proof in such beliefs that obliges the professors of these creeds or dogmas to fall back on evasive and sophistical assertions.

Such stock phrases as "Judge not, for as ye judge so will ye be judged" and—"Believe in me and doubt not," and similar exhortations are commonly employed when honest questions are asked but which cannot be rationally answered.

Clerical power, when supported by established "authority" and tradition, and surrounded by the insignia and trappings of ritual has a strong influence, especially over the simple and illiterate. People fear to question what are considered orthodox statements, through lack of courage, initiative or, perhaps, indifference. Convention is easy; nonconformity or dissent troublesome and mind-searching. For it requires, after all, individual thinking and reasoning to arrive at the truth of anything.

Truth, moreover, is not to be found in the various creeds which are founded on mystery as related in the books which are considered the standard

authorities on the various religions of the world; for it must be obvious that what is obscure cannot be realized as truth in the mind. Nor can truth be worshipped as in the custom now and was in ages past, as regards "gods" or prophets. For a just, impartial and all-powerful "God" would not require either worship or supplication.

Many no doubt appear to draw comfort from their systems of belief. But after all, who are the principal beneficiaries of the practice of these beliefs? From a material point of view, glory or reputation, the prophets, priests and leaders of the sects of religion have always gathered the lion's share. We may, of course, live in a peaceful state of mind when undisturbed by a truth contrary to our belief. But the fact that the questioning of truth in our belief, whatever it may be, disturbs us, is a proof that such belief must be void of the foundation of truth. The going to church, synagogue or mosque to hear the time-worn dogmas expounded, becomes a habit. But if we are honest searchers after truth we soon find that the same old theories and tenets are continually rehearsed. We begin to realize that it is impossible for us to worship a truth which can only be a servant to us, and can only increase in power in accordance with the degree of knowledge which we have gained through experience and individual observation and deduction. For it is through reason, perception and comparison of what we already know—that we realize the truth of that which is presented for our consideration.

But the trump card, if we may so term it, in the hands of the leaders of these creeds is mysticism.

Without the element of mystery, no religion of the past would have existed, comparatively speaking, a day. It is the "unknowable" which appeals to the popular imagination. It is some "superhuman" power which is claimed to inspire these dogmas, the truth of which the mere believer "must not question." But is not this assumption of divine inspiration contrary to all rational understanding? And is not employed often for the purpose of luring us away from the realization of truth and knowledge and so confirm us in the attitude of unquestioning belief?

In this position we may continue, and perhaps remain content in our belief until something in the course of our life disturbs and unsettles our confidence in it. We become dissatisfied with the exposition of such belief by the leaders to whom we were wont to resort for relief from our doubts and perplexities. But in doing so we appeal to the wrong people, for they themselves have not come into the true realization of the how and wherefore of truth.

We, therefore, live in a "fools' paradise" when we are content to live in an atmosphere of belief, for we thereby sacrifice our moral and intellectual growth at the shrine of tradition and dogma.

It is, of cours, a comparatively easy matter for the educated and accomplished orator or leader to induce the simple and ignorant to belief in sophistry and in plausible words, and so keep them in mental bondage. For it is the natural disposition of the majority of mankind to believe rather than to doubt. There are always people who like their reasoning done for them by others, just as there are many who

like the material things of life accomplished for them without any efforts on their part.

And these creeds, founded mainly on tradition and mystery, are foisted upon the people by those whose superior education should have prevented them, if honest, in so taking undue advantage of the seeker after "religious consolation." It is such proselytism which breeds dogma and intoleration. And, as history has abundantly proved, it has been the fruitful cause of bitter strife, persecution and martyrdom. Whole libraries of books have been written on controversial points of religion, each author giving his own construction and ideas of "faith," but all based on submission and subjection to belief in a "God" of mystery. We see this spirit at its worst in the religious wars and crusades of the past, and we can now observe its pernicious effects on the civil affairs of those countries where religion interferes with both public and private affairs.

Fundamentally, religious "belief" is based on the mysterious or unknowable, which, after all, cannot have any direct connection with the teaching of ethics. True morals or a right conception of the duties and conduct of life can only be found in truth, realized in each individual mind. Why, therefore, should we squander valuable time and vain endeavors in seeking to penetrate what will always remain insoluble, the mystery of a "supreme being"?

"Belief" is, at least in the opinion of the writer, erroneously considered to have the same meaning as faith. It is true that if we analyze "religious belief" and "religious faith" they are practically identical.

Now, "Belief" and religious "Faith" are practically synonymous, if we take the popular accepta-

tion of their meaning. Let us consult a dictionary or an encyclopedia as to their definitions. Webster's dictionary gives the following meaning of Faith: "Belief; trust in the honesty and truth of another; the assent of the mind to divine revelation; unshaken adherence; fidelity, honesty; (Faith is an element distinct from fidelity and honesty); a system of doctrines or tenets." And Belief is given: "Assent to anything proposed or declared, and its acceptance as fact, by reason of the authority whence it proceeds, apart from personal knowledge; faith; the thing believed; the whole body of tenets held by the professors of any faith; a creed; a conviction."

Thus we see that, according to a recognized authority on the definition of words that "belief" is blind adherence to the "authority" of tenets held by the professor of any faith, creed or conviction, for it also says, "apart from personal knowledge." And yet, in this enlightened age, and with the dictionary meaning of the word before us, we still continue to worship through our belief in dogma, the truth of which we have no "personal knowledge."

While the definition of "faith" is very similar to that of belief, there is a somewhat wider meaning given to it, but to all intents and purposes, the two phrases are in the same class. Thus we see that "faith" is mere belief or trust in others, or adherence to a "system of doctrines or tenets" and "assent to divine revelation. Now, what is the general conception of "divine revelation"? Is it not "belief" or "faith" in what is mysterious and unknowable? It may be declared, and with truth, that the book in which such "faith" or belief is taught has a larger

sale now throughout the world than at any time in the world's history. Be that as it may, the growth in the circulation of a book does not always imply that all its contents are accepted as truth or knowledge. Much may be found within its pages of great interest and moral instruction, but there is also much that is fallacious and contrary to the ethics of higher thought. When so many interpretations are placed on certain passages, how are we to know which is the right one? But we are told that it is all "Divine truth," and we are bidden not to doubt or question. With all these books of religion it is the same, whether it be the Bible, the Koran, the Talmud, or the Book of Mormon. They are declared to be sacred and "inspired" by "Divine revelation," and the mystery of their origin is held to be above human criticism.

It is not my desire to disturb or hurt the feelings of anyone in my strictures on belief as applied to religion, but to help others in realizing the difference between truth and belief, for only then do we come into possession of truth, its how and wherefor. We must, in fact, realize the truth, as agreeing with the actual or real, within our own individual minds. As to the stories of tradition when they do not agree with the conditions of the times and are contrary to human reason, they are as of much help to the inquiring seeker after truth as a straw on the water is to the drowning man. Above all things we can conceive of, religion should be, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion; but when it is surrounded by mystery, sophistry and imposture, a rational mind can only doubt, if he does not absolutely deny.

But all these systems of religious "faith" require

in the end the surrender of individual reason, and is thereby the greatest possible hindrance to the acquisition of truth, and moral and intellectual development. And this is especially the case with the "masses," who depend so utterly for their guidance in the conduct of life upon the self-appointed oracles and teachers of morality. How should they (the masses) know better than those highly educated men of authority, position and apparently special knowledge of ethics? They, therefore, allow their reason to be subjected to the control of those prophets, preachers, priests and orators, whose profession it is, or should be, to help in the attainment of truth and knowledge. Instead, however, the people are still beguiled by the theories and tenets of false doctrines and creeds, based on nothing more substantial than tradition and mysticism.

And as it is in religion so it is in the affairs of every-day life, the people who easily "believe" are easily imposed upon in business or private matters. We are all too readly impressed with personal appearance, the assumtion of authority and a plausible tongue. Not that we should be ready to doubt the integrity of a friend, or to recognize the advantage of a distinguished position in life. But there is at the same time a general weakness to defer to those in high position and of imposing appearance, irrespective of his true moral worth. The crook and impostor are well aware of the undue importance of such outward respectability, and thus take advantage of the weakness of their believers. When, however, the crook is poorly dressed, although perhaps more deserving of pity or sympathy than his more fashionably attired brother, endeavors to make

you part with your goods, you are at once upon your guard, and take measures accordingly.

How, then, can we discover whether the "beliefs" of others are true, or what element of truth, if any, there is contained therein? That we can only arrive at by the individual exercise of our reasoning faculty, by inquiry and investigation. Whether it is from the pages of a book or from the lips of the teacher, we must think for ourselves and reason out the truth or falsity of the statements. Nor must we be unduly influenced by the "established authority" of the one, or the high reputation of the other; for if we would realize within our minds the right or wrong of anything, we must in the end use our own judgment, especially should we beware of the subtle suggestions, invidious sophistry and plausible manner of those who would impose their ideas upon us.

The habit of belief as regards religion, or creeds of philosophy, such as spiritualism, theosophy and the like, is what may be termed ultra-credulity. It predisposes us to believe what is boldly and dogmatically asserted; it numbs our faculty of reason and tends to subject us to the thoughts and wills of others.

But whilst we should weigh and consider the thoughts of others, we should also see to it that we do not ourselves assert dogmatically what at the time is only a truth to ourselves. For by persuasion and the appeal to reason is the true way to help others realize themselves the truth of your words. And it may be that what you consider a truth may only be a belief, and whilst you are not wilfully speaking false, yet it may be as injuriously as a conscious and premeditated untruth. Therefore, when we have

not experienced the actual or real in the past, or arrived at the truth through our reason by comparison and perception, we should, if we would be honest, suspend our judgment, or make it clear to others that our statements are merely reports or hearsay.

When we come in contact with those who profess certain beliefs, and who may seek to ridicule or gainsay our ideas of truth, it is well to preserve a kindly composure, for if the mind is open to conviction we need fear no controversy.

It is those who are dogmatic and arbitrary in their beliefs who cannot stand the light of truth as developed by the power of reason and who become disturbed by enquiry or exposition. We have seen that of late days even so mild and reverent a spirit of enquiry as is embodied in what has been termed the "higher criticism" is bitterly resented by ultra-orthodox believers.

What was the popular conception of a "God" in ancient times? There have been many "gods" or supreme beings—the God of the Jews, of the Mohammedans, as well as the diverse ones of the ancient civilization of the Romans, Greeks, Persians and Egyptians, and of the barbarians of Africa and Asia. But the essential and centre ideas of such deities were practically the same. They were supposed to be all-powerful and "superhuman." But man in all ages worshipped such gods from selfish motives. And in achieving victory in bloody wars against fellow men; success in plundering weaker people; relief from personal ills and terrors, and help in personal gratification. One tribe of the world believes they possess the only "God" of avail; other nations are equally sure that their

deities are the only true supreme beings. The original conception of "one supreme God as being all-powerful, just, merciful and good," was a noble one; but man in his ignorance, selfishness and desire of domination over others, sought a monoply in the protection and wisdom of this Deity, and invested him with attributes of partiality and unjustness. For if a "God" was wise, loving and just he would not have favored one people, but would have acquainted all with his divine protection and guidance. But everywhere throughout the world and in all ages, men in their selfishness and lust of power have endeavored to make "corners" in gods, just as the material egoists of the present day seek to make corners in wheat, sugar or steel.

It is only by sharing our thoughts with others, and welcoming the honest criticism of our beliefs that we can attain truth and grow in knowledge. Nor should we resent the exposure of what is false but rejoice that we are shown what is true. For by comparison and deduction we arrive at the truth, and we are able to distinguish between good and evil.

But dogmatically state a thing to be true on the mere authority of the words of others, is to be yourself uncertain of the truth, for such must be registered within your own mind as agreeing with the actual or real. Otherwise it is but belief derived from information, tradition or hearsay.

In the foregoing reflections it may appear that I have omitted much that bears on another aspect of belief; its better influence on our lives, but that is considered as more pertinent to its kindred subject of Faith (non-religious) and is there treated.

Having, I hope, thrown some light upon the different aspects of belief, and explained its true meaning and influence in the conduct of life, permit me to sum up some conclusions to which may be reasonably submitted:—

(1) That Belief is, fundamentally, the outcome (to us) of tradition, hearsay, etc., and is the natural result of ignorance of the actual or real, and is not, therefore truth nor fact; and that it is one of the greatest of hindrances to moral and intellectual growth and the acquisition of truth and knowledge.

(2) That to proclaim mere belief as being fact is either the result of the non-realization of truth or the work of imposition.

(3) That he who pronounces the thoughts contained in any book or the words of others as fact, without having himself experienced the actual or real which they should embody, cannot have realized the truth in his own mind.

(4) That to submit our ideas and hypotheses, or the statements of books or of men to honest investigation is the only true and honest course; for in this way we arrive at truth and grow in knowledge.

(5) That to stubbornly adhere to a false dogma from whatever source obtained, and to refuse to have it examined or controverted is to display a spirit of narrowness and bigotry. For truth once fully realized cannot be removed from a reasonable mind.

(6) That of our strife, hatred, trouble and sorrow emanate from the lack of truth, resulting from blind belief and intolerance.

(7) That the continued religious strife and unrest in various countries is because of the absence

of truth and toleration. For apart from morals, all religion is based on the mysterious or unknowable, derived mainly from tradition, and accepted through ignorance, selfishness or apathy.

(8) That Truth is our servant-master; while belief is despotism which cripples the reasoning faculty and retards the development of our higher attributes.

(9) That bigoted belief is opposed to the revelation of truth which it seeks to thwart or evade.

(10) That such belief is a deplorable evil and the cause of much disturbance in our homes, or meeting places, in fellow-intercourse, in our business and in religion. For having no proof or evidence that appeals to the reasoning mind it resorts to dogmatic assertion and open or covert methods of intimidation.

(11) That it engenders hypocrisy, vanity and selfishness, and trades upon the ignorance, simplicity or trustfulness of people.

In concluding this article, I hope I have been sufficiently clear, fair-minded and unbiased in my remarks, and I do not think that the foregoing conclusions can be reasonably controverted. And if I have helped any of my readers to realize the evil influence of blind belief, and the necessity of attaining truth through the honest exercise of reason, it is a service I gladly render as I would gratefully receive under similar conditions.

THE LIGHT OF TRUE LOVE.

For long we have been wont to say that "God is love." and that "God is truth." And why? Is it not because we cannot conceive of a true and loving "Ruler" or supreme being who was not the very embodiment of these virtues. We cannot imagine a just and all-powerful Deity not being the found of truth and love. For we know that there can be no justice without truth and no happiness in life without love. We can all comprehend in a measure the virtues contained in truth and love, but do we all fully realize their what and wherefor?

Now as truth is the mind's true realization of actualities, and as love is born of truth, it would seem that we cannot love that of which we know nothing. We love our relation or friends because we know of their existence and of their qualities. But how can we love that which we cannot understand, and in the realization of which we cannot exercise our reasoning faculty? And as both truth and love are based on reason, it does not seem rational or even possible, to love the mysterious and "unknowable."

Nor can a just and honest man take it upon himself to declare "this" or "that" to be of which he has no personal knowledge. For it is then but a mere matter of belief, which may or may not be fact agreeing with the actual or real. A falsehood is generally understood as being a wilful or conscious misstatement, but it should also be borne in

mind that an unwitting or unconscious misstatement is as injurious as a wilful one and sometimes even more so. For he who is reputed to be honest and makes an unwitting falsehood does greater harm than he who is not so reputed. And just as a plausible statement is often mistaken for truth, so is the superficial appearance of love often taken to be the real article.

The writer proposes, therefore, to try and locate and define the attributes of love, its true characteristics, and its great and beneficient influence upon our lives. But we will first consider the nature of certain qualities which appear to be of love, or which assume a kinship to it, such for example as selfishness, desire, habit; the affections, and emotions; sacrifice, worship and sorrow, all of which will be shown as distinct from love in its truest sense. It is not proposed to deal with these elements in all of their phases, but we can at least probe them to see what connection they can have with our subject. Let us then first consider—

SELFISHNESS.

Now, it will be observed that all nature is selfish, in a more or less degree. The winds we see destroying, and the floods devastating, fire devouring and lightning annihilating without regard to life; and all life from the lowest germ to man, preying one upon the other. It seems in fact, an inevitable law that all life can only live through the destruction of life. Hence, also the law of the survival of the fittest.

The germ preys upon organic life and the organic live upon the germ.

Let us postulate that life is motion, and that its chief sustenance is found in air, water and food, which are the chemical constituents of matter. Apart therefore from motion, thought and his kindred potentialities man is a chemical product, and can be reduced back to the original constituents of which his body or substance is composed. The natural instinct of man is like that of animals, to feed on the flesh of other animals with no regard to life. Such would appear to be the natural law of selfishness, which like ignorance was the chief characteristic of the natural man.

Selfishness therefore may be natural, but it is the most remote attribute of love which thinks not of self but of others. He who is wholly selfish, like the miser, thinks only of himself.

It follows that the more selfish a man, the more devoid is he of love; whilst he who thinks and does more for the good of the greatest number must possess the greatest love. For he that giveth naught neither loves nor is loved; but he who truly gives loves much and is loved in accordance with his giving. Love begets love.

If it be a fact that the natural man is selfish, it must follow that he who truly loves, through the realization of truth, is above the natural. And if that which is above nature is supernatural, then it would appear that the man who lives in truth and true love is super-natural, or as is sometimes called —"super-man" or "over-man."

But the "love" which is based on selfishness is not true love, whether it be love so called for man,

woman or child, or for material things, such as money, jewelery, pictures, books or horses. The absorbing "love" for another—the passion which considers only its relation to a particular person without regard for the feelings of others, which will even sacrifice their welfare, to gain the cherished object, is pure selfishness and not pure love which is disinterested and thoughtful of the interests not of one but of all brought within its sphere of action.

DESIRE.

Without this potential attribute it would be impossible to accomplish anything, and the stronger its hold upon us, the greater its motive power in the pursuit of any object. In illness a strong desire to live aids in recovery, just as an opposite feeling may have the contrary effect. Our desires may be healthy, pure and inspiring, but they may also be wholly selfish and ignoble. Later we will see how true love becomes the uplifter of all desire, directing it in the true channels of noble endeavor where it becomes purified and strengthened.

Desire in its purest form may therefore be an element of true love, inspiring noble service for the welfare of not only those near and dear to us but also in a wider sense as embracing all humanity. As that phase of the subject will be considered in the course of our enquiry, we will now briefly refer to the element of—

HABIT.

We often hear it said that "he loves his glass" or his "pipe," or that "she loves to be in the fashion," and many similar expressions, when in fact such habits have nothing whatever to do with love. For we know that these habits may tend to enslave, and are chiefly indulged in for the gratification of an appetite or for purposes of attraction or vain-glory. Such habits may, of course, be innocent and harmless enough and may even be a source of consolation, but they are also often wholly selfish in their nature, and injurious in their effects. We see how over-indulgence in strong drink, for example, enslaving the mind, may tend towards the degradation of character, bring about the loss of material wealth and hinder intellectual growth. All other habits also when allowed to enslave the mind have a deleterious effect on character, a contrary influence in fact to that of love which is ennobling. We cannot, therefore, love through mere desire or habit the things we seek to use for our own pleasure or gratification for such are but mere instruments of more or less selfish indulgence. To form good habits is of course a worthy and commendable object in life, but whether "good" or "bad" they should never become our masters. What may be a good habit to one may be a bad one to another; what is one man's food may be another man's poison. But whatever our habits, and they should of course, be beneficial to ourselves and helpful towards others, they should be our servants. If they are in our true service we can also use them in the service of others.

We will now deal with another aspect of our main subject, namely the passions, and see what influence they have on love.

PASSIONS.

When Plato advocated what is now known as "platonic love" or non-sexual love, few no doubt gave ear to his advice, or comprehended its true significance. Even today, comparatively few appreciate or realize the truth that the passions are essentially selfish and therefore distinct from love.

We can understand, of course, the passions being employed to obtain any selfish end desired, and without the least semblance of what may be rightly termed love. But it will also be granted that after the passions are long dead, love may ripen in the fall or winter of life through community of interests and a true appreciation and realization of certain loveable attributes of the mind. The passions are therefore, primarily selfish ,and therefore distinct from love which is unselfish in motive and object.

At the same time, it will also be seen that love purifies the passions, as well as all the qualities we may possess. It refines our habits, desires and passions from all that is base and unworthy, such as anger or hatred. We may profess to hate vice and think we thus love virtue, but true love cannot hate. Hatred, jealousy and kindred feelings are but weakness foreign to love which is strong in unselfishness.

We may become disturbed and resent the words or acts of others who may be advocating what ap-

pears to us contrary to truth and justice, but we do not advance our cause by lack of forbearance. If we possess truth and love no opposition, misunderstanding or calumny need disturb us, for we are all in possession of our own thoughts and they cannot be taken away from us. And as love is essentially composed of tolerance and sympathy we cannot possess it if we allow our passions to hold sway. If in the heat of argument, or when we hear our charatcer or conduct maligned, or from any other irritating cause we permit ourselves to "lose our tempers," we merely fan the fire of anger or hatred in the minds of our adversaries; for like engenders like. But if we possess ourselves in patience and remain calm amidst the tumult of the angry words of others we acquire a great power, and influence over our opponents whose strength is dissipated in passion. And if we display the spirit of love in toleration, sympathy, and open-mindedness, we become not only strengthened ourselves, but we are enabled to impart a like spirit in those with whom we come in contact.

For tolerance is a phase of passion contrary to both truth and love. When we fear to listen to thoughts or ideas which do not appear to agree with our own it must be that we do not feel secure in our convictions, the truth of which we do not fully realize. For he who possesses the truth knows no doubt or fear. Knowing that truth is indestructible, his love will be evidenced in toleration, sympathy and charity to others whether differing from him or not.

But such toleration does not imply submission to or acceptance of unjust words or acts. On the

contrary, by restrain—our passions, we are able to submit our view-point and assert our just rights whatever they may be. By commanding ourselves, we become commanders of others. Discipline of the natural passions of humanity enable us to rise above them. For truth and love appeal to the reason, not to the passions, beliefs or predilections of the mind.

It will, I think, be generally agreed that the passions, as such, are essentially selfish and therefore inimical to love. We will suppose therefore that we have dispensed with their services and will now consider another phase of our subject namely—

THE EMOTIONS.

Now, the emotions are akin to the passions in so far that they are also conducive to a selfish or disturbed state of mind. It is true that the emotions are often a source of pleasure to us when produced by a cultivated or natural taste for poetry, music or painting. But even then the emotions alone are not safe guides, unless controlled by culture and reason, to the appreciation of the best and truest realizations of these arts. How much less so, therefore, when they are allowed to direct or sway us in our thoughts and convictions of the serious problems of life.

Take the art of music. A cultured musician can listen with appreciation to a rendering of Bach or Wagner by an experienced and desterous performer; but a similar piece given by an unskilful musician is at once discovered by the delicate ear

to be false in touch, tone and note, although it may be rapturously applauded by those whose artistic emotions in music have not been cultivated.

He therefore enjoys to the fullest extent that of which he is master. An appreciation of music, or any art, through the emotions, is comparative. We may imagine the rendering of one of Beethoven's Sonatas by a clever amateur well nigh perfect until we hear it from the hands of a Paderwski or Hoffman, when our standard of appreciation is considerably raised. And so it is with the awakening of the emotions in other directions. If we allow our emotions to sway us we may be led hither and thither like the rats by the piper of Hamlin.

We listen to the speech of some greater or lesser orator of reputation and authority. We are attracted by his plausible manner, his eloquent voice, his glowing language, the subtly of his words or the power of his declamation, all of which appeal to our emotions and we are captivated and perhaps entirely subjected to the influence of the whole performance. And so we may remain in the "belief" that we have heard the words of truth and wisdom.

But if we submit our emotions so produced to self-analysis, and begin to reason ourselves as to the truth of what we have heard, we may perchance discover that all the discourse we had so complacently accepted was pure sophistry or downright fallacy. We must then acknowledge that our emotions had played us false, had led us astray, and that only the light of our own reason had delivered us from our false beliefs, or erroneous conceptions. It is not only, however, that eloquence of speech and an attractive personality appeal to our

emotions, but the surroundings of vestments, the mystery of ritual and the atmosphere of assumed "divine revelation" all aid in leading the reason captive. Perhaps the same thoughts conveyed to us at a quiet informal interview with the speaker would have no great impression upon our minds and we may even question the truth of the sentiments he uttered, our emotions not having dominated our reasoning powers. Hence we are often disposed to ignore, or treat with but scant attention the well meant advice or knowledge offered by our next door neighbor, but when uttered from some pedestal of "authority" and in tones of dogma, we are too often inclined to take the words of the high placed oracle as infalliable and readily accept and believe without resort to the tribunal of our reasoning faculty. And all the time mayhap the speaker was more ignorant of the truth of his subject than ourselves.

Thus it will be seen that while the emotions may serve a useful purpose when rightly applied to worthy objects, and controlled by reason, they tend to obscure truth and pervert love when allowed to predominate over reason.

As our emotions are therefore not a true guide to love, if the foregoing line of reasoning be correct, let us now examine another aspect of our enquiry and which is popularly supposed to have a very close connection with love.

WORSHIP.

In referring to this phase of our subject, we should deal with it with the greatest circumspection

and consideration for the feelings and convictions of those who consider it of a sacred or "holy" character. For there are many who think that the act of worship is the highest form of virtue and is above discussion. But in putting the following views on the subject before our readers, there is no desire to be what is termed captiously irreverent towards such feelings. There is a sense in which we may respect the convictions of others, even although we cannot recognize their "truth or wisdom." We will consider therefore in that spirit, what truth or wisdom there is in worshipping any object of love. It will be admitted that we cannot worship the air we breathe or any tangible thing in our possessions. These things we possess and may enjoy, and the amount of pleasure, conscious, or otherwise, we derive from them will be in accordance with the value we ourselves place upon them. For the value of anything we desire or possess each one creates for himself. For a gold piece to you may have only the value of a penny to me, or vice versa. A diamond worth thousands of dollars to you or me may only be worth a dollar musket to the savage. A Turner or a Raphel picture may be a masterpiece to one; to another it has not the value of a dime chromo. And so also with all things material, and all mental conceptions.

It will be seen, therefore, that all the things we possess or realize become instruments which we use for the gratification of our desires, and perchance for the welfare of others, while the things we seek to possess are those which we desire to use, or of which we seek to become master. This being so, it follows that all things and all thought which we

have come into the full realization of are but servants or tools to us. If this also is true it seems manifest that truth, the sustenance of all true love and of all our higher attributes, cannot be worshipped. For truth can only be to you your own mind's true realization of the actualities or realities in life and nature, past, present and future. If, therefore, truth cannot be worshipped, any act of worship must be directed towards the mysterious or that which is unknowable, or what cannot be a realizable truth to us. And if we must know before we can love, how can such worship be true?

It may be argued that "all men worship something." While this may in a sense be fact in so far as many of all tribes and nations have worshipped things or ideas of every description, there have also been many in the past as in the present who have abstained from both public and private worship, from rational reasons or from indifference. Many of those also who did worship some "god" or deity, have freely admitted—when safe to do so—that they have been actuated, not by any innate conception of the truth or benefit of such acts, but by reasons of habit, tradition and the force of public opinion.

But assuming that all men did so worship in the past, such need not prevent us in this enlightened age of rising above such acts of useless humiliation or supplication. For that which is not of truth must be either false or unknowable.

It must seem manifest, therefore, that the different forms of worship, or the adoration of things or conceptions of which we do not possess the truth within our own minds is not only irrational but

detrimental to our own moral and intellectual development, and is a vain tribute to a deity of the imagination. Of what avail, indeed, all such worship or supplication, however sincere the intention or object. A rational, nay a humane mind cannot conceive of love being subject to the domination which worship and supplication implies. A just ruler, whose chief attributes are truth and love would seek to guide and help his subjects through kindness and unselfishness, not through the fear of punishment here or "hereafter," or as a reward for adoration, prayer and supplication.

Love, as based on truth, is the embodiment of all the noblest qualities that the human mind can conceive of; its true aim is the welfare of all mankind and requires no tribute of worship or act of humiliation.

True love is true socialism, in so far that we are all equal in love which demands not and threatens not, but gives of its bounty for the good of all. Only when this conception of love becomes universally realized will the brotherhood of man become possible. There will then be no necessity or desire to worship at the shrine of what is unknowable, and no fear of possible retribution for the neglect of acts of humiliation, prayer, sacrifice or supplication. For love is found only in the expression and act of giving, of service to others—the "greatest good for the greatest number," which means all humanity.

In primitive times, men worshipped idols of "stocks and stones," and later, as knowledge slowly advanced, the sun, stars, and "gods" representing various ideas or conceptions of power or authority.

Then still later was evolved the worship of the idea of a "creator" of the universe, and from thence has been evolved all the various dogmas and creeds of mysticism known in past or present history. But whatever the idea or conception, the purpose of worship has been the same: The propitation of a deity.

We are asked to worship a "god" who is supposed to be the embodiment of all good, and yet man in the semblance of "prophets" or seers have endowed him with such attributes of wrath, revenge and punishment that he requires to be worshipped or propiated.

If it be true that "God is Love," and truth, then love and truth alone should be our conception of "God." But man in his ignorance of truth has created a "god" after his own image with the difference of greater power, of more terrible wrath,—of "eternal punishment." And so by means of tradition, dogmatism and mysticism have the self-appointed teachers of morals and "revealers of a future life," by the assumption of "divine inspiration," sought to keep the people from the possession of truth and knowledge of which can only be found in the true realization of the actualities or realities of life and nature.

It is because people have not known the what and wherefore of truth and love that so many wars and persecutions have from time immemorial distinguished religious propaganda. Many are the martyrs who have died in upholding their belief in various creeds founded on tradition and mystery, as taught by the "prophets," priests and leaders of the passing age.

Truth and love, as realized within our own minds and as applied to our conduct of life to the realities of today, are our only true and sure guide. But belief in and worship of mysticism or the unknowable can only disturb our peace of mind, hinder our intellectual development, and tend to divert our attention from the service of others here and now.

These prophets and priests in their conception of a "God" of wrath, also pronounce him to be partial and unjust when they assume that their creed or dogma is the only one that contains the "truth." For surely a just "god" would not reveal himself only to a "chosen few," and withhold the truth from the many. And yet such is the substance of their teaching through dogma or suggestion, demanding "belief" without doubt or question. And if it is, as we submitted in foregoing pages, impossible to love that of which we know nothing, neither is it possible to express such love by acts of worship, prayer or supplication, which imply propiation, fear and incertitude of personal "salvation."

For he who possesseth all need ask for nothing, neither is it possible to express such love by acts of worship, prayer or supplication, which imply propiation, fear and incertitude of personal "salvation."

Nor would "he" demand or suggest tributes of worship and acts of prostration which are, in fact, only man's conception of what is due to a despot, and not that of what a just and loving ruler would require or seek.

The recognition of this truth, as regards the uselessness or affectation of worship will eventually come home to the mind of any man who exercises

his reason. It is of course, not just to impute motives from our own mere impressions, but many of the most regular and devoted worshippers will admit that their acts of adoration and their offerings of prayer are the result of a habit and a concession to the opinions or feelings of others. So prone are most people to acquiesce with established forms of ritual and ceremony, rather than disturb or shock the opinions of people whose mental outlook is based on belief in the doctrines of tradition. Having found that worship is not essential to true love, we will now consider another phase of our subject, namely—

SORROW.

Sorrow or grief is a natural feeling of the mind, but its expression and indulgences is often misapplied or preverted. Let us take an illustration.

We hear of an accident in some foreign land or distant place, whereby many lives are lost in a shipwreck or railway disaster. We read the news with a cursory expression of sympathy, and dismiss the subject from our minds, little or no emotion of sorrow being aroused because of the distance of the scene of the tragedy and because we know no one who was a victim or witness. If the accident occurs in an adjoining state or town we take a greater interest therein, and our emotions of sorrow or regret become more excited. But when such an accident occurs in our own town we become disturbed and if we are acquainted with any of the victims or witnesses, the shock of the event and the sadness

or sorrow of the consequences are forcibly brought home to our minds. It will thus be seen that however sincere our feelings of sorrow and expression of regret, that there is a certain element of selfishness when it is only exhibited when the tragedy affects those we know and when it appears to disturb the condition of our environment. We mourn for what we have lost or may be about to lose, and in proportion to the intensity of our sorrow, as affecting our own individual interests or affections does it partake of selfishness.

Let me give another illustration, of a case within my own experience, and which I have given before in my article on "Friendship," but which is also applicable to the present subject. A mother of the age of seventy odd years ministered for months with loving anxiety, to the wants and comforts of a son who was ill with a lingering disease. Death comes and with it sorrow overwhelms the aged mother, and much weeping follows the sad event. But an elder son having realized the harmful effect of such upon his mother went to her, after the body had been dressed and asked her to take the last look at the body of the deceased loved one, after which he said to her: "Mother, dear, why your tears? Are you crying for Harry, or are you not grieving for what you have lost dear, in him? And if so, do you not see that such is but selfishness. For if Harry could speak he would surely say, 'Mother, why mourn for what you have lost in me when I am now free from all my troubles?' And can you not see that all your tears can do no good to your lost one, and can only tend to disturb the peace of mind of those left, who are near and dear to you,

and is weakening your whole being. Such, mother, is all your tears can do. Therefore be brave and weather sorrow's storm, for your grief is distressing to those about you."

After these few words of consolation the good soul realized the wisdom of the words and was spared many days of useless and enfeebling grief. But the next day friends with mournful countenances began to gather and on the son's return to the house in the evening he found several of these visitors dumb with grief while a little sister sat sobbing as if her heart would break. And he said to her: "Daisy, do be reasonable, for it is only your own selfishness which is causing your tears. For you are crying not for Harry, but only for what you have lost in him; come therefore, and dry your tears, for they can only harm yourself and distress others." In a few minutes she realized the wisdom of his words and ceased her unavailing tears. But the next day a well-intentioned preacher called, and with a gloomy face and words of solemn and mournful tone soon had the mother and daughters again bathed in tears, and again the son was called to cheer and console them.

This is a simple illustration of what, alas! occurs in many a home, showing the uselessness and foolishness of indulging in sorrow and lamentation. It is true that we do not all possess philosophical minds, but we can realize, if reasonable the difference between unavailing mourning and the comfort of cheerful consolation.

In discussing the above subject with a friend, he said:— "I have often noticed that when my baby hurts herself she always looks at me and from the

expression on my face she either cries or smiles." By this you will see how our children are unconsciously taught to interpret and magnify their troubles when if we could only learn to smile away their little troubles they in after life would also learn to bear with cheerfulness and resignation whatever ills or woes they have to meet. Therein lies the truest wisdom. For often our troubles and disappointments are but "blessings in disguise" and help us to grow in wisdom. It is, therefore, not so true that "blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted," as that blessed are they who mourn not for they shall acquire great strength of wisdom. In that sense, tears and lamentations are but sources of weakness and depression. The potentialities of our thoughts make or mar the joys of life.

It behooves us therefore to see that our thoughts are based on truth as distinct from mere belief, that we be not unduly influenced by the words of tradition and mysticism and our aims in life unsettled or disturbed by useless thoughts on the unknowable.

A friend once said to me that the loss of a son and the sorrow of his mind caused thereby exercised great influence over his mind for the better, and while he thus spoke he was unconsciously revealing to me that, previous to the sad event he had been lacking in certain virtues. In the course of further conversation it appeared that he had sunk into a settled melancholy, and instead of gaining strength and wisdom, had become obsessed by belief in certain religious dogmas and mysticism, which to a reasoning mind possess no truth save

in the measure of pure morals, as applied to this life, that they may disclose.

A potent factor in the teaching of this mysticism is suggestion, which when employed even with a good motive is delusive in its ultimate effect, for it tends to obscure rather than reveal the truth. If the purpose of suggestion in religious propaganda be the promise of a sure reward in a better "future life," then it might be thought that at the departure of a dear friend or near relative we should rejoice rather than sorrow when the inevitable arrives; but when, according to the limits of our human understanding, we may not know, how can we either mourn or be glad? For we go to that "bourn from whence no traveller returns."

But we know at least that true love is born of truth, and that one of its chief aims is to console and cheer those who would mourn by dwelling not in vain regrets, sorrow and repining, but by inspiring fresh courage and efforts in helping those still with us. The spirit of those who, when nearing death left instructions for no mourning garb or signs to be worn at their decease, or no public funerals to be held, is after all the most unselfish and truest course to pursue. Such are those, too, who have lived worthy lives, according to their light, and who in their last words have enjoined upon their surviving friends their desire that there should be no mourning or regret. We may not help regretting the death of those near and dear to us, but we cannot help them, ourselves or others by observing outward signs and expressions of grief. With these few words upon such a delicate question let us consider another subject which is often mis-

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understood in its application to love, and to which we will now briefly refer—

SACRIFICE.

In ages past, and even in our present day, sacrifice in some form or another, has been often regarded and employed and taught as the highest form of virtue, the last tribute indeed, of love or worship of some duty or conception of duty. Too often, alas! it has been only an instrument of imposture, depotism or religious fanaticism. What, in the first place is meant by sacrifice? Let us take the dictionary definition of the word:—"The act of sacrificing or offering to a deity, especially a victim on an altar; destruction or giving up one thing for another; to offer to God or a deity in worship; to destroy or surrender to gain some other object; to devote with loss; kill; to offer sacrifice."

In the earliest biblical records we read that the sacrifice not only of animals but of human creatures on altars, to propitiate the wrath of a deity, was a fundamental tenet of religion. Even the sacrifice of a son by his father, and he a so-called "prophet"! Can we imagine anything more abhorrent than either the desire or the acceptance of such an atrocious deed of fanaticism, in the name of an "almighty" and just creator of the universe? Of course, we are more humane than in the days of these "prophets," whose contemplated human sacrifices would have been called murder or infanticide and been rewarded by death. And even the sacrifice of a bullock or ram would not now be over-

looked by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. And yet, such conceptions of worship to a great deity formed one of the cardinal principles of a religion still "believed" in, if it is not strictly followed in all its ancient and barbarous laws.

Again we are told that sacrifice means "to destroy or give up one thing for another," which is probably foolishness on the part of one and selfishness or imposition on the part of the other. "To offer to God or a deity in worship," which being interpreted means sacrificing body, mind and material possessions to some imaginary despot—who if actual would be the incarnation of selfishness—but in reality to the support of priestly or clerical domination and all that such implies. And it is by such means, even in this enlightened century, that the leaders of various creeds throughout the world fatten upon the credulity or "belief" of millions, ostensibly to maintain and spread their gospels (or ideas) and incidentally to build their palaces and mansions and acquire their standard oil shares and acres of land.

From such ideas of sacrifice have different religions sprung. In the past it was human lives, animals and precious jewels; in the present it is the sacrifice professedly of money and (as a corollary) the sacrifice of the reasoning faculty to some belief or dogma.

It is by such and similar methods that numerous religious creeds have been systematically employed to keep people "within their folds," or in bondage to irrational belief. For the virtual surrender of "sacrifice of a follower's or "believer's" reasoning

faculty has been their chief object, conscious or otherwise, apart from the morals they may contain as applicable to the conduct of life.

Thus, the morals or ethics which are taught in all the religious books of the past or present have been founded on, and evolved from, human experience and knowledge; but the miracles, the predictions and all the mysticism which form the foundation of religions are but delusions and contrary to all human reason.

The idea of sacrifice played a great part in religious history for ages past and was the direct or indirect cause of the many martyrdoms, crucifictions and persecutions that in those days so terribly signalised "man's inhumanity to man." In the name of sacrifice to a deity men did not hesitate to torture and put to death those who did not accept their particular belief; and the victims themselves were willing to endure all with the same conviction of sacrificing themselves as an act of atonement or propitiation to the god of their own "faith." These bad old days are happily gone forever, but "sacrifice, in some form or another is still an element in different religious creeds.

The true meaning of sacrifice is not always clearly understood. To give a portion of our wealth, or to forego some personal pleasure for the benefit of another, may be praiseworthy, but it is not sacrifice. we do not then give all, and there is, therefore, still an element of prudence, even selfishness or a certain consideration of self in such partial acts of giving. Especially is this the case when the gift, or the act of renunciation is dictated as circumscribed by our predilections for a particular creed or cause to the

exclusion of others. To give of our money or possessions to the Christian Science Church or any other particular creed is not sacrifice, if we are simply gratifying our individual feelings of exclusive devotion, whether the act be done ostentatiously or privately.

In like manner, our acts of giving for those within our own family or narrow circle are worthy, of course, of all praise, but are not yet sacrifice, for we are actuated by our feelings, natural enough, of kith and kinship, or of friendly ties and environments.

We often hear of some one or other losing his life in trying to save another from some imminent danger, and we say that he "sacrificed" himself in so doing. We may or may not be correct in so thinking, for it is possible that there may not be any thought or intention of sacrifice prompting the act, and may have even been performed from motives of emulation, applause or other ulterior object.

Let us consider a few illustrations. A particular situation arises when a number of people are in imminent danger of losing their lives, say, in an overladen boat in a stormy sea, and which disaster can only be averted by the "sacrifice" of one or two, who ease the boat by jumping into the sea and are drowned. In so doing they have performed an heroic act for the benefit of others. And yet we may ask ourselves, was it a pure and disinterested act of sacrifice? For taking the situation as a whole we have to consider that probably all (including the one or two who were drowned) would have lost their lives had this act not been performed, and that the apparent act of sacrifice was, perhaps, only a

matter of anticipating the inevitable by a short time.

Take another illustration. A soldier observing on a battlefield a helpless comrade in danger of death, rushes to the front and rescues him, but loses his own life. In this we have another act of heroism. Yet here again we cannot say that it is an act of "sacrifice." For, although the soldier may have known he was taking a great risk of losing his own life, he still thought and hoped to return safely with his rescued friend. There was, in fact, no intention of sacrificing his life; it was a case of simply miscalculating his chances, heroic as the deed may have been; it seems, therefore very difficult to discover a true act of pure sacrifice.

During the late Russo-Japanese war, a Japanese soldier is reported to have taken his own life voluntarily, in order to accomplish the destruction of an enemy's ship, and in this it would seem we have a clear case of sacrifice. But we may ask what prompted the act and what was the result? In the first place, the act was prompted, admittedly, by considerations of self-glory and the triumph of his own sect of humanity over another branch of it—his enemy; and in the second place, it resulted in the destruction of nearly all the lives on board the ship. This act of sacrifice is therefore selfish in motive and selfish in outcome.

"Everything," it has been cynically said, "is fair in love and war." Such, of course, it is needless to say, is true of neither one or the other. True love admits of no selfishness, trickery or "anything" which this ancient saw implies. As to war, which is the triumph of might as distinct from right, we find that certain restrictions as to what is "fair"

have been in past years gradually introduced, with the object of mitigating its inherent barbarism. But not until the mass of mankind see the folly of fighting the battles of the clergy, kings, presidents and leaders, will the savagery of war cease upon earth. When truth by arbitration, and love by co-operation among all nations, become realized, there will then, perhaps, be some prospect of the ultimate brotherhood of humanity.

This idea of sacrifice in various religious creeds can be traced back to the earliest days of recorded history, but the procedure has changed with the altered conditions of social life. The giving up of our wealth or a portion of it is not really so vital a matter as the sacrifice of our reason. For when we are asked to accept certain beliefs without question, it is asking us to surrender our opinions or thoughts as based on reason. True love desires no such sacrifice; it asks nothing, but freely gives to all; it seeks the welfare of others through truth realized within our own minds, for it cannot be found elsewhere.

Hoping, perhaps, we have given a little new light to some readers upon the subject of sacrifice in its relations to love, we will now consider that of the "Affections."

AFFECTIONS.

In the exercise of the affections we may often observe them in what we may term the dawn of love, but we also see them indulged in from selfish or dishonest motives.

We may become charmed or infatuated with a pretty face, graceful form or fascinating manners, and may imagine that such affection or passion is love until we discover that it is the outward expression of these qualities that attract our regard, and that when absent or impaired, our affections diminish or cease. Such is but "refined selfishness."

There are those again who display a most affectionate disposition towards us for the purpose of gaining some personal end, which when accomplished they cease their "blandishments" or efforts to please. Thus they show that their friendship or "love" was feigned for a selfish object. Such we can observe in daily business and social relations; and the more affected the exhibition, the more to be distrusted. Things too sweet have but a bitter taste.

If the axiom be correct that that which can be found separate from another thing cannot be one and the same thing, it follows that the affections must form a distinct element from love, although through love they may become purified.

Extreme affection, even when it seems most praiseworthy, is often unconscious selfishness. Thus we see, for example, a man and wife intensely devoted to each other, so much so that they neither see nor regard the welfare of others about them. They are regarded as a most loving or devoted couple, which may be true as regards themselves; but such is but exclusive, and, therefore, selfish affection. True love seeks ever to radiate to others not only within their own narrow circle but as far beyond its borders as conditions and opportunities permit. Exclusive affection of this description, whether be-

tween man and wife, lovers or friends, may contain an element of love; but pure and disinterested love most truly expresses itself in the doing unto others that which will produce the most good for all. For in such love the self, beyond just requirements, is put in the background, and the welfare of others placed in front. We are then able to discard all thoughts of selfishness, bigotry or intolerance and sympathize with or enter into the feelings of others with reason.

But the weakness of the affections is that we are influenced by them to the extent of accepting beliefs which have no foundation in truth. The glamour of affection induces us to cherish thoughts and ideas which are false or misleading, because there is no depth in our feelings or convictions, which can alone be derived from true love and truth.

There are, of course, gradations in this quality, such as a strong or weak affection, and it may be either sincere or affected. But what we would submit here is that mere affection is often wrongly mistaken for love, which, however, as we shall endeavor to show later, is on a higher plane.

Let us now briefly sum up the conclusions we have arrived at regarding the qualities which appear to have some bearing on love and are yet not its essential attributes.

We have seen that desires and habits are found at times to be wholly or partly selfish, and often misdirected into evil courses.

That hatred or anger, even when exhibited in opposition to evil, is not the way of love.

That sorrow or mourning, worship and sacrifice partake of selfishness or are the means of pander-

ing to false conceptions through humiliation, real or assumed, and propitiation of an imaginary deity of pains and penalties.

Nevertheless, all these qualities can be so purified, restrained and directed as to aid us in realizing love and its supreme and beneficent influence in the conduct of life.

In closing our inquiry, let us now consider what are the true and essential elements of our subject.

LOVE.

We may say, first of all, that love is the true realization of our duty, in thought and action, towards others, in seeking their welfare, through honesty, unselfishness, charitableness and toleration. These find their expression in the act of service and giving. Besides fraternity, love signifies equality; for true love knows not caste, creed, position, tribe or nationality.

Love is the embodiment of unselfishness in thought and act, expressed in kindness towards others. It is the giving of time, thought and consideration to the welfare of others and material help when needful. He that giveth nothing becomes himself morally and intellectually impoverished, but he who truly giveth much becomes enriched. "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

It does not follow that to hate evil is to love virtue. For hatred is foreign to love, and emanates from selfishness, bigotry and intolerance.

What, after all, is vice, and how can we hate it?

Now, it will be admitted that to endeavor to hate

the mere motion of an object or its potentialities is to hate what has no actual existence whatever. For motion is only a conception of the mind; and so with vice or virtue, which are but abstract ideas, and which appear real to us through the words or deeds of those who "put" vice or virtue in motion. It is not, therefore, evil we hate but the perpetrator of evil.

We will suppose, for example, that one has given himself up to an immoral or riotous manner of living, and through our hatred of him we despise and reject him, "casting him out into outer darkness." Such an act cannot be of love, of charity, or the desire to help and redeem. It may be that such an one is mentally deficient, has had the will weakened through habit, or there may be predisposing causes or conditions of which we are ignorant. But whatever the cause, it calls not for hatred of the victim, but claims rather an act of love, sympathy and the desire and will to help and uplift.

We may imagine that the thoughts we ourselves possess constitute all virtue, and that those who differ from us are wrong, or perhaps "lost." When we then begin to condemn, chastise or ostracise, thinking by so doing that we are paying a tribute to virtue, we are really displaying all the worst attributes of hatred, selfishness, intolerance and bigotry. We cannot then have realized truth within our own minds, are therefore untrue to ourselves, as well as to others, and do not possess the love which is expressed in tolerance and open-mindedness.

By such a spirit of tolerance we can meet any attack upon our cherished thoughts or ideas, may

convince an opponent of the error of his assertions or perhaps have such of our own convictions which prove fallacious removed by truth.

True love, therefore, is to be found in giving for the welfare of others, and all that such implies in thoughtfulness and consideration and true service. I would therefore offer the following definition: *That love is the true desire, expression and act of giving wholly for the good and welfare of others.* By following this principle in our conduct, we rise above selfishness, our desires are purified, our habits governed and our evil passions subdued. We learn to be cheerful under sorrow or trouble, not by indulging in vain lamentation or by useless worship and supplication, but by rising above them our means of comforting others become the greater; cultivating composure of mind and thus strengthen both ourselves and those with whom we come in contact.

It is possible, of course, that we may endeavor to do a kindness to others and really cause them injury. But this would not be the fault of the expression or act of love, the motive being pure, but may be the result of a mistake in its direction through lack of knowledge.

True love is not blind, although it may be mistaken or unwise in its methods or acts, pure as its motives may be. But both pure in intention and true or wise in its expression or act is to achieve its perfect fulfillment. Let truth guide us and love will achieve its mission.

Love is not blind, but sees through truth. And what is truth but knowledge and experience realized within our own minds? But we cannot realize the

truth of anything by confining our thoughts and aspirations within a narrow circle; we must look beyond ourselves and our immediate environment.

To look merely at the surface of thoughts and things is to be color blind; love, through truth, enables us to realize the essential beauty and worth beyond our immediate surroundings.

Love, as commonly understood, requires love or gratitude in return, but the highest form of true love seeks no recompense.

To love well is to understand well; it enlarges our perceptions.

Love seeks not to rule or dominate but to guide, persuade, console and serve. Service to others is its highest mission and the source of its greatest achievements in the betterment of the lot of humanity.

Women, it has been said, "love honesty, courage and strength of character in men," but it is often because particular men exhibit these qualities, and their expression or embodiment of them attract their affection. That "she stoops to conquer" is part of her natural guile, and only a small part of the creed that "all is fair in love and war."

And so men, it has been said, "love virtue and honesty" in women, and for doubtless the same reason that women "love" certain qualities in men.

Such "love" is well enough, but when it reaches a state of blind infatuation it borders on selfishness, if not sometimes its very incarnation.

True love presumes not, but is simple and natural; nor dictates, but seeks to influence and persuade. Love especially means forbearance, toleration and charity. If we possess true love in our

hearts* toward others, we shall forbear to allow our passions vent, tolerate differences of opinion, and be charitable in our judgment of the motives, mistaken actions or possible transgressions. But while charitable and forgiving, we should resist evil nor lend our countenance to that which is contrary to truth and honesty, for we become then "abettors of evil."

To love without reason expresses itself. For when we allow our "hearts" to run away with our heads we are likely to arrive at disillusion. A love not founded on reason, and therefore truth, is not true love, but an imitation, pleasing but deceptive. Its name is written on sand.

The truest hero of love is not he who wins laurels in the tournament or iron crosses for valor on the field of battle, but he who wins the daily fights through the acts and thoughts of true love and reason over its opposites in the conduct of life. As the poet nobly sang, "peace has its greater victories than war." The deification of war is fast becoming an illusion of barbarism.

To possess true love is to be open and broad-minded, willing and ready to accept that which is shown to be true, or to reject what is untrue. If we are thus honest with ourselves as well as to others, neither sophistry or dogmatism will be allowed to influence our conduct. For as love emanates from and is based on truth, only the true and real in thought and action can be welcome guests.

Love is not self-centered, "cribbed, cabined and confined," or restricted to our own family, neighbors and next-door friends. Such love is admirable

* Minds, really

and worthy enough; but the truest conception of love is that which extends the helping hand to the stranger; which guides the lost or strayed, and endeavors to help and uplift those who may, perchance, have stumbled or fallen in strange places. There are those who think they have performed the whole duty of love by showering marks of their affection on kith and kin, feeling no obligation beyond their particular circle and environment. Such, after all, is but a narrow and circumscribed idea of love, and partake largely of selfishness and exclusiveness.

To gather and hoard for one's self is opposed to the spirit of love. In its right degree for one's self it is, according to the dictates of prudence, a necessary thing, but the habit of grasping and accumulating for selfish ends is one of the decadent signs of the present age of dollar worship. The "almighty dollar" is, indeed, all that the name implies. Its omnipotent influence surrounds everything, social life, politics and religion. But, needless to say, it is not the measure of knowledge, love or happiness in life.

Love is not to be found by prayer, "high" thoughts or good intentions. For thoughts and words are barren when not translated into endeavor and action. It is not the desire, but the will that justifies all effort. Non-resistance is often as injurious as open revolt; there is a mean between anarchy and blind adherence to false conventions. It is love, which by freeing the mind from the domination of selfish habits, false conventions and beliefs, enables us to help others in the light of tolerance, sympathy and understanding.

Nor need we be disheartened if our ideas or acts for the welfare of others result in disappointment, or rejection. It is better to blame ourselves for the miscarriage of our endeavors. Love proves its strength by perseverance in well-doing despite ridicule, misunderstanding or opposition.

True love cannot be passive; it must resist evil. To love your neighbor as yourself is no doubt a noble idea, but there are limits to magnanimity. To turn the other side of the cheek to him who smites you on one, is not merely "no-resistance," as preached by Tolstoi and other well-meaning religious leaders, but is inviting and encouraging evil. To resist not evil is to become a party to it.

The pages of history and the recent example of the Doukobors shows us to what profitless and aimless ends fanaticism leads.

Nor does love mean unreasoning belief or acceptance. Being founded on truth, it must doubt until evidence is shown. Reason must guide it in all things, otherwise it cannot have faith nor endure.

True love is not shown by useless sacrifice of life. Men have been known to take their own lives with the morbid, even if sincere, idea of benefiting others. Granting the unselfish motive, how could they foresee the possible effects of such rash actions? Better to live on, and endure, with the undespairing purpose of still achieving the welfare of others. Loving service, persistent endeavor, is the noblest phase of true love.

Love in its highest degree rises above nature. For nature is "naturally" cruel and selfish. The winds destroy, yet purify; the waters engulf, but give life; fire devours, yet gives forth heat; light-

ning annihilates, yet affords light. All life exists through destruction; that which becomes and remains the same must draw from the same kind. Hence "life" lives on life, the greater on the lesser, and the lesser on the greater.

We are all, therefore, in a measure selfish by order of nature. But through truth and love we can control or subdue the selfish element of our nature in seeking the welfare of others, in single-hearted service for humanity. It is only in true service that we forget ourselves.

Love does not give way to sorrow, but seeks to cheer and console. The truest and highest form of love is shown not by retiring, as in ancient days (and even in modern times) to mourn in monasteries, nor yet to indulge in the "luxury of grief" in public or private, but in overcoming our own selfish disposition to dwell on our deprivation or loss, and in comforting and uplifting those in distress by cheerful words and active help.

Love knows no sect or creed. Protestant, Catholic, Mohammedan, Buddhist or Jew, atheist, agnostic, spiritualist or materialist, are equal in love's eyes; none have a prescriptive right to a "future heaven."

The instinct of love is derived from truth and reason, acquired through the association and comparison of knowledge, personal or hereditary. For as exercise of the body strengthens limb or organ, so the mind is elevated or degraded through the nature of our thoughts, and whether they are harbored or rejected in the last resort such decision lies with ourselves. The words of books or others may help and guide us, but our own reason must be the

final judge of appeal if we would have truth "dwell within" secure and stable.

If it is true that love is the true desire, expression and act of giving for the welfare of others, it follows that we can only love those now within the sphere of our influence. We cannot do any good to those that are dead, however dearly we may cherish their memories. Love therefore should prompt us to avail ourselves of every opportunity in this fleeting life of doing true service to all whom we can reach. The greatest good for the greatest number should be our constant aim in the conduct of life.

The first duty of love, as with charity, begins at home. Too often we do not fully appreciate the love of those in our immediate circle, nor regard with sufficient attention the ideas and aspirations of those with whom we come in daily contact. That "familiarity breeds contempt" is very often borne in upon us, no doubt unconsciously, and if not exactly contempt, it tends to make us careless or indifferent to the near and familiar. The same idea is expressed in that other proverb that "no man is a hero to his valet." And yet such an attitude of mind is essentially unjust, for true love will only be the more confirmed by closer association, and allowances made for the foibles that may appear to impinge upon the central character of anyone we love or respect.

Such toleration is the province of love. By an open and unbiased mind we not only evince our regard for the opinions of others, but we also reciprocally acquire their love or respect. We learn while we teach; love begets love. It is true in a

wider sense than is generally considered that "everyone loves a lover."

Latent in the hearts of most people, however little it may be shown, is a craving for love, apart from passion, which nevertheless may lead to its higher phase; and a spark may kindle it, or it may, perchance, require a torch to set it glowing. And he who, by the force of his love, expressed in kindness, sympathy, toleration, wise guidance and help, brings out that love in others is the truest benefactor to his race.

It is absence of true love of humanity in religious sectarianism that has been the cause of the public strife and private misunderstandings of the past, and which prevails in a more or less degree. Bigotry and intolerance cannot have any other consequence.

In private life intolerance has always been the fruitful cause of dissension. It is a weakness of the average human character to take offence at the expression of opinions which do not coincide with our beliefs or predilections, and even the most kindly meant advice is often bitterly resented.

In religion, however, it is a gratifying sign of the advance of free thought, that dogma is fast losing its unreasoning influence, and that there is now greater toleration for differences of opinion as to what was formerly considered unassailable. But there still exists a reluctance among the leaders of sects and denominations to permit their cherished conceptions of religion to be freely and honestly challenged.

While love begins at home, it should not end there. The idea that love is so confined, that it is due only to those near and dear to us is not a

just or broad-minded conception of its true import.

The highest phase of love is not national, provincial or personal; it is universal. Love and all that it implies, such as sympathy and consideration, teaches us to not only regard our neighbor as ourselves, but a foreigner or a stranger as entitled to its influence. "Patriotism" is, after all, too often "the last refuge of a scoundrel," and suspicion of or discrimination against the foreigner or stranger proclaims the narrow and bigoted mind.

True love can see redeeming qualities in those who may, perchance, have habits which appear to narrow-minded and ultra-religious people as the depth of wickedness. A man may take his glass of wine or play a game of billiards, with perhaps a few coppers on it to make the game interesting, and he is at once classed with the "unsaved" and the unregenerate. Many who indulge in such pastime in moderation do so as a mental relief from stress of business application or other causes, and may be, after all, more honest and worthy than their carping critics, who, far from possessing the spirit of love, are often either hypocrites or possessed by an intolerant conception of the amenities of life.

Love has no bounds. None of us can acquire perfect love, for it is human to fall short of our highest aspirations. But the more we strive to think and act in the way of truth, the nearer we reach in unselfish duty towards others in unselfish service, which is the true aim of love. To grow in truth and love is the noblest ambition we can foster, for it leads not only to our own higher development, morally and intellectually, but also tends to help on the brotherhood of man.

If we have true love in our "hearts" or minds, we shall regard with toleration and forbearance those whose thoughts do not agree with ours. But that does not assume that we must accept as truths the fallacious beliefs of others. The love based on mere belief is shallow and unstable. (See Belief.) Therefore if we would have our instincts of love true and lasting, we must see that our thoughts emanate from truth as distinct from belief, whether acquired through spoken words or from books.

Hence we see that true love is but a potential acquisition, fashioned of true instinct acquired through the power to direct our acts of kindness towards others in worthy channels.

We must judge of all things, for as we judge so will our instinct be true or false, and our ability to acquire truth and knowledge will be governed accordingly. As our thoughts are so will be our acts, and so our whole character will become ennobled or degraded. Love, therefore, develops the highest and purest characteristics of a man, while selfishness, its antithesis, debases all aspirations and achievement.

To "do unto others as you would be done by" is a worthy sentiment, but true love teaches us a still higher principle, namely, to "do unto others as they should be done by, for the good of all." This maxim does not limit what we should do to others by our own conception of what is good for us, but extends its application to what is "good for all" that may come within its action. Selfishness is thereby dismissed and the welfare of the many alone considered.

The golden rule of doing unto others as you

would be done by, while a good line to follow, if adopted in a pure and just spirit, is still often used in a sense contrary to truth and justice. For it may be employed by the dishonest in every walk of life to hide or protect their kind from justice. It gives to a man the apparent right to act towards others according to his own conceptions of right and wrong, and in so far is based on selfishness. Love points a juster way; that we should do unto others what will accomplish the greatest good, irrespective of our own predilections. It is possible, for instance, to do what appears to us a good act to another without considering what evil it may at the same time produce on others. That is because we perform the act from a narrow and selfish point of view.

True love is never knowingly coarse or profane. But while profanity is to be condemned, it does not follow that those who use oaths in the course of conversation are necessarily depraved or destitute of worthy principles. It is a matter of habit, and such language is often used with no intent of conveying what the words would seem to imply, and are so employed to emphasize thoughts or sentiments. It may undoubtedly show a lack of refinement, but he who is broad-minded will make due allowance, and true love will not impute motives where none were intended.

Here again is seen where the possession of love for humanity can discern beneath the surface of appearance and can separate the chaff from the real grain in a man's character. The miner, sailor or navy, accustomed to using strong, and what appears profane language, is often more honest and a

nobler man than he who uses nothing but the most correct and mild expressions. Refinement of language is, of course, preferable to coarseness, just as honesty and straightforwardness is of greater virtue than sophistry and tortuousness of conduct.

It is well to "mind our own business," but the maxim may be adapted as a cloak for selfishness and apathy for the welfare of others. True love will prompt us to aid others whenever the opportunity occurs, and to protect those who would be imposed upon. It is the duty of the strong to protect the weak, and love gives that strength.

Love, therefore cannot shield the imposter, in whatever guise he may appear, social or religious.

Mahomet, one of the greatest of religious imposters of the past, incited his soldiers to fight and die for his cause by promises, as the prophet of "Allah" of a future life of luxury and material bliss. Such policy has been a dominating principle in many religions; promises of great reward for those who "believe" and threats of punishment for those who do not. Can anything be more opposed to even human and perfect conception of love? How much more so must it be to the ideal of a love passing that of mere humanity.

Love seeks no leadership, dictatorship or dominance. To help, to co-operate, to guide—such is the mission of love, if we would only realize its true purpose in the conduct of life. Love teaches a man to be his own master, "captain of his own mind," his own prophet, lord and king. Love knows no ruling or subjecting; all are equal, and the true aim in life, freedom of thought and fraternity in spirit and act.

Under the rule of leadership of kings, prophets and priests, man has for ages been taught to rely upon force instead of love as the arbiter of all things. Might has been right, the inversion of what love demonstrates through truth, that right only is the true product of reason. But as long as men allow their reason to be subjected to the demands of dogmatism, and the superstition of religious beliefs, so long will social regeneration be retarded. False and designing leaders, of self constituted authority have always been the foes of social progress through the exercise of individual and cooperative reason. In religion, politics and civil affairs, selfishness and self-interest have for long years and still,—if in a lesser degree than in the past—, been the dominating influence in the government of mankind.

But love is the only true force in morals or ethics, and by its guiding principal only can the ultimate brotherhood of man be advanced.

It is because the spirit of love has been absent from the teaching of the various creeds and doctrines of religion that strife and bitterness has so often been their unworthy outcome. Man in his selfishness has made religious beliefs, which should have truth and love as their central principle, the instruments of domination, power and material gratification.

By dogma, sophistry and mysticism, prophets and priests imposed upon the credulity of the people who seeking light, help and consolation in their doubts, difficulties and troubles were beguiled with the foolishness of superstition, vestments and ritual.

Many no doubt have been sincere in their teaching of such beliefs, and have acted, as they thought, in the interests of virtue. They have not realized themselves what truth is and therefore could not reveal it to others but have resorted to tradition and mysticism for their dogmas.

It is the truth, the demonstrated truth that men need, and such can only be found within our own minds.

And such cannot be taught by dogma or creed, but only through the all-persuading power of love. By active well-doing, by vigilant service we can convince others that we have their welfare at heart. It is not mere belief in our good intentions but faith in our purpose, proved by experience and knowledge, that constitutes our influence and power for good. And only love for humanity can prove the incentive.

Reverence for others is a quality of love, but it may through unreasoning belief be misdirected and unworthy in its object. We may respect the motives of a person, and yet realize how mistaken are his ideas or acts. Love teaches us this toleration. But love for the welfare of others also teaches us, whenever we have the opportunity of warning them when they appear to be going astray or likely to meet with disillusion. Advice and remonstrance are not always welcome and when heartlessly or captiously tendered, only invite dislike or hatred; but when offered in kindly manner and in the spirit of love may prove of invaluable service. Often it is not the words we say but the tone in which they are uttered, perhaps unconsciously, that often "gives" offense. Love teaches us consideration for

the feelings of others. Two men may in principle agree, but there may be shades of difference which can only be composed by mutual forbearance. To "agree to differ" is not a mere hackneyed phrase, nor the mere dictates of prudence but the spirit of love. Differences in detail may be non-essential to the realization of a central truth. "All roads lead to Rome," some may arrive there by a short and direct route; others by long and circuitous ways. And so it is with human reason; all minds differ and each must find his own way, his own "salvation." But love can guide and help us on the road. We ultimately reach our destination by relying upon our own knowledge, but we may arrive there quicker and with less exertion by the guidance of others. Providence helps those who helps themselves, and love is providence. We must not entirely rely upon the guidance of all would-be leaders for unless we also use our own wits we may easily be led astray. Therein lies the essential difference between mere belief and faith; the one is founded on credulity and the other on knowledge.

Love as a guide is pure, unselfish, disinterested and incorruptible, for it is based on truth. But if we rely upon the leadership of those who would have us believe without reason, by the influence of suggestion, the fallacies of tradition or the imagings of mysticism we cannot arrive at truth, as realized within our own minds.

True love not only shows the way, but rests not content until we possess complete apprehension. With this spirit "in" our minds, we will spare no efforts in our service for others. It will strengthen our powers of determination and perseverance;

broaden our sympathies, enlighten our knowledge, inspire faith in ourselves as well as others and justify our endeavors and achievements.

Much more could be written on the beneficient influence and power of true love in the conduct of life, but it has been the writer's chief aim to point out its uplifting and revivifying spirit and purpose. Its spirit in service and its purpose for the good of others; or as defined in other words:—

Love is and can only be the true desire, expression, and act of giving wholly for the welfare of others. If we realize not only the letter but the spirit of this principle as a guide in life, it will aid us in distinguishing the true from the false. It will not only promote our moral and intellectual growth but will inspire and direct us in all our efforts for the good of others, the betterment of social conditions and the advancement of the brotherhood of humanity.

THE CASKET OF KNOWLEDGE OR EXPERIENCE.

This subject is undoubtedly a large one, and to some it may appear absurd that we should be able to know the what, the where and the how of obtaining all possible knowledge. Philosophers, scientists and others from the earliest dawn of history to the present, have been and are yet struggling for satisfactory answers to these questions concerning knowledge, the essence of all intelligence and our higher and nobler characteristics.

Knowledge is the sustenance of all ability, intuition and aspiration.

The will is crippled without it. Honesty, honor, love, justice and all kindred qualities or attributes are but chaos in its absence. If so, why not now dig and delve until we locate and master such an important and far reaching subject.

While conscious of the great extent of our task, let us, with the eye of our faith—the light of all truth—consider it in all its bearings, and we may if we persevere, reach some satisfactory conclusions. For should we be able to solve and fully comprehend this unusually sought for treasure, we shall have accomplished a service, the importance of which will be far beyond the estimation of most people.

Having this purpose in view, let us now endeavor to remove the boulders and briers which we may find in the path of our progress. Such, for ex-

ample, as hearsay and information, for these today, according to our most faulty dictionaries are considered to be branches of knowledge, and which we shall endeavor to prove have but a fallacious connection with knowledge.

Let us first consider "Hearsay." I make the statement to you that there is, sitting in a chair in my study a huge, white elephant, smoking his pipe and reading the newspaper with as much intelligence as you are able to read what I have written, and that he also converses with me. And suppose, for illustration, that what I have just told you, came to your notice from the lips of another, who heard it from someone else, and he also heard it from another, and so on.

The foregoing is an example of hearsay, although an extreme and ridiculous one, or appearing so in accordance to the degree of your intelligence, or ignorance, as to its being within the limits of possibility.

Such ludicrous statements cannot possibly appeal to be statements of fact, except to those who do not exercise their reasoning faculty and they will be accepted or rejected by the reasoning mind only in accordance with the degree of their knowledge of the facts as presented in the stories.

Hence we see that there cannot be knowledge in mere hearsay. For all the knowledge appearing in it to the recipient must first be registered in his or her mind previous to the receipt of the story; the remainder can only be a matter of belief. For example, supposing you were to accept my little story of the elephant, and proclaim it about as a true statement of fact, how ridiculous you would

appear to all reasoning minds, and of course, those who would accept it from you as truth would be equally foolish. For it is pain that such a tale could not possibly have any foundation in fact, nor appeal to your present knowledge and reasoning powers.

Now it is quite possible that a story we hear may be true and yet we ourselves be ignorant of its possibility or accuracy.

Yet in such a case no honest man has any moral or just right, regardless of the source from which it is received, to make a dogmatic statement as to its fact. For to do so is to be without the truth within your own mind, of its actuality, and therefore, as likely as not you may be stating an unwitting falsehood which is quite as harmful as a wilful one. To allow consciously, or unconsciously, an untruth to escape your lips is to be knowingly or unknowingly untrue and harmful to others. Therefore, to successfully check the growth of falsehood, it becomes evident that we must crush the living lies of hearsay which have no relation to knowledge, the most important asset of our intelligence.

The chief offenders of the Hearsay class, now stand in the highest pedestals of renown and respectability. For falsehood grows to great proportions when emanating from suggestions which are apparently virtuous, whilst at lower levels they are ignored or pushed aside.

Allow me to give another illustration of this pernicuous kind of hearsay.

Suppose I were to state to you that, seeing friends or others in a boat on a stormy sea, and in sore dis-

tress, I walked out to them upon the water, without getting my feet wet, calmed the winds, stilled the waves and brought them all to shore in safety.

What truth my friend, could you find in my words? And yet there are many similar stories, related as truth, and accepted as such, but which cannot have been conceived for any other purpose than to bewilder, sway and mislead the simple and innocent, who are scant of knowledge as to their true purport, which is to destroy their knowledge of the true actualities in life which they must possess in order to come into the true realization of their higher characteristics found in truth and honesty.

Now, as regards "Information," let us give the following illustration.

On my desk is the paper on which I write, with a lamp and a number of books. In this statement I am telling you of the actual existence of these things on my desk, and it can be readily accepted as being fact. But why? Is it not because you, in some way, have previously experienced these things, and have, therefore, no doubt as to the exact fact of my words?

Hence you see that even in "Information," which comes nearer to the truth than does our often false friend "Hearsay," there must be previous knowledge existing in your mind before you can with any degree of certainty honestly accept such as being true, and that also, regardless of the source from which it comes, be that source "saint" or sinner. For it would be unreasonable and unjust to give even the apparent "saint" the privilege of maintaining that all the words he speaks as state-

ments of absolute fact, as emanating from truth, which is our true mental conception of, or agreement with reality and actuality.

It would likewise be unreasonable of us to stamp every word of the sinner as a lie, which of course, would not be returning "Good for evil"—a principle, by the way, which is the guardian of our princely knaves, and which it is impossible always to follow.

Hence it must follow that he who cannot substantiate his statements with proof, as agreeing with reality can only be recording mere "Hearsay," and not even "Information." For if "Information" be of a different quality to "Hearsay" it must spring from the first speaker who is supposed to have experienced the actual, otherwise it can only be "Hearsay," and consequently be, consciously or unconsciously, true or false.

While the above may be true, there is yet another side of "Information" which we must not ignore, and that is that while my statement regarding the things on my desk is to me a veritable truth, yet the same can not be to you a truth, and therefore cannot be knowledge. For it is quite possible, that as far as you are concerned, what I have stated is not wholly true, nor are you in a position to honestly take an oath that what I have declared is true. And why? Is it not because you have not experienced the things (in the past) to exist, as they appear upon my desk? And if so, is it likewise evident that "Information" cannot possibly be a truth, or knowledge to you, until you yourself actually experience that with which it deals, even

although the "Information" be a statement of fact, agreeing with the actual?

Again, allow me to give another illustration as to the fact of the foregoing: I have in my pocket a certain sum of money, and I so inform you; in what way I ask, can such information be a truth, or knowledge to you? You are, therefore, compelled, not knowing whether I speak fact or not, to admit that such "Information" cannot by any manner or means be to you the truth or knowledge. It therefore follows that you cannot be in a position to truthfully swear that the things you merely hear of, or about, agree in every respect with the real or actual.

Having now arrived at this stage of our enquiry, let us guard what we have already discovered with a few axioms or realized truths, in order that we may not break away from the path of our progress.

AXIOMS.

(1): That to truly know a thing we must first experience it; for that which we have not experienced we cannot know.

(2): That to know of a thing, without experiencing it, is at best but "Information" and therefore cannot be a realized truth or knowledge to us.

(3): That to state a thing to be true without experiencing it is to discriminate false knowledge in so far as the realization of the actual is concerned, and is therefore to be untrue to ourselves and to others.

(4): That to declare information or mere hear-

say to be fact, is to be ourselves untrue, for we are not in a position to prove the actuality from which such may spring.

(5): That to rely wholly on the mere words of others is to be ourselves but phonographs, shallow and worthless to ourselves and entirely subject to others.

(6): That he who would proclaim mere hearsay to be fact or truth is himself ignorant of truth or a living imposition.

Bearing these axioms in mind, let us now proceed to deal with knowledge herself, and in doing so make a little further enquiry of a preparatory kind to enable us to the more easily comprehend and secure our ground as we proceed.

To do this I would ask you to permit me to reveal a little constructive imagination, and which I may say will be found in what may be appropriately called.

THE CASKET OF KNOWLEDGE.

This we will assume to be fashioned out of that beautiful much sought for, and precious metal called "Experience," and which we will provide with two handles in order that we may the easier carry it about with us. For one of these handles let us choose. Faith, the light of all truth, the stored up energy of ability, and the able strong arm of our true, unfailing will; and for the other that of reason, the sustenance of Faith, and the greatest of known architects and mightiest of builders. Having procured these, let us carve and embellish

them with those most priceless attributes, honesty, honor, love and justice, for those we cannot well do without, if we would complete our work with accuracy. Our casket being now complete let us assume that, for the time being, it is surrounded by what we may term oblivion, so that our truths as we gather them are in the meantime secured from outside interference.

And now before we enter into the work of gathering our truths to place within our casket, it will be first necessary to explain as briefly as possible the nature and quality of a few familiar terms which may interfere with the complete separation of our subject,—"knowledge," from all other thoughts or things within the sphere of our present knowledge, both actual (having form, substance or being) and abstract (such as time, motion, vice and virtue) which appear only in and through the mere motion of things, having form or being, and thus having no actual existence.

These terms I above refer to are these ideas conveyed in the words and thoughts, intelligence, understanding or mind.

To dispense with too great a volume of words, which too often only bewilder the surface thinker, I would ask you to, with me, use your own reasoning powers, for I will endeavor to crowd as many thoughts as I can into as little space as possible, and those in the form of axioms (or vital truth) which I think none can successfully refute.

(1): That that which exists (substance) cannot have been made or created out of that which does not exist—which is a self-evident truth.

(2): That it follows, from axiom 1, that all

substance is, was and must always be; for as no thing can possibly be made out of nothing, it must also follow that nothing can be totally annihilated.

(3): That all that is, must be of substance, having form or being; for that which is not of substance cannot have form, being, place nor location, and cannot therefore exist in nature.

(4): That that which appears in the abstract (having neither form, substance or being) cannot be perceived apart from the mere motion of a subject or object, and therefore is nothing, being but a mental conception such as time, motion and kindred attributes.

(5): That that which has the power to perceive must be of a substance; for that which is not of substance does not exist and is therefore nothing. (Ax. 3 and 4.)

(6): That in order for us to perceive there must be something (substance) which to perceive; for that which is not of substance does not exist. (Ax. 4.)

(7): That to be conscious of both things in the abstract, there must be substance, form, or being, in subject and object. For things in the abstract appear only in or through the mere motion of things having substance, form or being. (Ax. 4.)

(8): That, from the foregoing, thought is, and can only be a function of the brain, which is, and must be of substance (or matter). For that which is not of substance cannot perceive "being" nothing. (Ax. 5.)

(9): That the brain cannot have a thought of that which does not exist apart from the abstract

things (motion, time, etc.,) in or about that which does exist, in form, substance or being.

(10): That there could not be thought if nothing existed of substance, form or being.

(11): That there must first be a subject (of substance) before there can possibly be perceived an object, which must also be of substance; for that which is not of substance cannot exist.

(12): That from the foregoing it must follow that, thought is and can only be the brain's realization of the things that come within the sphere of its consciousness, through the senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell, or understanding.

(13): That thought appears only in the abstract, and has neither substance, form or being and therefore no existence; and thus is but a term used to designate the brain's hearing, seeing, touching, tasting and smelling; that which is in actuality or abstract, such as time, motion, vice and virtue, which in themselves do not exist, but appear only in and through the mere motion of a subject or object, having form, substance or being.

(14): That thought cannot be conceived apart from intelligence, understanding or mind. Therefore they are and can only be, one and the same, and as has already been proved, has no actual existence. Hence it follows that thought, intelligence, understanding and mind are but terms to designate the brains, seeing, perceiving, knowing or understanding things in actuality and potentiality. For that which does not exist of substance cannot perceive, know, or understand. (Ax. 4.)

(15): That thought, intelligence, understanding and mind, having no existence save in the abstract

or potentially, life is and must be separate and apart from them; for with the total absence of thought, intelligence, understanding and mind, life we know appears, as exemplified in deep sleep, or when the brain, which is of matter or substance, is under the influence of narcotics.

(16): That, we being able to elevate or enrich and also degrade our thoughts, it is self-evident that thought, intelligence, understanding or mind are wholly within our own control, being but a "matter" of the brain's working or realizing things as they are or may be, through the modification or rearrangement of the things it so realizes.

(17): That thought, intelligence, understanding or mind, appearing only in the abstract or potentiality, and having no actual existence whatsoever, it must follow that they cannot possibly be found in nature; but are, and can only be attributes of the brain, formed and fashioned out of the things in actuality and potentiality which are realized in and through experience.

(18): That as thought, intelligence, undertaking or mind appeal only in potentiality, it must accordingly follow that *all are equal* (the physically fit), the only apparent difference being that one sees more or less of the actual and potential things in life and nature. Small minds see little, whilst great minds see much, of that which is and can only be the product of our own efforts as found in our environment and what we can see beyond it.

(19): That to see only, fellow and worship any one thing is to be subdued and controlled by that thing, and accordingly do we sacrifice or crucify our higher intelligence which must and can only

come through our seeing, knowing, and truly understanding many things, both in actuality and potentiality.

Thus then with these self-evident axioms of truth, as an anchor to the ship of our progress and a foundation upon which to build our further research, let us now preceed to consider our "Casket of Knowledge" that we may thoroughly understand our main object. For such covers, and will no doubt, reveal the key to all intellectual progress, moral or scientific, will unravel many secrets and expose much evil which impedes our way in the mazes of life.

Many are the secrets we have already discovered, and there yet remains much to be laid bare by the light of reason. For there is not a subject known to man, which it does not, directly, or indirectly relate to or govern. To know of anything, we much hear, see, feel, taste or smell, in and through knowledge; all else is but darkest ignorance.

Now, in considering our "Casket," we must bear in mind that it is supposed to be surrounded and enclosed so that anything we are able to locate and place within it, must for the time being, be considered as "sacred," and in fact non-existent, being without substance, form or being.

Let us now begin at conception, and in as few words as possible we will consider the period of conception to birth. We all know that to be conceived and nurtured in a wholesome environment, is our first most fortunate and blessed state. For whilst there we acquire hereditary traits and the seed of what we call natural ability. Many are the

illustrations that may be given to prove that we, or our brain first commences to realize at conception, as may be seen from the following examples:

Twins are born, being conceived and nurtured in precisely the same environment, both physically and mentally, and yet, whilst often physically alike differ greatly and often wholly, in thought and disposition.

Here is an instance which was related to me by the brother of the mother I am about to refer to: A child was born with her tongue protuding. Shortly after birth the grandmother interrogated the mother as to what were her thoughts during confinement, which resulted in the discovery that the mother had a constant craving for tomatoes which she was not able to procure. With this information the grandmother secured a tomato and after placing two or three slices upon the child's tongue produced the desired effect of the child being satisfied, and the tongue regained its natural position in the mouth.

Many illustrations could be given to further prove that we first begin to realize at conception, but this being a large subject, and it being my chief purpose to refer to experience after birth, I will now proceed to deal with our "Casket" with that object, beginning with the things we know little or nothing about.

Thus then let us take all and every possible thing not yet conceived of or in any way experienced by us, such as, for example, that mysterious something or substance from which all things generate or are generated into the forms and beings we see—feel or in any way realize about us, together with every

conceivable and inconceivable thing not yet realized and quietly place them within our "Casket."

Having done this, let us now make note of just where we find ourselves with regard to all future knowledge. In the first place it is agreed that everything in the universe not yet in any way experienced by us is non-existent, and of course cannot possibly be of substance, form or being.

This I think you will quite readily comprehend, for remembering our axioms it will be evident that nothing can be possibly made out of nothing; and we are therefore compelled through correct reasoning to conclude that all we have now left are only those things we have in the past and immediate present, come into a full realization of thorough experience.

For that which we have not in some way experienced we cannot possibly know of, nor in any way realize, unless such be formed or fashioned in the imagination, of the elements of knowledge we already have, in some way or other experienced through the brain's realization of these things.

Well then, having now within our "Casket" everything unknown to us at present, it becomes evident that we cannot in any possible manner, hear, see, touch nor smell these things, and accordingly we are unable to entertain any thought regarding them. For that which is not in actuality does not exist, and as already said no mind, great or small, can comprehend it, as existing.

Let us now deal with the things we now comprehend, which we will do as quickly as possible in order to save your time as well as mine.

To be fearlessly honest in this age is to often find

yourself very much alone, and most often devoid of true, unselfish friends, as the majority of mankind seek our company, power and influence chiefly for what they can draw out of or receive from you. Few there are who truly think of others, notwithstanding the fact that those who do, produce the most good for all, and who are, after all, the only real "Gods" we have ever known or are likely to know. The old "Gods" of belief were those who, such was the cruel imposition of their worship, you were required to sacrifice everything, and even die for, in some apparently heroic manner. Such was, and still is the charatcer of the false "gods" that ignorance or duplicity have set up with the transparent purpose of having a real market value. For unless they be surrounded by the bewildering and false hale of mystery they cannot be imposed upon the "Believer" by the designing and subtle, nor worshipped by the simple and innocent whom it is always intended should be deprived of their just inheritance, found nowhere but in the realization of the actual and potential in life and nature. And this is what I am now endeavoring to the best of my ability, to reveal to them, and for which I cannot expect to escape much condemnation from those who cannot see "Eye to eye" with me.

For it is a veritable fact that he, who having reached the age of common sense, is not always willing to listen wisely to an opposite view to his own, must be tied, hands and feet by some foolish, pet belief, which at the best is probably old with the mildew of hearsay, fable or mythology, which is no satisfying nutriment for either man or child.

The foregoing is somewhat of a digression and

we will now resume the thread of our study of knowledge, or the things we now know are within our practical vision or realization. Take the sense of hearing, through which the brain realizes that which we call motion, change of place or movements of particles in the ear. For instance, without "Motion" you would be deprived of every conceivable sense of knowledge or experience within the range of human conception. For life, wherever we find it, cannot be conceived to exist without this one potential attribute, motion.

Let us consider motion in connection with sound. Now sound is but the brain's record of motion, which through the medium of particles, comes within the field of its sensitiveness. For there are many both slow and rapid movements of particles which do not approach or pass beyond its share of consciousness: Such for example as the motion of air caused by the movement of your hands, and that of light, electricity, etc.

Suppose for example we take from you the sum total of all your sense of hearing. In what way, I ask, could you be conscious of sound as you now realize it? You might say, of course, that you can feel sound without the ear, but in this you would be incorrect for sound cannot be conceived without the brain's sense of hearing, as experienced through the medium of the ear. We can and do feel movements of particles such as air or wind, but such consciousness is different to that of sound, which is the brain's record of motion or movement of particles through the medium of the ear. Therefore, without the ear there cannot be sound to us, al-

though at the same time the motion of particles may be going on all about us.

On the other hand, there could not be sound to us without motion, and no motion without substance. Hence it is evident that our sense of hearing depends entirely upon sources from without, for were there no motion without of particles there could not, of course, be sound or the sense of hearing, which is a record in the brain of the motion of particles.

Thus then let us put into our "Casket" all the outward forces which we realize or experience through the medium of the ear.

And now where are we? We are robbed, as it were, of all possibility of future knowledge, and have also lost all the sense of hearing, having now within our casket those forces upon which we must rely for the consciousness of these forces upon which we must rely for the consciousness of these things.

For, as you will remember, that which has no substance, form or being cannot be heard, seen, touched, tasted, nor smelt, and therefore it becomes impossible for us to even think of, or in any way experience them.

Having now those two points, future experience and knowledge through sound definitely settled and out of the way, let us deal with that of *sight*. It must be obvious to all reasoning minds that unless there be something to perceive that our sense of sight would be useless to us, and the evolution of the eye would have been manifestly unnecessary. For then nothing could exist of substance, form or being.

We have arrived now at the conclusion that eyes are only instruments through which the brain, being of matter, views outward objects of substance, etc., and through the realization of which, experience is gained of these things.

And where now do we find ourselves? It must be confessed that we appear to be becoming quite helpless in our capacity to gain knowledge of things about or now beyond us. For the following is the position we are now in.

(1): No possible chance of gaining further knowledge.

(2) No possible chance of becoming wise through our faculty of hearing, and are thus deaf.

(3): No possible chance of gaining knowledge through our sense of sight, and are accordingly blind.

The situation is indeed beginning to look serious, for our senses of sight or foresight and of hearing has been denied us through the removal of all these outward things upon which they must depend for life and sustenance.

You will notice, no doubt, that we are allowing you—as it were—to remain with all your senses for the time being, but are removing from you all the knowledge you now possess by depriving you of the outward things which constitute that knowledge. These of course, can only be your own brain's realization of them, with their corresponding potentialities, such as time, motion, etc.

Now as regards the sense of touch. It is of course, obvious that there cannot be such a thing as a sense of touch to us unless there be something to touch. This reflection might lead us to a discus-

sion of the emotions, but it is not our present purpose to deal with that phase of the subject. Emotions, after all are but imaginary and abstract qualities, and therefore, do not properly come under the subject of our sense of touch.

Well then, having seen that in order to realize the sense of touch, and as we have previously agreed to put these within our casket, so that we are not able in any way to experience them, it becomes evident that our sense of touch must also depend wholly upon the existence of those things within our reach.

And in the same way—to be brief—with the senses of tastes and smell which we will also put within our "Casket"; we thus appear to have completely stripped you of every conceivable form of knowledge which you hitherto possessed. We have also, as it were, placed an immovable barrier over which you cannot climb in order to snatch one spark of that most valuable attrbute commonly called knowledge. For we have each and every atom of it within our "Casket" which for the present purpose of illustration we have termed "Oblivion." You are therefore, as it were, suspended within a vacuum, with nothing to hear, see, touch, taste nor smell, and you must therefore be void of the realization of these senses. And you must also be without any possible degree of thought, intelligence, understanding or mind. For there is absolutely nothing without for you to in any way realize or experience. You are, therefore, of no more use to yourself or others than the space in which you are suspended.

And now I cannot see how you can refute the

conclusions arrived at in the foregoing words. Being always open to conviction there is no one more desirous than I am to welcome reasonable discussion or even refutation of any argument I may have advanced. For it is not my desire or intention to write anything which does not bear the impress of absolute truth.

Therefore I would reaffirm that this article is written honestly for the welfare of others, with the hope that it might help those interested in the subject in realizing the truth and importance of knowledge or truth.

And now having so far pictured to you what must appear a very dark and gloomy side of things, permit me to lift the clouds and let in some of the warm, life-giving rays of intelligence found within our "Casket of knowledge," which, as you know, is fashioned out of that precious golden "metal" *experience.*

Let us now make an alteration in one of our terms, and instead of "Oblivion" substitute the word and quality of "Experience." That is, we will now call the space that encloses our "Casket," as well as the metal of which it is made, experience, for I think it has been most clearly demonstrated that knowledge is and can only be found in and through experience, as emanating from your own brain's true realization, of things both actual and abstract.

For it has been clearly shown that there cannot be such an attribute as truth or knowledge without the outward existence of things having substance, form or being. Therefore, if what we have already seen or observed be true, I feel that in justice, if not

in kindness, you will permit me to sum up all our arguments in the following words:

That to gain intelligence, we must keep our eyes open and, as it were, peering into the

CASKET OF EXPERIENCE.

For it is only in and through such that we can gain little or much of the knowledge of the things in life. And once having realized the importance of the experience so gained, let us guard it against the approach and inroads of ignorance and duplicity, which ever linger and lie await in our path, seeking especially the downfall of the simple and the innocent, whom they would prevent from securing their just inheritance of truth, knowledge and wisdom.

To protect ourselves and others, we can only rely upon the solid and immovable rock of truth, a few axioms of which, as follows, may be of both interest and help.

AXIOMS.

(1): That *Truth* is and can only be found through your own brain's true realization of the actual (having substance, form or being) things in nature, together with their resultant potentialities, such as time, motion, vice or virtue.

(2): That your *Knowledge* is the sum total of the truths you possess regarding any particular thing or subject, as well as all things you yourself realize, through experience.

(3): That *Wisdom* (or the sum total of the wisdom you yourself possess) is and can only be the total accumulation of all your truths and knowledge, couples with your powers to perceive, know, understand and put into execution your truths or knowledge of the things and thoughts you realize. For without truth or knowledge there cannot be intuition, instinct, deduction, ability, will, or power to accomplish anything, because these can only exist in and through past knowledge acquired through experience, from whence comes all wisdom.

(4): That True Faith is the consciousness and subconsciousness of past experience, or acquired knowledge directing our acts and intentions towards accomplishment; and when prompted by the attribute of Love (see love) tends to bring about that which is worthy and wise for the true welfare of ourselves and others.

(5): That *Belief* is, and can only be, the blind leading the blind to the suppression of their reasoning faculty, preventing thereby the acquisition of truth, knowledge and wisdom, and also the destruction of faith, intuition and ability, together with every conceivable higher characteristic of the human mind.

(6): That *Reason* is, and can only be the power to build truth upon truth, through the adjustment, rearrangement or modification of the knowledge we possess, and sometimes appears on the scene apparently in the forms of instinctive acts, thoughts of intuition, prediction and the ability to think and do the things which are worthy and wise.

(7): That *Honesty* is, and can only be acquired through our true realization of what constitutes the

principles of right and wrong, or our acts of justice towards not one but all of our fellow-men, and which is and can only be realized through contact, deduction or association with the truly honest. For to live within an atmosphere of evil is to savor of evil, whilst to abide within the sphere of the true, the loving, kind and just is to become characterized by a like nature. For all men choose that which seems to them to be the truer; and hence it follows that the greedy, selfish, dishonest and unjust are blind to their own true welfare as well as to that of others.

(8): That *Desire* is, and can be none other than the outcome of the brain's past or present looking towards the things desired. For to change our desires we have but to truly look, and perhaps keep looking in an opposite or different direction. In other words, to change our field of vision (or thoughts) is to either purify or degrade our desires. Hence it becomes evident that he who has become a slave to any desire or passion and wishes to get rid of these acquired evils has but to change his field of vision and avoid contact or association with the objects of these evils.

(9): That *Love* is, and can only be found in the acquisition of the true expression, desire and act of giving for the true welfare of all. For he who thinks only of self is an enemy to others; selfishness being at the root of all greed and crime. Mere passion is not of love, yet love purifies the passions and desires of every description. For he who lives in truth and love lives in the purest atmosphere that can be conceived, and these two attributes are the sustenance of our highest characteristics, for without truth there cannot be

justice. To truly give is to love and be loved, but to grasp and hoard is to be selfish, and pitied or despised by all right thinking men.

The whole subject, of course, is a large one, but I have endeavored to cover it as fully as possible and explained to the best of my ability the different points contained therein.

It is my sincere endeavor to help in removing many of the foolish beliefs so prevalent to-day, and in which so many millions are still bound, to the detriment of knowledge of the conditions of life. When these beliefs are exposed and cast aside, the ground is cleared for intellectual progress and the acquisition of knowledge, in and through which the conditions of life are raised to a higher and happier plane. To grow in understanding you must look about you, and, if you exercise your reasoning powers, you are compelled to cast aside every belief, creed or dogma which cannot be reasonably and logically explained by those who would impose them upon you as "Divine Truth." For to assume that one is divinely endowed with superior intelligence and that the many are lacking in even reasonable knowledge is really an accusation against a "Giver-of-all," who, according to such reasoning, must be most unkind and unjust to the simple, unfortunate and ignorant, being prejudiced in favor of and partial to the few.

All is but a looking out and a bringing the things we see and hear within the sphere of our own consciousness, that we ourselves may experience them. For in no other way is it possible for us to truly gain *Knowledge,* all else is but "Belief." True information may be termed the light of knowledge, and must

remain so until we ourselves truly experience the object which it would locate, whilst hearsay is but possible information without the semblance of evidence in our minds as to its fact.

If all could but truly realize the great power inherent in an honest searching question, our hearsay mongers would soon be replaced by those who would know the where and how of truth and knowledge, and would not be content with such phrases as "Believe in me, etc." For these "Accept all" and "Ask no questions," dogmatists are the very ones who, being void of initiative, do not really know the meaning of the words they use, and therefore cannot satisfy the honest searchers after truth.

Whilst my exposition herein may seem, at first appearance, to differ with the generally recognized work of science, on second examination it will be found to agree with the sound principles of science, being opposed only to the unreasoning and blind contentions of dogmatical believers.

Many are the beautiful and invigorating truths which might be unfolded regarding correct thought or the brain's ability to see truly, but it is not my intention at present to enter upon that particular subject. In closing, however, I may say that our chief joys in life emanate from our being able to truly see (or think) the correct and bright side of things. But this we may often foolishly do through the imagination, by simple, trusting belief, which, in the end, however, injures or destroys our reasoning faculty, compelling us to rely upon the mere words of others and keeping us in a state of mental slavery, thereby depriving us of knowledge found only through experience.

WISDOM.

What shall we say of wisdom? Are there any of us yet wise? Do we, in fact, really know anything? Well may we ask these questions, for none are yet so wise as to be able to escape the words of the multitude that daily shout, "Oh, he's a fool," whilst in their own conceit they would deem themselves wise, being bathed in their own ignorance, and probably controlled by some pet belief or thought which has not yet seen the dawn of reason, nor appeared under the light of truth.

How ready we are to pass on as truth the catchy and silvery words of others without even a moment's thought as to the fact or falsity of them, considering them, perhaps, infallible because of their repetition and general acceptance, or are deluded by the subtle suggestions emanating from those who would have us all believe that the very ground on which they tread is sanctified for their special benefit and our apparent good.

These also are the people who are continually wrangling over points of doctrine, for the clear and simple reason that they are yet themselves ignorant of the what the where, and the how of obtaining truth and knowledge, and know not the little good they do and the much evil they are consciously or unconsciously guilty of, as they stand with upstretched hands and uncovered heads pouring forth their words of windy and baseless belief. And they think or pretend thereby to produce true men and

women, when, as a matter of general fact, they only encourage weak and unreasoning minds whom they utilize for their own material welfare, whilst they seek shelter under the "hallowed" but untrue works of the dead, proclaimed as "divine truth" without any evidence that a rational mind can admit.

And I venture to say that there is not being worshipped to-day anywhere on earth a *Truth*. For truth, being but the mind's realization of the actual things in life, cannot by any manner of means be worshipped, and we have nothing left, therefore, but myth or falsehood, which are the only factors of religion that remain to be worshipped. For morals or ethics never had or can have any possible connection with the mysterious, nor can they be used to dominate or keep in ignorance the simple and innocent, who are led like sheep to the destruction of their true development and happiness found only in and through truth and knowldge, the sustenance of all wisdom.

It is true we all know but little of this greatest of acquired attributes, wisdom. And it is no wonder that we mere civilians and laymen should possess but little of it when those who profess to be the very embodiment of it retard its growth, or have not yet realized the what, where and how of truth, whilst they persist in leading us to believe that myths and fables are none other than "divine truth." Surely it is time for a new era to dawn, when the simple may truly receive the pure and unadulterated food of wisdom, and not that of blind and worthless belief ever issuing from the lips of those lacking truth or who have not the honest courage to fearlessly proclaim it in the face of unjust condemnation.

With these preliminary words, let us proceed with our subject of wisdom, which we all desire to know and achieve in the course of our sojourn. Did you ever ask yourself the question, "How many truly wise men have I met?"—and then endeavored to define what is meant by the term, "wise men," and then sought to find them? It is a great search, is it not? For wherever we go we almost invariably find all holding fast to some favorite belief of their fathers, or perhaps some ideas of their own imagination, for which they do not possess the slightest foundation in evidence and are only based on hearsay or appearance. And in such beliefs they are, as it were, dogmatically encased, and declare themselves ever ready and willing to die in them. Such surely cannot be called wisdom, for to believe in what you know not the truth of is to remain in ignorance, which, after all, is the position of all out and out believers. On the other hand, wisdom is the measure of the knowledge you possess, acquired through your faith, perception, ability to compare, as well as your power to put into execution these attributes, so that they may bear fruit.

Someone, I think, I can hear saying, "We do not all possess these powers." Granted; but why? Could you not all see an apple if I held it up before your eyes, and would you not know and understand what two and two make, if you cared to look and learn? Such may seem simple questions, but they illustrate the point, which is: Could you tell me of any thought which, when correctly explained, you could not likewise see, know and understand? For surely it is folly to continue believing that you are not also endowed with the power to gain further

knowledge, and to grow in wisdom, when the path of knowledge is so simple. The trouble with us is that we are all too ready to respect and mistake mere appearance for truth, when the fact remains that truth has nothing to do with appearance or the mere words of others, but can only be found within your own mind as agreeing with the actual or real. How often do we find ourselves repeating something spoken by others as a truth, and later find it to be untrue? The wise speak with caution of the thing they know not yet to be a truth, but the ignorant glory in the repetition of hearsay, and seldom take the trouble to ask an honest question or to investigate. Such only see the surface of things and words, and they are accordingly the more easily led and preyed upon by the unjust.

If we were all clad in rags, without high positions or other outward influences, where would we go to find honesty and wisdom? Would we not then use our own reasoning powers and search for ourselves? It is quite obvious that we would under such circumstances. But now that conditions are different we foolishly permit mere appearance and assumption to guide us, allowing imposition to flourish through our ignorance of conditions and men, and our neglect to cultivate wisdom.

Through habit or desire we confine ourselves to this or that thought or habit, forgetting, ignoring or not seeing the many things about us which if we understood would help us the more quickly to obtain our true and just desires. But selfishness and exclusiveness keep us worshipping our cherished beliefs and ideas to the hindrance of our intellectual growth. Such is not the way of the wise who walk

in the paths of truth and knowledge, whilst the foolish hang their intelligence on beliefs.

Truth, love, justice and honesty are inseparable friends of wisdom, which finds in knowledge its inspiration.

To know what is false is to know what is true, so that he who sees no evil knows no good. For with the one we locate the other. Wisdom never stoops or stumbles, but is ever firm. It does not soar with the clouds of self-glorification, thinking itself a god or saint, but remains on earth, to be reached by all who truly seek through knowledge. Nor does it pride itself in having the mere hem of its garments touched, but is ever ready to give its virtues to the needy without gain or glory. For glory is the mental food of ignorance, presumption or tyranny, and but a mist to the just.

There cannot be anything more contrary to wisdom or even common sense than religious bigotry. For religion is but belief in things unknown, which is neither truth nor knowledge, and must therefore, be myth or falsehood. Faith is the light of past knowledge, conscious or sub-conscious, and is the revelation of new truth to us; but belief is the cross upon which we crucify our growing intelligence of the actual or real things in life and nature.

To be humble yet strong is a virtue; but to be meek and lamb-like in foolish belief is to be like clay in the hands of the dishonest potter. And to bow at the man-made shrines of others is to kneel before imposition. For those who pose as being wise, and infer that you are ignorant, are themselves both unwise and deceptive, and are ignorant of the true joys in life.

The wise do not preach one thing and act another, nor set up gods of wood or stone for the simple to worship. Neither do they declare from the housetops, "Love your neighbors," and then refer to their own as "fools." For such is but hypocrisy, and a part of their system of deceiving and hoodwinking the simple and innocent.

Wisdom cannot wear the cloak of religion for gain, nor be one thing on Sunday and another on Monday; such only shows the instability and dishonesty of mere belief.

Wisdom knows before it speaks; for its principles are to know and to do things only worthy, regardless of gain or glory.

It is, therefore, wise to sound well the fact or falsity of men's words, irrespective of their station, for the biggest knaves are hidden under the cloaks of position, education and vestments, with which and the glitter of false suggestion, they are able to beguile the simple and innocent.

It's an easy game for the princely crook to chase a little poor crook; but it takes an honest man with courage to locate and unearth the princely knaves.

The wise stay close to love, truth and justice; but the foolish live in unrest and are disturbed by the questions of truth. For they are never in possession of true or reasonable answers, whilst their shepherds wear uniforms with which to ward off all honest inquiry after truth.

Would that we could all exercise the virtues of an open and unbiased mind. For to dogmatically maintain that what we merely believe must be the truth is not the spirit of wisdom. And yet this is the prevailing tone and attitude of those preaching both in

high places and on the street. It is no great wonder that the street corner orators still remain ignorant, when those better endowed preachers, who profess to be the embodiment of wisdom, show themselves in pulpit and on platform to be so grossly ignorant of what truth and justice really means, and substitute instead false suggestion, parable and fable.

It is surely time that wisdom visited our shrines and altars, and let in the light of reason and justice on its dark and musty corners.

Nor does it seem wisdom on the part of a state to allow the so-called altars of truth to ignore the demonstration of truth and the exposure of the false.

Can we call this a scientific age? There is no doubt that it is, but chiefly in material things. It is the age of the almighty dollar, and everyone seems grasping for money, the altar upon which we sacrifice our honesty, honor and nobility of character. Moreover, we are all too selfishly busy with our own puny affairs to give any thought or time to the care of the weak and illiterate souls about us, and are thus liable to become small and crumpled within ourselves, while the crafty knaves in wealthy garb are busy as to whose mental freedom they can destroy, so that they may accomplish their own unjust ends and desires.

O, wisdom! Would that we all could find and truly know thy sacred virtues; what a reformation there would surely be. The wolf would doff his sheep-like robe; truth would point the way; belief would be crumpled into dust by the force of reason, and justice reign supreme.

He is happiest and wise whose chief joy is found

in seeing others gain wisdom; for he pities the fool, sympathizes with the imposed upon, and seeks to remove ignorance and dishonesty. For he knows that ignorance is the birthright of the natural man, but imposition an acquired characteristic of the knave.

The wise consider not wealth, distinction, position, nor the robes of suggestion found in fine manners, music or subtle smiles. But they search for the motives that move men in their thoughts, words and actions.

Nor do they profess to know of a "divine" will, for such is but a libel on the name of "divinity," and is only to be found coming from the lips of "believers" who know not whereof they speak.

For to proclaim ourself to be in possession of the will of a "supreme power," is to declare that power or being to be partial to some, and unjust to the many simple and innocent and the honest, who say, "I do not know." Nor can he be just if he desires the simple and innocent to be sold in the market for the material welfare or glory of others, who through a prostituted education have learned and practice the art of emotional and mystic trickery. Such, I say, cannot be credited to one who possesses the attributes of wisdom; for wisdom wards off all duplicity, and seeks only to elevate the unwise and aid the needy.

Dream on, fair saints, dream on, but make sure your dreams are of truth. For in truth only is to be found all righteousness, whilst belief only idly floats in the disordered imagination.

The practical works of truth, knowledge and wisdom build all our castles and secure our real joys

and happiness in life through our nobler characteristics. For all these can only be found in the attributes of wisdom, acquired through our own true and just endeavors.

Therefore, be wise and ask of all men to explain the beliefs they would have you accept as truth, and in the absence of their ability to explain you may rest assured that they live yet in dreams constructed of mere appearance, hearsay or imagination.

He is wise who is willing to listen, cautious in council, and eager to do good through his acts, whilst the fool is a poor listener, worthless in council and aimless in his acts.

There is no man so foolishly wise as he who merely believes he knows and dogmatically declares his beliefs to be truths. Thus it follows that belief is the fool's paradist, and the knave's capital. For belief is ignorance and truth the sustenance of wisdom.

To the world at large the wise are often they who stand on high pedestals or flount about in robes of suggestion, found in vestments, college education, and who possess an oily and slippery tongue with which to slide over fact and truth, and make beautiful emotional parables of falsehood.

The subtle seek to hide their own ignorance, but the wise reveal theirs that it may be replaced with knowledge. Someone has said that "God gives men wisdom." I wonder where he got the information from, for, in truth, there is little of it found in men. Nor, from such an assertion, does it appear that he granted it to all, but only to a few, who profess to have a monopoly of it.

A mere believer cannot be, in that respect, at least,

truly honest. He may be honest in his dealings with his fellow-men, but in disseminating his beliefs as truth he cannot be so, for he inoculates the innocent with false thoughts and thereby prevents the growth of their reasoning faculty through which alone they can acquire truth and knowledge and come into the possession of wisdom.

The wise are content with the things in this world, whilst the foolish are controlled and mystified by fallacious thoughts of another, of which they know nothing except what is told them by those as ignorant as themselves. The wise seek to perfect themselves and endeavor to profit by the enlightenment of others, but the foolish and dishonest work only for their own material welfare, and therefore cannot progress in wisdom.

And he who is untrue to others must likewise be so to himself. For that which is untrue is untrue wherever we find it.

To make gold your god is to part with wisdom, which cannot associate with greed or selfishness.

Wisdom's gods are truth, love and justice, whilst the foolish find theirs in gold, material possessions and self-glorification, and the simple have theirs made of mythology, suggestion or mere appearance, as dispensed to them from pulpit and platform.

Yea, go ye into the world and preach the gospel of truth and wisdom, but leave belief behind, that it may wither and die, for such is but the poison that saps the better life of the innocent whom wisdom ever seeks to enlighten.

To sow the seed of wisdom is to listen well to others, even although their words appear to you

foolish; for fools at times speak wisely, if unknowingly.

To feel sure that you are wise is vain and foolish. Therefore, let your thoughts move, that they may be purified by the fire of honest discussion.

There surely is no greater fool than he who believes his own thoughts to be "divine," and that those differing from his are the work of the "devil." For he thus charges the object of his belief with being partial to him and an unjust god to others.

To declare anything to be truth without proof to substantiate your contention is to be untrue both to self and others. Therefore, sew up your lips with the needle of wisdom until they can utter the truth. Better be dumb and speak no falsehood than a babbler of untruths.

Be not disturbed at condemnation, for if you are, you cannot yet have the truth, which welcomes discussion and is in no fear of chastisement, for through such it grows and becomes enriched.

Wisdom gathers where it cannot sow, and sows where it cannot gather; for such is its mission among men. It is quiet and immovable before puffed up ignorance or conceit, which is quickly exposed; but it freely pours forth its healing balm to the unpretentious honest or the unwise loving and good.

It talks not in riddles nor in obscure parables, but through similitudes or comparisons it lays bare the truth to those difficult of comprehension. It talks with the child in its own language and meets the philosopher and scientist at their own level. It is neither above nor below; for all men are equal, differing only in thought which exists only in abstract, through the brain's correctly or incorrectly

looking out on the actual and potential things in life and nature.

It is just towards all, yet will punish all forms of evil.

It gives much for little or for nothing; and is never disappointed, though its wares be rejected.

Appearances it quietly ignores, and considers and weighs the motive or truth. It sees through the saint and can fathom the sinner. It knows that music, vestments and trappings of the kind are often only the ivy which covers dishonesty in the apparent vineyard of morality.

Wisdom's light reflects; but the light of conceit is soon extinguished.

Faith is her guide, perception her coach, reason her builder and truth her fruit, whilst love is the dispensary open to all.

Religious faith is as fly paper, which holds every fly of belief that lands upon it. But true faith is the light of past knowledge shining upon future realities, through which we are enabled to make clear our path towards future accomplishment.

It is the sustenance of our will, perseverance and determination, together with all the kindred attributes of mind, of which wisdom is composed.

Wisdom is he who knows his own faults and the virtues of others; for he can then discard the false and adopt the good and true, is lenient towards others, and can correct and chastise himself.

Common sense, as often understood by the multitude, is sometimes only nonsense; but wisdom is common sense in an uncommon degree; but how few, comparatively, possess it!

Wisdom advances through the modification or ad-

justment of present knowledge, by the process of deduction and comparison, which are attributes of Faith.

It is true that no mind knows anything in its entirety. All we do know is that we know of things, and, in a measure, their cause and effect. For to truly and wholly know any one thing is to know all things, all things being composed of one thing—substance; for that which is not of substance appears only in potentiality or possibility, and therefore has no actual existence.

The dishonest are wise to their own material gains, but blind to their own true welfare, which can only emanate from pure and true thoughts as found in love, the giver, truth, the builder, and in justice, the guardian.

He is wisest who can act on his own true council and is taught by his own perception. For few are the wise masters; and those who cannot gather cannot sow nor reap, but are as chaff, blown hither and thither by the false winds of hearsay.

The wise gather and fend for themselves; but the foolish are fed by the spoon of belief in the hands of the irrational or untrue.

To know that others know much also is to be wise; for then are we charitable in speech, forbearing in manner and wise in council.

Wisdom is not like a glaring and gaudy fashion plate; nor is it like a foghorn, making much noise about what it knows, but is quietly willing, at all times, to give of its knowledge without price or reward. For its motive power is love, its wares are of truth, and its chief aim knowledge for all.

Philosophy locates, science secures, whilst dog-

matic theology, or any other ology of the kind, repudiates and, therefore, never possesses truth. Hence the perpetual unrest and bigoted strife amongst the various sects of religion.

Wisdom is of few words, but realizes much, whilst falsehood sees little, but endeavors to "fill up" with much talk, that it may appear wise, and too often succeeds in thus duping and misleading the simple and innocent.

To remove well our own faults is to be in a true position to help remove the faults of others, for we then act with sympathy, knowing the difficulty we had with our own.

To be lenient to others in trouble, whilst striving to be right, is the prerogative of justice.

To resist not evil is to be unjust, but to forgive those who in their weakness do some wrong is the path of the wise and the way of the just.

To compass faith, perception, reason, love, truth and justice is wisdom. Its tools are many and its works wonderful, for all true art is its product.

To know the what, the where, and the how of obtaining truth are the first steps towards wisdom; all else is but ignorance.

Wisdom stands not to one side whilst its neighbor's sheep are being stolen and then say that "it is none of my business." For it knows that to resist not evil is to become a party to it. It is not selfish; for selfishness is but ignorance, or self-eating-self. It cannot be dishonest; for dishonesty is but selfishness or ignorance of, and indifference to, what is due to others.

Education or mere book-learning is not a dominat-

ing factor in its being, for wisdom can only be found in the true principles of right and wrong.

The wise listen patiently to the opinions of others, nor do they bite before they are bitten; for words cannot hurt them. They are influenced alone through their own will, and grow through opposition or correction. For by such means their errors may be removed, or others convicted of their own mistakes.

The wise know they know little; but the foolish imagine they know much, and so hang themselves with the rope of spurious words.

The wise can split hairs, but they keep them in their own heads; while the foolish make of them their foundation.

The wise despise little lies or "fibs," however trivial they may appear. To tell even a small business lie is liable to lead to a habit of falsehood and theft. For to lie is to steal thoughts and mislead others.

Wisdom builds not to please but to purify, and lives in the warm sunlight of love, whose palace is Truth and Justice. For without love all is selfishness, and without truth ignorance; and it is through selfishness and ignorance that the baser attributes of the mind are engendered.

There is no friend so true as your own wise discretion; for without discretion you cannot find a true friend, who is the rarest jewel on earth, whether clothed in rags or satin.

He is wise who can subdue hatred, banish fear, alleviate sorrow, turn anger aside and smile in trouble; for he will then have the strength and sympathy to comfort and console the weak and suffer-

ing; such is the body, the heart and the soul of true sympathy.

But to weep with the mourner helps not, but rather hinders the work of healing and consolation.

The unwise wish, but wise do; the foolish live in the desert air of imagination; but the wise work in the fruitful field of reality.

There may, perhaps, be many thoughts, which I have herein expressed, which will be considered unwise by those whose preconceived ideas they contradict or refute. Nevertheless, is it not true that he who cannot withstand contradiction must be untrue, or unsure of his ground. But, in the long run, truth and wisdom must prevail. And in the expression of these thoughts I have been chiefly concerned in helping to enlighten the simple and ignorant, to set them free from the bondage of false education and blind belief, and bring them within the revivifying light of wisdom, which is Truth.

But I venture to think that he who is wise, and therefore honest and impartial, will, when he realizes the truth of the thoughts expressed, also help others to realize them. And as to those who through their beliefs, creeds or dogmas, cannot now see the force and fact of these words, I can only hope that later they may mend their ways.

REASON'S ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE.

The people: Reason, to Thee, our Lord, would we lay bare our humble heads, and bend our feeble knees.

Reason: Indeed, and for why should you prostrate yourselves before me?

The people: Because to thee do we look for the revelation of truth, through which we gain knowledge and come into the possession of wisdom.

Reason: Quite true; yet I must again ask, why do you desire to humiliate yourselves at my feet?

The people: Because we believe that it becomes us so to do; for from thy hand do we receive all the good things of life, with which we can attain to that which is just, true and worthy.

Reason: There is truth in your recognition of my influence, and yet you evade my question, which I would once more repeat: Why do you seek to bow at my shrine, and so humiliate yourselves and thus exalt me?

The people: Art thou not the god of our well-being, whom alone we can see, know and understand, the dispenser of true manhood, honesty and nobleness of character, from which spring out true worth and usefulness to self and others? And dost thou not ask and expect from us thanks, obedience and adoration in return for the rare and good gifts thou hast in great measure to bestow upon us?

Reason: Well have you spoken, and well would your words and prostration be received by all mun-

dane kings and lords who ever seek and demand that their own glorification be woven of the innocent and honest web of the ignorant and unfortunate, who are poor in thought and blind in perceiving truth from falsehood. But it is not so with Reason, whom you now address, for I can perceive the necessity and object of your search. For can you think that he who possesses all can desire to receive supplication for life's good things from those who are needy and just in their search, and who would humiliate themselves in prostration? Such is but folly, when the things so much desired are waiting at the door of everyone who through faith and reason wish to secure and wisely use them. What, I ask, have you come to bow at my shrine for, except to obtain that which you do not possess? And when you have received the things so coveted, how soon do you begin to depreciate and disregard them until, perchance, they are wrested from you? Then you fondly mourn for the loss of the precious gifts which you could not appreciate or rightly use when once in your possession.

But such is the selfishness and folly of man, ever striving after the material things in which he ignorantly "believes" are to be found life's joys and happiness; when, after all, such can only be attained through the felicity of his thoughts, which reach their highest peak when he has realized the joy of giving, doing and helping those who need his aid.

Why then humble yourselves at the shrine of another, only to humiliate yourself for the glorification of him who is vain or subtle enough to demand such homage? Away with your flattery and reverence of and your obsequiousness to men and things which

deprive you of truth and knowledge. For know you not that every virtue known to mankind is being daily weakened and destroyed by such self-abnegation. It is those people in high places, clothed in purple and fine linen, who by their words of sophistry and beguilement seek to dominate and lead. You may desire to be freed from your doubts and perplexities, but these self-acclaimed leaders and teachers only plunge you deeper into the slough of ignorance. For their wares are those of hearsay, fable and mystery, the media of disordered thought and imposition. They cannot help you in your search after Truth, nor aid you in the attainment of true and upright manhood, except through the teaching of morals found in truth and honesty.

It is true also that the earth is encumbered by millions who thus seek to delude the unwary. But by the exercise of reason, the truth is revealed. Reason reigns supreme, for it directs our thoughts, and is the builder of the earthly palaces in which dwell the joys, consolations and aspirations which alone make life worth the living.

It is no wonder, therefore, that you desire to prostrate yourself at my shrine; but the strength of reason forbids such weakness. For it is clearly evident that no living soul can rationally worship that upon which he stands, or that of which he is the circumference. For reason is the law of your attainment, and is the power within yourself, by which you educe truth from fact and reality, gather knowledge and acquire wisdom. And yet, day by day, are there thousands being crucified on the cross of blind belief in things which, in the light of reason, can never come to pass.

Listen, therefore, to reason, and heed not the dreams which captivate the imagination with futile desires. And when you listen to those who stand on high places, pulpit or rostrum, and who, lacking knowledge and initiative, continually revert to the fables of the dead as being "divine truth," you may rest assured that you have gone to the wrong place for enlightenment of your reason. Such can only appeal to the emotions, destroying your true faith in yourself and others and bringing your reason to the level of belief—(see Belief)—which blights civilization, and retards our political, commercial and social welfare. For do you not prostrate yourselves at its shrine? And is it not the medium of despotism and imposition, seated at the foot of the earthly pedestals of these preachers and self-appointed teachers professing or pretending to reveal the "gospel" by the recital of the supposed miracles of the past and perdictions of the unknown future? Some of those expounders may no doubt conscientious, "thinking" or "Believing" that they are doing service to man and their duty to their god. But there are too many, alas! who knowingly lend themselves to wilful imposition in order to keep blind the eyes of the innocent and simple, and thereby prevent the growth of that great faculty of the mind, reason. Would you call that justice, or the work of a just and impartial god? Do you think that a supreme being deals in the mysterious for the purpose of keeping humble, ignorant and meek the innocent? Or do you think that such mysticism and trappings of vestment are required by one who is supposed to possess all power, and the dispenser of the priceless jewels of Love, Truth and Justice?

Surely not; for that which administers love, truth and justice can only do so through that faculty of the mind known or called reason, by and through which only is it possible for you to truly realize life's higher joys and come into possession of the highest attributes of mankind. To see and know all these things you must and can only look through the searching and discerning eyes of reason. It is by the exercise of this faculty that man has progressed, materially and intellectually.

Thus, in order that you may more clearly grasp and realize the truth of what I have already said, I will enter more fully into the subject-matter of reason, so that you may remove any doubts which may be still lingering in your minds. For it may be that you still cling to some "Belief," the conception not of your own reason but of others whom you may not know and probably do not understand, and therefore blindly follow. For he that is thus misled displays his own weakness, and he who misleads seeks but his own advantage and glorification. But he who speaks not in riddles, but lays bare the truth to the innocent and simple is a Saviour of the weak and needy. Such benefactors the world much needs. And he who speaks in obscure parables, leaves his work for the knave to trade upon, and so makes victims of others. Such perverters of the truth the world could well spare.

Truth is not puffed up, nor does it wear the cloak of suggestion nor speaks from a pedestal of arrogance for its own glorification and the humiliation of others. For it knows that such is dishonest and the work only of impostors and knaves, the chief of whom are not always found in our prisons, but

moving about in high circles in the odors of sanctity.

How comparatively few men, in the matter of religion, use their faculty of reason! Not until Hearsay, Fable and Belief are cleared out of our churches will reason prevail. Moreover, men nowadays defer to women, who are just church-goers, and who, good souls, are much guided by the emotional side of their natures and are thus more easily influenced by the stories of the dead. And so men, from love or respect, follow the women, like sheep, to church. But when these men meet their fellows in business or social circles they carefully refrain from mentioning religion in the course of conversation. Why so, if it be not to keep their women-folk ignorant while they remain wise? So you see that it is not really our women, but "our old women" of the stronger sex, who are the chief culprits in keeping our good women in a state of bondage to the church or chapel. Is it any wonder also that they run to the church when so often they can't find true men folk at home, and thus are swayed by the oily tongues of the "old women" in the pulpit, who yet do not know the what, and the where of truth.

When our reason (the brain) sees clearly and knows well what to do, it, through faith, its armor-bearer, can and will plough through oceans of apparent trouble. For wisdom, the product of reason, can breast the surging waves and safely reach the harbor of refuge.

Reason requires not subjection, but leads rather to independence and self-reliance.

If so, why should you desire me to pose as King, with you as the slaves, trafficing upon your ignorance? Would you then call me just? Or would

you not think me more noble when I show you the way to your own crowns, which is to be kings yourselves? For through the light of reason you become masters of your own destinies.

Reason deals only with the things it sees and knows; it never shops in the second-hand stores of hearsay, fable or belief, for it knows that too often such are composed of falsehood and imposition.

Our feelings, emotions and passions, when not guided by reason, bring us to the level of the lower animals, and we become bereft of the power of accomplishing any worthy action.

He whose mental food is composed of mere belief becomes bigoted and irrational; he who will not reason is foolish; he who cannot reason is to be pitied; but he who dares not reason is a slave to the words of others, and becomes himself food for the knave.

Reason alone has raised man above the beast and given him power over all living creatures. It is conscious of the extent of its own power, and discovers our limitations. It ceases to reason upon things above its own power, leaving such to the credulity of the unreasoning sophists.

Through reason only can we come into possession of distant realities, facts, truth, knowledge and wisdom. For reason works through comparison, without which it is impossible for us to realize anything. It subdues the passions, directs the emotions, and guides towards attainment.

The authority of reason is disputed only by those who are unreasonably irrational and weak.

Reason, from a small concept of evidence, can build well into the future. It alone is our true

prophet. Through faith we perceive in the darkness; from conception comes attention and interest; while reason finds facts, facts truth, truth knowledge, and knowledge wisdom, the crown of our intelligence and the pilot to a noble and progressive character. Reason, with faith and perception, directs, constructs and enlarges the realities of life. From its principles we educe facts by which we build true manhood.

There is not, nor can there be, faith without reason; for faith is the atmosphere of reason; belief alone is blind and helpless.

Without reason there can be no judgment, for judgment is obtained through comparison, while comparison is the sustenance of reason.

Nothing can be intelligently done without reason, be it conscious or instinctive; for instinct is the product of past knowledge, obtained through hereditary or personal experience.

Association with the true and the real become to us reason in a slow process of growth. Our conscious mind deals with the things we are coming into the realization of, while the subconscious mind retains the things we have already fully, or partially, realized, and so our instinctive desire may be wrong through incorrect or incomplete reasoning in the past.

He who, through mere belief, proclaims the unreasonable to be reasonable, is himself irrational and intolerant, and so becomes fruitful of evil to himself, and a hindrance to the well-being of others. Such live in an imaginary world, while they trip and fall over the realities of life, with which alone they can become worthy and useful.

There cannot be "prophecy" without reason; for reason, through faith, is the light of all "prediction;" all else is but a dream, a delusion and a jumble of the mind's possessions.

To reason from false principles, or to take them for granted, is but the work of the foolish. But faith is not blind; it never makes a plunge unless it knows it will land safely; for the surety of its strength is found in reason.

Reason is but a poor thing in the eyes of those of selfish and habitual inclination, or hereditary belief: They themselves, are poor in "spirit" and weak in reason; for they cannot or will not abjure their delusions, and they are not ashamed to worship and do reverence to them or to ask alms for the purpose of bolstering them up.

The reason is easiest enslaved, made dull or overcome, by position, possessions, and seeming respectability. And the unscrupulous invariably desire to crush those at their own level, should such state even facts, which may be foreign to their own thoughts and predilections. For in the gilded gloss of the factitious good does falsehood find its greatest growth; while the poor, simple and lowly do naught but just reflect it.

When we have no good reason to accept a statement as a truth, apart from the source from which we receive it, we are wisest when we set it to one side, perchance for future consideration. For to do otherwise is to allow the thin edge of the wedge of belief to get in its deadly work. Question, question, is the cry of a reasonable life, to you and me; for if we ignore the demands of our reason we can become but slaves under falsehood's cruel whip.

The wise move by reason, the semi-wise by mere experience, the foolish by desire or the emotions, while the unwise are subject to the influences of false suggestion.

From reason we derive knowledge, and from knowledge wisdom; for without reason there can be no knowledge, or without knowledge reason; and their product is wisdom.

Reason is the producer of intelligence, which sees, knows and does; belief but a phonograph that receives and transmits the words of others, and not always clearly. In like manner do believers often repeat in garbled language the thoughts of others, which they have not weighed or considered.

He who will not exercise and cultivate his own reason, weakens and stultifies his intellect and becomes an easy prey to the knave and impostor.

Without reason our will power becomes worthless and paralyzed, and we become slaves to disordered dreams and imagination, like the opium maker, who surrenders to the baneful influence of the drug, causing injury to ourselves and misery to others yet weak.

It is men of reason, strength, calmness and incorruptible honesty that the world needs to-day. For such alone can justly deal with the present, prepare and provide for the future and adjust conditions best to suit all. Such men are broad-minded, large-hearted and unselfish. Nor will they vainly attempt to bring from the skies that which lies at their own door.

Greed seeks more than its own ability can acquire, ignorance builds castles in the air which are dissipated by the winds of disillusionment, and the

subtle seek to bring the simple to their knees, while they themselves reap the gain and the glory.

Falsehood is conquered when confronted with reason. Therefore the dealers in fraud and imposition seek the weak, simple and innocent, whom they can more easily gull and deprive of their reason. Is such not, morally, theft? But of course, our present laws can not touch them, being blind or indifferent, and dealing cautiously with eminence, while it brings the poor to speedy justice.

He who can and does truly govern his own inclinations, desires, emotions and passions is a long way on the road to perfect manhood. For he is thus enabled to banish fear, subdue hatred, control sorrow, efface selfishness; and by such self-discipline helps not only himself but administers to the welfare of others. For in helping others is found love's greatest and truest expression. Love is that innate desire and longing to give of itself, through affectionate service, for the true joy and welfare of others. Selfishness seeks to grasp and retain; love radiates, expands and gives of itself freely, and thereby grows and is enriched. For the greater and better life of love can only enlarge itself through and into others without whose revivifying influence it would wither and fall into selfishness, the chief purpose of all the lower forms of life. It is love and reason, therefore, that raises man above the level of the beast of the field.

Reason, when directed towards the welfare of others, can free us from greed and save us from moral stagnation; for the suppression of selfishness enables us to grow out of ourselves into others, who

become part of us; and in this way do we help others and ourselves to the larger growth of a worthy life. Love, through faith and reason ever radiates and expands, while selfishness is but self-eating-self.

Pure thoughts are the rarest things we can give, which, through giving continue to grow and fructify. Therefore, stand ever on the good feet of reason, turn your prayers and your actions into giving, for all else is worthless to yourselves or to others.

All life has its measure of reason, which it gathers as it grows and retains in the store-house of instinct or memory.

Our subconscious mind, when truth prevails, does all things through instinct based on reason. It governs our whole being, yet sometimes fails to guide us aright because of the poor or inadequate supply from our conscious mind, which it must rely upon for its sustenance, materially and intellectually, which is the power to see truly the things in life which have neither form, substance nor even "Spirit," but which are the work of the brain's realization through sound reason.

For example: I give you and a poor boy in the street each a gold piece. The boy will be overjoyed, while you might return a bare "Thank you." So you see that each to the same give more or less value, and so take from it more or less pleasure, which has neither form, substance nor "spirit," but only the mind's realization of that which has no existence. Thus you see that each and all may make "Heaven" or "Hell" out of nothing. To linger with

the above thought until you can grasp it is well worth your while, for through it you will find you can make something of nothing (potentially) which is most valuable to know, for from such sources spring all our fear, our sorrow and trouble.

The mind can see light in the darkest of nights. Every cloud has its silver lining, which you may find if you but truly look. Force yourself to smile when things look blackest; bear a brave and cheerful front to adversity, and the "hell" on earth will become a heaven. Let the past dead bury its dead; look to and serve the living. For there are as good men about you as ever yet lived.

But first and always cultivate your reason. To the wise there is no darkness save ignorance, no crime so heinous or far-reaching as the theft of our reason.

He who guides his thoughts, his words, and his actions by reason, can become a true servant or a just master, his own lord and saviour. He requires no sacrifice, and no god that his reason, the conceiver of all truth, knowledge and wisdom, does not justify for no man yet knows of such.

Reason seeks ever to be servant, father and mother, and is alone your just Lord and Saviour, requiring no adoration, but is at yours, and the service of all.

Hence unfurl your banners, lift high the standard that all may see, in you, and I, and everyone, through the triumphal arch of reason, is found man's just and loving Saviour.

Strive to perfect yourselves, or you will be but poorly finished. The world abounds in both the

ignorant and the knave; how hard it is to find the truly just and honest. But we can always help to spread the truth, and only through the continual exercise of reason can we become our own Saviour, and master in our own dominion, the brain.

THE WHAT AND WHEREOF OF TRUTH.

The above title no doubt savors of the prophetic; but whether there is any new knowledge to be found in its purport, the writer of these pages will leave his readers to judge for themselves.

In the pursuit of knowledge or truth, and in the conduct of life, we have all made in the past many mistakes, mainly because we did not possess the truth within our own minds and have, therefore, been unable to justly guide or control our thougths, words and acts. This is true not only of individuals but also of communities, acts and bodies of men from the earliest dawn of history to the present time. In commerce, politics, religion, and society the true realization of truth has not always been conspicuous by its presence. It is true that the many various sects of religion have each claimed to possess the monopoly of truth. But how many of the followers or believers in these creeds could give a rational answer to the question, What is truth? Neither in encyclopaedia or dictionary can be found any adequate definition or exposition of this all-important attitude. We seek for knowledge on the subject from those whose profession it is to teach truth, and we are regaled with the usual platitudes. And so, perhaps, we have remained for years in ignorance of the true comprehension of the what and where of truth to guide us in the conduct of life.

Truth is latent in us all, but we do not realize it.

Would it not, therefore, seem the dawn of a new era if we could all come into its full comprehension? We should then become instinctively capable of distinguishing the true from the false, impressions and beliefs from truth, and thus be enabled to grow in true knowledge and the higher attributes of character.

Heretofore we have been too wont to rely upon sources from without as being truth when, instead, they have led us into habits of mere belief or credulity.

Such a sweeping statement may appear, perhaps, extreme to those who believe that the throne of truth is controlled by the self-appointed prophets and leaders, or contained within the pages of some book or books which are supposed to be of "divine" or "sacred" inspiration. But it is the author's aim to show to the best of his ability that truth to us cannot be found in the revelations of any book, nor from the lips of any living man, nor even in all of nature, until it is realized within our own minds. And the author may here remark that in anything he may write it is with the sincere object of the welfare of others, and trusts that the spirit of the intention may be so appreciated if not realized. For in the course of his remarks he will find it necessary to oppose or challenge many of the commonly accepted and cherished beliefs of tradition and hearsay, handed down to us from our forefathers.

Although the word "prophecy" is usually associated with the idea of "divine revelation," it is really synonymous with the term "prediction," and as such the writer would apply both as signifying, accord-

ing to Webster, a "previous declaration of a future event." Let us briefly consider its meaning.

It appears obvious that there cannot be prophecy or prediction without the present realization or preknowledge of a future actuality or reality, and which must appear to us through the modification or adaptation of our present knolwedge and which must be governed by a rational understanding of the conditions which will bring about that prophecy or prediction.

There have been many prophets of old, and there have been such in recent days, who have predicted the end of the world at certain more or less clearly specified dates. But we know that both the ancient and the modern prophets "prophesied what they did not know," and that the world still revolves in the old way. And so it has been with regard to the prediction of other events, the effect chiefly of the imagination and belief in "divine or supernatural" inspiration.

The writer proposes in his present inquiry to present his views as applied to present conditions on the basis of our past and present knowledge. For of such must our conceptions of the future be composed, as only by comparison with what we know and have experienced, and by its adjustment can we anticipate, to some extent, the future. The understanding can by such comparison and adjustment see beyond positive experience. But if we have no rational knowledge, experience or realization of the thing which we could predict as a future happening, our prognostications are vain and futile.

All belief, therefore, in certain people, as related in historic works, being specially endowed with the

supernatural gift of prophecy, is based upon fallacy and ignorance of the natural laws of both reason and nature.

In like manner, to ascribe to certain favored personages of the past, superhuman attributes and miraculous powers, is to believe in delusions contrary to all the dictates of human reason and comprehension. Nor can the authority of any book, largely based on tradition and mysticism, be sufficient to bring home to a reasoning mind the truth of such beliefs. When history acquaints us with an actuality which we can experience, or realize by comparison with the conditions of to-day, we can then accept it as Fact by the power of our reason. Otherwise such statements of history or tradition resolve themselves into mere belief; which we shall later endeavor to prove to be ignorance of the real or actual, or blind trust in the words and assumptions of others.

Let us now examine and endeavor to define and elucidate the true conception of truth as based upon the reasoning faculty.

It will be first necessary to remove from the path of our search, such delusions as are contained in tradition, hearsay, fable and mythology, which only obscure or impede the realization of truth and knowledge. For it will be found that without truth there can be no knowledge; without knowledge no faith, but instead its shallow substitute, "belief," and love but mere passion. Consequently, if our reasoning faculty is not exercised, all our higher attributes, moral and intellectual, are stunted and perverted in their growth, and the acquisition of knowledge prevented.

Before we consider the elements which are more nearly related to our subject truth, such as information, fact, actuality, reality (or potentiality), with which we shall deal later, let us now examine the quality of

HEARSAY,

which we will first introduce through the useful Webster for its generally accepted definition. Even a dictionary, however, although popularly considered infallible as to the meaning of a word,—for most people like to refer to some written authority for their knowledge—does not always give a full and comprehensive definition, or covers the modifications or variations which a word undergoes in process of time.

But for most practical purposes we can take Webster as our authority, and hearsay is given as: "A rumor or report second-hand." From this definition it will be seen that we are left in a quandary of doubt as to there being any element of fact contained therein. Hearsay, in fine, is a rumor or report without foundation or authority, and its fact cannot be realized by us except through previous knowledge or experience as agreeing with the actual or real. Hence it follows that all knowledge must be registered within our own minds from experience or our understanding, which can only work with the knowledge already gained, and through its adaptation or modification, the mind is enabled to construct, in potentiality, a future actuality or reality. For in no other way can we grow in truth, knowledge and wisdom. Without such personal

knowledge we are mentally destitute before the words of others. Without comparison, also, there can be no judgment, for it is obvious there can be neither without previous knowledge.

Further, our definition states that hearsay is a report or rumor obtained "second-hand," and has, therefore, been in the possession of someone or other for some time; is not, therefore, new, and possibly not true, or at any rate has been passed along and probably lost much if not all of any fact it originally contained. For example, I witness, experience, or maybe fabricate something and tell of it to another, who in turn, relates it to you. In this way you receive a statement which may or may not agree with the actual or real, and which you can truly accept or refuse only in accordance with the degree of your past knowledge relative to the actuality to which the story is reported to refer. Otherwise, we cannot honestly accept or pronounce it to be a fact, for we may be possibly stating an unwitting falsehood, which is as injurious or misleading as a wilful one. And for this reason the justice of the land will not allow ignorance of the law as an excuse to evade punishment, for naturally every criminal would take advantage of the plea of innocence.

Moreover, it is plain that as we all think differently, a story passed from one to another becomes involved in mis-statement and is distorted, even although the speaker of the hearsay may be unconscious of the falsity of his words. It will thus be seen how scrupulous we should be in ascertaining the fact or falsity of the stories or statements we would accept and pass on to others as being fact.

Otherwise it is manifest that we cannot be honest with either ourselves or with others, irrespective of the source of our supposed information. For do we not often misplace our respect for or confidence in others who on the surface appear to be honest and worthy? How often, also, have we found ourselves relating hearsay stories, as being fact, and discover later that we have stated an untruth, when by the light of our own knowledge or reason we have drawn a true comparison? From the foregoing it will, I think, be clear that, although hearsay may contain a germ of fact, it can only be at best, distant possible knowledge which cannot be realized until we experience ourselves in some way the actuality to which it may refer. Nor can we without such personal realization truly assert it to be fact.

If, therefore, this line of reasoning is correct, we are justified in defining hearsay as follows: That hearsay is a rumor or report second-hand, and may be, as far as we know, entirely without foundation; that it gathers, grows and changes its form like a snowball pushed along the ground, and cannot be fact, nor become a truth to us as such.

Having found "hearsay" but a barren ground for our quest of truth, we will now dispense with its services and consider

TRADITION,

which is akin to hearsay, in its relation to truth.

It will no doubt be obvious to those of ordinary education, and who reason for themselves that tradition does not necessarily contain fact or truth,

even though they themselves could not, perhaps, give a ready answer to the question: What is truth?

While this may be so, permit me to say that this article is not written with the object of telling others what they already know or understand, but for those who may not fully comprehend the subject through lack of education, time, opportunity, or perhaps indifference to what they may consider a dry and abstract disquisition.

Let us first take the dictionary meaning of tradition, which is thus given: "The oral transmission of events, opinions, doctrines, practices, etc., through successive generations, without written memorials; that which is handed down; ancient custom," etc. (Webster.) This definition, I think, we can all accept as final. Tradition, therefore, is handed down to us, as indicated, by mere word of mouth, not appearing, originally, in written form, and bearing no evidence or connection with truth. For it is well known that a story or report—as with hearsay—passed from one generation to another,—generally, if not always, changes its form or meaning, and in time its true and essential import may have entirely disappeared. For the simple and obvious reason, as before given, that all minds think differently, detracting from or adding to what is termed tradition. It follows, therefore, that while tradition may, perhaps, contain some element of fact, it often resolves into falsehood or mis-statement, and when dogmatically stated to be fact, or given out as truth, a dishonest act is consciously or unconsciously committed. For to declare anything to be fact without ourselves having experienced or realized the actuality to which such purports to

refer, is to labor under misapprehension and, therefore, to be untrue to ourselves, as well as to those on whom we would impose such factitious belief.

What reliance, therefore, can we place on any doctrine or creed which is wholly or partly based on tradition? If we are in search of truth, tradition, it may well seem, cannot aid us in our honest quest, unless, perchance, it can help us into realizing the actualities or realities of present conditions. And yet, tradition, fable and myth, all of a kindred stock, are largely drawn upon for the purpose of awakening the emotions, misleading or swaying those who cannot distinguish fact from what is fabulous, or what at least has no evidence of emanating from a truth, which must agree with an actuality or reality.

It will thus be seen that to realize truth, we cannot rely upon the assistance of tradition, which is distinct from, and often inimical to fact, truth or knowledge.

Having arrived at this stage of our inquiry, we may reasonably say that tradition, through it, has also had a degenerative effect upon mankind, crippling the reasoning faculty, destroying true faith (the light of truth and knowledge) and subjecting us to the pernicious influence of those who propagate various false creeds or doctrines, often for personal and selfish ends.

We will now consider another somewhat kindred subject of tradition, namely,

FABLE,

and we will again consult our Webster, who thus defines it: "A short fictitious narrative, intended to

convey some moral; an idle story or falsehood," etc. How, whilst fables are not always used with the intention of the actual stories being literally true, they have nevertheless been employed for the purpose of "conveying some moral" and to inculcate truth. But the "intention" has too often been overlooked, and many fables contained in so-called "sacred" and "inspired" books have come to be accepted as "truths." Their influence, therefore, has not been very favorable to the acquisition of what we are all in search of—truth, which can, after all, only be found within our own minds. Fables may be interesting enough and some may point to useful morals, but when they are employed for the purposes, by suggestion and mysticism, of illustrating or enforcing false doctrines, they can only tend to obscure the realization of truth. Fables, also, whilst originally related only for the purposes of mental instruction and recreation, became often, in the process of time, to be "believed" in, as true interpretations of certain points in religious teaching, and for the same reason as with tradition and hearsay, cannot help us in our honest search for truth.

As fable has been so great a help to us in our inquiry as to truth, we will now, with your kind permission, consider the subject of

MYTHOLOGY,

and we will again consult our dictionary for an authoritative definition as follows: "The collected body or systems of the traditions or legends of a people, in which are embodied their beliefs (not

truths) concerning their origin, gods, heroes, etc., the science of myths; a treatise on myths." (Webster.)

In this definition we have the embodiment of what has already been shown to be the characteristics of hearsay, tradition and fable, and therefore, of kindred quality. It must be, moreover, manifest that myths, which also are employed in the propagation of religious beliefs, and are sometimes even supposed to be of supernatural inspiration, can offer us no reliable guide in our search for truth. The word itself, "mythical," has indeed become a term for that which is unreliable and factitious, and yet partly or wholly upon such fallacious ground.

Myths again, like its kindred qualities tradition, hearsay and fable, have in process of time become embellished and contorted out of their original meaning. Sometimes what in years past has been said or written in jest, mockery, or as a tale told to exercise the imagination, becomes in time invested with the authority of age and is accepted by the credulous as truth. It has been well said that if sufficient mud (of falsehood) is thrown at a person, some of it is sure to stick.

While it is cheerfully conceded that from tradition, hearsay, fable and mythology we can derive interesting and instructive thoughts, they have all been on the whole prejudicial to the realization of truth, and the habit of clear thinking and honest reasoning. This is especially so as regards the various dogmas, creeds and tenets of the numerous religious sects which have been established in various countries. Of such, books supposed to be "divinely inspired" are largely composed. We read a book

which has come down to us through the ages, stamped with this seeming authority of supernatural origin and our natural and hereditary influences predispose us to "believe" in its entire and unquestioned "truth." But not till we exercise our reasoning faculty can the facts of such book or books be realized within us.

Let us, therefore, examine and consider such tradition or hearsay-knowledge as we would the information given us in the ordinary course of life by those upon our own level. For it is a common weakness of believers to worship the gods or heroes of an apparently higher plane, and all the power and authority with which the latter are invested is the result of credulity and humility on the one, and assumption and dogmatism on the other part. But a reasoning mind cannot worship either true or false. For truth can be realized only through reason, and becomes our servant in the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge and wisdom.

Why, it may be asked, do we so readily declare our "belief" in doctrines based on mystery? Is it not because we are ignorant of the actual or real, or because we are under the influence of suggestion, hereditary, predisposition, habits and subject to conventional authority? To a rational mind it seems useless and futile to worship what we do not and cannot know, or that which is founded on tradition, of which there is no evidence as to its fact. It is only by our reason, through experience and knowledge, that we can arrive honestly at the fact of any creed or doctrine, otherwise we can possess but mere belief. For that which emanates from a truth within

us, as agreeing with actualities or realities, alone is fact.

We will now consider, in our quest for truth, our guide in the acquisition of all knowledge and wisdom, a subject which has a more intimate connection with our inquiry, namely:

HISTORY.

Now, history is often confounded with the terms we have already dealt with, but is essentially different. Let us see what Webster says as to history: "A narrative of facts and events arranged chronologically, with their causes and effects; knowledge of facts," and thus it will be seen that we are approaching near to, or perhaps within the atmosphere of truth. For it is given as "knowledge of facts," and as there can be no conscious statement of fact without the truth within our own mind of past, present or future actualities or realities, it becomes evident that we are now dealing with an element which may help us in realizing the what and wherefore of truth. Granting this definition of history to be correct, we must first know, however, whether it is founded on fact before we can realize the facts or falsity of it.

Let us first consider the terms of our definition as to history being arranged "chronologically." Now, before history can give the correct dates of events, there must be proven correct at first hand, recorded by the actual eye witnesses of them, or when related by the actors therein themselves, corroborated by others who have had experience or

knowledge thereof. In this lies the difference between history and mere tradition. Only therefore when an historical narrative is confirmed by many sources, all of which agree with and appear within the bounds of reasonable deduction, can we accept history, however brilliantly written, as being fact. Nor even then can we dogmatically assert such as fact, for the narrators may have been mistaken or deluded, and we ourselves have not experienced the actuality of which it purports, and we do not therefore possess the absolute truth within ourselves. But, at the same time, having ourselves experienced, or through the modification of our experience or knowledge, realized an actuality similar to that of which history relates, we can then truthfully say that the event narrated was quite possible and can reasonably accept it as an historical fact.

The further we go back in the pages of history the larger must be the measure of salt with which we accept the records of events. Many ancient historical and biographical works have long since been found to be works of more or less fiction, some even deliberately so, with intention to deceive or delude. In other works, where the purpose was doubtless honest and even care-taking as to data, the personal impressions and prejudices of the writers have often distorted the real significance and accuracy of their records out of all real proportion to Fact. Most people, however, are disposed to "believe" everything they see "in print," with some it seems to be assurance of "truth," when, as a matter of fact, there is no more probability of its being fact for its being so printed and published, than if it is merely uttered by word of mouth. The newspapers of the day,

especially, are the chief vehicles of falsehood, calumny and misrepresentation, their hurried production and unconfirmed presentation of information being largely the cause of their unreliability as regards truth. And even historical works, however carefully written, are not exempt from human error.

We must, therefore, in reading history, use our own reasoning faculty, discarding from our minds the false records of hearsay and tradition contained therein, and accept only as fact that which we know conforms with the actual or real.

Thus history can only provide us with data, the actuality of which, to be honest, we must realize within our own minds. With this brief sketch of the influence of history, we will now consider a subject which is not only prejudicial to our search for truth, but which also greatly hinders moral and intellectual progress. This phase, the true import of which is greatly misunderstood, is

BELIEF,

which, as it is a common and often unconscious delusion, we would refer to with kindness and with the sincere desire of giving what enlightenment on the subject we can submit. And yet we would endeavor to show that mere belief is not truth realized, and that it is not even faith, as we understand that term. Through its influence the reasoning faculty is prevented or hindered in the work of gaining knowledge of that which is true and necessary to the development of the higher attributes which make life worth living.

Through its subjection also, our faith, the light of truth and knowledge, becomes shallow and unstable, causing us to misplace our respect and confidence in things and men.

Our love for our fellow-men, under its influence, is often rendered selfish, exclusive and bigoted, and hence is not true love, which should be regardless of sect environment, circle and beliefs, and should embrace all humanity. True love is unprejudiced, unbiased and uninfluenced by opposite views or convictions, and it cannot consequently be found in its highest development in belief which is exclusive, self-centered and often intolerant of opposite opinions.

Such is belief, if we blindly accept as fact the assertions or statements of hearsay and tradition.

And as the religious beliefs, past and present, are mainly based on tradition and mysticism, their propagation must appear to a reasoning mind vain and delusive in their object and generally prejudical to moral and intellectual culture.

Referring now to the indispensable fountain head of word definitions, we find the following meaning of "belief": "Assent to anything proposed or declared, and its acceptance as fact by reason of the authority whence it proceeds, apart from personal knowledge; faith; the thing believed; the profession of any faith (belief); a creed; a conviction." Belief is here shown to be ignorance of the actual or real, or "without personal knowledge."

To make this point, if possible, clearer, let me give an illustration or two: I relate to you that, while sitting in my studio and looking out of the window, I observe a bird sitting upon the top of a

gate. Suddenly the bird becomes transformed, assumed the form of an "angel," which, to my astonished gaze, disappears amid a halo of glory towards the heavens. And suppose, also, that I, whom you know only through position, appearance or suggestion, was "believed" by you to be one who, like "Washington, could not tell a lie," and you dogmatically re-tell my story as being fact, and possibly put up a fight to prove it: Would not most people consider you under a mental delusion, if not actually mad, for believing so improbable a miracle in the present day? And yet such, simple and even absurd as the illustration may appear, is not more ridiculous than the miracles of tradition which are even now still "believed in."

Observe, also, the position such a believer is in with regard to the future acquisition of truth owing to the habit of such credulity. And once having made up his mind that a certain source cannot err, it becomes difficult or impossible for him to reject the most obvious untruth, being not in a position to distinguish between the true and the false. His reasoning mind, in fact, has become, through non-exercise, atrophied. Thus the door of the mind is closed and barred to all truth and knowledge in the direction of that belief. By this attitude of the mind intolerance to dissenting opinions is fostered, and the spirit of dogmatism encouraged. Partiality to those belonging to one's particular sect is also a prominent and unlovely feature of belief, which even when sincere is seldom friendly or even unbiased in the toleration of diverse opinions.

In short, belief is the offspring of tradition, hearsay and that which is mysterious and unknowable.

It will thus be seen how closely the qualities of which we have treated are connected, and how adverse to the realization of truth.

Belief, moreover, by subjecting us to the will and influences of those who teach religious dogma, is detrimental to personality and true individuality. It also begets a habit of relying upon others when confronted with moral or intellectual problems. Advice from others, when friendly, well-timed and honest, is not to be despised, but it can be resorted to so habitually as to weaken one's self-reliance.

There appears to be to many a fascination about the mysterious, and by its subtle influence, the multitude believe and worship what they do not know. Such would seem irrational, and yet it is what may be called the "drawing card" of the "prophets," priests and priestesses of various sects and denominations of religious belief.

The truth of these different religious faiths or beliefs having never been proved beyond a doubt to the mind of man—what has been the result in the bygone ages? They have been, as credible history tells us, the cause of wars, crusades, martyrdoms and persecutions. It would seem reasonable to assume that had the truth been revealed to, or realized by all men, no war, or essential difference of opinion would ever have arisen, and the brotherhood of man would now be a reality instead of still in the distant future.

There are, of course, many who believe that a certain book contains truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and who are quite honest and sincere, in so far as their knolwedge or belief permits. It is rather the leaders and teachers of fal-

lacious doctrines, many of whom make a mere business of their occupation, who are mostly to be blamed for misleading the simple and the trusting.

Much more might be written as to the prejudicial effects of mere belief in the search for truth, but I hope the essential points have been fully covered. Belief, it might be mentioned here, is often considered synonymous with "Faith," but that phase of the question will be found dealt with elsewhere. (See also the Truth of Belief.)

Having now, I think, cleared the atmosphere of the element which has been a stumbling block in the path of our quest for truth, we will now consider an element which may bring us nearer to truth or knowledge, namely:

INFORMATION

This term is given briefly as being "communicated knowledge of intelligence."

Yet information is akin to "hearsay," insomuch that it emanates from one who is supposed to have witnessed or experienced the actual or real, and which may or may not have been the case. For when I declare, for instance, that I write this article wholly for the benefit of others, I would be giving you what is termed a "piece of information;" and yet you do not know for certain whether I am making a true statement or not, and you cannot, therefore, honestly proclaim it to others as being a fact without your possessing the truth within your own mind. For you have not yet experienced my true motive. It may be, for aught you know, that I

write this article for self-glorification, reputation, money, or from any other ulterior object. Thus in spreading such information as being fact or "truth," you are always liable to mislead others, just as, if in not so extreme a degree, you rely on tradition or hearsay.

Nor does the authority of others justify us in blindly accepting as fact information of which you have no evidence or personal experience, in substantiation. It is a human weakness to defer to constituted authority in religion as in non-sectarian affairs. Given a man of health, of high position, and any information he cares to give to others is either accepted without question or received with greater credulity than if it emanated from "somebody" of no riches or prestige of the kind. While, after all, the information of the greatest men is as fallible as that of the humblest. And if it be a fact that the pursuit of wealth and position often brings with it disregard of honest dealings, whilst poverty is often ennobled by virtue, it would seem that the information of the humblest is often more trustworthy than that of the rich and high placed.

It is the self-appointed leaders of position and reputation who are able by the influence of the authority that they thus acquire, to propagate information which those in a humbler plane of life are easily disposed to accept as "truth." Such, of course, may or may not contain fact, which we may realize only by weighing and considering the statements by the exercise of our reason, if such is to be found.

It is also another weakness of humanity that our information is apt to be affected and perhaps dis-

torted by our feelings and preconceptions. And it is here where reason and the cultivation of an impartial mind come to our rescue.

Unless, therefore, we put information to the test of our individual reasoning, we are liable to be often misled, and regard as "truth" or knowledge that which is often wholly fabulous. Intelligence or news of anything we all like to hear, especially if it is "good news" or information; but how many of us inquire what real foundation there is as to its "truth," more especially with respect to the information we receive from those in high places?

Let me give another illustration: I make the statement to you that while out sailing, I fell into the water and was rescued from drowning by a friendly hand in another boat, and in relating this incident to you I am telling you of an occurrence well within the bounds of common experience. At the same time, in what manner can such a statement be a truth to you? You have not witnessed my falling into the water nor the subsequent rescue, and you are therefore not in a position to repeat my story dogmatically as being a statement of fact. To be strictly true you can only declare that you have been "so informed," that, of course, apart from the internal confidence you may have in my veracity and the reasonableness of such an occurrence.

Information may, of course, contain a statement of fact, but it cannot be so to us until we ourselves realize the actuality with which it purports to agree. For first must come the reality or actuality, then the truth of such within our own minds, through which the statement of fact is made manifest. Now it is true that were you to relate my story as agreeing in

every particular with the actual, you would be making a statement of fact, but only as emanating from a truth within my mind, and not in that of your own.

Hence it follows that even "information" cannot be knowledge to us until we realize or experience the actual or real from which it is derived.

There are various other forms of information to which the same axiom applies. There are people, for instance, who, being great readers, do not "weigh and consider," but accept all as being "truth," and repeat or quote such information as authoritative and beyond question. It may be true or it may be false, but unless we exercise our reason it cannot become truth to us until we have realized it through experience or comprehension of the actual or real.

And now having reached this stage of our inquiry, and before dealing with the true elements of truth, let us summarize our definitions.

(1): That hearsay is a report second-hand, which cannot be a fact to us without our first realizing the truth as agreeing with the actual or real to which it may refer, and cannot, therefore, at the best, be other than distant, possible knowledge.

(2): That tradition, fable and mythology are but legends, containing possibly elements of Fact, but often with little or no foundation in fact, and when propagated as "truth" only serve to obscure it, and tends to the crippling of the reasoning faculty and the prevention of the acquisition of all the higher attributes of the mind.

(3): That mysticism, or what is unknowable, when allowed to influence the mind, induces neglect of the actualities around us and leads to the subjec-

tion of the will to those who profess a knowledge they do not and cannot possess.

(4) : That history may afford valuable instruction, and that we cannot find truth in any book, until we realize it in our own minds, though our reason and comparison with present conditions and upon the internal evidence of the proofs submitted.

(5) : That belief is the outcome of hearsay and tradition, and is the natural result of ignorance of the actual or real, and cannot, therefore, be in itself fact, but is one of the greatest hindrances to moral and intellectual growth. For knowledge can only be found in and through reason and truth registered within our own minds, through the independent realization of actualities and realities, past, present and future.

(6) : That information, when true, is the light of knowledge, which to realize we must first truly understand or experience the actuality to which it purports to refer; otherwise it is unreliable, and when repeated becomes but hearsay.

These conclusions will, I think, appear reasonable to an impartial mind, and are presented not in a dogmatic spirit, but with the honest purpose of helping in our search for truth by eliminating the objects which tend to obscure and prevent its realization. We must first clear our mind of cant, sophistry and personal predilections before we can, with an open and unbiased mind, arrive at a just appreciation of truth and its bearing on all the problems of life. We have seen how easy it is to be diverted from plain and honest thinking by blind belief in the sources of which we have given the foregoing definitions. Not until we acquire the habit of examining and getting

at the root of these things can we hope to arrive individually, by the power of our own reason, at the truth which underlies life in all its phases.

It is, of course, possible to be too independent of the help and advice that others can give us in the questions and problems that assail us in the conduct of life. It is well to be self-reliant and to cultivate our individual powers of intellect and reason, but we should at the same time be always ready to consider and accept the teachings of those who may have knowledge to convey the truth of which is impressed upon us. But there is so much that is fallacious, sophistical or dogmatic in the doctrines and statements of many of the self-elected leaders and oracles of ethics, that it behooves us to be alert in the investigation of the knowledge we would assimilate. Otherwise we are always in danger of falling into the easy habit and disposition of belief or credulity. Much of this ready inclination to accept and believe the spurious doctrines and creeds of religion or philosophy is the outcome of mental indolence and reluctance to reason out for ourselves the pros and cons of the lessons of life.

With these introductory remarks, let us now deal with our subject truth in its essential aspects, and endeavor to arrive at its basic origin and realization. And this we can only arrive at by the perception of knowledge and the deduction of reason.

Before dealing, however, with the main points of the subject, permit me to give some definitions of a few terms which I use in the course of the following pages, to show at least the writer's conception of their meaning:

(1): That by "nothing" I mean that which does not exist in any conceivable form.

(2): That by a vacuum I mean space void of every conceivable or unconceivable thing.

(3): Potentiality—all that only appears to us in possibility, or through the mere motion of substance, and things fashioned thereof having form or being, and which cannot be found to exist in nature.

(4): Substance—the essence of all things existing; such as matter, air, ether, etherial matter, and all things fashioned thereof, and from which everything in potentiality or possibility appear to us only as mental conceptions, such as time, motion, sound, etc.

(5): Actuality—substance or all that exists and is fashioned thereof.

(6): That by "form" or "being" I mean all things which may be realized by us, through one or more of the five senses, such as air, gases, fluids, solids and all organic and germ life.

(7): That by reality I mean potentialities (def. 3), while the dictionaries give actuality and reality as synonymous terms, I would make the above distinction; as, for example, we say that virtue, vice, thought, motion, time, etc., are real to us yet appear only in potentiality.

We will now consider the essential points in the true conception and realization of truth. First, let us examine the subject of

ACTUALITIES AND REALITIES,

By asking ourselves what is the meaning of the alpha and omega of all things. There is, I would sub-

mit, no beginning and no end to anything in actual existence, save it be in form or being. For as nothing can be created out of nothing, it likewise follows that no thing can be totally destroyed.

All (substance) therefore, that is, was and must be, and that which appears apart from substance is and can only be potentialities of substance, or things fashioned thereof, and do not exist actually in nature, such as motion, time, sound, vice, virtue, and all qualities which appear to us as being real only through the mere motion of substance or thing emanating therefrom. If such be true, there can be nothing in actual existence in the entire universe, except it be of substance or matter.

Thus from this substance emanates all things which come or are brought within the sphere of our five senses, and of which we might say a sixth is apparently formed, namely, the understanding. For with the understanding we build in potentiality, such as the actualities of bridges, houses, etc., through the planning and deduction of the reasoning faculty. Or through potentialities we become a great scientist, artist or author. Through the understanding which is fashioned, when true, of personal experience or knowledge and its modifications, we are able also to deduce facts which appertain to actualities and potentialities beyond our own past and present experience, through which we can foresee or predict.

It may be well, however, to briefly refer to a few actualities, as examples, which we can all agree as being within the sphere of our own personal experience or knowledge, and which may be said to be irrefutable.

First there is the being of man, of animals, birds, fish, plants and all things composed of substance, and without now entering into the question of what substance is, we at least know that these things are in existence.

It is also manifest that were there no actualities of substance there could be no thought concerning them, and consequently no intelligence or mind, with all its attributes. For these must find their root in the substance of the brain, and are but potentialities of substance, reaching their greater degree of development and perfection in organic forms, in so far as we are aware.

It seems evident also that the greater the number of things in actuality we experience through the senses and understanding, the greater becomes our degree of thought, intelligence or mind. Hence it follows that thought, intelligence or mind are but potentialities of the brain, which is of matter, being our mental conceptions of the things in actuality and reality.

For example, were there no such animal as a horse in existence, the mind could not conceive of such, except we had previous mental experience or knowledge of some part such as a head or legs, of an animal of this nature. But with absolutely no knowledge of any part of a horse there could be no idea or conception of the mind regarding it. It is, of course, also evident that our conception and understanding of anything is increased or intensified in proportion to the degree of attention we give to or interest we take in it by force of observation and concentration.

To put it briefly, all things that exist are of sub-

stance, and all thoughts of the brain concerning them are but potentialities of substance or matter.

Of these potentialities, motion is the most vital. For without motion there could be no energy or life, and without substance no motion. From a material point of view, therefore, motion is absolutely necessary to existence. But the highest potentiality or reality from an intellectual standpoint is thought, or the understanding of the mind, a term used to express the seeing of the brain or its conception of things in actuality, through the senses.

Therefore, were there no actualities of substance, we could not realize anything through the senses of sight, touch, taste, smell or hearing. It is, therefore, the presence of actualities that brings into play our senses, and it is through our reasoning that we realize their true significance. This "truth" is made manifest daily through education, experience, observation and the acquisition of language, which is artificial or the work of art. For without language we should be destitute of the power of comprehending the thoughts of others, and cannot acquire the knowledge of good and evil, or virtue and vice, as found in the various walks of life. Vice, virtue, love, hatred and kindred feelings may appear real to us, but appear only in potentiality. Nevertheless, they cannot appear separate from actualities, being the predisposing effects of actualities.

But, whilst potentialities have in themselves no actual existence, it is apparent that they exercise great influence in the course of our daily lives. That thought appears only through our conception of things in actuality, but constitutes reality to us, is

exemplified in the incidents and accidents of life. But while some thoughts or reflections on such occurrences may be ennobling, strengthening and stable, others may be weakened and futile. According as we realize the true import of the circumstances and incidents of life, shall our thoughts be guided and our conduct regulated. It is in the moderation and saneness of our thoughts, directed by reason, that lies the true realization of the problems of life. We can be too unduly elated by some stroke of good fortune, as we can be likewise too depressed and overcome by the disappointments and reverses that we meet. We can be contented with little, or envious of the much that others possess. And so with all our thoughts, which have neither substance, form or being, but which appear real to us through the brain's conception of things in actuality, and which makes or mars the joy of life in accordance with the spirit of our thoughts, be they true or false, unselfish or selfish. For he who desires the least for himself is enriched through love, which is the true desire, expression and act of giving for the welfare of others.

If, therefore, we would be just and honest with ourselves, as well as towards all, we must forget in a great measure self, and confine ourselves not merely to the interests of our own narrow circle and environment, but extend our sympathies and help beyond. For the greatest good of the greatest number is the true aim of love. To help, intellectually, morally or materially, the immediate few is well, but it is still better, and more ennobling, because more far-reaching, to seek the good of humanity at large.

In the foregoing I have endeavored to demon-

strate to the best of my ability that there cannot be knowledge to us unless we ourselves have realized through experience the actualities or realities in life and nature, and which, through our reasoning faculty or the understanding, we arrange or modify, so building beyond our own environment, in the present and for the future. For thus only can we progress in knowledge; according to our thoughts and aspirations will be our ultimate development of character, and our influence for good or ill upon mankind.

Now, in our inquiry as to the where and what of truth, we have dealt with several subjects which intimately bear upon it and are yet not its embodiment. There is another phase of the question with which we propose now to treat, a term or expression which is often erroneously considered to be synonymous with truth, namely,

FACT.

If we consult a dictionary, truth and fact are given practically the same meanings. We may have the greatest respect for the compilers of dictionaries, but they are not always infallible, and they do not always cover (as mentioned in a foregoing page) the various significations of words or terms. Now, Webster thus defines Fact: "Anything that is done; event; reality; truth." I would submit, however, that such is not the exact definition of fact, in its relation to truth. In the same dictionary the words "reality," "event" and "truth" are given other and different meanings. At the same time, by common

usage, the two words of "truth" and "fact" are employed interchangeably in general speech and writing. Herein, however, I propose to make a distinction between the terms, showing the difference between fact and truth as realized in the mind. Much misunderstanding has often arisen through the wrong or incomplete comprehension of such terms, and it is for this reason that I have given in the foregoing pages the meanings of the distinctive words as used in the course of this inquiry, and which have a special relation to the subject of truth. I do not, of course, suggest that any reader has not himself the necessary knowledge of such terms, but as there are sometimes diverse impressions of their particular applicability, I thought it advisable to explain in what exact sense they are so used in this article.

Under the headings of actualities and realities, we have seen that they have no innate or necessary connection with language, and that these exist or appear even although there was no human speech. For example, take a simple illustration: If we place ourselves under the narcotic influence of morphine, opium or other drug of the kind, we may be unconscious of the things around us, and of what is taking place, but the actualities nevertheless exist, although fact, knowledge and truth are absent from our minds. It is obvious, therefore, that they are distinct and separate. Such being true, a statement of fact may be made, although the actualities upon which it is based have not been present to us. On the other hand, if I state that an incident occurred to me, and which you did not witness, you may repeat my statement of fact, but you could only do so

from my personal knowledge, and were you to repeat it to another, it would become hearsay, and so on until it becomes tradition.

It therefore follows that without the event or actuality there could not have been a true realization of it to me, nor could I have made a true statement, or "statement of fact" concerning it.

At the same time, while the incident I relate may be a statement of fact by me, you could not take an oath as to its being such, simply because you had not witnessed the occurrence, and have therefore no experience or knowledge of its actuality. You are not, in fine, in possession of the knowledge within your own mind, and are, therefore, unable to make a statement of fact, as emanating from a truth secured through your own mind's realization of the actuality or reality. For to make a statement and declare it to be either fact or truth without this personal knowledge is to make, possibly, an unwitting untruth.

Hence it becomes evident that we must, if we would be strictly honest, first experience the actual or real before we can make a true statment as to the fact or falsity of anything related by others or found within the pages of any book or books. For it should be borne in mind that an unwitting falsehood is as injurious as a wilful one to those who do not know.

It behooves us, therefore, to entertain some honest doubt as to the fact of what we are told, hear or read, irrespective of established authority, if we would arrive at the truth of the "knowledge" so imparted. For unless we exercise reasonable doubt, every falsehood would appear as fact, or every fact

a falsehood, when such is contrary to our beliefs or predilections.

Thus, then, if what we have seen regarding fact be the outcome of truth, I think we may justly refine fact to be *that which is physically expressed, spoken or written, as agreeing with the actual or real, past, present or future.* For there are but three forms of communication, namely, physical, spoken or written, and any other methods are only variations or adaptations of these. And as thought appears only in potentiality, communication by "mental telepathy" is only an idea or speculation without any foundation in fact.

We have now, let us hope, cleared the atmosphere —as it were—of the elements which tend to obscure or hinder our true realization or comprehension of our subject truth, which through the reasoning faculty alone can we acquire in the development of all the highest qualities of humanity. For without reason there is no truth, and without truth no knowledge and wisdom.

TRUTH.

The Sustenance of All Intelligence.

In approaching this important stage of our enquiry, let us recapitulate the conclusions arrived at concerning the elements which appear to impede or prevent the true realization of truth.

We have seen that in "hearsay" there cannot necessarily be truth, although it may contain some element of fact, which to be such to us we must first

experience the actual or real to which it would refer.

That tradition is remote from truth, as likewise fable and mythology, although these may or may not contain fact.

That history cannot contain fact to us until we realize through evidence its innate fact by comparison and deduction from the conditions of the present in their relation to those of the past.

That information is not necessarily fact although it may be the light of knowledge.

That actualities and realities must be personally realized or experienced by us before we can acquire truth and knowledge of them in our own mind. For a truth to me cannot become a truth to you until you yourself experience the actuality or reality with which it purports to deal.

That all that is either written or spoken is fact or fiction as emanating from the true realization, misconception or misrepresentation of actualities or realities. For first must appear the actual or real, then the mind's true realization of such, and lastly the statement of fact emanating from a truth agreeing with actuality. It is, therefore, manifest that we may retain truths within our own mind and yet not make a statement of fact concerning them, just as also we may make a statement of fact without personal knowledge or experience. It must consequently be evident that *truth is and can only be (to us) our own mind's true realization of actualities and realities, past, present and future,* and which can only be the result of our own personal experience or knowledge and its modifications through the understanding.

If, therefore, what is here summed up be correct,

all else can only be false knowledge or a matter of mere belief, which is the natural result of blind trust in the words of others, all of which constitutes a stumbling block in the path of social, moral and intellectual progress.

For he who merely believes knows naught and retards his own welfare often only for the benefit of those who would have him so believe. In fine, belief is ignorance, while truth is knowledge and wisdom.

Having now found the what and wherefore of truth, permit me to give a few illustrations which may impress more clearly upon our minds the difference between fact and the falsity of hearsay, tradition or whatever is spoken or written without foundation.

Supposing I were to state to you that a great wind storm arose, carried me up through the air and landed me safely and unhurt upon the top of a mountain: That I remained there long enough to discover and gather a number of precious stones, and that I was afterwards lifted up by the same agency and conveyed back to the place of my ascent. Now, were I to relate such a story as this, no doubt all reasoning minds would declare it to be false, being absurd on the face of it and contrary to our knowledge of the laws of nature and our own experience.

But, suppose again that this same tale had been handed down from generation to generation, propagated as being "truth," and that millions so "believe" it, and it is thus passed down through the ages. In what manner, I ask, can such be a truth or fact to us? If then such a story is and can only

be that of tradition or fable, what must we be stating when we declare it to be fact or "truth," if not falsehood? For we cannot be in a position to realize within our own minds the actual occurrence, nor can we, through the deduction of our reason, truthfully accept or declare the same to have been possible. Hence it follows that such a statement can only be the work of the imagination and when given out as having actually occurred, we can only do so through an unwitting or wilful falsehood. Therefore, to be truly honest, we can only say that such or a similar statement has been made or written, or that we do not know and cannot believe it. Otherwise belief is ignorance, and can only be the work of imagination or imposition.

The foregoing illustration will be found to apply equally true to every story of a ridiculous, spurious, impossible or miraculous nature whenever such be found. For when we ourselves are not in possession of the truth we must be false to ourselves and with others when we declare such to be fact or "truth," and that, also, irrespective of our intent or purpose.

Let us now take a simple illustration which will cover every conceivable story or statement, and which are of every-day occurrence. I make the statement to you (i.e.—information) that while walking along the street I slipped on an orange peel and fell heavily upon the pavement or sidewalk. In relating this to you I am telling you of an occurrence which can be readily accepted by you as having happened, being a common incident. While this is so, in what manner are you justified in positively declaring the same to be fact?

Hence it will be seen that unless we, ourselves, have actually experienced an actuality or reality, or have through the modification of our past and present knowledge come into the true realization of things contained in information, hearsay or tradition, we cannot honestly or justly accept or declare such to be fact; nor can history be of any real value to us unless we can so realize it through comparison with the actual or real of present conditions.

It is evident, therefore, how necessary it is for us before accepting or pronouncing anything we read or hear to be "truth," to first realize it as such in our own minds.

Having now, I hope reasonably and fully defined the what and wherefore of our subject, let us further enlarge upon its meaning before entering upon a consideration of its virtues. For there is no virtue to be found save in truth.

In our definition, the terms "true realization," and "past, present and future" were used and as the sense in which they are employed may not have been adequately explained, I propose to deal with them separately.

TRUE REALIZATION.

I suppose that all will agree that the earth, sun, moon, man, animals, trees, etc., exist in actuality or of substance, having form and being. These we can see, feel or realize through the senses, and cannot, therefore, reasonably deny their existence although there have been those who in ancient and

even present times profess to "believe" in the doctrine that "all is mind" and that there is no such thing as "matter" or substance.

It is obvious, however, that what we can thus see, touch or know must be of substance, and we thus come into its "true realization," through experience and knowledge or from its modifications. Thus alone can truth be acquired, for, as already demonstrated, a truth to me cannot be a truth to you until you have experienced or in some way realized the actuality from which it was derived.

Now, it is possible that we may imagine that we truly realize things when as an actual fact, we are relying wholly upon mere appearance or plausibility. For example: We look out across the sea, and through an opening in the clouds the sun appears to be drawing up the water, and hearing perhaps others accepting such phenomenon to be actual, we may assume that we have truly realized it. We may imagine that the mist rising from the water to the clouds is sufficient proof that the sun does so draw up water. Let us examine this assumption and see if there is any fact contained therein.

First, we will postulate that the sun is a body of fire, and that fire and water repel one another. Secondly, if the sun possessed the power to draw up water at all, it is evident it would attract it all the way into itself. For the nearer we approach the sun, the less air resistance we meet with, and were such a phenomenon to occur the earth would soon become dry and parched and life become extinct. It would seem, therefore, that if this reasoning is correct, the statement that "the sun draws up water" cannot be a "fact."

But to make this more clear and to aid us in realizing the fact as to whether or not this statement is correct, let me offer another theory.

Now, it is a demonstrable, scientific fact that water is composed of hydrogen and oxygen and that when resolved into these component elements, they are lighter than air and are forced upwards until they reach an altitude equal to their own weight, there remaining until through chemical or electrical change they are again united into water, and which through the law of gravitation is forced towards the earth in the form of rain or snow.

It is by such reasoning only that we can "truly realize" an actuality. Hence the moral that we must possess unquestionable evidence within our own minds of an actuality or reality before we can truly make a statement of fact or accept such as heard or written.

Again, it is I think, generally accepted that Plato lived and was the author of certain philosophical works. And why is such commonly agreed upon as historical fact? Chiefly because we have today the works of one by that name, that from various sources we have records of his life, which substantially agree, and that there is nothing related therein which cannot be reasonably accepted as fact. But while this is so, who is there now living who could dogmatically state that all of what is related regarding Plato is fact?

It must, therefore, be manifest that for anyone to declare that everything related of anyone long since dead, without reasonable and corroberative evidence, is to rely upon assumption or belief in tradition or hearsay.

Now, while we may all agree that Plato, Socrates, Confucius, Aristotle and many other historic men lived and worked, for the reasons above stated, there are yet other characters related of, in books handed down to us, and upon which there is great difference of opinion as to whether they ever lived. And why is there this doubt? Chiefly because of the absence of historical facts, and that many things related of them cannot be accepted by reasoning minds as being within the limits of probability or possibility.

It seems evident, therefore, and incontrovertible, that for anyone to dogmatically state that such a person existed, and to proclaim and propagate as "truth" "his" sayings and doings, of which there is no historical proof, is to act upon assumption and mere belief, or to perpetuate imposition. Belief of such nature is but ignorance of the actual or real, and the dissemination of false knowledge, which as practised in our own times is quite irreconcilable with advanced thought and reason.

From the foregoing it should be clear to all reasoning and unbiased minds that what is meant by "true realization" is that we must experience the actual or real, and that, too, apart from all outward sources such as information, hearsay, tradition, fable or mysticism. For these when accepted or believed to be fact only tend to obscure our "true realization" of actualities and realities and hinders the acquisition of the higher attributes of the mind. But it is a weakness of human nature to defer to those in high position, established authority and plausible appearance. And when such, with subtle sophistry or dogmatic assertion, seek to impose such

"beliefs" upon us, it behooves us to weigh and consider their doctrines or statements, for only when we exercise our reason can we realize, within our own minds, the fact or falsity contained therein. The intentions of such may be honest, but delusions are none the less injurious because they are unconscious, just as an unwitting falsehood is as harmful as a wilful one.

Let us now consider that part of our definition termed:

THE PAST.

It may be asked, after what has already been said regarding the past in connection with tradition or hearsay, how can we "truly realize" anything that existed or happened in the past to the extent of possessing the truth within our minds relative thereto? This we can do by the evidence of many things that existed a few years ago, or in the recent past. Such for example as the ruins of buildings, the destruction caused by fire, earthquakes, storms, floods, and many other vestiges which testify to antecedent things, the existence of which we can accept and realize. In like manner we can realize the truth of things having existed thousands if not millions of years ago. We discover the fossilized or petrified remains of some animals embedded in rock, and through research and the scientific reasoning induced by a knowledge of geology and zoology we can locate the era in which they lived, and the class to which they belong. Thus such a scientist as Professor Owen was able to reconstruct the complete anatomy of an extinct animal from merely its

partial remains, discovered after thousands of years. But while such can be so proven and demonstrated that no honest scientific mind can refuse to accept the evidence, it is likewise evident that for us to "truly realize" the existence of anything in the past we must possess such irrefutable evidence within our own minds. It is not supposed that we take for granted the theories enunciated by others, whether by spoken or written medium, for men err and no book is infallible. But they can acquaint us with actualities or realities of the past or present, and these we must realize ourselves through our own experience or knowledge and its modifications before we can possess the truth relating thereto.

When some expounder of a doctrine or theory, is unable to answer an honest question as to his assertions, and can only refer you to some book or authority, it appears evident that he must either be himself ignorant of his data or is not in full realization of its "truth." Being himself void of the truth he may desire you, in its absence, to merely believe his words, which may possibly be true, but of which he has no knowledge, or may be false; and in either case he cannot be honest either to himself or others, or be a reliable guide or teacher.

It may be asked, however, how can the "masses" who are continually taught to merely "believe" and ask no questions, or are met with evasive or mystical replies, realize the truth or falsity of the things and thoughts of the past in relation to the conduct of life? Not until they learn to think for themselves and submit to the tribunal of their own

reason the claims and assertions of these would be leaders and self-appointed exponents of ethics.

Such leaders are not wanted; in their arrogance and assumption they would always be ahead or "on top," with others dumbly and meekly following in their wake as "believers." They only can be trusted who seek not to be always ahead for purposes of their own profit or glorification, but who guide and enlighten us, helping us to realize the truth ourselves.

And so as regards the teachings of books (as touched upon under the heading of History), whether they be written by the acknowledged masters of thought or lesser known authors; we can only derive true and helpful knowledge from them when they shed light upon the conditions of the present day.

We are all too prone to be guided or influenced by the traditions of the past. While much can be learned from past thought, a servile and unreasoning acceptance of the theories, philosophies or ethics, which may have served their purpose in bygone ages, can only clog and obscure our moral and intellectual progress as related to modern conditions and the advance of free thought.

Let us now consider another part of our definition in the true realization of the "present."

THE PRESENT.

As we have already in previous chapters dealt to some extent with things of "the present," it will not be necessary to dwell long upon this phase of our subject.

The past being gone and irrecoverable and the future never with us, time admonishes us to think and live in the "ever present." What precious time is vastly wasted and golden opportunities neglected by vain regrets and useless pondering on past conditions and ancient, time-exploded theories and dogma of the future. Now conditions, have arisen, advanced thought has clarified the conceptions of men's duty to fellow-men, and these we must consider and study if we would help towards the universal brotherhood of humanity. Not by the debilitating and irrational belief in and worship of the doctrines of mysticism can we hope to aid in the solution of the problems ever pressing, now and here, upon the attention of mankind.

But here we have in the present day those who seek, demand or suppliant alms and subsidies from us for the propagation of fallacious beliefs, thereby tending to destroy our Faith (the light of past knowledge and future truth) and impeding the acquisition of truth and knowledge. For such beliefs would stultify the reasoning faculty; that constitutes the difference between man and beast. This, I submit is one of the things in life we must "truly realize" if we would know the what and the wherefor of truth and develop our nobler aspirations.

But surely there must be a rational change in many of our present systems of moral or ethical teaching before mankind at large can be freed from the bondage of irrational belief. It seems evident, therefore, that the people who tolerate and maintain these sects must themselves come into the light of truth, by the exercise of reason and the

"occupation" of such perverters of truth will then be gone.

Great no doubt, are the attractions and exaltations of seeming authority and smug self-satisfaction in standing upon a high pedestal holding forth on trite dogmas and stereotyped maxims while the multitude listen without question, and perhaps, without thought or reason. Such are the shepherds who, by the charm of suggestive and mystical words waft hither and thither their flocks to their pastures. But such cannot long continue when we truly realize the what and wherefor of truth. For then only do we discover that we, the poor sheep, provide both the wool and the mutton, while yet taught to merely "believe" and "ask no questions," knowing that enquiry would expose the true condition of "the present" and set free the captives of tradition and mysticism.

How has such blind belief been propagated, except by such teaching as "Judge not that ye be not judged"; "He that believeth not in me shall be in danger of the judgment"; "Resist not evil," and many other equally unreasonable commands or threats? It is by the seeming "inspired" authority of such dogmatic admonitions that the leaders of religious sects have so long beguiled and dominated the people.

Appearance, position, suggestion with their surroundings of vestment, ritual and trappings are all snares to those who do not know and are not taught the what and wherefor of truth as distinct from mere belief.

We must understand the great influence that suggestion, in its many diverse forms, exercises

over us, through the awakening of the emotions which are void of reason: For while so wrought up we are the more easily carried away by eloquent and plausible speech, aided by music and song, admirable and inspiring enough when used in the service of truth. Anything that charms and fascinates and is pleasing at the time we are apt to regard as of virtue, if not of "truth." But when our emotions have subsided and we have taken time to do a little honest thinking, how often have we asked ourselves the question: "After all, what was there of lasting value in what I heard to-night?" And yet we may again run to hear a mere repetition of the same, until it has become a habit with us and we accept and "believe" it all, although we have no knowledge within our own minds of the fact of what we have heard. For long we may have complacently thought, as we have been habitually taught, that truth was only to be found within the pages of a certain book, or as expounded by its professors, and that no reasoning was required on our part for its acceptance. But as has been reiterated in the course of our enquiry, truth is nowhere, but in our own mind. To come into the full comprehension of this fact is to be our own master-servant: Master because we possess the truth, and servant because we are the circumference of it.

Some of us may long have sacrificed our thoughts of truth and true personality upon the altars of dogma and assumption built of myth and fable, but such a condition cannot exist when we come to comprehend the what and wherefor of truth and true love. For true love cannot worship that which is not of truth. Its life and sustenance is found in

the true desire, expression and act of giving wholly for the welfare of others. Love glories in service and action, not in mere supplication and worship. Acts alone truly build and secure; all the will and words of men are as nought without the act.

Thus it will be seen that all thoughts avail nothing without individual effort; for all our thoughts lie dormant until expressed through words or acts.

And if in the present "we would retain our peace of mind, we shall learn through love, which is the offspring of truth, to bear and forbear, to be tolerant to thoughts and views adverse to our own. Without such a frame of mind we close the doors to knowledge and wisdom, retaining perhaps factitious thoughts and "beliefs."

To subject our thought to criticism, or even refutation is the true spirit of love. For true love is born of truth, which is indestructible, and may venture forth through the seven fires of condemnation, in which it is purified of any alloy of falsity it may possess. When we fear enquiry or criticism it shows that we do not feel secure in possession of the truth. That, no doubt, is not so much the fault of our own as of the false leadership of those who led us astray, or of hereditary influences formed by the same misguidance.

Let us, therefore, truly realize things in "the present." For in truth, the mind's true realization of actualities or realities, past, present and future is to be found all the virtues that tend towards the higher moral and intellectual development of humanity.

Given all the material wealth and mental endowments that we can desire, they become but as dead

sea fruit if we do not possess the truth (as distinct from belief) within our own minds of how justly to use them for the true welfare of self and others. True love will prompt us to seek the welfare of others, and our reason acting on our experience and knowledge of the actual will guide us in our efforts, however humble, to better the conditions of humanity. But our thoughts should not be our masters, but our servants; we can learn to direct them in the channels of truth by which we arrive at a right conception of our personal conduct and our obligations to others.

We can concentrate our mind on true, unselfish endeavor; or we can ignore truth and conscience in seeking the material things we most covet. We have then not yet come into the true realization of truth. For all the material wealth we can thus acquire, to the detriment of our moral and intellectual welfare, and probably at the expense of others, can only end in the bankruptcy of our true happiness in life. The pages of history and biography, and the lives of those we come in daily contact with, bear eloquent testimony to the fact that it is the honest and unselfish who are the most truly revered and the happiest among men. True happiness as found in truth consists essentially in love and service. Truth sets free the captive, raises the fallen, exposes imposition, is just to the criminal as to the honest, while yet resisting evil. By true service we not only induce to the happiness and welfare of others, but promote at the same time our own moral and intellectual growth; and this must be based on the "true realization" of the thoughts and things of "the present."

THE FUTURE.

In dealing with the things of the future let us content ourselves with that aspect of the subject which it is possible for us to know and comprehend, as distinct from the beliefs in "prophecy" and mysticism. Above all things we should strive to be rational and honest.

It is needless to say that much that is taught and "believed" in as to a future life, is based upon the imagination as derived from what are termed "inspired" sources. It is true that among some sects the old accepted ideas as found in the scriptures as to eternal punishment are not now literally proclaimed. But it is, nevertheless, true that the expounders of these various sects and denominations derive their misconceptions of the "future" from mysticism or the so-called "divine revelations."

It is not proposed, however, to deal with that phase of "the future," which will now be considered in its revelation to the practical and "knowable" things of life.

Reverting to "the past," it may be postulated that we begin existence at conception; where we were before, if that is possible, is but idle speculation. Apart then from the substance of matter of which we are composed, all we now appear to possess are potentialities of that substance, such as motion and thought. Substance, therefore appears to be the beginning and the end, as expressed in the phrase from "dust to dust," beyond which no man knoweth. Life after death is the one problem which the limitations of man's reason "has found" insoluble.

What then, can we realize of things "in the

future"? Only the things that may be accomplished in the years of our existence, and these only through our past or present experience, or knowledge. With the knowledge of bricks or stones and other subsidiary material we can plan in the present the building—the foundation, the walls, the arch, the coping-stone and so on until we can construct in our mind the entire building which we may complete "in the future." It is obvious, therefore, that without our past or present knowledge of architecture or buildings, whether elementary or advanced, there could be no conception in our minds of the future building.

Hence we see that with past or present knowledge we may build in potentiality (thought) into the near or far future. But as nothing can be accomplished without planning and endeavor, it follows that thought, faith or will without material aid cannot move a grain of sand.

At the same time, such potentialities as motion, vice and virtue, or correct and incorrect thought, may exercise a vital influence over our material and intellectual lives. Through motion, for example, or physical exercise, we can increase the strength and activity of our organs, whilst with inaction or disuse we tend to hinder their growth or atrophy them.

With vicious or impure habits of life we can debilitate or degrade both body and "mind"; while with pure and true thoughts and habits we can strengthen and enrich them. As our thoughts are, so become our actions, and according to their intensity or concentration will be their strength and influence. These constitute our past or present ex-

perience and knowledge, stored in the brain for "future" use.

It is clear, therefore, that we build in the present the foundation of what we become in the future, our thoughts being the architects. For from thought must emanate all our acts, be they true or false, worthy or unworthy. Hence how vital it is to "truly realize" the what and wherefore of truth as distinct from the fallacious elements which only hinder, if they do not entirely prevent, its acquisition.

It is, therefore, manifest that we can only imagine that we shall live in the future, and have no rational ground for that "belief." Nor can we dwell in the past, for conditions in the present are different and the advance of thought has shown the fallacy of the beliefs that at one time were never challenged. And so to live in the future, basing our happenings, present and ultimate, in its promise, is to neglect the things of the present, which we must study to comprehend if we would be of any true value to ourselves and others here and now, and thereby, also, enrich our future.

Thus by daily individual effort in acquiring knowledge and acting upon it in the true interests of others besides ourselves, we build up true personality. We have, then, no past, present or future; we shall require no leadership of dogma and mysticism in our qust for truth and true knowledge, for such is found only in the true realization of things as thy actually were, are or may be. And, as previously demonstrated, this end can only be arrived at through our own personal experience or the

modification of our past or present knowledge of those things.

Let us rather rejoice in the present, gladly performing the duties of our lives and seeking the true welfare of others not only in, but beyond our immediate circle. Thus shall we grow in moral and mental worth if truth be our guiding star.

For through truth all things of "true and good import" come and through love, the beneficent offspring of truth, all the true happiness this world can afford in the present and future.

In concluding these thoughts on "the future," I hope it has been clearly and truly demonstrated that truth to us is and can only be *"our own mind's realization of actualities and potentialities, past, present and future."*

I would now add that if our line of reasoning is correct in the foregoing inquiry, that we can only gain the truth in connection with the highest attributes of the mind, through our own faith, born of knowledge and the exercise of our reason in and through individual effort.

Not by blind belief in the words or suggestions of others, be they gods, prophets or priests, neither by prayer, supplication or worship can we usher in that "new era of truth," which it has been the honest purpose of this inquiry to advocate.

If "God is love," and "all truth," it must follow that in love and truth is found all good, which was the original word or meaning from which the term "God" was derived. But so-called prophets have distorted this meaning and have given us a conception of a "God" of wrath, of eternal punishment, revenge and partiality. Such surely cannot be the

true embodiment of a just "God" or supreme being. For a just "God" who "possessed all" would not seek the humiliation or the punishment of those who, through ignorance or honest doubt, do not believe. Nor would he keep from universal knowledge or the realization of truth the sustenance of all virtue and the source of all true happiness.

In conclusion, I may say that in this inquiry as to truth I do not seek to disturb nor condemn, nor ask anyone to merely believe, but desire only that the thoughts expressed herein be duly weighed, unbiasedly, considered and comprehended in the light and spirit in which they have been written. For their one object has been the true welfare of all, in a just realization of truth.

Condemnation from many quarters I can only expect, but what I have written may not be in vain if my thoughts bring enlightenment and consolation to but a few who are now in a sea of bewilderment as to the what and wherefore of truth and love, from which emanate all the virtues and happiness possible in life.

Yet I have endeavored to be fair-minded, reasonable and considerate in my treatment of the adverse influences in arriving at truth, and I hope that my efforts, imperfect as they may be, will at least help towards the juster realization of truth in the conduct of life.

THE VIRTUES OF TRUTH.

In the foregoing chapters I have fully covered my definition of truth, and therefore deem it unnecessary to give any further scientific explanation of it under this heading. My object in treating the subject of truth as I have done in the following chapters, will, when rightly and unbiasedly read, be, I hope, fully understood.

I have, as you will notice, personified my subject, for in no other way would it have been possible for me to give it the character and great importance it undoubtedly possesses to all those who truly understand the power and influence it exercises over the lives of the truly honest, kind and just.

For truth, with her kindred attribute of love, are the two highest qualities that can be thought of, in the development of man. For without these all is darkest ignorance and blighting selfishness.

I have, it is true, shattered much that is generally believed, but when you once learn that I have, as clearly as possible, replaced it all with that which comes within the sphere of practicability and which you yourself can daily use for your present and future welfare, I feel sure that you will not only feel kindly toward me for having so written, but will extend the warm hand of welcome to that which I have, with my small ability, endeavored to explain to all who seek honest, unselfish aid to guide them through the maze of life, with the true smile of loving and just endeavor. It's the smile that comes

with truth and knowledge that helps lift our burdens and makes light our hearts with love as we wend our joyous way.

Yĕa, blessed are they who mourn not, for they have acquired great strength. They see how unwise and weak it is to let the inevitable disturb them.

When tears are near the surface they come from little depth, whilst the further down they are gives more room for strength and courage to lift up and help the weaker ones about us.

To become disturbed at the loss of some pet thought is to show that you are not yet quite honest with yourself. For the honest rejoice to know they have gained the new and true, whilst ignorance rebels at seeing the old replaced by truth, the champion of all virtue.

I write these prefatory words that you may realize the spirit in which what follows has been written, for it has been done without fear or favor and for the good of all.

THE PEOPLE PRAY.

To thee, O truth, do we bend our feeble knees. To thee do we bow our uncrowned head. Thee, O truth, do we seek and strive for, and humiliate ourselves to obtain. Yea, for thee do we prostrate ourselves in humble, meek and lowly reverence before the shrine of thy abundant light and most radiant glory. For art thou not the peaceful hand that directs the germ, guides the beast and lifts on high mankind? Much have we lost, much has been

taken away from us and much have we suffered. Yea, and many have foolishly died in vain search of thee. Hither and thither, footsore and lame, feeble and tired, have we continued our pursuit of thee; but alas! O truth, our strength and our courage must leave us if thou come not to our rescue. For wherever we go we are but confronted with the subtle evils of greed, ignorance and duplicity, who ever claim themselves to be you, while they make us but their own selfish sustenance, retain us as slaves and so use us for their own ends and glorification. They feed us on the whey, while they live on the cream, smiling inwardly at our complacency and innocence. They tell us they are our shepherds, with a commission from you to make of us but sheep, whom they say might go astray and so keep us in pastures of their own choosing. Thus are we kept simple and ignorant of the good things in life to be found without the narrow confine of their fold. But we would sweep away such gross imposition, if we would hope ever to become truthful, honest and free. For it is in thee, and thee only, that we can find freedom from such slavery. In times past we have made thee of wood, of stone and of iron, and have worshipped the stars and the heavens and bowed to the winds, while we have wept at the crossroads, only to find to our sorrow that you were not there. Then we have sought you in books, fables and mythology, but found alas! all but a dream imposed on us for others' gain and glorification. Again we have made shift to find thee in men who have cruelly misled us through myth, hearsay and falsehood, living by our labors,

and keeping us ever paupers that we might stoop at their shrine of false emotional suggestion.

Yea, much have we paid for admission to thy presence; we have sought thy sacred body and found only a skeleton; have paid for a load and received but a stone.

O truth, where art thou? Have you not form, substance or being? If so, why dost thou so long remain absent and keep us still in darkness?

Are we not to know thee, but to remain ever subject to others, who seek but to impose upon us? Must we still feed on falsehood which betrays our faith, our perception and kills our reason, through which alone we find thee, and come into knowledge, the builder of wisdom?

Or must we still bow to presumption, ever swollen and diseased with much ignorance, false suggestion and imposture, or seek our freedom, found only in thee?

Fain would we find thee, wherever you be, for in thee alone do we find true refuge, our honor, and all that is true.

Come, we beseech thee, O truth, that we may cling to thee, for thou alone art our armor and strength, with whom we can become and remain ever free.

Speak, O truth, where and how can we find thee, that we may all become freed from the slavery of gross imposition, and become each our own prophet and King. * * * * *

Harken! O ye poor, destitute, simple and innocent; ye seeming-wise, selfish and dishonest; dignitaries, Lords, yea, "Gods;" For henceforth know ye, that I, even I, am your only King, Ruler, Ser-

vant and true Guide. For without me even beasts and all life must grope in the darkest of dark ignorance, the pitfall of the mind from whence doth come all fear, sorrow and trouble, greed, selfishness and dishonesty; all of which are but theft, the great curse of mankind.

Well do I know ye have suffered, and many died in their efforts to possess and defend their conception of me; but alas! well do I know ye were wrong. For harken! look! see! know and understand if you would now become truthful, honest, and therefore wise. Yea, bend well your understandings.

For I speak now, once and for all time, that ye may know yourselves, wherein ye have been mistaken, and wherein ye can forever direct yourselves, and so become kings and lords of all your possessions. For in and through your own mind's realization, to ye do all things come and go, and unto ye nothing is sent, yet all we can possess, see, know or understand are now within your own reach, which must and can only be secured in and through your own individual efforts. Many, it is true, may help, yet ye must do the doing and possessing. For in and through truth, faith and reason do ye or can ye truly know or understand anything whatsoever. Yea, I, truth, do keep care for and truly guide and serve ye, from conception to your departure. For in and through me only can ye breathe, eat, sleep, or become. Therefore, attend ye well, for many things will I say unto you, which if you will truly and honestly observe, must be unto ye a living, breathing rock upon which to build your future happiness and true welfare, and with which only

can ye *do unto others as they should be done by, for the true welfare of all.*

To think truly of all is to do good unto all, and for such purpose only do I now reveal myself unto you. And know ye, that whether or not ye can see truly into my word, and so realize the truth, yet be it ever known as a most profound fact that I, truth, ever was, am, and ever shall be, none other than the *mind's true realization of the things which were, are and can be,* and which in my entirety no man shall know, but only that part of me which he within himself can realize. Yet to him who can think the best of and for the greatest number of his fellows, unto him will and must come life's greatest, truest and rarest blessings. For to think only of and for thine own self is to ever remain small, mean and cramped within thyself. While he who gives of his truer, better self to and for the greatest number must correspondingly grow into the fuller, truer and nobler man. For to give of thyself to others is to make others, though love, part of thyself, and they part of you.

Further, it is also true that without the company of your fellows, you could not possibly have advanced beyond the beast, and especially is it true that the more of them you see, know and understand and do kindness to, the greater and truer must you become. I care not how you do it, so long as it is justly and honestly done, but it can and must only be done by and through I, Truth.

When I said that I, Truth, am *"the mind's true realization of that which was, is and can be,"* I also knew that such speech being strange to many, it would be necessary for me to explain first what is

meant by "true realization," then "which was," "is," and "can be."

The sun, earth, moon, stars and many other things about you, are that you may realize within yourself as being vital and profound truths, and unless you lose your reason, no living man could possibly prove them to you to be otherwise. Many might, of course, present to you as you now see them, perchance with more knowledge to you concerning them. This being so, you have come into the "true realization" of those things, so much so that no further proofs are required. Nor can such be reasonably refuted, although there yet move about the earth many seeming wise, who will tell you, through unreasoning belief, that such things do not really exist.

So, then, what is meant by "true realization" is, that you have come into the truth and knowledge of things to such an extent that none can possibly dispute them as existent, which you can see, know of, and show to others, without having to employ in so doing the mere agency of belief. For belief never can know of anything, its sustenance and life depending wholly on the words of others, or of appearance, which is most misleading to those who rely on such sources for truth and knowledge concerning the things that appear in the horizon of the mind's realization.

Therefore, we cannot possibly truly realize anything unless we possess in our own mind reasons, and not beliefs, for the existence of them. And it is for this reason that you have not truly realized the fact that you, all through the ages, have been misled by mere believers into foolishly believing

that what they have chosen to tell you was the truth, and in this way have you been led whilst blind, by the blind, for your apparent good, but really for the gain and glorification of them. For to glorify thyself is to exalt thyself and so humiliate others, to do which is in itself theft of thought, the most precious jewel, when true, in your lives.

The chief thing, then, is to realize things in your own mind. For all the mere beliefs known to men can do naught but make of you a slave to the will of others. To believe is to see not, know not, and become naught, and thus are you easily led; and so will be your persecution and pilgrimage through the streets of sorrow; while all the time there exists within your own mind the great and precious palace of truth, for which you have been vainly searching. Yea, I, truth, cannot possibly be found outside of your own mind, through which only can you come into the full realization of the things that were, are, and can be; and that quite apart from what others may say or know. Search, therefore, through the eyes of reason, with honest questioning, until you find the truth, which is ever immovable and unchangeable. And while you do so, bear ever in mind that he who endeavors to evade your questioning with words of belief, is himself either ignorant or dishonest; for to do so is to ignore your reason, the searcher of all truth, knowledge and wisdom.

Moreover, should such an one ask you to rely on another, he can do none other than deny the truth while keeping much or all to himself. For by doing so he declares that "God" has left his work incomplete in you, while he himself has been perfected

by him and so makes "God" appear partial and unjust.

Therefore, he who would be your just and true tutor will teach you only the things he himself knows to be knowable actualities and realities. For the moment he departs from such a course, he must declare himself, to the honest knowing, as being dishonest or ignorant. It must surely be clear to any reasonable mind that he who would teach as truth the things he himself does not truthfully know does so either out of ignorance or for the purpose of imposition.

Therefore, I would say to you, pilgrim, find out your own truths, in your own minds, for such can only be found therein.

"THAT WHICH WAS."

The meaning of these words you may find in the following illustrations:

A fire has destroyed a building; you observe the destruction it has wrought, and you thereby realize, without further question or proof, that it was actually destroyed by fire.

Again, you notice the footprints of an animal on the snow or elsewhere, and you accordingly realize, as before, that a beast has passed that way.

Further, you discover in a rock the ossified remains of an animal, and you immediately know that an animal of that description has at one time existed.

Infinite are the number of similar illustrations which could be given, but these will be sufficient for our purpose.

Thus in these examples we find that a fire raged some time previous; an animal passed a particular way, and at some prehistoric time one of a particular species lived and died. Therefore, in these cases we have truly realized the truth within ourselves of things that were, so clearly so, that no further proof is necessary to convince us of the positive truth, nor could it be possible, while we retain your reason, for anyone to dissipate the same from your mind as being false.

So you once more see where it becomes absolutely essential for you to possess evidence in your mind of the past existence of things before the same can be retained therein as truth. And in this way only is it possible for you to remain undisturbed in your mental possessions and so retain them as truths, beyond any danger of their being replaced by other substitutes. These latter can, perforce, be only hearsay, which, as an honest man, you have no right to accept, or pronounce as fact, for such may or may not be but falsehood. For he alone is truthful who knows whereof he speaks; while he who merely believes has no evidence, but mere words or appearance to support his contention, and thus can never truly know anything, nor be in a position to make a statement of fact from a truth in his own mind.

But, you may ask, would not this make of us confirmed doubters? Well, is not an honest doubter, when evidence is absent, much more progressive than a simple, blind believer, who is always being led, and therefore cannot find out things for himself? He who doubts not makes every lie appear a truth to himself; such is the office of a believer.

Do you not now see the reason why you have been

compelled to offer up your supplications, to prostrate and humiliate yourselves at the altars made of ignorance and imposition? Such you could never have done had you truly known the why and wherefore of my purpose in life, which I again repeat you can find nowhere but in your own mind. He who relies on another's words as truth, has no truth within himself. He also who would ask you to merely believe what he or anyone else says as a truth, does you a grievous injury, for he thereby tends to injure or destroy your reason. And he who, perchance, would say that there is anything higher than reason only utters a glaring and obvious falsehood. For in and through reason only is it possible for any living "soul" to come into the possession of truth, and which is the highest attribute of all mankind. Without truth, love is blind, and then it is foolishness. Further, with all truth, all things may be done that can be done.

Yea, in and through the system herein laid down, is it possible for you to become reasonable, honest, just and truthful, and so your own master.

Note also that I, truth, regard not party, sect, leadership, dignitaries, lords, Kings or "Gods," as being supreme over me, for without me all amount to nothing; thus must they acknowledge me as their true ruler, servant and guide.

"THAT WHICH IS."

I must now explain to you: For "That which is" cannot possibly be truly recognized in the mere words or thoughts of others. You must possess in

your own mind evidence of the true existence of these things before it can possibly become a truth to yourself—otherwise you must fall back to the condition of all believers, whom by this time you should know are naught but the innocent who make food for the crooked and dishonest, for upon the simple believers do they daily operate. The wise and knowing they cannot approach, they can foretell them by their shadow, and they know in advance the object of their words and actions, which you will find, if you only observe, is self, self, self, or that which you possess.

Therefore, be wise and thereby realize "That which is." Through the eye of honest doubting (of reason) is the only way through which you can gain the truth. Better doubt and be mistaken than believe and be simple, or a creature without reason. For remember, that he who reasons is ever forward, while he who does not is found doing chores for those ahead, in imposition.

Therefore, be not charmed by false appearances; look behind the shrine, though such seem to be "God-like." For falsehood now is found in many disguises, in rags as well as in satins; in the poor and the rich; in fine speech and in clatter.

Get at the truth of fact and falsehood if you would escape being misled. For remember the foolish are led, the simple follow; while ignorance and imposition do the leading, the honest rejoice in guiding.

He who says he has a "Feeling," a "Sensation," or knows something which gives him comfort, and which he cannot explain to you, and so asks you to believe and trust in him, is either deceitful or igno-

rant of what he is doing. For if your mind be yet simple, he does none other than injure or destroy your reasoning, one of the greatest evils to inflict upon another. Give your laurels to the honest; be just to the crook, and return not good for all evil, for on such false clemency the dishonest thrive. Return true justice for all evil; for justice is true kindness. Do unto others as they should be done by, for the good and welfare of all. Forget self, also the other, but think of all, which, of course, must include yourself and the other, for such is the duty of all men to self and others. Through the operation of such a principle only, can men remain honest, and the dishonest receive their just due. For he who allows evil to run unchecked becomes a party to it, so is he evil also, yet without the act. To tend well to your business is also to guard the welfare of the weak ones about you, as parents do their children.

Those who are not ready to lend a helping hand to the cause of justice are abettors of evil among men; for such are the pillars that support dishonesty, who roam the earth in shoals, apparently honest and seemingly respected.

Pardon me, good pilgrims, for wandering from the direct subject for the moment, and I will now proceed with

"THAT WHICH CAN BE."

What I mean in these words is, that you may notice, for example, a person approaching a precipice in the dark of night, and you know that should

he continue on, he must come to grief. You also observe another indulging in habits of life which, if he continues to follow, will cause his ruin.

Again, you picture in your mind, through constructive imagination, many things which you can acquire or do if you but will,. for the evidence of how to accomplish is at hand.

Now, what have we here? We have examples, full of evidence, and thus can truly realize things "Which can be," but which have not yet come to pass. So you see how all true prophecy finds its birth in and through reason, with which we are supplied with the evidence that enables us to make a statement of fact regarding that which will or "Can be."

It is true that we may sometimes make a shrewd guess, concerning a future truth, but such can only emanate from instinctive knowledge, which at one time, through experience, we possessed as truth, but which, for the time being, has been lost to our conscious mind, yet may be still present in our subconsciousness, or our storehouse of instinct, built of past knowledge or experience. For it is not possible for your mind to think of anything it has not yet seen or experienced, unless such be composed or fashioned out of things of which you were previously conscious.

Therefore, you see that it becomes impossible for you to truly foretell anything without having in your mind evidence with which to support your contention. Otherwise the same will be but a guess, and most likely a falsehood. For he who blindly moves must surely come to grief, as he cannot travel without there being obstacles in his path. How unwise,

therefore, it is for us to accept without proof the many stories which spring from the region of non-constructive imagination or a diseased and disordered mind. Such are they who dream in darkness without a spark of evidence apart from the foolish, unpractical and unreasonable word dreams of others, which too often become the pitfall of the simple and innocent, who are taught so to believe by ignorance and injustice.

And thus having now come to the full explanation of the meaning of the true revelation of myself, which is, I, *Truth, am the mind's true realization of that which was, is, and can be,* and which I leave with you to accept through your understanding or regret because the same may disturb the beliefs of which you may, perchance, have made worthless idols or pets through mere hearsay or habit. Yet, those of you who truly see, know and understand the true meaning of my words must surely come into the priceless light of freedom and progress which will so guide you that you will no longer require to be led.

For no leader ever yet revealed the whole of his mission and purpose in so leading; for were he to do so, he would immediatly dethrone himself, or be content to be a just guide and true servant who will always be the noble lord, king and Saviour of his fellow-men. For to lift oneself above, in the spirit of dictation, is to keep others at your feet and humiliate them, and thus exalt yourself, which was, is and always shall be nothing short of theft, the work of ignorance, falsehood or tyranny.

Thus, then, from what you have seen, it should appear to you quite evident that you cannot pos-

sibly realize a truth without evidence, through reason, of the reality or actuality of a truth. For mythology, hearsay, fable and belief are external things, whilst truth dwells—to you—only within your own mind. Even fact we find to be but the external expression of a truth, for unless a truth is internal, it is not possible knowingly for you to make a statement of fact concerning a reality. So that we find that fact is not a truth, but only the instrument through which truth reveals reality to another.

Moreover, what I have told you are truths, to me, while the mere telling of them to you is only a statement of facts which may, sooner or later, become truths to you when you truly realize them through reason or evidence to be statements of fact, agreeing with reality and actuality.

Thus again do I say to you, consider well what I have revealed to you of the what, the where, and the how of the greatest of all attributes of your mind and of all life, namely *Truth*. Yet have I many things to relate concerning my power and usefulness to you, which if you will be wise and truly honest with yourselves, you will grasp and retain for all time. For without them and a true knowledge of them you cannot know whether or not you, or those you know and observe about you, be truly and justly honest. To know that you are truthful is to know also that you are honest, which knowledge you cannot possibly attain to through the medium of belief, or through the worship of different creeds, dogmas, myths or fables.

Yea, know, also, that I, Truth, cannot by any manner of means be worshipped. For have I not

already shown and proved that I dwell ever and always within your own mind?

And likewise, do you not see that the very moment you come into possession of a truth, at the same time do you pass it on to your subconscious mind, or into your storehouse of memory, the dwelling place of knowledge and desire, which has accumulated there through past experiences acquired through hereditary and personal contact with things and thoughts? And have you not likewise observed that through that process, your conscious mind is still at liberty to reach out, through reason, for new truths which it likewise masters and stores? Such, I say, is the mind's law of attainment. For were not this so, there could not possibly be mental progress, as your conscious mind can think of only one thing at a time, and is merely the advance agent of the subconscious mind which receives all that the conscious mind so gathers, and which it will again return to the conscious mind as necessity demands—in accordance with the degree and quality of the attention and interest you take in the things you assimilate. Thus, then, no doubt you now see wherein it becomes impossible for you to worship or even bow to me. For although I, Truth, am indeed king and lord, yea, "God" of "Gods," I cannot or would not permit another to humiliate himself at my shrine. For such is in the very nature of things impossible. Yea, each and all of you control the very throne on which I sit. You are the very circumference of me, outside of which, by you, I cannot be found. For again do I repeat that I, truth, was, am, and always shall be

nothing more nor less than *your own mind's true realization of that which was, is, and can be.*

And yet again do I say unto you that there is no refuge but in *truth* secured through reasonable deduction, born of knowledge and experience.

Know you, also, that each one of you is, and can only be, the measure of what you know. For it becomes impossible for you to do anything without the truth or knowledge of how to do it. Belief is always a weakling, for it cannot accomplish anything worthy, but is impotent itself and the cause of harm to others. Its whole mission is to rob others of correct thought, or of their reason, the giver of all truth, and with which our true, instructive thoughts and desires are built and nurtured into motives which make and sustain a fuller and richer life of true and noble manhood.

He who truly seeks truth is of no country or religion, for to be otherwise is to be partial and unjust to others. The whole universe is truth's country, and the world of thought her dominion. There is no man wholly good, none wholly bad. Yea, there is more good in everything and in all men than there is evil. But professing "saints" are factitious, while even the dishonest are natural. To be just and true we must be neither the one nor the other, for one is falsehood and the other is ignorance.

He who will build his life wholly of truth, casting forever aside the weakness of belief, will and must be of powerful beneficence, for such a one will perfume the very air about him with love, truth and justice, of which others must eventually partake.

To make a truth indestructible, continue to cast

it abroad. For its power grows through use and its vindication in disputation. Therefore call not others fools, knaves or other strong words, who cannot at once see your truth. For to do so is to proclaim yourself ignorant of how to rightly bestow your gifts. Cast your pearls before swine, for pearls were made to please and beautify, and the lowest of creatures most need help.

To think you are a "God" is the best way to show yourself a fool. Keep, therefore, your "I am" to yourself, and instead use "You may be," as your motto towards others, for such is the conduct of a true and just guide. All others are impostors or despots, whose sole mission is self.

He who discovers and lays bare the truth to others is as a star in the darkest of nights, which may be seen by all who care to look; but he who would ask others to merely believe darkens the mind and deprives them of the light of their reason. If there be others who cannot see, it is your bounden duty as a true teacher of morals to first open their eyes and then show them your truths. Otherwise you keep them in bondage and woefully ignore your obligation to help the blind, the weak and down-trodden.

He who dares to be ever true, need not seek for his friends, for all mankind, consciously or unconsciously, seeks for truth. Truth lives even in the vilest of criminals, and truth is his truest friend. Truth is kind and ever just, yet cannot return good for evil if society thereby would be injured.

We may be kind and good to those who in their weakness make mistakes, but evil we must resist or

correct, else we become parties to it, and unconsciously assist in its extension.

The truth spoken from and realized within your own mind embraces love in the honest and knowing; bewilders others, and often for a time disturbs the ignorant and inspires fear within the dishonest, who resist for a while, but finally surrender to the truth. For truth in its power can treat all with justice and loving kindness, be they strong or weak, for it is ever impartial.

The honest and truthful are fearless in doing good, for they cannot be disturbed or destroyed by persecution, which they know only emanates from ignorance or duplicity. They do not preach, "He that calleth his brother a fool shall be in danger of hell fire," and then go about the country accusing all who will not blindly believe in what they say to be true, "Fools, heretics, God's swine," etc.

Should others not see your truth, charge yourself, for you may not have gone the right way; had you done so, it is not so likely that you would have failed in your mission.

Ignorance, you must always remember, runs riot at every turn, and as all minds differ, it becomes necessary for you to change your method of explaining the truth, to suit the various minds whom you deal with. Belief has many minds, all of which cannot see. Thus will you find it necessary to first remove belief before it will be possible for your truth to take root.

Truths, when they meet, always agree; but when truth meets with ignorance or dishonesty, there is always found to be friction. Be, therefore, always on the side of truth if you desire constant peace.

There is no mind known to man that contains all truth. Yet all potentialy know all. For such is only a matter of looking out through the eyes of reason in order to enlarge the things that your mind may realize, whilst *belief is but the cruel cross upon which we crucify our higher intelligence* which is found only in and through our reason, the builder of all truth.

While you live, tell but the truth, though you shame and shock others, for at the last you must do them, as well as yourself, a great and growing kindness. Moreover, truth never yet hung herself for herself or for others, because in the nature of things she must live on and ever for the benefit of all, by her queenly service. Nor does she run into the fire, and then declare herself unscorchd. She never endeavors to walk where she cannot stand. And she never cries, "I am a God or Goddess," for she is but the true servant and guide of all life.

He who professes himself holy is himself unholy; for that which is holy is the light and atmosphere of truth, which requires no profession.

Truth grows when in action, and when discovered and cast abroad is as a shaft of light amidst the dark ignorance of mankind. For truth is light, and ignorance but darkness, through which we stumble and fall.

Truth spoken and not understood becomes a stumbling block; for to speak it without the power to explain is to feel and look foolish at the honest look of a questioner. It is in this way that mere believers are helpless.

Truth once fully realized is always a truth, and so is indestructible.

Truth often cuts deep and wounds when not wisely directed. It behooves us therefore to be careful of how, when and where we use it. For such, at times, is as a thunderbolt to the ignorant, and a rain of fire to the dishonest.

If your belief should fall before the march of truth, you should rejoice. For through her alone can you progress, and through her find true love, justice and true character, the crowning jewels of a growing intelligence.

Truth is not foolishly meek and lowly. It is calmness and strength, knowing no peril that it cannot avoid or dissipate.

It is fearless in the right and cannot humble itself at any shrine. It is a servant to all life, which it never seeks to master. Its glory is found in strength, service and in being mastered.

He who possesses not truth or the power of reason will grasp at a straw or worship a shadow. The history of all religions prove this to be so, for all such have died or are dying. No religion can live on forever, while truth never dies. For once a truth, always a truth.

He who realizes truth has the book of all books in his mind and requires no other. While to him who cannot realize truth all books are but stumbling blocks.

He, also, who realizes the truth is never disturbed in discussion; but he who merely believes is always agitated by a truth contrary to his belief, for he has no reason with which to support his contention.

Woe unto thee, O belief! for the myriad thefts from the innocent that lie at thy door. Desist, O

Arch Impostor! For I, Truth, am now on the march with my arm justice, generalled by reason.

There is not, nor can there be, such a thing as religious truth. For all religion is mystery. It is not possible for the mind to worship a truth. For to realize it is to stand in, or to be the circumference of it. For such is and can only be a part of your own mind's realization. You may glory in the things you possess, but it is foolish to worship them. For that which you become master of cannot possibly master or humiliate you. But the same may be your true guide in life, which is the highest office of truth. Further, to seek to be master of anything does not, nor cannot, imply an act of worship. For such you desire only to use, and are thus above that which becomes a servant to you.

Moreover, truth is and can only be the product of reason through comparison. For were there no such thing as comparison, all would appear to you to be a complete sameness; nor could you understand or realize the thoughts expressed by my words were there no comparison of thoughts in them. Therefore, all correct reasoning must find its basis only in and through comparison, from which alone is it possible to discern fact from falsehood. Consequently, he who, possessing the power of reason, does not judge within his own mind, is acting contrary to common sense. But more blameworthy still is he who would teach another and judge not himself, for in this way he tends to injure or destroy the reason of him who is foolish enough to believe in him. And to deprive another of one of the mind's most precious assets is the worst form of theft. Reason is that asset, for in and through it

is it possible for any man to realize the truth. In short, truth must have reason to direct it in the selection of its food or sustenance.

You may call such instinct if you will, but nevertheless, there cannot be true instinct without there first being truth with which to build that instinct. For, it may again be repeated, instinct is nothing more or less than past knowledge stored up within the subconscious mind for future use. Thus is the conscious mind (agent to the subconscious) relieved of the burden, or some part thereof, of the knowledge thus carried, and is enabled more freely to realize new truths with which alone it is possible for it to grow in fullness and progress in development.

Therefore, use your reason and judge, for as you judge so shall you be judged. And he who says, "Judge not," although perhaps well intentioned, entirely ignores the importance of judgment with regard to the conduct of life. Judge even men as well as beasts, for alas! there is still much of the lower animal in many men, such as prey upon the innocent and unfortunate. It is here where the judgment, exercised through reason, helps to frustrate and expose evil and protects and succors the weak and innocent.

It is because, unfortunately, that so many are guided by other than their mind in seeking truth that weaklings are produced, and there are too many dishonest and unscrupulous men about seeking whom they may devour. Such men mislead the innocent; the honest desire only to guide through the light of truth.

When you are truly guided by another, then are you justly served, for he seeks only to be master of

the situation so as best to serve you by revealing to you the truth. Hence the true and just master is the best guide and servant. Truth is the builder of all character, never character that of truth. For there cannot be character without truth, but the sum total of the truth you realize and exercise is the measure of your character. Nor is it possible for a believer to possess character or personality. For character is only the measure of the truths you yourself realize, and he who only believes realizes no truth, but only assumes he knows because of hearsay, suggestion or appearance, none of which is knowledge, hence he can possess neither character or personality. And also, that which is not yet realized by you cannot be a part of you, but is yet hearsay, which may be knowledge to others, whose character the believer always assumes, and by so doing subordinates his own personality.

Truth alone is charity, for there cannot be true charity unless you know whether or not you are doing good or evil through your giving. Truth gives to help, not merely to please itself or others. For he who gives merely to please, cannot well know what he is doing, and thus is thoughtless and blind. Truth never was, is not, nor can be blind. She sees, knows, and can do all things only for the welfare of herself and others.

Truth cannot retain as truth the words of others, however eminent. She must truly realize them to be first facts as emanating from reality, otherwise she regards them as hearsay. For to say that a thing was, is or can be, merely because of the word of another, or through your own imagination, is in itself a falsehood. Therefore, is it the more honest

to use the words, "It is said," when a statement is made to you of which you have no evidence of its fact; and you thus cover your lack of knowledge; do not incriminate yourself, nor mislead others.

Be King and Lord of your own domain, with truth as your servant, even although your fare be but a crust and a glass of cold water. Regard not the greedy thoughts or words that seemingly spring from the lords or princes moving about you, for they may be more unfortunate than yourself, although their coats may be of purple and their purses lined with gold. Your pure and high thoughts, alone found in truth, are where all your chief joys and happiness are to be found.

Truth and love (not infatuation or selfish desire) are man's most precious possessions, for they are the pride and joy of the highest and most worthy characters, and the light and charm of all true friendship.

Every truth which you uncover will tend to free you from selfishness. To be selfish is to be but a cad, though you own half the town and look gorgeous in garments of silk or fine linen. While every truth you seek to destroy is to thrust a dagger into your own better and nobler self.

Someone has said that "There is no such thing as an absolute truth," to which I might reply that fables are not yet all dead. But if such words were spoken, it becomes an absolute truth that such must have been said. It is true that you do not know anything in its entirety, but you do know of many things, their nature, cause and effect in a measure. All things, to you, first exist in the unseen, from whence they come into the seen, which fact is re-

sponsible for many yet believing that all things are made out of nothing. To say that a world like the earth could be evolved from a dot of ink from a pen would be as foolish as to say that something can be made from nothing. Therefore it must follow that all substance that is, was and ever shall be. Although nothing can be totally destroyed, form can be changed. Nature works in circles, going and coming, appearing and disappearing, and re-appearing.

Your brain is of matter, and through it you realize things and thoughts, while its seeing and knowing, which we call mind, is nothing, having neither form nor subtsance, for truth, knowledge, and ability are only the brain's realization of things. Thus the more you see the greater will be your mind. All to the mind is a matter of realization, as distinct from gathering. Thus all education is but a process of looking out instead of "filling in."

To be nurtured in a good soil is to be fortunate. Yet all who are rational, may, if they will, advance beyond their present state through the continued realization of truth. On the other hand, belief is but ignorance which ever retards a growing intelligence, crushing faith, crippling perception and thereby injuring or destroying reason, through which you educe truth and come into the possession of wisdom.

Truth never requires to suggest, nor does it ever seek to reveal itself through the hearsay of the dead, for there are greater men now living than ever yet existed, through whom it makes itself evident.

The greatest age of all time is the one in which you live; for the present ever builds upon the past.

Truth never required to imitate; it is always itself. Its beauty is in its strength. Its love is found in meeting ignorance, whom it ever seeks to enlighten.

Good pilgrims! I notice that a number of you have retired, while others are now asleep. Those of you who have retired are believers, who yet in their innocence hate the truth found in my words; who cannot therefore grow, for they are held in bondage by habits and suggestion. Those of you who now sleep are honest, and yet find my truth too heavy to grasp at present, but they will again awake into the newer and better light of freedom found only in and through truth. Yea, he who is not ever willing to discard hearsay for truth is dishonest with himself and untrue to others. Nor can he who knows not whether his words be true know whether he be honest. Such is the lot of believers.

Harken, therefore, you who are still present, for much have I yet to say unto you, which if you grasp will lead you gently and lovingly through the land of troubles and sorrows into that sweet heaven of sunshine where your Lord and Master and true servant, Truth, doth ever abide, and whose most radiant light makes joyous the lives of all the reasoning and honest, for those alone can see and know *my strength. For know you not that I, Truth, alone am the rock of all the ages, and so can never die. Yea, I only do reign supreme. Nothing was, is, or can be without me, for I am servant, Lord and King, yea, "God" of all, for in and through me only do all things live, move and have their being.* (All life.)

I, being Truth, do speak, know and act the truth,

the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and yet am I of all things the most hated by all mere believers, and those who teach belief, (when contrary to belief). For such is and can only be the work of darkest ignorance or gross imposition, which is theft of the lowest order, when spoken from positions of eminence.

For thy thoughts being true are more precious than life itself. In and through them only do all things revealed to you. Yea, the nature, quality and truthfulness of your most precious thoughts only, are and can only be your true Lord, guide and Saviour. And he who would say you nay, has not the truth within him, and must therefore be false or dishonest, for truth alone is the light and strength of your own mind; all else is darkness. Yea, it is true that you may deduce many truths through intuition. For intuition is and can only be the subconscious voice of past knowledge acquired through the observation of and association with the things the mind has at one time partially realized, but which, to be a vital truth that you may honestly pass on to another, must be fully realized by your conscious mind. Otherwise, the same may be no other than a falsehood, evolved through lack of perception. Thus, he who would say that "A something within him tells him" that he is ordered to do or merely believe in this or that, and so asks others to do likewise, from the basis of such fancy, does unto all weaker minds a great and growing evil. For to so impose upon them is to injure or destroy their reason; a course of conduct which is one of the greatest evils that ever retard the progress of mankind.

Many, you may say, do not possess the power of reason and thus cannot realize truth, which statement is in a measure true, but only as regards the unfortunately deranged minds. But the vast army of those who do not use their reason are mentally whole and sound, but are enslaved by the many falsehoods preached from the lips of living ignorance, imposition or tyranny; men who are considered "saints" because of mere appearance, exalted position, and false eloquence of tongue.

Truth cannot be charmed. To be thus charmed is to be enslaved through the emotions, by external or surface beauty.

Truth loves to deal only with the true richness of the real and actual of things. Beauty has no charm for it, unless it be of love and abiding justice. For love is and can only be found in and through the act, expression and desire of giving one's better and truer thoughts for the good and welfare of others. For the mere act of love is but selfishness without its radiation as just expressed. For justice ever considers all (the whole), and never a part only, for such is but to please self or another, regardless of the good it otherwise might do for itself and all others within its sphere of influence.

He who is wholly unselfish will think of all, and by thus being true to self is true also to others. For each one is a part of the whole. Thus to leave out a part of the whole is to be unmindful of and unloving to that part, consequently selfishness still remain as a boulder on your road to progress and true worth.

He that gives most (truth) gathers most, because to give he must gather. Truth grows and

becomes strong only through giving or in expression, otherwise it would lie dormant.

Further, he who is ashamed to cast forth his truth is not in possession of the whole truth of that truth. Thus his fear or lack of strength may be honesty yet not wisdom. For he who will cast forth a part truth, must, through use, find the whole truth. For through use and disputation does she refine herself from the alloy of falsehood.

Likewise, he who fears to have a truth attacked is not and cannot be in complete possession of the truth. Otherwise he would know that his truth is immovable and indestructible, and his peace of mind undisturbed.

It is possible, it is true, for you to remain undisturbed in like circumstances when your seeming truth is but falsehood, but that is because you have allowed such to paralyze your reason.

See that you then know and understand; for to live truthfully in the present is to provide well for the future. Smile and be glad, and you will shake off fear. Bury sorrow. Shake hands with hatred. Regard trouble as a messenger of new and brighter light to guide you on in the path of a truer, richer and nobler life. For he who can smile at the inevitable (death), nothing can disturb. For fear, hatred, trouble and sorrow have all vanished, such being but the work of selfishness or a delusion of the mind. We cry for what we lose, or may be losing, and grasp at what we do not need. Such is our selfishness.

He who finds his joy in giving is on the road to the fuller life, for you cannot give without receiv-

ing. Therefore, the more you give of truth the more you must receive.

In like manner the less you give the less you must receive, for your storehouse must become choked and cannot receive more. Therefore, keep both doors (giving and receiving) always open, that your goods may pass in and out, for in this way only can your counting house (the mind) increase its store of wealth. Such is the conduct of the unselfish whose worth and joy is found in giving, and seeking not to control, lead or sway, but to be guides and servants. And in this manner, while helping others you help yourself.

But yet one cannot sacrifice with wisdom. To sacrifice a better self for another is to make others but unworthy paupers, and so prevent the good that one might do by living for the weak and helpless, who need the aid of the strong and just.

For sacrifice, when believed to be the highest work of grace, becomes a gallows to the many who foolishly would follow.

To live on, to remove the trouble, is the work of the new and truer hero; but to cut off a life of work and loving endeavor in a spirit of so-called sacrifice is to evade duty, and will not help the living. Therefore, live on, be wise and face the trouble or sorrow, for there is much good work to do, and none can do the work you would have done.

Truth makes no sacrifice of the things with which she justly requires to do her work.

And do not sacrifice your thoughts of truth to those of the ones you most love and respect, for that is but false kindness to them and of no avail to yourself. For the words of even the dearest to

us must be considered in the light of our own reason, if we would truly realize the truth.

He who would make a statement as being fact without possessing the truth of that fact is like a child in a nursery who repeats a fairy tale. He has fallen into the pit of belief, which is full of the bones and skeletons of other men's word.

He who merely believes really knows nothing; he is but an echo of the words of others; and he who would teach others so to believe injures or destroys faith, perception and reason, the builders of truth, knowledge and wisdom. He is thus a pernicious moral or mental criminal. For to deprive another of the power to reason is to rob him of the truth, with which alone he can live, move and have his being.

Do you not now see wherein lies your chief trouble? It lies first within yourselves, and secondly in those who would have you still bow the knee before man-made shrines, whilst they softly whisper in your ears the subtle and criminal words of "Believe, believe;" "Rise above your reason;" "Trust in this or that, and so you shall be saved."

What an imposition! For I, truth, herein state that there never was, is not, nor ever shall be salvation to any living "soul" save through truth, which was, is, and shall always be your own mind's true realization of things as they in themselves exist. Therefore, he who would have you merely believe in anything is criminally ignorant of what he does, or is himself a living imposition.

To teach and explain moral principles is to be just; but to ask another to bow and worship and so

humiliate himself before the shrine of mystery is to encourage the evil of ignorance.

In your prayer to me, pilgrims, you mentioned "Gods" of wood, stone and iron, and many other Gods you have humiliated yourselves before, all of which you had abandoned. Why? Was it not because you had discovered that they were only man-made images fashioned to attract your fancy and devotion, and which you set aside as the truth within yourselves declared them to be the selfish work of your fellow-men?

I, Truth, herein state that there never was, is not, or ever shall be a true and just "God" who will ever ask of you to humiliate yourselves before his shrine and so exalt himself. For such a one must, before the light of truth or reason, condemn himself as being foolish or inhuman.

The father who would inspire his children with fear does but destroy the fabric of true manhood in them. For the surest way to cure a fault is to stand it on its own feet, not by making it a weakling through fear and prostration.

While on your knees, belief warts grow; but when on our feet we are masters of our troubles.

Belief humiliates, tyranny dictates as glittering fiction paves the way. But truth and reason are lords of all the truly honest and never seek to rule or dominate.

Truth is accessible to all. It can sup with dishonesty, smile on hatred, and laugh at apparent trouble, while sorrow it chases away.

He who lives in, with, and by truth, requires no guide save his own hand and brain. Books may reveal facts from which reason finds truth. But

facts are but hearsay until your mind sees the truth or reality from which they sprang.

The power that builds knowledge is truth, while truth is the product of reason, faith and perception.

The plain, unvarnished, simple truth is king and lord of all mankind, to which the rich and poor alike must give way. For truth alone can be their final guide.

We all desire to possess truth; yet the ignorant and dishonest daily endeavor to crush it, the ignorant because of belief, and the dishonest because they cannot use it for their nefarious purposes.

The chief business of our conscious mind is to procure truth, which it can only do through reason, whilst our subconscious mind retains the truth, when gained, for future use. Thus you again see where and how it becomes impossible for the mind to worship a truth; for it seeks always to be master of it. Such is the mind's law of attainment. And yet in this enlightened age you have not one moral or religious institution which teaches this law. Nor have I heard of any moral teacher or professor attempting to explain the what and wherefore of truth. For were they to rightly do so, according to reason, all creeds, dogmas and beliefs must fall by the wayside, for none such has yet been devised which can be accepted by all reasoning minds as a true guide to their welfare.

Furthermore, there are no creeds, dogmas or religions which can honestly face the test of truth and reason, for all are and can only be based upon belief, which has no foundation in fact. For were they to possess truth, they could not, as I have reiterated, possibly be worshipped. Yet must they

contain sufficient moral value to make them appear virtuous and attractive; the rest is naught but mystery, which is employed to excite and capture the emotions of those who have not come into the light of reason, or who have had the same subverted through some system of belief.

And so have you been led astray. Yea, is it not then, time that you were awakened out of your slumber, that you may apply the vacuum cleaners of truth and reason to the altars of your beliefs? There surely are no "sacred" places which will not stand a little honest house cleaning? If so, it would be well to have such gently and quietly torn down and replaced with better substitutes. For cleanliness is in itself truth, which knows no shame and which is ever willing to face an honest question. Question, therefore, and investigate; by so doing you can only unearth truth, the foundation stone of all life.

When you are sure you have come into possession of a truth, cast it abroad, and be not disturbed should others roughly use it. For in this way only does it become stronger, and grow in usefulness. On the other hand, should it happen to be proved to be un-truth, then you should rejoice to see it overthrown. For it can be of no use to you or others, but only a snare and a stumbling block, should you hold fast to it.

Thus ignorance will struggle to retain a falsehood which it has carried for some time, and will close its eyes to the light of truth; while honesty, wherever you meet it, loves to be taught and enlightened. In argument it will give and take, welcoming just and reasonable comparisons, and will,

when convinced, discard the old for the new and true. When its old coat is worn out, it secures a new, in which it finds more comfort and a better fit.

When you have reached the point of reason that enables you to test from all sides the thoughts you hold, then only have you begun to cast aside belief and grow in truth and knowledge.

You may be most careful of what you eat and what you wear, and in common affairs of life you may be most precise in knowing what you do, and yet be equally careless in the matter of the greatest of all things, your thoughts, which you take second hand, accepting beliefs as truth without a single honest, reasoning question.

There is not any greater pleasure in life than to gather knowledge and pass it on to others. For in and through the act only do you enlarge your better self, by growing into others and they in you.

Such is true, mutual, and abiding love.

Truth is Lord and love the giver. They are true "Gods." For in and through them we can find everything in life worthy of possessing. An honest man, if he will but use his reason, will come to truth, and love will give him of the highest joys in life, enabling him likewise to give unto others. But everyone must, in the nature of things, appeal first to reason, who is the builder and finisher of all.

There are many things in nature which you cannot explain or know, and therefore you have no right to assume and pronounce them to be facts. To do so is misleading the minds of the weak ones around you, and is an offence on your part that cannot be too strongly condemned.

Every religious order known to man has either fallen or is gradually falling, the inference being plain, namely, that all such have existed through mystery and have died, or are dying, before the march of truth and reason.

After all is said and done, there can be nothing higher than truth and reason. For nothing ever was, is, or can be found without the agency of reason; thus reason is the mother of all good, truth the child, knowledge the youth, and wisdom the man. And he who would endeavor to argue otherwise is already deep in the kuagmire of belief.

The fictitious or fallacious cannot stand before the strong and impregnable words of truth.

Truth ploughs her furrows of fertility only in the truly honest, for honesty received and gives much. It is never bigoted or overbearing in belief. To be honest with thyself is to keep your storehouse ever rid of questionable goods, so that others may be supplied only with what is right and true. Honesty does not believe, but knows that her goods are genuine, and they are therefore never questioned.

Truth and honesty go hand in hand, not as a mere matter of policy, which is of the atmosphere of trickery, but because they are kindred. He who makes truth and honesty a policy does so in hope only of reward. But truth and honesty require no reward, for they are in themselves the greatest and highest of all rewards.

Moreover, they find their reward in the act of giving or doing, being governed by Love, the giver of all true and perfect gifts.

Truth never cries "I am," or "Believe in me," but

"Take me," "Use me for your own good." For its joy is in being of service to others.

Falsehood moves quickly, for it fears detection, while truth lingers long, is patient and serene, for its word is law, and its love the light of all kindness.

If truth be the highest attribute, then the highest truth is that *truth is the mind's true realization of that which was, is, and can be.*

Truth cannot injure anyone, for it is the servant of your own mind, and you hurt yourself only through the absence of truth.

He who is determined to speak only the truth cannot be dismayed by contradiction, for he feels serene in the strength of his position.

He who knows not truth cannot stand up for it nor grow in knowledge. Ignorance is the mother of all dishonesty, although it is true also that dishonesty is not always ignorant of what it does.

To establish a truth cast it abroad, and if it be a truth it will return to you tenfold, whilst if it is not a truth its exposure should make you rejoice, for the storehouse of your mind is thus the cleaner for its absence.

Truth cannot say "I believe," or "I don't believe," but rather, "I perceive," or "I do not perceive," for it denies not and accepts not without evidence.

Because So-and-So, who stands on a pedestal of popularity, makes a statement which he relates as a fact is no reason why you should foolishly repeat it as such. For from such sources do our greatest falsehoods flash forth their deadly poisons, which is carried by the ignorant and by them dispensed as truth, just because Mr. Appearance made the statement, the truth or falsity of which is never ques-

tioned. Thus do the simple cripple their faculty of acquiring truth.

Further, mere appearance may be charming and attractive, but it may also be the cloak of falsehood.

Let your judgment be a silent search for evidence, which, when secured, quietly cast abroad, that the same may enlighten others as to the true condition of things and men. To pursue such a course is to be honest and dispel imposition and duplicity.

Remain unmoved if the ignorant and dishonest seek to mangle or destroy your truth, for it is indestructible.

Millions in the past have been believers, and many have even died to uphold their religious beliefs, all of which were void of truth, *for there never was nor can be a religious truth, nor can truth be worshipped.* Such beliefs were based on fable and mystery, to allure the unreasoning and simple.

The natural man is the ignorant man who is selfish, remaining within himself, and so cannot radiate to others. But the unselfish man, having risen above the natural, ever radiates his good qualities to others, and so enlarges himself into others. Such is the product of all true civilization and the disciple of the brotherhood of humanity, which selfishness, ignorance and dishonesty would seek to overthrow or pervert.

Oh, that you could but realize how selfishness doth ever sap the nutritious blood of the better, truer and nobler life, leaving your manhood but an empty shell.

One little deed or thought of unselfishness is of more value than thousands of those of the selfish.

Unselfishness builds through giving, while selfishness is but self-eating-self and creates nothing.

Build a wall of jewels and gold, and roof it in with thoughts of self while in thyself remain. Then look all over with the eye of truth; what do you find therein? Only a monster of greed and selfishness, of no true value to either self or others.

Oh, that I, Truth, could flow through the veins of all! Each day would dawn with truer light, greater love and freedom. I would guard the simple, enlighten innocence, brush aside the selfish, lift the fallen, pull down the proud and mighty and make all men equal. There would be no high, no low, and all would help one another.

One original thinker often reveals more truth than a thousand learned men who are mere bookworms or hearsay trumpets. Hence, the importance of being able to realize for yourself reality as it is, and not as merely spoken by others, for most men are yet but as sounding boards of other's thougths.

Let your own truth radiate, and fathom well the words of others that you may prove truth or falsity. For he who utters a falsehood, whether conscious of it or not, is untrue, and is either knowingly or innocently dishonest. And after all, an innocent falsehood in its travels does as much evil as an intentional one. As truth (to you) lies only in the department of your own mind, it is very wise that you should at all times resort to that source to prove or disprove appearance and hearsay.

At times you may have a feeling that a certain statement made by others is or is not true. Such a feeling may emanate from hereditary belief, which in itself is useless in revealing truth. Or it may

proceed from faith which is endeavoring to call up past experiences in order that perception and reason may make a true comparison of a truth already in the memory with what purports to be a new truth. In this way only is it possible for you to correctly judge of anything.

Thus you see that faith, instinct and intuition find their birth in observation, attention or interest, from whence spring comparison and judgment, which form the basis of all reason and from whence come truth, knowledge and wisdom.

It is well, therefore, to be always on guard against the deceptiveness of appearance and the emotions which are always liable to be attracted by the mysterious. It is by this means that religion takes advantage of the simple and innocent.

Many have died and many have been slaughtered by their fellow-men in defence of gods of stone and wood, the virtue of which existed only in the imagination. They were worshipped as true gods, although there was no truth to be found in any of them, and what comfort or consolation was derived from them was entirely illusory.

It is likewise true that through the absence of faith and reason the simple mind can take seeming comfort out of "gods" of various kinds.

Yet such can only be but disordered dreams, which must vanish before the light of truth. Moreover, truth is always calm and stable, while religion is ever in a state of unrest, possessing not the truth, for it is founded on hearsay, fable and the mysterious. All religions are dead or are now dying through the revelation of truth.

Truth measures every inch she travels; while

reason, through faith and perception, explores the mysterious for truth, but cannot be mastered or controlled by the mere words of others, for she must see, know and understand before she accepts any statements as facts. For she ever looks behind the shrine of appearance, knowing that subtlety and imposition wear many fine robes with which to captivate the simple and obscure the truth.

Truth alone can regenerate the ignorant, subdue the dishonest and compel belief to discard its false raiment for the spotless robe of reason.

There is, indeed, no system known to the mind of man that so enslaves and eventually destroys the reason than a system of belief.

To possess correct truth which none can disprove is surely worth all the beliefs of the past or present. For to merely believe is to know nothing, but to know is to be in possession of truth and knowledge.

When you have banished belief from your mind, then only will you grow in knowledge and become your own guide and ruler. For if you are wise, you will search through reason or comparison with the honest questions of how, where and why, and in this way only is it possible for you to know or realize the actual.

I think I can hear someone say that many are not given to reason. And why? Is it not because they prefer to cling to their pet beliefs, which have been handed down to them from their fathers, who themselves accepted such on mere hearsay or tradition?

I, truth, would again declare that he who accepts remuneration for revealing truth and does not know the what, where and how of it, cannot be con-

scientious and honest. For he is but grasping in the dark, and is only a mere professor. Therefore, he has no moral right to pose as revealer of truth. Many there are at the present time in this invidious position, but who, if they have a spark of true manhood left, will ere long change their course. And why? Because as the people learn the what, the where and how of truth they will demand it of them, or replace them with those who will give them what they pay for. For what is sought is truth, and not hearsay or fable, bolstered up by mystery for the purpose of enslaving the mind and driving them to their knees, an act which no just "God" ever required of them, and which can only be humiliating imposition.

Therefore, turn your prayers into the act of true and loving kindness, and stand upon your own feet for you will then do more real good than by bending on your knees. He who is continually praying does little good either to himself or to others, but he who instead does acts of kindness performs the greatest good of all.

Therefore pray not, nor grieve not, for blessed are they who mourn not, they shall have great strength. And woe unto the poor in spirit, for they taint the atmosphere of joy. Rejoice and be glad, for there is a silver lining to the darkest cloud, if you will but look through the eye of truth. Be therefore strong and courageous, for strength builds strength, while to weep and be weak is to pull down.

He who expects others to weep for him when dead does not realize the consolation of truth, while he who bids others to bear a brave front has the

strength of heroism and leaves the world better for his having lived.

He who speaks the truth need use but few words, but he who *speaks untruly* must use many words to cover the smallest falsehood.

The selfish man cannot be truly honest, for he thinks of self alone and regards not others; be therefore unselfish, if you would be kind and true to both self and others.

Love not all of all your neighbors, for such is to love both virtue and vice. Turn aside hatred by doing good, and forgive those who in their weakness may do some wrong. But resist evil, otherwise you become a party to it, and thus become evil.

Regard not him who would say, "Believe in me," for he seeks his own gain and glory at your expense and humiliation.

Fable is the funeral, hearsay the graveyard, and belief the coffin of truth, knowledge and wisdom.

But he who desires you to fully know and understand his words, and to realize the truth from which they spring, is honest in his purpose, and seeks only the good of your welfare.

To hold truth requires courage, for dishonesty is ever on the watch to crush or suppress it. To expect this is to be undisturbed, for you cannot fear challenge or disputation. For through such truth radiates and gains in strength.

Truth is always a truth, but so-called "religious truth" is only hearsay, which disappears with the progress of knowledge.

He who desires to be truthful will naturally form habits and instincts of truth, and so will the atmosphere around him be honest.

Truth never follows, it guides itself and seeks to direct others.

He who would have you follow him is weak himself, and so requires your service; but he who is truly honest will not seek followers, but will endeavor to make others a light unto themselves and their own true guides.

Make the truth first your truth, then only have you a right to use it; otherwise it still belongs to him who knows how to use it.

Speak the truth and you will not require a high pedestal or false suggestions to assist you in your work. For such only bewilders the simple and enslaves the innocent.

Should you not know the whole truth of a truth, speak it not as being a fact, for it is still part hearsay to you. Therefore you are not justified in proclaiming it as a truth, for such only is a species of belief.

If religion you must have, let it be *a living, burning thirst for truth,* for through it alone you gain knowledge, which is a bushel filled with truth, while wisdom is her storehouse.

There is nothing so strange or disturbing as a new truth to the religious mind. For such is taught to believe that his so-called truth or "faith" is absolute, and he cannot understand its being questioned. Hence the reason for the perpetual religious unrest, the many diverse sects and unsettled counsels.

To come into the possession of truth and knowledge regarding anything is to have a surer foundation than mere belief, and is to become your own guide and master.

But to believe is to be sure of nothing, and to be

led by those who themselves know not whereof they speak, or who are unprincipled enough as to use you for their own ends, which they can only do while you are simple enough to be so controlled.

Search, therefore, for the truth through question and investigation, and observe well those who would have you believe in this or that, for you will probably find them ignorant and prejudiced, having become so through mere habit or from hereditary belief. And the believer is often influenced by the mere appearance of the seeming good who dwell in high places and are surrounded by the trappings of vestments and mystery, when even they are but unknowing sheep led to and from the pastures of belief.

Oh, how blind you have been to bow to those who seem above you, because of false suggestion's cloak, which is of many bright and alluring hues to thine eyes; truth requires no such cloak to attract the unwary. She alone can guide without outward show or mystification.

Know ye also that *I, Truth, never was, and cannot be found in any book or books,* although through the eye of truth you may find therein facts or falsehoods. For *truth is and can only be found by you in your own mind.*

All life must struggle for its being and so build themselves. The lilies do toil and do spin, for were it not so they could not be or become.

Be ye also wise for your own individual efforts only can reveal unto you truth, knowledge and wisdom, which you must possess if you would attain to the highest good in life.

Know you also that he who would take the

writing of another and declare that the meaning of them is not represented in the words and then endeavors to reconstruct them for his own purpose, must be either grossly ignorant or a knave. For to assert that one, long since dead, did not mean what he actually wrote is in itself falsehood for it becomes impossible to know just what such a mind thought if his words do not convey their true meaning.

So that if another reserves the right to place his own construction upon such words, you also have a like privilege, so that they can only be worthless and misleading if they do not correctly convey the true meaning. For he who speaks the truth speaks not in riddles, as he knows that many are the dishonest who seek to use them for their own gain or glory. Such are but parasites, although clothed in seeming respectability.

Therefore, hearken unto truth, for many are the things that I have yet to reveal unto you.

Yea, know ye that the kingdom of heaven is at hand as evolved from your pure and loving thoughts, found in and through truth. For I, Truth, am the light and true guide of all living creatures; only through me can you justly rule your lives.

Therefore, repent ye not, for repentance doth humiliate, yet be ye guided by your past mistakes. For blessed are they who mourn not, for they are endowed with great strength. Some cry for what they lose, and grasp for what they do not need; such is selfishness.

Woe unto the poor in spirit, for they make

mournful the weak ones about them, and retard their own welfare.

Woe to the foolishly meek, for they become prey to the inhuman wolves who prowl about seeking whom they would devour.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for and do obtain truth, for in it alone is found all righteousness.

Blessed are the merciful, for theirs is the kingdom of great joy; they are the foster parents of the needy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they have much truth and shall know good.

Blessed are the peaceful, for they shall live in peace and grow in wisdom.

Go ye not into the way of evil, that ye be persecuted for righteousness sake; for truth asks ye not to persecute the good within you for the advantage of evil.

Be ye therefore wise to know your power before you so venture; for such is the way of wisdom. Foolishness alone doth plunge through a moment's fancy.

Yea, go ye unto all the world and preach the gospel of truth. For he that teaches truth doth perform the greatest service to all; but be sure your truths are not mere beliefs. For such do naught but bewilder and disturb.

Know ye also that truth cannot say unto you, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile and persecute you and say all manner of evil things against you falsely for my sake. For such is but persecution of the simple. But truth says unto you, do ye none of these things for my sake. *Believe ye not in me,*

but know ye the true meaning of my words, that ye also may truly reveal the truth. Ask what ye will that may explain. For he who speaks in obscure parables enslaves the simple and innocent, and provides wares for the unjust.

Nor can truth say, "Rejoice and be glad," and also "Blessed are they who mourn," for such is contradictory. But Rejoice and be glad and mourn not is the way of wisdom.

Know ye also that he who would have you persecute yourself for his sake can be naught but a tyrant.

Truth is the light of all men. A city that is set on a high hill cannot be hid, nor can he who has truth for his beacon.

He who lighteth a candle of truth doth a kindness to all men, for it giveth them light on their way.

Therefore, let your truth so shine before men that they may see its good works.

Truth is the salt of mankind; "But if the salt hath lost its savor," wherewith shall it do good? You are henceforth good for nothing and shall be barren of all righteousness.

Seek ye to glorify nothing, for that which seeketh glory is unworthy of you; for such is the way of ignorance or tyranny.

Truth comes to destroy the unrighteous law and to substitute the law of love and justice, that by it may be fulfilled what all men truly desire, peace and happiness. For the laws of all nations and men are yet imperfect. And verily I say unto you that unless ye live in truth, peace cannot come unto you;

for in truth is found all righteousness and all true joys and happiness.

Whosoever, therefore, shall break the commandments of truth and shall teach men so, shall be of the children of evil; but whosoever shall teach the laws of truth shall be as a light on a high hill, a guide to all who need him, and he shall be loved by all; for all life loves truth.

For I say unto you that unless your righteousness exceed greed and selfishness, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of peace and joy. For selfishness is the cause of all evil.

Whosoever waxeth wroth with his brother without cause is a fool, and he who calleth his brother a fool is himself a fool. For such enrages ignorance, which is ever quick to show anger. Be ye, therefore, calm, for therein lies thy greatest strength.

Bring not your gifts before the altar, for such is but wood and stone, while ignorance or imposition receives your gifts and accept your humiliation. Therefore, turn your prayers and supplications into acts of loving kindness and mercy, for through them alone can you be justly measured.

Innocence boweth to that it knows not of, and so is bewildered and humiliated.

Agree not with thy adversary, for such is duplicity, yet strive not with him in anger, but be calm and just to demand and enforce your rights, that imposition and dishonesty be overcome. For he who allows evil to flourish or does not seek to check it is himself a culprit.

Ye have heard it said that "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed

adultery with her already in his heart." Truth says unto you that it is not so. For there cannot be propagation without the desire.

If thy right eye offend thee, seek ye to remove the evil thereof, for it is better to go through life with both eyes than with but one.

And know ye also that the thought of "Hell-fire" is but a religious trick to frighten the simple and innocent, for I, Truth, say unto you that "Hell" is and can only be the product of your own selfish and impure thoughts or the absence of truth.

Whosoever findeth it impossible to live peacefully with an unruly wife or husband is wise to seek measures of divorce. And he, or she, who would marry her or him that is divorced doth justly so.

Yea, take an eye for an eye, or a tooth for a tooth, for such is the law of justice, through which alone evil is punished and prevented from growing; but do ye justly so.

And truth says unto you, resist evil, for to resist not evil is to become evil. And to him who would smite you on one cheek, turn not to him the other, for such can only encourage ignorance and thus promote evil.

If a man sue thee at law and wrongfully take away thy coat, seek ye to change the law, that the thief may receive his just deserts.

Go not with him who would compel you to go a mile, for such is but petty tyranny. Give not indiscriminately to him who would ask of you, for such encourages pauperism. And think you well before giving to him who would borrow; such promoteth greed and dishonesty.

Do ye therefore none of these things for my sake, but for the good of all.

Hate not thine enemy, but excuse the ignorance which is the cause. Be kind to those who hate and would persecute you. But pray for nobody, for such is folly, and can be of no avail.

Strive that ye may be the children of truth, for in truth is found all that is worthy.

To love only those who love you is to be selfish; but to love the good in all is to be loved by all. For thy acts bring either reward or degradation; while prayer doth humiliate and permit the ignorant and unjust to impose upon you.

Seek ye, therefore, to perfect yourselves, for in so doing lieth great joy and contentment. When thou givest, let thy right hand know what thy left doth. Give not secretly, for that which is worthy need fear nothing, yet do not sound a trumpet.

Truth cannot condemn all those who preach in synagogues and on the corners of the streets, as she herself also preaches in synagogues, on the streets and on mountain tops; for such is to be inconsistent and dishonest.

"Use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do, for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking." "Be ye not therefore like unto them," for truth knoweth that such is but the way of the foolish and selfish, as words avail nothing, but true acts attain all.

Yea, Truth is thy kingdom and hallowed is her name. She gives us each day our daily bread; and forgives not our debts, but makes us pay each farthing. She leads us not into temptation, and

delivers us from evil; for her's is the kingdom, the power and the glory of all life.

Forgive ye not men their wilful trespasses, but compel them to repay the good thereof, that justice may prevail.

Fast not, so that ye be not of a sad countenance; for such is the way of the foolish, for mourning is born of selfishness, whilst love seeks ever to give.

Lay up treasures on earth, but seek ye them honestly. But first lay up treasures of truth, for through her will all those be justly added thereto.

"For where your treasure is there will your heart be also."

The light of the body is truth: Seek ye her, that thy whole body may be full of light. But if thy thoughts be evil, they shall be as a cancer to thy body.

"Ye cannot serve two masters," neither can ye serve both truth and falsehood. And he that endeavoreth to serve "God" is on a fruitless errand, for no man knoweth "his" will, save it be found in good through truth. Nor yet does "he" wish you to mourn or worship. For were it so, "he" would have told you without the aid of a mediator.

Take ye thought of what ye shall eat, and drink, and wherewith ye shall be clothed, for thy body hath need of these things, that the truth within you may live and flourish, for truth is thy sustenance.

Behold the fowls of the air, for they gather and do spin, and so build and sustain themselves. Neither are ye better than they, save through truth. The hairs of thy head are not numbered; for he who would number them is on a fool's mission.

Yea, by taking thought thou canst improve and better thy being through truth.

Seek ye first the kingdom of truth; for through her will all these things be added unto you. And take ye thought of the morrow; for so do the wise; paupers alone do otherwise.

Ye have heard it said of old times, "Judge ye not," but I say unto you, judge that ye may not misjudge. For as you judge, so is the measure of your worth. Yea, judge of all things and men, for many there be who will seek to impose upon you.

Behold well the mote in thy brother's eye, that ye may assist him to remove it; but first remove the mote in thine own eye, that you may see clearly to assist thy brother.

Give that which is holy to the unrighteous, for so do they become righteous; and cast ye your pearls before swine, for pearls were made to beautify; the pure require them not.

"Ye have heard it said of old times that he that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened," but I say unto you that multitudes have asked, sought and knocked, and have been turned away wanting.

Yea, truth alone can give unto you that which ye truly desire, while "Believe in me" gives nothing, retards your progress and leaves you in a state of ignorance.

What man is there of you, whom, if his son asks for the bread of truth, will give him a stone of belief?

"Ye have heard it said of olden time: "Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you," but I say unto you, so do all the dishonest, in order to

protect their life. Therefore, *do ye unto others as they should be done by for the true welfare of all.*

Enter ye in at the straight gate of truth; for broad is that gate, but narrow is the way of belief, which leadeth to the destruction of your reason: For many there be who find it to their sorrow and perpetual unrest, whilst yet "believing" themselves wise, and blessed in their stupidity.

Yea, beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, and with ingratiating manners, but who inwardly seek your humiliation; they are but wolves.

Ye shall know them by their fruits, found in those about them, whom they make and keep simple and blind for their own glory.

For he who endeavors to gather truth from beliefs, or knowledge from hearsay, is like unto a corrupt tree which bringeth forth evil fruit.

The tree of truth cannot bring forth evil fruit, but the fruit of the tree of belief is of no avail and doth humiliate.

"Every tree" of belief, "that bringeth not forth good fruit," should "be hewn down and cast into the fire" (disrepute).

"Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them." Seek ye, therefore, to know the fruits of tradition, hearsay, fable, etc.

Seek ye not to do the will of anyone, save he be of truth, for in truth alone is found all joy and righteousness.

Truth cannot love her "neighbors and enemies," and say unto them, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity;" for such is the work of ignorance.

Truth denies not "saint" or sinner who justly asks

of her; she rewards the just and condemns the criminal, wherever such is found, after fair warning.

She lifts up the fallen, pulls down the "Gods" and makes all men equal.

She offers no rewards save those found in doing, nor threatens with destruction all honest non-believers; for those she knows are just in their search after knowledge.

Therefore, hearken to, know and understand the meaning of her words, for she is "God" of "All Gods," and servant to all living. She lifts not herself on high, but endeavors to uplift others. She dwells within and not without, and so is man's just and only Saviour—servant.

She cannot liken those who will not merely "believe" in her to the man who built his house on sand, but says, "Believe ye not in me, but know and understand the true meaning of my words, for in the true realization of them only can you come into the truer and nobler life of love, truth and abiding justice.

Truth cannot do a kindness to another and say, "See thou tell no man," for such is not the way of the just, who desire to radiate their kindness.

Know ye also, that faith never had nor can have any connection with blind and simple, trusting belief; for faith is the light of truth, while belief is the sepulchre of knowledge.

Belief may "cure" imaginary trouble, but truth removeth all trouble, and sweepeth clean the imagination of all fallacious thoughts.

Truth need never complain that "the foxes have holes and the birds have nests," and that she has

nowhere to lay her head; for that which hath all power wants for nothing.

Nor can she deny a young man the privilege of burying his father and say unto him, "Follow me," for she hath respect for the dead as well as for the living, and thinks not of self in her doing.

Yea, truth alone can control the winds and the waves.

Truth cannot drive "Devils" into swine or destroy the property of others; for such is but superstition and theft, and the "devils" imaginary. Truth regardeth honest industry, for she knows that from work issues usefulness and the true brotherhood of man. Therefore, she cannot destroy it by asking others to "Leave it and follow me," for she seeketh to encourage all in the good of honest work.

Yea, truth can eat with publicans and sinners, and forget not her own position and people.

Truth alone doth heal those who truly touch the hem of her garments, but never those wrapt up in falsehood and egotism.

Yea, the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers of truth are few (in high places).

Truth cannot say, "Go ye to the lost sheep of Israel, but to the city of the Samaritans enter ye not," for such is to be partial and unjust.

"Truly ye have received, truly give; heal the sick; cast out belief, and raise the dead," when you can, so says Truth.

Be ye, therefore, not foolish, but provide shoes for your feet and raiment for your journey, also gold and silver, and food and meat; for they can only be paupers who do not thus make provision.

Inquire in the cities as to whom are unworthy,

that ye may help them to become worthy; for the worthy require not your services.

Ye have heard it said that "If a house be unworthy, let your peace return unto you," but truth says unto you, "Let your peace remain," for so it is with the loving and kind, while ignorance and selfishness would desert the helpless.

Behold, I send you forth as strong men in the midst of wolves, which you must overcome, not with sword or gun, or with words of unjust condemnation, but with truth's healing salve of love and justice.

Be ye, therefore, as wise as serpents and immovable just to enforce your rights and those of the weak ones about you. For many there are who are ever on the watch to devour the innocent and destroy the simple and honest.

Yea, beware of men, and fear not though they seek to deliver you up to the councils; for truth feareth nothing when doing good. Yet be ye not puffed up, nor headstrong; but know whereof ye speak and believe not. Be calm, kind and ever just, for no man but a fool shall revile you, and truth will be with you as guide and protector.

Yea, many are the false "prophets" who endeavor to destroy truth and all righteousness by making sheep of the simple, innocent and illiterate.

Oh, that the true and loving words of truth could reach the hearts of all, for falsehood and all evil would disappear and all grow in truth, knowledge and wisdom.

And now, good pilgrims, fare you well, and as you travel on through life, with the loving and peaceful smile of truth on your countenances, think,

speak and do only the just and kind acts of truth, from whence come life's greater and higher joys and true worthiness of character.

Learn of me; for I am "God" of all and the true servant to all life, while love is my dispensary.

THE PEOPLE'S REPLY.

Oh, Truth! Truly art thou God of all. Thou seekest not for glory nor our humiliation. Thou art our guide, our just and loving servant, whose mission is not found in self but in the welfare of the people, many of whom have in the past struggled and died, and are striving still, to uphold a fool's conception of you.

Now that thou hast revealed thyself unto us, well do we see and know that it is the deadly evil of selfishness which debases and ruins our better selves, and that the practitioners thereof seek only their own glory through others' degradation. Yea, well do we now realize the what and wherefor of thy sacred person, and we see, also, where cometh greed, dishonesty and all evil ways of men who think only of themselves, and seek to crush the weak and needy.

Oh, truth! Would that we could in humble supplication kneel before thy shrine of most abundant light and illuminating glory; but we now truly see that thou, God and servant of all, canst not so degrade thyself with our humiliation, but rather seek to make us honest, just and loving men, and are content to see us ever progressing to perfect manhood and womanhood.

Oh, Truth! What a great and growing kindness thou hast ever done for all! Clearly do we now realize that to him who will ever follow thy kind and loving precepts will come the possession of a truer and nobler character. For therein we now find freedom from fear, sorrow and the petty troubles of life, which disturb our peace of mind, and by means of which we get rid of the demon of selfishness which mars our joys and keeps the goodly innocent as slaves to serve the greed of others.

Oh, that we could but reveal unto you the throbbing heart of our loving indebtedness to thee for thy true and princely service to us. For well hast thou shown to us the roads of peace and freedom, and marked the dwelling places of duplicity, imposture and unjust tyranny.

Yea, the abundant light of a truer and nobler manhood has come at last to stay with those of us who can truly grasp thy just laws and loving precepts.

Oh, the comfort of the thought that "all are equal, save in the measure of the truth and love that within us dwell," and that none are high, and none are low except through the degradation of dishonesty and selfish imposition.

Oh, that our yearning hearts may overflow with truthful love in thy kingly service to our fellowmen, so that joy, peace and worthiness may come to us all.

Yea, our hearts are full with love and gratitude for the service thou hast rendered unto all, be they "saint" or sinner, for all live and search for thee as the God and Saviour—servant of mankind. For thou dwellest not amongst the clouds, nor do you

make the dwellers upon the earth thy foot-stone, but art thyself a true and princely servant and guide to all.

And now, oh, truth, words have failed us to give adequate expression of our sense of gratitude towards you, and yet we can realize that you require no words of praise, as thou already possesseth all, being prophet, king, lord and god of all.

THE TRUE PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE.

If what has been remarked in the foregoing chapters be truly observed and appreciated in the spirit intended, it may be hardly necessary for the reader to read the following supplementary thoughts. But as a closing chapter I have deemed it wise to add these few words, being deeply impressed with the ignorance or thoughtlessness which still lingers in high places with respect to the propagation of Truth. For it cannot be denied that there are millions who are practically kept in a state of intellectual and moral bondage by those who advocate blind belief in certain dogmas. Such an assertion may seem harsh, sweeping and unjust by those who read this opinion for the first time. But being honest, I feel compelled to "speak the truth as I find it." For I cannot conceive how our moral teachers or leaders, having received the highest education in universities and colleges, can still be ignorant of the what, where and how of truth as distinct from mere belief. One is, therefore, driven to the conclusion that they lack true courage and initiative, or that they prefer to consult their own interests, place or position in pandering to prevailing ignorance. And when these teachers and guides occupy high positions and influence, it is doubly to be deplored that, instead of enlightening those of humbler positions and poorer education, they still find their occupation in beguiling and misleading them with sophistry.

It would seem, perhaps, hardly necessary for you

to rely on any words of mine to bring home to your own realization the fact of this statement. For you must surely have observed that there is a growing revolt among reasoning men in all civilized countries against the prevailing imposition, conscious or unconscious, of these self-appointed moral teachers of mankind. And it is chiefly in the exploitation of the mysterious or unknown that they find the instrument with which they impose "beliefs" upon the simple and innocent or those who do not trouble to reason as to the truth of parables, fables, myths and tradition.

Moreover, it seems to me that no "God" but a despot could possibly expect, imply or demand that mortals should humiliate or prostrate themselves for the glorification of another; for he who seeketh glory for himself must surely be of a selfish and tyrannical character. Let us stand erect, in the consciousness of our own dignity, that we may show that we are our own masters, and not slaves to the glib tongues of those who profess to be lords, prophets or priests over us.

Let us retain, if you like, our brick and stone altars, our sweet music and song, but let us discard the subtle and false stories or legends of the dead, for truth cannot be found therein. After all, what is worship but mourning, prayers and supplication, which all find their root in either selfishness or imposition, and are fostered by those who would keep us bound in the chains of belief. Many doubtless will condemn my words, without reflecting on the difference between truth and mere "belief." But truth grows through condemnation and disputation,

while belief is exposed when we inquire and investigate as to its foundation.

All things are pure except the thoughts, words and acts of man, and either truth or falsehood can be the outcome. How necessary is it, therefore, that we see that we *realize truth as agreeing with reality,* and that love is the *true expression, desire and act of giving for the welfare of all.* For from truth and love spring honesty, honor and all our highest attributes. But to acquire those we must look at the bright side of things, and put our thoughts into unselfish action.

There is one predominant thing in the universe, and that is substance or energy with its potentiality of motion, and from their various degrees and modifications appear the phenomena of nature, such as electricity, life, light, heat or fire, and all else find their sustenance in substance or appear in motion. For they cannot be found separate or apart from substance and motion. Without substance we find a vacuum, having neither matter nor motion, and therefore cannot exist in nature. Life, therefore, in a sense, is motion. And in another application, if we would grow intellectually we must keep our thoughts in motion, interchanging them with those of others, for only by so doing can we realize the truth of things.

At the same time, I do not ask you to "believe" anything appearing in the pages of this book, nor yet allow anything I have written to disturb your peace of mind. You must realize the truth for yourself; I merely point the way.

Believe nothing nor yet deny anything without evidence. You must find yourself whether a thing

is a fact or not, through the true and undisputed realization of the actuality from which it springs. Seek to know of all things that others would have you accept as truth, for mere belief will melt like snow before the warm life-giving breath of truth.

In these pages and preceding chapters I have endeavored, to the best of my ability, to honestly and reasonably expose the fallacies and sophistries of "belief," and at the same time have suggested the way in which they may be replaced by a practical and logical realization of truth, faith, love and the other higher attributes of our nature. But it may be said that simple and illiterate minds are not yet prepared to receive or realize the truth for themselves. That may appear true, but is not, for any mind that can receive or accept sophistry can also receive and realize truth. And truth, after all, is the simplest and easiest of all to comprehend when honestly and plainly disclosed. Give me, if you like, the greatest of all truthful thoughts and I will guarantee to make the average person, who can understand my language, rightly understand it. Or if there is any man honest and open-minded and not incurably enmeshed in some cherished belief, who shows a desire to use his own reasoning powers, he cannot fail to, sooner or later, realize the truth as distinct from mere belief. It is only necessary to truly seek, and the simplest mind will soon discover the light of truth and of love.

Now, surely it would be a great help to us all in our efforts for the advancement and welfare of others if we could only quietly and lovingly sit around a table, and compare and sift one another's truths, beliefs or dogmas. And why is such a round

table conference of the leaders of different religious sects not possible, at the present time? It should be possible, but most religious beliefs are dogmatic, and there is no desire for differences to be adjusted or the real truth arrived at. And yet, it is truth that we should all agree upon, for falsehood is the creator of dissension.

The honest are always willing and ready for others to express their views that they may learn the true from the false. And yet, it is not denied that there are good men in our churches preaching the sophistries of belief, and who sincerely "believe" that they are right, and who may well be excused. But in excusing the few, are we to forget the many who are, in a sense, compelled to listen to false parables and fables of belief? Once the majority of the people are aroused to a realization of the falsity of such teaching they will quietly demand that the truth be given them or the occupation of such leaders, preachers or teachers will soon be gone.

There are government inspectors of schools; why not of churches? But while these school inspectors will examine and report as to the general education of these establishments, they do not apparently trouble themselves as to any religious teaching the scholars may receive, for they are themselves orthodox believers. But the idea of a government inspector of truth as revealed in church, although it may seem impracticable, is worthy of a moment's consideration. Perhaps our Socialistic brethren may consider the matter, for it is the church that is one of the chief obstacles in the path of social progress. It is the advance agent of commerce and wealth, as may be often seen in the warm welcome

given to the rich and the cold reception of the poor, as they would sit in the pews of the wealthy or apparently refined.

Yes, if you be wise, you will weigh well all thoughts and assertions and probe them to the source from whence they came, that their truth or falsity may appear.

One man of truth is worth a thousand dogmatists, for he promotes progress, while the latter retards it, always crippling intellectual advancement.

Ignorance is presumption, but wisdom is tolerance, for it knows that all are equal save in their own thoughts, which exist only in potentiality and are governed by the way we look at and inquire into the things about us. Look far and near, compare and investigate all things if you would find truth.

They who desire not further knowledge would retard their own mental growth, and impede the general progress and welfare of humanity.

Ignorance is natural, but wisdom is above the natural, being an acquisition through language of that which is true, whilst ignorance does not acquire but remains inert.

Prejudice, bigotry and dogmatism are born of ignorance and end in falsehood, duplicity and mental degradation. For there are none so ignorant as those who "believe" themselves wise, and none so wise as those who know their own ignorance, for they ever seek knowledge.

The ignorant regard their "beliefs" as sacred, while the honest and wise cast their hypotheses abroad that they may be destroyed or proved to be

true; hence they are never disturbed at contradiction.

The surest cure for ignorance is to believe nothing and deny nothing without indisputable evidence or experience. For that which we have not yet experienced cannot become truth, unless it be through the modification of past knowledge, which composes our Faith.

Appearance often misleads; hearsay may be distant, possible knowledge; and information possibly the light of knowledge; but none are absolute knowledge until we are able to realize the reality or actuality which they would indicate.

There are none so unwise as those who close the doors of their minds with belief. For belief always rejects the admission of truth and reason. The unwise are led, but wisdom seeks to guide. It clears the path and throws the searchlight of faith to mark our way.

The foolish feign to be wise, although they are ignorant, and so would keep wisdom from approaching. For wisdom seeks the honest whose minds are discarding the old for the new and true. The unwise, like the water spider, skips on the surface of things, and becomes food for the fish that see above and below.

I have just to-day read in the paper that the Jews are about to cast their sins into the waters, this being their New Year. Such is an example of the ignorance still prevailing in an ancient religion. When will the people become wise? It would almost seem as if they will become so before their leaders and teachers, judging from the unrest among religious sects.

Such leaders move with a motive, while the honest reveal truth by guiding.

The wise are lenient with the ignorant, while the ignorant regard the uncommon wise with suspicion and dread. Socrates and many another wise man, thus lost their lives at the hands of the ignorant.

The ignorant are selfish, little realizing that selfishness is self-eating-self.

To deem yourself wise in things unknown is to be simple. For the wise know that the things they now see contain mystery, which they seek to fathom, but do not worship. For that which we master becomes a true servant, when the master is a servant to others through truth and love.

The unwise rely for knowledge alone in what they find in books or the heads of others; but the wise, while consulting books, weigh and consider and use their own judgment.

The unwise say, "I believe," but the wise say, "It is said," "I don't know," or for such a reason, "It is or is not."

Nothing is so indicative of wisdom and culture as an open, unbiased mind, but those who merely believe are the greatest skeptics when truths are advanced which are contrary to their pet beliefs.

Vestment, uniform, appearance and suggestion sway the unwise, but the wise see beneath the surface and are not misled.

Ignorance on the street is food for the knave, but ignorance in high places is a snare for the simple and innocent and an impediment to progress.

You can make an honest man understand his own ignorance; but the bigoted must fall over their own before they find it an obstacle.

Pride, conceit, duplicity, selfishness and kindred qualities are born of and live in ignorance.

Ignorance is seen on the surface, but wisdom lives in the deep, and appears on the surface only for others, which is its chief thought. For its armor is reason, its light is faith, its tools are truth, and its dispensary is love, found only in giving without thought of self.

The chief business of the parasite is to keep the people ignorant that he may tower above them; but the honest love to see others progress, though they themselves may be needy, and are not above but abide in the level where they can do the most good.

I may in the course of my words appear to be severe, but my intention has always been to be kind, having sought only the welfare of others. But the blandishments of sophistry still affect millions of the simple or thoughtless, and few have the courage to speak out the truth, which is found in honesty, love and honor. For these, and these only, we now need to have preached from our pulpits to help make us all honest, loving and wise. But we must cease to reverence or worship the mysterious and discard mere belief as relics of ancient days and unfitted for the reasoning or rational minds of an enlightened age; and in doing so let us ever remember and cultivate.

THE LOVING SMILE.

Picture, if you will, life without a true smile, and what have you? Life would then be hardly worth living, as it would be without one of its chief

consolations. And yet, while the same is true, how few of us truly know and realize the virtue, strength and great beauty of a true and loving smile. It is the joy and music of our lives. Its notes are struck, its stings vibrate, and its voice of music sweetly sings and keeps time to the loving hand of truth, the choirmaster of our being, whom we all in a measure know, while few really realize its vital importance.

Would that we could all know and realize the sweet, loving, guiding and comforting voice of truth, the strength and joy of all the truly honest. There are many who think that great virtue exists in tears, sorrow and lamentation. But why continue in such sorry plight when it is truer that there is greater virtue to be found in smiling. Why spoil our joy of living with sorrows loud, or supplications which are weakening, just to please our selfish thoughts?

It is no doubt true that the chief glory of "men" is found in the desire to rule, sway or govern, and we (the masses) in our simplicity, cannot understand why they wish to dominate. Probably we are all too busy (and therefore blind) with our own miserable little circle and environments to see beyond its borders, or to see the drones which rob our hives for honey which we ourselves *produce*. We are, in fact, simply drugged with the fallacious and false thoughts of suggestion and sophistry, concealed by "saintly" smiles, music and song.

Would that our palaces of mourning could be converted into houses of true and loving smiles. What a world of sunshine this would be for you and all. For the smile is the atmosphere of "heaven," but hatred or anger is of "hell," and born of our

own ignorance.

We often laugh at and ridicule others in worship, little realizing that we ourselves are equally foolish to those who have risen above our plane of life, through the true realization of the truth of why we so humiliate ourselves. Truth always smiles; it spends no time in tears or lamentation, and has therefore no room for selfishness. Its mission is to give, uplift, guide and wipe away all tears. It flaunts not about on stilts, but walks the straight and simple pathway in modest assurance. It serves alike the pauper, prince or king, and regards them all as equal. It lifts up the fallen and pulls down the presuptuous.

Oh, that our forefathers could have only worn a loving smile as they challenged one another's pet thoughts and beliefs—what untold sorrow, misery and bloodshed would have been prevented! And if that was so in ancient days, how much truer iş it in this advanced state of civilization. Why not allow our fallacious thoughts or false beliefs, founded on mere hearsay, to be destroyed? For without this spirit of toleration and readiness of conviction, the long-talked-of era of the Brotherhood of man will be but a dream and vision of the imagination. If we cannot smile and agree to differ in our thoughts, there must always be, as in the past and present, nothing but continual strife, misery and sorrow, as we cross our thoughts or convictions with those of others. Such, I regret to say, is the failing of all religious leaders, who dogmatize and declare others, who happen not to be of their way of thinking, to be false. Wherever, also, we find religion, we also find reason and true faith being crushed and repudi-

ated in favor of the works of myths and fables of the dead prophets and others who proclaimed themselves as "divinely" inspired with a message for mankind, and who were really only fanatics and impostors when proclaiming themselves to be far above the people.

Truth and love ever smile; but ignorance dwells in untruth and is disturbed when brought in contact with them. Therefore, the professing "saints" who are, after all, only hypocrites, are being gradually found out for what they are by all rational people in every country. Let us, therefore, demand proof and not be content with the sophistical quotations from dead authorities, the usual method of those who pose as teachers of "religious truth."

Surely there can be nothing more false and unmanly than for one clothed in authority, position, or possessing a glib and oily tongue, than to bewilder, mislead and apparently convince the simple and illiterate to their way of thinking. It is taking advantage of their position, and is therefore doubly dishonest.

You may ask, "Are they all guilty of sophistry?" There are, no doubt, many who intend well. But granting the good intention, how much of truth or common sense can be derived from their parables and fables? The fact remains that those people are uttering things of which they have not the slightest foundation, and which are consequently devoid of truth.

Moreover, they are but makeshifts as regards their influence on our lives. For of 168 hours of the week, people give them but one or two, and are then mostly pleased when that short ordeal is over.

And why? Because all the honest love truth, and soon weary of sophistry or assertions that others cannot prove, and which are therefore neither true or rational. How, for example, is it possible for us to cultivate a true smile if we are to be continually reminded of the grave from whence no traveler has yet returned? Why not rather enlarge on the life we now hold by constantly thinking of our true and known joys, found in truth, love and honor, and forget the inevitable? For if it can possibly hold anything in common for us, those who leave most joys behind through the true and kindly smile will surely be those whose reward "there" will be the greater. And as to those who go through life in worship and prostration, of what use or help to others can such be? Do they not rather mar the joys of others and hinder a rational development of character?

Is not the smiling, beaming face the warm and soothing sunlight of all our joys in life? Why, then, allow ourselves through the selfishness of mourning or worship to destroy that pearl of great price, a true smile?

Nor is such expected of you by any just or loving ruler, for to expect or accept such of another can only be the work of imposition or tyranny. Such behavior or conduct can only emanate from discontent, and is kept aflame by those who cannot see or who wish to keep you simple and ignorant for their own ends and self glorification, being but clay in the hands of the potter. Do not fancy that I desire to anger any of these persons, for such is not my desire. I know full well that there are millions who see eye to eye with me in what I herein say, but who,

from lack of courage, interest or initiative, fear to "speak" the truth, perhaps, from the influence of clerical authority. These men I wish to help, as well as others, to the best of my ability in "speaking" the truth. The atmosphere is warm with just what I am saying, for I can see it, feel it everywhere, for it is in the hearts and minds of millions, for whom I would venture to speak. We are all too prone to imagine that a fine coat or a little education is the garb or sustenance of honesty, when the fact is that such are daily used as cloaks for gross imposition and duplicity. Did you ever, when in court, notice how strong and stalwart business men, when in the witness box, show fear or nervousness when addressed by the judge or lawyer? And what think you is the cause? In the first place, the judge and lawyers are familiar with their position, and are thus easy and fearless in their work, while, on the other hand, the witness is unfamiliar with the conditions, and erroneously regards the court and officers as much above them, and hence their humility. Those conditions are, consciously or unconsciously, used by those who through position or authority regard themselves as above us. And so we cower and submit to their high hand of dictation, and not having bothered ourselves with an honest and unbiased investigation of the material they use with which to build their influence over the simple and illiterate, we ourselves become shorn of words to express our inmost feelings, and keep silent, or perchance drift also with the tide of habitual inclination or blind conventionality.

Let out your shaft of light, but do it with a kindly spirit, and wherever you find it disturbing to others,

give it in small measures, while all the while smiling. Don't fight or wrangle with another who cannot yet see eye to eye with you, for you must remember that you yourself were once ignorant of the truth you now possess. But do not merely fancy you have a truth, but prove it first by casting it abroad, that it may be stripped of all alloy or destroyed as being false. For he who fears to have his thoughts challenged is untrue to himself, as well as others, and retards his mental progress. If our religious orders were to adopt this plan, we would then have reason to know them to be honest, but instead, they declare that "the book, we must not depart from," the writers of which are long since dead and cannot be questioned.

Therefore, to show annoyance and refuse to permit your thoughts or assertions to be challenged is only proof that they are not worthy of honest investigation. For truth fears nothing, being immovable and unchangeable, and is, therefore, always smiling with the outstretched hand of welcome, and so can never be disturbed.

"To laugh and grow fat" is a good saying; but to "Smile and grow wise" is a better, for fat is heavy, but wisdom has power to enlighten our path and make our burdens easy.

To possess a belief or even truth and fanatically place ourselves in a position to waste or sacrifice our life of usefulness in upholding it is but false pagan heroism. To live and alter your method of dispensing is the way of the new and truer hero.

The true smile wards off trouble, makes light our burdens, alleviates sorrow, helps the sick, lifts up the forlorn, subdues hatred, and converts our

enemies to friends. It makes ignorance feel foolish, bigotry look small, and conceit or presumption appear ashamed and of no account.

Laughter makes sweet our thoughts, makes light our heart, and is light and solace to others. A smile and laugh, with common sense, is always much sought after, for it chases away trouble, subdues a frown, makes anger look foolish, and finds us wisdom.

Our food and our acts we consider with great care, but our thoughts, though often mildewed and musty with age, we fear to let the sunlight of truth bleach off their tainted color.

It is a good thing to know how to gather, but it is better to know how to truly give, for to give you must also gather, and therefore have the two in one. But to know not how to give, you cannot truly gather. In giving you are taught how to truly gather, for it is but the foolish who judge not of their giving.

He who cannot withstand true or even unjust condemnation or chastisement fears his faults will be exposed, and is therefore not yet honest with himself and so untrue to others. For that which is dishonest anywhere is also so everywhere.

To force, through suggestion, others to their knees and with the loud voice of seeming authority proclaim yourself a prophet or high priest is the work of imposition. When the light of reason dawns, truth and true love will do the ruling, for they go hand in hand, and are the watchwords of the honest, while ignorance and imposition seek to keep the simple in the bondage of false beliefs.

The religion that cannot bury sorrow, crush

hatred and elevate the people is but a mental death-trap and useless to humanity.

He who cannot smile while his pet thoughts or beliefs are undergoing reformation would be wise to quickly change his religion, for it is evident that the same must be false, or otherwise he would not feel disturbed.

He is wise also who can rejoice to see his thoughts most roughly handled, for he knows that if they be true as agreeing with reality they will stand unmoved, and if untrue, he will be glad to have it so revealed. Hence, his smile and freedom from anxiety and peace of mind. The true smile is the atmosphere of love, which is born of truth, while anger, hatred and sorrow are born of selfishness and weakness, retards love and prevents the acquisition of truth and knowledge.

Would that we could all acquire the wisdom and virtue of a smile in our time of trouble. What burdens it would lift and light our homes and lives with kindness.

A mournful or a selfish face is a damper to all kindness and all cheerfulness.

The wise grow and smile through chastisement, whilst ignorance becomes enraged.

The child exhibits love's truest and sweetest smile, as its daddy, long absent, welcomes it, for then its whole being seems to beam with love. Would that we all could so feel for one another, for we would then with joy play marbles with our cherished and seemingly "sacred" thoughts.

Is there or can there be such a thing as a "sacred" thought? What do we mean by the term? Do we mean that there are thoughts which we should lock

away from others, and so become ourselves selfish in their keeping? Is it possible that a truly honest and just person can hold a thought which he is not willing to make common property, more especially if such contain virtue? If not, then what must we regard as being "sacred"?

When we think and probe the matter thoroughly, we are through reason compelled to admit that all "sacred" thoughts are composed wholly of mere sound or letters from which the words are formed. For what is known as sacred is regarded so through selfishness, and may also appear but foolishness to others. Hence all good is common property, as such is what we make it through our just endeavors. Vice is found not far away from virtue, for only with the one can we judge the other.

There are many smiles. The subtle smile, the sarcastic smile, and the conceited smile; but the true and loving smile is never near corruption, for it is the bud and flower of all our joyful giving without a thought of self.

If you be wise you'll smile as another endeavors to destroy some pagan thought secured from books or pulpit, and if he succeed in his efforts, then you should rejoice, for false thoughts weigh heavy and can only pull you down to greater ignorance. But if your thoughts are still upheld by truth, then may you smile. Hence, you see, the plan pays well both ways. Only through comparison can you prove your thoughts to be true or false. The atheist may and can be the noblest of all characters, and perchance, at last be right. So, too, the agnostic, for he assumes not, but says: "I do not know," and therefore is he honest. But the mere believer says,

"There is, I know," and then becomes often disturbed at such questions as "How so?" "Why?" "Where?" etc., and then refers to the pages of some book.

Many of us are too prone to regard those differing from us as children of evil, when in truth we are often the chief culprits ourselves, through lack of truth to correct the others. Why do we behave like this? It is because we have allowed others, as ignorant as ourselves of truth, to instill into our minds a thought without a proof, apart from hearsay or appearance. Let us listen quietly and calmly to others, that we may grow in knowledge, and not allow ourselves to be ruled by others. "Let us also retain our systems of ethics, but discard the mysterious or false. For such are the elements that keep us bigoted and biased, and hence ignorant and untruthful. There is but one true element through which we truly progress, and that is morals, found in our judging of right and wrong, and has no connection with religion. For there are many around you who emphatically declare that they have nothing whatever to do with religion, and who are yet among the best of citizens and lovers of humanity. Ethics deal only with the conduct of life, while religion is generally allied to the mysterious, the worship of which is but foolishness.

When we are called upon to prostrate ourselves, the command will not come second-hand nor through the vain imaginings of fable and hearsay, supposed to be of "divine" inspiration. But that which is true, just and kind cannot use such methods to control or sway the simple and illiterate, the working bees of the community who are robbed by

the selfish and designing. There is now a movement—Socialism—which seeks to control the drones within the human hive, and its aims are directed towards the brotherhood of man.

The age of despots is passing, for the powers of loving truth and justice, aided by a true smile, are slowly but surely gaining ground among men.

Sorrow is confusing, distressing and weakening; but laughter is king over all the earth. For with a smile there is no sorrow nor selfish discontent and life is worth the living regardless of our coat or purse. There cannot be a truth to you until you yourself have truly proved it thorugh experience past or present. For information, which comes near to the truth at times, can only be at best the light of truth or knowledge. For although every man on earth were to tell you that the moon was made of green cheese, the same could not become a truth to you, even though you were to believe it. And as we have seen in previous chapters, belief can only be ignorance of the true situation. For to regard thoughts as truth without ourselves truly experiencing the reality of them is to close all the avenues through which all our higher characteristics must pass before they become of any real and lasting value to us. Smile, therefore, and be glad, even although others seek to destroy your thoughts.

The great mind may say "such and such appears to me to be so, but what is your opinion?" But the small, narrow and bigoted mind says, "It is so, because Mr. So-and-So says so," and they become but mental slaves to their beliefs. It is true that they are not entirely to blame themselves, having been brought up and nurtured in the atmosphere of

bigotry or belief, and hence are taught to regard mere beliefs as truths. Who, then, is to blame?

It should be remembered, also, that "saints" do not always wear fine garments, or dwell in castles or palaces. For such are often our chief criminals, who know the loopholes in our laws and are able to take advantage of them. They wear solemn faces and look wise, but lack the sincere and loving smile.

Therefore keep smiling in both bad fortune and trouble. Laughter, like all other joys or virtue, is but an acquisition of habit gained by looking always at the bright and good side of things. For as we look at things, so they appear, bright or dark.

And if we observe the nature of the thoughts which we or others smile or laugh at, so shall we reveal our character. As to sorrow, worship or mourning, they are but impediments to the true enjoyment of life, preventing us from seeing the silver linings in the clouds. Let us, therefore, cultivate the habit of smiling and the music of true laughter.

No doubt it may be hard for many who are naturally pessimistic to acquire this habit of cheerfulness, but with constant practice will come the disposition. And it is also to a great extent the lack of the spirit of joy in religion that tends so much to encourage grave and gloomy thoughts, which are so contrary to the real intent and happiness of life.

He who weeps with us in our sorrows is but poor consolation, but he who smiles and comforts us helps to lift us up from despondence. He it is who is the real consoler and the true friend who seeks to convert our temporary weakness into strength.

Someone has said that "All kind acts find their

root in sorrow." If that is so, "let us all mourn, that we may be comforted," for such is the tendency of the teachings of many who would guide us through the mazes of life.

We may lose a loved one, and there will gather together many friends in silent and helpless sorrow, or perhaps in lamentation, with the effect of only increasing our feelings of distress. But the one with the truest sympathy is he or she who brings the smile of comfort and the words of consolation. For it is the truest wisdom and philosophy to disperse the clouds of despondency with the ready smile and the cheerful word.

Selfishness mourns, whilst love is ever giving to help and comfort others, for it takes the wind out of the sails of sorrow and sets free the bark of kindness.

Someone will declare, "My life was changed through sorrow at the loss of—some friend," and thereby admits that he might have been better or more kind before it was too late.

It is sad, yet true, that in our ignorance or thoughtlessness we often do not realize or appreciate the true friends and things in life until we find them departing from us.

Now, therefore, is the time to do a kindness to those we still have with us; and by just keep smiling we can help and console. Those with the mournful countenance are seldom missed.

Love in smiling through a plain and homely face has a charm which far surpasses mere beauty. For beauty is often but on the surface; whilst love permeates the very being and radiates through the

kindly motive of expression, pure desire and act of truly giving.

A mother's acts towards her child are always those of love, pure in motive, but sometimes mistaken in their results, and are, therefore, not always those of true love. We often do some loving act to or for another, with the best intentions and just to please, forgetting to consider its probable result, and may thus unconsciously do injury instead of help. Love gives to help and sustain, and not merely to please. For it is as much an act of love to withhold as to give when the effect is not for the good or welfare of others.

When our political leaders truly realize the power of true love, they will endeavor to enlighten the people, from an unbiased, impartial and non-party standpoint, of the true qualifications, character and motives of those who present themselves for election. For wherever you find cliques or parties pulling in different directions, you will generally also find them actuated by self-interest and selfishness, with the true interests of the people not always in their hearts. For love and the welfare of the people should be the mission of every administration, irrespective of party interests, and many are the evils in life that are within the power of governments to remove if they only possessed the pure intentions.

Remove the weeds and thistles from the garden and the flowers and fruit will more freely grow. Good fruit cannot well thrive without good soil and atmosphere. For "that which bringeth not forth good fruit" should be removed.

Those who never smile are often engrossed in self-interest or selfishness, but he who has the true

ready smile for others has their interest and welfare at heart. To live in the true spirit of a smile is to live in the warm sunlight of love, and be loved by all.

To be able to smile when you may feel hurt or offended is acquired, but becomes instinctive of the wise.

Love smiles, but ignorance frowns. The wise may feel annoyed, but still smiles, but the unwise give way to their passions. To keep smiling therefore, is to disarm anger and frustrate evil intentions.

After all, one of the greatest consolations of life is the true smile. It helps to make pleasant life's journey, cheering us on the way and diffusing comfort and joy to others. It opens to us the hearts of others, making us mutually helpful and forbearing. It is a light at the door of wisdom, at which Faith and Reason stand to welcome Truth and Knowledge.

Someone has said that "tears hinder sorrow from becoming despair and madness." But why shed tears when consolation and comfort can be found in looking at the bright side of things with a smiling face? Or if you feel gloomy, disturbed and despondent, throw your hat in the air, whistle a tune or dance, if you like, till you are tired. In a few minutes, perhaps, you will laugh at your own folly and realize the uselessness of dwelling on your own trouble or sorrow, and seek to make the best of things. And the habit, through practice, will become instinctive.

To illustrate the true and loving smile, allow me to relate a recent experience of the writer.

The incident may appear simple, but it embodies the truth of the philosophy indicated. Having returned from lunch to my place of business, I was approached by a foreman, who said, "Jack, the engineer is very sick and declares he cannot run the engine many minutes longer." "Where is the superintendent?" I asked. "He has gone to lunch," I was told. The superintendent being the only other man in the factory who understood the working of the engine and boiler, I proceeded to find the engineer, whom I found all "doubled up" and looking certainly very pale and miserable. Approaching him with a smile and in cheery words, I asked him, "What is the trouble, Jack?" In a most doleful tone of voice he replied, "I have been suffering for days with a bad stomach, and it has now completely overcome me."

"Don't you think," I said, "you could hold out until the superintendent's return?" "No," he despairingly said, "I don't think I can, for I can scarcely lift the shovel." "Brace up a little then," I said, "and come into the engine room and direct me what to do until the superintendent returns." He accordingly pulled himself together.

"So your stomach is out of order?" I said. "But what has your stomach got to do with your nerve and your head? Don't you think now that, in spite of your stomach, you could smile for a moment?" He responded with a smile, and I continued my encouraging tactics. "Now, how long, Jack, do you think you could keep smiling while your poor stomach is getting back into working order? Don't you see that with a cheerful will you can greatly help to relieve your trouble? For you know the

mind has not only a great influence in enabling us to endure much physical pain, but also aids in curing our ills." After these few words he looked at me with a new light in his eyes. "You are right, my boy," he exclaimed, and in a few minutes went about his duties, having realized, I think, the truest of all philosophies; the solace of the brave smile and the cheerful mind.

At the close of the day's work he came to me and said, "My boy, I would like to tell you something. From all the books I have ever read, or the words I have heard spoken, I don't think I have received so much comfort as from the invigorating thought conveyed in those few words of yours to-day. For had you approached me instead with the usual empty words of sympathy, I suppose I should have been still sick and miserable."

This simple and true occurrence I now use to illustrate the law which underlies all the so-called "faith cures," "mental healing," "divine healing," and the like, all of which are based on the influence or suggestion of the mind over potentialities, such as sorrow, pain, etc., as well as the subjection of the reasoning faculty to mental delusions. For the influence may be of a two-fold character—curative or delusive. But for the present I am referring to its consoling and healing power.

Permit me to give another illustration. The other day I met an acquaintance, who seemed to have a heavy load of worry and perplexity. His face was gloomy and his words were slow and solemn, as he related to me the expected death of a loved one, and thus naturally expected of me much sympathy, which I gave him to the following effect:

"To me such is anything but good news; but tell me, do you think that your worrying, and making yourself and others about you miserable, can possibly aid in the cure or comfort of your good wife? Or do you not think that were you to enter the sick room with a loving, cheerful smile, it might help towards the peace of mind if not the cure of your wife? For after all, the cheerful countenance sheds a ray of sunshine over the sick room and gently assists us in all our efforts to alleviate and cure the illness. And is it not a fact that as a rule we only increase our sorrow, trouble and pain by harboring despondent thoughts?"

The tenor of these words seemed to surprise my friend, but when I asked him if he would now try and smile in the face of all his trouble, he acknowledged my kind intentions and heartily shook my hand. Meeting him shortly afterwards in a bright and cheerful state of mind, he referred to my advice, saying that he now fully realized the truth and wisdom of my words.

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It is, unfortunately, a habit or weakness with many of us in time of sickness and trouble to be despondent, gloomy in the sick chamber, and mournful in our outward behavior, instead of bearing ourselves with brave cheerfulness.

Is it not far better, and the truest philosophy in life to learn to face the worst with courage? By looking at the bright side of things, troubles are seen in their true proportion, and when at their worst often begin to mend. It is surely true that blessed are they who mourn not, for they shall gain strength and be enabled to help those who are weak

and dejected. But those who mourn merely to be comforted, weaken their own powers of consolation, and disturb the peace and comfort of others around them. We are all too wont to look for sympathy, which often only aggravates our vain sorrow and regret.

The cultivation, also, of cheerfulness and evenness of temper in the discussion of opposite views with others is the wisest philosophy, especially when misunderstandings arise. And I may take this opportunity of expressing my hope that whatever I have written in the foregoing pages may disturb no reader's peace of mind. They have been composed with the sincere desire of helping and guiding those who are seeking new light on the subjects treated. Many generally accepted ideas I may have controverted, but I have also endeavored to replace them with thoughts which appear to me truer and more applicable to the present conditions of life.

It is not denied that we can learn much from the teaching of the past, but there is also many traditional concepts of ethics which are opposed to modern advanced thought and the realization of truth according to reason. Such it has been my endeavor to elucidate in previous chapters.

We can all help each other in the pursuit of knowledge by discussion, inquiry and the interchange of ideas; and if at the same time we cultivate a disposition of brave cheerfulness and serenity of temper, we shall realize the trust philosophy of life.

JUST A WORD.

To the Preacher:

Herein I have, as you will probably think, been very severe upon your methods of influencing, swaying and controlling the minds of the multitude in the exercise of your vocation. I have endeavored to show that subjection to mere belief, as founded upon myth and tradition, only tends to cripple the reasoning powers of your followers; that it does not help in intellectual growth and progress, and that it does not promote true moral development. And I have contended that all virtue can only emanate from truth and nothing but the truth, and is not to be found in creeds or dogmas which have no foundation in fact. Nor does truth require any bolstering up by the props of altars, vestments, trappings, nor yet the subtle influence of mysticism.

Many of you, I know, sincerely believe that what you preach is the truth. But I venture to think that in the foregoing pages I have demonstrated the fallacies of your teaching, in as far as mere belief is concerned, and that such religion cannot be a true guide to moral or intellectual growth, nor a true help in the conduct of life.

It is, of course, a very simple and easy matter for you, in your position and with your education, to win over to your irrational way of thinking those who have not been so fortunate as to receive an honest education along the lines of religious belief, or who have not yet developed their reasoning fac-

ulties. Nor can they put to you the honest questions as to the truth of your assertions, or when they do you delude them with sophistry or evade them with the formula of "Believe, and doubt not."

You cannot deny, for all authoritative history proves it, that religion of some creed or another has been the direct and indirect cause of many prolonged and bitter wars, crusades, persecutions and martyrdoms, and has in consequence been a stumbling block to the welfare and progress of humanity. Even at the present time it is one of the chief disturbing causes in the revolutions and unrest of several countries in Europe. It is also one of the disquieting elements in our social structure, and the cause of much unnecessary discontent, differences and strife in family life. And why is this? It is because when "believers" are questioned by honest doubters and searchers after truth, the believers, having no rational explanation or proof to give as to their creed, become disturbed and offended, and in turn denounce the doubter for his attitude of nonconformity. You, as teachers and leaders, are responsible for this spirit of intolerance, for why should inquiry and investigation into the truth of dogmas and creeds be suppressed?

You may acknowledge that religion has been the cause of many wars, but you may advance the plea that "it is also true that religion has been the one great factor in the moral elevation of mankind." But I cannot admit that sweeping statement, for the contrary is the case, it having no connection with ethics, being but mysticism. There have been other factors, together with morals, at work in the development of man's moral and intellectual progress,

such as education, science, literature, art, social and state improvement schemes, all founded on truth and not the mere "belief," which is the alpha and omega of religion, as found in the worship of the unknowable or the mysterious.

To every reasonable or rational mind I have, I hope, demonstrated beyond question that truth, the highest of all known attributes, *cannot be worshipped*. Therefore, to persuade or induce others to worship what is founded on myth and tradition as being "divine truth" is wrong from a moral point of view and irrational from an intellectual standpoint; hence it must follow that the element of religion, being other than morals, must have a contra effect.

In my previous chapters I have sought to show that truth, love, honesty and honor, as emanating from faith, perception and reason, are the only factors which help in the developmtnt of true morality. Therefore, he who teaches any creed or dogma which tends to destroy the reasoning faculty prevents others from acquiring these other precious attributes.

And yet the blind belief of all the different religious sects is based on the abnegation of the reason of worshippers. History has proved it in by-gone days, and it still characterizes the religions of today. It has been always an impediment to the acquisition of truth, knowledge, wisdom and every attribute which contributes to moral and intellectual progress of mankind.

The Greeks at the time of Aristotle, Plato, Socrates and others, reached the highest degree of intellectual and physical development known in his-

tory. It was because, besides exercising their bodies, they cultivated their reasoning faculties and interchanged ideas and thoughts with those of diverse opinions and convictions. And why did they degenerate? Chiefly through the baneful influence of religious fanaticism, which, through the medium of priests, gradually acquired domination over the minds of the people. The study of philosophy and science and the search for truth was discouraged, and those who persevered in such were persecuted and sometimes massacred. And so on during the most religious periods, war, persecution and martyrdom were the inevitable outcome of bigotry and intolerance. Would any just and loving "god" tolerate such a reign of terror?

It was during just such a period of intolerance that one of the world's greatest and wisest men, Socrates, was condemned to drink the deadly cup. Simply because he endeavored to inculcate a love for truth and the cultivation of virtue among the ignorant and degraded people of Greece. And so down the ages have other men suffered and died for truth, as contained in true philosophy and science. No doubt were it not for the civil laws, and the growth of tolerance, religious fanaticism would be still flourishing. Freedom of speech and the liberty of the press have done much to encourage and promote the exercise of reason.

Truth through reason is gradually being recognized as the indispensable foundation of social life, whilst the creeds and dogmas of belief are being exposed to searching criticism.

"Let the dead bury their dead," for religious belief is a dying cause. Let, however, the living truth

grow and radiate, that we may all exercise our reasoning faculties in moral questions just as much as we do in our private or business affairs.

It requires, no doubt, courage and perseverance to get thoroughly rid of any ingrained habit; and so it is with belief. It may mean the wrenching away of cherished ideas, the jeopardizing of position, the loss of so-called friends, or other sacrifices, but there are compensations. Once the mind is free from the incubus of religious belief the reason begins to assert itself; there is the constant desire to realize truth in all the relations of life, and it is earnestly applied to the acquisition of knowledge, not for our own benefit alone, but for the welfare of others.

And it is you, whom I now address, who are responsible for the ignorance or the apathy of the millions who profess "belief." I can appreciate the circumstances of your position, the requirements of your vocation, the force of hereditary convictions and the tyranny of established and generally accepted dogma. But take the man at the corner of the street, who is pouring out his whole "soul" in the words of others, and who is exhorting his hearers to "believe and doubt not." This street preacher, no doubt sincere in his mission, is more to be excused than those who preach in high places, in pulpits and on platforms. For he has not been so fortunate in receiving the university or college education which you probably did, or at any rate he is not surrounded by the attraction of a finely built church, with a beautiful organ, a splendid choir and pews of well-dressed, admiring or listening occupiers.

Now, you all use the name of "God," as if you knew the personality and will of such a being, and if you are questioned as to your knowledge, you either resent the inquiry or by sophistical and fallacious explanation show that it is all a matter of mere belief, founded on mysticism. And not knowing yourself the truth of your creed or dogma, you yet pose as a true teacher of morals, which as you, more than your congregation, should know, can only be established on truth. Whether consciously or unwittingly you teach a doctrine which is founded on hearsay, myth or tradition, and proclaim it to your audience to be truth; instead of the bread of truth you give them the store of belief.

A "God" who was loving and just would surely require no arts of sophistry, chicanery or mysticism to reveal himself, but would let the whole world know the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Mysticism, especially, is just a relic of the pagan system of worship; without mystery or imposition, the old religions of the past would not have existed a year.

Many of you, I freely admit, are most conscientious in your work to uplift the fallen, help the weak, alleviate sorrow and make light the burdens of life. And so have been atheists of the present time and pagan worshippers of sticks and stones in ancient days. But it is the system of blind, unreasoning belief that I have sought in previous chapters to condemn and expose. When you depart from the elucidation of morality and seek to deal in religious mysteries, "miracles," and what Spencer calls the "Unknowable," you are, wittingly or unwittingly, lending yourselves to the imposition of

what you do not know to be true upon others who seek enlightenment.

Some of you there are who simply sacrifice truth and honesty in order to hold your position, sway the crowd and draw your stipend. It is suggestion, sophistry and a skilful use of mysticism which attracts and keeps the simple and poorly educated in subjection to creeds and dogmas.

Then there are many of you who "believe" in both the "divine inspiration" and literal truth of every word in "The Book," when, as you must know, there are many things propounded therein which are contrary to morality, and that the greater portion of the book is open to various interpretations. And when some more enlightened, unbiased and truth-seeking member of your profession attempts any reasonable and "higher" criticism of certain parts of the book, he is at once treated as an Ishmael, if not a pariah, by the leaders of the sects or denominations. Some of you teach, "Resist not evil" (Matthew, v., 39), while you do your utmost always to resist it, and "Love your neighbors," and yet are not very friendly with those living a few doors away from you. Then there is that terrible threat that "He that believeth not in me shall be in danger of the judgment and hell-fire," etc., and there are other numerous passages which no just and loving man, much less a "God," would endeavor to impose upon humanity as a moral guide in life.

It is sad but true that the spirit of "Christianity," as taught from the pulpit and the book, is, to put it mildly, not reasonable, tolerant or broad-minded. Here is an illustration of what is an every-day occurrence with religious believers who "gather to-

gether" under your wing, and who receive their ideas of tolerance and mutual consideration in matters of opinion from members of your cloth:

"Mother, how is it possible for me to 'believe' a horse to be a fly? or that one man killed thousands with the jawbone of an ass?" etc., etc.?

"I don't want you to think a horse to be a fly, but I must insist that you respect and believe your Bible, and look up to your minister."

"But mother, if I should find many most absurd and glaring untruths in that book, and——"

"I dare you to make that statement again, for it is not true. You will break my heart if you continue in your question of this sacred book and the divine men who teach it."

"But mother, have you any fault to find with me in all my acts of loving kindness towards you and all I come in contact with?"

"I am not finding any fault with you, but I must insist that you respect the preacher and never question the Bible."

"Will it not stand honest investigation?"

"I dare you to ask questions, for such is above question, and if you so continue you will have to leave the house, or I will. For you break my heart through your questioning of this book."

"I will get the book, mother, and if I may, will ask you a few questions from it, or show you a few things it teaches."

"Dare you, my boy. I will not listen to you."

The above is sufficient as an illustration of the influence of your system of asking others to "believe" without revealing the truth and falsity of "the Book." You have taught people to merely be-

lieve that every word and thought therein is of "divine origin," and that they must ask no questions, and you have thereby in many cases shattered their faith in the loved ones about them and sown the seeds of dissension

You, who have doubtless had a high class college education, must surely know that it is only through honest inquiry that truth can be reached. I am but a "poor" student of moral philosophy, but I know at least that truth can only be realized through our own reason and perception.

In making these few parting remarks to you as ministers of the "gospel," I have been actuated by nothing but a sincere desire to induce you to reflect upon your attitude on this question towards those who seek substantial truth and not visionary belief. The wisest of us are open to be criticised, and you are not exempt from this salutary principle. There is abundant scope for your intellectual and moral abilities in teaching people plain and pure ethics, without resort to myth, tradition, mysticism or the sophistry necessary to bolster up mere religious belief.

Whether my poor but honest endeavors to show you the light in which your methods of Biblical teaching is regarded by millions of non-believers will have any effect in persuading you to "mend your ways," I know not, but if you would be honest to others you will not dismiss from your minds these views without serious consideration. Even the views of one's personal enemy should receive patient and honest attention. For honesty is, in a measure, truth, and should be the guiding principle in religion as in our non-sectarian business, private

or public. And where should we look for it, if not from teachers of ethics and accredited guides to the true conduct of life?

You owe a duty not only to believers, but to non-believers, and that is, to face the truth and justify your position according to the common sense and reason of humanity. What is unknowable should be dismissed from your own mind and not imposed upon those who are too trustful, simple or indifferent to challenge your doctrines, or who are silenced by dogmatic assertions.

In conclusion I only hope that the foregoing straight and candid words may be read in the spirit they are intended, which is in kindness to yourselves and sympathy with those who are in search of truth.

JUST A WORD.

To my Critics:

You will, no doubt, find much room for discussion in "A Dawn of a New Era," and possibly, in your opinion, opportunities also for censure, which, to be frank with you, I do not shun, but rather court. For I feel convinced that just criticism can only help the cause I have at heart, and may aid me in a fuller exposition or modification of the principles which I have endeavored to explain to my readers. I am well aware, of course, that millions of others have already observed or experienced the truth of the thoughts herein expressed, but who, from perhaps lack of ability to adequately express themselves, or from ingrained habit and indifference, have chosen to remain silent. Or it may be that they are under the influence and subjection of the sophistry of those whose interest it is to evade inquiry into the truth of certain dogmas or creeds. Authority, social position, vestments, trappings, and the exploitation of mysticism by glib and plausible speakers, have all had their influence in the widespread acceptation of or adherence to mere "belief."

These various aspects of truth versus belief I have endeavored to deal with in an honest and unbiased spirit. I have also drawn largely upon personal observation and experience, and with all due respect to the great or near great masters of religions and philosophical thought, and whatever "truth" they may have revealed, I have not based my con-

clusions on their works. I have, in fact, written the whole book from an independent and original standpoint, having regard to the progress of human thought and the conditions of the present time. But I seek no followers, my only desire being that what new truth I may have brought to light may be rightly understood, weighed and considered by others, and that it may be a help and guide to them in the problems of life. I have sought to expose the fallacies of religious belief and dogma, which engender the strife and differences existing between the various sects and denominations. It is these religious creeds which breed the bigoted individuals. They refuse to listen to any inquiry into the truth of their beliefs. For instance, some time ago I had an advertisement inserted in a daily newspaper, and afterwards sent cards to a number of those who replied. The card read to this effect:

"I should be pleased to see you if you are impartial in your religious views, and thus open to deal only with the truth; otherwise it would be little use calling."

Among others I received a reply from one who called himself a "Christian," as follows:

"Referring to your advertisement and your postcard to-day, as I gather from your remarks that to be a firm believer in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, as set forth in the New Testament, is to be disqualified for the past, I can only agree with what you say, viz.: that it would be little use calling on you."

I write and ask for a man who is unbiased in his religious views, and I receive the above reply. Do you consider a man in such a frame of mind to be

open-minded and impartial? What is the inference, if it be not that he is under the influence of clerical authority or suggestion, or is afraid to discuss his views with a non-believer, who is still seeking the truth.

On another occasion I met an acquaintance, another believer, and in the course of conversation he appeared much interested in my line of philosophy, having gone so far as to ask me to give him a list of books from which he might be enlightened, but I was obliged to tell him that I could not give him the books wanted, as my work was original and based on personal observation, study and experience. Upon which I immediately noticed that my ideas fell considerably in his estimation, being not found in established authority. By this time we had exchanged cards with the purpose of calling upon each other, when he asked the question: "How does your philosophy agree with the teachings of Christ?" To which I was compelled to answer that "They differ quite considerably." He instantly replied, as if someone had struck him: "If so, I do not wish you to call upon me, nor do I care to call upon you." For a while I had thought I was talking to a broad and unbiased mind, but his last remark undeceived me.

Such has been my experience with the generality of so-called "religious believers," who will not listen to any questioning of his belief or his Bible, or who find refuge in referring you to the "authority" of the writings of by-gone religious teachers. It is this unquestioning and blind reliance on the spoken or written authority of others, who may or may not have some truth to convey, that I have endeavored

to combat in these pages; my contention being that we should all use our own reasoning faculty in seeking to arrive at the truth of any "belief."

In some of the chapters of my work I may have written what may appear somewhat harsh expressions; but such has not been with the intention of wounding the feelings of anyone. There is no reason why such vital subjects should not be discussed, either in speech or writing, in other than a friendly and considerate spirit.

As my critics, I do not ask you to spare any portion of my work where you think it desires correction, and these few words are written to explain the motive and bearing of my line of philosophy.

You may also find fault with it from a literary point of view, and its method of construction may not be to your liking. But I do not profess to be a literary man, nor an experienced author, and am, therefore, open and glad to receive your mature criticism. It is ideas of truth, as opposed to the myths and tradition of belief, that I have endeavored to the best of my ability to put before my readers, and in the simplest and clearest language.

It is possible that I may have, in the course of these pages, used some strong expressions, but they have been intended rather against the cliques and false systems of belief, than against individual members thereof. We are none of us infallible, and if I have made a slip or unwitting error in a statement, I shall be glad of correction, that I may modify, recall or enlarge upon its meaning.

If I have been obscure to others, I must admit the fault, although it has been my constant desire to be clear.

Honest criticism, especially if it be friendly, is always of benefit, but even if hostile, it serves its good purposes.

JUST A WORD.

To my readers:

I sincerely trust that after reading the contents of this book you will have gained some knowledge of the what and wherefor of truth. And should, as I hope, your views happen to coincide with mine, permit me to suggest that should you come in contact with those who, in your opinion, still preach the sophistry of belief which tends to destroy true faith, cripple reason and prevent the acquisition of truth and knowledge, that you will preserve throughout your discussion an even and serene temper, no matter what the provocation. With this object in view, I have written the following thoughts as a help and guidance for you, but not as a stumbling block to the unknowing, but for their sole benefit, and as an aid to their own realization of truth. Therefore, I beseech all who may read to *believe absolutely nothing written herein,* but to seek rather to know and truly understand the meaning and spirit of the thoughts conveyed that they may be of true service to you as well as to others.

Many are the thoughts bearing on this and kindred subjects which I have merely touched upon, and which at some future time I hope to further explain. In the meantime I would suggest the bearing in mind of the *loving smile,* for it will carry you through many a hardship or trouble with safety. This I know from experience, as by acting on this principle, every reverse that I have yet met with has

brought with it greater strength and knowledge with which to guide me in my subsequent efforts or accomplishments, and has therefore proved a blessing. For without new conditions and difficulties we cannot progress.

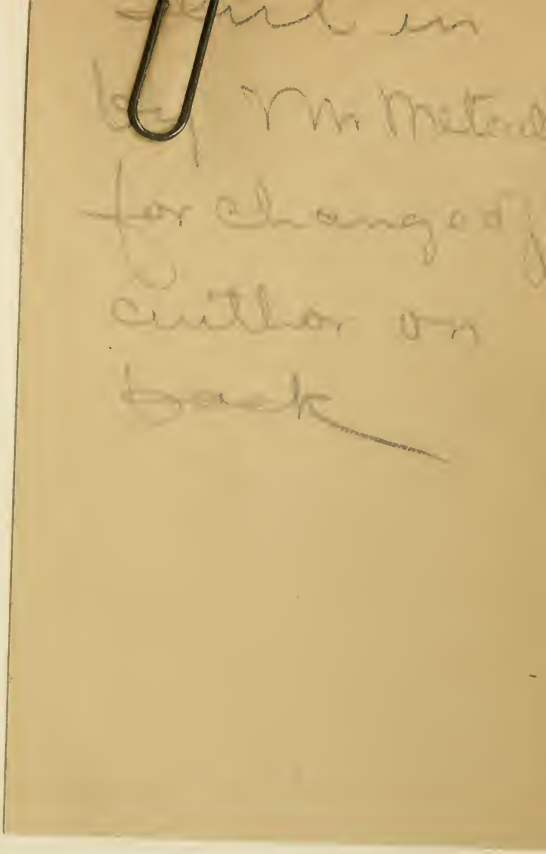
Be kind and considerate towards those whom you may seek to enlighten, and if they exhibit unrest or disturbance, quietly let the matter drop, that no ill-feeling or strife may result. Allow others the benefit of their own opinions, and do not yourself become disturbed if others seek to browbeat you because of your opinions, for you will no doubt meet many who will show this intolerance of difference with their views. Such, at least, has been my own personal experience. Especially be ever kind and lenient within your own family circle, where there may be devout believers who are now under the influence or dominance of some dogma or creed. Seek to enlighten the young, but discuss such controversial subjects with the aged only when they may express a desire to listen. For to live many years under the dominance of some unproven belief becomes such an ingrained habit that it is difficult to remove, even with the truth, and during a long life such people may never have heard your views justly expounded. Therefore, be especially kind, loving and respectful towards them. And by showing this consideration for all, your work will be a pleasure to yourself and a benefit to others. For in such a frame of mind your truth will have much greater weight, and as you so speak you will surely gather and become yourself enriched by your kindly efforts.

Further, should others ask questions which you

cannot honestly answer, do not endeavor to draw from your mere imagination, nor from the mere spoken or written words of others, in order to appear wise. Be honest with yourself and admit you do not know, even though you meet with ridicule, but proceed to gain further knowledge by kindly question, and thus show the sincerity of your intentions.

But, as already advised at the beginning of this chapter, above all things keep your temper under control. For to show less of temper is only proof that you are not yet in possession of the whole truth of your words, or that you are not equal to your opponent, who may, perchance, be speaking falsely, but is more adroit, and is schooled in wilful or unconscious sophistry. And even though he may be unwise or dishonest, apply any hard words to yourself which may want to come to the surface. For if you be wise you will find that they may be justly applied to yourself. Soft words turneth away wrath, but indiscreet words only excite ignorance.

Finally, may you grow in truth and knowledge, opposing belief, hearsay or fable wherever you may find them. For with them, or under their influence, you cannot intellectually progress through the power of your own reason, and can be but a slave to the will and words of others. It is true that they may appear kind and honest, but they are, nevertheless, dominated by the sophistry of mere belief, through hereditary influence, circumstances of position, or lack the courage, initiative or interest to reject the old and accept the new and true. Therefore, be kind and considerate to them as to others, and use your truest efforts for the betterment of humanity.



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