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NEW LIGHT
GEORGE H. SEARS



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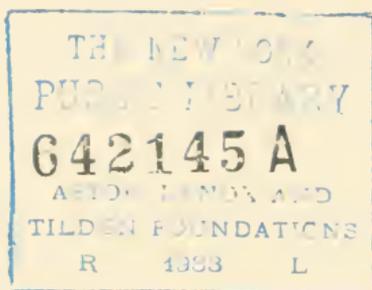
BY

GEORGE H. SEARS

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THE NEW LIGHT

He spoke wisely, who said, "We don't know how much we have to know to know how little we do know"; and we shall never know so much, that we may not have to know more, to know how wisely he spoke, who said it.

THE NEW LIGHT

AN EXPLANATION

Do not overlook this explanation. It is important. This book contains many thoughts which will be misinterpreted and misunderstood, if you do not heed this admonition.

The New Light, it must be admitted, would not be an appropriate title for this book, if it did not contain thoughts that were new, or, at least, some old ones dressed in new garments.

There are no more vitiating thoughts in the creeds of men than those which have robbed religion of its essential thought and those which have nullified, or destroyed, man's sense of personal responsibility.

When we look into the future and see the treasures that are for those who are faithful to the principles which govern the attainment of that development and growth, which shall best fit them for the reception and appreciation of these gifts, the realization of which, to the minutest detail, depends upon the character of that development and growth, how tremendously we shall be impressed with the importance of this life—a life, the significance of which has not been, even approximately appreciated—a life in which there is nothing wrong or sinful in the sense we have been taught, or have understood it to be.

We have not comprehended that every circumstance which comes into our pathway is the condition that our

development at that particular time, demands, and that the character of our progress is determined by the wisdom we display in accepting these conditions, and the use we make of them as building materials.

We cannot escape the fact that these are the building materials with which we must build, and they are all we have to build with; but the character of that structure is determined by the wisdom we display in the manner of their use. The manner of the use of these materials and the results obtained, because of the manner of their use, is the responsibility that rests alone upon you and upon you alone, and it rests upon you with a mathematical precision and a certainty which cannot, in any degree, by any possibility, be evaded or shirked.

Of the tremendous importance of this life men have had no correct, or approximately correct, conception, and nowhere does it appear in their thought or their teachings. Because of the errors in their creeds personal responsibility, as a principle in their development and growth, has been submerged, or, to a large extent, nullified or destroyed.

The error we have characterized in our chapter entitled "Thought" as that misconception of what lay so near we could not find; the gold mine within which needs but the magic touch of Faith to reveal its wealth. A faith in our own individual and personal divinity. A Faith born of a Faith in a God who makes no mistakes—has made no mistakes in providing for all the emergencies an individual life may be called upon to meet, and has left no unmapped shoals, hidden dangers, or otherwise upon which a human soul may be shipwrecked, or permitted to destroy itself.

Reveals that error in man's thought, and his creeds,

whereby he hath not observed that the Kingdom of God is within, not without, not in another, whose favor he must be compelled to seek before his divinity, by him, can be accepted.

That the individual is the tremendous fact, and that the tremendous fact with the individual is his own individuality.

That no life in the whole wide universe is more important than any other individual life. That an eternity is a long time in which to grow. That after all there is no difference, no difference except that which has to do with time.

That other destructive and vitiating error, and we have referred to it above, and which we have discussed in the second chapter of this book, upon which every so called religion which exists to-day, or has existed as far as history records, has been founded and builded: that error in men's thought whereby they have misunderstood the character of the building material, upon which their development and growth must depend; that error which we have described as man's misconception of Evil, and the Environment in which he lives, whereby their meaning and significance in his evolution, and development, have been wholly misinterpreted and misunderstood, and we know of no error by which he has been so deceived and misled.

Our observation has not revealed a false religion, and we know of no other which man has yet accepted, with all its false and misleading philosophies of life, which has not been predicated largely, if not wholly, upon a false conception of Evil, and the Environment in which man lives. Because of this misconception, not only have the laws of God been interpreted as a medley of errors, needing the intervention

of miracles and His special providences to rescue them from failure and collapse, but all that is vital and true in the teachings of Jesus have been in irreconcilable contradictions and, seemingly, inexplicable confusion involved.

He hath not observed that it is his misinterpretations which have all the confusion caused, and that there are no defects in God's plans and purposes which, by these interventions, or otherwise, need to be amended or patched.

Even the contemporaries of Jesus and His most intimate followers, by this devitalizing error were confused and misled, whereby His teachings were misinterpreted, misquoted and misunderstood.

In the last pages of our chapter entitled "Happiness," commencing on page 168 and continuing to its end, which we would ask the reader to look over, not once or twice, is the best expression we are able to put in words of the conclusions to be drawn from these errors in man's religious conceptions—Errors which have usurped the place of religion's essential thought, robbing it of its control in men's creeds, whereby they have been left without definite, or truthful, moral standards by which their ideals can be measured and fixed. That, because of these errors the world is without religion, that, which has been termed religion, is a substitute, or a counterfeit. Religion is as simple and instinctive as is eating or drinking. It is as much born with us as our foot or hand. From ancestral faults or other causes, our moral affections may be born imperfect. So, too, may our foot or hand; but in neither case is our interior nature responsible for the imperfection. Commencing on page 57 and continuing to the end of the second chapter is a statement of our answer to the

only criticism of our thought we have deemed it necessary to anticipate.

Of this fact we may be assured there is nought that stands between us and our greatest good but an error in our thought.

The struggle between Truth and Error is the contest that is ever waged, and from which, in our evolution, we emerge as each higher plane in our progress is reached.

“Man is a child in this world. Wars, cruelties, evils, injustices, sins, diseases, miseries, these are the effects of underdevelopment. His salvation from hell-punishment is progression, growth, unfoldment. His growth is both automatic (unconscious), and conscious (or volitional), and thus each man is inevitable, and forever, a party to that which may enter into his experience. Either good, or evil, man is a type of the infinite universe.”

GEORGE H. SEARS.

CHAPTER I: FORETHOUGHTS

“The program of every despotic institution is headed with—‘Believe, or be damned!’ And the head and front of our offending is a personal remonstrance. But how difficult to swim against the tides of popularity! The waves dash furiously against and roll over you. You must have a confidence in the Truth—else you will sink beneath the surface of Institutions, and become food for reptiles that crawl on their blood-stained foundations.”

CHAPTER I

FORETHOUGHTS

“Fortunately there is no evidence that God has called upon any mortal to help operate the universe, consequently the universe continues in good order without mishap or disaster.”

Be it of the thought, or the deed of men, or be it otherwise, no circumstance in life is a disaster or mishap.

Progress, eternal progress, ever forgetting the things that are behind, ever reaching forward to those things which are before, is the universal law.

With the errors of the past embedded in the foundations below, we are making larger and broader the structures of experience, which give to our achievements their substance, their character, and their strength.

And there are none with sufficient wisdom to tell us what should have been put into that structure, or if there be ought which should have been left out.

The experiences of the past are preparing us for the acceptance of the greater truths, which the future holds in store. Till these preparations be made, the greater truths may not be grasped, or be safely entrusted to our care.

Because men have not recognized this law of their evolution and their growth, they have failed to comprehend the sequence, or the significance of events.

The greatest events in all human history as holo-

causts of horrors and confusions are viewed, and the unfolding of God's plans and purposes, in all their majesty and perfection, their symmetry and harmony, are unobserved.

Without a comprehension of the laws of compensation, upon which all values depend, they have sought to eliminate the cost of their achievements, as if an attainment from its purchase price could be separated, and anything of value be retained.

They have not observed that a value, apart from its cost, never did exist, could no quality have, or even substance possess.

What Evil is, what its meaning is, what its significance as a condition of growth as an element in our evolution may be has been misinterpreted and misunderstood.

Knowing every step upward in our higher development presupposes a step below from which the upward step must be made, and not suggesting how our evolution could otherwise be carried forward and sustained, or upon what kind of material an experience, or conception should be built, they thoughtlessly assume that this lower step must be wrong, is an evil, that should be eliminated by some process other than being utilized as a foundation for the better thought which is to take its place.

We climb not to the top of a ladder and kick it from under till a safe landing is selected and made; and we do not comprehend how the part it has performed in elevating us to that eminence can, by us, be ignored.

Term it Evil, or term it what you may, it furnished the rungs which we put under our feet to make the climb.

Yes, my orthodox friend, you have discovered the

parting of the ways as we knew you would, and pardon us if we have anticipated that you would ask if man's sin does not consist in his refusal to climb.

Be not deceived, man has no more power to refuse to climb than the acorn has to prevent its growth.

Down, way down perhaps, beneath the soil, on the surface of which no sign of life appears those germs of growth are resting hid from view, nevertheless unfolding, and when the conditions for their development have been furnished by that soil and their environment, they shall bud and blossom in the light.

"All the evil of the world is something incident to man's development, and no more permanent than the stumbling of the child who learns to walk, or his scrawling letters when he first essays to write. It will be outgrown and not a particle of it or its consequences shall cleave permanently to mankind."

Facts, it has been said, are stubborn things, the most stubborn things we meet, but he who invented miracles and special Providences of God (while man's present state of ignorance and lack of development prevails) invented instruments of attack, against which a Fact cannot stand on equal terms, and against which it has been foredoomed to go down in ignominious defeat. Thought is abandoned and Reason put to flight, for Ignorance, you may depend, the lines of least resistance seeks.

The character of our lives, and the character of that civilization which they collectively express, has a quality which by the quality of our religious thought is determined and fixed.

As of individuals, the difference in the thought of different nationalities, which gives to them their pecul-

iarities by which they are distinguished, apart from the peculiarities in their religious thought, would have no existence.

The errors in men's religious creeds, and their false ideals, which upon those creeds have been built, have been the principal source of the confusion in their thought, and have laid wide and broad those foundations, which have given to their greeds and hypocrisies their protection and their support.

False religious beliefs, with all the false conceptions of life which these errors have fostered and bred, have done more to rob men of a true conception of the tremendous significance of their lives, and done more to foster and protect their hypocrisies and their greeds, than all other influences with which mankind has been concerned.

That holocaust of error in which the world has been involved, and from which it has been struggling to emerge, is none other than that which had to follow and had to be as a natural and inevitable sequence of men's false ideals, which have been fostered and protected by the errors in their religious thoughts.

It is our purpose to uncover these false ideals, and expose these religious errors.

This purpose is both earnest and most serious, and we have not observed how those, who give due consideration to our thoughts, may be misled.

The errors in men's thoughts by which they have been misled cannot be removed by giving them larger and more frequent doses of the same sort.

More religion, so called, as many misguided ones would have us believe, is not the great need. No remedy for these ills which are so apparent, and of which they complain, will be found till the errors in

their religious thought, which have caused these afflictions, are removed and more wholesome thoughts substituted in their place.

If we would be rid of our disappointments, we must be rid of our false ideals, by which our aims and purposes are directed and controlled. *If we would be rid of our false ideals, we must be rid of our false religions, and our false religious beliefs. If we would be rid of our false religions and our false religious beliefs, we must first be rid of our misconceptions of evil.*

“Sin is a name for excess; a mark missed by man in his development; a ditch, into which, when with ignorance or passion blind, we stumble for a season.

“Nature, through all her parts, is regulated by the same changeless principles—one being the law of progressive improvement; hence, descending from the primal races by ordinary generation, posterity is benefited, not injured, by primitive misdirections; for so great and powerful and just is the Divine Spirit, that all evil is overcome by good, and one of the original mistakes of our remotest ancestors has proved more valuable as a means of victorious achievement in righteousness than a million acts of passive rectitude, or negative goodness. Because such acts, like man’s primitive misdirections, are not the result of voluntary affection, or intelligent choice, based on adequate experience—but mistakes and acts, on the contrary, stumbled upon and kicked out of the sands of Progress, even as the precious diamond was thrown up into open day and proverbial celebrity by the undesigning toe of a wandering savage—in which there exists neither merit nor demerit, but discovery, nevertheless, and benefits innumerable.

“What is theologically called a ‘fall’ was in truth

the greatest benefit to mankind; it developed physical industry, beautified the soil, and improved the climate, exercised the intellectual faculties, evoked the sentiment of association and awakened the spiritual affinities; in short, according to this oriental myth, it drove the Aristocratic Family from velvet lawns, from paths luxuriously ornamented with flowery carpets, from the presence of ceaseless perfumery, from rustic chairs, not the product of pleasurable invention and victorious toil, from natural-tufted sofas, 'neath the graceful arches of magnificent trees, never planted or treated by human hands, from the lascivious pleasing of the lute-like song of paradisaical birds, from the flowing of rivers whose indolent powers had never pressed the ponderous wheel of a cotton-factory or the pioneer's saw and grist mill; therefore, the fall was in fact the first step up that hill which leads to manly enterprise and womanly independence—the democratic road to useful Knowledge." *

No obligation with any certainty is fixed where full responsibility for the performance of that obligation is not placed where it cannot, by any possibility, be evaded or shirked.

The thought in men's creeds that an avenue has been provided where the full responsibility for the performance of an obligation could be escaped, or with another shared, has deprived their moral standards of all stability and strength.

No man follows the dictates of a thought to which he does not, either actively or passively, give his assent. His religious professions may be what they may, the ideals he adopts for his guidance and control discloses his religious beliefs, and reveals the only religion he accepts.

* A. J. Davis.

A thought is the only material with which he builds; is that, and is that only, which determines his personality and that which distinguishes him from other men, and the full consequences of a thought he entertains or accepts, cannot be avoided or overlooked, or by a miracle or an act of grace, be on the shoulders of another placed.

The right to select and choose the thought he may entertain, the full responsibility it does impose, places his destiny within his own control, and fixes his responsibility where it cannot, by any possibility, be evaded or shirked.

“Ignorance breeds Fear; Fear breeds Greed; and Greed, Wealth, whose converse is Poverty. And these again breed Strife and Fear in endless circles.

“Experience (which in time to all shall come) breeds Sympathy, and Sympathy Understanding, and Understanding Love.

“And Love leads Happiness by the hand to open the Gates of Power Unlimited.” *

But Love breeds Happiness, and if it be Happiness we seek, it never can be reached through our Greeds.

Without Love there is no Happiness, and when we have Understanding, we may observe that the one without the other never can and never did exist.

The dust, the wretched blur and distortion are but for a moment. They are no more than they are. When you shall behold yourself in the clear mirror of God, you shall be satisfied.

In due time it shall be discovered that there is nought for which God's forethought has not provided, and which may not and shall not be turned to useful purpose in our growth and development, and in vain

* Carpenter.

may have been our search for that which ought not to have been.

Better far is he who finds a purpose in all life's expressions than he who says there can be none.

He who hath read the histories which in the rocks are storied;

He who hath observed the animals and the birds, and listened to all that animated life to him doth tell;

He who along the brooks hath journeyed and with nature hath communed;

He who in the silence sits and to the whisperings of unseen visitors attention gives;

Should never say that the Divine is not in every circumstance, or that there is ought which no purpose hath.

A little bird I saw, with plumage remarkable.

Whether its beauty or its utility no one could tell which those feathers most displayed.

It flitted here, it flitted there, till a mate it found;

Then straightway such a home it builded.

For the purpose, part to part, none better was fitted.

In the nest I soon saw three creations which were truly wonderful.

Like them, proud man, with all your attainments, that which can approach them shall you never hope with your hands or thought to make.

In them, three little birds, male and female, in embryo, lay.

In one end of each of those cradles was a cavity that held air sufficient to those babies, when they should need it, the first breath of life to give.

And when those creatures with that breath had strength the task to perform,

Behold a sharp needle like point on the end of each

beak had grown, with which they were enabled the barrier of their bondage to break.

When it had served its purpose, this point did drop away.

Every day, while within these mangers they lay, that parent bird warmed them with her body, and never once allowed a chill to reach them.

Each day that mother overturned these mangers; regularly she moistened her feathers in the dew and brought it to this little home;

And in that nest one day three images of the mother lay.

If in all those preparations there had been any variations, no little birds would have been there.

But no variation occurred and nothing from that creation was omitted.

Of all that picture the greatest thing of all that I saw was the thought which appeared—a *forethought*, which to that mother did not belong.

Call it molecular action, call it motion against resistance acting.

That forethought no dead inanimate matter shall explain to me.

“And the tree toad is a chef-d’œuvre for the highest.

And the running blackberry would adorn the parlors of heaven.

And the narrowest hinge in my hand puts to scorn all machinery.

And the cow, crunching with depressed head, surpasses any statue.

And a mouse is a miracle enough to stagger sextillions of infidels.”*

* Carpenter.

“Yesterday, we climbed to the loftiest summit of a dark, broad, and beautiful mountain. We sought a solitary dwelling place beneath the shadows of many trees. The beetling cliffs lifted their stately summits on either side. The music of the deep valleys below filled the temple with sacred melody. The far-off silvery clouds, floating between our upturned eyes and the summer sun, seemed to welcome our thought to the worlds on high. We there obtained a wondrous vision of truth, and law, and soul, and matter, and for the thousandth time we acquired a lesson from Mother Nature.”

Yes, we climbed the mountain, my invisible friends and I, as we have tramped together and climbed a thousand times.

How often we have invited other friends to join us. As often, they refused our invitation. “Matter and money surrounded them on every side.” They were enthralled in a bondage they would not break, and heavenly visions to them seem to make no appeals.

“The Universe, with its beauties and loves, and harmonies is nothing to the idiot mind engaged in matter. The gorgeous heavens, with their unnumbered systems of suns and stars, are nothing to a soul bowed down by the daily drag of material necessities. The ponderous globes of space so attractive to the uplifted mind of the philosopher, *are nothing to my brother who makes a God of gain.* Money and matter surround him on either side. He drives through his surroundings, and they drive through him: and so goes his daily life to the last syllable of recorded time.” *

How often, so often we have wished to take our friend with us on these rambles, but he or she, never

* A. J. Davis.

goes, and thus we have ever been compelled to take our rambles alone.

Perhaps you may be persuaded to take a short ramble with us among our thoughts, and we trust that some of those which this book contains may be worthy of the attention, which, to them, you may give.

**CHAPTER II: EVIL AND
ENVIRONMENT**

“Man shall be a culmination of universal Nature; he shall be so organized in his body as to receive and elaborate the animating elements of nature into an eternal and unchangeable Soul—and his Soul-being constituted of these principles which are in themselves pure, everlasting, and infinite—*shall possess and obey the tendency to unfold and progress forever.*”—*A. J. Davis.*

How dark and cheerless is that lack of observation and that lack of understanding, which impels, or permits man *to dare to say* that the purpose which preceded the creation of a human soul was less than this; *to dare to say* that there is in the wide universe one human soul which does not, or shall not, possess and obey the tendency to unfold and progress forever.

CHAPTER II

EVIL AND ENVIRONMENT

"This day before dawn I ascended a hill and looked at the crowded heaven.

"And I said to my spirit, When we become the enfolders of these orbs, and the pleasures and knowledge of everything in them, shall we be filled and satisfied?

"And my spirit said No, we but level that life to pass and continue beyond." *

Where perfection may be reached the end shall be found: and at the point where nothing more can be attained, life of all support shall be robbed. When growth ceases dissolution begins; and death shall never come where development hath no end. In the limitless expanse of knowledge and experience which, without boundaries, extends before us, immortality lies.

Thus growth is the great central fact, around which, all other facts revolve, and no incidents are observed which in any other direction tend. God hath not created and overlooked that creation's most important circumstance, or left it to the ignorance of man to circumvent.

Omniscience foresees all obstacles; and omnipotence all obstructions can remove; and we are compelled to believe that no expression of created life, be it of the thought, or of the deed of men, or be it otherwise, can be in vain, or shall cause any variance of the plan.

If development cannot be continued beyond the point

* Walt Whitman.

where perfection may be reached, imperfection a condition of growth becomes and it is for those, who would the Creator's handiwork improve, to inform us what degree of imperfection may be a sin, and what degree may not be so termed; likewise, they may explain how a condition, by necessity imposed, may be wrong.

Plans which are Divine against all losses protect; and we do observe, that those things which have so confused, in the processes of our development, have been changed to growth.

If we cannot point to that which hath not been, or shall not be, into growth converted, we shall not be heard to designate that which shouldn't be.

No knowledge by us shall be possessed, which upon a previous experience must not be based, and these are the pegs upon which our conceptions are hung.

Sufficient wisdom hath not been acquired to enable us to specify what pegs, if any there may be, which never should have been placed.

No thought without that by which its boundaries may be fixed, to conscious knowledge could be brought. Thus all dimensions are measured by their extremes, and a quality is known by its opposing thought. The height acquires its glory from the depth below; likewise, the good from the bad doth grow; and, if we would tinker with the plans of God, we must know what pegs to draw.

"Hours of pain and darkness within, evil conscience and heavy burdens of concealment; hours of black and obstinate desire, eyes turning aswerve, trembling guilty tongue—hungry mortal hours caught in the clave of your jaws I deny you not.

"Far from it. I welcome you, you are my friends, as good as any; I give you equal places with the rest, if

not better, for what indeed should I understand if you had not taught me?"

There never hath been a folly you did commit, which, when it had been discovered and overcome, hath not furnished its contribution to the progress you have made; and when that folly has by me been observed and understood it has another useful purpose served of preventing a like offense by me; and he who may tell what may be subtracted and leave the whole might have that wisdom which would enable him to know how his understanding and mine, in any other manner could be built and fortified with the experiences it may need to give it substance and to give it strength.

That experience in all the lives I may have lived, which hath not had its value and its place, I cannot designate; call it evil, or call it good, if the growth and the strength, which I now possess, would be preserved, I know not what from my experience should be removed.

If I have not the understanding to comprehend all the elements my development may demand, I shall not be able to affirm that my Creator hath permitted any waste in my growth to intervene.

My faith in Him persuades me to believe that His wisdom and His goodness hath provided for all the conditions which might be foreseen, and if there be no limits to His powers and His foresight, which I have no reasons to suspect, I cannot say that anything by Him hath been overlooked.

"Slowly, slowly, through many years thou buildest up thy body,

And the power that thou now hast (such as it is) to build up this present body, thou hast acquired in the past in other bodies;

So in the future shalt thou use again the power that thou now acquirrest."

If there were no conditions with which to contend there would be no need to be strong; and if there were no obstacles to overcome our occupation would be gone, and I know not what would be left to give to existence its support.

When my thought with evil hath been filled, evil hath been the reward of my search; when the good hath occupied my thought, only the good hath appeared; and behold when I looked for the good, no evil was found, and I said to my soul indeed it is plain why God is not disturbed.

"The darkness of God's shadow must correspond in intensity with the brightness of God's light. And only through the full knowledge of the one can the other be fully appreciated. He only can appreciate good who hath had ample knowledge of evil."

Without a background against which its beauties might be revealed, no picture could exist; and if there were no opposing thought its boundaries and location to fix there would be nothing upon which a conception could be based.

Whether it be a thought, or whether it be a thing, its dimensions are determined by the distance between extremes; no thought or thing without these extremes could be. If this distance might be reduced the laws of growth would be reversed.

Every elevation must be measured by the distance between its highest and its lowest point, and no glory to the height can be attached which is not determined by the distance to the base below.

If by a process of evolution we have grown, when we have reached the better, somewhere below must have

been that which was not so good from which we have grown, and you who are so disturbed by the wrongs which God's plans have not seemed wise enough to prevent, should be able to tell us how a condition by force of necessity is culpable.

No structure can be separated from that upon which it is built, and if it would be preserved, we know not what from below could be removed; neither do we know how a condition of growth can be an offense, or why it should be so termed.

We shall not confound the wisdom of God with our definitions of ignorance, and he who is so thoughtless as to refer to the need of miracles and the intervention of Divine Providence to cure supposed defects in His plans, must prove that there are defects which must in this manner be overcome.

To give dimensions and to give form to a thought we possess, all our previous experiences have lent their aids, and we cannot have confidence in your complaints, while you are not able to explain what might become of that thought if any of those props should be taken away.

If we know not where the branches may reach, we cannot know how far the roots should extend. If you are without knowledge as to what elements our growth should include, we cannot attach much significance to your statements that God's plans may have permitted ought that shouldn't be.

Eternity is a long time in which to grow, and it takes more wisdom than we possess to tell what any particular person's growth, at any particular moment of time, should be, neither do we know what glory is in store for every life that is lived, when these conditions of which we have so complained have developed these

germs of being into that larger life which they are to possess.

Designate a wrong as a mistake, or designate it as you may, all wrongs exist in different degrees, and whether a wrong be of a higher or a lower degree it is a wrong; and since there are none who do not some wrongs commit, you, who see so much which ought not to be, should be able to specify at what degree the wrongs we commit are permissible and in what degree our wrongs shall not be excused, and if so much building material should be destroyed you ought to stop long enough in your enterprises of tearing down to consider what you might have left, with which to build, when you get through, for when the building materials have all been destroyed your helplessness will not have much by which it may be restored. Do not forget when a proper and sufficient foundation by these circumstances have been laid the next step in your growth you will be compelled to take. Because of their failure to observe and recognize this principle men have builded false religions and founded them on that devitalizing and destructive error of natural depravity and original sin.

If man shall ever get above his present state, all those evils and those environments which have so disturbed men's little thoughts, will be found to be materials to be molded into use, and by the structure to be absorbed and not destroyed.

It is he who uses, and not he who destroys, who finds nothing of which we may complain and discerns nothing in God's plans to amend.

As existence projects its winding and devious course into higher and nobler realms there is a glory in the advance we have made, a pleasure in the new and changing experiences with which the journey abounds, and

if these pleasures and these glories would never cease there must be no end to our growth, and if there would be no end to growth there must be no end to the material with which we may build for better things.

Nothing without its purpose; nothing in vain; nothing to be destroyed; everything to be used; the lessons we uncover everywhere; the lessons we are yet to learn.

That knowledge which might be gained to be lost again is in vain, and reveals defects in that plan which would such losses permit; and he who does these conditions proclaim denies his Creator's wisdom, or ability, to protect.

Knowing that only a small portion of His purposes in one brief lifetime may be disclosed, he who with greater faith in His wisdom is possessed is not so much disturbed by wrongs, but in every circumstance sees the unfolding of wisdom's laws.

Always two opposing forces, antagonistic yet mutually counteracting, hold the universe in space. The centripetal and the centrifugal, those which pull and those which hold fast, giving to matter its motion and its form, its beauty and its strength. If for an instant one of these forces should be relaxed, that to which its support hath been lent would disappear and be lost.

When the forces within shall fail the bubble will collapse; when the resistance of the outer rim shall be overcome the bubble will be occupied by space.

That grace, that magnificent strength by those noble elms displayed, without the resistance interposed by gravitation's force and the winds of Heaven, which through their branches have blown, would not exist.

Be it a thought, or be it a flower, or be it the growth of a thing that ever grew, obstructions overcoming upon

it hath conferred the strength and the beauty it does display.

Be it joy; be it pain; be it disappointment's bitterest pang, or be it our fondest hope's fulfillment, whatever thy experience's circumstance may be, it can but one purpose serve, which in time shall be observed to be to build a nobler and a larger thought; and against these backgrounds shall be revealed those thoughts which otherwise no conscious form could have.

The poet who observed, "I am just as much evil as good, and my nation is. And I say in fact there is no evil, or if there is I say it is just as important to you, to the land or to me as anything else," gave utterance to a truth which cannot be gainsaid.

We are what we are to-day because of the use we have made of the materials our environments have furnished for our growth, and whether these environments' conditions may have been termed evil, or termed good, their significance hath been determined by the use we have made of these materials in our growth.

"We feed not the body with the food of one dish only, nor doth the sedulous bee gather from one flower single virtues. She takes the best from many and together she makes them serve, working to honey, which the putrid spider would convert to poison."

The useful and the beautiful flourish and bloom to gladden and to cheer, while by their side, supported by the same environment, thrives the unsightly and the obnoxious to disturb and annoy, and we know that these differences to their environment cannot be charged; thus it is from within is determined what our environment to us shall be.

When we triumph in the struggles against those

obstacles which our environment interposes we are never heard to declare that our strength in any other manner could be acquired.

Values by their cost have been so enhanced, and the quality of knowledge on so many experiences doth depend, that our search hath been in vain for that which ought not to have been.

Those things, which to us as losses, often, have appeared, to profits have been changed; and however appalling the cost hath seemed, it hath never outweighed that which by it hath been gained; and we have not yet observed how it, in any other manner, could be acquired.

The strides of progress have never been out of pace with the preparations for the advance, and without the experiences necessary to support each forward step, no progress could be had. That, of which we have most complained, hath been our greatest need; and, if our thought had been permitted to prevail, all strength would have been destroyed.

No obstacle doth annoy, when it hath been overcome; and all obstructions, in the processes of their removal, as aids to growth become.

Those struggles, as blessings, (sometimes in disguise) through the added strength by them acquired, prepare and fortify us for the higher contests which we approach.

Till we know the quality of strength our development may demand, we shall not tell, if in any other manner it could be built.

Not in searching for that which ought not to be; but in determining the manner of the use, the problems of life are solved.

Where there are no obstacles to overcome, there shall

be nothing by which our strength may be renewed; and on me no development shall be conferred by those obstructions which, by another, are removed.

Another's exercise develops no sinews of strength in me; and meaningless is the thought that any lack of mine can be atoned by that which by another may be wrought.

My child, who disobeys, offends against himself; the law he broke was made as his guidance and for his good, and by its violation the injury is to him, and not to me, for whom the law was not made; and where there is no injury to me there can be against me no offense to forgive.

What significance to a so called sinful act may be attached, except as an offense against him, who offends, hath not yet been made to appear.

No indebtedness of mine can be incurred, which must not, first have been an obligation, which to myself was owed, and where all duties to myself are discharged all obligations which have been charged to me shall be fulfilled.

In the confusion, which our definitions have involved, thought hath been abandoned, and from our bewilderment to be relieved, special providences of God have been invented, as, if there could ever be a need for the suspension of a law by Divine Wisdom made.

In their bewilderment, the thoughtless, by a process of amendment or annulment, have sought to wipe out their violations of the law, and all its penalties escape; forgetting that the laws of God are significant, and with the good of man so vitally interwoven, that to change would defeat His purposes, and destroy that which they would preserve.

The stream of progress, by the hand of man cannot

be stayed; as in a mighty river, our errors become engulfed in its eddying tide.

Slaveries, wars, and all of those expressions of greed and avarice, everywhere so displayed, are of ignorance bred; when their purpose is fulfilled, and upon them a better thought is built, they, in the onward flow, shall be swept away. The greater those attempted impediments we construct, the more impressive is the disaster in which they are swallowed up.

So immutable are those laws by which our development is compelled, that we have no more power our progress to thwart, than the trees and plants possess, to decree the limits to their growth.

Paradoxical as it may seem, although that circumstance in our growth which is, or hath been, must be and must have been, it is through our free agency that it is, or hath occurred; and it is and hath been that which by us hath been willed.

Than man's desire for happiness, he hath no higher attribute; and when rightly understood, shall be found to be, that which leads him to his greatest good.

The discords of life, by our errors, are produced; its harmonies are, alone, of truth.

Like the law of gravitation, which holds the worlds in space, man's lust for pleasure shapes his course, as with a compelling force; and when his happiness hath been achieved, it hath been proved to be coincident with his greatest good.

By the discords of error we are driven, in our search for harmony, to find the truth; and by the search for pleasure lured, we are led to our greatest good.

Thus it is, while our progress may be compelled, the choice hath been of ourselves, and it is through our free agency that it hath occurred.

Where we select the rewards, and the penalties are by us allowed; there shall be none, but ourselves, of whom we shall complain.

Until you may demonstrate, that a part can be taken away and still have the whole remain, your doctrines of forgiveness are without an explanation to sustain.

There is no environment in which we shall be placed which may not be used to increase our strength; and he who grumbles at his fate doth nothing but his weakness proclaim.

The error in our thought is that only which prevents our advance; and, when that error hath furnished the resistance necessary to develop our strength and furnished those experiences, which it may not be necessary to repeat, that error shall never reappear. When they are abandoned a new thought takes their place and not till then is our progress made.

The tenacity with which our mind doth to its errors cling hath confused our thought, because it hath not been observed that a law of its progress is, that it shall not let go of that to which it clings, till a perception doth to it appear, that with the changes of its grasp, its support may still be preserved.

Our thought can never accept an error in exchange for a truth, when that truth shall be understood, and we cease to cling to error when the truth is understandingly known.

In time, all errors do themselves reveal, and thus they help to build the thought by which the truth is found, and all our growth and development becomes a process by which our errors for truths are exchanged.

All errors in our beliefs are reflected in our deeds; and he, who hath not some form of religious thought by which his life is shaped, hath not yet been found.

The impotency in our creeds, so painfully manifest, shall never be removed, till the truth be substituted for the errors in their thought; and when they do include the great vital truth which Jesus taught, with all those devitalizing thoughts left out, we may begin to be ashamed of our selfish enterprises and displays.

That responsibility doth lightly rest which may be placed on the shoulders of another to be borne; and no obligation shall any stability have which no fixed location hath.

In the thought that from no thought or deed of mine shall I be permitted to escape, doth my strength consist; and we shall from much of our weakness be relieved when we learn that upon ourselves we must depend.

Without thought, we allow our intelligence to drivel and waste; and we drift and float, till the slightest wind that blows, doth buffet us about, and never once discovering why our plight should not be attributed to a decree of fate.

Our thought is the only material with which we build, and in growing a nobler thought our development is attained.

That thought unless we permit by none other than ourselves can be controlled; thus, our growth and happiness is shaped by ourselves.

My lack of joy I shall not to another charge for there shall be no circumstance which to me shall come that may not to the growth of a nobler thought be turned.

“And when He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the Kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation:—

Neither shall they say Lo here: or lo there: for behold the Kingdom of God is within you."

That which is without derives its value from that which is within; and he shall be disappointed in his search who seeks his pleasure or his growth in outward circumstance.

Of these outer accouterments we may be robbed, but that which is within cannot, without our consent, be reached.

These accouterments are those great losses which we do so bewail, forgetting that we determine whether any loss can prevail.

The burden of men's prayers to Deity are that they from these supposed losses may be saved, and wondering why nothing from these petitions are ever heard; as if the value of an achievement to them could be preserved where their responsibility by another might be assured.

Strive as we may there is no duty to ourselves which can be shirked, and, if Heaven would be sought we must look for it within.

A truth by necessary experience and proofs must be fortified if it, as a factor in our lives shall endure, and our failure to recognize these necessities in much confusion hath involved.

In vain shall be our prayers from these necessities to be relieved; and so vitally do they affect our growth and happiness that from them to be relieved would that growth and happiness destroy.

Since nothing is which hath not come of that which by the Creator hath been permitted or made, if we find it not in an error of our thought, nowhere shall the bad be found.

Everything is good which is for its purpose used,

and no created thing shall be unclean which is not so viewed.

Without mistakes we make no growth, and they do furnish the resistance by which shall be developed the wisdom and the strength by which they shall be overcome, and when that point is reached those mistakes which we have passed we shall never have need to repeat.

The ingenuity with which men have invented special providences of God to relieve themselves of their mistakes and have sought by the intervention of miracles Wisdom's laws to amend is hard to comprehend.

If the natural be not of God, we know not from whence it comes and the distinction between the natural and the supernatural doth not appear; but we all do admit that an All Wise Creator could make laws which need no such bolstering up.

The superstitious and the miraculous have been disappearing with civilization's advance, and as our vision clears we do behold that all things are in harmony with fixed and natural laws which for our greatest good do work.

Miracles have been Ignorance's refuge since recorded history began, but in the vital truths which Jesus taught, or any other circumstance upon which our developments depend, a greater enlightenment observes nothing which needs the supernatural to support.

In His rebuke, "Why callest thou me good; there is none good but One," in His reply to the Pharisees, "The Kingdom of God is within you," and in the thoughts contained in the parable of the "Talents" all theories of the supernatural are destroyed, and faith and atonement as by some so called religions taught finds no support.

Our faith in another the implanting of his thought may have allowed which, without such faith, would no lodgment have found; but it hath been through our faith in ourselves that any development hath been reached, and from within and not without all the forces have come which have any miracles worked. We have not discovered where a vicarious substitute by Jesus was taught.

When men forsake the thought that any growth doth come from another than themselves and look for their development from within where Jesus said it should be found, many of our doctrines of faith shall be reversed.

None but man hath man's faith in himself destroyed and all his mawkish insipidness inspired.

As far back as man's history can be traced his evolution hath had a continuous and upward trend, ever towards the perfect end, and he who hath observed hath been unable to find where natural depravity finds its support.

Jesus was divine—every man is divine. He is the Son of God; so art thou and in exactly the same sense; and by none but man hath man been abased.

We have been astonished at the works that Jesus did, forgetting that in revealing the forces within himself, He sought to reveal the forces of the human soul.

He said the works that He did we should do, and even greater we should do. And for the selfsame reason that they were done by him they by us should be done.

Man hath not been elevated by lowering him in the dust; and when the thought of his divinity with its meaning and significance he shall comprehend by his reverence and his self respect he shall be controlled.

You, who of the fall of man and of his natural depravity have so often preached, hath it to you occurred that some may have taken you at your word, and as a sequence of your thought, lived as if no divinity to them belonged?

With numbers man hath been impressed but with God the individual is the tremendous fact. Two souls are no greater than one, and either one, or both, doth the whole include; and a loss to one doth the whole in disaster involve.

If our weaknesses are located at the point where the greatest sensitiveness appears; then the condition of our environment which does most disturb discloses where the remedy should be applied; and since our strength is exercised by that which does oppose, these conditions of our environment which do most disturb are of our greatest need.

The weakest and most hopeless man we meet is he, who seeks his failures to excuse, by pointing out the obstacles with which another contends, as not being as difficult as those he has to meet. The purpose of life's struggles by him has not been grasped, and if his complaint were true, he fails to observe how much stronger perhaps than his neighbor he has it in his power to be. There are no opportunities for him which do not from his environment come, and like the unworthy servant who wrapped his talents in uselessness, he is being deprived of the few that he hath.

Time and our environment we can never escape or get past. Here and now are the vital facts. The present is the point on life's highway that we are now at; the future is the point we are going towards, but never reach; the steps we are to take, at the point where they are taken are the now—Eternity is the never ending

continuation of the now, and the eternal now is the only time in which we live.

“The mill grinds not with the waters that are past,” and no grists are ground while its wheels are stilled waiting for the waters which have not come.

Our talents are not increased by waiting for a better time or a better place to invest; and the hardest lesson we have to learn is this: if we are to be happy, or there is ought to be achieved, now is the best time and this is the best place to begin.

The working out of our destiny in our own keeping is placed. If we would be happy it has laws we must discover and obey; and we cannot close our eyes, or wrap our talents in idleness and hasten the time when our desires shall be realized. If we transgress by that act we fix the penalties we inflict, and these are the punishments which fit the offense; if we do right the measure of the reward is determined by the deed and every man becomes his own judge and his executioner.

“Beware, then, of doing wrong, for thou must bear the penalty, only thou. Verily life is long enough to make payment; 'tis better to have none to make.”

When an error has been forsaken and a better thought takes its place no transgressor shall be heard to claim that there are any punishments which exceed those which he doth upon himself impose.

All those dark struggles recessed further back than the thought of man can reach; those sorrows and those cruelties which upon our attention do so press, have been purchasing for our progress, toward the future reaching, a noble and a grander thought; and we are not prepared to say that a value exists which upon its purchase price doth not depend.

That from which we flee lends its aid to that which we seek, and the pleasure which comes to us from the advance we make cannot be separated from the struggle by which it is attained.

The glory of the present with the past is forever linked, in bursting the bondage of our yesterdays the freedom of to-day is gained, and greater wisdom does disclose that there is no waste and nothing is in vain.

Wonderful are the works of God working for man's greatest good. The labor is ours, the plans are His, though devious the way may seem there shall be no failure in the scheme.

By a writer of note it hath been said, "War and courage have done more great things than love of one's neighbor." Love hath not been a factor where love hath not been, and no courage hath equaled that which by love hath been inspired. The one greatest thing by war being done by him hath been overlooked for he hath not observed that for love's triumph and love's supremacy war hath been laying the foundation and is clearing the way.

By their own weight the follies of men are being crushed; and there are no errors which do not themselves destroy. All our ills the elements of their cure contain, and no circumstance hath been observed which hath not for progress made; and we little comprehend how that which we now possess by Fear and Force hath been won; neither do we know what triumphs in our evolution without these elements would exist.

We cannot encompass that which we have not the capacity to contain; and none shall deny that Love to a higher development belongs than that, which by Fear and Force, hath been controlled.

That which to an earlier and lower plane in our growth hath belonged, may not to a higher development pertain.

The reign of Love shall supersede the reign of Fear and Force and it shall be when our thought hath been grown too large by Fear and Force to be controlled.

If men's rights are to be measured in property and dollars and cents, and virtue and morality are to become a merchantable commodity to be bartered for so many pence, we should not be surprised if these thoughts in action are expressed.

The conflicts of men have been, the struggle of error to survive, and no war was ever fought, which did not register an advance in our thought, and many of those errors forever destroy.

You, who so frantically call for peace, should have started your appeals before the war began, even before it filled so large a part of our thought. These errors, which with your assistance may have been grown, may now be so large that it would be best, perhaps, to allow them to destroy themselves.

Wonderful are the laws of growth, and whatever be the form of life, however simple or complexed, it hath not an expression, whether it be of thought, or deed, which doth not to certain laws conform. He, who hath not dug deep for the cause, hath often been much confused by an effect. Whether it be an ailment of the body, or of the thought, no success has been had in giving our attention to doctoring effects.

Many are those would be tinkerers with men's bodies and souls, who have been traveling, all their lives, in these little circles with no ends, and our age, our achievements, and even the universe, has come, by them, to be limited and circumscribed by these little

rings, which are only the creations of their little thoughts.

No boundaries have been by the Creator placed, and any limits which may appear man, alone, hath attempted to fix. When first causes are found, so simple shall the remedy be that we shall not need a miracle, and less seldom need the surgeon's skill to perfect a cure.

The end of our discoveries and development can no more be reached than the end of time or space. What to-day may seem impossible, to-morrow is uncovered, and the next day becomes the common place.

It is the little men who have tried to make the world so small; and they have built a little Heaven, where the elect may sit and sing, and have thought it should not be made with room enough for all, as if no distinction to them could come, if all were let in.

When those, who would instruct, shall learn what an experience to our progress means, and shall perceive that our errors, in being overcome, furnish the resistance which develops our strength, they may cease to teach those inventions of their bewildered minds, that by an act of grace, our mistakes may be relieved, and all or any of our responsibilities escaped.

That assumed partnership of the Creator in the petty and selfish schemes of men would be most flagrant sacrilege, if it were not by Him observed as a lack of development, which will all be changed with the growth of a larger thought.

The struggle is that, which it hath ever been, the strife between the forces of Error and those of Right; and he who doth the right hath no need to call his Creator to his aid, for his help hath been given to the right, before his petition can be made; and his requests

for His assistance, in his schemes of ignorance, shall be without avail, for it already hath been refused.

He who is doing right finds his defense already prepared and anything he may say neither adds to, nor subtracts. The retributions of error are forcing us to see where our happiness should be sought, and by our experience this wonderful truth we are being taught, that our rewards are fixed by ourselves, and all penalties by ourselves allowed.

Our follies and our hypocrisies shall find us out, and when to ourselves we are revealed, of all our errors we shall be ashamed, and none shall wish that another should any greater burdens bear than those which are imposed by his guilt.

They who themselves forget and in their labors of love are swallowed up, never appear as beggars for the help of Providence.

The reign of Love is beginning to supersede the reign of Fear and Force, and the dawn of the better day for which untold ages have been preparing the way is being approached when Force by Love shall be overcome.

In the love of God and love of our neighbor the great secret lies, and when our thought shall be developed, where our relations to our Creator and our neighbor shall be comprehensively understood, we cannot help but love them both.

We may not possess that love and fore-thought for ourselves that we ought, and our neighbor in this respect may be at fault. Love of our neighbor doth not require that we should do for him that which we would not do for ourselves, neither should we accede to his request to do for him that which he for himself should do.

My duty to myself in no way conflicts with that which is due to him and that, which is for my best interest,

and that, which his welfare demands, the answer contains.

If I attempt to injure him, the injury is mine, and, if I do him good, the greater reward to me belongs. If I do right, I have done that which is for my greatest good, and he in no way is wronged by me. The material with which he builds his strength must by him be placed, and we cannot take for him his exercise.

By ill advised efforts on our part more weaklings and dependents may be created, than the thoughtful may be able to relieve. God relieves none of his errors' disciplines, and we shall not justify an attempt to do for another that which by the Creator could not be done, and allow to him that development and happiness which by himself alone must be attained.

He wrongs himself, who demands from me that which doth not to him belong, and I only assist his injury by attempting to do for him the things, which he for himself should do.

Envy, jealousy, hatred, vanity, hypocrisy and deceit, are of selfishness bred, and the sources of our discontent to our own thresholds are too easily traced, to be denied.

In nursing another's weaknesses, we accomplish no cures, and we cannot for him any of his virtues gain, and he who attempts to build with might-have-beens, and allows his talents to rust and waste, because others seem to be ahead of him in the race, cannot be helped. He shall there remain, till his thought be changed and these conditions no purpose have but to compel the change in his thought and build with these experiences the foundations his future growth shall need.

His duty to himself is not affected by anything which another may attempt against him, and I cannot charge a lack in my thought to lack in his. I have a duty

which I owe to him, and he hath a duty which he owes to me, and it all becomes a duty which we owe to ourselves.

Our welfare with the welfare of others is so entwined that their interests are ours, and ours are theirs, and the happiness of one hath a certain relation to others, which doth upon the happiness of all depend.

He who never ceases to the pleasures of others to add, never any end to his own pleasures finds and the sources of our discontents must in other employments be found.

Selfishness is the darkness, love is the sunshine through which we pass; when we cease to need the darkness the light shall prevail.

“TIME AND SATAN” *

“Is there one in all the world who does not desire to be divinely beautiful?”

To have the most perfect body, unerring skill, strength, limpid clearness of mind, as of the sunlight over the hills,

To radiate love wherever it goes, to move in and out accepted?

The secret lies close to you, so close.

You are the person, it lies close to you, so close—deep down within.

But in time it shall come forth and be revealed.

Not in accumulating riches, but by giving away what you have

Shall you become beautiful;

You must undo the wrappings, not case yourself in fresh ones;

Not from multiplying clothes shall you make your

* From “Towards Democracy,” Carpenter. By permission.

body sound and beautiful, but rather by discarding them;

Not by multiplying knowledge shall you beautify your mind.

It is not the food you eat that has to vivify you, but you that have to vivify the food.

So if thou seekest fame or ease or pleasure or ought for thyself, the image of that thing which thou seekest will come and cling to thee and thou wilt have to carry it about.

And the images and powers which thou hast thus evoked will gather round and form thee a new body—clamoring for sustenance and satisfaction;

And if thou art not able to discard this image now, thou wilt not be able to discard that body then, but wilt have to carry it about.

Beware then lest it become thy grave and thy prison—instead of thy winged abode, and palace of joy.

For (over and over again) there is nothing that is evil except because a man has not mastery over it; and there is no good thing that is not evil if it have mastery over a man;

And there is no passion or power, or pleasure or pain, or created thing whatsoever, which is not ultimately for man and for his use—or which he need be afraid of, or ashamed at.

The ascetics and the self-indulgent divide things into good and evil—as it were to throw away the evil;

But things cannot be divided into good and evil, but all are good as soon as they are brought into subjection.

And seest thou not that by escape from Death thou couldst never overcome Death—

For since by being a slave to things of sense thou hast clothed thyself with a body which thou art not master

of, thou wert condemned to a living tomb were that body not to be destroyed.

But now through pain and suffering out of this tomb shalt thou come; and through the experience thou hast acquired shalt build thyself a new and better body;

And so on many times, till thou spreadest wings and hast all powers diabolic and angelic concentered in thy flesh.

And so at last I saw Satan appear before me,—magnificent, fully formed.

Feet first, with shining limbs, he glanced down from above among the bushes,

And stood there erect, dark-skinned, with nostrils dilated with passion;

(In the burning intolerable sunlight he stood, and I in the shade of the bushes);

Fierce and scathing the effluence of his eyes, and scornful of dreams and dreamers (he touched a rock hard by and it split with a sound like thunder);

Fierce the magnetic influence of his dusky flesh; his great foot, well-formed, was planted firm in the sand—with spreading toes;

‘Come out,’ he said with a taunt. ‘Art thou afraid to meet me?’

And I answered not, but sprang upon him and smote him.

And he smote me a thousand times, and brashed and scorched and slew me as with hands of flame;

And I was glad, for my body lay there dead; and I sprang upon him again with another body;

And he turned upon me, and smote me a thousand times and slew that body;

And, I was glad and sprang upon him again with another body—

And with another and another and again another;

And the bodies which I took on yielded before him, and were like cinctures of flame upon me, but I flung them aside;

And the pains which I endured in one body were powers which I wielded in the next; and I grew in strength, till at last I stood before him complete, with a body like his own and equal in might—exultant in pride and joy.

Then he ceased, and said, 'I love thee.'

And, lo, his form changed, and he leaned backwards and drew me upon him,

And bore me up into the air, and floated me over the topmost trees and the ocean, and round the curve of the earth under the moon—

Till we stood again in Paradise."

A philosophy which cannot withstand the assaults of criticism, and even stronger be because of such attacks, is of little worth.

Since there is a form of criticism, which may be considered by many, to apply to our thought, and being representative of all those which might be seriously made, we take the liberty to quote the following, afterwards making our comments thereon:

"A theory in which emphasis is placed solely upon human action and reaction. We are precisely what the past has made us. We are the victims of our own folly, our 'Karma.' Through all the universe rigid law reigns. There is no escape except by returning the exact mathematical equivalent of every misdeed. We attract what we believe in. According to our state of

development everything is rendered us. That which is for us gravitates to us. We have what we need for our development. Everything depends on ourselves and the way we take life. If we do not take advantage of our opportunities now, they will recur in more severe form. Thus, ever on and on, till we are compelled to choose the pathway of the higher life.

“To pursue such a creed to the end is to discover that it leaves God out of account, and is purely a personal method of salvation. This creed really amounts to fatalism.

“We are indeed bound by hereditary ties. We reap what we sow, and there is a fitness between supply and demand. But, unless we are morally free, how could we accept the opportunities that are attracted to us?” *

If this criticism is logical, and is correct in its deductions, and it applies to the philosophy our book is intended to proclaim, then it goes to the foundation of our thought and demands serious and respectful attention.

Narrow indeed is that conception of life, and its manifestations, which fails to recognize the direction and guidance of divine Wisdom and divine Love in all its expressions. If these manifestations were not by a law of their being held together and supported, as the warp and woof holds together and supports those creations of the weaver's art, all in chaos and disaster would be involved.

Since the perfection of the whole upon the perfection of all its parts depends, the operation of that law to all its parts must extend. Whether it be man's growth and development, or other circumstances, of whatever

* Desser.

sort, neither from the operation of that law can be exempt.

By pointing out and disclosing that law, which in man's growth and development manifests, surely creates no foundation for the charge that our thought thereby leaves God out of account, and, if God be not left out, neither can it be said that our thought reveals, only and purely, a personal method of salvation. Either our growth and development is subject to the laws of God, or man is a law unto himself. If he is a law unto himself, then God is not included in the account.

If there be ought our thought points out and discloses, it points out and discloses a law by God established, to which man's growth and development conforms, and to this extent, at least, you must admit, God hath not been excluded from the account. On the heights and in the depths we have sought, but never yet have found where God was not.

In his younger and tenderer years, the child is sent to school, up through the various grades he struggles, the primary, the grammar, and those which may be higher; and, perhaps, the helps which may be gained by a college training he secures, slowly though it seem, all these years he has been climbing, broadening, growing, placing behind, and beneath him, stores of knowledge and experiences, which, when needed to make his decisions, are, by his thought, called upon, and appropriated.

How do those decisions compare with those he would, or could, have made when he entered that primary grade? Some of that knowledge, and those experiences, to an extent, at least, were voluntarily acquired, some by parent, teacher, and other circumstance, persuaded and sometimes even compelled.

When we gain greater wisdom we make a better choice than we could have made, when we were with less wisdom possessed. Therefore, how does it appear that our gain in freedom does not, in degree, upon our growth in wisdom depend?

If freedom of will, or moral freedom, as by all authorities defined, is not a matter of degrees, and a subject of development, what is meant by the statement, "Unless we are morally free how could we accept the opportunities which are attracted to us?"

Within these limits, we are free to choose, free to act—enthralled in a labyrinth of counter influences, imbosomed in our environment, which, as we develop, ever changes, ever grows more friendly, nevertheless ever increasing responsibilities are imposed, and these responsibilities are located on our shoulders, where they cannot by any possibility be shirked or surrendered, yet who hath not seen beneath it and through it all the hand of God by which it has been guided and persuaded like the warp and woof of the weaver's loom?

He is the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and from human life is inseparable. Man's growth and development into all its elements cannot be so divided that you may specify how far one element, or another hath been concerned in that development and that growth.

Do not think, dear friends, that this world does not move as God intends, or that He is dissatisfied with his handiwork, as He certainly would be if the teachings of the thoughtless are to be believed. There are many pitfalls along life's highways, into which we all do fall, and for a season have remained, and there are many by-paths beset with brambles and thorns to wound

and maim'. These pitfalls, brambles and thorns are permitted to remain, if we go that way, where they will do the most good in creating those experiences upon which we must build. These are by the Creator with calm composure viewed, for He knows the glorious conceptions and achievements, which from these hurts and struggles are to be gained.

"When morning dawns, the night and its shadows depart, so the evil is no longer evil to the good. Everything was good. The night for it brought out the holy stars. Pain for it unfolded the infinite blessings of pleasure. Selfishness for it revealed the divinity of benevolence—briars for they shielded and protected the flowers while blooming—skepticism for it compelled the soul to search and learn the lesson of fundamental principles—darkness for it brings out the spirit's inherent love of everlasting Light." *

If we to-day are not the sum total of all those parts, which together constitute that whole, which we designate as spirit, as body, and as soul, and if Thought, whether it be of us, or be from a higher source, or a source which does the highest and the lowest include, be not the architect and the builder of all we manifest or express, tell us from whence and how we came to be what we are.

Those thoughts with which we have builded may be voluntary (if there be any such which unqualifiedly may be so described) thoughts by circumstances induced, *thoughts by heavenly messengers unseen, to us suggested, whom some have recognized and whom some have not, whose help to us has been given when we have done our part, or when we have reached a plane of development where their assistance to us may be*

* A. J. Davis.

allowed, and thoughts in whatever manner impressed, or acquired, have made ~~us~~ what we are.

“Friends may grow cold and change around us; enemies may band together for our destruction; lovers may fly away and leave us, like sunny birds when the cloud lowers, and the voice of thunder is heard remote. But we have one immortal Friend who stands between us and foes, encircling our souls in his arms of everlasting Love.

“For shall not he who preserves, and blesses, and beautifies all things, take good care of all these, his human children, especially created in his own image of power, wisdom and love. He paints the wings of the little butterfly. He guides the crimson flower-cups where the tiny insect sips honey-dew at morn. He launches every beam of light. He adds plumes to every wandering zephyr. Every sparrow that falls from the leafy bow with a chill pain in its dying heart falls to sleep on his kindly breast. Never a grain of sand, nor a drop of dew, nor a glimmer of light has been lost out of his embrace of infinite tenderness since the beginning of time, nor will be while eternity rolls on. *Shall he then loose me? Can I loose myself?*” *

* A. J. Davis.

CHAPTER III: THOUGHT

“When man once fully realizes his innate powers and glorious capabilities, I know there are not dungeons, nor sin, nor disease enough in all the Earth to prevent him from walking forth God-like and in the Image of his Maker.”
—*A. J. Davis.*

“Ignorance is the true original sin. Men are bankrupt morally because they do not know the gold mine that is in them.”—*Brierley.*

CHAPTER III

THOUGHT

“I say no man has been half devout enough,
None has ever yet adored or worshiped half enough,
None has begun to think how divine he himself is,
and how certain the future is.”

“The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation;
Neither shall they say Lo here or lo there for behold
the Kingdom of God is within you.”

When the Creator entrusted to man the power to create and control a thought he placed the universe at his feet. But he who never begins a journey never arrives, and he who enfolds his talents in thoughtlessness, and puts them not to use, discovers not what a gift he hath; like one, who through a beautiful country travels, with his eyes closed, he shall not know whether it is a desert or a paradise he is passing through.

We know something of this and we know something of that, but we shall know more of ourselves when we know more of our thought.

We may travel near and we may travel far, what men think makes all the difference in men there is; and there is no difference of body or mind which doth not to a thought conform.

Every man we meet is but a walking and a talking display of what he thinks—a bundle of thoughts moving about. If in each of these bundles the same thoughts could be placed there would be nothing by which the one from the other could be told.

Men of different nations are with many national characteristics marked, which are but the expressions of the peculiarities in their thoughts; whether hereditary, or acquired, they all to a thought's pollution are traced. In many vagaries of face, and other physical contour, these characteristics have become strikingly manifest, and of whatsoever kind those physical and other expressions may be, which are so exposed, all their distinctiveness by a thought have been built; and these characteristics are only lost or absorbed, when the thought from which they sprung are by other thoughts overcome.

That commercialized thought by Jacob possessed, which in the body, face and feature of a mighty people for thousands of years has been transmitted and expressed, illustrates the intensity of that influence which a thought may exert.

It was Jacob, who by a trick robbed his father-in-law, Laban, of his flocks; by the compulsion of his brother, Esau's dire needs in exchange for a mess of pottage took his birthright from him; and by a fraud, which he practiced upon his blind and enfeebled parent, deprived Esau of the father's blessing which to that brother belonged.

If these thoughts which have led men in bloody strife to fight, and others of great strength, should be traced, it might be found that Jacob's descendants were not the only nationality which had been burdened with thoughts which have been handed down from an age remote.

He, who may think a thought hath no power to create, may tell us how the mother's mind hath conveyed to the unborn babe the pictures which were gal-leried in her thoughts, and sometimes transmitted the

deformities which had become there impressed. The child was never born which did not display the imprint of many, if not all, the images and thoughts which passed through its mother's mind; and whether those markings be expressed in its body or its mind, its mother's thoughts may all be read therein, and the source of many of those errors which in our inheritance are expressed are often found where the thoughtless least suspect.

Diet, climate and every phase of environment, their influence may have lent, it shall ever be found to be a thought which has controlled; and in a thought the only source of our development is revealed.

When our ancestor's ideals by us are imitated, it is then they are, by us, resembled; but when our thoughts in other directions trend, heredity only a circumstance becomes.

In seeking to hide behind our parents' weaknesses, no laws of growth are fulfilled, and these in being overcome furnish the resistance by which our strength is developed and renewed.

A thought's influence men have not yet begun to comprehend, and because of their lack of observation their inheritance by many hath been refused.

Since our thoughts are the only materials with which bodies and souls are built, our thoughtlessness furnishes the problems by us to be solved.

Thoughts, thoughts, nothing but thoughts, when we look into men's faces are seen, and if they but knew how those thoughts, in all their nakedness, were trooping into view, how startled they would be.

Those vaporous veils, which Hypocrisy, with such infinite pains, hath striven to create, and behind which

it had hoped to sit unseen, has only served to emphasize how useless its task hath been.

The ostrich hath not been the only creature which has deceived itself by the thought that it might be hid from view because its head was buried in the sand. Of like quality is the foolishness of man, who believes his thought can be concealed from view because of anything he may say or do. That which he would hide is that which he reveals.

Be thy clothes tailor made and to fashion formed, or with greatest care arranged, whatever be the attention you have bestowed, it is your thought that comes to view, and far more conspicuous is our thought than any clothes which may have been made for us to wear.

When I look upon your physique, your face and your features, I see only that which has been molded and chiseled by a thought; and since your life manifests nought which is not the creation and the product of a thought; if your physique, your face and your features have a resemblance to that which I possess, then in the strata which underlie, and upon which these expressions are builded, similar thoughts to that extent, by each of us must have been possessed; but you may be more beautiful than I; then to that extent, more beautiful thoughts have been placed in the foundations which have given to these expressions their support.

That which has been written with a thought no man can counterfeit, and it is the one thing which cannot be disguised or concealed from view.

If we are shabby and down at the heel that shabbiness first in our thought did appear, and if gluttony and greed are manifest that gluttony and that greed in our thought first had to be.

Those who with selfishness and hatred may be filled

shall display these conditions in their countenance and their mein; and there are none who are hard and pinched in feature who are not hard and pinched in thought.

The selfish and the benevolent, the beautiful and the commonplace are mirrored to all who choose to observe.

Sown in secret, sown in darkness, in the light they are blossomed forth, and no harvests were ever garnered which were not of the seeds that had been sown. If you would be bright and sunny you must have bright and cheery thoughts, and there was never a gross and brutal mind which was not expressed in a gross and brutal strength.

A strong and robust body, with a weak and sickly mind in control, by none hath been observed, and no circumstance in our lives expressed hath been out of character with our thought.

If we would have strong and healthy bodies, we must build strong and healthy minds, and we shall not be able to enumerate the number of those sickly ones which everywhere we meet, the source of whose weaknesses nowhere but in their thought shall be found.

Since our thought gives to our mind the only exercise, by which its development can be progressed, if there be a condition of body or mind to be improved, our attention must be directed to our thought.

All thy loveliness comes from thy mind and no roses in thy cheeks shall appear, till those roses have been planted in thy soul. The only cosmetic which can make a beautiful face is a beautiful thought and no amount of paint or powder can hide an ugly one, and strive as you will you possess no thoughts you can deny.

When would the glow of health and beauty of youth begin to fade if the purity and buoyancy of childhood's

thoughts were preserved, and with the thoughts of love and manly strength our minds were so occupied that the cares of greed and strife could find no entrance there?

“Crabbed age and youth cannot live together;
 Youth is full of pleasance, age is full of care;
 Youth like summer morn, age like winter weather;
 Youth like summer brave, age like winter bare.
 Youth is full of sport, age’s breath is short;
 Youth is nimble, age is lame;
 Youth is hot and bold; age is weak and cold;
 Youth is wild and age is tame.
 Age I do abhor thee, youth I do adore thee.”

If age would be loved, age must be young.
 Where the fires of love are not conserved,
 The joys of youth are not preserved.
 If age would be young, age must cling to love.
 Love buildeth up where hatred teareth down;
 Greed contracts all that love expands.
 Selfishness hath the appearance of our dearest friend;
 Remove its cloak and our deadliest foe is discerned.
 Long hath been the struggle which they have waged;
 For love and greed never can be classed as friends,
 But the victories of love are being multiplied
 While greed is being weakened by defeats and our
 glory is being won in the triumph of better
 thoughts.

Time cannot be blamed for that which to thoughtlessness should be charged, and in all our philosophy here comes the rub: How the importance of our thoughts on us shall be impressed.

There is a homely saying, "That you may lead a horse to water but you cannot make him drink." A more difficult problem we may submit; to man you may talk and preach but you cannot make him think.

This task by the Creator has been provided for, for no man can forever resist the harsh experiences which the errors in his thought create, and these discords do persist till he shall be compelled to think.

By some it hath been asked, "If a man shall die before he may be persuaded to build these better thoughts how doth the benefits from his experience take place?" It is foretold that if a man should die he shall live again, and he who takes not the future into account ought not to declare that his time has been well spent.

If our confidence in our Creator is supreme, there should be no circumstance which should shake our faith; and we do not believe there ever was an enterprise of greed which hath not, or shall not, sometime, or in some manner, be compelled to pave the way for love, and when it hath performed its part in the creation of a better thought it shall be forgotten.

Through the power to choose and direct our thought the responsibility for our growth and our happiness upon us is conferred, and no outward circumstance can any value for us express, till that value be fixed and determined from within; and none have been so deceived as those who have looked for the Kingdom of God elsewhere.

This one fact many do not yet comprehend that we are just where we have chosen to be—tied to that post our thought hath hitched us to, and we shall there remain till we ourselves make the change. Every man is as small as that which he subjects himself to, and

he who is no larger than his desire for those things which money can buy, or any other thing which outside of him lies, has not yet uncovered those gifts which lie buried within.

Without thought is the statement that a man should not be blamed for what he does not know. If the thing he does not know is not the very thing he is to find out, we know not what his talents are given to him for, or how in any other enterprise those talents can be developed and increased.

He who thinks that the source of a man's foolishness is not in what he does not know, shall reach no end to his journey while he continues to look for it elsewhere.

"Since ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise," is one of those statements made in jest which should not be taken otherwise.

Above the falls, in a boat, oblivious of any danger, some little children sat and their shouts of pleasure on the shores could be heard as to the brink of that cataract, this precious cargo shot.

After a catastrophe we never hear anything of blissful ignorance said; and if it were not for blissful ignorance there would be few catastrophes to regret.

In the journey towards perfection accidents of imperfection must occur, but blissful ignorance hath never fortified us against a danger, or removed an obstacle from our way.

Be it ignorance blissful or ignorance of another sort, we shall never be chargeable with ought that comes not from our lack of thought.

Adversity raps the knuckles of the thoughtless and befouls the springs of life with envy and hatred for him whose thoughtfulness hath developed a success; and it

is observed: that those who begin as borrowers as lenders have seldom been known to end.

As surely as forethought is that upon which bank accounts are built, just so surely we shall make no drafts on pleasure, till our forethought hath placed them to our credit; nothing hath been discovered which gives relish to life like the thankfulness in the mind of him who owes no debts, which he does not discharge, and we must not forget that our obligations with which we are most concerned are not those which are measured in dollars and cents.

Whatever thy station in life may be, it shall be thy thoughts which make thee rich or poor, and since there can be no limits in the thoughts which may be coined, there shall be no boundaries to the blessings we may acquire.

Senile dementia is not confined to those whose life has been numbered in years, with many, if not all, it has begun too early to be termed an affliction of age.

In no manner shall a faculty of its usefulness be so easily deprived, as putting it away to rest; and so little are our talents used that the wonder is that we have made as much progress as we have.

That which we allow to shrivel and waste because of our neglect; or its usefulness impair because of a thoughtless use, cannot be said to be a victim of time.

No disappointments have been prevented by what we did not know, and we have been robbed of no pleasures by the troubles we have learned how to avoid.

None are able to measure the happiness, or estimate the number of years, which may be added by love's tonics, and a thought's control.

They who would tell what a man's happiness, or his age ought to be, shall not know it from the lives which

have been known, for that man hath not been observed, whose life with love's purest delights hath been filled, nor that man hath not been found who hath lived to the full capacity of his thought's control; and there is no known data from which it may be inferred how much happiness a man should be able to glean, or how long a man ought to live.

Because of an error in their thought of age and time, some strange impressions into the minds of men have crept; but none should forget, that time contributes no less to growth than it does to decay—neither the one nor the other by time have been harmed, nor of either hath it been the cause.

The only part time performs is to furnish the opportunity for a cause to work; and he who looks to time as a cause shall find no explanation for an effect.

His talents in idleness shall rust and waste, while he continues in his thought that his age is a cause of any of those conditions of which he may complain. Not a cell in our bodies to-day exists, which was in our bodies a few short years ago; and let them tell who may if there are any living bodies which are old. Surely, we do not understand how there is a difference in men which should be attributed to time. You, who would so much to time refer, should be able to inform us, why those cells of which our bodies are built, when they subdivide and new cells create, do not to a like cell give birth, more youthful than those parent cells can be; and why they should not so appear; and likewise be able to name that subtle influence which determines why those cells build not one member where another ought to be.

That class who would tell us that God hath said thus and so, because some one else has said He said thus

and so, may also assume to tell where a thought gets its birth; of what it is made; how much space it occupies; from whence it comes when we determine upon its recall; who that messenger may be which passes between us and it, when that thought is summoned in response to our desire; the connection which exists between a thought and its executed command; and of what its power doth consist—whether memory be an impression, or a scar, imbedded in the substance of a molecule, to its descendants to be transferred, and if so, what becomes of that scar when the molecule is renewed.

Like the children in the boat, in blissful ignorance we drift and float, not observing whither those currents which are carrying us on may be bound, or, if they might be avoided and shunned, till they have become too swift and strong for our strength to overcome.

Look into childhood's rosy and sunlit face and see what is there that you have lost, and you might discover why it has been said "Of such is the Kingdom of God"; look into your own, observe the texture of your skin, its lack of support caused by the wastages below, and view the wreckage in neck and feature, contour and mind, and tell us how those differences between you and the child have occurred. Time with those changes had no more to do than it did with carrying those children over the falls in the boat.

Because of our lack of thought we are not permitted to state how many of those currents, by which we have been carried along, could have been avoided and shunned; and if a man shall not be blamed for not finding out all that he may know we know not to what his failures should be charged.

Time is our greatest friend, and eternity shall not

be long enough for us to discover all we may wish to find.

If we could no new explorations make, we would wish to cast our lives aside, as we have done with many an old book we have read, and take up a new one in its stead. We know not if there be a function of our body, or our mind, which our thought may not suspend, neither do we know how many or what kind of cells our minds may create, or amend, neither do we know the cause of those suspensions which our thought may not find. If we would look to a thought, or the lack of a thought, for some of these changes which to time have been charged, we might be startled at the result.

That innocent Thought we entertained, repeats its intrusions till a habit has been formed, then automatically, and unobserved, without repose its destructions are wrought.

If our appearances do not belie, it might be an unpleasant reflection to be reminded of the number of those destructive habits which must be at work tearing down more than our constructive ones have replaced.

He who craves our sympathy for his misfortunes and his ills, far too often to that class belongs to whom Jesus referred as unworthy servants, who were being deprived of those which they had because they had not unwrapped their napkins in which their talents were hid. Instead of seeking sympathy, if we would look within the cause of most, if not all, of our complaints shall be found.

Engaging our energies in money making, and enterprises of greed, develop no wholesome and helpful thoughts, and the source of our disappointments may be nearer our thresholds than we suspect. When we know more of our thought, we shall know more of our

souls; and it may be ascertained how many so called miracles were not miracles at all.

“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you,” is a statement the significance of which hath not yet been understood. Jesus said the things that He did and even greater we should do, when our lives are controlled by the thoughts He obeyed; and we shall not be heard to deny the truth which in this statement is contained, while we refuse to follow the formula He prescribed.

History hath not disclosed one, who had developed that purity and strength of thought, to whom it might have been wise, or even safe, to entrust those powers, which it is said that Jesus displayed; and may it not to us appear why His promises by men have not yet been claimed?

In His reply to the Pharisees, He pointed out where the Kingdom of God should be found, and we are not without information as to how righteousness may be acquired. If His promises would be claimed, where should a man look if he should not look within?

Proclaiming the natural depravity of man for nineteen hundred years, Jesus' teachings have been denied and the doctrine has been taught, that, if a man would be raised he must look without for his help; but in all that long, long time we fail to observe that any progress has been made, which has not come from the use he hath made of his thought, and from within, and not without, his strength hath been derived.

“It is truth alone which is valuable, and this fears nothing. The crucible doth not hurt the gold. The dross alone falls away and of the dross we are certainly well rid.”

If to bolster a mistake, or an error, in our thought, we have attached to Jesus' personality and teachings a different significance than that which He claimed, our thought should be changed.

All our development and our joys are in our thoughts contained; likewise, the limits to our sorrows and disappointments are placed, and they who have not discovered that the Kingdom of God is within, have observed in vain.

When we find ourselves, we shall discover God, and adoration and love shall take the place of those weaknesses which many of our petitions have conveyed.

Our thought as a function of our souls may be recognized with its conceptions and expressions limited and colored by the medium which it must pass through; and in this manner our individualities are preserved.

Of our thought is all our growth; of our growth is all our duty; of the growing of a larger and a better thought are our pleasures; *in the control of our thought is the control of our growth, our duties and our pleasures.*

"Allow the thought and it may lead to a choice; carry out the choice and it will be the act; repeat the act and it will form the habit; allow the habit and it fixes the character; continue the character and it fixes the destiny."

Entertain the Good and the Bad will shun thy hospitality; bestow thy attention on Evil and it will be thy guest; contend with it and it will contend with thee; temporize with it and it will occupy thy thought; forget it and it will die of neglect; closed to its entrance must be thy gates, if thou wouldst not have it lingering about thy doorsteps, till favoring opportunity finds it reëstablished as a favored guest.

No thought shares our entertainment without our permission, or invitation; likewise, those we choose to abandon shall cease to annoy; and herein lies the circumstance by which our destiny, by us, is controlled.

On little attentions, however slight, bad habits do mightily thrive; and to many sinful vices we have been enslaved, because this circumstance has been overlooked.

That thought which becomes our habitual guest, noticed, or unnoticed, though it be, usurps a control, which in our upward progress lends itself to willing service, or may become our master to tyrannize and destroy. Upon the character of these permitted guests the control of our destiny doth much depend, and in this manner, our pleasures and our joys are within our keeping placed. Thus there is no way devised by which we shall be excused from the lack of our talents' use.

“Think of living, wert thou the pitifulest of all the sons of earth, 'tis no idle dream, but a solemn reality. It is all thou hast to front eternity with”; and there is no offense with which you can be charged, which shall not be of your thought, and none can dispute Jesus' words that the Kingdom of God shall be found within.

No more weakening thoughts have been taught than those which would instruct that we should look elsewhere for our help. Because of that thought the Church hath for nineteen hundred years been a laggard in the race, and hath not kept pace with the advance which man in other fields of effort has made.

A thought which as a conscious expression of the will is manifest, by many repetitions becomes as a habit fixed, and when that habit is allowed, without volition of the will it doth, as it were, automatically reoccur;

till in time all trace of its parentage may be lost. Imprinted as in a plastic mold, a part of our subconscious self it becomes, whereby instinct may get its birth, and to future generations becomes transferred as an inherent quality of a race.

Many, if not all, of the functions of our bodies and of our minds, which are now subconsciously performed, may have begun in response to a thought, which in its inception was within our control. Though the conscious quality of that thought hath been lost, and no coöperation of our wills appear, those functions, nevertheless, are performed in response to a thought; and however remote the parentage of these activities may be, the potency of a thought is the great fact with which we are impressed.

We are thus admonished, if that thought we entertain be not well chosen we should beware how we allow it to remain, for no mortal man can measure the consequences of a thought which is permitted to be our guest till it doth the character of a habit gain. Good thoughts into habits should be grown, and it must not be forgotten that evil thoughts will grow themselves.

Good is the positive, evil the negative extreme; and no good would endure without its negative opposing force by which its development is assured. If a thing could be which had no distance between its extremes, a positive without a negative might exist.

Without its opposing thought the good must fail, and evil like the good hath been an essential in our growth. The good becomes active as an expression of our will; the negative without volition on our part is a constant opposing force, which by its resistance builds the sinews of our strength.

As we develop and increase our growth the positive

thought which we to-day possess, becomes to-morrow's negative force, resisting the new and better thought which we find ourselves striving to put above it in place. Herein, may be traced those inventions of thoughtless men, by them used to explain those mysteries of creation they have not been able to comprehend, and referring these opposing forces, so necessary to their growth, to the natural depravity of man, which an afterthought on the Creator's part had required His intervention to overcome.

Since no vessel can more than its capacity hold, no man can exceed the limits fixed by his thought till that thought for a better is exchanged; and in this manner, the errors which surround a truth are removed, and the position of that truth made secure.

In the confusion of their thought men have referred to natural depravity, as something for which man should be blamed. If that which is natural be not of God, we know not where its origin should be sought, and we shall show greater faith in our Creator's handiwork when we observe greater wisdom in His plans.

A proclamation of your trust in Providence, can no great confidence inspire while you suggest so many things to be patched and repaired. Those who have striven to impart a faith, which Jesus never taught, should not be amazed at the havoc they have wrought; for, if it be true, that the Kingdom of God is within, how shall that Kingdom be reached by directing a man's faith away from himself, away from his divinity and away from his soul? Belief in our instructor may be necessary to implant His thought, it is belief in ourselves that produces the result.

Referring to a weakness in man, which none other than an imperfect growth doth express (for perfec-

tion no weakness hath) as a possible unpardonable offense most surely refers to a plan which needs to be patched.

Little by little, through time's vast expanse, the worlds have been made. Patiently; patiently, through untold ages, and in lives we cannot number, man's estate, such as it now is, hath been reached, and we should not forget that that which for an eternity would last must not be hastily built.

Before the coal, which lies buried beneath our feet, was the plant from which it was organized and produced; and before those rocks and stones which do underlie and the soil which did arise, was the life which builded those fossilized remains, which in rocks and stones and soil are manifest. And we shall not be able to state that this earth did not begin with a life, farther back in time, than we may conceive, which did gather the material from the elements then in space and organized the first atom, which became the nucleus around which the world, and all the worlds, were built, and we know not if this building process ever stops. The question from whence came that original molten mass, which in cooling did create a crust, and the waters upon its surface condense, is no objection to the thought, for we are still to account for that mass before it became molten with the heat.

"These nuclei individually attract those elements and substances that have corresponding individual affinities, and these accumulate and condense and purify and form systems of suns, comets, planets, and satellites. And these planetary organizations form the central mass, and fertile womb of each orb that rolls in space."

Whether mind and matter, for all time, a co-

existence have had, the conviction cannot be escaped that all these worlds have been organized and builded in obedience to a thought. Undisturbed by the lapse of time, with greatest patience and wisdom shown, these worlds have been created and hung in space; shall more haste and less thoughtfulness in the making of a man be expressed?

As through a glass darkly the Creator's plans and purposes by us have been observed, and but a small portion of the immensity of His wisdom in one short lifetime, by us, shall be viewed. If there be none who can dispute the wisdom of His laws, there are none who may assert that a thing, or circumstance, hath occurred, which hath not, or shall not contribute to our advance.

Like the child that stumbles before it learns to walk, innumerable may be the times we fail, the time shall be in this life, or some life to come, when we shall succeed; and as each step in our progress hath been taken we have discovered how our strength has been builded and fortified by the mistakes we have made. Shall we despise those steps by which we have been raised, or shall we be able to state if there be one step in all that journey taken which never should have been made?

We shall not pass judgment on the struggle that another makes, though it in hopeless failure may seem to be involved; for like you he is a child of God, and hath His love as much as you; and that struggle, by which your estate was attained, is the same as that by which his shall be won; and whether he may be nearer to the Kingdom you may not know.

With your development you may be well pleased, but its purchase price you should not forget; for naught

to thee or thy neighbor comes which gets not its measure and its value from its cost, and those gains we have made, never can be known till that veil shall part, which doth the past from the present obscure.

Stop and weigh that thought by which you place yourself in the category of the saved, while you contemplate how thy brother may be lost. *Stop, I say and weigh that thought.*

All by the same standards of conduct cannot be judged, till in their evolution, all have reached the same plane; and if we could be permitted to view our own past, we might not be heard to despise the progress which other lives have made. Till we know where, how far down, and how far back the trail of our development doth lead, we should not have too much confidence in the judgment we pass upon another's deeds.

The conflict between error and truth which is waged, while an error in our thought prevails, and the discords which these conditions, create, are God's disciplines by which our lives are purified and raised; whereby it should not be said that any man's development is permitted to fail.

If the differences in men to the differences in the development in their thought should be charged, which cannot be denied, then the differences in their thought to the differences in their equipment should not be charged, for if their talents throughout their lives and the lives which had gone before, had been put to the same use, no difference in their equipment would appear, whereby we conclude that a man's duty is involved in the use he makes of the talents which he has, and since the use he will make of these talents upon his faith in them depends, we discover why Jesus so

much importance to faith attached, and the kind of faith to which He referred may be understood.

Faith without works is dead, and for a most logical reason that a man shall hardly be persuaded to use a talent in which he does not believe.

Whether it be the relics of some saint, long since deceased, or the startling and ill considered statement of an evangelist, whatever the circumstance may be which doth implant the thought by which our faith, consciously or sub-consciously, is aroused, it is the faith in ourselves that persuades us to use our talents by which the results are produced. The miracle of grace was involved when these divine gifts upon us were conferred, and there are no needs of special providences to amend. The difference between thee and thy brother is the difference in your thoughts; your growth and his may not have reached the same plane.

The journey which lies before is much longer than that which lies behind and there shall be time for all of these differences to be outgrown. Space hath no limits and time hath no end, and we do not comprehend if there be aught which may not by a thought be overcome. All qualities and all growths are relative, and small indeed must be the thought which makes the difference in men's size an unpardonable offense.

Believing that there are other lives, which a man may live, but denying that he shall have opportunities for growth, in any one, but this life's brief space, surely hath no reason for its support. No less thoughtless is that doctrine, which is preached, of the terrible visitations which shall befall because of unbelief, with the unbelief of which Jesus taught left out; or so beclouded by other thoughts that it is seldom observed, and never understood.

When Jesus said, "Come unto me all ye who are heavy laden and I will give you rest," think you that a miracle was to be performed whereby a profit from your indolence might be gained; and an earning power to your talents given which should not come from those talents' use or was He to instruct in the manner of those talents' use whereby this rest by you might be gained?

In the anxiety of our search for some one who might be found to take for us our exercise, by which our strength must be built, we have failed to observe that the import of all Jesus' teachings has been to reveal to us how wonderful those talents shall appear when we may be persuaded to unroll those napkins we had hid them in and put them to use, as He had done and in the manner He disclosed.

Is this not the way, the truth and the life of which He spoke and which caused Him to state that no man should see the Father who sought Him in any other way. "Neither shall you say Lo here or lo there for behold the Kingdom of God is within you," and he is without thought who looks to a miracle to explain "the way" which "is so plain that wayfaring man though a fool need not err therein." He, who finds the effort to think, too great an undertaking for him to make, shall discover none but himself who shall be blamed for the mistakes he may make; and he shall not be heard to complain of the size of that enclosure he will not enlarge. As are the thoughts we entertain, and have been those which have gone before upon which our present thoughts are built, so are we, and no limits to our development in any other manner have been imposed.

In all life's wide expanse an idle thought hath never

been known and never shall be found. Each performs its part and gives birth to its own; and however great, or however small it may have seemed to be, its impress is there in our personality expressed and in face and feature engraved. It is the sum total of all of those which into our lives have come which have developed the kind of body and mind we possess.

Those poisons which may be taken in with our food and drink and the air we breathe have no destructiveness which doth with that of a bad thought compare; and the secrecy with which that bad thought may be entertained doth none of the virulence of that bad thought destroy.

How deadly have been those thoughts we have secretly entertained never shall be known. If our disappointments with growth and pleasures would be replaced those we strive to conceal must be as pure as those we are willing to make known. The selection of those thoughts which shall be our permitted guests is the one great duty which we owe to ourselves, which can never be shunned, and the one obligation which by none other than ourselves can be discharged.

The character of our choosing doth determine the kind of development we shall attain and the quality of those pleasures we shall be permitted to enjoy, and there are none who may tell how a man may be profited and of his mistakes be cured, if any of the consequences of those mistakes from his shoulders might be removed. Neither shall any be found who can explain how that exercise which is so necessary to develop our strength can by another be performed and the benefits of that exercise to us be preserved.

There is no miracle of grace in man's growth and development involved, by which, he, of any of his

responsibilities for his growth, may be relieved and his offenses by another be atoned; and when Jesus' teachings are understood, this doctrine, like many other inventions of thoughtless men, put forth to explain impossible situations which their false interpretations have placed them in, will be omitted from our creeds.

Every thought which a part of our lives becomes acquires its character, which determines its value to us, from all the previous experiences we have known, and by them are fixed the character of those foundations upon which we build. Experience furnishes the background against which our knowledge is revealed, and the structure in no manner could be preserved if any of our experiences might be removed, and your doctrine of the remission of sins you have not been able to explain.

Had we been as diligent in our search for truth as we have been in our efforts to shirk our duties and of our responsibilities to be relieved, we might have discovered how many of our so-called Christian doctrines are not Christianity at all.

That lack, which in men's lives during all these nineteen hundred years since Jesus' time have appeared, to Christianity cannot be charged, if Christianity has not been practiced or taught.

Is there anywhere the rich and powerful get such encouragement for their hypocrisies and their greeds as they find in the protection and support these errors in the creeds of the church doth lend?

Integrity has not been a conspicuous attribute where personal responsibility with infallible certainty has not been fixed; and we know of no circumstance which hath made such hypocrites and weaklings of men as the errors in their creeds, that the responsibility for

a thought they have ever entertained, by another, could be assumed, or that an act of their lives could be reversed or condoned by a sacrifice another hath made.

Inventing miracles to bridge the gulf that separates them from the truth, forgetting that there would be no impassable barriers in this manner, to be bridged, if it were not for the errors in their creeds; destroying personal responsibility by suggesting miraculous avenues of escape, by Divine Providence devised, have created the kind of moral instability we might expect and left us with no firm or fixed standards by which our moral conduct should be judged.

These inconsistencies in our religions have to such proportions grown that an eminent and conscientious investigator of the religions of the world hath felt constrained to state, "Religion and morality ought not to be associated. Each has been the disturber of the other. They cannot keep step together." The mistake he made was caused by his failure to distinguish between the religion which Jesus taught and the religion of the church.

Educating a class of men especially versed in dim and misty lore, to make more mysterious the mysteries of their misty creeds, and ordaining them to preach of that "way" which Jesus said, "Is so plain that the wayfaring man though a fool need not err therein," and never for an instant seeming to discern the irony of the position their pretense hath placed them in, is a remarkable commentary upon the extent to which men by thoughtlessness may be led.

Of what dimension is that thought which would class as pagans all those who refuse to limit their conception of their Creator's wisdom and His love to those proportions these organizations may choose to pre-

scribe; and is it not quite possible that support to its enterprises are withheld because it may be believed that those truths it is supposed to represent may be so smothered and submerged by the errors which surround that the effectiveness of those truths are nullified and obscured?

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

As if to emphasize the truth which these commands contain, and to close all avenues through which Hypocrisy might attempt to escape, it was said, “If a man say I love God and hateth his brother he is a liar, for he who loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen. And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God loveth his brother also.”

Those enterprises of personal gain and personal aggrandizement, which the pursuits of wealth and fame involve, can hardly be said to be enterprises in which the love of God and the love of our neighbor take a prominent part; and the statement, “How hardly shall they who have riches enter into the Kingdom of Heaven,” no astonishment should create.

Is the love of God and the love of your neighbor the thoughts which are made most prominent in your lives, your preaching and your creeds? For it is by the answer to this question you are to be judged. The beautiful words and phrases you may use have not deceived, for your lives are all that we need to observe, and may we again remind that your thought is one

thing you cannot obscure or disguise. It is only the lack of observation on the part of the thoughtless which sometimes allows your hypocrisies without detection to pass, but be not deceived of all the things you cannot afford to do, to fool yourself is one thing you cannot afford to do.

Every time we put a better thought above the one we discard a re-birth to that extent takes place, and there is no other meaning to the statement that you should be born again that we can comprehend.

The "trail of the sawdust path," or any other avowal you may make, very little meaning hath, the significance is all in the thoughts you put behind your life's control.

In those two great commands to which we have referred we are given the perfect ideals towards which our thoughts should bend. While perfection in the absolute may never be reached, our journey must the right direction take, and our satisfaction and pleasures come because we are in the right path.

While we may be at different points on the way that circumstance doth none of the pleasures to any traveler therein deny. In all this enterprise of growth our thought is the important circumstance.

"The law of progression regards and endows all men equally and impartially. There is perfect harmony between endowments and responsibilities. Obligations are commensurate with powers possessed. All men are born alike, not equal. All men are equally dependent and independent; but no two men are on the same plane of growth, having exactly similar wants and needs, at the same time; all go to the Fountain to be filled and inspired, but each with his own measure,

which holds more or less, or different, than that of every other at the inexhaustible source."

From you, the pathway of your past may be hidden. Some day it shall be revealed; and when you look back over that long and devious journey, your soul has traveled to reach the eminence of which you boast, you may discover that God, to you, had not been so partial, as you supposed.

That the journey your brother has pursued may not have commenced as soon as yours, and that the time may be short when he shall have gained and possessed as much or more than you; neither be mistaken for he may, even now, be farther on the way.

There is one other phase of Thought to which we would allude. You, who would reject, as evidence, all those expressions and manifestations, which, by your materialistic standards, cannot be measured and weighed, or even be visualized, or seen, may permit us to suggest some considerations of another sort.

Nothing, you will admit, cannot manifest, and nothing does express. Likewise, you must agree that that which makes an impression, and which manifest sufficiently to produce observable results, of whatever sort it may be, is a something, which exists, and, if it have existence, it must occupy some space, have form, substance and weight; otherwise, it could not manifest or a something be.

You have your image in a mirror seen, and a something of the wonders of the photographic art have known. What from you to the surface of that mirror went, which returned to you that image of yourself? If there is a manifestation, there must be something which manifests; and, if it be a something, it has form, substance and weight. What was it which impinged

against that photographic plate, and in an instant of time, etched thereon every object, which came within the focus of its lens?

One day I saw a picture of a section of the moon, one of eight thousand, which a French scientist had taken. These when joined together, brought down to earth and disclosed in detail, the whole surface of that body, and revealed to me its hills and valleys, located thousands of miles away, and each of those pictures, in an instant of time, were painted for all to be viewed and seen.

If, with the painting of those pictures, the rays of light were concerned, what was the hand which aided by that light, spread those pigments there, with a fidelity that no hand of man can imitate? Did you see that something? Can you measure it? Can you delineate for us the form of that which imprinted and penciled that image in the mirror, and those pictures on those photographic films? Have you ever seen the operator, or the process, which took place?

Perhaps you can better define this operation, by the statement, that what we saw was the results of vibrations conducted to that film, by the ethers of space. That all things are in a state of vibration, and that the rate and character of these vibrations determines the form, substance, and character of everything which exist; and that its vibrations determines what that something may be. That every object which came within the focus of those photographic lenses was ever throbbing and vibrating, throwing out those pulsations, which to each of those objects belonged, giving to the ethers of space the same vibratory action they possessed; and thus, they were impinged against those photographic plates, etching thereon the same vibra-

tions which to each of those objects belonged; and these vibrations, by these pictures, are thrown out again, to be registered upon the retina of the eye, whereby these objects are seen, and sensed.

In following us, dear friend, what has become of that materialistic platform upon which you stood, when you set out on this journey with our thought?

If you would explain those pictures by the rate and character of those vibrations, which these objects photographed, sent out, tell us what there is which may be visible, or invisible which takes not its quality, its weight, its form, its contour, and every characteristic from which it may be recognized and differentiated, if it takes them not from these vibrations. But you saw them not, neither did you measure, or weigh them. Yet, you must admit they were substantiated, having form and weight.

Thus, it appears that there are many problems which our materialistic toe may stub itself against, which our materialistic philosophy is inadequate to solve, except it be admitted that all definitions of matter are so narrow, and by ignorance so circumscribed, that all our conceptions of matter are wrong. That in fact all things, be they visible or invisible, and all their various manifestations are simply matter in different states, and rates of vibration. That their visibility depends upon the rate and character of their vibrations, which determine whether they are seen or unseen. We cannot conceive how much greater, and how vastly greater than that which is seen, is that invisible universe which fills the never ending reaches of space.

He who only takes into account those things which he sees, hears, and can measure, and weigh, lives in a very small world indeed, with all his thought, his joys,

and his activities limited by the boundaries he has prescribed. Material, as by us defined, takes into account only that which may be seen. The spiritual is of the unseen and he who takes not into account the spiritual significance of life has missed the greatest lesson it has to teach.

The first and primary cause of all phenomena is the spiritual, likewise these phenomena apart from their spiritual significance have no purpose or meaning.

Every so called religion, every science, and every philosophy, to the extent they overlook the spiritual causes which underlie their investigations and disclosures, and to the extent they fail to comprehend and emphasize the spiritual significance of these discoveries, and disclosures, to that extent they are imperfect and misleading, and in varying degrees, exert pernicious and disturbing influences.

To the extent that our philosophy may be deficient in these particulars it is defective and imperfect. Thus we have stated the standards by which, we believe, our thought should be judged.

Since all so called religions, all sciences, and all philosophies, as now comprehended and taught, are largely materialistic, and wherever their claims to the contrary may be, ignore spiritual causes, and spiritual significances, they are imperfect and misleading, and in varying degrees, have been and are exerting pernicious and disturbing influences.

“I deny that rock is a substance; I deny that a tree is a substance. Yet, on the other hand, I affirm the outward world is real. I am not a Berkelenian, because I affirm the external world to be a real world. But it is a real phenomenon only.

“I never realized more thoroughly than at this hour

that the world that men regard as so substantial is only a world of shadow. These outside forms and facts are nothing but phenomena.

“When we perceive the unity of nature; when we regard the mutual transformability of bodies, of all forces; when we discover in the analyzed sunbeam and starbeam the elements which have been precipitated and hardened into rocks, and coal, and iron, and other metals; when we behold everywhere the reign of the same invisible power, ever changing in form, but ever the same in essence, the soul is carried on and on in the tide of inspiration up to the same great central conception that spirit is all in all. Substance is necessarily eternal; phenomena necessarily limited in time and space.”

Life is a spiritual manifestation, and all phenomena, visible or invisible, are only expressions of spiritual causes. Spirit organizes substance into matter, thereby creating all material forms. In the final analysis, all things are of the spirit, by spirit created, and without spirit nothing was created that is created.

Without substance a thing could not be; even thoughts are spiritual forms of spiritual substance possessing motion, form and color, in infinite variety, giving to each a character, and an individuality, by which it is distinguished, and which determines the power and influence it exerts. That which hath substance must have form, for whether it be spirit, or whether it be matter, all things as substance and form are manifest. When the wonders of thought are better known, the nature of our responsibilities will be better understood, and we may more clearly comprehend how the atmosphere in which we live by Thoughts of Love, or Thoughts of Hate, are changed.

“The world will be lovelier when it is better loved.” Nature increases in loveliness, when we increase our search on the side of her loveliness. If we persist in looking on the side of her loveliness, in time it shall be discovered that she has no other side.

Search for the good in your friend, and in him, whom you may have thought was not your friend, and then observe the change that takes place in you and them. When your thought dwells only upon the good, you may discover how much more lovely will be the place in which you live.

Like those vibrations which do from all nature's objects and beauties radiate, and etch their images and outlines upon the photographic plate, and without which vibrations they could not be visualized and sensed, so do our thoughts their throbbing impulses throw out, imprinting and distributing their impression and their pictures everywhere to be sensed and picked up by those who within the focus of their waves may chance to come, or to its vibrations may be attuned.

Thus our thoughts like thoughts in others influence. Our suspicions of others sometimes like suspicions of us in them create. What we send out comes back again. “All chickens come home to roost,” may be a homely statement, but in meaning it is significant. Be not mistaken, you can not change the Karma in which you live, till you change your thought. When we shall comprehend the power of a thought to help or to harm, a most valuable lesson shall be learned.

But our experiences, the good and the so-called bad, those conditions of fair repute, and those harsher ones of which we complain, and to which we often surrender, in time shall teach that lesson as by no other instructor can be taught.

“I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of the after-life to spell;
And by and by my Soul returned to me,
And answered ‘I myself am both Heav’n and Hell.’”

**CHAPTER IV: THE TRAIL OF
HYPOCRISY AND GREED**

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“It was withal a highly polished age,
And scrupulous in ceremonious rite.
When stranger stranger met upon the way
First each to each bowed most respectfully,
And large profession made of humble service,
And then the stronger took the other’s purse;
And he that stabbed his neighbor to the heart,
Stabbed politely, and returned the blade,
Reeking into its sheath with graceful air.”

—*Pollock.*

CHAPTER IV

THE TRAIL OF HYPOCRISY AND GREED

“She lies, whom Money has killed, and the Greed of Money, the thrice driven slave, whom a man has calmly tortured, and cast away in the dust—and calls it not murder, because he only looked on; while his trusted lieutenants, Supply and Demand, pinned the victim down—and her own mother, Nature, slew her.

“Do you think your smooth faced respectability will save you? or that Cowardice carries a master key to the Universe in its pocket, scrambling miserably out of the ditch on the heads of those beneath it?

“Do you grab interest on money and lose all interest in life? Do you found a huge system of National Credit on absolute personal Distrust? Do you fatten like a ghoulish on the dead corpses of animals and then expect to be of a cheerful disposition?

“Do you continually live further and further from Nature till you actually doubt, if there be any natural life, or any avenging instinct in the dumb elements? and then do you wonder that your own life is slowly ebbing, that you have lost all gladness and faith?”*

Time has been, when men by brute force, the mastery obtained. If right did not make right, the right was assumed, and the weaker by the stronger were subdued. Wit and Cunning hath since supplanted much, which, by mere physical strength had been achieved; and while the enslavement may not be less intensified, more refinement in the means employed hath appeared.

* Carpenter. By permission.

Barbarism is the designation we have to the former applied; and, as if its sting might thus be concealed, to the latter we have given a more euphonious name, for that is known to us as civilized.

The character of Barbarism is not changed by giving it a better sounding name. Whatever may be the terms we use, where the only difference is in the method employed there is no significance in the distinction we would make.

If he, who triumphs over his simpler competitor, because of greater intellect, may rightfully claim all that he does in this manner acquire; then he who wrests from his weaker contender those things for which he strives, because he is endowed with greater brute strength, for like reasons may assert that he has the right to hold and enjoy whatever he may thus be enabled to get.

No glory can be claimed by him, who outstrips a cripple in the race, and whether our accomplishment be by reason of our superior mental equipment or because of our greater physical strength, there is no difference in the quality of the act by which an advantage by these means are gained.

If all of those among whom you have lived had possessed a mental and a physical equipment which was equal or superior to that which belonged to you and with like cunning were endowed, and by the same scruples as you were moved, would it have been possible for you to have acquired many of those possessions which you now have and hold?

If, of these things you claim any are possessed because of a superiority you over another may have had, then how do you make it appear, that these things which were thus attained, were not also acquired be-

cause of his weakness; and how shall you deny that they have not, to that extent, been gained at his expense, by which circumstance you owe to him a debt by you to be discharged?

No race, with fairness, can be won, where any handicaps may exist, which place the contestants on unequal terms. Whether the strength of those, who with others compete, be expressed in brawn or brains, protection should be extended to the weaker proportioned to the freedom the stronger enjoy.

When those who of the love of God, and the love of their fellowmen, do boast, shall relinquish those possessions they have annexed because of the advantages their competitors' handicaps have to their enterprises lent, greater confidence in their claims to righteousness will be inspired.

Diligence and Frugality are entitled to their rewards, which Sloth and Dishonesty may not dispute; but no rights are thereby conferred by which the bounds, by love of our neighbor fixed, may be overstepped.

Greed and Avarice have a quality, which for Love may not be mistaken, and no acceptable return to our talents' use can be made while we permit them to be prostituted to a selfish use.

The energy we in any direction expend, beyond that which necessity impels, depends upon the value we attach to that which we seek; and the motive force, which behind our activities lies, is measured by the worth we have placed upon that which we would achieve. Thus, our false ideals, while their falsity remains undisclosed, may give a greater stimulus to our activities than the real hath supplied. Wherein it has, by some, been thought men's activities must not be denied that stimulus which the freedom to annex millions, and other

things which Greed doth crave, seem to give; otherwise, those activities might stagnate and decay, and for lack of these incentives many, if not all, of the world's great enterprises would be refused the energy so necessary for their prosecution and support. As if the allurements of an evil inducement might have more than virtue had to offer.

If the energy we expend is induced by the value we place upon that which we would attain, what becomes of Greed's inducements when it shall be proven that its promises are fictitious and are incapable of fulfillment? Love fails not in its promises, never lags, and knows no fatigues, and when our energies shall be by Love inspired our enterprises from lack of support, shall never fail.

When we shall be called upon to regain that which to us has been lost in those enterprises which by an evil inducement we have been persuaded to prosecute, the nature of the penalties which by our transgressions are imposed will be better understood, and we may comprehend how our offenses by ourselves are atoned.

All that we have has been acquired and is possessed with reference to others' rights; and he who strives to ignore those rights, to that extent, deprives those things he claims of their value to him. God, in His Wisdom, has established a law of ownership which none can circumvent; we only find our own when we seek it in the good of all, and the thought that for ourselves alone it should be sought destroys that for which we seek.

The fleeting satisfaction, which the accumulations of our greed have lent, is a deceptive counterfeit. Every step by a selfish enterprise enforced, in this life or some life to come, must be retraced; and no miracle of grace

has established a moral bankruptcy court where the payment of any of these debts may be escaped.

A fool's paradise is not altogether a safe place in which to live, and, if the delirium of joy you express because of your supposed acceptance as a member of the fold is inspired by the thought that there is nothing you have been required to give up; that the accumulations of your avarice may still be retained; and the distinctions you have created between you and your neighbor need not be taken down, the hallucination should be removed for it stands between thee and thy greatest good. Be not deceived, he is not born again who does not change his thought, and he is not always a messenger of God, who doth such mission assert.

No one serves two masters and you shall never be found in Love's services while you are a slave to Greed. Likewise, he who makes the saving of your soul an enterprise of gain, may well be questioned as to which master he serves; for he who would save others should be saved himself.

He is not born again who changes not his thought. Except to implant an error in men's minds, much that has the name of Christianity assumed may not be Christianity at all.

We cannot circumvent the laws of God, and only where they are obeyed can their benefits be retained. All our possessions have a double use; one to elevate our neighbor, the other to advance ourselves. We should think of others as we would think of ourselves and should treat their rights, and their opportunities for pleasure, and for gain with the same concern that we would have them treat ours, and if we were the weaker and they were the strong.

“Thyself thy foe, to thyself too cruel
Nature’s bequest gives nothing but doth lend,
And being frank she lends to those are free.
Then, beauteous niggard, why dost thou abuse
The bounteous largeness given thee to give?
Profitless usurer, why dost thou use
So great a sum of sums, yet canst not live?
For having trafficked with thyself alone
Thou of thyself thy sweet self doth deceive;
Then when Nature calls thee to be gone,
What acceptable audit canst thou leave?”

Every deed is determined by the thought from which it gets its birth. You may preach of your faith, and tell us what your thought may be, but we cannot be deceived, for we know what you think when we see your face and observe how you live.

The love of your neighbor hath that growth which the manner of your living does disclose, and you shall not be heard to boast of your services to him, while you create distinctions which do so cruelly weigh down upon him.

I met a man. He was selling shoe strings on the street; bitter and cold were the wintry blasts, which beat against his thinly clothed frame; his left leg had been cut off above the knee, and to this was fitted a stick, upon which he walked; his right leg had been broken near the ankle, and so badly set that his shoe could not be laced; on his forehead appeared a deep and ugly scar, which extended across one cheek, and as he stood shivering in the cold, he asked me to buy. I said to him, “You are surely in a bad plight. How were your injuries received?” “I was hurt in falling from a roof on which I was doing carpenter work.” “Do you not find it very hard to get your living in this way?” I

inquired. "Yes, sir," he politely replied, "but what can one like me do?" "My dear man," I said, "your question is hard to answer." As I looked into that face, where the scars of want and privation were so cruelly traced, to myself I wondered why, in addition to these misfortunes which had befallen him, he should be compelled to get his scanty living by such means, or be segregated as a social derelict, and as so much human wastage to be sent to the Poor House, burdened with that sense of degradation which the removal to places of this character have ever implied. Society, which includes me, owes to all such as he the duty to treat them with that love and that respect due to a brother in distress, and not to make deeper and wider that gulf our attitude and demeanor has created between these unfortunates and those who are with more goods and chattels seized. And I left him weighted with the thought, that our duty to these can never be discharged till we have obliterated and destroyed all these distinctions which, thoughtlessly, or otherwise, we have permitted to exist.

Think you that the value of a human life by Jesus was measured by what might be its earning power, or by what might be its ability to accumulate and hold on to those things which to its possession might be reduced?

We were on a street with elegant mansions filled, and their occupants were passing by while we talked, and I thought how I would feel, if their chilly manners were directed against me, were I in this poor man's state; and I wondered how many costly mansions for our own selfish use alone would be built, if the conditions of our unfortunate brothers were taken more fully into account.

The cruel indifference of wealth; the poor man in

the cold; Lazarus or Dives, for which doth the future the better prospect hold?

Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand: Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was ahungered and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer Him saying, "Lord, when saw we thee ahungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto there?"

Then shall He answer them saying, "Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me."

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love it profiteth me nothing. Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoices in the truth; beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things; endureth all things.

"Love never faileth; but whether there be prophecies they shall fail, whether there be tongues they shall cease; whether there be knowledge it shall vanish away."

"Thou oily in the pulpit ever preaching, Peace,

peace, where there is no peace; Hast thou ever opened wide thine eyes?"

When the Bishop comes to town he goes with the rich man of his flock to sup, and if any of his sanctuaries by wealth have been polluted, his objections have not been spoken loud enough to be heeded, if they might even have been heard. When Jesus was here below He scourged the money changers from the house of God; and by the Pharisees it was charged that with publicans and sinners He was wont to consort.

"The shambles are in the temple as of yore, and the tables of the money changers waiting to be overturned."

What hast thou done to purge your temples of these unnatural thoughts, Hast thy voice been raised in effective and unmeasured tones against these sources of life's greatest wrongs? Dost thou lack courage, or art not the lines between right and wrong in thy mind well drawn?

Those who live in glass houses, are not easily persuaded to entertain those dangers which attend the practice of throwing stones; and moral courage has not been a distinguishing characteristic of those with unclean hands.

Self protection, not mutual admiration, is the source of that strength in those social compacts, which binds hypocrisy's devotees in the common enterprise of protecting their vanities and their greeds. Counterfeits of much of their popularity will be deprived, when those, whose pretensions and positions, which should give promise of more wholesome influences for good, shall relieve themselves of those possessions and acquisitions which stand so much in need of that co-operation, which others with similar thoughts to protect may be able to give.

Figs from thistles have not grown; and the fruits of love are not garnered where the seeds of greed, which need our vanities to shield and protect, are cultured and sown.

Lending our aids in making a virtue of the capacity to absorb, and glorifying him who doth advantages over others gain; preaching competition, as if coöperation were something to be shunned; cultivating the growths of strife by distinctions marking, as if he who beyond our threshold dwells, the qualities of an enemy assumes; creating of society an armed camp, as if life's activities should be viewed as a battling ground, we should not raise our voices in horror if wars do devastate and destroy till we take into account the part we have performed in creating these thoughts which do all strife support.

You cannot teach a doctrine which weakens men's responsibility by instructing that the full weight of their misdeeds shall not on their shoulders rest and deny your part in the thoughts you assist to create.

We shall not escape the pollution of our thought till its impurities are removed from its source.

By a designation we shall not be misled. Conducting a club in the name of religion, where social, or other distinctions are fostered, by no manner of means makes it a church.

That place, which hath brotherly love for a foundation, extends its invitation to my chauffeur and my coachman, as well as to me. If by my manner, or apparel, a thought is expressed, which may make that place, to my brother, uninviting, more need of a better thought, I may have than my coachman and my chauffeur.

There shall be no uplift, or worship in my service, while by any species of insanity, I permit the thought to possess me; that in my life and attainments, rather than my brother's a greater measure of divine love and grace is manifest. And that place should not be termed a sanctuary, which, in its creeds, or its practices, encourages the growth of a thought, that to me a higher seat should be given than that which is accorded my neighbor.

That thought, which, within me, would create a wish to use that, which I may have, to make a demarkation between him and me, as an enemy to my growth and happiness, and good fellowship should be abandoned.

Of its cold and clammy atmosphere, and that freezing dignity, which is molded of distinctions' marking, life shall never be rid, till we bring our souls out from their hiding, and their exclusiveness, where, by the cheering warmth of love, they may be reached.

Though that achievement, which by another may be possessed, shall be of him and not of me; if my thought be right, I shall help, and not obstruct any sunshine which may flood his way.

If the love of God and love of our neighbor shall be established, it shall be when our altars are sanctified with the purity of our thought, and not with rituals and formalities weighted.

Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy mind. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

Thus He established the standards by which your religion and your church shall be judged. If love of

God, and love of your neighbor, be not the dominant thought, how shall thou call thyself a Christian or thy meeting places the house of God?

If your righteousness is measured by that love which towards your neighbor is expressed, then your religion by your selfishness may be judged, and he who has not agreed with the thought you have displayed, or alined himself on your side, may not be so irreligious as you have striven to make it appear. By your works you shall be known, and the condemnation of your deeds cannot be denied.

“If a man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar, for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, cannot love God, whom he hath not seen. And this commandment have we from Him that he who loveth God loveth his brother also.”

The most hideous Thought that stalks abroad to-day is the thought that from my brother I should be distinguished as having more or better than he.

That deadly respectability which erects altars to aristocracy and designates them sanctuaries of God hath no essence of righteousness.

Think you that God created men that distinctions between them might be made; as if the glory of any could consist in the distance between these supposed elevations by them occupied?

My gains are not increased by the mistakes another makes; and he is, indeed, poor in thought who would, by comparison, capitalize his neighbor's weaknesses to gain a reputation for strength.

Our achievements are not enhanced by that which our neighbor lacks; and men are for nobler purposes made, than as stepping stones to be used, by which another may hope to gain an eminence.

Hath it been your thought, that with this life you began, or that the journey of the soul, by any, hath been traced? Hath it occurred to you how unspeakably small that conception must be, which would confine man's preparation for the experiences of an eternity to one life's brief span?

If we know not the degradation, through which the present, by us, hath been won, we do not know, if any advantage over another, by us, hath been gained: neither do we know how short may be the time, when all that we have attained, by him, may be surpassed. The thought, that there are any glories for us, which by our neighbor may not be shared, is a deception which love could never prompt.

In growth and development there is nothing which shall offend: but a desire to excel my brother hath nothing to commend. There is no least or greatest in the sight of God, and with equal love and forethought, the progress of all is viewed.

"At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus saying, Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?"

And Jesus called a little child and set him in the midst of them.

The rebuke so gentle yet emphatic—what a depth of meaning, and what eloquence in those words and their setting!

"Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

Dost thou understand of such there are no greatest?

Where would those flowers be that bloom in the innocent faces of childhood, if it were not from the purity of their minds?

How much does the delicate texture of their skins have to do with the innocency of their thoughts?

I have seen the bloom of youth disappear, but after the flowers have been trampled from their lives.

I have never seen them fade, till they were disappearing from their minds. The glow of those beautiful and wholesome faces ceases to exist when jealousy, hatred, greed, and corroding cares enter their little souls to destroy their sweetness and their joys.

In their innocency all is equality.

The purity of that thought leaves their lives like crystal springs with nothing to blur the images of Heaven reflected there.

But we shall behold the desolation in the beautiful garden of a soul which shall be wrought by sowing the seeds of a bad thought.

When the thought is implanted that a distinction should be made between them and their little play-mates: that all is not equality.

When that idea of superiority begins to sprout and to grow among those flower beds: and those beautiful plants begin to droop and die and all their glories and sweetness fade away; then we shall appreciate to what proportions a bad thought may grow: how deeply seated and widely spread its roots; how far reaching its branches; and numerous the seeds it shall scatter for other growths.

For out of that terrible thought of making distinctions between human souls, has been erected those monstrous structures of greed and avarice, which cast their shadows far and near, robbing the earth's increase, and shutting out love's warmth and sunshine.

What is the thought that prompted the building of that mansion in which you dwell? What is the purpose of that career so carefully surveyed and planned?

What is the end of that ambition which is absorbing your energies?

Of all men those questions do you the most concern? If you build rightly you build well, and nothing shall exceed the joy of a life well spent.

Good thoughts and good deeds never burden with fear of care: it's the bad only that oppresses and destroys.

It is so easy, but how childish, to think by some magic we shall be transported, or in flowery beds of ease shall be borne to glory on the shoulders of another.

O simple minded, shameless, have you no better thought of glory?

When we possess His thought, His spirit shall be within us.

Of our madness from others to be distinguished this truth He spoke. "If any desire to be first the same shall be last."

Shall the destiny of one be placed above that of another?

The thought that would make me desire to be first makes me worthy only to be last.

I should ever desire to build as grandly and nobly as I may; but love of my brother shall create no desire to build better than he.

Here are two thoughts. One shall to others only an inspiration be; the others' iniquity you need not me to describe.

The pictures that are painted with that bad thought no human brush can portray.

The most hideous Thought that stalks in the world to-day is the Thought that from my brother I should be distinguished as possessing better than he.

If the former of those two thoughts had possessed us

how many palaces would ever have been built, and what an amount of energies would have been saved for good and noble purposes?

While you scatter broadcast these unnatural thoughts, which all the growths of love destroy, be not surprised if your preaching of "Peace on earth, good will to men" as mockeries have appeared.

He, who from the love of his brother drifts and becomes inflated with his position and his power, stands in greatest need of wisdom's aid: and he, whom he doth despise, may to him many lessons teach.

Easily shall that thought be traced which doth decree that the difference between a brass knocker and a gold one shall determine whether the occupant of the dwelling upon which they may be placed shall be a person of consequence, and you, who would your acquisitions use, as if he must be humiliated, who cannot as good afford, are better understood than you know, and your lack of shame with pity and not resentment should be observed.

"The endurance of the inequalities of life by the poor is the marvel of human society."

The patience of many, who do the burdens of your insolence bear, is building for them a far greater eminence, than that which by you is shared. God hath no greater love for you, than He hath for them, and He permits no injustice to be done. As His designs unfold, we shall discover how His plans have been misjudged, because our vision hath been confined to too small a segment of that arc which His plans involve, and which it may need eternity to disclose.

The farther we get from that love that is due our neighbor, the farther we shall be from that which we seek.

Our cares are limited at the point where we fix the boundaries to our greeds.

With the decrease in Vanities' expenditures, our pleasures are enlarged.

We may inform another of the dent in his hat, or his clothes' disarrangement: but diplomacy must not be forgotten, if we would point out an error in his thinking.

The greater our defects the greater must be the deference with which they are approached.

Like ailments in our bodies, the soreness doth increase with the malady's malignity.

Chronic Indifference is a stubborn disease, and like Blissful Ignorance has become a dangerous epidemic.

Wisdom and Ignorance are not made to agree, and natural is Error's resentment of Truth's Intrusion: but Truth owes no apologies, and its greatest credit in the character of its enemies is shown.

Sometimes in the seats of greatest learning a thought of greatest ignorance underlies, and behind the richest altars some biggest cowards hide.

There are none with whom folly doth more effectually play the clown than the supercilious nabobs of position and authority.

Like toy jumping-jacks how their arms and legs do beat the air when obsequious flattery pulls at the strings.

There shall be nothing some men have that you cannot purchase by offering them a name.

How the revels of the banquet board do ring with self adulations, as round the honor table, those little tables do join in those choruses of praise?

If you only have enough of them nothing exceeds the music these brass bands do make.

There is no intoxication like the drunkenness of power in the minds of small men with small thoughts.

In the delirium of their self-esteem, they would pension the retired occupants of conspicuous places, (of whom we have never heard it said that they had refused the place because the wages were too small) as if there were any dignity that exceeds the dignity of labor; as if virtue needed wages to enlist it in the cause of righteousness.

How naturally some of these grand old pensioners do thrive and fatten with little thought of those who grow lean furnishing them the bounty.

Dull, indeed, is he who cannot see the thought of it and duller still is he who cannot see the wrong of it.

These occurrences, which so strangely common seem, of men surrendering their wisdom, for the reputation of being wise; and bartering their freedom and becoming enslaved, for the privilege of being preferred, are but the sequel to an error in our thought, which is being most zealously taught.

Vanity doth so race itself for elevation and distinction, that it forgets the smirch and bespatterings of the race and becomes puffed up with that for which Wisdom would not pay the purchase price.

It doth so over-step the bounds of modesty and good breeding, that Worth and Virtue are infrequently seen in places of distinction. For a title men have sapped their vitals and bartered their souls, and in their struggles to hold on to an eminence have forgotten all the nobleness of life.

In cultivating these vanities many golden harvests have been gleaned, and so delusionized by fame they have become, that it doth appear, as if there were noth-

ing, which some men have, which could not be purchased by offering them a name.

Hypocrisy hath been clothed in Charity's garb. Halls of Fame have been erected with which to persuade Greed to part with its hoarded gains, till we are constrained to believe that nothing is too sacred to be smeared with Vanity's taint.

As if Virtue were a commodity to be bought and sold; or as if the scars of Avarice could be effaced by an expenditure of ill gotten wealth; but be not deceived, those ugly lines by Error's thought engraved can only be removed by reversing the process by which they were acquired.

Occupying your stilted heights of so-called social prominences, to what extent have you comprehended the character of these supports upon which you have builded? Has it to you occurred how far your follies have revealed the thought, which underlies your enterprise of creating distinctions by which that which you have may be contrasted with that which your less favored brother may possess?

Occupying the orchestra seats of life, clothed about with your phylacteries of intellect, of culture, and of exclusiveness, to what extent have you contributed to those waves of discontent and crime, which are now so persistently beating against the bulwarks of social security?

How much have you contributed to those unequal distributions of God's bounties which is so disagreeably apparent? Do you claim these bounties which you so largely have and hold because of the strength of body and mind, which to you has been given, whereby you were enabled to outstrip, in the race, the cripples, and

those less fortunate in these particulars, and thus you beat them to God's larder; and, by the use of these superior equipments, kept them from it, while you consumed and squandered these things you were, in this manner, enabled to acquire?

Those faculties and talents, with which you started out on life's highway, by you, were never purchased and nought, by you for them was ever given in exchange. Therefore, there are no principles of ownership, which may be invoked, to give you an exclusive proprietorship thereof.

While these equipments are of a sort which are distinctive and personal to you, they are given to you in trust. If, of your stewardship you were, to-day, called upon to render an account, what acceptable return would you make?

This question concerns you more than it does those, who, the burdens of your insolence and oppression, may have borne.

As certain as the sun appears each morn in the eastern skies, as certain will retribution follow these infractions of God's laws, and by none other than ourselves shall those penalties be fixed and their enforcement allowed.

If we are looking for our happiness in houses; in lands; in positions of power; in a name; in priestly raiment; in costly monuments, or mausoleums in which our names are to be inscribed, or other displays of wealth, or manifestations of our greeds—all these to agitate the wonder of the world, or to excite the envy of those who may look thereupon, or to shame the possessions of those who may have less, disappointed ambitions and shattered hopes shall engulf us.

To aim to be nobler and better is one thing. To

aim to be nobler and better than another, whereby we seek to be distinguished, by using his short-comings, to contrast and lend emphasis to our achievements, is quite another.

One shall be an example and an inspiration, the other shall develop no virtues.

Better that he be buried in oblivion, with a clear record, than be elevated in dishonor and shame.

Selfishness hath a numerous progeny, and there are none with a sunny face.

Sunshine from our environment with selfishness never shall be extracted.

The good and the strong shall look in vain for a bad environment. Whatever shall be its circumstance, they shall see therein their need.

Few, if any, would great reputations seek, if they did but know, at what fearful cost they are most often bought, and that that cost must by them be paid. Rude the awakening shall appear, when it may be discovered that they themselves have paid the cost, and their follies have not been taxed upon him whom they supposed.

By reputations be not deceived; many supposed leaders owe their prominence to their ability and capacity to absorb that which to others belongs; and such expert navigators of public opinion they have become, that they are able to sail the tempestuous seas of fame without giving to the world a better thought.

A pig's tail into a whistle made is a pig's tail still, and where no nobility is possessed, none by a position is conferred. Men are not made by bestowing titles, and no label which by them can be affixed, as a distinguishing mark, can with a thought be compared.

No smaller man shall be met than he who seeks, by these little means, above his brother to be preferred;

and no large man shall ever view a position as an eminence. He takes no delight in the fact that his neighbor's development may not be equal to his own, much less shall he care to capitalize it to add to his fame.

Divine powers cannot to unholy enterprises be wooed; and the subtle forces of our souls shall not be unlocked, while we approach them with an impure or selfish thought.

Burnt offerings, gifts of ill gotten gains, and all those schemes, by ingenuity contrived, to mask an unrighteous thought behind benevolence's cloak, shall be without avail; and he shall be of little wit who thinks the soul can be bribed with love's counterfeit.

If reputations for benevolence for righteousness could be substituted, and love with bank notes could be bought, there would be no lack of saintly assemblages with which our churches and high places would be filled.

By Jesus it was taught, that the left hand should not know what the right hand had done; and that wheat could not be garnered where tares had been sown. Think you that with appeals to vanity by parades of contributions and published lists, in which the names of benefactors are displayed, any piety is manifest? You who have shamed the widow's mite, as if virtue were something, which could be bought, most dangerous seeds have sown.

"Take heed that ye do not your alms before men; otherwise, ye have no reward."

"Therefore, when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have the glory of men."

Our attempted deceptions deceive none as they de-

ceive ourselves, and he who strives to cheat the real loser becomes. We have no secrets, we only think we have; and the thought we strive most to conceal is the one we most display.

The tones of your voice have been heard and measured, and its quality has been that with which we were impressed; your movements have been noted, and they too had secrets which they revealed; your body and your features were seen, and engraven there were images of all the thoughts you had entertained.

“There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known;” and we know of no foolishness which we may attempt, which shall not upon our own shoulders rest, with all its obligations by us to be assumed and paid.

We should not be surprised by the impurities, which appear in the stream below, while we continue to lend our aid to the pollutions of those springs, which contribute to its flow; and our bad thoughts, with less vigor, may be expected to thrive, when we are persuaded to cease our tinkering with effects, and give more concern to those sources from which they are derived.

Appealing to men’s vanities and cupidity, by conferring degrees, as if he who would be persuaded to do his best, should be bribed, or by exciting his baser instincts encouragement to nobler efforts might be lent; attaching labels to indicate the supposed elevations, which another above others has reached, to relieve him, as it were, of any humility which might be incurred, if it were otherwise possible for him to be mistaken for one of the commoner sort; affixing titles, as if virtue must be tagged if it would be recognized, or that a higher culture, by the promptings of unworthy motives, could be reached, clothing ourselves in phylacteries, like

the Pharisees of old; then wondering where that unity of interests gets its strength which bands men together in the common enterprise of protecting and preserving the acquisitions of their vanities and their greeds.

The demarkation between that which to me, and that which to my neighbor belongs, is clear and distinct. Greater love to another than that which to myself I owe, I have no right to give, and he hath no right to accept.

He filches from me, and steals from himself, and to his offense I an accessory become, where I give to him and he takes of my talents' use that by which he is enabled to permit his talents to slumber in disuse, or in a misuse to be spent.

The laws of God with certainty have fixed, as a principle of justice and right, that each shall determine and inflict the penalties which because of his misdeeds are incurred, and these are the punishments which fit the offense, whatever it may be, that he permits; likewise, establishes by the use which of his talents he shall make the rewards which upon himself shall be bestowed.

These laws of our Creator are just and right, and no reason doth to us appear why another, except by changing his thought should be relieved of these disciplines which the misuse, or disuse, of his talents do impose. That which Reason and Justice hath decreed we have no right to dispute.

“Woe unto you Pharisees; for you tithe mint and rue, and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God. Woe unto you Pharisees for you love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the market. Woe unto you scribes and pharisees for ye are as graves which appear not, and men that walk over them are not aware of them.”

If it has to thy mind occurred, on what is based that thought that there are any favorites of God? On what may your notions of justice be based that omnipotence hath not made it possible, even certain, that somewhere throughout the cycles of time all inequalities shall be outgrown?

Is there anything in thy position, or thy garb, that makes thee any more an object of consideration than the lowliest who in His kingdom dwells?

When we sow the seeds that choke the growth of truth and love, the sources of those harvests we reap shall not deceive.

Standing aloof in your high places calling down to those whom you have located beneath you; out into the byways and hedges piping forth the invitation into the fold to come, while with your distinctions marking, higher the barrier's building, and then wondering why these poor brothers see no common ground of meeting.

Peering over from behind those obstructions which have been your life's ambition to create and maintain, are you willing that they should be taken down so that it shall be equal between you and them? Would you allow these lines of demarkation so clearly drawn by you, and that set to which you are joined, to be removed? "Could you be happy receiving favors from one of the most despised of these? Could you be yourself one of the lost?"

It is not an enterprise of love that creates distinctions between you and your neighbor, putting yourself on one plane and him on another, and there is no equality while this insanity doth possess you.

"Thou at the club, or country seat, or in the study, or sitting in the front pew of the church, so luxurious, so refined, so pious, yet all out of other men's labors;

thou eager after elegant recognitions through the streets hastening."

Shall we allow others to soil their hands doing the dirty work of the world while we talk of morality, and how things may be set right, and then call ours a better employment?

Where didst that thought of yours get its birth, that manual labor should be despised, or put upon a lower or different plane, than any other form of effort which may be put forth to make this a better world in which to live?

Your thought in your deeds is manifest, and no deed acquires a quality that shall be better than the thought from which it gets its birth.

Love of your brother prompts no desire to excel his accomplishments, and hath no part in laying a foundation for any pleasure, which may be experienced in exciting his envy, or his resentment. Good natured rivalry takes into account no permanent advantages, and is influenced by no elements of gain as an incentive.

If Love be present all these distinctions are clearly made, and we shall lack occasion for calling other instructors to our aid. "Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up," and by the appeals of your hypocrisies and displays it never hath been persuaded. Virtue's simple garb doth its beauties most become, and by suggesting embellishments its help cannot be won.

Many weakness and shams their climax approach, when men are demanding the kernels instead of the shucks, and this demand can no longer be answered by making more attractive these sugared husks. We may never know the number of those easy resting places, which to their recipients have been reserved, by bestowing upon their donors these coated shells, which do not

a kernel contain, and nowhere are hypocrisy's pollutions so manifest as at the fountain heads of that which should be the source of our highest and purest thought.

Goodness hath no more sinister or invidious foe than Hypocrisy, with which it doth contend, and if it be in need of an opposing thought, against which its virtues may be measured and ascertained, we know no better than Hypocrisy to select.

Shaming the possessions of others with your schemes of contrast, as if he, who wins for thee thy bread, merited the added burdens of thy effrontery and insolence, and we lending ourselves to your enterprises.

Erecting all manner of displays; setting them off against misfortune's background; and by cunning contrivances, seeking for their approval as Christian virtues.

Nineteen hundred years after the death of Jesus, whose messages had been to teach of the Love of God and our fellowmen, and make that one thought the foundation upon which our religion should depend, in the public prints, circulated far and near, in headlines large and bold, appeared "Barbaric Splendor. Gorgeous Scenes Mark Reception of India's Rulers. British King Heavily Guarded Enters Delhi. Hordes of Starving Natives Make Contrast. Ten Millions Cost of King's Durbar."

Not a voice in disapproval raised, and not a church the thought rebuked. Eyes wide open and no images registered there.

May that word "Contrast" be blazoned forth till in the luridness of its flame all the other words are blotted out.

In these same prints with equal boldness displayed we read "New York Millionaires Will Spend Twenty

Million Dollars Christmas in Gifts of Jewels to their Wives." The "Contrasts" being left to us to be supplied. This the day we have set apart to commemorate His birth.

Has it to any occurred that, during all these nineteen hundred years, since Jesus' death, it may not have been christianity that has been taught?

That these ideals which the errors in our thought permit might not be forgot, we are again invited to read. One of the most successful men of America when asked to what he attributed his success replied. "I built my fortune on the dial of my watch, seconds became pennies, minutes became dimes, hours became dollars. I gave a money value to every tick of my watch and took advantage of everything that economized time. I never procrastinate. I keep my eyes and ears upon my opportunities. I look well into whatever seems good to me, when my judgment approves I act quickly and with decision."

Thy definitions have revealed thy thought. Boasting loudest of that which is thy greatest shame. That which robs virtue takes captive all thy joys. Insanity most infamous, yet so sad, seeing thy greatest happiness where thy deepest miseries lie.

The greatest Thief of Thieves is the Thought which filches from thee the time which to other Thoughts belong.

Be not deceived, there are no gifts of God which are exclusive; and no acceptable return to our talents' use shall be made, where our weaker brother, who needs our help, hath not been included in the account we shall make.

"After hypocrites the Devil has are those who exhaust an anxious existence in the disappointments and vex-

ations of business, and live miserably, and meanly, only to die magnificently and rich. For like the hypocrite, the only disinterested action these men can accuse themselves of, is that of serving the Devil without receiving his wages; for the assumed formality of the one is not a more effectual bar to enjoyment than the real avarice of the other.

He who stands behind a counter, until he drops from it into his grave, may negotiate many profitable bargains, but he has made a single bad one, so bad indeed that it counter-balances all the rest, for the empty foolery of dying rich he has paid down his health, his happiness, and his integrity."

"Buccaneers, Choctaw Indians, whose supreme aim is fighting that they may get the scalps, the money, that they may mass scalps and money: out of such come no chivalry and none will. Out of such come only gore and weak infernal rage and misery: desperation, quenched annihilation. Behold it. I bid thee behold there and consider: what is it that thou have an hundred thousand pound bills laid up in thy strong room, a hundred scalps hung up in thy wigwam. I value not them or thee. Thy scalps and thy thousand pound bills are as yet nothing, if no nobleness from within irradiate them: If no chivalry in action or in embryo ever struggling towards birth and action be there."

No law of man can justify a wrong, and he who uses the imperfections, in human statutes contained, to protect his greeds makes a weak defense.

In this land dedicated to the equality of man, it is said that two percent of those protected by its laws own sixty-five percent of its resources and its wealth, while sixty-five percent only own five percent thereof—One of these "Two Percent," in a public hearing being asked

“If ten dollars a week were enough for a longshoreman with a family to support, under oath this answer made, if that is all he can get, and he takes it, I should say it is enough.”

“And Jesus looked round about and said unto His disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God; and His disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the Kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.”

Shall you dare to contend that He wished His hearers to be mistaken in what He meant?

The truth He was striving to convey was too deeply significant not to be emphatically expressed.

No strained interpretations which men may invent, its full force and application to avoid, can from its plain and unclouded meaning detract, and in our efforts to make it appear that Jesus did not mean what He said, we shall not find that the rich man of His time possessed any qualities, in those respects, which distinguished him from his modern prototype, except that the modern a greater adept hath become.

No man can two masters serve, and he who is a slave to Greed cannot be in the service of Love.

If Heaven be a condition to be attained, the Greeds, which the pursuits of wealth, and its retention, imply, from our lives must be purged, before its glories by us can be claimed.

When the test was applied, the master, which this rich young man served, was revealed. If the same tests were to the rich of our time applied, how many would turn away as this young man did?

In this incident was presented the question which did the very essence of all of Jesus' teachings involve, and it was clear that He intended that none, by what He might say, should be misled. If He did not mean just what He said, what becomes of the foundation for your belief in the accuracy of any other statement He made?

Since you claim to be His follower, and believe all things that He said, how shall we with your truthfulness be impressed, while we are permitted to observe that your words by your deeds are belied?

You cannot make an error fit that place, which by a truth should be occupied; and you will, of much of your confusion be relieved, when you cease your strivings to make the Truth with an Error agree.

When those errors which our instructors have implanted and would have us retain, are from your thought removed, we shall be in less need of their services to explain the religion which Jesus taught, and we may better understand what was meant, when it is said, "The way is so plain that the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein."

If "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and that these two commandments do the whole include, it doth seem that there is much you include which might be left out, and in your struggles with the nonessentials the real doctrine which Jesus taught has been left out, or obscured. For that which does the whole include does very nearly the whole contain.

Those errors in man's creed to which he gives his assent are as prominent in his life as they are in his creed. Weakening his obligations by shifting his

responsibilities has had precisely the effect we should expect.

If a law of my physical body is ignored, whereby an injury to it is sustained, that injury is experienced and felt by me; and we have not comprehended how it could be possible, or advisable, to suspend a law of my physical welfare and growth, whereby another might undergo suffering and pain as my substitute, and whatever the nature of my physical offending might be, by a formulated process of acceptance, by me, of the sacrifice he had made, I could of the pain and injury of my act be relieved.

Are the laws of our spiritual growth and development less significant, or may they be more readily amended, or suspended, without disturbing the purpose they serve?

Without a perversion of His thought, it has not by us been discerned that Jesus gave utterance to a statement, which could be given an interpretation that lends support to your doctrines of a vicarious substitute.

It is only the foolish who have expected that the expenditures of their follies may be limited by a process, which might make another's bank accounts available for the payment of their debts. When their balances are rendered they may be surprised to discover that not a draft by them has been made, which has not from their own accounts been paid. Another disappointment, by them, shall be experienced in the disclosures which may be made, that him whom they had overlooked and despised, had accumulated more than their foolishness had permitted them to save.

The manner of your living hath been observed, the structures you have builded, and the distinctions you have adopted and created, whereby from others you

might appear to be distinguished, hath been noted, and man's refusal to accept you, by your defense of natural depravity cannot be explained.

If you have a truth to impart, men will be looking for you; if it be an error you may be striving to impose, there will be need for you to look for them.

Where others have refused to accept your errors, natural depravity hath been a convenient defense, in the weakness of your thought forgetting that there is nothing for which men do so hunger and thirst as they do hunger and thirst for truth and righteousness.

No man exchanges light for darkness, when once the light by him has been recognized; neither shall he be persuaded to surrender a truth for an error, when the truth is known, and the error comprehended.

That is not depravity, which impels men to cling to an error, before their observation and experience has impressed the difference, which between that error and the truth exists; neither is that natural depravity which demands information, or a reason, for that belief which you would impress.

With the aid of our reason, truth from our errors is separated; and without its use our thoughts with nobler growths could not be exercised.

Look with suspicion on the thought, in that institution, or that religion, which denies your reason, or of it hath a fear. That place which invites not my intellect extends no hospitality to me.

Closing the doors to our reason places shackles on our faith, and our creeds with growth can never be cultured, while reason remains an unwelcome guest. Our reason approves not that which we do not believe, and that which we do not believe claims not our faith,

thus a faith without the approval of our reason, doth not long exist.

All that we are, or ever shall be, of our thought is builded, and every item of the material by our conscious reason is inspected, or our sub-conscious mind accepted, and what is not sub-consciously implanted, through the avenues of our intellect must be reached.

To the hypnotist it is well known that his success does not upon the truth of his suggestion depend, but that which he persuades his subject to believe, the important circumstance becomes.

If Avarice be cultivated, and be convinced that all those things it covets may be retained, and no surrenders to the Love of its neighbor are to be required, which shall with its possessions, or enterprises, conflict, its attention may be held while its aids are secured.

Thus it occurs if Ignorance with Greed to the Chariot of Evangelism can be hitched the number of its "Converts" may be increased.

But we are not perturbed, for the plans of God by the foolishness of man cannot be deflected or disturbed, and one of the discoveries we have made, is that Immaturity's mistakes in the direction of their cures have ever moved.

Levslaye has said, "If Christianity were taught and understood, in conformity to the spirit of its Founder, the existing social organism would not exist a day."

We might add that many, if not most, of the greeds and strifes of life will disappear, when they are shorn of that support which our religious thought doth give.

There is no regeneration in a confession of faith; and that should not be called Christianity which hath the essence of Christianity left out.

The name you give to your meeting places does not

make them the House of God. When Jesus said ye must be born again, if He did not mean your thought should be changed, no significance to His statement can be attached; and since the manner of your living doth disclose your thought there are none who should be deceived.

In the structures of God there are no errors to annoy; and no walls by man ever builded, as a place of worship, with the blue vault of Heaven can be compared. In this temple there are no rituals and formalities to becloud our worship or our thoughts to divert.

Lavish your money, and lavish your time; build your organs, and build your chimes, you cannot make an error outlast a truth.

Erect your chapels with minarets and spires, which to Heaven point, you can never make a structure, which shall be larger than your thought. That which to it its real beauty and grandeur give, shall be the thought, which did the deed inspire; and numerous are those simple structures which do all cathedrals outshine.

Hypocrisy breeds contempt, breeds distrust, and since our thoughts in our deeds are manifest, no man need be told whether Love of God and love of our neighbor are the ideals we strive to attain.

If a partnership in your thoughts, by others, has been refused, it may not rest with you to state that any blame for that act to them should be attached.

The gnarled and sturdy oak, which spreads its branches far and wide and the tiny shoot which stands by its side, with equal admiration are viewed: and no difference is seen except the difference in their growth.

Whether you be superior, or inferior, my comradeships with you do not depend, for you are neither superior or inferior.

Those thoughts you express, which I have outgrown, or gotten past, may supply me with no need: and that thought, which may be beyond my attainments' appreciation, may give me no entertainment, thus our comradeships on helpfulness, or congeniality of our thought depend.

"Who you are I know not, but I have it before me that thou shalt know.

For a certainty you are no greater or less than me. I neither look upon you with envy, nor with pity, with deference, nor with contempt.

Endowments, dignities, and accomplishments, are of no account whatever: but honesty, and to stand in time under the great law of Equality, after which you will be satisfied and joy will take possession of you.

Till then farewell. Do not follow me, but go your own way voyaging, and then, happily, sometime we shall meet."

The day shall come, when, "He holds it fast;
What lay so near he could not find.
One place, one only, place there was on earth,
Where no man e'er was fool, however mad.
Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die."

Civilization is undergoing a great upheaval in its thought. An important turning point in our evolution and development is being reached. Vital changes are impending, and taking place in that evolution and development, which are to be expressed in a new democracy, and a religion with saner thoughts.

The thoughtful are beginning to observe: to observe that the ideals by which men's lives have been ruled have failed, have utterly failed, have hopelessly failed,

to give them the satisfaction, the happiness they sought.

Their brother, and their neighbor, they forgot. They forgot love and thereby forgot themselves.

They grasped at wealth, they grasped at power, they grasped at fame and forgot.

“Who grasped at earthly fame grasped wind, nay worse,

A serpent grasped that thro’
His hands slid smoothly, and was gone, but left
A sting behind which wrought him endless pain:
For oft her voice was old Abaddon’s lure,
By which she charmed the foolish soul to death.”

Forgot the error of the man who lived for personal gain, forgot,

“He died—he died of what? Of wretchedness;
Drank every cup of joy, heard every trump
Of fame: drank early, deeply drank, drank draughts
That common millions might have quenched, then
died
Of thirst because there was no more to drink,
Died all but dreary, solitary Pride:
And all his sympathies in being died.”

Forgot the injury to his body, his mind, and his soul, that a selfish thought inflicts, which waits not a future life to record its hurts.

Forgot all those pleasures which are postponed, by the poisons the sting of error’s thought instills.

Forgot, that we may reach a development in our thought where these injuries shall be seen and recognized, as they exist and are expressed.

Forgot that when these discoveries are made man's self interest alone will be sufficient to compel him to reject the lures of evil thoughts, and seek his pleasures where they shall be found: found only in those thoughts and deeds which love doth not forbid.

Forgot that no miracles are necessary to bridge an error in his creed.

Forgot that there are natural laws by which his growth and development must be maintained, and that no man hath made an advance till his thought hath been developed to that point where he might be entrusted with the conditions which his new estate impose.

“Arabula (divine gift of God) is within thee. Live true to that every moment, and no flower will shrink from thy approach.”

CHAPTER V: FAME

“God includes all, the heathen and Hebrew, the Mahometan, the Atheist, and the Christian; nay, Cain, Iscariot the kidnapper, are all folded in the arms of the Infinite Mother, who will not suffer absolute evil to come to the least or the worst of these, but so tempers the mechanism of humanity that all shall come to the table of blessedness at last! Death itself is no limit. God’s love is eternal also, providing retribution for all I do; but pain is medicine. What is not delight is discipline, the avenue to nobler joy.”

—*Theodore Parker.*

CHAPTER V

FAME

Oh! her voice was sweet to mortal ears:

And vanity, which in the heart of man
Were ever strung harmonious to her note,
That many thought to live without her note,
Was rather death than life; to live unknown,
Unnoticed, unrenowned; to die unpraised!
Unepitaphed! to go down to the pit,
And molder into dust among vile worms!
And leave no whispering of a name on earth!

Such thought was cold about the heart, and chilled
The blood. Who could endure it? Who could choose,
Without a struggle, to be swept away
From all remembrance? and have part no more
With living men? Philosophy failed here;
And self-approving pride. Hence it became
The aim of most, and main pursuit, to win
A name to leave some vestige, as they passed,
That following ages might discern they once
Had been on earth, and acted something there.

Many the roads they took, the plans they tried.
The man of science to the shade retired.

And laid his head upon his hand, in mood
Of awful thoughtfulness: and dived, and dived
Again, deeper and deeper still, to sound
The cause remote, resolved, before he died,
To make some grand discovery, by which
He should be known to all posterity.

And in the silent vigils of the night,
When uninspired men reposed, the bard,
Chastely of countenance, and from his eye
Oft streaming wild unearthly fire, sat up;
And sent imagination forth: and searched
The far and near heaven, earth, and gloomy hell;
For fiction new, for thought, unthought before;
And when some curious, rare idea peered
Upon his mind, he dipped his hasty pen,
And by the glimmering lamp, or moonlight beam,
That through his lattice peeped, wrote fondly down
What seemed in truth imperishable song.
And sometimes too, the reverend divine,
In meditation deep of holy things,
And vanities of Time, heard Fame's sweet voice
Approach his ear—and hand another flower,
Of earthly sort, about the sacred truth;
'And ventured whiles to mix the bitter text,
With relish suited to the sinner's taste.

'And oft-times too, the simple hind, who seemed
Ambitionless, arrayed in humble garb,
While round him spreading, fed his harmless flock,
Sitting was seen, by some warbling brook,
Carving his name upon his favorite staff;
Or, in ill-favored letters, tracing it
Upon the aged thorn, or on the face
Of some conspicuous oft frequented stone,
With persevering wondrous industry;
'And hoping, as he toiled amain, and saw
The characters take form, some other wight,
Long after he was dead, and in the grave,
Should loiter there at noon and read his name.

In purple some, and some in rags, stood forth
For reputation; some displayed a limb
Well-fashioned; some of lowlier mind, a cane
Of curious workmanship, and marvelous twist;
In strength some sought it, and in beauty more.
Long long the fair one labored at the glass,
And, being tired, called in auxiliar skill,
To have her sails, before she went abroad,
Full spread, and nicely set, to catch the gale
Of praise. And much she caught, and much deserved,
When outward loveliness was index fair
Of purity within: but oft, alas!

The bloom was on the skin alone; and when
She saw sad sight! the roses on her cheek
Wither and heard the voice of fame retire
And die away, she heaved most piteous sighs,
And wept most lamentable tears; and whiles,
In wild delirium, made rash attempt,
Unholy mimicry of Nature's work;
To re-create, with frail and mortal things,
Her withered face. Attempt how fond and vain!
Her fame itself, soon moldered down to dust;
And in the land of deep forgetfulness,
Her beauty and her name were laid beside
Eternal silence, and the loathsome worm;
Into whose darkness flattery ventured not;
Where none had ears to hear the voice of fame.

Many the roads they took, the plans they tried,
And awful oft the wickedness they wrought.

To be observed, some scrambled up to thrones,
And sat in vestures dripping wet with gore.

The warrior dipped his sword in blood and wrote
His name on lands and cities desolate.

The rich bought fields, and houses built, and raised
The monumental piles up to the clouds,

And called them by their names. And strange to tell!
Rather be unknown and pass away

Obscurely to the grave, some, small of soul,
Considerable renown by oaths profane,

By jesting boldly with all sacred things,
And uttering fearlessly whate'er occurred:—

Wild, blasphemous. perditionable thoughts,
That Satan in them moved; by wiser men

Suppressed, and quickly banished from the mind.

—*Pollock's Course of Time.*

CHAPTER VI: HAPPINESS

“Every human being is a son of God in the Kingdom of Infinite Love. One must be tremendously in earnest to know life. One can no longer float easily into the harbor of Wisdom, than one can know what Love is by delegating some one else to love in one’s stead.”—*Dresser*.

CHAPTER VI

HAPPINESS

“If any man seek greatness let him forget greatness and ask for truth; he will find both.”

If any man seek happiness let him forget happiness and ask for righteousness; he will find both.

No happiness ever came in doing wrong; and there never was a pleasure's lack, which was not in an error of our thought to be found.

Experience's circumstance no meaning hath, but to lead us to the light, and to teach, that in virtue's course are our only delights.

Life's wonders are revealed when Wisdom leads us by the hand, and the despairs of darkness ever flee with the coming of the morn.

With the passing of the gloom all those visions which did so affright in their clearer outlines only give delight.

Whether joy's sunshine floods our ways, or within sin's darkest shadows we are enclosed, in it all, but one purpose doth appear, and that the error of our thought to disclose.

Whether we call it good or call it wrong, it is with it all our joys are won.

In all the warp and woof of life's wonderful fabric everything hath its purpose and nothing is out of place; its colors and figures, in perfect harmony blend; the designs of its creator in all its details are manifest, and he, who the completed whole cannot comprehend,

shall not be heard to say what is, and what is not in vain.

Within the greatness of our inheritance is the greatness of our responsibilities lodged.

The equipment by the Infinite is supplied, likewise is the plan.

What are given by the Hand Divine cannot imperfect be; neither shall they fail.

Within the narrow confines of animal life instinct hath been its guide, but man hath not been so confined.

Within us is a divinity with no boundaries that are not by ourselves interposed.

With an intellect and soul, in the image of the Creator we are made, and all the limits to our growth removed.

As free and unfettered as the boundaries of space, we have the power to think, to reason, to choose, to direct, and to create.

Thus equipped we travel Heaven's highways, limited only by the Infinite.

Of a greater beyond we become a living prophecy, never completed here, because we are immortal; and in immortal progress are our immortal joys.

There shall be no needs which shall not be of ourselves and of God there are none. No failures can prevail where all emergencies have been foreseen.

All our duties are of our growth, and that growth self development becomes, by the use we make of that which we possess.

Thus to its course our progress holds and our destiny is achieved. That it shall be of ourselves is its greatest glory; and the purpose as our greatest good and happiness doth appear.

"In the material universe there is one grand royal

law, upon which hangs all the laws that govern matter, or motion, that law, the union and source of all the laws known to the physical world, the law of gravitation."

Likewise, in the mental, or spiritual universe, there is one grand royal law, which carries forward our evolution and development, a law of attraction irresistible, which, with gentleness and persuasiveness, urges and keeps in motion all the activities of our lives; that inherent longing for self gratification, which in happiness is expressed.

In matter the attraction of gravitation is a property from which it never can be separated.

In man the desire for happiness is a spiritual attribute inherent in his soul, which from him cannot be withdrawn.

If man of his desires for pleasure could be robbed, his life would no incentive have, his evolution and development would be foreclosed, and his activities in stagnation end. In this circumstance, the Creator's hand is recognized, and in the light which on us shall dawn, when this motive force is understood, a better thought of life shall be revealed.

That reaching out for greater joys is that which causes us to press forward, seeking that which shall enlarge our pleasures, till we do discover where our purest joys do lure is the pathway of our greatest good.

The purer our lives the more refined are our pleasures, the more refined our lives, the purer are our joys.

The quality of our virtues ever becomes the measure of our happiness.

That "virtue is its own reward" only a small portion of a truth doth state; without virtue pleasure hath no support.

Not a discord in life has been which was not of virtue's lack.

"However difficult it may be for Integrity to get on, it is a thousand times more difficult for Knavery to get off, and no error is more fatal than that of those, who think that virtue has no rewards, because She is her own.

"He who is virtuous is wise, and he who is wise is good, and he who is good is happy.

"It is virtue alone that can render us superior to fortune, we quit her standards and the conflict is no longer equal."

If we would increase our happiness we must enlarge our thought of the good.

"The way of the transgressor is hard" and there are no others ways that are.

In placing limits to our transgressions the way to our happiness is found.

We have that measure of pleasure the use of our gifts places in our reach.

In knowing how to use our talents only shall our joys be increased.

The joy that hath no purchase price hath no value, and there are no pleasures which may be separated from their cost.

The blessings of being are not stumbled on to, they are acquired.

It is with our thought the portals of our delights are opened and to all our disappointments closed.

Through that wisdom by our thought acquired we enter the pathways of love, of truth, and all attainment; and against the background of our experiences our joys only are recognized and exposed. Every step by which we are raised is growth's condition.

The only evil is the permitted obstruction to our growth, by our lack of thought interposed. Likewise, no evil hath there been, which hath not lent itself to our advance by being changed to the good.

“For (over and over again) there is nothing that is evil except because a man hath not mastery over it; and there is no good thing that is not evil if it have mastery over a man.

“But things cannot be divided into good and evil, but all are good as soon as they are brought into subjection.”

In gaining the mastery is our development achieved, and we are accepted according to the use we make of that which we have.

“For if there first be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.”

There can be no wrong, except the condition we allow, by not living up to that which we have, and when the conditions it doth impose have persuaded us to correct our thought it shall as evil, disappear.

In these permitted circumstances are our regrets. The disturbers of life's harmonies; the discords in its joys.

In discovering the harmonies of life the problems of happiness are solved.

Celestial happiness, with joy's music shall fill our souls, only, when the laws of our progress are fulfilled by living up to that which we possess.

The discords are the admonitions that we are wandering from the paths of our greatest good.

A warning of love, as a punishment never shall be viewed; and there can be no quality of vengeance in an admonition for our greatest good.

Danger signals to protect as instruments of harm were never intended.

If my hands be placed in the fire, I shall be in pain; the pain is for my preservation. If from doing wrong I am unhappy, this is likewise for my preservation. The fact significant is that all the conditions are by ourselves determined.

As certain as the cycles of time, we reap the harvests of the seeds we sow, and self permitted, or self inflicted, are all our woes.

In our thoughts, or deeds expressed, we select the quality of our miseries, or determine the character of our joys.

He who holds both the scepter and the scales of justice should have no complaint.

Whether what we seek shall be worth the price is for us to decide. The sacrifice is saved when we forego the attainment.

The questions we decide we answer by determining what we can afford, and nothing by us is acquired that of ourselves gains not its quality, and its worth.

The cost of our vanities are the burdens we bear; the real with a pleasure's expenditure is bought.

In giving out pleasures, our joys do thrive; and we shall all be purchasers of happiness when we shall know the cost of our woes.

All evils are changed to the good when through them, to us, it shall be discovered, that the sources of our miseries are our wrongs.

From the same soil which grows the obnoxious are blossomed forth the flowers.

Whether it be the odious, or the fragrance of the flowers, there is naught which comes not from within.

Harbored within are the thoughts which gnaw at

our vitals; but of that we refuse to release, we should not be heard to complain, and those maladies, which in our bodies appear, may be more of the thoughts we digest, than of the poisons we may eat.

Man doth not err in one thing, and harvest the fruits of another; and there are no purchases, by us possessed, which have not been determined by that which we have given in exchange.

Those bad bargains, in men's bodies and faces, everywhere reflected, should admonish us to be careful what we barter, if we would not be disappointed in that which we acquire.

Maimed are our souls, and scarred are our faces, by the cares and disappointments, which are of those thoughts we have taken in return for a self surrender; and nothing in life, like those bad bargains, are so widely displayed.

Another shall not be charged with our burdens, while we refuse to throw off our cares.

It is ourselves, who are defrauded, when another we attempt to cheat, and to be guarded against ourselves is the danger we have to face.

"It is the act of an ill instructed man to blame others for his own bad condition; it is the act of one who had begun to be instructed to lay the blame on himself; and of one whose instruction is completed neither to blame another, or himself."

The only injury which to self can come, must by that self be done, and there is no miracle by which another's exercise may be substituted for the use I must make of the talents I possess, if their increase, by me, is to be claimed.

Nothing enters within which must not with our

approval be passed; and that which we deny admission to our thought of us hath no part.

In that inner sanctuary of self the thought of another can only come, as an accepted guest; and none, but those we admit, can its defences ever penetrate.

Unless we accept the attack the most villainous shaft, by jealousy, or hatred, ever leveled, can do no injury except to him by whom it is aimed.

To filch from me my good name, or me of my property to rob, another may attempt; but without my consent, myself he cannot reach.

“When anything shall be reported to you which is of a nature to disturb have this principle in readiness that the news is about nothing that is within the power of your will. Can any man report that you have formed a bad opinion, or had a bad desire? By no means, but perhaps he will report that some person speaks ill of you; what then is that to you? Or that your father is planning something or other. Against whom? Against your will? How can he? But is it against your poor body, your little property? You are quite safe, it is not against you. Your father had a certain duty, and if he shall not fulfill it, he loses the character of a father, of a man of natural affection, of gentleness. Do you wish him to lose anything else on this account? For never does a man do wrong in one thing and suffer in another.”

The use of my talents cannot be omitted, or surrendered, and the benefits of their increase to me be reserved; and there can be no moral bankruptcy court, where of my offenses, I may be absolved, and the increase of my talents, to me, be preserved.

Our glories by our responsibilities are determined, and where the one cannot be evaded, the other cannot

be denied; and there can be no miracle of grace by which we may be permitted to sow the seeds of error and harvest the fruits of truth.

The confusion in Stupidity's mind cannot be cleared by adding to the bandages by which its vision has been obscured; and by none is such weakness displayed, as he who takes refuge in the supernatural to explain, that, which by the use of his thought could be ascertained.

In our lack of pleasure is our lack of thought, and when we unfold those napkins which have our talents concealed, and put them to their use, faith's significance will be better disclosed.

When the thought shall possess us that of our offenses are all our woes, and that in turning our mistakes to profit, whereby we commit not a like offense is the only atonement we shall ever know then we shall cease shirking our responsibilities, in the vain hope that another shall do for us what we for ourselves must do.

We cannot place limits to that which we cannot comprehend; the influence of that we cannot encompass, we shall not be heard to deny, and, those circumstances, which may be beyond a thought's command, or the mind's creation, cannot by us be estimated or told.

Our endeavors are ever at the boundaries our weaknesses prescribe; and no man is larger than he chooses to be. When he changes his choice, his thought is changed, and in the growth of the better thought his development is made.

For hundreds of years preachers have preached of the wonders of faith, and of it all substance robbing, by forgetting that man's trust in himself is faith's only doctrine, and that only through trust in himself is his faith in his Maker.

For hundreds of years, exhorters have exhorted and

told of the glories of God; on the depravities of man principally dwelt, and never once discovered that by weakening his ideals man's progress never hath been helped.

For hundreds of years, teachers have taught, but on the one great predominating thought, which Jesus sought to convey, very little emphasis has been made.

"And when He was demanded of the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say Lo here! or lo there! for behold the Kingdom of God is within you."

That which is within cannot be without; and that which must be of ourselves cannot be of another. What is at hand is not beyond; for behold where should we look for that which we have; and who is there who shall not perceive that faith in himself is his greatest need?

God is no respecter of men, and where there are no favorites there can be no especially selected intermediaries upon which the supply of our needs shall depend.

In the achievements of another, no glory to me shall belong; and in me there will be no incentive to develop my strength where by some mystery, or magic, my burdens by another may be borne.

Shifting man's responsibilities, removes the props from his faith, leaving him as a sportive waif of chance, and as a withered husk which the winds do blow about.

By others we shall not be misled; for every circumstance to some purpose tends, and, in answer to our petitions or another's, no law of God shall be found, which He may be required to nullify or amend.

By the follies of none should we be perturbed, for by none other than ourselves can we be undone.

Even against ourselves we cannot forever prevail, for there is no resistance interposed which, in time, shall not develop the strength, by which it shall be overcome.

No error can be squared to fit a truth, and there are no delights found anywhere, but in the paths of right.

"The way is so plain, that the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein." What a fool may know shall need no teacher to explain; and we may be assured that God hath not created a life of riddles and locked their secrets with any, but those whom their talents use.

Apparently grave responsibilities, by our instructors, have been assumed, but any seeming damage will be removed, when we learn that to think for ourselves is a duty we cannot shirk, and be relieved of the burdens which others may impose.

He who chooses himself as a guide of mankind, and tinkers with the laws of God, by bolstering his authority with the claim of a call, which may be higher than that which beckons to you, grave responsibilities assumes.

The character of those assumptions, that there are defects in the machinery of the universe, by the Creator's wisdom overlooked, which shall require especially selected mechanics to repair, is hard to describe.

Let us not be misled, or permit the thought that man of his responsibility can be robbed by that other fallacy, that a man is not to blame for what he does not know, for precisely there is where his blame, if blame there be, starts to grow.

It is in increasing his knowledge that his duties lie. It is the talents hid in our napkins which do not grow.

Be ye rich, or be ye poor, be ye of high, or be ye of lowly estate, there are none who the right from the wrong do not know.

Designate it conscience, or a quality of the soul there are none who cannot recognize the wrong.

Intricate problems have been evolved in our efforts to resolve that which cannot be solved.

It has not been questions of right, or wrong, which have confused; but of mathematics, by us interposed, in computing profits, and displaying our ingenuity, in division and subtraction, in our endeavors to make our supposed self interest fit the right.

In the scramble for what we believed were the profits, our avarice hath weighed more in the scales than that which righteousness seemed to offer.

If we shall not know the meaning you to that word "Rewards" have attached, we may not know what significance your statement hath, "That an individual can rightfully receive from society a reward commensurate with his contribution to its welfare."

If all compensations are measured in pounds, shillings, and pence, and there are no services which may be measured in terms of love, then the evangelist, the doctor, the lawyer, and the candlestick maker should each receive a reward, measured in dollars and cents, commensurate with his contributions to society's welfare; and since those words, "Commensurate with his contribution to society's welfare" to every laborer in God's vineyard, a different meaning hath, no standards are thereby established, by which any limits to men's greeds may be placed. A conception of rewards by many expressed and sanctioned as a moral and religious tenet to be observed; as if Love could be extracted and any christianity be left, and of the kinds of religions being taught we know none where provisions for Greed's protection have not been reserved.

There is no pretense by which you may emulate the

example of the Lowly Nazerene where you recognize no services but those which may be compensated in terms of money gains.

Who would suggest that those services which natural parents upon their children bestow could have a money value upon them placed, or that compensations of this sort have ever entered into these parents' minds?

If these services, which by the promptings of Love in the household performed, into our lives so much sunshine and happiness have brought, why should these enterprises be within such narrow limits confined, and not allowed to reach outside, where our joys in more bounteous abundance might thrive?

If your conclusion may be valid, that an individual should receive a pecuniary remuneration commensurate with that which his more mature growth and equipment enables him to contribute to society's gains; then he, whose growth and equipment no contributions permits, should not be allowed to subsist on those things which others' labors bring forth or create; and all mankind, to the extent of their equipments' lack, should be penalized in favor of those who may be more fortunate in these respects, with no place in your economy for children, or other non-productives, left to them.

“Work, nothing else and nothing less is the gospel of our social salvation.”

The opportunity to labor and receive its just recompense to none should be denied; and he, who, in the guise of charity, or otherwise, encourages idleness contributes to its woes.

In God's vineyard no provisions for “slackers” have been made; and he who can, and will not give a return for what he receives, should be relieved of no penalties his refusals impose.

The fundamentals of life are activity, employment, constant, incessant, never ending; and in all nature not an atom rests in repose.

Our conceptions are measured in vibrations, and every thought is expressed in pulsations, possessing those characteristics which to that kind of thought belong.

The character of these pulsations have determined the difference in men, which, by us, are viewed; and, if we would not be disappointed, we must be careful of the thoughts by which our enterprises may be inspired.

All thoughts which Love has prompted have been constructive; and, if there are those which have been destructive, to other sources they must be traced.

Not a faculty, or an opportunity, with which, we, at our birth, were endowed, by us, were bought, and no exclusive ownership therein can to us belong because of anything we have paid.

Like God's sunshine and the air we breathe, they come to us as gifts; and how shall we be excused, if we refuse to give a service in return which shall, in value, be measured by that which we have received?

When we shall be seeking those things we would claim as ours, we must not forget to take into account how much of that which we seek may be owed in return for that which we have received.

We may be more just to our neighbor, when we are able to put ourselves in his place, and it may be discovered that he is committing the offense we criticize, because he has not received, or has not acquired, those qualities of thought, or mind, we possess; thus perhaps our better equipment upon us does impose obligations to assist him in overcoming these handicaps.

“Muzzle not the mouth of the ox that treadeth out

the corn" gives no support to a thought that the ox should be given all it might tread out or more than it could eat or digest. The pig with natural instincts possessed will get out of the trough, when it has had all it can eat, and let the other pig in; not so with that unnatural kind, with nobler instincts supposed to be endowed, for he will seldom leave the trough while there may be another who may be kept from getting in.

Where Love directs, only that which is mine shall be acquired, and that which is mine shall be so used that my neighbor's joys will not thereby be obstructed or refused.

In disregarding these laws of ownership, man's inhumanity to man is nowhere so displayed, and none are so disgraced, as he who seeks to shame his neighbor's possessions by the manner of the use he makes of those which he claims as his.

That palace, that landed estate, that position of worldly power, or other pinnacle of fame, too often serves no nobler purpose than to emphasize the littleness of our thought. There is no nobility manifest in striving from my neighbor to be distinguished; and in such an enterprise there shall never be discovered any quality of love.

We cannot enclose, or monopolize God's love, or God's sunshine; and the success of our efforts hath been to shut out that which we would confine. In our haste to care for self, this truth hath been overlooked; when we forget others we most forget ourselves.

Selfishness is the darkness, love is the sunshine, through which we pass, and when we cease to need the darkness the light will prevail.

The offsprings of selfishness are easy to trace, but

a census of their number would be hard to take; to jealousy, anger, and hatred our lives pay terrible tolls; but, when enough we have suffered the truth we shall accept.

No ray of cheerfulness lightens our way, while hatred is harbored in our hearts; and we shall have less need of other instructors when we give heed to the source from which our miseries and our joys are derived.

No gifts we possess are exclusive, and the glory of our achievement loses none of its luster, because it hath been of another, or even by all shall be possessed.

Sacred are thy rights, and equally sacred are thy neighbors. That respect due you from him, he shall exact of you. Whatever in life be thine, or his, designated station, within himself he never does (and never should) consent to release his right to you. The cry of justice is there though he stifle it so it shall not reach thine ear.

God hath not created two souls, and put one under subjection to the other. The impress of the Divine hath made your neighbor thy kin, and in his heirship to the things of life and time the equal of thee or thine, or any who shall be created.

The joys of life are only refused to him, who refuses the purchase price, and our miseries shall be ended, when we purchase pleasures in their stead.

He who attempts to steal ought from his neighbor, or interposes obstructions to that, which to another pleasure brings, filches from himself treasures of far greater worth than in vaulted banks were ever stored; and no injury to another, by his thought, or deed, intended, shall equal that which he imposes on himself.

There are no more vicious seeds we shall sow, than those, whose growth, the growths of love usurp. That little barefooted boy, the companion of my childhood days, whose cheeks with manly virtues glowed, though his home the stress of poverty often felt, in our comradeship's true democracy was my equal. When I permitted society to create within me the thought, that because of my possessions, or other circumstance, from him I should be distinguished, I gave countenance to its hypocrisies, and in thus aiding its hardship's impositions, in degree, however remote, I became, perhaps, an accessory to a crime he did commit.

I may never know that, which to the different trend in our thought, did lend itself, or whether the secret thoughts which I may have entertained equalled his offense which was discovered; of this one thing I may be assured, if I had not denied him that love, which in humanity no inequality recognizes, to his weakness I could not have contributed. "For deep down there is, may be, no differences." "When the desires that are born of Hate and Fear and Distrust are gone, there is no difference."

The robberies, which have been committed behind respectability's mask, cannot be measured; and when society, with its greeds and cruelties, shall cease to crimes to lend its aids, better thoughts shall be implanted, and of courts and prisons there shall be a greatly lessening need.

These vanities and these oppressions, shall not be decreased by placing premiums on society's hypocrisies, or erecting monuments to its greed; and it hath been known, that a depravity paraded too long in virtue's livery, may that virtue assume, and, even its own parentage forget.

Man's goodly proportions shall only appear when he ceases to smother himself in hypocrisy's clothes.

Environed in the bewilderments of falsehood's web, in more unreal creating, we but renew and multiply its strands; for our freedom is not gained by encasing ourselves in new impediments, but by casting off those we have.

No joys are builded on a foundation of lies. If our lives would beauties and happiness radiate we must strip them of their shams.

The spurious can never be removed from circulation by aiding its counterfeiters; and we shall not hope of our illusions, or hypocrisies, to be cured by clothing our deceptions in fictitious values.

When Competition reaches its breaking point, and the lessons, Greed hath to teach, have been so impressed, that its influence shall be forever lost, Coöperation will be substituted for those strifes Greed creates, and by Love we shall be ruled, and all because the conception hath become imprinted in our thought that Love hath more than Greed to give.

While it may be observed that self interest still remains as a motive force, by which our progress is impelled, it is a self-interest of another sort, so large and broad, that our brother and our neighbor have their just and full share in the account.

A self interest, as it were, which has been submerged in the good of all, but enlarged because our self permeates and becomes a part of the whole. After all, dear brother, there may be no burdens borne which are not imposed by what we, or some one else, did not know.

Whatever be the circumstance, the difference in men is the difference in their advance in thought, and he

who is without pretensions by greater wisdom is controlled.

Bodily deformities by our brothers possessed only sentiments of sympathy arouse, and when we view these more conspicuous defects which in their thoughts and their minds are expressed of all resentment we should be robbed.

The life of every man is the gift of God, and by His love and forethought supervised. When he shall comprehend his follies, he will be ashamed; and none shall desire that greater punishment to him may come than those which of his mistakes are born.

Somewhere in the past, or the present, in the struggle through which we pass, our purification to gain, is reflected an epitome of every life that has been, or shall be, and we shall look in vain for that, by which the Creator hath above another distinguished us. With the growth of better thoughts our animosities are overcome, and when Love by us, is understood, the way to our happiness shall be assured.

“Love is the very being (*esse*) of every one’s life, consequently from Love both angels and men have their life. Every one who reflects can know that the inmost vitality of man is from Love; since he grows warm from the presence of Love and cold from its absence, and when deprived of it he dies. But it is to be remembered that the quality of his Love is what determines the quality of one’s life.”

Since Happiness is a quality of life, the quality of one’s Love determines the quality of his Happiness. If one cultivates Love, by so doing he cultivates Happiness; conversely, if one cultivates Selfishness, by so doing, to the degree he cultivates it, he destroys Hap-

piness, and in like degree destroys life. Aphorisms few deny and fewer still exemplify.

When they seek Happiness they begin by cultivating Selfishness, the more assiduously they prosecute the search, the more diligence they display in cultivating Selfishness.

Thus one may be in possession of the knowledge by which he might of his disappointments be relieved, but he never uses it. He may have the knowledge, but may not understand what he knows, for knowledge and understanding are not one and the same. Every one knows more than he understands, and this must be so, because he must first be in possession of the knowledge, before it can be accepted by his thought, and molded into understanding. The knowledge his thought refuses to raise to the plane of his understanding is not appropriated, or assimilated, and does not thereby become of his life a part. That which he understands he must accept and has no power to refuse. It thereby becomes established as a fact and as such cannot *be separated from his thought.*

To the degree he understands a truth, to that degree it must and does become a factor in his progress and his growth, and he cannot refuse it, if he would. No man can be persuaded to exchange an error for a truth, when that truth is known and understood. What he can not refuse he must accept, and what he accepts embeds itself in his thought and is not shaken off.

Perfect Love in the absolute is infinite, and by the finite can never be reached, but in the degree we attain to it, in that degree our Happiness is assured.

Thus it appears how our life is a journey ever advancing, ever moving upward on to higher and broader planes, with its joys ever increasing, but never ending

since that which has no end never can be reached, and that which has no boundaries never can be exhausted.

If through mental laziness, or otherwise, he has refused to raise that knowledge, he does possess to the level of an understanding, whereby he cultivates Selfishness, where Love should be cultured, who should be blamed for his disappointments, if that blame to him should not be charged.

When he shall understand Love, he shall be in possession of Happiness, which shall be measured, only, by his understanding of Love. He who would seek Happiness must seek a more perfect understanding of Love.

Love shines forth into Happiness in relation to its purity. The clearer and purer the love, the clearer and purer the Happiness. Likewise, man's faith denotes the degree in which he accepts a truth. The purer his conception of truth, the purer his faith. As his understanding of a truth develops, his faith increases, thus faith and truth are ever conjoined, and whether it be love or whether it be truth, they both proceed from understanding. Thus we cannot cultivate either, except we cultivate our understanding of these virtues, and in proportion to our understanding, we accept them, whereby they become a part of our lives. Thus our duty to ourselves (our duty to others being in the final analysis our duty to ourselves) is to get understanding. Get understanding of Love. Get understanding of Truth.

For money and preferment, many strange things have been done, but in the better time that is coming more for happiness shall be done.

The memory of a good deed brings no regrets, and we shall never be embraced by the glowing warmth of

love while hatred doth possess us. We find not our disappointments in cheerful thoughts and kindly acts; by which we are admonished, that our lack of joys are from thoughts of another sort.

Some day we may establish a society formed on love of our neighbor, and the love of God, with all those thoughts, which to our hypocrisies and our greeds have lent their aids, left out; and because of those suggestions, which in an old name may be contained, by a new designation it may be known.

Where good fellowship and the pleasures of doing good may rob us of a desire to boast, and allow no place for that thought, that to us should be given a higher seat than that which by our brother may be occupied.

Where cheerfulness and joyous mirth, as tonics for the soul, are recognized, and where our songs with more joy, and in shorter meter may be sung.

Where men are not employed to bombard us with their thoughts till they grow threadbare and fall apart.

Where better occupations for men are found than that of appealing to their audiences in the form of supplications to God. Terming such an appeal as a prayer to God is most arrant sacrilege.

That prayer which is breathed as an inspiration of the soul, though it never be uttered so mortal ear may hear, with an invocation addressed to the multitude should not be compared.

That, which we address to the many, should be designated by another name.

That which, by us cannot be defined is not comprehended, but that which is understood in comprehensive terms can be stated.

The dictionaries of men, by us, have been searched, but nowhere have we found that Love or Religion, have

been given a competent definition. These attempted definitions of Love are no more definitions of Love than they are definitions of greed, or the basest passions, and so vague and crude are the attempts to define Religion that we are left without a definition. We are without these definitions for the very good reason that the world has no adequate, or approximately adequate, conception of either Love, or Religion.

There is no Jewish religion, there is no Mohammedan religion, and there is no Protestant or Catholic religion, because there can be only one religion.

The truth of this statement will appear, when it is discovered and recognized that the definition of religion and its only definition, is so simple and comprehensive that it cannot be misunderstood, and that it cannot into sects and creeds be separated.

When it is recognized that Religion has only one essential, and that essential comprehends all requirements, no avenues of escape are opened whereby its meaning and significance can be misunderstood, or avoided.

Until we have an adequate, or an approximately adequate, conception of Love and Religion how shall either be taught, or accepted? The fact is that neither have been taught, or accepted. That which has been termed religion has not been religion. It has been either a substitute, or a counterfeit.

When we are in possession of an adequate, or an approximately adequate, conception of Love, we shall be in possession of an adequate, or an approximately adequate, definition of Religion. And why? Because Love and Religion are one and the same. Love comprehends all there is of Religion, and it is impossible to have one and not be in possession of the other.

If a definition of Love is not a definition of Religion, why did Jesus say that Love comprehended all the Law? If Love comprehends all the law, why have men taught that it does not comprehend all the law? Because they are not in possession of an adequate, or an approximately adequate conception of either Love, or Religion.

Love consists in regarding what is ours with reference to the welfare and happiness of others, and in feeling their joys as our own. "To feel our joy in another and not his in ourselves is not love." To the extent others are excluded Love is excluded and to that extent our joys are denied.

Love with wisdom is ever joined and each with the other keeps pace. When we increase in wisdom our Love shall be increased and the way to our happiness and best good is in no other way assured.

This we believe is at least an approximately adequate conception of Love, and no one will deny that it is recorded that Jesus taught that Love is Religion's only essential requirement.

The marvel is that the church has consistently and persistently insisted that there are other essential requirements.

In its bigotry and thoughtlessness it has failed to observe that it has been these other requirements which have usurped the place of Love as the controlling thought in its creeds, whereby its followers have been left without definite, or truthful, moral standards by which their ideals could be measured, or fixed.

If these errors and anomalies in men's thoughts, and ideals, should not be charged to those, who have so assiduously taught, and promulgated these errors, we know not where the principal responsibility for these anomalies should be placed.

Hypocrisy and Greed can only thrive where Love is excluded. If Love to Greed gives no support, please tell us what are the thoughts in your creeds from which Greed and Vanity receive such encouragements?

None will make commerce of "saving souls" (?) where Love is in control, and those orthodox conceptions of profits will have no place in a sanctuary dedicated and given over to the teaching only of those thoughts which Love does not forbid.

"At last, after centuries, when the tension and strain of the old society can go not farther, and ruin on every side seems impending.

"Behold! behind and beneath it all, in dim prefigurement, yet clear and not to be mistaken—outline and draft of a new order.

"When the great web and framework of the old order, Law, is collapsing of its own weight." *

"Behold! a new order." In the realm of Love there is no need of Law's restraint, and man shall have gained his freedom in his new estate.

* Carpenter.

CHAPTER VII: AN ARGUMENT

“There are slaves who fear to speak,
For the fallen and the weak;
There are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they needs must think;
There are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.”

—*Lowell.*

CHAPTER VII

AN ARGUMENT

“No truth is lessened by disbelief. No error is made true because the learned receive it as such. Nothing can be changed that is unchangeable, by man, or his actions.

“Then press onward! Exercise your choicest gift which is Reason, and fear no corruption from Truth, though new, and expect no good from Error, though long believed. Fear not for Error is mortal and cannot live, and Truth is immortal and cannot die.”

Is it of no importance whether your religious assumptions are founded upon Truth, or upon Error builded? If it is important, then pray tell us, who of your faith, if any there may be, who can inform us how the Bible was written and compiled, and how it came to be declared the word of God? With your permission we will state the narrative as it has to us been given.

There was, however, before Christ, a council of Jewish rabbins, by whom it was decided that all manuscripts of a sacred and traditional character that might be found in possession of any nation, should be immediately collected. At that time the interest taken in manuscripts of a sacred character was such as has never met with a parallel, excepting at one subsequent period, when there existed an actual mania upon the same subject, and which period has been distinguished by some writers as the age of bibliomania. The Jews succeeded in collecting a vast number of writings, which

they preserved for several centuries. To these was superadded a collection of about fifty gospels, or books relative to Christ and the apostles, together with other historical and sacred records. Some of these are now found in the New Testament. They were thus preserved until the year 325, when at the command of Constantine two thousand and forty-eight bishops assembled at Nice.

It is well to remark in this connection, that these bishops were nothing more than organized human beings, nor were they sufficiently refined to merit many very high encomiums. After they had assembled, they were so violent and vociferous, that had it not been for the emperor's presence, they would have engaged in open battle. For each one had prejudices so strong in favor of certain peculiar doctrines, and all were so anxious to have their pre-convictions prevail, that justice and purity were entirely excluded from their proceedings, and were as far from their deliberations as mythology is from the truths of the Divine Mind. Constantine was obliged to disqualify seventeen hundred and thirty from having a voice in deciding which books were and which were not the word of God: and only three hundred and eighteen were left. These decided that the books which composed the Bible as subsequently known, were the word of God. Several Books, however, since that time have been rejected. Out of fifty gospels then extant, they decided that those only of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were worthy of being preserved; while they rejected entirely the books of James, Jude, and the Apocalypse. After this decision, Constantine arose and solemnly declared that the same should be considered as sanctioned by the Divine Will; and that the books thus fixed upon should there-

after be implicitly believed as the word of God. Those manuscripts that were rejected (among which were three well-written gospels) were committed to the flames.

In this general condition the Bible remained until the year 633. During the interval there were frequent councils called, which frequently annulled the decisions of each other—each establishing new propositions and passing new rules to be observed until the assemblage of another council. Thus were produced, from time to time, modifications in the form of the Bible, as well as in the number of books that were to be considered as composing it.

At the council of Toledo, in the year 633, the books of James, Jude, and the Revelation of St. John, were received into the canon. Then the Old and New Testaments were established in nearly the same form in which they exist at the present day. They continued, however, for many centuries unread and unknown by the mass of mankind; and it was not until the fourteenth century that the first English version was made. During the intermediate period, portions of the Bible were copied into the German, Danish, and Saxon languages. A thousand years elapsed after the council of Nice, before the Bible became much known; and probably it would have sunk into oblivion had not the art of printing been established in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

“Why were not these fifteen hundred bishops, who were discarded, as well qualified to decide which books were the word of God as those who remained?”

Moreover, reflect that nearly as many manuscripts, as are now embodied in the Old Testament, suffered

martyrdom. And why, or how, and by whose imperative command shall we believe that those which were saved are the word of God any more than those which were destroyed?

Either these questions are significant, or they are not. If they are not pertinent, they make no suggestions, with which we should be concerned. Either it is important whether we give to the Bible its true value, or it is a matter of no significance; and these are not the only facts concerning these most vital questions of which man is most ignorant.

The meaning of the parable of the Talents may be allowed to filter into, and penetrate our slumbering consciousness, when we come to recognize that man's failure to think, to think for himself, hath been the greatest obstacle which hath been permitted to obstruct his evolution and his growth.

Our talents are not credited with the use which another makes of his, and no disaster is evaded by a responsibility we have attempted to shirk in accepting the use of another's talents where our own should have been employed.

Certain men have been delegated, or have delegated themselves, to examine the ancient records and writings of men, who lived in the dim and distant past, and they have selected the records and writings of some and the records and writings of others they rejected.

Those they selected they passed their judgment upon, and thereupon decreed that these, they selected, contained and were the Word of God. With no less assumption they likewise decreed that these records and writings they rejected did not in this category belong.

By what process of reasoning are we justified in assuming that the decision of certain men, or the decision of any man, should be binding upon another's thought as to what should be, or should not be, accepted as the Word of God, and how doth such decision make their records, and writings, or any records and writings, the Word of God?

Some men may have the gift of prophecy, and some may have gifts of another sort. By what right is it claimed that the words of him, who hath the gift of prophecy, is God's word, and the words of those with proclaimed that the words of him, who hath the gift of gifts of another sort are not?

Men organize what they are pleased to call religious institutions, with the absence of Christianity, a conspicuous characteristic and term them Christian Churches. These Churches are not progressive and never have been. The Nature of their assumptions precludes the thought of growth. Growth means change, it means advancement, and improvement.

Since the Church assumes to be the custodian of the vital and fundamental truths which determine the destinies of men, if it would be consistent, it must be opposed to any evolution, or change in its thought.

In assuming to be the custodian of these truths it has made no allowance for mistakes in its assumption.

Its assumption that Truth is infallible is one thing. The assumption that it is the Truth it is the custodian of, or that its interpretations of Truth are infallible is quite another thing.

A denial of the infallibility of man in his interpretations of Truth, is not a denial of the infallibility of Truth.

In blissful thoughtlessness they found these institutions upon a so-called doctrine of faith and salvation, which by Jesus was never taught, and proclaims it his great plan of redemption.

With more zeal than understanding, since Jesus' time, they have preached these false interpretations, which no other effect upon His mission could have, but to nullify all His teachings, and have never taken thought to discover why His promises have utterly failed in fulfillment.

"Eighteen hundred years is quite long enough to test the efficacy of a moral medicine.

Christianity (meaning I assume man's interpretation of Christianity) has been assiduously administered, with professional skill to the world for nearly twenty centuries. Yet these horrid dramas and bloody tragedies are still being performed almost beneath the dripping of the sanctuary.

I tell you the exact truth when I say, in reply, that excepting the civilizing, or moralizing, influence which Commerce and Art and Science and Poetry, and Music, and which Philosophy have progressively exerted upon the world, the people, as far as the Church is concerned, in their civilization, are not more righteous to-day than they were in the days of Charlemagne."

Commenting on the failures of the Church. A. Conan Doyle makes the following pertinent statements. (I think, however, where he uses the word Christianity he referred to the Churches' interpretation of Christianity):

"I would say this, which must be obvious to many, however much they deplore it. Christianity must change or must perish. This is the law of life—that things must adapt themselves or perish. Christianity

has deferred the change very long. She has deferred it until her churches are half empty, until women are her chief supporters, and until both the learned part of the community on one side and the poorest class on the other, both in town and country, are largely alienated from her. Let us try and trace the reason for this. It is apparent in all sects, and comes, therefore, from some deep common cause.

“People are alienated because they frankly do not believe the facts as presented to them to be true. Their reason and their sense of justice are equally offended. One can see no justice in a vicarious sacrifice, nor in the God who could be placated by such means.

“Above all, many cannot understand such expressions as the ‘redemption from sin,’ ‘cleansed by the blood of the lamb,’ and so forth. So long as there was any question of the fall of man there was at least some sort of explanation of such phrases; but when it became certain that man had never fallen—when with ever fuller knowledge we could trace our ancestral course down through the cave-man and the drift-man, back to that shadowy and far-off time, when the manlike ape slowly evolved into the apelike man—looking back on all this vast succession of life, we knew that it had always been rising from step to step. Never was there any evidence of a fall. But if there were no fall, then what became of the atonement, of the redemption, of original sin, of a large part of Christian mystical philosophy? Even if it were as reasonable in itself as it is actually unreasonable, it would still be quite divorced from the facts.

“In my opinion, far too much stress has been laid upon Christ’s death, and far too little upon his life. That was where the true grandeur and the true lesson

lay. It was a life which even in those mangled records, shows us no trait which is not beautiful—a life full of easy tolerance for others, of kindly charity, of broad-minded moderation, of gentle courage, always progressive and open to new ideas, and yet never bitter to those ideas which he was really supplanting. Especially one loves his readiness to get at the spirit of religion, sweeping aside the texts and the forms. Never had any one such a robust common sense, or such a sympathy for weakness. It was this most wonderful and uncommon life, and not his death, which is the true center of the Christian religion.”

The failures of our civilization, its churches, and its partisans, to Christianity cannot be charged, if the specific doctrine of Jesus, which constitutes Christianity, has not been practiced, or practically taught.

Jesus taught a marvelous philosophy, a distinctive religious doctrine, fundamental and comprehensive, in terms which admit of no unintentional misconstruction.

The remarkable circumstance is that it has not yet been given a trial.

Mr. Shaw, in his preface to “Androcles and the Lion” published by Brentano’s, has so well and tersely expressed one view of our thought that we have obtained the permission of the publishers to quote the following passages therefrom:

“Why not give Christianity a Trial?”

“The question seems a hopeless one after 2000 years of resolute adherence to the old cry of ‘Not this man, but Barabbas.’ Yet it is beginning to look as if Barabbas was a failure in spite of his strong right hand, his victories, his empires, his millions of money, and his moralities, and churches and political constitutions.”

"This man has not been a failure yet for nobody has been sane enough to try his way."

"But he has had one quaint triumph. Barabbas has stolen his name and taken his cross as a standard. There is even a sort of loyalty in it *like that of the brigand, who breaks every law, and yet claims to be a patriotic subject of the King.*"

"The moneyed, respectable, capable world has steadily been anti-Christian since the crucifixion, *and the specific doctrine of Jesus*, has not, in all that time, been put into political, or general social practice."

If the way is so plain that the wayfaring man, though a fool need not err therein, he, who observes, should be impressed with the thought that a way, which needs so many explainers to explain, may not be the way of which Jesus taught, and we are easily constrained to believe, that no sane man would attempt to dispute that which is so plain that the wayfaring man, though a fool, could not be able to misunderstand.

The remarkable circumstance is that it has not yet been given a trial.

Between the religion of Jesus and the religion of reason there is no conflict. Both are democratic and socialistic.

The misinterpretations of Paul, and others, however unintentional they may be, which is the religion the Church has permitted to dominate its teachings, and its practices, is both imperialistic and capitalistic.

To the extent that it has been influenced by His misinterpreters, it has confused Jesus' simple doctrine of love and personal responsibility, and established in the minds of its followers false ideals, and false standards of life from which the greeds and strifes of men,

as a natural, a logical, and an inevitable sequence may be traced.

In his reference to Paul Mr. Shaw says:

“He is no more a Christian than Jesus was a Baptist ; he is a disciple of Jesus only as Jesus was a disciple of John. He does nothing that Jesus would have done, and says nothing that Jesus would have said, though much, like the famous ode to charity that he would have admired. He is more Jewish than the Jews, more Roman than the Romans, proud both ways, full of startling confessions and self-revelations that would not surprise us if they were slipped into the pages of Nietzsche, tormented by an intellectual conscience that demanded an argued case even at the cost of sophistry, with all sorts of fine qualities and occasional illuminations, but always hopelessly in the toils of Sin, Death, and Logic which had no power over Jesus.”

As we have seen, it was by introducing this bondage and terror of his into the Christian doctrine that he adapted it to the Church and State systems which Jesus transcended, and made it practicable by destroying the specifically Jesuit side of it. He would have been quite in his place in any modern Protestant State ; and he, not Jesus, is the true head and founder of our Reformed Church, as Peter is of the Roman Church. The followers of Paul and Peter made Christendom, whilst the Nazarenes were wiped out.

“The conviction is spreading that to encourage a man to believe that though his sins be as scarlet they can be made whiter than snow, by an easy exercise of self-conceit, is to encourage him to be a rascal.”

To enumerate the forms of hypocrisy and greed to which this thought hath lent its encouragement, we must agree, would be a task most difficult.

“Without the proper clews the gospels are to a modern educated man nonsensical and incredible, while the apostles are unreadable. But with the clews they are fairly plain sailing. Jesus becomes an intelligent and consistent person.”

“The iconolaters have never for a moment conceived Christ as a real person who meant what He said as a fact, as a force like electricity, only needing the invention of suitable machinery to be applied to the affairs of mankind with revolutionary effect.

“Thus it is not disbelief that is dangerous in our society; it is belief. The moment it strikes you (as it may any day) that Christ is not the lifeless, harmless image He has hitherto been to you, but a rallying center for revolutionary influences *which all established States and Churches fight*, you must look to yourself, for you have brought the image to life, and the mob may not be able to bear the horror!”

The conviction cannot be escaped that our religious thought has been the most important, if not the controlling circumstance by which the character of men's ideals of right and justice have been determined and fixed; and if the anomalies in our civilization would be overcome the anomalies in our religious creeds must be removed.

The inconsistencies in Jesus' teachings immediately begin to disappear when we abstract the confusing versions and statements of Paul, and other men, who because of their false interpretations have substituted a theory of their own for the doctrines He taught.

His teachings fixed personal responsibility with a certainty, and a definiteness, which permits of no evasions. For this personal responsibility, the Church has incorporated into its creeds a substitute, which has

usurped the place which Jesus' teachings should occupy, leaving its followers with no fixed responsibility, or definite ideals.

In his "Problems of Living" Mr. Brierley says:

"Amongst simple races the moral quality of belief shows almost exclusively in the way it is used. There is hardly a question here as to how it has come by it. It is like the elements around them, a primitive fact into the midst of which they were born, which they accept and live in, as they accept and live in the air and sunshine. With the educated man of to-day the quality of belief is a question of much further reach. For a creed to be acceptable he must recognize in its texture the elements of knowledge and of veracity. He realizes with Pascal that the first of all Christian truths is that 'truth shall be loved above all'! And as to what constitutes truth, some fine old crusted formulas no longer attract him.

"A certain order of mind will doubtless for a long while to come bow down to ecclesiastically manufactured authority, and accept as religion a sentiment of this sort, uttered not long ago by a Jesuite professor at Maynooth; 'The principle of liberty of conscience is one which is not and never has been and never will be approved by the Church of Christ.' But Rome with the best will for the work no longer creates the beliefs of the world. Before resuming that role she will have to purge herself of her sins against truth; she will renounce her bogus infallibilities, her habit of persecution, her veto upon research, her fostering of superstition, and other deadly intellectual vices. A religious belief that can show no better credentials will not survive in the future. What survives must ring true to the intellect. It will be nothing more

nor less than the spiritual interpretation of approved facts."

"And how will that interpretation be gained? Always in one way—by personal experience." Absolutely personal experience. He who does not grasp this great lesson of personal experience we have striven so earnestly to emphasize in our Chapter on Evil and Environment will have read that Chapter in vain.

It often happens that it is the stranger within our doors, who sees us as we have never been able to see ourselves, and who, from his unprejudiced stand-point, is able to point to, and reveal conditions we have often seen, but have become so accustomed to see, that they have been passed by us, unobserved.

In the Century magazine for February, 1918, appeared a most remarkable illustration of the thought under discussion, and from the pen of a stranger within our gates.

The irony of this article we are sure the writer never intended, and we are equally certain that its irony has been unobserved by nearly every one, if not by every one, by whom it was read.

The article is entitled, "The Religion of Sanity," written by M. E. Ravage, author of "The Liberty of the Foreign," etc.

Being a Jew, he thus describes his first experience in a Christian Church, and his comments, we must admit, are characteristically Jewish in thought and expression.

This is what he says: "I had looked for humbug, and I found the most perfect honesty. I had looked for self-contradiction, for solemn professions of faith in far-away, impracticable abstractions, for pretenses of submission to an ideal of humanity, and non-resistance,

and supineness, and I had found what? A clear-eyed, level-headed, sane body of principles, such as a practical man could believe in. I had stumbled upon a discovery. For the first time in human history, as far as I knew, a people had evolved a creed in harmony with their lives and their ambitions. Instead of making the vain attempt of the ages to practice what he preaches, *the American characteristically reserved the phrase and preached what he practiced. To be sure, he called his creed Christianity, but that was no more than a compliment to tradition.*"

Here we have, in general, a just and honest criticism of every Church in Christendom. At least every church which has incorporated these substitutes in its creed.

The Kaiser had a church, and he called it a Christian Church and it had evolved a creed in harmony with the lives and the ambitions of its followers, and he was one of its followers.

Hypocrisy, Greed, Imperialism, Capitalism, and other Isms, all have their Church, and they call it a Christian Church. They have also found evolved, or have evolved, in the creed of this Church, that which harmonizes with their lives and their ambitions.

There is one mistake they all have made. They assumed too much when they designated it a "Christian Church."

Mr. Ravage had no difficulty in discovering that what he saw was not Christianity, and he said so; but he failed to observe that a religion of the sort he commends is open to his criticism of non-resistance and supineness.

Why not give Religion a Trial? is not an idle question. Men do not even know what it is, and what

they do not know they cannot characterize. When its tremendous significance is comprehended none will be found who shall characterize it as supine or non-resistant.

There is no note of weakness in a thought which Jesus taught, and its demands upon the courage and strength of men is a reason for their retaining, if not the original reason for their acceptance of these non-resistant substitutes, as a part of their religious creeds.

“Christ was the greatest fighter the world has seen, alone He stood up against the mob, against the priesthood, against the empire, against almost everything there was, and with the might of His single personality fought for a new Kingdom and a new style of life. The weapon he introduced is only just beginning to be understood, so slowly does human history move. But as surely as electric traction will take the place of animal haulage so surely will Christ’s way of dealing with evil and with our enemy supersede the brute force method of an earlier time.”

Be not deceived, if Christianity had been given a trial, the greeds and strifes of men would never have been given the support they have received, and its just and full share of this condemnation by the Church cannot be escaped.

If the following criticism of modern Christianity, which is made by an author of note is not fair, or just, we leave to the reader to point out.

“I noticed there was so much of the world in the churches, that it was impossible that the church could ever improve the world. Selfishness had invaded the sanctuary. Every member was anxious to secure his own salvation, from the machinations of an imaginary personal devil (the personification of wily selfishness)

and from an everlasting hell—the fabled conservatory of what was too bad to be redeemed by omniscient goodness.

“I noticed furthermore, that the church was supported by men, who, bent on their own salvation, habitually shut their ears to the pressing wants of the world’s working and hell-going millions. The churches claim to be the reservoir of all private worth, of all public virtues, of all sinless charity. But behold the broad comfortable pews are loaded with the heartless devotees of hot-house aristocracy; with commercial gamblers; with the villains of speculation; with languid, listless, indifferent, godless dyspeptics; with cloistered, convented, lip-serving dogmatists; with atonement seeking cowards of traditional piety, who dare not imitate the example of Jesus, the public physician, the unconventional preacher, the associate of publicans and sinners, the philanthropist, the open friend of the poor and unfortunate.

“If religion consists in conveying by acts, God’s life into the life of society; if it consists in enlarging and spiritualizing the streams of public morals; in ministering to the necessities of the sick, the outcast, and relieving the conditions of the struggling millions of poor men and women; in improving the structure of society which, by its present selfishness and shameless injustice, generates one hundred criminals to one saving angel; if it consists in practical efforts to prevent the insane, rash, and reckless struggle for wealth; *in overcoming the heartless extravagance about the person, and in the homes of the so-called higher class*; if true religion consists in these works of righteousness, and in loving your neighbor as you love yourself, then, then—why the plain truth must be acknowledged there is no true

religion in the established churches of the nineteenth century.”*

Truth hath its ear marks by which it may be known, and the separating of Truths from Errors is an employment of our talents of which Jesus taught, the shirking of which might cause us to be deprived of those which we had.

Those who have trusted to the talents of others, instead of using their own, are the shirkers who have been most misled.

The stone the builders rejected, since the crucifixion have consistently rejected, is yet to become the head of the corner.

Jesus taught one thought, only one fundamental thought, that thought is comprehended in His doctrine of Love. So clearly stated that the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein.

“Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

If love doth not comprehend the whole doctrine Jesus taught, why did He say upon these commands, hang all the law? All most certainly is not a part.

That confirmation of these commandments which says, “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar,” needs no comments to emphasize its meaning.

There is nothing in these statements of His doctrine which can be misunderstood, and men have not misunderstood them. The plain fact of the matter is, they

* A. J. Davis.

have ignored them, so far as they seemed to interfere with their desires and their ambitions, and so far, as they seemed to them, to impose impractical conditions.

They have attempted to side-step them by the acceptance of the substituted sacrifices of another, which they have thoughtlessly permitted themselves to believe has been miraculously provided to bridge their endeavors and carry them over, without causing a too violent interference with their desires and ambitions.

Absolute perfection may be an impossible attainment, and the fact that Jesus' doctrine of Love sets a perfect standard, towards which our development and growth should be directed, gives no support to the objection, that it may be impractical, and furnishes no reason why the limits of our endeavors should not be in that direction.

If the love we have for our Creator and for our neighbor determines the quantity and the quality of our joys, how shall our happiness be increased except we continue to increase and develop our love of our God and our neighbor? Our happiness and our best good lies in no other direction.

Men have not observed that perfection never can be reached; neither have they comprehended what might occur, if it were possible to reach a point, where our development, and our growth would be at an end, because perfection has been reached, and there was nothing more which could be attained.

The paramount significance of every observable circumstance is growth, the movement from a lower condition towards a higher attainment. Attaining to-day that, which in our yesterdays was beyond our reach, supports our existence, likewise supports our pleasures.

That which, by another, has been achieved, adds no

luster to our attainments, and that exercise which another takes adds no elements to our growth.

If those props which support our existence would not be removed, and the pleasures of attainment are to be retained, by us to enjoy, we know no steps in our growth, and that attainment, whether in this life, or some life to come, which can be taken by another as our substitute.

Of the elements which support our existence, and our pleasures, we are most ignorant, and we have had a most erroneous conception of the significance of Jesus' doctrine of Love in its practical application to our lives, and our thought.

That the way is not plain has not been the question in dispute.

Men have not reached that point in the evolution of their thought where they have become persuaded that this way is the way to their greatest happiness and their greatest good. They have not accepted the surrenders and sacrifices that they have supposed it implied. Sacrifices and surrenders they have not been willing to make, while a substitute seemed to be provided which opened up an avenue by which they could, so easily, escape.

It has been a question of bargaining, and they have settled the question by determining which would be the best bargain, from their standpoint to make.

When we reach that development in our observation and discernment, where we shall be persuaded that the doctrine of Love comprehends all the law; furnishes the only standard by which the purity of our lives must be judged; points to the only conditions upon which, our real development may be achieved; declares the only foundation upon which any real happiness can be

builded; when we overlook the misstatements and misinterpretations of others, and accept this doctrine of Love, as the only clew to His thought, Jesus' teachings become intelligent and consistent.

If this doctrine had been understood, Jesus' statement, "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven," so much consternation, in the minds of men, might not have been caused, and they might not have thought they were called upon to make so many, varied, and contradictory explanations of its meaning.

It may be true, that all things are possible with God, and that He might make any needle's eye large enough to take any camel through, and that He might, perhaps, make a camel so small that it would not be obstructed in its passage through any needle's eye that has been made.

But we must not forget that, if with this kind of explanations our minds are trained to be satisfied with, that there are no errors, which in this manner, could not be satisfactorily explained to that kind of mind.

By the confusion, which Jesus' comments among his disciples caused, it is evident that it was a very small aperture to which He referred as that through which the camel was required to pass.

If our lives are to be judged by the Love we have for our God, and the Love we have for our neighbor, what think you was the thought Jesus was seeking to emphasize?

The acquisition, and the retention of great wealth, may be said to be promoted by your Love of God, and the Love you have for your neighbor, but we must admit that, so far as our observation instructs us, it hath not so appeared.

When He was asked by the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God cometh, the answer He gave, "Ye shall neither say lo here, or lo there, for behold the Kingdom of God is within you" may give you some further clues to the meaning of the thought He was seeking to convey.

We have not discovered that a talent we possessed, when our life on this plane was begun, by us was purchased, or by an effort on our part was acquired, and our claims of exclusive ownership may not have the support we have assumed.

Our pride of possession must have very little by which it may be justified where it appears that that which we possess, we have neither purchased or acquired; and the possession of our talents may imply obligations towards our neighbor and our brother, which are not discharged, by retaining for ourselves any greater portion than these considerations permit.

When Johnnie was a boy his father gave him a large apple and a small one, with his little brother to divide. He gave the small one to the brother, and to hide his shame, went behind the house, while the large one, by him was devoured.

Since Johnnie has sufficient growth to call himself a man, he has discovered how his greeds may be capitalized, and that, which in his tenderer years excited his shame has now become the source of his greatest pride. For must not he acquire and possess more goods and chattels, and other emblements of power and influence, than his brother and his neighbors have and hold, if he would above them be distinguished and a better position in society command? He has by these means become a man of consequence, can afford to purchase a reputation for philanthropy and dole out charity to those,

who, perhaps, would never have been compelled to accept his alms, if he and his sort had not been so willing to accept a substitute, in the place of the way that Jesus taught.

In front of my home a man diligently works, as each day he scrapes up and removes the dirt from the street. If this work by this man was not performed, and there were no others who could be induced to do it in his place, I would be obliged to remove the dirt, or its annoyance endure. So it has occurred to me that, while this man has helped others, he has been doing some work for me.

Through the list I go, with the shoemaker, the tailor, the merchant and the candlestick maker, till the vast army of men which I find have been working for me, has grown too large for me to estimate, and these are those who assistance has given to me the time I have devoted to myself and my chosen work whereby much property perhaps in my bins has been stored, and much influence and culture may have been acquired.

Tell me, if you can, how much of this property, this influence, and this culture, I owe to them, and how large my indebtedness may be? Have I allowed to them the property, the influence and the culture that is theirs, or have I so far forgotten their source as to be filled with a pride for that which may not all be my own?

“For it is enough that we should feel the cold a little less than the laborer who passes by, that we should be better fed or clad than he, that we should buy an object that is not strictly indispensable, and we have unconsciously returned, through a thousand byways to the ruthless act of primitive man despoiling his brother.”

You sticklers for grades and gradations among men, for reputations and influence, for culture and fame, how much more than your share have you been taking? If you had appropriated no more than you own how much would you be distinguished over them?

“Yes, we will do almost anything for the poor man, anything but get off his back.”

Exclusive Culture and polluted Wealth, “You are the sacrifice of the many—I cannot touch.”

APPENDIX

“Blessed are ye, for a new era is beginning; a new religion is coming; a new day of morals is dawning; a new road for human progress is making.

“This is that road which the toiling hands and sacrifices of the millions have graded over lowlands and through highlands, over the swamps of humility and through the mountains of pride. It is a straight, a level and a grand highway for all humanity; it leads onward forever.”

A VISION ¹

I read in one of the Boston papers an account of an aggravated and most soul-chilling murder, committed, as the paper stated, by a detested wretch, long a burden to himself and society. I read also concerning his execution, which account was accompanied with a few remarks upon the punishment he would probably receive in the other world. The relation of this horrible occurrence weighed my spirit down. The position from which I viewed and contemplated the deed, was identical with that educationally occupied by almost every political, legal and clerical teacher in the land. I viewed it as to its external aspect, and was driven to the unreasonable conclusion that man is, in reality, a depraved creature at heart! Oh, how I trembled at this! But no man, reasoned I, could do such an evil to his fellowman, without being evil in the very elements of his being; and if this is an individual truth, it must be a universal one. Yes, only twenty days ago I was filled with sorrow concerning this demonstration of innate sin, of perverted and evil affection, of a voluntary love for, and doing of, evil—voluntary, because growing out of, and being allied to, the Soul's Life. I prayed, constantly, to know the truth, and to view the occurrence, and its causes, from an interior and spiritual position. At length, one day, I felt moved to visit the village grave-yard, that I might be free from outer disturbances. I obeyed the internal impulse, sought a retired spot, folded my head in my garments, shut myself from sense and outer impressions,

¹ Andrew Jackson Davis.

and meditated on the subject of my thoughts. Instantly my understanding was opened, and the birth, and life, and character, and the various circumstances which constituted that murderer's experience were manifested to me in their regular order of succession.

In a small, unclean, unfurnished room, in a cradle, I saw a child. It was physically deformed, especially in the cerebral region. I saw that the cause of this malformation was referable to the ignorance of its parents—they had violated the laws of reproduction and utero-gestation. It was plain to be seen that this infringement and disobedience was faithfully recorded on the person of the child.

In five years more, that child manifested in its plays and conversations the angular and impulsive promptings of love unguided by wisdom, which latter it had not, because of youth and incapacity, and which its parents could not have communicated because of their ignorance from birth.

In five years more, I saw that child the companion of those of equal growth and like hereditary misdirection,—of those who were born foes to the interests of society,—those who were victims of circumstances, such as surround and influence all persons and families forming the lower strata of civilization.

In five years more, that child was a perverse and wicked youth—was the leader of card-playing and gambling tricks without the city—and was the chief of mobs and riots within; was chewing tobacco, smoking cigars, drinking liquor. His parents were poor. At first they could not send him to school, at last he would not go. He stood as a representative of inferior situations and circumstances.

In five years more, I saw that youth a man in stature,

but not in development of body nor elevation of mind. And in an old, dilapidated dwelling, like the Brewery in New York City, containing about twenty families, I saw his wife—for he had married.

Two years more, and I saw his child. That mother's child was left in the care of a sympathizing, but no better situated, neighbor, while she, worn out and emaciated, was peddling strawberries in the streets of Boston. I saw her return at night, with food for herself and her little one, and money to procure bread for breakfast; but that cruel man, intoxicated husband, and misdirected father, abruptly and insultingly demanded her little savings, and appropriated it to his own use—to buy rum, whereby to drown the rising feelings of goodness and sympathy within, that his obscured and misdirected soul might not perceive the body's corruption and depravity.

In six months more, I saw him when alone, weeping; but when seen by others, he was gross, unclean and disgusting. Feeling that others disliked and despised him, he disliked and despised himself. A whole garment was not in his possession. One by one they had been sacrificed to gratify his overmastering desire. Indeed, he was a slave—rum was his master. A slave can not do as he will, but only as the master prompts, and sanctions, and commands!

Three nights afterward, he was destitute of liquor, food, friendship, clothes and money. Society had neglected its legitimate child. Nature's universal provisions were withholden, and the husband was urged to violent plans. At this moment he saw a well-dressed and apparently wealthy gentleman step into quite an inferior oyster-house. The husband hurried on and entered it. He obtained a seat with an air of

carelessness, and unobserved. The gentleman was a stranger, was inquiring the most convenient route to a village ten miles from the city. When he paid for his oysters, he unfortunately revealed a well-supplied pocket-book. The temptation was too powerful. The husband saw the magnitude of destitution and starvation compared with the act of assassination—compared with the former the latter seemed justice, to exercise which he at once resolved. He had heard the directions given the stranger, and without a moment's hesitation hastened on the way. After proceeding nearly half the distance, he secreted himself by the roadside and awaited the traveler's approach.

"I don't want to kill him," said the husband; "I will only stun him and get his shiners. The world owes me a living; it don't give it to me; I am resolved to take it. God knows this is justice. I am hungry, and must have something now or I shall die." Now I saw him weep. A sound of footsteps close by announced the traveler's approach. Out he leaped and grasped the stranger by the throat, and sternly demanded his money. The man knocked him down. This unexpected blow fired him with vengeance and determination. He instantly arose and shot the man, and stabbed him hurriedly in many places—mangled him in the most horrible manner—searched his pockets, robbed him of all he had, threw the body over the fence, and went into Boston to drown sorrow with a flood of rum, which he then could purchase.

I saw him arrested, tried, condemned, imprisoned, abused, sneered at, and formally executed—executed as an example. I saw all this.

I continued in that illuminated condition nearly an hour after the above vision, reflecting upon its im-

portance and signification, when my perceptions enlarged, and it was given me to follow his spirit.

In the first Society of the second sphere of human existence—where the inferior types of the race are, and where they gravitate for refinement and reformation,—I mean the Weak, and Idiotic, and the Mis-directed individuals and classes of every community and nation,—there, I saw that dark spirit. He was small, and weak, and ungrown; he was clothed with all possible conflicting colors, and was disagreeable to behold. As a coating upon his faint spirit was impressed, or induced, or recorded, every unfavorable influence and evil circumstance that had surrounded and actuated him from his birth to the grave. The malformation had rendered his body inadequate to a regular unfolding of his spiritual elements and attributes; and outer conditions and opposing influences prevented his finding his true position, or making a pleasant and happy journey through this rudimental sphere. The most lovely rose cannot grow, if planted in an iron vase, and breathed upon by the chilling winds of Iceland; nor can a pure spirit grow into a love of goodness and truth, if confined within the walls of an ill-formed body, and breathed upon by the freezing atmosphere of uncongenial conditions and circumstances.

But now, higher influences pervaded him—penetrated that superficial coating; it grew thinner and more thin; it became transparent; it dissolved and crumbled into nothing. The germ of the spirit sparkled like the crystal in the granite rock. I saw that, from the first, it was pure within, though evil without; the pure soul indigenous to heaven, the outer life to the imperfections and misdirections of earth.

