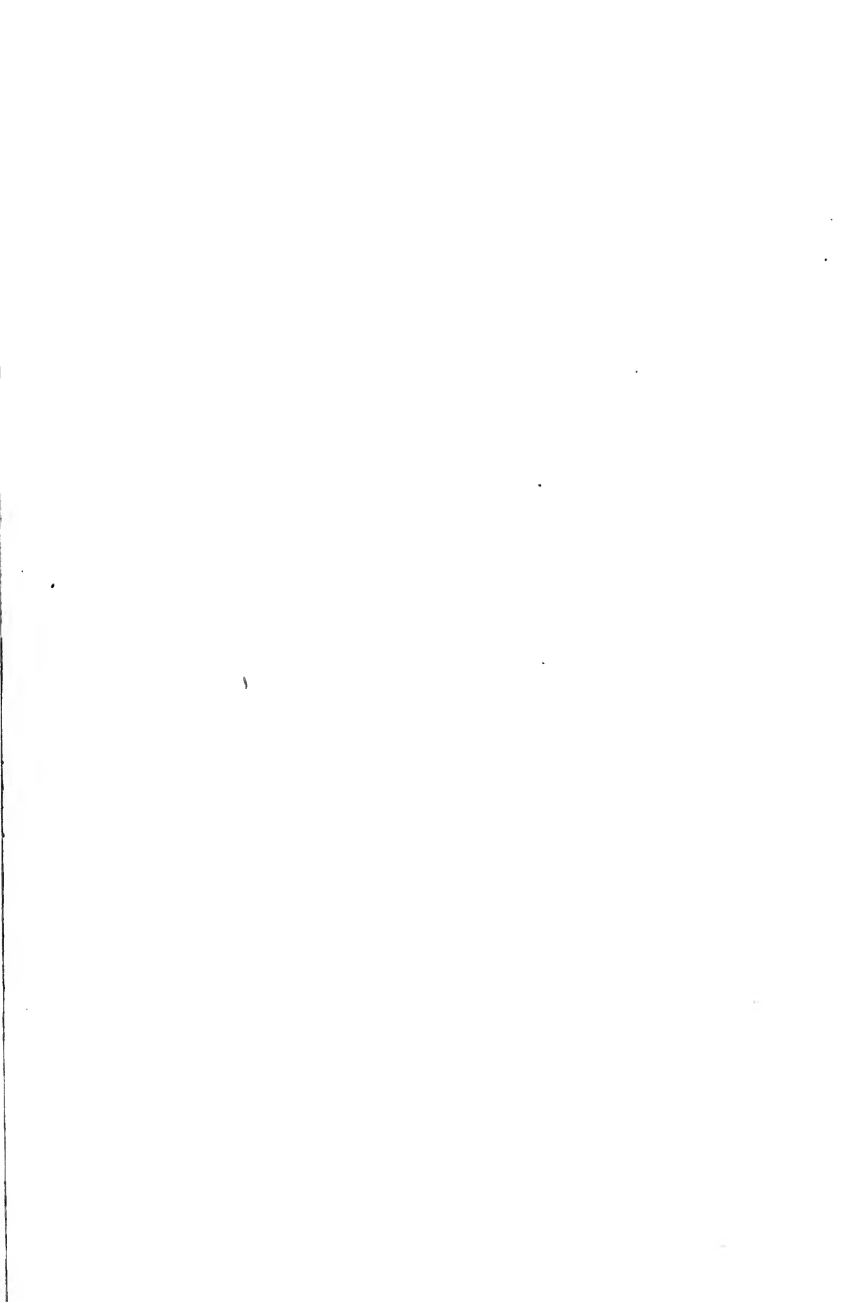


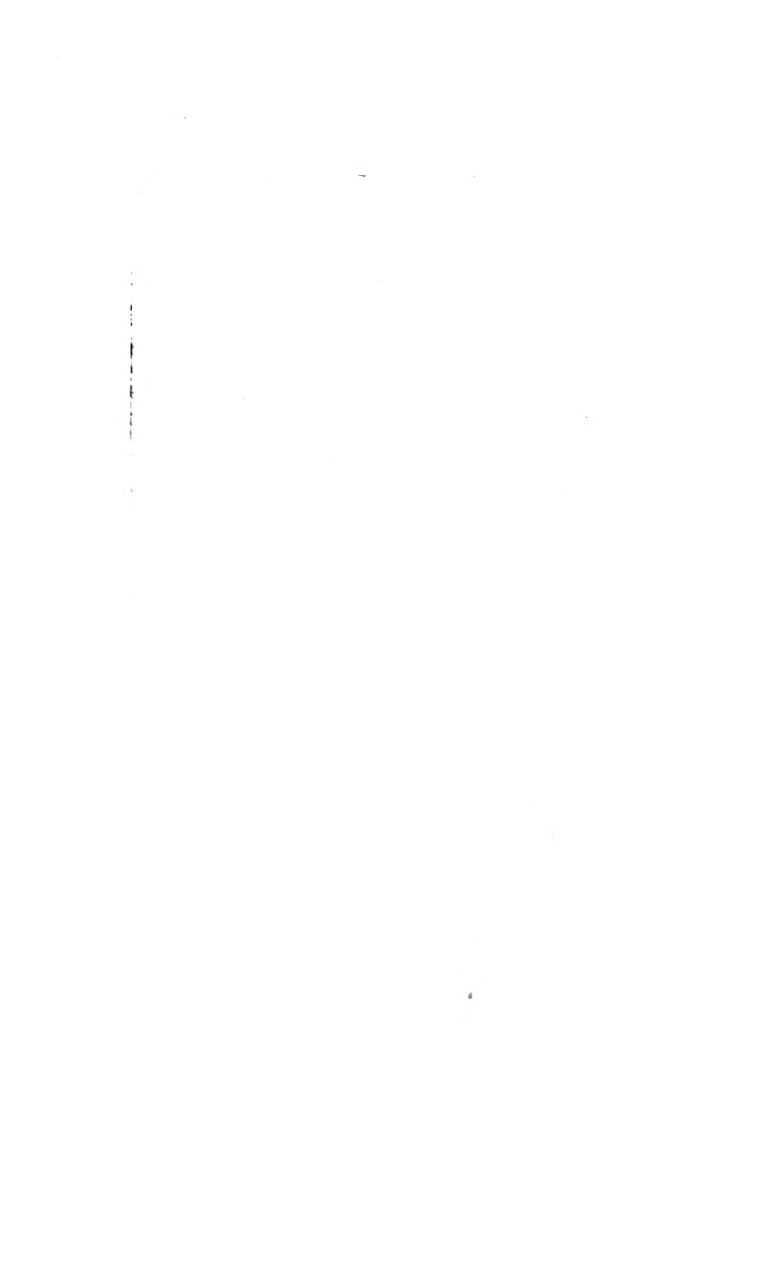
The Question Box

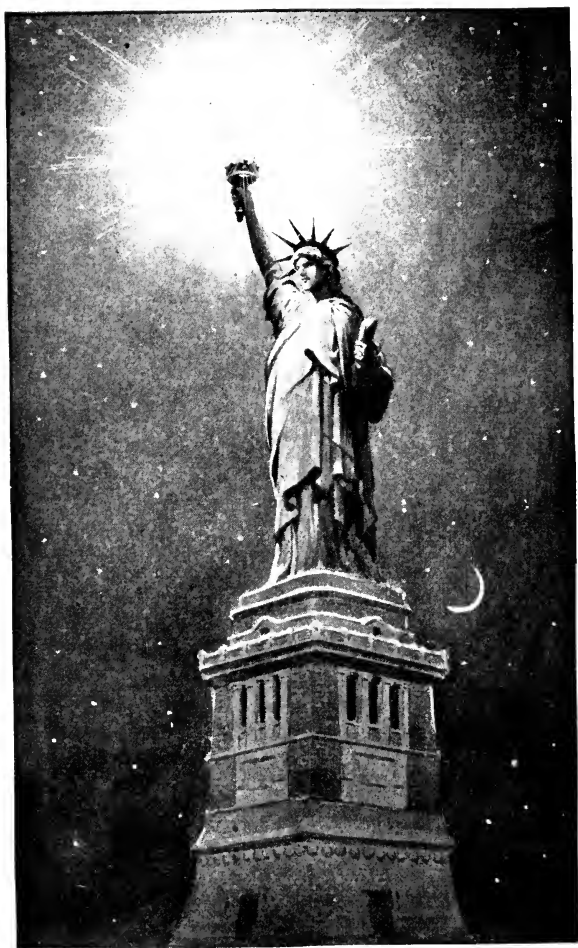
By TK

Oct 75
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THE QUESTION BOX





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A Series of Questions in Natural Science
Answered by H. H.

THE GREAT EASTERN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
NEW YORK, N. Y.

Questions Answered
Volume II

1900

Published by The Great Eastern Life Insurance Company
New York, N. Y.

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A Series of Questions in Natural Science
Answered by TK.

Author of
"THE GREAT PSYCHOLOGICAL CRIME,"
"THE GREAT WORK," Etc.

Question Box Series
Volume II

FIRST EDITION

Indo-American Book Co.,
5705 So. Blvd.
Chicago, Ills.

1914

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by
Indo-American Book Co.

Published 1915

ADDRESSED.
to the
Students and Friends
of
Natural Science

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What Shall We Do About Christmas Giving?

AMONG THE STUDENTS and "Friends of the Work" the subject of Christmas and Christmas Giving has, to some of us at least, become a real Problem. It is one of such active and vital interest, and touches so deeply the tender sensibilities of human nature, that it is difficult to consider it free from bias as a result of the multitude of happy memories which cluster about the day and the occasion in an unbroken chain backward to "childhood's happy hours."

There is no single event or occasion or influence within the range of Christian civilization which touches more powerfully the common bond of human sympathy nor touches more vividly the lessons of human brotherhood nor inculcates more deeply the true "Spirit of the Great Work" than does the time-honored and inspiring custom of Christmas Giving.

For one single day in each 365 it brings all men of Christian customs and habits of

thought under the spell of the Spirit of Universal Brotherhood, and for that brief fraction of time lifts them into a common atmosphere of mutual sympathy, understanding, fellowship and good will.

For this we should be truly grateful, and I believe most of us are. There can be little doubt that most men, women and children of Christian civilization and influence are better from the effects of this unselfish influence of Christmas and for the Spirit of Giving which goes with this national Holiday.

But during the last few years this subject has presented itself to my reason and conscience from a new angle. This has been due to the rapidly growing circle of generous personal friendships resulting from the Extension Work of the Great School in this country and in this center of intense activity.

No one [still on the outside] is in position to understand or appreciate the meaning, the beauty or the value of friendships that grow up naturally and inevitably among the Students and "Friends of the Work." Nothing could be more ideally beautiful. This establishes among us the *Spirit* of Christmas 365 days in every year. The desire to give becomes a powerful and ever present impulse.

And this undoubtedly is the spirit of mutual helpfulness, generosity and Service which the Master, Jesus, endeavored to inculcate among his disciples. And it is unquestionably the right spirit, and should exist at all times in the hearts and lives of all those who become accredited Students and Representatives of the Great School today.

But, after all, even among the most loyal and generous of friends, there are possibilities of embarrassments arising out of this identical spirit of generosity and unselfishness. It is concerning these possible embarrassments that I have been requested to write and give to the readers of *Life and Action* such suggestions and light as I can from the more exalted viewpoint of the Great Friends.

It is not an easy task. The subject is one of many sides and angles. It touches some of the deepest, tenderest sentiments of the human soul and some of the loftiest ideals of human intelligence. It goes to the heights and the depths of human nature and involves relations that have grown up around a beautiful custom almost twenty centuries old. But I am to write about the inevitable embarrassments which grow out of this venerable and time-honored custom and not of its

beauties nor its benefits. Let me see if I can do so in such manner as not to minimize the virtues of the occasion, nor discount the benefits which flow from the generous and almost universal custom of Christmas Giving:

1. We all know that a "Gift" is something voluntarily given without expectation of return. The vital and distinctive elements of a "Gift" are that it must be a voluntary offering, and that it must be made without expectation that the giver will receive anything in return therefor. Therefore, if there is in the mind of the giver any thought, desire or expectation that the receiver will give him something in return, this fact destroys the spirit and intent of a "gift" and removes the transaction to the category of a mere "exchange," or to the spirit and intent of a mere exchange. A gift is an expression of absolute unselfishness. It should be received in that spirit and with that understanding, if accepted at all.

2. Notwithstanding the unqualified truth and accuracy of the foregoing analysis and definition, and quite regardless of the motives, intentions and purposes which inspire the millions who make Christmas an occasion

for remembering their friends with beautiful and often-times expensive gifts; it is nevertheless a fact that almost universally those who receive such gifts feel themselves charged with the obligation to return a gift of some kind to the giver, and usually of equal value.

In other words, whilst I am convinced that in its inception the custom of Christmas Giving was founded upon the spirit of perfect unselfishness, there is not the least doubt that in these modern times it often obtains that in the mind of the receiver the acceptance of a gift implies an obligation on his part to give one in return. | This is more especially true where the giver and the receiver are bound to each other by the ties of friendship only. |

3. [This unfortunate and mistaken "rule of reciprocity" that has grown until it has become virtually a custom in this country, is not quite so rigid among those who are bound by the ties of consanguinity, or family kinship. But even here the tendency is strong on the part of the receiver to feel himself bound by an *implied* obligation to balance the account in a purely material sense.]

There can be not the least doubt that

among those who have become identified with the Work of this School and who have endeavored to exemplify its principles in their daily lives and conduct, the effort to apply the "*Law of Compensation*" to themselves in this very problem of Christmas Giving, has had and does have something to do in the development of the idea of reciprocity to which I have just referred.

4. But so long as the custom of exchanging Christmas gifts is limited to the immediate members of the family these embarrassments do not so often arise—especially where both parties are financially independent and thus able to make gifts without taxing their material resources or interfering with their ability to discharge already assumed obligations.

Even a limited number of outside friends may often exchange such gifts without allowing the practice to become a burden or a hardship.

5. But there is one mighty influence back of this truly great problem of Christmas Giving which has not yet been mentioned, and which has, beyond all question, done more than any other to make of this occasion and event a great national festival of extravagant

unselfishness—a sort of *National Contest* in the practice of *giving*. That mighty influence is none other than the supremely selfish and artful and overwhelming Spirit of Greed at the foundation of modern American Commercialism.

Paradoxical as this statement may appear upon its face, the evidences of its truthfulness are abundant, and more or less familiar to every Christmas shopper. For months in advance of the Christmas Holiday the merchants throughout the length and breadth of this beautiful land of ours prepare their stocks of “Christmas Goods,” embodying every article of merchandise within the limits of human genius to devise, human art to depict and human skill to execute.

They apply to the problem every known principle of the art of advertising for many weeks, gradually but surely cultivating in the consciousness of men, women and children in every department and walk of life, a friendly and hospitable attitude of soul. This is done with such consummate skill and with such a profound knowledge of the secret springs of human Life and Action that a veritable contagion of unselfishness is developed and carried into every home in the land,

until the annual epidemic sweeps all before it.

These clever merchants then employ special "Holiday Help" to meet the "Christmas Rush"—and after it is all over, and the millions of poor people have spent every penny they could accumulate or borrow, the merchants then enjoy their own "Carnival of Cash." They sit back in their leather chairs, count their profits, smile the soulful smile of self-satisfaction—and think, perchance, "What fools these mortals be."

But next year they do it all over again—on a bigger and bolder scale than ever—and so on, *ad infinitum et nauseam*.

This, however, is a slight digression. I was about to say that there are instances where the beautiful custom may prove embarrassing to those whose generous friends become so numerous as to make reciprocal giving impossible.

For illustration: We who have the Great Work in charge have become the center of an ever-increasing number of loyal friends whose affection we prize beyond all material possessions or gifts.

In the realm of faith and affection and loyalty we may and do reciprocate in full measure all that we receive, and on that

plane, therefore, we experience no embarrassment in returning full equivalent and in discharging the obligations imposed by the Law of Compensation.

There is still another aspect of the subject wherein our friends lay us under material obligations, wherein our resources have limitations when because of their kindness of heart they include us in their lists of "friends to be remembered."

This they do without the desire for or thought of return. We acquit them of seeking to place us under any obligations, material or moral, for we are sure they are impelled solely by "the pure and holy joy of giving." At the same time we cannot divest ourselves of the sense of obligation, nor could we long escape the reputation of being selfish or mercenary if we continued to receive valuable gifts and made no return in kind. We do not feel that it is possible to receive gifts that represent money value with no more acknowledgment than a mere card or note of thanks.]

Even though we might absolve our conscience from the sense of obligation today, we cannot ignore the possibilities of the future. That is to say, should these present students and friends at any time in the future

withdraw from the Work, or from us, would we not regret that we had accepted their material gifts without having responded in kind? The "still, small voice of conscience" whispers: "Be careful! The friends of today may, perchance, be the enemies of tomorrow. Take nothing for granted with even the best of friends. Be sure that every account is fully balanced; that no man ever may justly say of you—"There goes one of my debtors'."

To all those in positions analogous to ours this embarrassment increases every year, as the numbers of outside friends increase; and it is but a mere question of time when it becomes impossible for one in such a position to balance the account in material things. I doubt if anyone having a keen sense of equity could occupy this position long without also the sense of oppression.

There is still another phase of Christmas giving entirely personal to the "RA" and myself that almost forbids our taking any active part in the strenuous Holiday season. This has reference to the value of time and the limitations of physical energy.

So rapidly are the Friends of the Work increasing in number that we can scarcely

attend to the matter of "Applications for Instruction," and to the work of the students in the field; to say nothing of the requests for interviews and for personal advice on individual problems.

In truth, we have found it next to impossible to add to all this, the selection, purchase and sending of gifts, together with the after-acknowledgments of those received. This year we abandoned the idea even of sending out individual cards of greeting to our long list of friends.

We cannot continue to receive gifts and ignore the custom of reciprocity. We cannot disregard the impulse to do as we are done by, in this respect. We could not respond fully if we desired, and we could not do so even partially without an expenditure that would not be justifiable. And should we fail to respond next year, it might be construed as indifference to our friends.

On the side of expenditure there is for each of us a proper limitation and a moral responsibility for the making of gifts, whether it be giving pleasure to those we love or giving aid and comfort to those who need.

But on the side of "Time, Thought, and Vitality" we at the Center have another re-

sponsibility, and this our friends may not wholly understand. Our position entails such close attention to the work in hand; our days are so filled with crowding demands, that we have neither time nor energy personally to engage in this strenuous Holiday rush.

The appropriateness of a gift often exceeds its material value, and we who are recipients of so many carefully selected gifts are embarrassed to offer some haphazard "present" hurriedly purchased by proxy, or in a crowded Christmas Shop.

All this means that we who are charged with the conduct of this Great Work should not be drawn into an expenditure of money, time, thought and energy that might prove inimical to the Work itself, or obscure our best opportunities for doing good, nor into receiving personal benefits not fully justified by conscience.

But how is it possible to adjust a problem of this nature in the scales of Equity, Justice and Right? How can it be done without in some measure destroying the meaning and spirit of Christmas, or minimizing the virtue and the value of Christmas giving?

These are questions that I have given much thought and consideration for the past few

years; and it was about two years ago, I believe, that the suggestion was made to the small Group with whom we have been intimately associated for many years, what appeared at the time to offer a wholesome solution among ourselves.

It was mutually agreed among us that we would join the "Good Fellows' Club" which, by the seeming magic of common impulse, has established a great working force of independent members in the name of Christmas Cheer for the poor and unfortunate.

Our working plan was something as follows:

1. Among members of our own families and relations generally we would observe Christmas customs as seemed best in each case. We agreed also that there would be some outside friends who might misunderstand any radical change in our custom of festivities.

2. Among ourselves [and such of the students and friends outside as could be advised of the new plan] we would limit our "gifts" to a card of greeting, a personal note or letter, or at most a mere inexpensive trifle

of such character as would take it out of the category of "Gifts of material value."

3. We would then associate ourselves together in a club of "Good Fellows" for the purpose of carrying all the light, warmth, comfort, joy and happiness within our means into the homes and hearts of those who need and to whom the joys of Christmas giving are impossible.

It was agreed that all the money we otherwise would have spent on Christmas gifts for each other [and as much more as we could reasonably afford without injustice to our already assumed obligations] would be devoted each year to as many poor and worthy families and individuals as possible, whose circumstances would not admit of a share in the enjoyments of Christmas Giving.

*Each one of our members who could do so agreed to assume the responsibility of making Christmas a day of "Glad tidings and great joy" to at least one worthy and deserving family to whom it would otherwise be a day of self-denial and unsatisfied longing.

A plan of action was developed whereby a number of poor and virtually destitute families were located, and arrangements

were made to meet the conditions of each according to its greatest needs. Gifts of clothing, fuel, food, and [where there were children], toys were provided and distributed.

Those of our friends who engaged in this work now agree that it has been productive of more real benefits, deeper satisfactions and greater joy than they ever before have been able to obtain with the same investment of money, energy and time.*

From these experiences it is evident that those of us who live in comparative comfort know but little of the meaning of Christmas to those whose daily lives bring them into the midst of the spirit of Christmas and yet deny to them even the smallest participation in its brightness, its fellowship, its good cheer, and its joy and happiness.

Can you think of anything more maddening than it would be if one were bound by unbreakable chains to an iron shaft, and then condemned to starve, while on every side—just beyond his reach—were spread beautifully decorated tables laden with foods of every kind to tempt the appetite, and the air he breathes filled with its rich and tempting flavors; while men, women and children on every hand are feasting and enjoying them-

selves to the full measure of their capacities, utterly oblivious of his existence, presence, condition or suffering?

And yet, this is scarcely an exaggerated picture of realities that exist today on all sides of us and that may be discovered within a few blocks, sometimes within a few doors of us, by those who have the time and inclination to look for them.

They are bound by the unbreakable chains of poverty to the shaft of necessity, and there condemned to watch the rest of mankind feed upon the good things of life which are just beyond their reach.

*These conditions exist all about us while we revel in the joy of Christmas giving. If we could but see the picture of the real privation, want and consequent suffering of these brothers and sisters of ours, not one of us could have the heart to enjoy a single Christmas gift of any kind. We would open the doors of our hearts wide and admit all these slaves of poverty, these orphans of suffering and sorrow, into our homes and to our lists of "those to be remembered on Christmas Day."

It is because of my definite knowledge of

the existence of these children of misfortune that I can no longer continue to enjoy the gifts that come to me from the store of dear old Santa Claus. I want to help them. I want to beg all our Students and Friends to help them. We can do it, and at the same time enjoy our own gifts with joy multiplied an hundred-fold because of it.

From the experiences of our friends who have become "Good Fellows" we have but the faintest knowledge of the amount and intensity of happiness we can purchase for these poor sufferers with a dollar. *We ought to know.*

And this brings me to the point of this message to the Students and Friends of the Work. I want to make it clear and definite. It is this:

- ✓ 1. That they remove my name entirely from their lists of "Friends to be remembered with Christmas Gifts of material value."
- ② 2. That each and every one of my friends who has contemplated making me a Christmas gift of material value, not only refrain from so doing, but in addition thereto that he take the time and make the effort neces-

sary to find some poor and worthy family [where there are children, if possible] whose poverty denies to them the joys of Christmas giving, and make to *them* Christmas gifts that shall equal in material value any gift that may have been contemplated for me.

If you who respond to this, my Christmas prayer, will but go in person, study the needs and wants of your proposed beneficiaries, select and buy the presents you think will give the greatest amount of innocent and wholesome pleasure, then go yourselves and personally superintend the distribution of your gifts, I am willing to guarantee that you will enjoy your Christmas and Christmas giving as never before in all your life.

It will be a new experience to some of you, I am sure, to witness the expressions of unrestrained joy in some of these little waifs over the merest trifle of a gift which, to your own children or the children of your friends, would bring only disappointment and possible disgust.

*To see a little, half-naked child weeping hysterically with joy over a three-cent doll [its first Christmas gift] will give you a new sensation worth many times what it will have cost you in time, effort, and money.

To see the thin-faced, shabby, half-starved father and mother mingle their tears with those of their little ones, will cause your heart to swell with a new sympathy for "those who need" and with new gratitude to the Great Father that it has been your blessed privilege to carry this much sunshine into the darkened homes of earth. |

It will take you many days to swallow the "lump in your throat", but you will be a better man, or a better woman, for the experience; and it will give you a new idea of how to be a "Good Fellow" on Christmas day hereafter.

At this writing Chicago is the seat and center of one of the greatest strikes in its history, numbering, it is said, over 40,000 of the poorest-paid and worst-treated of all laborers, the garment workers, largely made up of self-supporting women, with a small army of dependent children, the innocent victims of this labor war. And whether this strike be continued or whether it succeeds or fails, it must mean unspeakable deprivation to all concerned upon the side of labor.

No matter how it ends, I can see a long vista of over-due rentals, empty cupboards, insufficient clothing, lack of food, coal and

the common necessities of life. To these poor, desperate souls this on-coming Christmas dilemma of gifts and festivities appears as the most cruel of mockeries, and it is not surprising that already the suicide list is increasing through their despair. In the miserable places these people call "home" there will be no "Merry Christmas"; there will not be even a ray of hope or gladness unless we, you and I and others of our own kind shall make it our business to carry to them the only message of "Peace on earth" that they can understand—and that must be material help in their hour of need, and some of our own "Merry Christmas" for their little children, the innocent victims of our terrible commercial greed.

I pray with all my heart and soul that you, my friends and fellow-workers in the Cause of Humanity, will follow the suggestions herein contained, and that you will help me present this subject to the Students and Friends of the Work everywhere, in the hope of developing and inaugurating plans and methods for bringing the joys of Christmas into the homes and lives of the destitute, as far as may be within our means.

More especially do I invoke the aid of our young people in this inauguration of a new Christmas spirit. It will help them in the development of a right Attitude of Soul to exemplify the Spirit of the Work and become the future Accredited Representatives of the Great School in this field of its endeavors.

With their co-operation and active interest it is hoped that we may be able to establish a Harmonic Charity that will enable us to carry our part of the world's burden in a manner that will enable us to know with absolute certainty that our contributions reach the end and accomplish the purposes for which they are intended. Herein is the greatest difficulty in all systematic charities. We can overcome it if we begin our work in the right way.

Before another Christmas comes to us it is the purpose of the Great Friends to help us work out this problem along lines that will open to us a new and important field of a future Great Work.

Should We Desire to Communicate With the Dead?

The time seems now at hand when it is possible, in response to a real demand for definite

information, for me to answer a question of vital importance to the School, the Work, the Students, the "Friends of the Work" and finally to myself.

The columns of *Life and Action* would also seem to be the natural and legitimate channel through which to convey my message in such manner as to deliver it in the most direct and acceptable way to all those for whom it is intended and who are entitled to receive it.

It is fair to assume that all those who have made a careful reading and study of the volumes of the Harmonic Series, and on the basis of these text-books have applied for admittance as Students of the Great School, and asked for instruction in the formulated work of the Ethical Section of the Great Work, are deeply and definitely interested in the great problem of another life—the life after physical death.

Their interest in the books, in the teachings and findings of the School therein contained, in the Work, in the "Friends of the Work" and in the spirit of Friendship and Brotherly Love which prevails everywhere within the environment of the School and the Work, is evidence as conclusive as could well be adduced in proof of their interest also in

the great problem of Immortality of the Soul and of our continued Life beyond the Grave.

*In truth, the greatest definite achievement of Natural Science has been its solution of the great problem of Life after physical Death; and hence it is that in this scientific demonstration of another life is to be found the central inspiration which attracts to it the interest and attention of those who prefer the definite and unqualified findings of exact science to the tenets of a dogmatic religion.

It is therefore but natural and logical that those who gain admittance to the School of Natural Science should seek to obtain as much definite information and acquire as much exact personal knowledge as may be possible concerning this, the greatest and most vital problem of individual existence.

Most of those who come to the Great School in search of knowledge are moved by the desire to know something more definitely concerning the life beyond. Most of them have relatives, friends and loved ones in that life. In some instances these have but just entered upon that life.

It is inevitable that within the ranks of our Students, Helpers and Friends of the

Work, from this time forward the door of the other life will swing open again and again, and one by one they will go from among us to join the "Great Majority."

Each year henceforth the number of our departing Friends and fellow Students of earth who gather on the other shore must inevitably grow larger and larger.

And for each one who goes from among us there will still remain among our number those whose love will follow him out into that other life.

Many there will be among us whose spiritual eyes have not yet been opened. To all of these the life beyond lies outside the range of their vision. To them it is a land of darkness. Into that Stygian darkness, out into the "Valley of the Shadow" their dear ones have gone. Save by the power of Love and the light of Faith they cannot follow.

But the souls of those who yet remain upon this plane of life are filled with inexpressible desire and longing for some definite token that out beyond the darkness there is indeed a land of Light wherein their former companions and fellow travelers along the journey of life now dwell.

It is but natural that they should seek for tidings through every known and legitimate channel. It is therefore but natural that the Students and Friends of this School and Work, whose spiritual senses are not yet sufficiently developed to enable them independently and constructively to commune with their loved ones in the life beyond, should turn to me and ask for the information they otherwise would seek out alone.

During the last year more than one of our "Visible Helpers" have passed out into that higher life. In other instances the friends and relatives of our Students and Helpers have crossed the "Great Divide."

*It is but natural that those who thus have been bereft should come to me and ask of me that I become a "Messenger" for them and their absent ones, thus to enable them to keep open the way of communication and prevent the "Gateway of Death" from closing between them.

To the average student of psychology no seemingly just or adequate reason exists why I should fail, neglect, or refuse to act in such a capacity.

Even among the accepted Students and

accredited "Representatives" of the Great School there may, perhaps, be one here and there who, not having had opportunity for any definite study of the subject, would be inclined, on hasty consideration, to think that my position of responsibility in the School and Work should, of itself, bind me in good conscience to render such a service for any Student, Friend or Helper who might ask it of me.

For instance: During the last few weeks one of our accredited Representatives and "Visible Helpers" has been put to the severe test of seeing his beloved wife—who was also his Companion, fellow Student and Helper in this Work—pass out into the other life, and, for the time being, beyond the limits of his vision and his present unfoldment of Consciousness.

As yet, he is unable, independently and at will, to open his spiritual eyes and look out into his spiritual environment, or otherwise constructively and consciously sense her presence and definitely communicate with her.

Would it be right or wrong, proper or improper, wise or injudicious—all things duly considered—if he should gratify his personal longing for her further and continued com-

panionship, and should come to me and ask me to communicate with her for him and act in the capacity of a messenger between them, delivering to her various messages of love from him and messages of response from her to him in return?

Again: Within the month past one of our Students and Helpers, a young, tender-hearted and affectionate mother, has been compelled [by what I can only conceive as the Great, Overruling Destiny] to witness the physical death of her beautiful, bright, affectionate and only son, a charming and lovely child of seven or eight years. In the face of her love, her care, her effort, her hope, her desire and her prayers, the hand of Death was upon her boy, and he slipped from her loving embrace—out into the life beyond, where, as yet, she cannot follow him consciously and independently.

For the time being her heart is heavy and her soul is sad and her life is lonely from the sense of separation. No doubt it would be a source of inexpressible joy and comfort to her, if she could come to me and receive from me *his* assurance that he still lives, that he is with the Friends and Spiritual Helpers—all of which I could do with unqualified

assurance. Doubtless she also would love to communicate with him through me as her messenger.

Would it be right or wrong, expedient or inexpedient, wise or unwise—all things duly considered—if she should gratify her personal longing and ask me to act as a messenger between her and her boy?

These are questions which apply with equal directness and force to each and every Student and Friend of the Work, now or in the future, who shall be temporarily separated by physical death from the conscious companionship of those they love.

These questions all go directly to the heart and center of one of the most vitally important problems which [in the course of his or her progress in the Great Work of Spiritual Self-Development and Unfoldment] every Student of this School must sometime solve for himself or herself.

The chief purpose of this letter is to throw as much light upon the subject as may be possible within the limits of the space at my command. To accomplish this purpose requires that we view it from as many different angles and study it in as many different lights as may be possible.

To that end let us proceed with our study of the subject in an orderly and sequential manner and view it first from the angle and in the light of what is definitely known by the Great School and Friends concerning the experiences and the best interests of our beloved relatives and friends who, through the gateway of physical death, have gone before us out into

The Other Life.

① Those who have gone far enough in the definite lines of psychical research to have made a careful reading and study of the text-works of Natural Science, comprising the volumes of the "Haromic Series" [three in number thus far published] will have in mind the fact that, in point of moral development and spiritual growth, the individual enters the other life upon exactly the level to which he has attained in this. Morally, he is, in his essential nature and status, neither better nor worse than he was on this side of life immediately prior to his transition through the process of death. Spiritually he is neither higher nor lower in point of his essential development. In

other words, he takes up that life at precisely the point of individual unfoldment where he leaves off this.

② The fundamental law of his being in no sense has been changed by the incident we call "death." He is still a creature of evolution, in a world wherein the principle of individual evolution still obtains. His individual unfoldment and evolutionary progress in that life are still dependent upon his own individual effort along constructive lines.

③ The GOAL of his evolutionary progress and effort is still out *beyond*. It is toward the higher and still higher realms of *Spiritual* Life and Action. It is therefore *away* from the plane of this physical life and *not toward* it.

④ But the line of direction of Spiritual growth and unfoldment is always in the line of individual attention *and* personal effort. Therefore, whatever has the effect of fixing the attention and impelling the personal effort and demanding the personal presence of a spiritual individual upon or toward the physical plane, this plane of earth, is directly opposed to his own spiritual evolution,

unfoldment and progress. Whatever binds him in any sense to this physical plane, or holds his attention and requires his presence upon it is a definite and distinct hindrance to his spiritual unfoldment and his evolutionary progress.

⑤ The grief of an earthly husband for his spiritual wife, or that of an earthly mother for her spiritual child, binds the one in spirit life to the plane of earth by a magnetic bond which few in that life are able to overcome. The bond of sympathy for sorrow is one of the strongest ties of the soul. The efforts of those upon the plane of earth to communicate with those upon the planes of spiritual life fixes and holds the attention of those in the spirit life upon the plane and conditions of physical life and physical things. This has the inevitable effect of retarding the growth of the soul and interfering with the otherwise normal progress in spiritual life and in the spiritual realms.

Therefore, from the viewpoint of spiritual life, evolution and progress, this problem raises and involves a vital question of morality and personal responsibility—especially with all who understand the Law.

It can now be understood and better appreciated why it is that I have not encouraged those who have besought me to become their message-bearer between them and their loved ones upon the other shore of the River of Life.

~~I~~ I have known that in so doing I inevitably become party to a transaction which establishes conditions that definitely and unavoidably interfere with the spiritual unfoldment, progress and evolutionary growth of those upon the spirit planes of life whom I might thus help to bind to the plane of earth.

It involves a distinctly moral question on my own part, because I know the Law and therefore am bound to obey it. I *cannot* act in the capacity of such a messenger without violating my own personal responsibility.

There are, however, some exceptions to the law as above outlined; but these seldom, if ever, exempt those who have been in the spirit life but a comparatively short time.

It has occurred, for illustration, that one of our friends who passed to the other life only a little more than a year ago greatly desired that her husband and other members of her family, yet upon earth, should know what a beneficent service they had rendered

to her by cremating her physical body and thereby at once destroying the magnetic bond which otherwise might have exerted a gravitative influence upon her for a period of many months and possibly years—depending upon the length of time it otherwise would have required for Nature to have broken the bond and dissipated the magnetic attraction through and by means of the much slower process of physical disintegration through natural decay and the gradual resolution of the physical body back into its original elements.

✱ We all know that under ordinary conditions it requires a good many months for a physical body [that has been buried in the earth according to the ordinary method of human burial in this country] to disintegrate. There are many instances where it has required several years for Nature to effect complete dissolution of the human body and final resolution back into its original elements.

The length of time required, however, is dependent upon a number of different conditions; such, for instance, as the embalming of the body prior to its burial, as well as the mineral conditions of the earth in which

it is buried, either of which may act as a preservative, and, in some instances, prevent natural and complete dissolution for many years.

It is not generally known, however, that during the period the body remains intact, as well as during the process of its disintegration, there remains a subtle magnetic attraction between it and the spiritual body of its former inhabitant. This is doubtless due to the natural vibratory harmonic [which in all instances must necessarily exist between the two bodies during their union throughout the period of physical life] and which harmonic has not been wholly destroyed by physical death.

✓ The force and degree of this continued attraction varies; and this variance is due to the differing degrees of spiritual unfoldment of the individuals which they have attained before physical death occurs.

The principle may be stated somewhat as follows:

The force, degree or power of attraction, which the physical body exerts upon the spiritual after physical death, is inversely according to the degree of spiritual unfold-

ment attained by the individual at the time physical death occurs.

This is only another way of saying that the greater the degree of spiritual unfoldment attained during this physical life the less will be the retarding influence of the physical body upon the spiritual after physical death and before the disintegration and dissolution of the physical.

And this again helps us the better to understand the great, broad, fundamental principle which underlies all true spiritual evolution and individual growth, and gives us an added uplift and inspiration to make the most of this life. For in proportion as we LIVE THE LIFE here we overcome the gravitative influences in spirit life which otherwise would bind us to the level of earth and earthly conditions.

It was largely to elucidate this principle of life that the beautiful Soul above referred to came to me from the spiritual realm and asked me to become her messenger for a few brief moments and convey to her loving and loyal husband and children a message that would enable them, by a still more unselfish attitude of mind toward her, to liberate her

from the bond of *her sympathy* for *their sorrow*.

In consenting to act as her messenger in this one instance I did so with the full knowledge and a clear understanding of my own personal responsibility and moral accountability. Had I thought that the result would be to open a line of communication which would bind her more closely to the earthly habitat and environment of her former home I should have told her so frankly and declined her request. But that was the exact reverse of both her purpose and mine.

And the results have fully justified our mutual efforts. For to-day she is free from the gravitative pull of her earthly home, free from the bondage of her physical body, and free from the weight of sorrow and longing in the hearts and minds of her husband and children, which otherwise might have held her back and retarded her spiritual unfoldment and progress.

Therefore, in an instance such as this, wherein the motive and purpose are definitely and distinctively such as to result in greater liberty of action and more perfect freedom of a Soul in spiritual life from the

gravitative influence of earth, I do not hesitate to act in the capacity of messenger and render the service asked of me.

But even in a case of this character, where the service sought and rendered resulted in definite benefit to both parties between whom it was my privilege to act as a messenger, the sequel to this incident will show that had I acted in the line of my own personal interest only I would have pursued a different course entirely.

It will also appear that, had I considered only the best interests of the School and its Work in this center of activity I would have hesitated thus to open the door to possible misinterpretations, embarrassment and definite injury.

Briefly reviewing the subject from the viewpoint and perspective of those on the spirit planes of life, it will now be observed that while it would seem to be both natural and logical for the Students and Friends of this Work [who are yet unable to communicate independently and constructively with those on the spirit planes of life] to come to me and ask that I become their messenger, in the very largest number of instances if I should comply with their requests

the results would be to the distinct detriment of those on the other and higher planes of life.

In most cases by complying with these requests I would become a conscious and therefore intentional and deliberate party to an inexcusable wrong. Knowing the Law and its consequences, I would thereby knowingly and intentionally violate my own personal responsibility and invite upon myself Nature's penalty, which every student who has read "*The Great Work*" knows is the most terrible that could possibly be conceived, and at once would result in the loss of my Spiritual Powers and my ability and right to represent the Great School and Cause in this or any other field.

With this inevitable result ahead of me it must be apparent to the Students and Friends who, in future, would ask me to serve as a messenger between them and their spiritual relatives and friends, that I cannot do so in any case where the result would have any tendency to impel or invite conditions that would retard the spiritual unfoldment and growth of any Soul upon the spiritual planes of life.

I trust it will now likewise be clear to my

fellow Students and Friends that the instances wherein other results than these would follow are the rare exceptions and not the general rule.

Let us now consider the subject from the viewpoint of the best interests of the Friends on

This Side of Life.

And in order that we shall not start wrong, and as a result get lost almost immediately in a dense fog of intellectual sophistry, let us begin our study of this phase of the subject by fixing once more clearly in mind:

- ✓1. That the law of spiritual unfoldment and growth is the same on all the planes of life.
- ✓2. That it is therefore the same for the Students and Friends in the physical body as for those in the spiritual.
- ✓3. That here, as well as there, the line or direction of spiritual unfoldment and growth is always in the line of *attention and personal effort upward*.

Now, therefore, when one of our Student Friends comes to me and asks me to become his messenger for the purpose of com-

municating with a spiritual relative or friend; whilst his *attention* may, part of the time, be fixed upon an individual who is on the plane of spiritual life and in the environment of spiritual things; nevertheless, that is *not* the line of his own personal *effort*. For his effort ~~is not~~ that of striving to rise to the level of spiritual life in order that he there may come into fellowship and communion with one who is in that life.

^{no} On the contrary, his effort is to induce one who is in the spiritual realms to come down to the plane of physical life and into a physical environment and commune with him there. In such an attitude of soul there is no impulse whatsoever on his part in the line of spiritual unfoldment, nor is there to either party.

It is precisely the same attitude of soul that inspires a group of "Spiritualists" to sit around a table and endeavor to induce their spirit friends to come to them upon the plane of earth and deliver messages to them through a medium.

* Not one of them is fixing his attention upon the plane of spiritual life and conditions and then putting forth his own personal effort to raise himself in the line of his atten-

tion, nor is he striving to unfold his consciousness upon that higher and more exalted plane of spiritual life and spiritual conditions. Not one of them is striving to attain to an internal status and condition of spirituality.

In a Spiritualistic "Developing Circle", so-called, each individual is only striving to become as negative and passive as possible in order that the spiritual "Controls" may come and break through from the spiritual side and "control" their consciousness, until the sitters become automatic instruments under the control of their spiritual "band". Once having completely surrendered to such control a physically embodied sitter becomes a subjective medium through whose physical organism messages may be conveyed from the spirit "controls" to others on the physical side not under such "control".

And so it is that when a Student or Friend of this Work comes to me, or writes to me, asking me either to deliver a message to or obtain a message from one in the spiritual realms, there is absolutely nothing in his own attitude of soul, or condition of mind, or state of being that could act as an inspiration or impulse towards spiritual unfoldment or growth.

On the contrary, he is rather inviting the opposite of that for which every student of this School should strive. Especially is this true where the motive which inspires him is that only of selfish gratification.

An exception to this, however, would be where I might be asked to deliver a message of generous assurance that has for its purpose the more complete liberation of one in spirit life from the gravitative influence of earth.

For illustration: If the Friend whose beloved wife has just passed to the other side should seek to establish a line of communication with her solely that he may bind her to him upon the earthly plane and still enjoy the companionship of her presence in his earthly home, some day he would be compelled to recognize and regret his profound selfishness, for he must inevitably sometime come to realize that in such case he has bound her to earthly conditions and thus retarded her spiritual growth and progress.

* But if, on the other hand, the motive which inspired him was that of liberating her more fully from the gravitative influence of earthly conditions and assuring her of his own purpose to keep pace with her in spiritual un-

foldment until one day he would be able, voluntarily, independently and constructively, to open his own spiritual eyes and see her in her own spiritual home and there commune with her because he had earned the right to do so by reason of having lived the life and earned that reward—then and in that event he would be strictly in alignment with her best good as well as his own.

Recapitulating from the viewpoint of the best interests of those on the physical side of life, the individual who would hold himself in line with the Constructive Principle and strive for Spiritual Unfoldment, must pursue a life in conformity with the following suggestions:

①. He must bear in mind that Spiritual Evolution and Unfoldment involve and mean a constant movement away from physical conditions, impulses, emotions, appetites, passions, desires and enjoyments, and upward toward Spiritual Life, conditions, emotions, impulses, desires, enjoyments and occupations.

②. That Morality is at the foundation of all Constructive Spiritual Unfoldment and Progress.

3. That the establishment of any line of communication with those in the spiritual realms must not be alone for selfish enjoyments nor inspired by selfish motives and purposes.

4. That any demand on his part which would fix the attention and personal effort of any spiritual relative, friend, or other individual upon any goal which is in a direction *away from* the higher spiritual life, and turn them backward to earth, to the life and environment of physical nature and physical things, to himself and his earthly life, comfort and enjoyments and holds them upon his earthly level, is a demand which sets in motion the destructive principle within himself, and for those in the spirit life it stops the wheels of Spiritual Evolution, turns them backward and starts them downward along the devolutionary incline in the broad Road that leads to the North and to the Land of Spiritual Darkness.

5. That he has no moral right to seek for the establishment of any line of communication with anyone upon the planes of spiritual life for any purpose save that of helping such individual more fully to overcome the gravitative influence of earth, or for

the unselfish service of humanity, or for the Cause of Truth.

With these suggestions clearly in mind it can readily be seen how easy it is for one who has but just suffered the personal loss of a beloved companion by death, unwittingly to seek for the establishment of lines of communication from purely selfish motives and without consideration of the spiritual well-being of either himself or those with whom he would seek to communicate upon the spiritual planes.

But those who know the Law and understand how vitally important its observation is to themselves, as well as to those in the other life, are bound by a heavy burden of responsibility not to become parties to its conscious or intentional violation.

And now that we have gotten a view of the problem from the standpoints of those on both sides of life who are separated by the "Valley of the Shadow", it only remains for us to study the subject from the standpoint of one in my own position and determine with certainty what are my duties and responsibilities toward those on both planes of life who would ask me to serve as a voluntary messenger between them.

What Is My Duty?

This is not an easy question to answer in such manner as to satisfy those who have never been called upon to assume such a responsibility or to fill such a position.

Let me assure my readers, however, and the Students and Friends of the Work whose faith alone in my integrity and sanity has led them to the door of the School in search of Light and impelled them to knock and ask for admittance, that there is no demand they could make upon me to which I would not gladly, joyously, gratefully and unhesitatingly repond, if I but knew that I could do so without violating my own sense of personal responsibility or betraying the confidence reposed in me by the Great Friends upon whose wisdom and counsel I so often depend, and to whom I am so deeply indebted and so profoundly grateful for their ever-ready response to all my reasonable and just demands.

The difficulties of my position in this matter are not because of any uncertainty in my own mind concerning what is right and what is wrong, nor what is my duty, nor what my responsibilities.

On the contrary, they are chiefly due to the lack of definite information on the part of Students and Friends concerning the conditions which obtain on the spirit side of life. As a result, they assume many things concerning that life which are not true, and because of these errors they often expect of me the performance of tasks and the accomplishment of labors entirely beyond the range of my abilities.

It often occurs that I have neither the time nor the opportunity to explain to them their own errors and mistaken assumptions, nor give to them any satisfactory reason why I cannot comply with their requests or answer their "prayers".

In all such instances they are left to draw their own conclusions; and I believe it would be fair to them, as well as to myself, to assume that in most cases their conclusions are not correct. I believe I would still be strictly within the lines of truth if I should say that in a good many instances their conclusions are unjust both to themselves and to me.

An illustration or two at this point, I hope, will enable me to clear up a number of points that are of fundamental importance. I trust they will serve the double purpose

of answering those who, during the past, have written to me from all over the country [I might have said truly, from all over the civilized world] asking me to render services entirely beyond the range of my limitations—and also those who, in future, may be impelled to do the same thing.

Within the last month I have received a number of letters, from which I select the following illustrations, omitting names and addresses, because of my respect for the motives which prompted the writers, and because it is not my desire to wound, embarrass or humiliate any friend whose confidence in me has impelled him or her to appeal to me in time of sorrow or distress, however unreasonable may be the demand or request or prayer in itself:

[1] A lady writes me from Mexico. She is an entire stranger to me, and I to her in a personal sense. The nearest approach to any acquaintance between us is in the fact that through some channel unknown to me she seems to have learned of the books of the Harmonic Series. Judging from the contents of her letter, I presume she has read some parts of one or more of the books,

and has learned therefrom that "TK" is the author of "*The Great Work*"; for she refers to me in that relation.

Her letter in itself is a prayer. It is beautiful in expression and most pathetic in substance. It is the letter of a trained and scholarly writer, and at once commands both my sympathy and my respectful consideration.

She tells me of her early life in the midst of luxury, ease, indulgence and love of a devoted, indulgent father and mother. There can be no doubt that she was reared in the midst of ideal conditions.

At the age of early womanhood she married the man of her choice and reared a family of five ideally bright, affectionate and charming children—two boys and three girls.

Never in all her life had she known the meaning of sorrow, from personal experience, until death came into her home and took her boy, the oldest child of the family, a young man of twenty-one years—a strong and manly man of sterling character and great promise.

So happy had she been in the completed circle of her home and family that even the thought of separation by death had scarcely

occurred to her. So complete and ideally perfect had been her earthly home that she had never even contemplated the possibilities of a spiritual life or a spiritual home.

The sudden death of her boy had shocked her into an overwhelming realization of her profound ignorance concerning all that pertains to the life beyond.

And now her whole heart and soul and being were suddenly turned to that life in search of tidings from her lost boy. Her reading of "*The Great Work*" had pointed her to the source of information for which she had sought and prayed.

She asked me to find her son for her and bring from him such a message as would be to her positive proof of his identity and of his continued life and of his continuous presence with her and of his continued love for her.

It did not seem to have occurred to her that she was asking of me anything unusual, or that there might be any possible reason why I would not or could not comply with her simple request.

I wrote her a long, careful and sympathetic letter, telling her that she evidently did not realize what a difficult task she had

set me. Then as gently as possible I reminded her:

1. That I did not know her
2. That I did not know her son.
3. That I did not even know she had a son.
4. That if she had, I did not know that he was in the spirit world.
5. That if indeed she had, and he was in the spirit world, and I should try to find him for her—never having seen him in either that world or this—I would not know him even if, by accident, I should find him.
6. That even if by chance he should be able to come to me, and should tell me that he was her son, I would have no means of either verifying or disproving his statements.
7. That if, under such conditions, he should give me a message for her I could not possibly persuade myself to deliver it to her and take the chances of being imposed upon, or of imposing upon her.
- ✓ 8. That my work was not that of serving as a messenger between the two worlds, for relatives and friends who did not know how to communicate independently; but rather

to tell those on this side how to live in such manner as best to prepare them for the duties and responsibilities of the other life when they shall answer the summons and cross the "Great Divide".

Her reply was one of mingled disappointment, humiliation and apology.

She knew, from the information she had gotten from "*The Great Work*", that I was a "*Master*".

She *supposed* that a "*Master*" would know all about the world of spiritual things and all the people in it.

She had the idea that a "*Master*" could do anything and everything he wished to do—and that one of his chief accomplishments, as well as his principal business and occupation, was that of performing miracles for the edification of the lesser intelligences of earth.

From her reply it would seem that, according to her concept of a "*Master*," he is in no sense a creature of Law; but that he transcends all the laws of Nature, and manipulates them to suit his own convenience and purposes. Evidently, in her imagination, neither time, space, distance, circumstances, nor conditions can in the slightest degree thwart or

interfere with the operation of his will or the accomplishment of his purposes or designs.

[2] A gentleman whose letter indicates that he is a man of good education, writes me from British Columbia. He is a total stranger to me, and I to him. He tells me that the wife of a friend of his [whose name he does not give me] is insane. She has been committed to an asylum, the location of which he did not give me. He is convinced that she is obsessed by an evil spirit; and with no other information than this, here is what he asks me to do:

1. Leave my physical body, come to British Columbia, and make an examination of the case.

2. Tell him the name and character of the obsessing spirit, and what it wants.

3. Either cure the lady myself, or tell him how to do so.

4. He then asks me to take a look at him, while there, and let him know whether he is "duly and truly prepared, worthy and well qualified" to be admitted as a Student, and immediately to enter upon the "Technical work".

5. He would also like for me to tell him how many times he has reincarnated to date, and who he was in his last incarnation.

When I replied to his letter and frankly admitted that he had given me an impossible task, he was inclined to set me down as a hypocrite, for the reason that "If you are a *Master* you should be able to do all that I have asked of you and vastly more, without the least effort or inconvenience."

These two illustrations will be sufficient to disclose a few of the many unreasonable demands that are made upon me by inquiring souls all over the country.

In most instances there is no question in my own mind as to the entire sincerity and good faith of those who thus unwittingly demand of me all manner of impossible things. They do so wholly upon their own false assumptions as to the "*Powers, Prerogatives, Possibilities and Functions of a Master.*"

I do not know how or where they may have gotten these utterly false ideas and fanciful notions concerning the meaning of "Mastership". Perhaps they have absorbed them from the mystical fiction of modern story writers. The modern mystical novel, where-

in the subjects of psychology and psychic phenomena are dealt with from a purely imaginative viewpoint, might easily constitute a background of suggestion for almost any assumptions within the range of human intelligence or imagination.

It may also be possible that some of these fictions have emanated from the modern lecturers upon the subjects of metaphysics and psychology. I am inclined to this belief. It has become almost a fad, within the last few years, among lecturers and so-called "Teachers" of psychology to define, illustrate, elucidate and expound the subject of "Mastership", at so many dollars per head, and the wonderful and impossible things such "Masters" can do to the rest of mankind, with impunity.

If false concepts of the subject are not thus inculcated surely it is not for lack of opportunity and abundant inducement, for the atmosphere of the present is surcharged with psychological romanticism.

For the benefit of the Students and Friends of the Work who may not fully understand nor appreciate the difficulties of my position, nor how easy it is for them to ask unreasonable things of me, and make

unreasonable demands upon my time and vitality, I want to make clear a few of the difficulties which do not seem to have occurred to some of them:

① I am, I verily believe, without the least exaggeration, one of the busiest men on earth.

② I am, under the general plan and method of the Great School, endeavoring to inaugurate and conduct a movement which has for its purpose, among other things, the education of the people of this Western World to a knowledge of what Natural Science has demonstrated concerning the great problem of another life, and to point the way to the *Living of a Life* here upon earth which shall enable those who will live that life to verify some of the many important findings of Natural Science on that great problem. It will be observed that this is a work of education. Only those who are engaged in it are in position to understand and appreciate its vital meaning and purpose.

③ The very largest part of my work is on the plane of this earthly life, and has to do with the life and well-being of men and women on this physical plane of existence.

4. Working from fourteen to eighteen hours out of every twenty-four, with all the help I am as yet able to command, I can accomplish but a mere fraction of the work before me to be done. I am therefore compelled to select from the great general mass only those things which appear to me to be of the most vital importance to the interests of the Movement and Cause.

5. If there were no other reasons than those above enumerated, it must be apparent to anyone who can reason, that the question of time alone would make it a physical impossibility for me or any other individual to respond to the demands from Students and Friends on this side of life for information concerning their relatives and friends on the spiritual planes of life. Even if I could obtain the spiritual information desired without the element of time entering into the work, to convey that information by letter to individuals in all parts of the world is a task which does call for the expenditure of a vast amount of time as well as energy.

6. But there are other reasons, in addition to the matter of time, which are equally as important.

It is a fact which does not seem to be known, or at least recognized [by most of those who appeal to me for tidings from their loved ones in the Great Beyond] that, with rare exceptions, those who pass into that life are not immediately able to communicate directly and without help with those in this life, even through one who is an independent psychic in the physical body.

* In the very largest number of instances those who pass from this life into the life beyond are, for the time being, as helpless as an infant who comes into this life.

This is especially true of the following classes:

- ✓ [a] Those who die in infancy.
- ✓ [b] Those who die suddenly, while in full physical vigor; as, for instance, those who are suddenly killed in battle, by murder, by suicide, by accident, by heart disease, or by any other process which severs the bond between the physical and the spiritual bodies suddenly and violently and without anticipation, while the physical powers are vigorous and strong and the physical magnetism unimpaired.
- ✓ [c] Those who have lived lives of dis-

sipation, bestiality, gross immorality and excessive physical indulgence.

✓ [d] Those who are spiritually undeveloped; as, for instance, the ignorant, superstitious and degenerate, and all subjective psychics, whether through hypnotism or mediumship.

The exceptions are:

[a] Those who, after having lived to maturity in this life, approach physical death under conditions which afford them time and opportunity to overcome the gravitative force of the magnetic attraction of the physical body.

* [b] Those who live a truly spiritual life in the physical body and who by such a life overcome the magnetic attraction of the physical body after death.

* [c] Those who are specially educated to make this physical life a life of constructive spirituality, in conformity with the knowledge of Natural Science.

With these facts in mind, the Students and Friends of this Cause will be much less likely to make unreasonable demands upon me in future, with reference to those in the spiritual life in whom they are interested

and concerning whom they otherwise would seek to obtain information through me.

And there is yet another phase of this subject which involves serious embarrassments to me personally; and, unless it is treated with the utmost consideration and a high degree of intelligent discrimination and discretion by all parties interested, will place the School and the Great Friends, as well as myself, in a false position. I am sure no real "Friend of the Work" would knowingly or intentionally be a party to anything of such a nature. And yet, it is inevitable unless the situation is explained and the possibilities constantly kept in mind by us all.

Let me see if I can outline this phase of the subject briefly and in such manner as to make it as clear to my readers as it is to me.

1. There are two definite, distinct and directly opposite methods of establishing communication between the two worlds of life.

2. One of these involves a process which is known to be destructive in its essential character. The other alone is constructive.

3. The first of these is known to Science

as "The Subjective Psychic Process", and to the world it is known by the more familiar names of "Hypnotism" and "Spiritual Mediumship".

4. The other is known to Science as "The Independent Psychic Process", and to the world generally it goes by the name of "Mastership".

5. Through the mediumistic process and practice the entire subject of "Spiritualism", as well as that of "Communication with Spirits", has become "common", in the sense that it no longer commands respectful consideration from those outside the class known as "phenomena seekers". The old adage: "Familiarity breeds contempt" seems to apply to the status of that branch of Spiritualism which devotes its efforts chiefly to the development of subjective mediumship and subjective mediums, and through these the production of all manner of psychic phenomena connected with the process, the occupation and the business of establishing and maintaining channels of communication between the two worlds, for the accommodation and gratification of the inhabitants of both.

Through this method and process the busi-

ness of getting "messages" from the denizens of the spirit world has been carried to such a point as to have brought reproach upon the whole subject of mediumship.

The "Business Mediums", whose advertisements may be seen in all the great metropolitan journals of today, offer such "inducements" to the unsophisticated public as to prove to intelligent men and women, beyond all question, that their claims are fraudulent and their pretensions false.

For almost anything in amount, between fifty cents and five dollars, they offer to open the door of the spirit world to any and all who apply and can pay the price, and obtain any sort of information desired. Virtually every day in the year their claims are proven utterly false.

And the intelligent element of society knows this.

Now, suppose it came to be advertised among the Students and Friends of the Work, and through them to the public in general [as it inevitably would be] that the "TK" makes a practice of transmitting messages to and from the spirit relatives and friends of his Students—is it not clear at once that he would soon be classed as a "Medium"?

The truth of this was proven by the single incident referred to in the early part of this letter wherein, for the definite purpose of conveying to the husband and children of one of our Students, a wife and mother, who passed into the other life, her appreciation of the great service they had rendered her by cremating her physical body and thus liberating her at once from the gravitative influence of its magnetic attraction.

Through the earnest desire to have one of the life-long friends of the deceased know this incident, and thinking it would be of special interest and comfort, the incident was passed on under the seal of confidence. But the friend receiving it evidently forgot that the subject was given her in confidence, and she told it to her own friend who, in turn, passed it on and the incident was soon a topic of discussion among a number of those who were not in position to understand the motive which prompted me nor the exceptional conditions attending the incident.

As a result, the story "got out", and was repeated with variations until its own mother would not have recognized it as her offspring had she met it in broad day light. And so it is that through this effort to be of

service, strictly within the lines of my personal responsibility, I have unintentionally been placed in a false position and have been gratuitously advertised as a "Medium" for Students and Friends of the School. I have no doubt that as a direct or indirect result of that one specific incident there may be several individuals today who still labor under the impression that I am a "Subjective Psychic" and, in fact, the principal "Medium" for the Great School; and that as such I am accustomed to acting as a sort of "Delphic Oracle", or "Witch of Endor" for those of the Students and Friends who desire information from relatives and friends who have gone before them into the "Great Beyond."

There is something in the mere discussion of such a subject, from the mediumistic viewpoint, that seems almost a sacrilege, in that it lowers the exalted concept of true Spirituality and of true Spiritual Life to a level of "familiarity" utterly unwarranted, and wholly out of harmony with the demonstrations and finding of Natural Science.

Students of the Bible should be able to understand and appreciate the distinctions therein made between the psychics of those

ancient days who had "*Familiar Spirits*" who spoke through them, and those who were not at all dependent upon such "familiar" on the spiritual planes for their knowledge of spiritual life and spiritual things, but whose communications with those upon the planes of spiritual life were direct, independent and of an exalted nature and significance which gave to them the dignity and the value of definite authority.

Anyone who will study the subject from the Bible with this suggestion in mind cannot fail to observe that in the days of the Master, Jesus, and even some thousands of years yet further back toward the twilight of human history, the distinctions between "Mediumship" and "Mastership" were well known and appreciated.

For Isaiah, the "Prophet of Old", says [Isa. 8, 19], "And when they shall say unto you, 'Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter', should not a people seek unto their God for the living to the dead?"

In those days, as in these, "Mediumship" was an established fact. And then, as now, it was the natural antithesis of "Mastership."

Those among the readers of *Life and Action* who have ever given any considerable amount of time and attention to the investigation of mediumistic phenomena will understand perfectly what is meant in the Bible by a "Familiar Spirit", or by "Familiar Spirits".

No better nor more accurate term could have been selected then, nor could there be today, than "*Familiar*", to express the chief characteristic of that kind of spirit which manifests as the "control" of the average medium.

It assumes a kind of "familiarity" which is repulsive to the sensibilities of any man who has the gracious instincts of a "gentleman", or those of any woman who is attracted by the gracious and womanly qualities of character which are exemplified in the life and conduct of every real "Lady".

There is no phase, or accompaniment, of Subjective Mediumship which justly, nor with greater emphasis, condemns the entire method, process, spirit and purpose of "Mediumship" than does the unwarranted and repulsive "*familiarity*" of the controlling spirits which constitute the controlling "Band" of the average Medium.

It is entirely at variance with all that the Great School and the Great Friends hold to be appropriate and consistent in such a relationship as that between any Master of the Law on this plane of earth and the Spiritual Intelligences in the Higher Life who are working together for the education and the spiritual evolution and progress of mankind upon earth. It is out of harmony with the Spirit and Purpose of this School, this Work, and this Movement; and is inconsistent with that quality of conservatism, refinement, courtesy, politeness and respectful consideration which every Accredited Representative of this School and Work is expected to exemplify in his or her life and relations.

The general theme upon which I am writing is one which touches so many vital problems and is of such vast and far-reaching importance to all our efforts and plans, that I have only just introduced the most pertinent phases of it in this article.

For this is, in reality, but one theme of the many which I am reserving for consideration in the next regular volume of the Harmonic Series—if I shall ever be able to command the time to reduce it to manuscript.

Before closing, however, let me explain to those who shall do me the honor to follow me with sympathy and patience :

1. That if I be not entirely mistaken in assuming that I have a definite work to accomplish, then there is not the least possible doubt as to the exact nature, scope and purpose of that work.

2. If I may be permitted to dignify my work by referring to it in this connection as the embodiment of a definite mission, then let me say [without unwarranted egotism, I hope] that my mission is one involving a definite and purposeful system of education.

✓3. I have been especially educated, instructed and prepared by the Great School and commissioned to crystallize, formulate and reduce to definite expression in simplified and exact English, a modern statement of the great problem of individual life and death, from the viewpoint of the scientific demonstrations, proofs and findings of Natural Science.

✓4. The purpose, in its relation to the people of America, is to inaugurate among them a General Movement for their education in the scientific principles of Life, Liberty and

the Pursuit of Happiness, and inspire them to *Live a Life* in harmony with those exact and scientific principles.

5. While the knowledge covered by the educational system inaugurated involves that of the Life beyond the Grave, and the constructive method of establishing inter-communication between the two worlds—it is no part of my own mission to act as a Messenger, or medium of communication, between the inhabitants therein.

6. Whilst the knowledge to be given to those who become active factors in the Movement covers the general problem of individual Health, both physical and spiritual, and the laws and principles involved in the treatment, care and the prevention of disease; and whilst the work of treating and curing disease is being carried on and accomplished at this time by those under my instruction and general guidance—nevertheless, it is no part of my own personal work to engage in the active practice of Healing.

7. In the course of my work as an instructor, and in the many consultations with the Great Friends and Spiritual Helpers incident thereto, I am in definite and personal

communication with those on the spiritual planes of life every day and almost every hour. Many of my students and Helpers know this. Frequently in the progress of the Work and in our meetings of those who are closely identified with me in the Work of carrying forward this Movement, we discuss the various subjects from the viewpoint of the Great Friends. In all such instances I give to my Students and Helpers the information obtained from the spiritual Friends and Helpers. It often occurs at such meetings that a question arises concerning which the wisdom of our spiritual Friends and Fellow Workers is of the utmost importance. In all such instances I do not hesitate in the least to act as a messenger for the Great Friends on the spiritual planes and deliver to my physical Workers their messages of instruction or counsel or suggestion—as the case may be.

This is all in the line of the General Movement and falls within the lines of my “mission”, or what I am pleased to call my “Work”.

Notwithstanding all this, I am sure my readers will not misunderstand me when I repeat that my own personal “mission” or

Work, is not that of acting as a messenger between the Students and Friends of the Work and their relatives and friends in the spiritual life.

I am aware that those who are ignorant of the differences in the methods and developments of a "Subjective Psychic" and an "Independent Psychic" might not be able to distinguish from the foregoing wherein my own work as a messenger is different from that of a Medium.

This is a subject, however, which has been fully defined, elucidated and explained in Vols. II and III of the Harmonic Series.

For the time being I trust I have not trespassed upon the patience nor taxed the friendship of my readers, and that I may claim their further courtesy and consideration in future issues of *Life and Action*.

Professor James' Discredit of Psychic Research.

The School of Natural Science has been taken to task more than once because of its unwillingness to adopt the methods employed by the School of Physical Materialism, or

those of the Psychical Research Society of which the late Prof. James was a prominent member.

The reasons for the position taken by the Great School and Friends on the subject of "phenomena" were stated with great care in the January-February number of this magazine in answer to "G.D.B."

Quoting from page 19 of the article referred to:

"Just so long as the scientific gentlemen who are making the investigations for the S. P. R. cannot open their own spiritual eyes and look into their spiritual environment and see for themselves—in other words, just so long as they must depend upon some third party as an intermediary through whom the messages come to them, so long the element of uncertainty will forever remain, to the minds of these so-called scientists.

"And therefore, just so long as they must depend thus upon any intermediary, however perfect it may be, there is absolutely no message that can come to them from the spirit world which they will accept as 'unmistakable'.

"For no matter what 'test conditions' may be made, these great scientists will be able

to find or invent some alleged 'hypothesis' upon which to explain that the message could have been received without thē necessity for spiritual intervention at all. In other words, it may have been communicated to the 'subjective mind' of the medium, or intermediary, from the 'subjective mind' of some individual on the physical plane. Indeed, this seems to be the established method of disposing of such messages as are communicated through mediums to those in the physical body."

*"Let me repeat in conclusion, that just so long as the S. P. R. finds it necessary to employ, or depend upon an intermediary [medium, hypnotic subject, or psychic] the demonstrations of that Society will never reach the dignity of true Science. There will always remains that element of uncertainty which they will never be able to overcome, so far as the general public may be concerned."

Since the article [from which the foregoing quotations are taken] was published, Prof. James has passed into the spiritual life. It now develops that before his death he wrote and sealed a number of letters the contents of which were known only to himself. These letters he placed in the vaults of

the English Society for Psychical Research, with instructions that they be not opened for a year after his death. The purpose was to test whether he could communicate from the spirit life, through some medium, the contents of these letters to Prof. Hyslop.

From the newspaper reports it seems that Prof. James himself admitted that the proposed "test" would not be accepted as scientifically conclusive, because there were at least two possibilities of the contents of the letters becoming known to the medium through other channels, viz.:

1. The letters might be opened before the sitting and by collusion or fraud the contents communicated to the medium.

2. Before his death Prof. James might think so much about the contents of the letters that he might thus communicate them telepathically to some person in the flesh who might in turn communicate them telepathically to the medium.

Thus it would seem that Prof. James has discredited the scientific value of his own experiment, and at the same time has justified the position of this School on the subject of the unreliability of any results obtained through a medium.

For if it be granted that through unconscious telepathy he could communicate the contents of the letters to another physically embodied individual during his own lifetime, and that this other individual might in like manner unconsciously transmit them to the medium, this fact opens the door of uncertainty so wide as to make utterly impossible scientific certainty in the delivery of any "test" message that can be conceived or devised.

The truth of this statement will become apparent to the reader if he will but try to outline a method by which any message may be communicated through a medium under scientifically "test" conditions.

And thus, the S. P. R. itself furnishes the evidence to sustain the School of Natural Science, and proves that so long as an intermediary is employed the results are scientifically unreliable.

Why Is the Soul Sometimes Imprisoned in a Diseased Physical Body, Until All the Faculties Are Impaired and the Individual Is as Helpless as an Infant?

One of the good Friends of the Work re-

cently asked me the following interesting question:

“Why is it that it sometimes occurs that the Soul remains imprisoned, as it were, in the physical body for months, and sometimes even years, when the body is diseased until the mental faculties are impaired and the individual is as helpless as an infant, and the experience seems to represent nothing but *Suffering?*”

If I were to answer this question from the standpoint of my own stock of personal knowledge I should have to say: “I don’t know”.

Furthermore, I am not acquainted with anybody, so far as I am now able to recall, who does know.

I have heard one or two men talk very “learnedly” on the subject, and in such manner as to convey the impression that they either *knew* all about it, or *thought* they did.

Then again, I have read a number of books and articles touching upon various phases of the subject, written by men who seemed to take themselves seriously, and who wrote as if they really thought they knew something about it.

One of these was at one time interested in the Work of the Great School. He wrote very entertainingly and expressed himself in a manner calculated to convey the impression to strangers, that "The Psychology of Physical Suffering, or Pain", is a subject within the range of his own personal knowledge. And so it may be, for ought I know. But his exposition of his theme impresses me with the conviction that, after all, it is but a clever elucidation of an interesting theory; or, what a modern scientist would designate as a "working hypothesis".

Let it be distinctly understood, however, that, so far as I am personally concerned, *I do not know, nor assume to know*, just what definite or specific purpose Nature, or the Great Universal Intelligence which some call God, has in mind to accomplish, by so providing that death does not always occur as soon as the physical body appears *to us* to have become an incumbrance to the imprisoned Soul of man.

Neither do I know just why God, or Nature, has also provided that a large percentage of our fellows die long *before* they appear to us [from our limited human understanding] to have passed the point of physical usefulness and service.

To my own way of thinking, however, there is as much to marvel at in the latter case as in the former. The one condition seems as inexplicable as the other, according to my limited viewpoint. The one involves as much of "mystery" as the other.

If it were possible for us, even in imagination, to put ourselves in the position of Nature, or of the Great Creative Intelligence, even for a single instant of time, I do not doubt that the logic of these facts and conditions of Nature would appear to us with perfect clearness, and we would see "at a glance" that any other facts and conditions would be utterly impossible. For I believe there is a natural and adequate reason for everything in Nature, if we could but find it.

Furthermore, if it were possible for us to get back of the physical manifestations in such cases as my friend's question involves, and instead of considering the diseased and shattered condition of the physical body we could but know the experiences of the *Soul*, does it not seem within the range of possibilities to find that through the very suffering involved in such a condition the imperfect physical body is helping Nature evolve the imprisoned Soul?

We do not know all of Nature's purposes. Some of our good Friends seem to think we ought to. I hope they will keep this confession of our limitations [made in a moment of deep humility] in mind, and spring it on us, if at any time in the future we should forget and should assume a more "chummy" relation with God, or Nature, than the foregoing confession would substantiate.

Concerning the functions of sorrow, suffering and pain in the economy of Nature, however, we do know that there are times and individual conditions when and wherein they seem to us, from our limited perspective, to be both meaningless and superfluous, as well as cruel and unnecessary.

I say this *seems* so to us; but may it not, after all, be merely *seeming*, and due solely to our inability clearly and accurately to read the "Designs upon the Trestleboard of Nature", in the particular case at any given time under consideration?

For we know also that there are many instances within the range of human observation wherein the beneficent effects of sorrow, pain and suffering are perfectly apparent. They *seem* to be so from definite design. So often is this true as almost to suggest that

Suffering is merely Nature's Evolutionary "Irritant"—a sort of psychological mustard plaster, calculated to spur the Soul on and impel it to strive for higher, better and happier conditions.

Our "Nature Cure" Friend and Brother—Dr. H. Lindlahr—whose facile pen often illumines the pages of *Life and Action*, has wrought out a most interesting philosophy of life from the viewpoint of Nature's Constructive Principle as it exemplifies itself in the Therapeutic Process involved in the cure of disease.

He tells us in substance, among other things, that:

1. "Every *acute* condition is but the result of a *healing effort* of Nature."

2. "Every *chronic* condition must become *acute* before a cure is possible."

3. "In the cure of chronic disease the *Law of Crisis* works itself out." That is, in the process of curing a chronic condition Nature proceeds by working up an acute condition called a "Crisis". This acute "crisis" occurs as a result of Nature's effort to throw off the poisonous obstructions and accumulations in the system.

* If the first "healing crisis" does not throw off all the poisonous accumulations, then Nature proceeds to gather her forces and work up another "acute" condition, or "Healing Crisis"; and so on, until the system is entirely cleansed, and perfect health is restored.

The wonder of it is that the good Doctor says all this with such a straight face that his patients actually believe him, and forthwith proceed to get well by way of the "Law of Crisis."

So vividly and indelibly does he impress these concepts upon them that they interpret every "*acute pain*" as one of Nature's "*healing efforts*". They are therefore correspondingly happy every time they have an "acute" pain; and the more "acute" and intense the pain the happier they become.

This is the happiest "philosophy of pain", and his the most uproariously happy Sanitarium full of sick people within the range of my knowledge.

[Best of all, however, the results bear out the good Doctor's philosophy of "Nature Cure"; and all kinds of so-called "incurables" are getting well under his methods of treatment.] It would surely make a radical optimist out of the rankest pessimist go-

ing, to go through his Sanitarium and personally study the "Law of Crisis" working itself out in all sorts of difficult cases.

Possibly if my questioner would study this subject of "Crisis", it might be found to have its analogy in the psychic constitution of man.

✓ In this event, it is not difficult to conceive that a Soul bound to such a body as the question describes, may be gathering the energy of experience necessary to help it over some evolutionary difficulty or "crisis" just ahead of it.

And who is there wise enough to prove that such is not the case?

My friend's question only suggests how little we *know* of the real and definite purpose and intent of Nature, or the Great Universal Intelligence back of the manifestations of Nature.

We study the laws, principles, forces, activities and processes of Nature until we feel that we understand their operations; but how little we are able to fathom the simplest ultimate.

When asked what *ultimate* purpose or intent is in the Mind of the Great Supreme Intelligence, even with reference to the simplest

problems of Nature, we find ourselves in the presence of "Mystery" far too profound for the most exalted concept of human intelligence.

We see the unmistakable evidences of a great Law of Evolution in operation.

We see its application to the human Intelligence, Ego, Soul, or Individual Entity.

We know that Evolution means Progress.

We know that under it man is progressing.

But where and when and what is the final *Goal* toward which we are moving?

What is the great Ultimate End of all our progress? Or, *is* there an end?

When and where and how shall we know the ultimate destiny of the Soul? Are we not in the midst of the Ultimate now?

Shall we ever know any more about the great *Ultimate* than we do today?

Answer, you who know!

Will God Hear the Prayer of One Who has Disbelieved in Him and Repented, but has Been Prevented from "Living the Life" Because He Sacrificed His Life for Others?

Question. "Suppose one is raised in ig-

norance of life's responsibilities, but with due regard for the Master; that he endures years of unhappiness and then finds himself adrift in life; that after many hardships he grows discouraged and through the influence of another comes to believe there is no God and that life begins and ends here; that he grows reckless but does not stoop to evil but regrets that there is no one to answer prayers; that later, from an unknown source, comes the conviction that there must be a God; that the individual then regrets with all his soul that he had ever turned from God, repents and prays earnestly for forgiveness and strives with all his strength to '*Live the Life*', but is prevented by the suffering of the helpless innocent; that he sacrifices himself for them;—will God thereafter hear his prayers? What chance has such an one for happiness or progress in the life to come?"

Answer. This question comes from the depths of a troubled soul, as indicated by the letter accompanying it; and because of this I would be more than pleased if I had the time and space for a full and complete answer which would be definite, specific and responsive to each and every phase of the question.

This I cannot do, however; because neither time nor space at my command will permit.

But the question already has been answered for anyone who will take Volumes II and III of the "Harmonic Series" and seek diligently to understand "*The Law of Spiritual Gravity*" and "*The Law of Compensation*" and the "*Law of Spiritual Unfoldment*" as therein elucidated; and then add to these a careful study of the little booklet "*Who Answers Prayer?*"

Under the "Law of Spiritual Gravity" [See Vol. II of the Harmonic Series, page 335], "Each one of us at physical death either rises or sinks—as the case may be—to a level of spiritual life and evolution exactly commensurate with his life and development immediately prior thereto."

Page 339—"But in the realm of this higher citizenship of the Soul, there is but one law, the great Law of Justice."

"In accordance therewith man is, in the most exact and literal sense, the arbiter of his own destiny."

Now if my questioner will turn to the Chapter of "*The Great Work*," Vol. III, "The Passing of a Master", and begin with the last paragraph of page 448, and read through

to the end of the chapter, he will find a sufficient statement and elucidation of the law governing the status of the Soul after physical death, to enable him, by applying it to his own case, to answer his own question with a fair degree of certainty.

A reading and study of the little brochure, or booklet, on Prayer, above referred to, I am sure, would give him the added information necessary to clear up the entire subject in such manner as to comfort him in the certain knowledge that Nature is neither unjust nor inconsistent, and that no act nor effort of his that has been inspired by unselfish service to others, can ever result in anything but his own Spiritual Good.

The very fact that "*He sacrifices himself for them*" is proof positive that in a *spiritual* sense he has thereby earned Nature's reward for *unselfish service to those who need*, and that in the end he has done that which was best for *himself*—although at the time, and viewed solely from the angle of physical life, he may have *appeared* to be making a great personal sacrifice.

It is in our knowledge of the *spiritual* application and results of the great "Law of Compensation" that we find our greatest

measure of comfort, for here we learn that there is nothing in all Nature more beautiful nor more certain than the Rewards of Unselfish Service.

I trust I have said enough to accomplish two very definite and important results, namely:

1. To lead my questioner to make a careful and prayerful study of all three volumes of the Harmonic Series and the brochure on "*Who Answers Prayer?*".

2. That he may therein find the answers to his questions more fully than I can give them here, and derive therefrom the comfort he seeks.

In What Sense Is the Ruler of this Planet Our Father?

Question. 1. In what sense is the Ruler of this Planet our Father? Is he: [a] our Creator; or, [b] our loving Guide and Guardian?

2. If there is a divine element somehow present in mineral, vegetable, animal and man, is it an emanation from the Father?

Would this be the probable meaning of the statement attributed to St. Paul, that God is

not far from every one of us; for "in Him we live and move and have our being." [Acts, 17, 27-28]?

3. Christ is reported to have said that God marks the fall even of a sparrow [Matt. 10, 29] and numbered the very hairs of our heads. Does the Father, then, personally know and watch each one of us, and hear our cries for help in a just Cause? If this is so, what need is there for the Great Friends as Messengers of one already with us, or auxiliaries of an All-Wise and Omnipotent Helper?

4. "*The Great Work*" page 456, "Whose glorious Presence illumines all spheres below."

Does the radiance of the Great Father supply the light of the Spiritual Spheres, in any such way as the sun lights the earth?

5. Ibid. "By whose light all men of earth are free to travel upward."

Does this mean that the Father supplies the Intuition and Faith and other gifts whereby the men of earth can evolve?

Let me thank you for your answer to my question regarding Destructive Control and Constructive Help, given in the January-February 1910 issue of *Life and Action*. It

is clear and conclusive. I find the magazine a precious boon and a real help.

Answer. Your list of question this time is somewhat formidable and at a number of points takes me out of range of the "*Things we know*".

In all such instances I can give you only my own personal views and beliefs, for what they may be worth.

I suggest that you keep in mind my limitations, and use your own judgment about adopting or rejecting my views on any subject of belief.

1. The Planetary Ruler, as I understand from those much wiser than I, is in no sense a "Creator".

He sustains a relation somewhat analogous to that of a ruler of an absolute monarchy; except of an immeasurably more exalted and perfect character, and his "kingdom" is a spiritual one, and includes the entire Planet and all its planes and conditions.

2. Before I could give even a fair guess at the answer to your second general question, I should have to know exactly what *you* mean by "*divine*".

I do not think you will find anywhere in

any of the Text-Works of the Harmonic Series any statement such as your question assumes.

It is stated in substance, however, that the four kingdoms of Nature—Mineral, Vegetable, Animal and Human—are governed by the four “*Life Elements*”. These “*Life Elements*”, in their evolutionary order, are “*Electro-Magnetic*”, “*Vito-Chemical*”, “*Spiritual*” and “*Soul*”.

In the Mineral Kingdom is but one—the Electro-Magnetic.

In the Vegetable there are two, of which the Vito-Chemical is the dominant one.

In the Animal there are three, of which the Spiritual is the highest and dominant one.

In the Human there are four, of which the Soul Element is the highest and the dominant. [See “*The Great Psychological Crime*”, page 301, and following].

Nowhere, however, are these Life Elements referred to as “*Divine*”.

Natural Science finds that these Life Elements are universal in time and space; and if they are looked upon as being “*manifestations of the Great Universal Intelligence*” which also is conceived to be universal in

time and space—then I can understand how they might be spoken of as “Divine”, or a “Part of the Divine”, or as “Manifestations of the Divine”, etc.

It is possible that Paul may have had some such concept of “Divinity”. The quotation to which you refer would seem to bear that construction.

3. What the School of Natural Science really knows about “Prayer” is well expressed in the “*Beloved Master’s*” little Brochure, “*Who Answers Prayer?*”

From this it is clear that “The Great Friends” and the “Spiritual Helpers” do really hear our cries for help, and do answer them as far as they can when they deem our prayers just and find us in real need of the help for which we ask.

But even the Beloved Master does not presume to say that all the agencies that answer prayers may not be merely the “Messengers” of the “Great Universal Intelligence”. He frankly says “We do not know”.

4. There is a rather strong analogy; although, to say they are “*alike*” would, no doubt, mislead.

5. This has more specific reference to the

present knowledge of the Great Law of Evolution. The Great Father stands as an example of what Evolution can achieve, and his life illumines the Evolutionary pathway to all who follow Him.

**From the Standpoint of the Great School,
What Is the Definition of "Charity?"**

Question. In the authorized Version of the Bible we are taught much about "*Charity*". The Revised Version gives it "*Love*" instead.

For examples: I. Cor. 13 Chap.: "If I speak with the tongues of men and of Angels, but have not love," &c.

I Peter, 4-8. "For love covereth a multitude of sins."

I would be glad to know the exact sense in which the Great School uses "Charity".

Answer. Unfortunately, perhaps, I do not feel myself at liberty, at just this time, and through so public a channel as the columns of *Life and Action* to give the official definition of the School, for the following reasons:

1. "Charity" is one of the definite and specific subjects included in the "*Test Course*" Work.

2. The value of that Work to each applicant depends upon the amount of original thought and effort he puts into the work of analysis and demonstration of each individual topic submitted to him.

3. The value of his work to the School as a "*Test*", by which it is to determine his real status and *know* when he has met all the terms and conditions of each test submitted to him, is in the fact that he must have no *help*. In other words, his *own* work, "unaided and uninfluenced" by others, is the only fair basis upon which it is possible to judge of the real status of any student.

4. If I should publish the official definition of the School, that fact would remove the subject of "Charity" from the list of "tests" and would not be in line with the purposes of the Work.

However, it just occurs to me that it might be a subject of both interest and value for the readers of this magazine to send to me for publication their own definition and elucidation of "*Charity*", from their best understanding of the Spirit of the Great Work.

The subject is one of profound interest and vital importance within the concept of the Great School and should be well worth such

thoughtful consideration as the Friends of the Work may be able to give it; and we will be glad to give space to their best efforts to give a clear and consistent definition and analysis of the subject.

**Suppose a Person Under Obsession Dies,
Does He Enter the Spirit Life in
the Same Condition?**

Questions. 1. "Suppose a person under obsession dies, does he enter the Spirit Life in the same condition?"

2. Suppose he dies while insane from any other cause, what then?

3. Can man obtain from cooked food—in other words, from dead food—the same life building elements that he can from the uncooked?

4. Or, if so, are they in as suitable form for refining the body as they would be in their natural state?

Answers. Obsession is a psychic condition, the result of complete psychic hypnotic control of one in the physical body, by one in the spiritual.

Physical death does not necessarily alter the psychic relation or condition at all.

An individual under psychic subjection at the time death occurs, will remain in that condition until the controlling intelligence either voluntarily releases him—or, until some stronger intelligence forcibly breaks the control and releases the subject.

In other words, hypnotic control is possible between individuals on the spiritual planes. And this is because it is a *psychic* condition.

In the case of one who dies insane solely because of physical conditions—as, for instance, because of a fractured skull—physical death results in almost instant recovery. In some instances there may possibly result a short period of confusion, but this is due to other conditions, and not to the physical causes of the insanity.

Question. Are cooked foods as nutritious as raw foods?

Can man obtain from cooked food the same life building elements that he can from the uncooked?

Who is the truly "Great Physician?"

Answer. The subject of food values is so largely an individual problem that it is impossible to lay down an arbitrary rule that will apply to all individuals.

The method and amount of *cooking* are elements that enter into the problem.

Then again, the selection of raw foods is another element equally important and must be considered in any correct answer to the question.

The question assumes that all cooked foods are necessarily "dead food". Just what he means by "dead" in this use of the word needs defining, to make his question clear.

Cooked foods are not "dead" in the sense that they are not "life sustaining", for we all know from personal experience that we can live on cooked foods; and it is also true that a goodly number of people can live on them more easily than they can from raw vegetables.

Then again scientists tell us that there are a few varieties of vegetables that are rank poisons in their raw state and only become nutritious and valuable as "food" through the process of cooking.

Answering the question, however, from the viewpoint of vegetables that are known to be good "food" in their raw state; let me say that the right kind and amount of cooking does not in the least destroy the food values of such vegetables as corn, potatoes, turnips, beets, carrots, parsnips, cabbage, peas, beans, and onions; and in many instances the right kind of cooking materially adds to their values.

4. The question also depends so largely upon the individual and upon his physical and spiritual condition and general status that an arbitrary rule would be at fault.

The entire subject of diet is so largely one of adaptation and adaptability that it is far more difficult than is generally supposed, to lay down rules that are not subject to exceptions.

Generally speaking, however, the same may be said as in answer to the preceding question. That is to say, the right kind and amount of cooking does not destroy food values.

I suggest to my questioner and all others who are especially interested in the subject of dietetics, that they read carefully the series of articles in this magazine on this sub-

ject, by Dr. H. Lindlahr, begun in the last previous issue and continued in this number. Dr. Lindlahr, whose "*Nature Cure Sanitarium*" is located at 525 S. Ashland Boulevard, Chicago, has given profound study and experimental tests to the subject of Diet for many years.

He has supplemented his study of the German Schools of Scientific Dietetics, by a further research from the viewpoint and knowledge of the Great School.

I regard him as the most advanced of all our modern authorities in this field of Scientific Dietetics; and for this reason he was prevailed upon to give to the readers of *Life and Action* the benefit of his researches and studies in this important field of scientific knowledge.

It is difficult, these days, to find a recognized authority on Diet, who does not unwittingly fall into some one or another of the many ruts that have been worn by their predecessors and become "faddists" to some extent.

It takes a truly broad-gauge intelligence, for instance, to recognize the fact that, while a vegetable diet is of unquestionable scientific value, there are special cases and conditions

wherein a rigid *meat* diet alone will reach the desired therapeutic results.

In other words, the truly "Great Physician" is he who recognizes the good in all methods and systems and is broad enough and independent enough to avail himself of the *best* there is in all; and to keep out of "scientific" and "conventional" *ruts*.

Dr. Lindlahr approaches this standard very closely, and it is because of this that we congratulate ourselves on having secured his consent to write for this magazine.

We commend his work to the thoughtful consideration of our readers who are especially interested in the great problem of *Health*.

**Apparent Ambiguity on the Subject of the
13 "Spheres" or Planes of Life
Connected With This Planet.**

Question. Our attention has been called to what appears an ambiguity in the volumes of the Harmonic Series on the subject of the 13 "spheres", or "planes" of life connected with this planet.

The uncertainty does not appear to be con-

cerning the number of spheres [for this is plainly stated as 13]; but as to just how the Great School enumerates the spheres or planes it calls "spiritual".

Answer. In "*The Great Psychical Crime*" at pages 234-236 it is plainly stated that there are 13 Spheres or Planes, and [solely because man is as truly a "*spiritual*" being while on earth and in the physical body as he is after he has cast off his physical body by death] all 13 spheres are referred to and treated as "*spiritual*". In this view this earth plane is designated as the *first spiritual* plane.

But at page 409 of "*The Great Work*"—where an illustration is made of the "Magnetic Field" which lies between this earth life and life beyond—this earth plane is referred to as the "*Physical plane*" and the next higher as the "*first spiritual*".

This latter is the manner in which they are usually referred to, solely because we are not accustomed to thinking of this earth life as a spiritual life, and because it comes handy to differentiate this as a "physical" life.

For the purposes of enumeration it makes little difference whether we call this earth

plane “spiritual” or “physical”, so long as we understand that the total number is 13, and that this earth plane is counted as *No. 1*.

But it is important [for those who desire to be accurate] to know that the “Magnetic Field” [which lies between the physical plane and the next plane above the physical] is not counted by this School as a distinct and separate “plane”. It therefore is not one of the 13.

I am under the impression that at least one of the Oriental Schools considers the Magnetic Field as a distinct and separate Sphere or Plane, in which event the total number would be 14 instead of 13.

But this is a subject which has never appeared to me to be of any very vital importance to the practical problem of *Living the Life*.

For the present it may, however, be of interest merely as one of the subjects upon which the School of Natural Science has seen fit to state its findings for what they may be worth to its Students and Friends.

How Far Is Ralph Waldo Trine’s Book, “In Tune With the Infinite,” in Line with the Doctrine of the Great School?

Question. 1. It has occurred to me several times to ask how far Ralph Waldo Trine's book "*In Tune With the Infinite*" could be considered in line with the doctrine of the Great School about "getting into harmony with Nature's Constructive Principle". I have read "*The Great Work*" carefully many times, but it seems to me that while "Nature's Constructive Principle" is constantly referred to, it is nowhere very definitely defined.

2. How far would the Great School endorse Trine's principle that thought forces are themselves constructive? I understand him to mean this: I want to become a certain kind of man or accomplish a certain work. Fear or doubt of my ability to be or do this we would all agree would tend to prevent success from its reflex subjective effect. But I understand Trine to go further, and to hold that, if one steadily holds the image of one's doing or becoming something good, that thought force of itself sets things in motion in such a way that other events and forces necessary to the result come to pass and the image attracts the condition which one is aiming at. Does the Great School approve such a doctrine?

3. It has seemed to me that the two most important things to hold before the mind are in Whitman's words "charity and personal force" or in my own terminology "power and sunshine"; "power", in the double sense of capacity and energy, also courage; "sunshine" in the sense of good will to all, the just and the unjust, an even, steady warmth of love to all, and helpfulness. In fact, the single Mithraic idea of sunshine seems perhaps the best material analogy for the object of moral endeavor; for the sun is the source of all power, light, warmth and life, apart, that is, from the original interatomic energy, for the unlocking of which sunshine is practically necessary.

Answer. I am sorry to confess that I have never had the pleasure, the time, nor the opportunity to read Trine's "*In Tune With the Infinite*"—not from lack of interest or desire, but solely because I have been so busy trying to keep in tune with my highest and best ideals of life, which, so far as I know, lie somewhat this side of the "*Infinite*."

I therefore do not profess to know enough of Mr. Trine's teaching to determine with accuracy how far, if at all, he is in align-

ment with the teachings and findings of the Great School.

But it would seem to me that your reading and study of "*The Great Work*" has either been incomplete, or that I failed of my purpose therein to define "*Nature's Constructive Principle*" in such manner as to meet the demands of exact science.

You tell me that you "have read '*The Great Work*' carefully many times, but it seems that while '*Nature's Constructive Principle*' is constantly referred to, it is nowhere very definitely defined", etc.

If you will turn to page 111 of "*The Great Work*", and begin with the Chapter [VII] entitled "*Nature's Constructive Principle*" and read carefully, you will find at least where I have *tried* to make the subject as simple, clear and definite as seemed to me at the time necessary to avoid ambiguity.

After referring in the opening paragraph to the two processes running through Nature which manifest themselves everywhere as "directly and unmistakably opposite in their effects"; I follow in the second paragraph with these words:

"One of these processes gives objective expression to that which men of science, the

world over, have been pleased to designate as 'The Law of Integration'. Some have named it also the 'Law of Growth'. Others call it 'The Organic Principle'. Still others name it 'The Law of Affinity'. It is known also as the 'Law of Evolution'. The Great School, however, has come to designate it as '*Nature's Constructive Principle*'."

"It matters little what name we give it, so long as we know with exactness and certainty the meaning of the name selected. To the man of science any one or more of these designations might safely be used without likelihood of confusion, for to him they mean one and the same thing. And so it would be with the lay student or general reader, if he but knew the synonymous meaning and nature of these several expressions. The question of vital importance, therefore, is, what do they mean? Let us see.

"The process which gives objective expression of this law or principle of nature is everywhere manifest to the trained scientist in the world of physical matter.

"For instance: It manifests itself to the objective senses in the integration and crystallization of stone. It is evidenced by that subtle force which integrates and binds to-

gether in solid mass the particles of iron, steel, copper, brass, silver, gold and other metals. It is observed in the condensation of vapors into liquids and of liquids into solids. It is demonstrated by that subtle affinity between the atoms of physical matter upon which the chemist in his laboratory bases all his chemical compounds. In truth, it is *that principle in Nature which impels every entity to seek vibratory correspondence with another like entity of opposite polarity.*

“In the vegetable kingdom it reveals itself in the results of that mysterious process which integrates matter into cells, cells into aggregates and aggregates into bodies which we call trees, plants, flowers, fruits and vegetables. It is discernible in the activity with which particles of earth and air and water are made to combine and flow in continuous streams into the body of the growing tree or plant. It is indeed that which manifests itself in the outward or objective expression of life, health, development and growth in all the varied forms of vegetation.

“In the animal kingdom its manifestations cover yet a wider range. We observe it in that which impels a single nucleated cell to grow, expand, multiply and combine with

others of its kind into definite organs. We note its evidences in the development of these simple organs into living, individual, organic entities. We watch its manifestations with interest in the development of the animal life germ into the living infant animal, and in the growth of the infant animal to its full maturity. We add to our interest a tender solicitude and personal affection as we study its manifestation in the growth and development of the infant human being from its first appearance in this physical life through all the stages of its infancy, childhood, youth and maturity; and we seem to miss it in the declining years of old age.

“To this point in the ascending scale of individual development we have been observing what would appear to be the outward objective expression of a purely automatic process of physical nature. Mineral aggregate bodies, vegetables and animals come into existence, integrate, grow, unfold and mature, so far as we can determine, by the operation of a law or principle of development in nature, over which they have no control. They seem to be involuntary subjects of it. They would appear to follow their course of integration and growth because they respond

automatically to the Constructive Principle of Nature in its manipulation of physical conditions and its impelling power over physical things.

“But there are yet higher manifestations of the same law or principle in operation. These rise to the more exalted plane of psychic phenomena. They constitute the indices by which we mark the constructive unfoldment and evolutionary development of the human Soul. They measure the increasing power of human intelligence. They signalize the growing refinement of moral sentiment and aesthetic taste. They evidence the increasing sensibility of human conscience. They mark the growth of human sympathy with and care for those who need. They measure the increasing stature of human character. They indicate the evolutionary construction of psychic individuality.

Page 114. “The integrating force in highly developed Society is the Constructive Principle of Nature working under the voluntary and intelligent guidance of the human Soul itself.

“For the purpose of definition, this great fundamental law or principle of nature back of the process which integrates inorganic

matter, organizes vegetable and animal matter into living, organic bodies, renews and sustains individual life, and constitutes the essential foundation of all development and growth—physical, spiritual, mental, moral and psychical—will be known and designated in this work as ‘Nature’s Constructive Principle’ ”.

Page 115. “It will be observed that this definition carries the effects of this principle far above and beyond the plane of purely physical material, into the realms of the spiritual, mental, moral and psychical in nature. *To this particular and significant enlargement of its scope and meaning, special attention is directed. It is of the most vital importance. Upon it, in truth, rests the central theme of this entire volume.*”

I am convinced that the foregoing literal quotations from “*The Great Work*”, without further comment, are sufficient to show that you are in error when you suggest that “While Nature’s Constructive Principle is constantly referred to, it is nowhere very definitely defined”, etc.

The parts of the quoted paragraphs I have set in italics not only give a “definite” definition of the term, but also call particular atten-

tion to the "enlargement" of its scope and meaning beyond those given it by physical science.

But if you will read carefully the entire chapter from which the foregoing quotations are taken, you will find that its whole thirteen pages are devoted to a definite and careful definition and elucidation of "Nature's Constructive Principle"; and I verily believe the purpose has been accomplished with such simplicity, clearness and "definiteness" that you cannot possibly fail to understand *exactly* what the Great School means when it speaks of "Nature's Constructive Principle".

In addition to the sections above quoted, however, I call your attention especially to the "*Summary*" of that chapter, beginning on page 123, and ending at the bottom of page 124, in these words:

"The purpose of this present volume is to identify and elucidate the '*Constructive Principle of Nature*' in its relation to and its effects upon individual life, and point out wherein man himself may become an intelligent factor in complying with the Principle and controlling the Process in their relation to his own individual existence and well-being."

As I have stated above, I am not sufficiently posted on the subject of Trine's writings to know how far, if at all, he may have sensed this great, fundamental Principle of Nature at the basis of all Evolutionary Unfoldment and Growth; but I am sure that if he has expressed himself as clearly, as definitely, as simply and as exactly as this subject is covered in "*The Great Work*", if you will take the two books, lay them side by side, and study them carefully, you will have no trouble in determining how far, if at all, the Great School would be able to "endorse" Mr. Trine's statements on the subject of "Thought Forces".

If you have stated his position correctly, then the Great School could not endorse him without some qualifications.

For it is as true that some thoughts are destructive as that others are constructive in their results.

Therefore, any statement which would imply that *all* "thought forces are themselves constructive" is too sweeping, too inclusive, too general, and hence, not true.

It is true, however, that thought involves force, and that thought force may have an effect upon the individual who does the think-

ing as well as on those upon whom it is projected.

But there is a tendency, among some of our modern psychologists, to give to "thought" alone and independent of "action", undue credit in the accomplishment of results.

For illustration: It is *not* true that the simple *holding of the thought of "opulence"* in mind will, alone and without other effort, bring material wealth and riches to any individual.

Thought, persistent and unfaltering, accompanied by equally persistent and unfaltering effort in line with it, however, will come about as nearly getting the intended result as anything within the power and limitations of man.

What would Trine say of the following:

Suppose a man "holds the image of himself becoming an honest and upright man", and yet every day and hour of his life he practices dishonesty, lies, deceives, defrauds and intentionally wrongs his fellows—how long would he be in "becoming an honest and upright man"?

In other words, does not all individual un-

foldment depend upon individual effort in line with a definite line of thought and purpose?

These are problems deserving of thoughtful consideration.

What Constitutes Careless Reading and Readers?

Answer. In the effort of the Great School of Natural Science to inaugurate and carry forward a great Educational Movement such as this, it would seem not unreasonable to anticipate that a good many difficulties would be encountered on the way.

More especially would this seem inevitable since those of us upon whom the responsibility rests are but human beings with human limitations as to intelligence, knowledge, experience and ability; and are compelled to labor in the midst of imperfect facilities, with but a fraction of the necessary help, and in the face of the relentless hostility and bitter opposition of the most powerful and unscrupulous organization of men and material resources on earth.

It has occurred to me that much possible good might be accomplished in behalf of the

Cause, if those we designate as "*Friends of the Work*" could but know with definite certainty something more of the various difficulties to be overcome in this voluntary and gratuitous Work of Education in which we are engaged.

For, to know with certainty the exact nature of an obstacle in one's pathway, is the first and most important step toward its removal.

For illustration: Suppose you found it necessary to travel alone and on foot a long journey through a dense forest along a narrow path with which you were wholly unfamiliar. Suppose also that some Friend, who has been over the pathway, informs you that there are grave difficulties which you will have to meet on the way and overcome, and great dangers you will have to avoid if you hope to complete your journey alive.

When you ask him to tell you what they are he refuses to give you any information whatever, and you are compelled to go forward alone and unprepared.

But suppose, on the other hand, you prevail upon him to give you the benefit of his knowledge, and you therefrom learn that at a certain point is a deep and dangerous

river which you must be prepared to cross; at another you must pass near the lair of a man-eating tiger which is more than likely to attack you; and that beyond this your path leads close beside a deep bed of quicksand.

Knowing the nature and the general location of these various obstacles and dangers, you enter upon your journey with assurance and serenity, well knowing that you have prepared yourself for every emergency, and reduced the chances and probabilities of failure to the minimum.

With this line of suggestion and thought in mind, let us see how far we may be able to obtain a clear view of the pathway which leads "onward and upward into the light," and wherein our chief difficulties lie:

1. As indicated in the literature of the School, thus far formulated for the purpose of this present Occidental Movement, this is but one of many definite and distinct efforts of the Great Friends to give their knowledge to the World in such manner and form that it would accomplish the largest measure of permanent and constructive results.

2. In each preceding effort the purpose

has always been to adopt a plan and a method of procedure that would be consistent with the time, the conditions, the environment, the civilization and the particular people to be reached; and that would accomplish the largest measure of permanent and constructive results.

3. In every such crystalized effort that has reached the magnitude and dignity of a definite, public "Movement", the Work of Extension has involved a distinct Educational Movement. And in every such effort of the School the Work of Education has been, more or less, an experiment.

4. This present and latest effort of the School was planned many years before its active inauguration. It was based upon the experiences of the past ages of effort, and as might readily be anticipated, every phase of the contemplated movement was given the most careful, thoughtful and exhaustive consideration, and the methods of procedure to be followed were wrought out with the utmost exactness and detail.

— The results of past efforts had demonstrated the vital importance of exact science as the only adequate and substantial basis and background of this modern Movement.

Never before had it been possible to invoke the aid of exact science nor the sustaining influence of scientific methods.

The phenomenal progress of physical science during the last century—yes, even the last half-century—has made possible many vital considerations which never before were available in a Work or a Movement of this nature.

As a result, to-day we have a scientific vocabulary for the first time in the history of this planet—so far as the records go—which is sufficiently facile and exact to sustain an Educational Movement along the lines and within the field of exact science.

In this philological aspect of its labors the great modern School of Physical Science has given to the world a heritage of inestimable value, for which it is justly entitled to the profound and unfeigned gratitude and reverence of every intelligent student of nature.

In thus virtually *coining* an entire scientific vocabulary, it has presented to the Great School the one and only remaining instrument necessary to enable this School to present its message of “Glad Tidings and Great Joy” to the World in such manner that never again will it be lost, nor distorted through

the unscrupulous efforts of designing "*Interpreters.*"

To-day, all over this great, progressive, Western World, men in every station and walk of life, are earnest, active and practical students of physical science.

In our colleges, universities and even our common public schools, all over the land, our young men and women are studying the language of exact science and becoming thoroughly familiar with many of the latest and most advanced discoveries in all the various fields of physical science.

Our great daily and Sunday newspapers and monthly magazines are speaking the language of modern, progressive physical science to the millions of our "*unschooled*" students and thinkers in every city, village, hamlet and country school district in this great nation of ours. And thus, in a somewhat broad and liberal sense we are rearing a rising generation of "*scientists.*"

In the realm of modern "*Medicine*" and in every branch of the many-sided problem of advanced "*Therapeutics*", including the subject of Dietetics and the study of the chemical purity of all kinds of foods, men and women in every station and walk of

human life and society—from the college president and professor to the druggist and the grocer in their stores, and even the housewife in her home and the cook in her kitchen—the findings and the language of physical science are already familiar and are daily becoming more and more widely and generally understood and appreciated among all classes.

And all of this work of education among the masses is but preparing the way for the Great School to deliver its message of the "*Higher Science*" to the world under the best conditions possible.

Best of all this work of preparation, the School of Physical Science has worked up in its pioneer researches and discovery until, in more lines than one, it has touched, from below, the sub-stratum of spiritual matter, and thus has entered—for the most part unwittingly as yet—upon the plane of the "*Higher Science*," the Science of the Great School.

Without fully realizing that fact, as yet, the Great School of Modern Physical Science, has done the preliminary work of bridging the gulf between the world of Physical Nature, matter and life below and the world of Spiritual Nature, matter and life above.

The time is not far distant when all this will be known and fully recognized by both Schools; and when that time shall come, there will follow an intelligent modification and adjustment of methods which will enable the two Schools to join hands in a co-operative effort beyond that point.

In the meantime, however, we must pursue our separate lines and distinctive methods; and on the part of the Great School of Natural Science there will continue to prevail the same spirit of good will, sympathy and tolerance which has characterized its efforts throughout the past.

Turning now to the problems that confront the Great Friends in their efforts to carry forward this great Educational Movement in the heart and center of this representative Western World—let it be remembered:

1. That the effort has been, and still is, to interest "*The Progressive Intelligence of the Age.*"
2. That to accomplish this result the appeal has been made in the language of modern and exact science.
3. That the methods employed are Edu-

cational and conform to the most rigid and exacting demands of our progressive Western civilization.

4. That as the foundation of the educational system inaugurated, a Series of Text-Books was formulated with the utmost exactness and simplicity, covering the fundamental principles of the "*Harmonic Philosophy of Life*" and the data of Natural Science upon which it is founded.

5. That all this has been analyzed, illustrated and elucidated in such manner as to bring the entire subject of both science and philosophy within the range of average English-speaking intelligence.

6. That absolutely "without money and without price" those who have studied the text-books carefully and have found themselves in unqualified sympathy and accord with the teachings and findings of the School therein contained, have received such additional instruction as the School has been in position to give to those who are able to prove themselves "duly and truly prepared, worthy and well qualified", and who have asked for it.

7. In all this work of instruction and

education the effort is being made to educate Students to a point of knowledge and efficiency in the Work, beyond which they, in turn, later on shall become safe Instructors and Helpers in the Work of education and extension.

By this method it is the purpose and intent of the School that every Student who receives the gift of its instruction shall qualify, if possible, to give it again in the same way to others, who shall seek it and be able to prove their right to receive it.

8. But herein begins an almost endless chain of difficulties on the part of both the School and the Student.

Exact Knowledge.

It is my purpose, if possible, to define, analyze and elucidate a few of the most vital and persistent of these difficulties, in the hope that a mere knowledge of their existence, together with a better understanding of their nature and importance, may suggest the proper and adequate remedies.

¶ The first in order, as they occur to me, is a lack of exact knowledge and definite information on the part of the average Student, so absolutely necessary to make of him, or her,

a safe and competent and reliable Instructor, in due course of time and personal effort.

To my constant surprise, almost amazement, I find from the questions that come to me from active and advanced Students all over the country, that they do not seem to have obtained more than the merest fraction of the knowledge, information and data contained in the three text-works of the "Harmonic Series" — specially formulated and published by the School for the benefit of Students, and as a definite and scientific Instruction to them.

From the information that comes to me, it would seem that the purpose and importance of these books are not yet sufficiently understood by our Students. For this reason the following explanation may be of value to our readers generally, but more especially to those among them who have either applied for instruction or who may hereafter contemplate doing so:

1. The three volumes of the "Harmonic Series" are "Text-Books" of the School.

2. They were formulated and published for the definite and specific purpose of laying the foundation for studentship in the School.

3. The intention of the School is that they are to point the way for Students to the door of the School, and constitute a definite Instruction therein.

4. It is the purpose of the School that every individual who desires to be admitted as a regular Student shall first know definitely and in detail what these text-books contain.

Otherwise he would not know, nor would the School, whether he could accept their teachings and in good conscience serve as an Instructor for the School and become one of its accredited Representatives.

It is to determine these vital questions that every applicant for Studentship is required to answer these questions [among many others]:

“[a] Have you made a careful and complete reading and critical *study* of all three of the volumes of the Harmonic Series?”

¶ “[b] Do you find yourself in full and unqualified sympathy and accord with all their teachings and findings?”

If he answers the former in the negative—as many do—he is informed that before he can go further he must make an exhaustive

study of all three volumes, until he *knows* what they contain, and that nothing further can be done for him until he has completed that study.

For it is only after he has done this that he is in position to answer the next question intelligently and in good conscience.

Then, after making such a study, suppose he answers question [b] in the *negative*, and says that he is *not* in unqualified sympathy and accord with all the teachings and findings of the School contained in the text-books, what follows?

But one consistent course is possible, namely,—his application must be rejected.

→ For, if he is *not* in full and unqualified sympathy and accord with the fundamental principles set forth in the text-works, it would be impossible for him to become a consistent *Instructor* to pass the knowledge on to other Students, as he has received it.

Consistency is one of the fundamental prerequisites of a good Instructor; and the School demands this in return for its instruction which, in all cases, is “without fee or reward”—an absolute *gift*, involving the time, thought, consideration and personal

effort of one or more of its Instructors, covering from two to ten years.

With these preliminary requirements and safeguards in all instances, it would seem that no applicant for instruction would ever gain admittance as a Student who was not "duly and truly prepared, worthy and well qualified."

Especially would it seem impossible that any applicant could gain admittance and attain to the status of an accredited Student without knowing the text-books thoroughly from beginning to end. And yet, the evidences in my possession could hardly be made to support any other conclusion.

As illustrations, I want to refer, in this connection, to some of the questions that have come to me from various Students who gained admittance, as such, only after solemnly stating that they had carefully read and studied all three of the text-books, until they knew what they contained, and that they found themselves in full and unqualified sympathy and accord with all their teachings and findings.

These illustrations will not, in any instance, disclose the name nor the identity of my questioner; because their disclosure

would serve only to embarrass the Student and cause him to feel that his questions are not welcome. For this would not be true, and the result would be the exact opposite of that which I desire to accomplish; for one of the fundamental prerequisites of a good Student is his willingness to ask for knowledge or information from any available source at command, and the ability to formulate an intelligent, exact and unambiguous question. I want every accredited Student to feel that it is not only his right but his *duty* to ask for knowledge and information whenever he is in need of it *and has exhausted other available sources* from which to obtain it.

But I must, at the same time, not make the invitation *too* hospitable or seductive, lest the "*other available sources*" be overlooked or ignored and those Students whose stock of patience, perseverance and industry is deficient be thereby encouraged to slovenly habits which would let them throw upon others [whose time is equally important] the burden of individual study and research which should be carried by every Student.

With this preliminary explanation clearly in mind, I am sure that each and every Stu-

dent who finds his own question among the following illustrations will congratulate himself upon the fact that he thus has helped me to elucidate a difficult problem that will undoubtedly be of value to many others than himself.

Illustrations.

1. "At a recent meeting of our Group of Students and Friends, I was asked to write and ask you if you would please tell us how to understand, or rather *reconcile*, the following statements:

[a] '*There is no Death.*' Vol. I. Chap. I. p. 5.

[b] *This is 'The Second Death.'* Vol. II, p. 329.

The simplest answer I could possibly give that would be clear and to the point, would be: "*Read the Books.*"

Another complete answer would be: "*By the Context.*" But this would amount to the same thing; for a careful reading of the books would enable any Student to get the "context," the natural sequence of thought in which the seemingly contradictory statements appear; and that alone will make clear the fact that statement [a] in Vol. I, has

definite, specific and sole reference to what we call "*Physical Death*"; while statement [b] in Vol. II, has equally definite, specific and exclusive reference to a purely *Spiritual* experience—the result of the "Destructive Principle of Nature" and its *seeming* effects upon Spiritual men and women who invoke it and follow it persistently.

The whole of Chapter 2, Vol. I, is devoted to an elucidation of statement [a]; and here is the very first sentence of the chapter:

"By death is here meant the extinction of the individual self-consciousness, personal identity and intelligent activity of a man when his physical body ceases its functions and activities."

Could any thing be stated more clearly and distinctly? It must, therefore, be clear that when the author of Vol. I, says: "THERE IS NO DEATH," she has reference to physical death and means to state that there is no "*extinction of the individual self-consciousness, personal identity and intelligent activity of a man when his physical body ceases its functions and activities.*"

In other words, what we call physical "*Death*" is, in truth, but a *transition*; and

the intelligence continues to live on beyond that point.

Now, what is the author of Vol. II talking about when he uses the expression, "*The Second Death*"?

A study of the book and the "context" will disclose the fact that at page 334, last paragraph, he says: "What the scientific significance of this second or spiritual death may be, is as yet, *the great unsolved problem of Nature.*"

At page 397, in the final chapter on "*The Genesis of Dogma*" under the "*Third Hypothesis*," he says:

"In Part II of this volume, Chapter IV, paragraphs 19 to 22, inclusive, under the head of '*Facts Demonstrated*,' it is stated that man disappears from the lowest plane of his spiritual life by either one of two different processes,——.

"Under the opposite principle and process of destruction or devolution he also disappears in a manner which corresponds, in every essential particular, with the disappearance of the animal.

"It is also stated that in this second case he does not reappear [at least in identical or distinguishable form] upon any of the high-

er planes of spiritual life which are distinctively related to this particular planet.

“The question of his destiny as an individual intelligence in this case is a matter of even more absorbing and vital interest to those who have undertaken its solution, than is the destiny of the animal.

“But here again Nature seems to hold a secret which defies the detective powers of the wisest intelligences of both planes of life. No satisfactory solution of the great problem has yet been wrought out.”

A little further on it is stated that while Natural Science does not claim to *know* the meaning of this “*second Death*”, there are two distinct “*theories*” on the subject. “They are presented without comment for what they may be worth. No attempt has been made to prejudice the mind in favor of either of them.

“On the contrary, it is suggested that even those who have at command all the facts and all the data thus far accumulated bearing upon the subject *are still withholding judgment.*”

Having read the foregoing—all of which appears in Vol. II—would it seem possible that any Student of the books could think

there is anything that calls for a “reconciliation”?

It must be entirely clear that there is no discrepancy whatever in the two statements, when the “context” is taken into account.

And furthermore, *it is all in the books*. Any one who will *read* them cannot fail to find it.

It must be clear, therefore, that in this particular instance the fault is not with the books nor their authors, but with the Students who had not studied with sufficient care to get the full meaning and intent of the *text*.

2. Another illustration from the many is, in substance, somewhat as follows:

A group of seemingly intelligent women who have been reading and “studying” [?] the books for some two years or more [and who became accepted students on the strength of their understanding and acceptance of their teachings] have recently come forward with a series of questions as to just what Vol. I [Harmonics of Evolution] teaches concerning the “Law of Affinity”; whether an individual can have more than one “affinity”; whether the teachings of the

book, if followed, would not lead to promiscuity and immorality, and so on.

For the author of that Vol. who spent three years in the writing of it [solely that she might make it so clear and so simple that none could misread it nor fail to get its exact meaning] to have such questions come to her from women who claim to have read and *studied* the book for many months,—is surely discouraging, or would be if one were inclined to permit it.

There is not a question asked by these studious ladies, but is fully and specifically answered *in the book*. It is *all there*, and in *bold, clear type*; and its teachings are in perfect alignment with the highest morality and the perfect integrity of the marriage relation and all its obligations.

Wherein, then, is the difficulty? Simply and solely in the fact that these readers of the books are not “Students” in the true meaning of the term. They have done their work so imperfectly and indifferently as virtually not to have done it at all. And yet, I have no doubt they have thought they knew the Philosophy of Natural Science as set forth in the text-books, with definite certainty.

These two illustrations are taken from our files, at random, from among a large number. They are typical, and therefore sufficient to illustrate and elucidate the point I am trying to establish.

They are in line with our experiences from the date of the publication of Vol. I of the Harmonic Series to the present time. There can be but one interpretation of these experiences, namely, that the average woman reader is *not* a “Student”.

Furthermore, contact with the text-books does not *make* a Student of her. She goes right on as before, simply “scanning” the books instead of really *studying* them, and as a result, she gets but a fraction of their contents and that fraction is distorted and imperfect.

† Some time ago a “Friend of the Work” was explaining his method of reading and studying the books. He said his first reading was always with pencil in hand, and as he read he made a question-mark on the margin of the page, opposite each point concerning which he had any doubt, or concerning which he desired to ask any question. As a result, when he was through his first

reading he usually found his book pages frescoed with many question-marks.

✧ Then he began a second reading, and as he proceeded he erased every question-mark to which he had found a satisfactory answer. And so on, with a third, fourth, fifth and subsequent readings, until he had reduced his question-marks to the minimum, at which time only did he feel that he really knew what the book contained.

At the time he came to me he had read "*The Great Psychological Crime*" some fifteen times. When he completed his first reading the pages of the book, from beginning to end, were literally covered with "???". But when he finished a second careful reading he found that he had erased more than half of his interrogation marks. Then again and again he read it from cover to cover, and with each new reading some of the markings disappeared.

At the time he came to me—after all his careful readings and study—there remained just one big "?" which he had not been able to erase. He said the book itself had answered every one of his many questions but this one, and I fancied I observed a faint twinkle of triumph in his eyes as he told me

that he had not been able to find any answer, in the book, to his question.

I asked him to tell me just what was the question he had in mind; and when he had stated it very carefully, I told him to open the book and turn to page [giving him the number] and he would find the answer. He did as requested, and his face was an interesting psychological study when he found that the answer was indeed there, clear, concise and complete, and that he had actually read the *words* of it fifteen times without getting it into his consciousness.

This man is one of the best students I know. He has a keen intelligence and a good memory. He reads carefully and studies well what he reads. And yet, he tells me that, after having read "The Great Work" [Vol. III] some twenty times, he continues to find so much in it that seems to him "entirely new", that it is a source of constant amazement to him to observe how little of its contents he is able to get at any single reading of the book, and what an enormous percentage he fails to master.

I refer to the experiences of this particular student in the hope that they will inspire other students to adopt some of his methods

and imbue them with the determination to *know* what the *text-books* contain, before asking questions that are already answered therein, or that are answered in "*Life and Action*".

Almost every day I am receiving letters from the best kind of people in all sections of the country, and many of them begin somewhat as follows:

"Dear Sir: I have just finished a hasty reading of Vol. III—'*The Great Work*' and I want more *Light*. I am applying to you for further instruction" etc.

Within the week a gentleman wrote me from the Pacific coast, just after finishing chapter III of "*The Great Work*", and asked to be admitted as a Student and to receive instruction.

These good people all mean to be courteous and considerate and it would pain them deeply if they felt that they had failed in that regard.

It requires much thought and consideration on my part to get the facts before them in such manner as to avoid humiliating or otherwise hurting or offending them.

I gently call attention to the fact that "*The*

Great Work” is *Vol. III* of the “*Harmonic Series*” and that all three volumes are *text-works* of the School, written and published for the distinct and definite purpose of constituting a “natural approach” to the door of the School; that their teachings constitute a profound Instruction which is the foundation of all other instructions; that until this foundation has been laid by the Student, and the Text-Books have been mastered, it is impossible to proceed with any other instruction that rests upon that foundation.

In conclusion—let me offer a few suggestions which I sincerely hope will prove of real value to all who read them, and who may hereafter desire to become identified with the School and its Work:

1. The three Text-Books in themselves constitute the *first Instruction* of every applicant who desires to gain admittance as an accredited Student.

2. Until he has mastered them and thereby gotten the benefits of his *first Instruction*, he is not prepared for any further Instruction which rests upon that foundation.

3. To accomplish the desired end in the shortest time and with the least effort, I recommend the following method of study, re-

gardless of the number of times the individual may have read the books, viz,—

✓[a] Begin at the beginning and study with pencil and paper at hand.

[b] From every page and paragraph formulate into writing such questions as you would ask a Student if you were his Examiner and were trying to make him prove to you that he had a detailed and an accurate knowledge of what the three books contain.

[c] After completing such a study, then lay aside the books, take your own list of questions and write out in your own language answers to as many of them as you can.

[d] Whenever you find a question to which you are unable to formulate a satisfactory answer, go back to the books and read up on the subject until you can answer your question correctly.

[e] To facilitate your reference to the books, I would suggest that as you are formulating your questions you note after each question the volume, page and paragraph where you can find the answer.

By the time you have completed such a study of the books as I have indicated, you should be able to pass the kind of examina-

tion which would satisfy any accredited Examiner that you have a thorough and accurate working knowledge of what the Text-Books contain.

And this is the character of knowledge which the School expects every Student to possess before asking for any Instruction other than that contained *in the Text-Books*.

For an applicant who has read but hastily a few chapters in one of the books [or who has read all of any one of them, or who may even have completed a rapid reading of all three books] to come asking for any further Instruction which calls for a gift of the time and labor of an Instructor covering many months and even years of effort—is no more reasonable nor consistent than it would be for a common-school graduate to apply for admittance to the Senior class of the Chicago University without examination, and without taking the work of the three preceding years of the regular college course—the Freshman, Sophomore and Junior years.

And yet, both Mrs. Huntley and myself are receiving urgent applications for Instruction almost every week, from earnest men and women all over the country, who have only just glanced hastily through one or more of

the books and obtained but a mere suggestion of what they contain.

Each of these letters of application demands a courteous response from us, and this involves a long and careful explanation as to the purpose of the books, the fact that they are Text-Works of the School, that they contain an "*Instruction*" which must be mastered before the applicant is ready for, or can be admitted to, any further Instruction based upon the contents of the three Text-Books.

The one thing most difficult to impress upon the consciousness of these "Stranger Friends" is the fact that the three books of the Harmonic Series are *Text-Works*, that they are "*Works of Instruction*" and contain an exact and a scientific *Instruction* which every applicant must *master* before it is possible to gain admittance to any other or further Instruction than that of the books themselves.

The importance of this subject to the educational work of this Movement is such that it will command further consideration in these columns, from time to time. We trust our readers will find the general theme of sufficient interest and value to follow us patiently and without prejudice.

In this connection, we will be glad to receive any suggestions our readers may deem of value; and will endeavor to answer any questions they may desire to have us consider in *Life and Action* insofar as time and space at command will permit.

Is God a Self-Conscious Spirit and Nature a Manifestation or Expression of Himself?

Question. 1. Why is it that throughout your philosophic writing, more particularly in "*The Great Work*"—you so often employ the terms, "*God or Nature*" in just that relation?

2. Do you believe that God is a **Self-Conscious Spirit**, Creator of all things, and Nature the manifestation or expression of Himself? The whole value of all your teaching depends on your belief upon this subject.

3. Just what do you mean, and to whom do you refer when you speak of "*The Ruler of this Planet*"?

4. To whom do you refer as "*The Father*"?

I do not seem to be able to get these terms

clearly in mind, and I want to be definite and certain as to their exact meanings.

Thanking you for your kindness and patience in answering so clearly and carefully the many questions I have already asked you and hoping this latest list will receive the same careful and generous consideration, etc.

Answer. With sincere interest I have just finished a careful reading of your valued letter of the 29th ult., and in the midst of the multiplicity of demands upon both time and vitality in which I live, I find it an absolute physical impossibility to respond to your many questions in such manner as to be of any real satisfaction to either you or myself. I do not like to undertake such a task by letter, even under favorable conditions, and if you could but know even a fraction of the difficulties in my way, you would acquit me of any thought of discourtesy, I am sure, even if I declined to attempt an answer at all, under the existing conditions.

But I am strongly impressed with the earnestness, sincerity, good faith, and intelligence of your inquiries, and am strongly impelled to respond, even though inadequately and most imperfectly. With that thought in

mind, I trust you will follow me with patience and kindly forbearance:

1. With reference to the terms "*God or Nature,*" and the manner in which they are employed in the books of the Harmonic Series.

I believe it will help you to understand the spirit and intent of the Work more fully if you will turn to page 35 of "*The Great Work*" and read carefully the last paragraph but one, and note carefully my promise therein that I will confine myself as closely as may be possible to the things which are within the range of my own personal experience [knowledge], the demonstrated facts of science, and the established truths of nature.

Now, under this pledge, if I had claimed, or professed, to know anything definitely about *God* [in the sense of the Great Universal Intelligence back of all manifestations of Nature], I should have been false to my promise, and unworthy of your confidence; for it is a *fact* that I do not definitely *know* anything whatsoever about the Great First Cause of things, nor do I know anyone who *does* know.

Even the greatest and the wisest of the Great Friends, with whom I have come into

personal acquaintance and fellowship on the Spiritual Planes of life, when asked for definite knowledge on the subject, say with the utmost frankness, simplicity and humility, "*We do not know.*"

2. But, in order that I might not justly be accused of assuming knowledge which I do not possess, I have used again and again the terms "God or Nature," to indicate to the reader that I do not assume to know *which* is scientifically the correct term.

A careful search of the Scriptures [Bible] will disclose the fact that the term "God" is not *always* used to designate the Great Creative Intelligence, or First Cause. But in some instances it seems to have been employed to designate a Great Spiritual Intelligence whom the Jews seemed to regard as their particular "God," or "Ruler"—thus, by inference, rather suggesting the idea that there may be *other* "Gods" than the "God of the Jews."

In my writing of the MS. of "*The Great Work*," I was brought face to face with the fact that among religionists generally, and more especially among the ministry, the term "God" is used quite generally to designate the Great Universal Intelligence, the Great

Creative Intelligence, responsible for all things whatsoever, in heaven and on earth, or elsewhere in the universe; while the physical scientist employs the term "*Nature*" to express his concept of all that he knows of a "Cosmic Intelligence."

In order that both classes might read my statements understandingly, and without prejudice, and free from the feeling that I was dogmatizing upon the subject, I employed *both* terms interchangeably, or in such manner that the contending disputants as to the Great First Cause, would not be able to accuse me of assuming a knowledge I do not possess.

I do not hesitate to say to you that *I do not know* whether there is a Great Intelligent Personality back of Nature or not. I see everywhere evidences in Nature of intelligent *design*, and I know that Nature *represents* intelligence. But *what* or *who* or *where* that Intelligence is, I do not *know*. Neither do I know anyone who seriously *claims* to know, when called upon to answer the question from the basis of his own personal knowledge.

I do not know whether the Great Intelligence that is responsible for Nature is "*back of*," or *in*, or *throughout*, or "*above*" Na-

ture; or whether the Great Creative Intelligence and Nature [taken together] constitute *God*. I have some ideas and convictions on the subject; but since I do not *know*, these ideas and convictions would be of little or no value to you or anybody else who demands definite *knowledge* on the subject.

You ask if I believe God to be a Conscious, a Self-Conscious Spirit, Creator of all, and Nature as the manifestation or expression of Himself?

In the books of the Harmonic Series I have studiously avoided giving any expression of my own "*beliefs*" on this subject, because I recognize the fact that concerning ultimates, and other things we do not know, my own *beliefs* are of no greater value than those of my most obscure and humble reader.

If I should answer your question frankly, and tell you what I *believe*, you would be not a *whit* wiser as to the *realities* than you are to-day; for my *beliefs* are not necessarily *true*. Yours may be more nearly the truth than mine. Therefore, it seems to me that I would be assuming a heavy responsibility in putting forth my mere "*opinions and beliefs*" on so profound a subject, lest you or some one else might not always differentiate

carefully and accurately between my *beliefs* and what science actually *knows*.

You say that you think the whole value of my "*teaching*" rests upon my *belief* on this subject. I am compelled to admit that I am entirely unable to follow your mental processes in this regard; for it does not seem to me that my *belief* can have anything whatsoever to do with the subject.

In what you designate as my "*teachings*" I have endeavored to confine myself as closely as possible to the findings of Natural Science, quite independently of either my own beliefs or those of others.

But you are correct in that it is important to know just *why* I have used the terms "God or Nature." I have endeavored to give you my reasons for so doing, and I trust they will commend themselves to your sympathy and reason.

For the purposes of this School and Work, it does not seem to me to be a vital matter [at this time] whether "*God and Nature are one,*" or whether "*God is Creative Intelligence and Nature His Manifestation.*" Neither does it seem to me vital to the problem of "*Life Here and Hereafter,*" whether "*God is an Individual Intelligence,*" or is simply

“*Universal Intelligence without Personality.*”

And why do I say this? Because these are problems which, as yet, are beyond the range of human intelligence, so far as we know; and the problem with which this School and Work are concerned most vitally, is that of “Individual Life Here and Hereafter,” and the evolutionary possibilities of man, insofar as we are able to ascertain them through the means and methods of Natural Science.

Your own view of the matter is identical with mine, in that “I do not think at *this stage* of our evolution we can comprehend God.” Furthermore, I am convinced that we have several “rounds” of evolution ahead of us before we will be able to comprehend Him, Her, It or Them. And because of this fact, it seems to me that there are many vitally important things a long way “*this side of God,*” or our knowledge of God, with which we might occupy our time, thought and personal effort, to much more practical value. Does it not seem so to you?

Just as you have indicated, recognizing man as an Individual Intelligence, possessing Consciousness and Will, and assuming that he is a result of creation, it is but logical to

assume that his Creator also possesses the same or equivalent attributes. But you see, it seems to be impossible for us to approach *God*, or the Great Creative Intelligence, from any angle, without having to *assume* so many things that our conclusions are of little or no scientific value.

Answering your question concerning the "Ruler of this *Planet*," that term means exactly what it says. There is an Individual Intelligence, known to the Great Friends and Spiritual Masters of this School as "The Father." He is in human *form*, and upon Him rests the Spiritual Rule, or Government of this little planet we call "Earth." But He is *not* the "*Great Universal Intelligence*." And that is why I do not speak of Him as *God*.

You ask why it is that I do not speak of *God*, in the closing chapters of Vol. III. This would seem to answer itself, in the light of what I have already said. It is because I do not *know* anything about "*God the Great Creative Intelligence*;" and in those chapters I have endeavored to confine myself as closely as possible to the "*Things I Know*."

All your *reasoning* on these subjects is interesting, and *may* be *correct*, so far as I

know. But it does not seem to me to be within the limitations set for the subject-matter of my own MS.

I have also had in mind the writing of another MS. on the subject of "*What Science Knows Of The Spiritual World*" or to that effect. Science has demonstrated many things of the most transcendent interest and vital importance concerning the Spiritual Life of Man on this Planet. But when I come to write of these things, strange as it may seem to you, I shall *not* try to tell my readers anything about *God*.

So far as I know, *God*, the Great Universal Intelligence that is responsible for the existence of this little Earth and its inhabitants, both physical and spiritual, is beyond the knowledge of the wisest of this planet. Then why should I presume to write of It, or tell my readers about It? You must see the absurdity of it all.

I want you to know that I appreciate your earnest letter of inquiry, and hope that in what I have said in reply, inadequate and hurried as it is, you will be able to obtain such information as will enable you to answer the questions for yourself.

Again thanking your for your friendship

and confidence, and with greetings of good will and all good wishes, believe me, etc.

Does Life and Action Stand for Economic Justice?

Question. “We want to know why such a magazine as “*Life and Action*” should not stand for industrial justice?”

Answer. If our Friend were within speaking distance I would ask him whether by that remark he means to imply that *Life and Action* does not stand for “*industrial justice.*”

It would seem so, at any rate, although I can scarcely believe he meant to convey such an idea; because there is nothing in its pages, from its first issue to the present, so far as I know, upon which to base any such conclusion.

We who are responsible for the establishment of *Life and Action* [and this includes the Great Friends who are responsible for the School of Natural Science] have endeavored to establish the fact that we stand for *justice* in all its different phases, aspects and departments, which, of course, includes “*industrial justice.*”

It is true that the magazine has not dealt especially with economic or industrial problems. This, however, is solely because the field of its greatest usefulness has seemed to us to lie in other directions.

The industrial and economic problems are far more than sufficient, in themselves, to fill the pages of a magazine of this size indefinitely. And there are almost unlimited numbers of newspapers, periodicals, magazines and journals throughout the country wherein the industrial and economic problems are under constant discussion.

That field is already so effectually covered that there is no room for a magazine of this size.

The Great School, however, has its own solution of the industrial and economic problems. In this field, as in that of every other phase and field of Natural Science, it has reduced its findings to the basis of exact science. Furthermore, it has demonstrated their accuracy by actual experience.

Its conclusions, therefore, are not based upon, nor the results of, mere *beliefs*.

And when the foundation of Natural Science has been laid sufficiently broad and

deep in this country, and a sufficient amount of educational work has been accomplished to constitute a substantial background, its purpose is to present its solution to the world and verify its scientific accuracy by a practical *demonstration*.

Until then we trust our Friends will not draw unwarranted nor unjust conclusions as to our position on the subject of economics, nor give to us a status inconsistent with our just deserts.

Does a Good Man Who Has "Lived the Life" Face the Transition Without a Pang?

Question. I first want to thank you most sincerely for writing "*The Great Work*" which has been a very great help to me and has altered completely my outlook on life and death.

During this last month I have lost a great friend, and last week my Father passed away.

It was the first time I had seen death, and during the long vigil by his bedside, for two days and a half, I was so grateful that I had read your book. The end was wonderfully peaceful and beautiful.

Since then I have again read the last chap-

ter in "*The Great Work.*" I thought, perhaps, I might venture to ask you, if you can, to set my mind at rest on a few points which trouble me just now:

1. You say that a good man who has "*Lived the Life*" faces the transition from earth without a pang. Surely the separation from those dear to me must always be painful, however strong my faith is.

2. If many, many years elapse before we follow those who have passed away, how can we know them again and they us? If our souls have developed and grown very much in the interval, surely the recognition must be difficult. The thought that we may not know each other, is a very painful one.

3. You say that the work here may go on in the other sphere sometimes without any break. This seems to me very hard to understand, especially if one's work here is social, and among human beings.

I should be very grateful for any light you can give me on this point.

I know that you have innumerable letters, and must ask you to forgive me for adding yet another.

Answer. I do indeed have many letters,

and most of them contain questions—sometimes as many as ten to fifteen. In one, not long ago, there were thirty-seven distinct questions.

But I never look upon it as a hardship to answer any questions which seem to be of real importance and inspired by worthy motives, provided I possess the requisite knowledge, and have the time at command. More especially is this true when I have reason to believe that my questioner has read the published literature of the Great School and, after diligent search, has failed to find a satisfactory answer.

In your case, my dear friend, I sympathize deeply and would esteem it both a privilege and a pleasure if I could be of real service, or even comfort.

Let me hasten, therefore, and see how far I may be able to answer your several problems:

1. I do not think you have quoted me correctly. You quote me as saying: "A good man who has *Lived the Life* faces the transition from earth without a pang," etc. I am tempted to ask you to give me the page and paragraph where you find any such state-

ment. I do not believe you can find even the substance of such a statement.

Here is what I do say, and I quote it *verbatim*, beginning near the bottom of page 450 of "*The Great Work*":

"But what of the moral and upright man who has done his best to live a clean and righteous life? What does the transition mean to him?

"He may have no definite knowledge of what is involved in the process of physical dissolution. He may not know that Morality is the foundation of Constructive Spirituality. He may not even have a definite belief or conviction that there is a life beyond the grave. He may be wholly in doubt as to the great problem of Immortality. It matters not. For if he has lived his life free from Envy, Jealousy, Fear, Anger, Lust, and other destructive and degrading appetites, passions, emotions and desires; if he has lived a clean and moral life; if he has dealt justly with his fellow man and kindly toward his dumb brothers and servants, of the animal kingdom; if he has lived as nearly as possible to the standard of his own highest ideals, and by the light of his own best knowledge, he has lived a life of co-operation with the

Constructive Principle of Nature in his own Life and there is nothing that can deprive him of the benefits and rewards of such a life. Whether he has known it or not, he has been acquiring a status of Constructive Spirituality all the while. The natural results are inevitable. Nature does not deny him the legitimate fruits of his Personal Effort in line with the Constructive Principle.

“The transition of such a man is truly a triumph and a victory over the forces and conditions of nature which tend to the enslavement and oppression of the Soul after physical death. Even though for the time being it may be an unconscious triumph, nevertheless nature is consistent in that she has made her rewards as automatic and irrevocable as her penalties.

“The results of this Spirituality unconsciously acquired during physical life is that at death both the Physical Body and its Physical Magnetism fall away together, leaving the Soul free to rise at once into the realm of Spiritual Nature.”

The foregoing is all that is said of the good man, “the moral and upright man who has done his best to live a clean and righteous life.” There is nothing in it about “facing

the transition from earth without a pang.”

If he were not only “good” but also “wise” as a *Master*, and knew what awaited him in the life beyond *then* he might well face it “without a pang.”

But I think it is safe to say, as a general rule, that the *good* men of earth who do *not know* what is awaiting them beyond physical death cling to earth with considerable tenacity, and approach death with reluctance, and oftentimes with many “pangs” of doubt and anxiety.

If they could only *know* that they were going to their rewards, many of them would go cheerfully, even gladly, save only for their regrets at separating from the loved ones of earth.

But to those on the other side of the “Valley” there is by no means so complete a separation as to those who are left behind in earthly conditions. For those beyond can come close enough to earth and earthly conditions to see and know something of the lives of their loved ones left behind.

2. And in this fact is the answer to your second question. While the changes of many years in the life beyond would, in some in-

stances, make our recognition of our loved ones impossible; yet, the fact that they are able to keep sufficiently in touch with us to note our earthly changes, would enable them to know us even though we may not always recognize them in return.

3. I do not feel sure that I have gotten your meaning concerning the difficulties of resuming a work on the other side commenced here. Suppose a man like Lincoln passes over. Having been deeply engaged, heart and soul, in great questions of political importance, on this side, it is more than likely that he will engage in similar labors in that life. For there are men in the spiritual life and realms who devote much time and consideration to governmental problems.

Wherever there are men, women and children, there are sociological and political problems to be considered; and it is but natural that those who on earth have given deep study to such problems would find both interest and occupation in similar lines of endeavor after they have passed on into the other life.

At any rate this is true, and I am unable to see any valid reason why it should not be so.

My suggestion is that you avail yourself

of the first opportunity to read and study carefully the other two volumes of the Harmonic Series, and follow this with the volumes of the Supplemental Harmonic Series and the Harmonic Booklet Series. All of these are intended as "side lights" upon the great problem of Life, both here and in the hereafter.

And if you will but study the problem carefully, you will discover the interesting fact that the spiritual life is but an extension, as it were, of the physical.

The law of individual being is perfectly correlated in the two worlds, and there are no broken nor missing links in the great chain.

If you will get this great fundamental fact well established in your consciousness, it will help you to understand and appreciate the further and correlated fact that the Spirit Life and World are just as "natural" as are the physical.

Your difficulty lies in your unfamiliarity with the idea, concept and fact that the Spirit World is as truly a material world as this. The great difference is in the increased refinement and vibratory intensity of Spiritual matter. But it is matter nevertheless.

If this reply to your courteous inquiry only leads you to a further and more critical reading and study of the other books herein referred to I shall feel that I have at least pointed the way toward the further knowledge and data that will unravel many of the present mysteries which perplex you.

What Meaning, Import and Significance Does the Great School Place Upon Heredity?

Question. What meaning, import and significance does the Great School place upon Heredity? Since it is clearly set forth in the text-books of the School that each Individual Intelligence is responsible for its own conscious acts, it would seem to follow that Heredity, in the sense it is ordinarily understood, namely:—the transmission of desires, tendencies, habits, etc., of the parents to their children, could not be possible. It would seem that all a parent could furnish would be the physical instrument or body, and an *environment* that would tend to cultivate in the child the habits and tendencies of the parent.

Answer. On a vividly remembered occasion in the course of my early instruction in

the Great School, I asked my Instructor a similar question as to Astrological influences. The answer I received was, in substance, as follows:—

“Each planet exerts a magnetic influence upon every other planet—the Earth included. The degree of its influence at any given time depends upon its distance and volume.”

“The sum total of planetary influence at any given time upon the Earth is called the ‘Earth’s Astrological Setting’ at that time.”

“Now the astrological setting at the instant an infant breathes its first breath of life has an influence upon that child’s life to the extent of giving it a general *tendency* which may or may not become perceptible in the course of its life.”

“But remember, that each individual man or woman is always ‘greater than his astrological setting.’ Otherwise he could not be held accountable under the Law of ‘Personal Responsibility’.”

This answer, paraphrased, would apply with equal force to the influence of heredity.

There can be little doubt that there is a “Law of Heredity”. This seems, at any rate, to be taken for granted quite generally.

But to whatever extent this may account for the general leanings of the individual in point of his tastes and desires, there is not the least doubt in the world that man in his individual nature is greater than the influence of heredity. That is to say, he has an inherent power which enables him to overcome the gravitative influence of heredity and determine his own destiny.

If this were not true, your suggestion as to his lack of responsibility would be true beyond all doubt.

The position of the Great School on the subject is, that even granting that Heredity, Astrology and Environment all exert an influence upon the individual; nevertheless, all of these combined are not sufficient to abrogate the Law of Personal Responsibility and Moral Accountability.

Man is not a "Creature of Heredity", nor of "Astrology" nor of "Environment", nor of all these combined.

Man is "Master of his own Destiny".

Heredity is but one of the elements to indicate to him the definite and special lines toward which to direct his personal effort.

The "Working Tools" with which Nature has invested and endowed him enable him to

overcome the gravitative influence of all adverse elements and conditions, and build his Temple of individual Character true to the lines of his own ideals.

But for this fact he would indeed be an irresponsible automaton, a helpless plaything of Heredity and Environment.

What Would Be the Status of An Infant at Physical Death if Its Habitation Had Been in the Magnetic Field Before Birth?

On page 447 of "*The Great Work*", it is stated that a very large percentage of children, dying, pass quickly to the first Spiritual Sphere.

Question. 1. If a Soul came into physical life from its then habitation in the magnetic field, would such a one pass to the first Spiritual sphere, or return to its status before birth?

2. Would a child born to parents who were held in the bonds of psychic subjection, and itself, during its short earthly life constantly environed by those subjective conditions, be deterred in its upward passage by reason of those influences?

Answer. 1. This is a purely individual problem, depending upon conditions both internal and external, not all of which can be determined in advance.

If it be granted that reincarnation is a fact of nature, it is only one of the links in the chain of evolutionary influences.

Your question would seem to be another way of approaching the problem of Heredity, etc.

But there is something in the very essence of individual being which makes the individual master over all the devolutionary powers and influences that play upon him.

On this basis, it is clear that the level to which we rise upon the Spiritual planes of life is not determined by the level from which one enters physical life, but that from which he leaves it.

It is much more largely determined by the use he has made of his opportunity while here and the manner in which he has *Lived the Life*.

2. Temporarily a child which has had no time in which to overcome those conditions would be retarded in its evolutionary growth. But after it has been in the Spirit life until

it has become self-reliant the problem becomes one of individual application again. And keeping in mind always the fundamental fact that every individual, in its essential nature, is Master of its Destiny, it is not difficult to understand that it is more a question of time and its use than we are wont to admit.

Is Truth Both Absolute and Relative?

Question. On page 185 of "*The Great Work*", TRUTH is defined as "the established relation which the facts of Nature sustain to each other and to the Individual Intelligence or Soul of Man."

In discussing this definition with a friend recently, he contended that Truth could have no existence except in Individual Consciousness. I maintained that Truth was Truth, irrespective of man's conception of it; that facts and their relations were real and existent, no matter what the Individual relations might be, or whether or not any Individual was conscious of their existence; that otherwise, nothing could exist as a fact of Nature, or have any relations with other facts, until some Individual discovered such fact, which seems to me to be an absurdity.

It would seem from this definition that Truth has a double aspect, [a] the relation which the facts of Nature sustain to each other; [b] the relation they sustain to the Individual Intelligence. In other words, Truth is both absolute and relative. Absolute Truth, the actual facts and their actual relations; relative Truth, the concept the Individual Intelligence has of those facts, which is Truth, or apparent Truth, to the Individual. For example, the earth is round, and revolves about the sun. Men once sincerely thought the earth flat, and circled daily by the sun, which was the commonly accepted view for centuries.

But man's opinion [his conception of relations of Nature's facts] in no wise modified or changed the real facts and their actual relations. When men grew wiser, the actual facts and their actual relations did not change, but man's conception, understanding and opinions of those facts [that is to say, his relations to those facts] did change. Therefore Truth itself is absolute and changeless; man's conception of those facts is changeable, each phase being Truth to the Individual for the time being.

What is the correct view?

Answer. Your view of the subject coincides with my own.

In this connection, let me tell you something that I am sure will be of special interest to you, and possibly others also.

It is this: I have just placed in the hands of the Manager of the Indo-American Book Co.—a manuscript of a public discussion between Prof. Heinrich Hensoldt, Ph. D. and myself. It was first published in *The Arena*, of Boston, during 1894-5, and therein this very subject, in at least one aspect, was at issue.

“*The Reality of Matter*”—a new book that will appear about the time this issue of *Life and Action* reaches you, contains a republication of that discussion, with some most interesting illustrations of the truth of the philosophy of a big, ugly, hungry bear.

This “Bear Story” of mine, [wherein the bear takes issue with a “Hoary Philosopher of Hindoostan” on the subject of “The Reality of Matter” and *proves* the correctness of his philosophy to the entire satisfaction of the “Hoary Philosopher” who held that “*Matter is a Delusion*”] is held to be a most complete and unanswerable verification of the truth of your position.

When the book is out I trust you will do me the honor to read my "Bear Philosophy" therein contained, and tell me if it answers your question to your satisfaction.

If not, I think I shall have to turn my "Cartesian Bear" loose and *sic* him on *you*.

He is *most convincing* in the way he does things, and in the force with which he elucidates his philosophy of life.

"Dollars Want Me."

Back in 1904, a lady "Friend of the Work" in Tacoma, Washington, wrote me, inclosing a pamphlet under the above rather odd title "*Dollars Want Me*". As I now remember, the booklet bore the name of one of the then prominent "*New Thought*" writers, as its author; and I think since then it has been circulated quite extensively, until its quaint suggestion has become almost an accepted tenet among a certain class of writers on the subject of "*Opulence*".

My correspondent was considerably wrought up at the time concerning the strange ideas contained in the booklet, and wished to know my views and those of the Great School on the subject.

They are contained in the following reply of mine, which bears the date of August 20, 1904.

Since then the subject has come up again and again, in various forms and phases, and from many different sources, showing that the Students and "Friends of the Work" are not entirely satisfied with the sanity nor the moral soundness of any system of obtaining material wealth, or acquiring "Opulence", by simply "*thinking dollars*" out of other men's pockets, bank accounts, or legal possession, into our own, without having earned it, or in some way returning an equivalent consideration.

In view of the many misconceptions on the subject, some of which are doubtless due to the little booklet referred to, I am convinced that my analysis of the subject will be of interest and possible value to the readers of *Life and Action* at the present time.

If so, we shall be glad to have the benefit of any suggestions from our readers, after they have read the following letter:

"Dear Friend:—

I wish I had the time to answer you as I should like to do, on the subject of "Dollars".

But the question is one which cannot be covered in a single sentence, nor in a paragraph, nor in a letter. It involves enough to cover a good sized volume in order to make all phases of it entirely clear.

I have read the little booklet you sent, and there is no doubt, in my mind, that if we go back of the printed words to the author's *mind*, and get at his real *purpose* and *intent*, there would be very little to find fault with. I believe he has been *trying* to give expression to a real TRUTH. The difficulty lies in the fact that he employs a peculiar method of expression. His language is semi-figurative in many instances, and this makes him *appear* to say a good many things which the context would clearly indicate he did not *mean*. That is to say, take a single sentence, and from that one sentence alone we would surely obtain a false view of his position. The sentence "Dollars want me", is a good example.

For if we give to the word "want" its most commonly accepted meaning, this would imply that dollars "*feel the need of*" me; or that they "*wish for*" me; or that they "*long for*" me; or that they "*desire or crave*" me.

It is clear that this use of the term is ap-

plicable only to that which is capable of "feeling" or "needing" or "wishing" or "longing" or "craving" or "desiring". In other words, it can apply only to that which possesses consciousness.

It could not apply to "Dollars" therefore, at least in *that* sense.

But in the sense that the word "want" means "to be without", or "to lack", it might be very pertinently applicable in many instances. For it is a fact that "Dollars", generally speaking, appear "to be without" *me*. A good many of them seem "to lack" *me*.

But I do not believe this either is the sense in which the author of the booklet has intended to use the word.

By reading the booklet through, I get the impression that he is endeavoring to show that the "attitude of mind" in which most men and women *seek* money, is spiritually stultifying to the individual; and in this I fully agree with him.

I do not believe he intends to convey the impression that there is that kind of affinity between mind and the raw material of which "Dollars" are made, that would enable a man to place a silver dollar on the opposite side

of the room and then by assuming "an attitude of mind" that it will get up on edge and roll across the room to him.

I do not believe he means that by merely assuming "an attitude of mind" and "affirming" that the two silver quarters in my pocket "belong to him", that *they* will understand and recognize the truth or justice of his "affirmation" and forthwith hop out of my pocket and make off across the country in search of *him*.

I think, if he were asked the question direct, he would say that the only way he can [by purely mental processes] *think* money out of my pocket into his, or out of another man's bank account into his, is by impressing his thoughts on *my mind*, or the *other man's mind* in such manner as to convince us that he was entitled to it. There can be no doubt whatever, that if he can assume an "attitude of mind" which will convince me that these two quarters in my own pocket belong to *him*, and should be in *his* pocket instead of mine, *I* would immediately set in motion the necessary physical processes that would very soon accomplish the transition.

But in this case, as you see, the process by which the transfer is made is set in motion

by the operation of his mind upon *mine*, and not directly upon the two quarters themselves. It is therefore a play of mind upon mind, and not of mind upon “dollars”.

Taking all he says together, it seems to me that there is a good deal of truth in it. If I were to attempt to put it in a sentence, as I understand his position, it would be something like this:—

“Take an honest, dignified, self-respecting, inviting attitude of mind toward all matters of money and business and then attend yourself to the details as they come, and the result will be that you will be more successful than if you allowed yourself to become a *mercenary groveler* after “dollars”.

But now, let me see if I can answer your question specifically. You ask,—“Do you gain *material* things wholly on the *mental* plane, and always at the *sacrifice* of the spiritual?”

I could say simply “No”, and be entirely correct; but that would not convey my meaning entirely.

1. Some of our material possessions come to us wholly without reference to our own mental attitude. For instance—By virtue of our man-made laws of inheritance, a child

may become, in its own right, possessor of vast stores of "Dollars" merely because it is the child of its own father or mother. This is often the case before the child is old enough to *have* a "mental attitude" toward dollars, or toward anything else but "food".

2. Then again, much of the wealth of the world, which is simply *measured* in "Dollars", comes even to those who *are* old enough to think, [and who are thinking most of the time about money], but as a result of causes and conditions over which they have no control.

I have an instance in mind. A friend was compelled, against his own wishes, to take a piece of real estate on a debt. At the time he believed it to be entirely worthless, and for all practical purposes it was so. He held it a number of years trying all the time to dispose of it, but could find nobody who would give him anything for it. He paid taxes on it for several years without receiving a cent of returns. But one morning he awakened to find that a new town-site had been located on his property. In a few years he had sold off lots enough to make him independent the balance of his life.

3. Other things we acquire as the direct

result of our conscious and intentional efforts. These come to us as a result of two things, viz,—[a], because of our *thinking out the method* by which they may be acquired; and [b], by then *doing the things we have thought out*, as necessary to that end.

4. And now the question arises, as to whether the material possessions that come to us as the result of our own thinking and acting, *always* come at a sacrifice of *spiritual* benefits.

Again I could say “No”, but still you would not get my meaning fully. The question of the effect upon our spirituality, depends entirely upon the “attitude of mind” in which we seek and strive for them, and the “purpose and intent” for which we seek to acquire them.

If you recognize it as the first and highest duty of your life, to provide for the material care and support of an aged mother who is dependent upon you, there is no amount of mental effort you can put forth to acquire “Dollars” enough to accomplish that result, that will ever mean “spiritual sacrifice” to you; *so long as you pursue methods and means which your conscience approves.*

On the contrary, there is perhaps no way in which you could employ your intelligence that would result in *greater* spiritual growth and spiritual development. The "Dollars" are only an *incident*.

In this case, as you see, it is your own "mental attitude" which determines whether the struggle for "Dollars" is a spiritual sacrifice or the reverse.

And this, I think, is the essence of the meaning of the author's booklet. His entire philosophy seems to be, in a word,—Put yourself in a right attitude of mind toward money and business and material possessions, and then *work*. The results will take care of themselves; and not only this, they will be the *best* results of which you are capable.

Speaking for myself, I am convinced that wherever this attitude of mind and Soul is maintained, the highest measure of success to which the individual is capable, will follow.

I will even go further and say, that no matter whether the individual works directly for material possessions or not, if his motive be absolutely right, a sufficient number of "dollars" will come to him to meet his actual necessities.

A very practical illustration of the truth of this is in the case of two of your friends whom I happen to know very well. For 22 and 17 years respectively they have been engaged in a work which is at the very antipodes of all things of a purely material nature. And the work has been so vast in its scope and purposes as to absorb all their time, attention and energies. The work they have been engaged in has no money or commercial value, and is seemingly quite out of the realm in which "dollars" are wont to grow.

But in all these years they have never begged, borrowed, accepted nor received charities nor alms from anyone. Neither have they suffered for food, raiment, nor shelter. It is true, they are not *wealthy* as a result of this devotion to what they have recognized as their DUTY. But considering the nature and purpose of their work, they have had all the real necessities of life, and a few of the comforts; and, to my personal knowledge, they have been two of the happiest people on earth.

While there have been many times during those years when they have been down to the last "dollar", and have not known where the next one would come from, still the Great

Work in which they have been engaged has gone on without interruptions, and they have lived to see many of their purposes accomplished.

There can be little doubt that many times they could have spent a good many more dollars than they did if they had possessed them, and I believe that they would have spent them in the direct lines of their Work, and for the purpose of furthering the Cause to which their lives are mutually dedicated.

I am also absolutely certain that in all those years there has never been a time but they could have gone out into the business world and "made money", if they had been willing to allow that idea to divert them from their chosen Work. For they both possess well tried business abilities.

And now, after all these years of their faithful, untiring, unfaltering effort in the direct line of their recognized DUTY, with no serious thought or attention to the question of "dollars",—now, after both have become so old that their "earning capacity" in the business world is practically gone, it so transpires that the value of their chosen work has impressed itself upon a wide circle of

honest, earnest, unselfish seekers after the knowledge and truth which they possess.

The interest of these friends of their Work and of the Cause they represent, is of such a nature that it is helping to solve the material problem for them.

They did not ask this. They did not seek it. They did not want it. They did not even dream of it. Their minds and hearts were on the Work before them, and the Cause which to them is sacred. Their sole desire has been to help those who were in need of such help as they could give. And yet, it would now seem just possible that the co-operation of their interested friends, would result in solving the question of "Dollars" for *them*, in a most beautiful way, so that they will be able to devote even more of their time and energies in the direct lines of their chosen Work than in the past. They will never be wealthy, nor is at all likely that through the co-operation of all the friends of their Work they will ever be able to command more than the bare necessities of life in a material way.

Perhaps you will understand me better when I tell you that there is in nature that which I have come to designate as the "Higher Destiny", which seems to have un-

der its guidance and control all the constructive forces of the Universe. It makes for good always. If we only assume the "mental attitude" which puts our lives and our motives in parallel lines with the action of those forces, we do not need to worry or grieve or trouble over the purely material problems of this life.

I do not mean by this that we dare stop our efforts, and still expect nature to bring "Dollars" and lay them in our open hands, or even pass them to our bank accounts. But, for the man or woman who labors earnestly, with clean hands and a pure heart, I believe the world always has and always will have a place, and that by pursuing such a course the best possible results will accrue to each individual laborer in the Master's vineyard.

Thus far I have confined myself to the direct questions you asked me to answer. But Mrs. Huntley tells me that in the course of your correspondence with her that you have asked a number of other questions which seem to run along these lines:

- "1. Why should you two be poor?
2. Why can't you use your superior knowledge to 'get money'?"

3. If your work is of importance to mankind why should you be allowed to be poor?
4. Is it not right for you to "demand opulence?"
5. Why doesn't the Great School furnish you the means to enable you to give all your time and energies to their work? &c., &c."

To answer these questions fully and in detail would make it necessary to go at great length into the analysis and consideration of the laws, principles, forces, activities and processes which underlie the entire superstructure of society as it now exists. This, as you see, is impossible in a letter. But I will try and give you a few suggestions that may help you to understand our position and that of the Great School.

1. Only in a purely *commercial* sense can we be termed "poor". In every other way I do not know of an individual on earth with whom either of us would exchange places. But financially we *are* poor, as that term is used in the great world of business and finance. The question is, Why?

In order that either of us might become

wealthy, or even have "opulence", in our own right, it would be necessary for us to give much more time and thought and energy to the mere matter of "accumulation" than it is possible for us to do and at the same time accomplish the Work which we have chosen to do.

By turning our attention to the matter of money getting, there has never been a time but we could have made what the world calls a success in that line. But this would have demanded more of our time and energies than we have been willing to devote along those particular channels.

The two roads have been open to us all the time from the very first. We could not travel both at the same time, for the reason that a law of nature makes it impossible for an individual to be in two places or travel in two different directions at the same time. We have been compelled to exercise our individual right of choice. We have done so, and have deliberately elected to follow that path which does not happen to be strewn with "Dollars."

2. Why do we not use our superior knowledge to "get money"?

There is absolutely no question as to the fact that we *could* do so. We both *know* that we could. We know that we could convert our knowledge of life here and hereafter into money, and thereby soon have all the wealth we could find use for. The question is, why do we not do so?

The knowledge we have acquired in the realm of spiritual and psychic truth, is of such a nature that it cannot be "sold" without violating a principle that is at the foundation of our own individual well-being, as well as the best good of humanity to whom we are responsible, and for whom we have elected to labor.

First, let me see if I can make clear to you the effect upon ourselves.

The evolutionary development of the *Soul* comes only as a result of individual effort upon the *psychic* plane of being. Its foundation is laid deep down in moral principle. Whatever diverts the thought, effort, motive or purpose of the individual from the plane upon which the thing to be accomplished lies (or centers it upon a lower plane) interferes with his progress just as far as he is influenced thereby.

In just so far, therefore, as my thought, purpose, effort or motive is centered on the matter of "getting money", just that far it is diverted from the exercise which means Soul development, and to that extent hinders my own progress.

For instance—I am writing you this letter with all my faculties and Soul powers fixed on just one thing, viz., helping *you*. But suppose I were going to sell you the lesson for \$5.00 or \$10.00, it would be utterly impossible for me, or any other person in like situation, to keep to the level of the purely psychic result to be accomplished. My motive becomes a mixed one. It is tainted with selfishness to the extent that I am laboring for a material reward. The reflex of this upon my own Soul is inevitable, and it is destructive.

Again, in the realm of the Soul there is no material *measure of value* for psychic truth or knowledge. When I impart knowledge to you, I do not thereby deprive *myself* of it. I do not part with it myself. As a matter of principle, have I the moral right to "sell" you a thing which I still retain? Or, is it morally right for me to charge you a material price for that which has no *material measure of value*?

I receive my full reward by the act of giving. My reward is the Soul growth resulting from the right use of the faculties, capacities and powers of the Soul. And there is no exercise so conducive to Soul growth as the unselfish act of imparting to others who need, the knowledge that will help them.

And now what are the results from the viewpoint of the one who receives?

By long continued custom we have come to feel that when we purchase a thing and pay "Dollars" for it, that fact gives us absolute title to the thing so purchased, whether it be knowledge or things material. In the commercial world when a man has "title" to property which he can call his own, he at once assumes that he has the right to use it as he pleases.

On the other hand, a *Gift* always carries with it a sense of obligation to respect it as something above and beyond all commercial values. A gift of knowledge carries with it a sense of appreciation and respect which strongly impels the recipient to use it only for right purposes.

Now, the purpose of this Great School is so to pass on its knowledge that the results to all concerned shall be the very best that may be

possible. We are responsible to those who receive this knowledge and to humanity at large, to the extent that we shall do nothing which shall diminish its value *to them*.

By the experience of all the past ages it has been demonstrated that knowledge of this nature cannot be made a matter of merchandise without impairing its value, and at the same time putting it into the hands of the unworthy. We are obligated to give it to those only who are ready for it and who will use it correctly. We could not do this if we set a price upon it as merchandise and thus offered it to those who could pay the price.

By embodying the knowledge in book form, it then falls under the head of merchandise to the extent that it then represents material value. In this form we have the right both legally and morally to sell it. But in this case, we are also responsible to the world for whatever goes into the book. We are therefore bound to publish only such of the knowledge we possess as will be of value to the *public interests*. Much of the knowledge can never be published, or at least not in our time, because we could not then control its circulation; and it is of such a nature that the unscrupulous would abuse it for selfish pur-

poses, and thus destroy its value and defeat the purpose of those who are now its repositories.

But you see how impossible it is for me to cover the subject by letter. I have only just touched upon a great fundamental principle of Ethics which underlies all our efforts both here and hereafter.

If there are other specific questions which you can frame in definite propositions, I shall be glad to answer them to the best of my ability.

In conclusion let me say, that while we have worked all these years in what the world calls "poverty", and will no doubt continue the struggle to the end under the same conditions, I am not prepared to say that we are accomplishing any less for the Cause of Truth, or for ourselves, or for humanity than we would if we had vast wealth.

Vast wealth [to us] would involve equally vast responsibilities for its right use. We could not to-day spare the time [from the more important work before us] to administer vast money interests. I believe that we are doing the very best that could be done. I believe that we are giving to the world the very best we possess. And

although if we had money we would doubtless hire stenographers and clerks and servants to relieve us of all the detail work, still I am not at all certain that we would thereby accomplish even *as much of real good* as we do to-day.

The very fact that we *know* poverty, and that we labor under conditions just as hard and as difficult as any which surround our fellow men and women, enables us the better to understand and appreciate *their* lives and their difficulties, to sympathize with them, and advise with them intelligently.

And moreover, I believe that our place in the confidence and affection of those who know us, is far *stronger* to-day than it would be if *they knew* that we were financially independent, or living in the midst of luxury. Our very *poverty* is a badge of assurance that our motives are pure and unselfish.

A millionaire is the last man on earth to preach to the poor. Why? Because the poor know that he is dishonest. They know that he could not *remain* a millionaire *among* them and be sincere. They also know that he is so far out of the world in which *they* live that he is unable even to give them sincere sympathy in their trials.

If we should to-day organize *classes*, and teach for *money* we could soon be independent in a financial way; but we would thereby lose that touch with you all which means the world, if it were in our hands.

What Is the Difference Between the Teachings of Theosophy and Those of the Great School?

Question. What is the difference between the teachings of Theosophy and those of the Great School?

Answer. The question assumes that there is but *one* difference. There are many. In bound volume "I" of *Life and Action*, beginning at page 43 of the last number, will be found a partial answer. In bound volume "II", beginning at page 53, may be found something more on the subject. In volume "III", the same subject is further elucidated by Dr. J. D. Buck, who was one of the leading and most learned members of the T. S. during its early work in this country. Through a careful reading of these, and then a further reading and study of the textbooks of the Harmonic Series, I am sure my questioner will be able to answer his own

question to his entire satisfaction. It would require many pages of *Life and Action* to cover the subject anew, and space is precious.

What Is Electricity?

Question. What is Electricity? How does it differ from magnetism?

Answer. I do not know. I do not know anybody who does know. There are several *theories*. Much data is in existence concerning its activities, properties, force and manifestations; but *what it is in essence* is within the realm of the undetermined, as yet.

The views of modern physical science are expressed in clear and simple form in "*Radiant Energy*", by Larkin, "*The New Kingdom*", by Duncan, and a number of other recent works by eminent scientists.

Members of the Great School are agreed: (1). That it has a "substantial" basis; that is, its basis, or essence, is a *material substance*. (2). That on the evidences of its manifestations it is closely allied with Magnetism. (3). That it is *not* Magnetism, however. (4). Being a *substance*, for the purpose of studying its manifestations it is permissible to regard it as a *fluid*. (5). That it

might, with equal consistency, however, be regarded as "*A Mode of Motion.*" In other words, that the basic substance of electricity and magnetism is, for all known purposes, the same; and that whenever and wherever the individual particles of that substance act in one certain particular manner or "*mode*", the result is electricity, and when they act in another manner, or "*mode*", the result is magnetism. (6). That it is when the basic substance, as such, flows in a given line, that it manifests *Force*. Or, when the individual particles act harmoniously and consistently in the same *direction*, the result is what we speak of as a "*current*" of either electricity or magnetism.

The subject cannot be covered in the space at my command.

Of What Value Is the Book, "The Way of Initiation," by Steiner?

Question. Have you heard of the book, "*The Way of Initiation*", by Steiner? If so, of what value do you consider it?

Answer. Yes, I have heard of the book, and have read it. I do not like to answer the remaining part of the question, and would

not do so but for the fact that I have received many inquiries concerning the book and its teachings. There seems to be a well-defined idea, in the minds of a good many of its readers, that it emanates from the Great School, and therefore carries the unqualified approval of Natural Science, and of myself personally.

This is emphatically *not true*. The book does *not* emanate from the Great School. It does *not* command the unqualified approval of the Great Friends. Neither does it command my own endorsement.

Like almost every other work along ethical, metaphysical, religious, philosophic, occult, mystical or psychical lines, it contains some truth. But as a method of instruction for those who are seeking Independent Spiritual Unfoldment, or Constructive Psychic Development, I regard it as one of the most unfortunate works given to the world within the last decade. I have not space in which to elucidate and specify. I do not want to pass judgment against any man's work, but I feel that I must correct the wrong impression of the Students and Friends of this Work, as well as the readers in general of *Life and Action*, concerning the book in question, and con-

cerning its author's relation to this School. I am impelled to do this because it has come to me that a number of the students of Steiner's works have drifted into psychic subjection, and these unfortunate and destructive results are being charged to me and to the Great School.

This is the first word I have uttered on the subject, and I sincerely hope it will be sufficient to guard all my readers and the Students and Friends of this School against further mistakes. I understand that Max Heindel represents Steiner's works and teachings in America, and that his "*Rosicrucian Fellowship*" is based upon them. If this be true, then what I have said should also apply to Heindel as well as to Steiner. All of which I deeply regret, and I trust my questioner will realize that he has set me a most unwelcome task, and one likely to involve me in embarrassments.

What Do You Think of the Book, "The Apocalypse Unsealed"?

Question. What do you think of the book, "*The Apocalypse Unsealed*", by Pryse?

Answer. Although I have the book, I have never had time to read it. If it is a work of “*interpretation*”, however, it is not likely to contain anything of scientific value. “*Interpretation*” is the direct cause of most of the religious, philosophic, occult, and metaphysical disputation and conflict throughout the ages, and little of real value to humanity has ever been settled thereby.

Is Not the “Secret Doctrine”, as Outlined in “Mystic Masonry”, Contradictory of “Harmonics of Evolution”?

Question. Is not the Secret Doctrine, as outlined in “*Mystic Masonry*”, by J. D. Buck, contradictory of “*Harmonics of Evolution*”?

Answer. I do not recall anything of that nature, although it has been a good many years since I have read “*Mystic Masonry.*”

What Is Sin?

Question. Would you kindly criticise the inclosed definition of Sin?

Answer. I cannot do it satisfactorily short of several pages of manuscript. You will therefore pardon me for not attempting it.

Just one suggestion, however, may be of service, not alone to you but to other readers of the magazine. Your definition of "*Sin*" makes it due to *ignorance*.

Sin, however, as this School employs the term, is both a "*conscious*" and "*intentional*" process. If one violates any law of his being through ignorance, the result is an "*error*", but not a *Sin*. This is a subject that constitutes one of the collateral problems of the "Ethical Formulary", and is well worthy of your deep and earnest consideration.

**If the Great Masters Cannot See the Soul,
How Can They Definitely Determine
That It Arrives at "Dissolution,
Disintegration", Etc.?**

Question. At page 329 of "*The Great Psychological Crime*" you say: "The individual who elects to travel the Destructive path will, so far as science knows, arrive at ultimate dissolution, disintegration, total individual extinction and a resolution back into the original elements from which it came", etc.

Then at page 221 of "*The Great Work*", you say: "The Soul of man is not a visible entity upon any of the planes of life, so far as known", etc.

If the Great Masters cannot see the Soul, nor otherwise sense it except through its material manifestations, how can they definitely determine that it arrives at "dissolution, disintegration", etc.?

Answer. They *can't*. Please note in the above quotation from the G. P. C. the clause, —"*so far as science knows.*" The context in which this clause is used is intended to convey the information that science does not know.

If you will turn to page 397, of the same volume, and begin with the "*Third Hypothesis*", and read carefully all that is under that heading, you will find your question fully and definitely answered. You will observe that the Great Masters do not *know* what is the scientific significance of this "*Second Death*", this *seeming* "*Death of the Soul.*"

But it may be of interest to the readers of *Life and Action* to know that it is the consensus of judgment of the Great Friends that this *seeming* "Death of the Soul" does *not* mean "*Individual Extinction*"; but rather

that it is only another transition of the Soul in its evolutionary journey toward Self-Completion.

Are Breathing Exercises and the Exercises of the Will Constructive?

Question. "Are Breathing exercises and the exercises of the Will constructive?"

Answer. A friend sends me a booklet on "*Memory Training*", asks me to read it and tell him if the breathing exercises and the exercises of the Will therein recommended are constructive, and if I can recommend them.

Again let me say that I do not like to be asked to criticise or pass judgment upon the writings, teachings and findings of any individual or school. My friends do not seem to realize that this places me in a most embarrassing position.

My work is not that of passing upon the truth or fallacy of other individuals or schools, but that of giving to the world the teachings and findings of this one particular School of Natural Science, known as "*The Great School*".

Generally speaking, however, let me say

that any method of deep breathing that gives the lungs full exercise and increases their capacity, is of value to most people who live lives of physical inactivity.

But most of the unusual "*exercises*", such as breathing through one nostril at a time, of standing on one foot and breathing through the opposite nostril, or counting so many seconds, or thinking one thought as you inhale and another as you exhale,—have no special value to those who do not understand the mystical significance of every variation.

There are some good things in almost every work I have ever read upon the subject of mental discipline, will-training, breathing, and other exercises. But unless the individual knows of the things set forth in Vol II of the Harmonic Series concerning the Destructive Principle, and those in Vol III concerning the Constructive Principle, and governs himself according to the Constructive Principle, he is constantly liable to drift into the "*Subjective*" attitude of mind, and thus do more harm than good.

I am tempted to say, for the benefit of the Students and Friends of this School and Work, that the less of so-called "*Mysticism*" you practice, the better for you. If you will

refer everything and every step to the tribunal of your *Reason*, and practice nothing but those things that commend themselves to both Reason and Conscience, you will seldom go far wrong. But if you allow yourself to be drawn into experimenting with mystical rites and practices the psychic significance of which you do not understand, you are almost certain to fall into subjective psychic conditions which are both destructive and most difficult to overcome.

If you will make it the rule of your life to *take nothing for granted*—that is, to know the *reason* for everything you do, and know that your own reason *approves* it,—you will seldom make mistakes. Otherwise, you are in constant danger of mistakes.

In this wonderful western world of ours I find that the desire and ambition are very general to have some unusual experience, do some unusual or extraordinary thing, or gain the reputation of being something “*out of the ordinary*”.

A good many of the methods by which these wonders are achieved are not considered of special importance. As a result, scarcely a delivery of my mail occurs without bringing me one or more frantic cries for

help, from those who, blindly and ignorantly, and “*without thinking*”, have followed some “*Occult Teacher*”, or some reputed “*Master*”, until they have drifted into psychic subjection, opened the door to psychic control and find themselves unable to close it, or unable to emancipate themselves from their thralldom.

In virtually every such instance, had the individual followed the “*Rule of Reason*” above suggested, no harm could have overtaken him, or her, as the case may be.

Again, let me admonish you—Follow no teaching which does not commend itself fully and unreservedly to both your REASON AND CONSCIENCE, and know the meaning of each and every step before you take it, and never take another step until you know that you can *retrace the previous one of your own volition*.

If you will follow these simple suggestions in all your psychic studies you will not need me nor anyone else to tell you the value of any man’s teachings.

Is It Constructive to Pray Only in the “Hour of Extremity”?

Question. Is it constructive to pray only in the hour of extremity?

Answer. One who has read the Beloved Master's brochure on "*Who Answers Prayer*"?—asks me if it is constructive to pray *only* in the "*hour of extremity.*"

I am sure that a more careful and searching study of the little booklet will answer this question fully.

But let me suggest that if the individual is ever uncertain as to whether or not he has actually reached the "*hour of his own extremity*", it is entirely safe and consistent for him to pray for help anyway. Those who are wiser than he, or any of us, will be able to determine whether he is entitled to the help he asks.

Fear not, but make your entire life a prayer, if possible, by **LIVING THE LIFE** and exemplifying **THE SPIRIT OF THE WORK.**

If, According to the Law of Affinity, There Is But One Man for Any Given Woman, and He Should Elect to Align Himself With the Destructive Principle and Go Down to Spiritual Death, What Would Become of the Woman?

Question. According to the law of Affinity there is but one man in the entire universe for any given woman, and *vice versa*. Now suppose one of the halves of the perfect whole—the man, for instance—should elect to align himself with the Destructive Principle, and should go down to Spiritual Death, what would become of the other half—the woman? Would the survivor wander through eternity without satisfaction and happiness?

Answer. This question has been partially answered before. That is to say, it is but a *theory* that Spiritual Death means total extinction of the Individuality.

While it is true that the Great Friends are unable to follow the Soul, the Individuality, through the experience called Spiritual Death, and know with certainty what becomes of it; nevertheless, reasoning from analogy in physical nature, they conclude that the total annihilation of a Soul is as impossible as the annihilation of a particle of physical matter. Therefore, it is the consensus of judgment of the Great Masters that in the experience called spiritual Death, or the Second Death, the Soul, or Individual Intelligence is *not* destroyed, in the sense of its being extinguished; but that it simply undergoes a tran-

sition of some kind that they are unable to determine with absolute certainty, as yet, and therefore the question assumes a thing that cannot be proven, and which is not believed to be a fact, viz., the “*extinction*” of the Soul, or Individual Intelligence.

What becomes of it, however, is also not known; but it is believed that it reverts back to some lower type, possibly animal, and that there nature again assumes control of it and by the same automatic process it passes through another evolutionary ascent until it appears again upon the plane of the human. If this be true, then the other “*half*” of the union would only have to wait for it to reappear again upon the human plane.

This subject of “*Affinity*”, however, is one which I do not like to discuss, for the reason that there are some phases of it that are beyond the range of present knowledge, and therefore we can do no more than simply speculate upon the subject.

But the world in general is prone to place all manner of misconstructions and misinterpretations upon any statement that is made, however consistent with the known facts of science. It is by the discussion of such questions as this that the attention of the world

is diverted from the vital principles of Morality and the LIVING OF THE LIFE, and the real philosophy of life based upon Natural Science thus obscured and lost sight of.

For the same reason, it will be observed that I have not discussed the profoundly interesting subjects of "*Reincarnation*" and "*Karma*", which form such a prominent part of Theosophical teaching. It is because no one is in position to prove to the skeptical world that they are scientifically true.

Moreover, the subject of "*Affinity*" is one which will take care of itself, in due time, and this without the necessity of our troubling our hearts and heads over it. If we perform the part assigned us as individuals, and devote ourselves to *Living the Life* and *exemplifying the Spirit of the Work*, in due time we will achieve what science terms "*Self-Completion*". When we have done that, we can safely depend upon Nature to give us our reward which is "*Individual Completion*", and the fulfilling of the perfect love and marriage relation.

There are many things concerning the great and profound problem of Life which science does not yet *know*. The question above involves some of these. But I trust

those who have been puzzling over the subject of "*Affinity*", and other problems which lead out into the realm of the present unknown, will not be discouraged nor even disappointed; because there are enough things definitely known concerning the problem of Life to enable us to choose between the right and the wrong ways of life, and devote ourselves to the living of the life that shall conform with the Constructive Principle of Nature, and lead us finally to the Land of Liberty and Light. Do not discuss "*Affinities*" with *anybody*. If you do you will be misunderstood and lay not only yourself, but the Great School open to criticism.

Can the Man Whose Attitude of Soul Continually Strives for Advantage in Every Exchange Ever Achieve Spiritual Independence?

Question. At page 264 of "*The Great Work*", it is stated that: "There is something in the spirit of '*Selfishness*'—the kind of selfishness that would impel one to receive more than he is willing to give—that chains the soul to earthly conditions. The man whose attitude of Soul impels him to strive

for the advantage in every exchange will never achieve Spiritual Independence”.

Now, inasmuch as the commercial world depends for its very existence upon an unequal exchange, does not the foregoing mean that anyone in the commercial world, having its spirit, cannot achieve Spiritual Independence?

Also, is it not a fact that one in the commercial world who lacks the spirit of that world, will find it impossible to make what is called a “Success”? In other words, is it not a fact that one in the commercial world who has the ability and desire to remain in that world cannot achieve Spiritual Independence?

Answer. I know that the commercial world represents much that is supremely selfish. I also know that there are many to-day who are engaged in that world in subordinate capacities who are not in position to change its conditions or practices or spirit. To such as these it would be difficult to make what the world calls “Success”, if they insisted upon their own ideas of Equity, Justice and Right in all their dealings; because they would simply lose their positions.

But I am fully convinced that it is possible for the man who engages in any line of commercial business on his own responsibility, to do business honestly, give value received in every transaction, and still make a "*Success*" of business.

It all depends on the *man*. Honesty and fair dealing are commodities of intrinsic values everywhere, and they will command success in the commercial world as readily as in any other.

It has been said many times, and by men of splendid abilities in the profession of law, that no man can practice law honestly and make a business success of it.

I want to say that I *know* this is not true. I have seen the demonstration of honest success in the practice of law, under the most trying conditions possible; and it was demonstrated that as soon as the lawyer had proven his incorruptibility business came to him from every other lawyer's clientage in his section of the country. He soon had more business than he could attend to.

I am convinced that the same thing is literally true in every other branch of the business world. The man who can *prove* to the business world that he is absolutely honest,

upright, and conscientious in every sense, and can be relied upon under the most rigid test conditions is the man that will find his place in the business world and achieve success in its highest sense.

Such a man can achieve Spiritual Independence at the same time. Again let me say, it all depends on the *man*.

The man who starts out with the assumption that the Commercial World is an established system of robbery, and that one to be a "*success*" must become an accomplished robber, is only making excuses for one of two things, viz.,—(1) his *rascality*, or (2) his *business failure*. Such a man will never be much of a help in the work of reforming the commercial world to lines and practices of honesty and fair dealing.

The Great School is endeavoring to teach men in all the walks of life the ethical principles that are consistent with Constructive Spiritual Unfoldment. And those who will but LIVE THE LIFE will prove the Law. This requires the kind of Courage that does not anticipate failure at the outset and begin the struggle with an apology for it. It calls for the Courage that is willing to live or to

die for the TRUTH and for HONOR at all times.

The foregoing questions come from a young man who is just entering upon the journey of his business life. They seem to be surcharged with the wrong suggestion. They seem to breathe the spirit of pessimism, and take for granted that the world is already so bad that the only road to "success" is by becoming an artist of "*badness*". I sincerely hope this young Friend will revise his data and shift his outlook before he acquires the habit of seeing nothing but evil in the world about him.

Spiritual Independence is possible in any walk of life, to the man who has the Courage to LIVE THE LIFE. The whole problem is covered in that one statement.

It is also true that every young man who enters the business or commercial world becomes an influence that will make his world either better or worse. If he starts right, and keeps in the middle of the road of Honor and Truth, he will help to make his world vastly better than it was when he entered it. And that is the task which this School sets before every student, man or woman.

Let nothing deceive you nor swerve you from that path.

Is There Any Harm in the Popular “Mind Reading Experiments” Without Reference to the Thoughts Themselves?

Question. I suppose that in the course of his evolution man becomes sensitive to the thoughts of others to the extent that he may be able to read them perfectly.

But I would like to know if there is any harm in the popular “mind-reading experiments” wherein one person makes himself, or herself, passive, for the time being, to the thoughts and images in the minds of others, without reference to the character of the thoughts themselves.

For example,—one person concentrates his mind on a certain number, letter, character, or word, while another tries to make himself, or herself, passive, in order to get the “impression” from the mind of the other person.

The experiments in finding hidden articles come under this head, I presume; and while I cannot see any particular harm likely to arise from the process—so far as the person

who does the concentrating for the purpose of giving the message or impression—but it has been a serious question in my own mind whether the process might not be harmful to the other person, the one making himself negative and passive for the purpose of receiving thoughts and images and impressions in this manner. Am I correct?

Answer. Generally speaking, you are correct. This is especially true of those who experiment without understanding what the Great School means by the "*Wakeful Consciousness*", and in violation of the fundamental principle therein referred to.

One who knows the meaning of the "*Wakeful Consciousness*", and who maintains it unremittingly throughout all such experiments is in no danger. But one who does not is almost certain to fall into a condition and state of negativity which lead naturally and inevitably to "*Psychic Subjection*".

Much harm has been done through the character of "experimenting" to which you refer—to those who have gone about it without know the nature and effects of the process involved.

As above indicated, however, under proper instruction it is possible to experiment freely without the least danger.

And so, in this, as in almost everything else pertaining to Constructive Spiritual Unfoldment, wise guidance is necessary in order to avoid the subjective pitfalls that are waiting for the ignorant "experimenter".

Again and again the Great Friends have dropped the word of earnest caution against ignorant experimenting in the realm of psychic experiences. Almost inevitably it leads the ignorant experimenter into trouble of some nature; and it is the rarest thing in the world, almost, that any real good comes to anyone from such experimentation.

There seems to be an almost insane desire (on the part of those who first come to realize that there is something real and genuine in so-called "*occultism*") to rush in headlong "where angels fear to tread". Without stopping to consider the possibility of danger, or mistakes, they accept in good faith the statements contained in the most glaringly false advertisements of what they can do if they will send \$5 for some book on "*Occultism*", or on "HOW TO BECOME A

MASTER". They send for the book and begin to experiment. The results are deplorable in the majority of cases. Thousands have gone to the insane asylums, and thousands more are going, as a direct result of just such ignorant experimenting with forces and conditions of which they know nothing.

Once more let me drop the word of warning against such things. Remember, you who read this, that Constructive Spiritual Unfoldment is a GROWTH. It is the result of long and careful effort to LIVE A LIFE, and never is attained by tricks, or legerdemain, or any *short cut to Mastership*.

In What Sense Are We to Understand the Expression "Personal Criticism" as Used by TK in the Article "Spirit of the Work" in Bound Vol. III of L. and A., P. 235?

Question. Referring to your article on "*CRITICISM*", am I right in assuming that the *only* constructive criticism, or permissible use of the word, is when modified by "*Self*"? If so, have we not put criticism on a par with carping, or fault-finding? Carping is more ignorant, superficial analysis

without regard to a remedy. Fault-finding may be a comprehensive analysis, and may offer a remedy, but is always expressed in an unkind, arrogant and hostile manner.

Answer. There is a sense in which the word "*Criticism*" is used that takes it entirely out of the line of thought contained in my article to which you refer. For instance, in reference to Theology and History, it means "A detailed inquiry into the origin, integrity, authority, and text of literary and historical documents." In this use of the word we have what are known as "*Lower Criticism*" and "*Higher Criticism*". *Lower Criticism* deals with the *text* of such a document or production, and *Higher Criticism* with its literary and historical features and value.

But this use of the word is entirely foreign to that under consideration in the article to which you refer. In that article I was dealing with that phase and field of "*Criticism*" wherein one assumes to analyze the character of another and lay bare to *third parties*, in an unkind manner and with unfriendly intent, all the flaws, failings, weaknesses and imperfections of character possible to dis-

cover and disclose, to the injury of the person so criticised.

It is in this sense that it should never be used, except in its application to "*Self*". It is permissible for one to lay bare his own faults, weaknesses and imperfections of character to others so long as he does not become a hypochondriac from dwelling too much upon them; but he has no moral right to take liberties with others.

Your question enables me to see that it might have been better had I given the various definitions of the word, showing all the different senses in which it is used in our language, and then indicated the fact that I desired to consider only that phase of it covered by my articles. I trust, however, that my treatment of the subject is sufficiently clear to avoid misunderstanding of the purpose and intent of the School with reference to the principle involved.

Is It Wrong to Release One From the Physical Body Through Medical Means When the Meridian of Life Has Been Passed, if Such An Individual Is a Mental Wreck?

Question. My father has been in bed many

months, paralyzed in his right side, unable to speak, and recently his mind seems gone, and he raves like a maniac. Often we are obliged to force him to eat. (a). Have we done right to keep him alive under these conditions? We love him, and although it is fast taking my mother's strength, we had hoped (though the world calls him a good man), to keep him with us until we could show him the Truths of the Great School. (b). I am neither "duly and truly prepared," nor "worthy and well qualified"; but I want to heal him, even though too ignorant. Can you not tell me how? (c). I have not prayed, because I consider sincere desire is prayer; and then I feel that it is only right to pray for that which is Spiritual. Am I right? (d). Do you advise me to take Father to Dr. Lindlahr? (e). Is there anyone here in this city to whom I may go when "duly and truly prepared" to receive the Ethical Work? (f). Does the Ethical Work require more than a Grammar-School education? (g). Will your next work teach us to heal the sick and relieve suffering? (h). Christian Science seems to do some good, although its failures are so many as to prove that it has but a fraction of the Truth. Can you not give us something better?

Answer. (a). To answer this question truthfully would require a definite knowledge of the purposes and plans of the Great Universal Intelligence, far beyond anything which I possess. I can only tell you how I should feel about it if I were in a condition similar to that of your beloved Father. It seems to me that if I were paralyzed, unable to speak, unable to move, a mental wreck, long past the meridian of a normal life, a great sufferer, a burden that was causing the sacrifice of the health and very life of the woman I love, with no real prospect of ever regaining my health—I should thank the members of my own family, and my beloved family physician, if he would give me the helping hand of a loving Brother, and in the painless method of sleep help me to emancipate myself from the bondage of earth and of the physical body. And yet, if I were a *physician* in such a case, I should hesitate before invoking the last earthly sleep. I recognize the fact that the issues of life and death are with the Great Creative Intelligence alone, nevertheless I believe there are occasions when it is morally permissible for the physician, in the exercise of sympathy, pity and mercy, to employ a wise judgment in the emancipation of those who suffer without

hope. Medical Jurisprudence justifies this view, just as it gives him power to determine, as between mother and child, which shall be the sacrifice of the surgeon's knife. But, my dear Friend, please bear in mind the fact that I am not even *trying* to answer your question. I am only telling you how *I* should feel about it if I were the sufferer. God alone knows what is right in such a case as you suggest. At least, I do not know the answer.

(b). You recognize the fact that you are neither "duly and truly prepared", nor "worthy and well qualified" to be entrusted with the knowledge of the Great Friends that would enable you to qualify as a Healer—and yet, you ask me to tell you how to *heal*. Do you see anything that appears to you to be inconsistent in this? The knowledge of the Great School is a *GIFT* to all who receive it. It can be given to those and those *only who can prove their qualifications and right to receive it*. Until you can do this I would betray the trust reposed in in me if I should grant your request, however earnestly made.

Furthermore, the science of Healing is one that cannot be "told" to anyone. It must be

“*learned.*” It involves an *education* based upon a Science that is older than our Occidental civilization. Even if you could prove yourself “duly and truly prepared, worthy and well qualified” (which you admit is impossible), still it would require at least three years of the most earnest, faithful, unremitting and difficult WORK (on your part), and INSTRUCTION (from me), to invest you with the knowledge that would enable you to control the forces, activities and processes of Nature which are involved in the science of therapeutics. This will tell you some of the reasons WHY I cannot “tell” you how to heal your own beloved Father, deeply as it would gratify me to do so, and deeply as it would rejoice you to make him well again.

(c). Have you read and made a careful and critical *study* of the little brochure on Prayer, entitled “*Who Answers Prayer*”? If not (and your question would seem to indicate that you have not), then, by all means send to the Indo-American Book Co. and obtain a copy at once. Make a careful *study* of it from beginning to end. Do not let a single sentence escape you. It contains the whole subject of “*Prayer*”. Not a principle is omitted.

Let me ask you this hypothetical question: "Suppose you were starving, and you had no means with which to obtain food, do you think the "*desire*" for food in such case would obtain it? Do you not think that in addition to the "*desire*", you would have to ask some kind and sympathetic Soul to help you obtain it? Many a hungry Soul has starved to death on "*desire*"; but those who supplement their "*desire*" with an earnest plea for help are almost sure to obtain the relief needed.

This suggestion should make clear to you the fact that in a literal sense "sincere desire" is *not* "prayer," in the sense in which this School considers prayer.

Furthermore, even granting that your conclusion were true, (that one has no right to pray for anything that is not spiritual), how do you know that the cure of disease is not, in some measure, a *spiritual* process? In truth, it is. And there is no field of service wherein the Great Friends on the spiritual planes of life can render more help than in the relief of suffering, and the cure of disease. When you have made a critical study of "*The Great Psychological Crime*", you will have a much clearer understanding of

the meaning, purpose, and power of Prayer. But first make a study of the booklet "*Who Answers Prayer*", and therein you will find much information that will make clear many of the dark places ahead of you at this time.

(d). No, I could not "advise" you to take your Father to Dr. Lindlahr, without knowing something more of the case. Generally speaking, I know that Dr. Lindlahr has had remarkable success in the treatment of paralysis, *locomotor ataxia*, and other difficulties of a nervous origin. I have great confidence in the "Nature Cure" methods of treatment which the Doctor uses in his sanitarium. But the good Doctor has his limitation, just as we all do, and there are cases which I do not believe he or any other physician can cure. From what you tell me of your beloved Father's case, it is a question in my own mind whether he has sufficient nervous vitality to respond to the treatments. I could not recommend you to run the risk of taking the trip, in his present condition, without assuming a heavy burden of responsibility. I am not in position to do so with my present knowledge of your Father's condition.

My suggestion is that you write to Dr.

Lindlahr, state the case as carefully and fully as possible, and ask him frankly his best judgment. I am sure he will give you a frank and truthful answer as to what he *thinks* could be done. If he felt that the case is too far advanced for him to accomplish the relief sought, I believe he is honest and would tell you so, without charges of any kind. (e). This question I have answered by letter. (f). Ethical Work of the Great School requires an accurate knowledge of the English language, including Grammar, Spelling and English Composition, sufficient to enable the Student to express himself or herself in simple and exact English, free from errors. A "*Grammar-School education*" may, or may not be sufficient, depending entirely upon how much good the student has obtained from his education. I have had a number of graduates from the various Colleges and Universities throughout the World apply for the Work, who were unable to write a letter of a single page without a dozen or more errors of Grammar and Spelling. Then I have had applicants from among those who have never completed the course of their country district school, who could express themselves in perfect English. All depends upon the use the individual has made of his education. (g).

No, my next work will not teach the science nor the art of Healing. (h). When the time comes, if that is before my work here is finished, I shall hope to give to the world some of the advanced methods of therapeutics known to the Great School and Friends. It will then be for the world to answer as to whether these are "better" than the methods of Christian Science, or Christian Metaphysics, or the Emmanuel Movement, or Nature Cure, or the regular Physician, or the various other methods now in use. In my own best judgment, the methods of the Great School are immeasurably superior to those of any or all the other systems of treatment combined; but there are, no doubt, many who would not trust my judgment in a matter of so much importance. I cannot blame them. In truth, I heartily commend them.

**Does the Great School Accept the Bible
Record and Account of the Life
of Jesus on Earth?**

Question. Does the Great School accept the Bible record and account of the life of Jesus on earth?

Answer. Not in all its details. There can be no doubt that the people of Judea, Jerusalem, Nazareth, and Palestine in general, were much like the people of other civilizations of all times.

It seems to be one of the characteristics of human nature, the world over, and in all times, to magnify the incidents of importance in the life of any individual who has achieved public prominence as a benefactor. And the further they get away from the time in which the individual lived, the larger do the incidents referred to appear to succeeding generations.

The same is undoubtedly true as to the life and doings of the man, Jesus. While I am not going to recommend it as correct in all details; nevertheless, I believe the little book entitled "*The Crucifixion, by an Eye-Witness*", comes more *nearly* giving a rational and intelligent report of the incidents in the life of Jesus which are generally considered by the "Orthodox Christians" of our time as *miraculous*, than does the Bible.

There are undoubtedly discrepancies in both records. I say this because I have seen the Record of the Great School covering these same events. I believe this to be as accurate

as it is possible for human nature to record the events of History. This does not mean to suggest that even the Record of the Great School is literally correct in every minute detail.

Macaulay, the English historian, whose "*History of England*" is accepted as Authority the world over, is said to have admitted that there are not less than 5000 errors in the latest revised edition of his time. These are doubtless of a minor nature, and mainly in the minute details. But in the larger view of English History there can be no doubt that he has given the important events in such manner as to enable the student of his work to obtain a general view of the subject, a sort of large perspective, such as the artist's pencil sketch of a landscape which he afterwards fills in and works into a completed work in oil. The minute details he fills in to suit his artistic fancy, preserving with fidelity only the general outlines.

Has Man in the Physical Body Attained to the Degree of Wisdom That Enables Him to Command Disease of Every Kind to Disappear Instantly?

Question. Has man in the physical body attained to the degree of wisdom that enables him to command disease of every kind to disappear instantly?

Answer. No. There has been wonderful progress made during the last century—even the last half-a-century—yes, quarter-century—in the science of Medicine, and in a knowledge of disease and the methods of its cure. But modern physical science may be said only to have just fairly opened the door that leads to definite and scientific knowledge in this most fruitful field of inquiry.

There is not the least doubt that the Great School is far in advance of all the modern schools, in that it has spent many centuries of unremitting study of this subject, and has made many discoveries in the realm of the “*Higher Science*” which, as yet, are not even dreamed of by the most advanced representatives of the modern school of physical science.

There are now two men in this western world who are studying the subject from the viewpoint of the Great School, definitely and intelligently—one along the lines of *Organic Chemistry*, and the other along the lines of “*General Therapeutics*”.

I firmly believe that these men will virtually revolutionize the present ideas of physical science in both these fields of scientific inquiry. I know that they already have made demonstrations of the scientific knowledge of the Great School, far out within the field of the so-called "*Unknowable*" of physical science.

I also firmly *believe* that the time is not far distant when it will be possible for them to make some important demonstrations to the most advanced and liberal representatives of the school of physical science—without serious danger of landing in the insane asylum. In other words, I believe we are on the eve of a new era in the field of Therapeutics.

But even so, this does not mean that man has triumphed over physical *Death*. It does mean, however, that in the years to come it will be possible for mankind to live out the allotted span of life upon earth, comparatively free from the horrors of *disease*, so that while he does live he will be in the possession of his natural faculties, capacities and powers, and able to make of his life an exemplification of the law of "MORALITY AND SERVICE".

But so long as we have Steel Mills, Railroads, Aeroplanes, Automobiles, Hydroplanes, Fire-Works, Fourth-of-July-Celebrations, and other things like political "Steam-Rollers"—men are going to get run over, and have their arms, legs, backs, and necks dislocated, and sometimes broken. This all means physical suffering, and plenty of it. But it does not mean "*Disease*", in the sense to which I refer.

All the knowledge of all the Great Masters combined is not yet sufficient to prevent *Death*. There is no method known to Science, from the lowest to the highest rounds, that can prevent death when one has been blown to atoms by an explosion of dynamite, or has been run over and his body severed in twain, or has fallen 5000 feet from an aeroplane and landed on the hard rocks, or has had 1,000,000 tons of rock and dirt cave in upon him in the bottom of a mine.

I know that the Great School has discovered a method whereby those, who possess the qualifications and are willing to do the work and take the instruction necessary, may prolong their physical life far beyond the supposed "allotted span". But this does not mean "*Physical Immortality*"—so far as science yet knows.

The demonstrations of the Master, Jesus, of his power to heal the sick, were not "miracles", in the accepted meaning of that term. They were strictly within the operation of Natural Laws. They were the results of a definite training and the knowledge thereby acquired. The many cures of "insanity" which have been made, and are being made constantly, by the physicians of this School, are just as "miraculous" and wonderful as anything Jesus ever did in that line. They are done in the same way. This is a part of the knowledge of the Great School wherein Jesus spent the years of his youth between the ages of twelve and thirty, and received a definite training for the work he afterwards accomplished in the world.

Did Jesus' Physical Body Actually Walk Upon the Water?

Question. Did Jesus' physical body actually walk upon the water, or was it the spiritual body the disciples beheld?

Answer. I do not know. Either might have been possible. I have seen the demonstration of the power of man in the physical body to overcome the force of physical grav-

ity by mental control of the finer forces of Nature. I have seen one who was able to suspend his physical body in the air, and float at will in the atmosphere above the earth—thus proving the possibility of walking upon the water, as the Master, Jesus, is reported to have done.

Then again, it is possible for one who has been educated to do so, to withdraw from his physical body, and travel in the spiritual at will. In such event it would be possible for him to walk upon the surface of the water, or just above it; and if one who is clairvoyant were present he might readily see the spiritual form of the individual walking upon or above the water.

And so, in the incident referred to, Jesus might have withdrawn temporarily from his physical body and walked upon the water; and if his disciples were sufficiently developed psychics to be able to see with their spiritual eyes, they might readily have seen their Master as he walked upon the waves.

I do not know which of these methods was employed by the Master, Jesus. It has been my *opinion*, however, that the incident which is classed as one of his “*miracles*” was only a demonstration of his power to overcome the

force of physical gravity, and that he did walk upon the water in his physical body.

Is there not another incident recorded wherein Peter tried to walk on the water, and actually did so for a little distance—until his *Faith* failed him, and he succumbed to the force of physical gravity?

What Was the Kind of Healing Jesus Did When He Healed the Blind?

Question. In *Life and Action* you mention the fact of your having enabled one, who was physically blind, to see spiritually; was that the kind of healing Jesus did when he healed the blind?

Answer. I do not know. I am inclined, however, to believe it is not the same process; for if you will read the scriptural account carefully I think you will observe that the man's *physical* eyes were cured and his *physical sight* restored? Is not this true?

The incident to which I referred in the magazine was one in which the spiritual sight alone was opened.

Is Spiritual Sight in Some Degree Like the Physical?

Question. Is the spiritual sight in some degree like the physical? That is, can one with spiritual sight see trees, flowers, etc.? In other words, are trees, flowers, rocks and other physical things also spiritual?

Answer. This question is fully answered in both "*The Great Psychological Crime*" and "*The Great Work*." Study them more carefully and you will find many other questions answered for you.

What Is the Distinction Between "Faculties" (or "Capacities") and Powers?

Question. On page 226 of "*The Great Work*," it is stated that—"The attributes of the Soul, on their functional basis, divide themselves naturally into two distinct classes"—Faculties (or Capacities) and Powers. Yet throughout the entire Harmonic Series the phrase—"Faculties, capacities and powers," constantly occurs, indicating a distinction between "faculties" and "capacities." Will you kindly elucidate this seeming confusion of terms?

Answer. In one of the "Epistles" accompanying the Problems of the Ethical Formula, the desired elucidation is fully made; so

that whatever seeming confusion there may be in the text of the Series is entirely cleared up to all who go far enough to receive and study the "Epistle" referred to.

But a word may be timely. And I give it with pleasure:

The term "*Attributes*" is the broad, general, comprehensive, and all-inclusive term by which the School has intended to express *all* that the Soul possesses.

But these Attributes divide themselves into two general classes, on the basis of their "*functions*"—or *uses*. One of these is *receptive* and the other *aggressive*.

The receptive attributes are designated as "*Capacities*," and the aggressive attributes are designated as "*Powers*."

But the school of physical science so often refers to these receptive attributes as "*Faculties*," that it seemed advisable to use the term as a synonym of "*Capacities*." It is not strictly a correct use of the term. But wherever the phrase "faculties, capacities and powers," is used in the text-works, the intent is to use it in this way—"faculties (or capacities) and powers."

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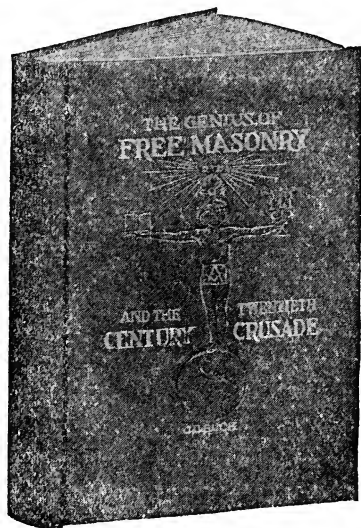
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