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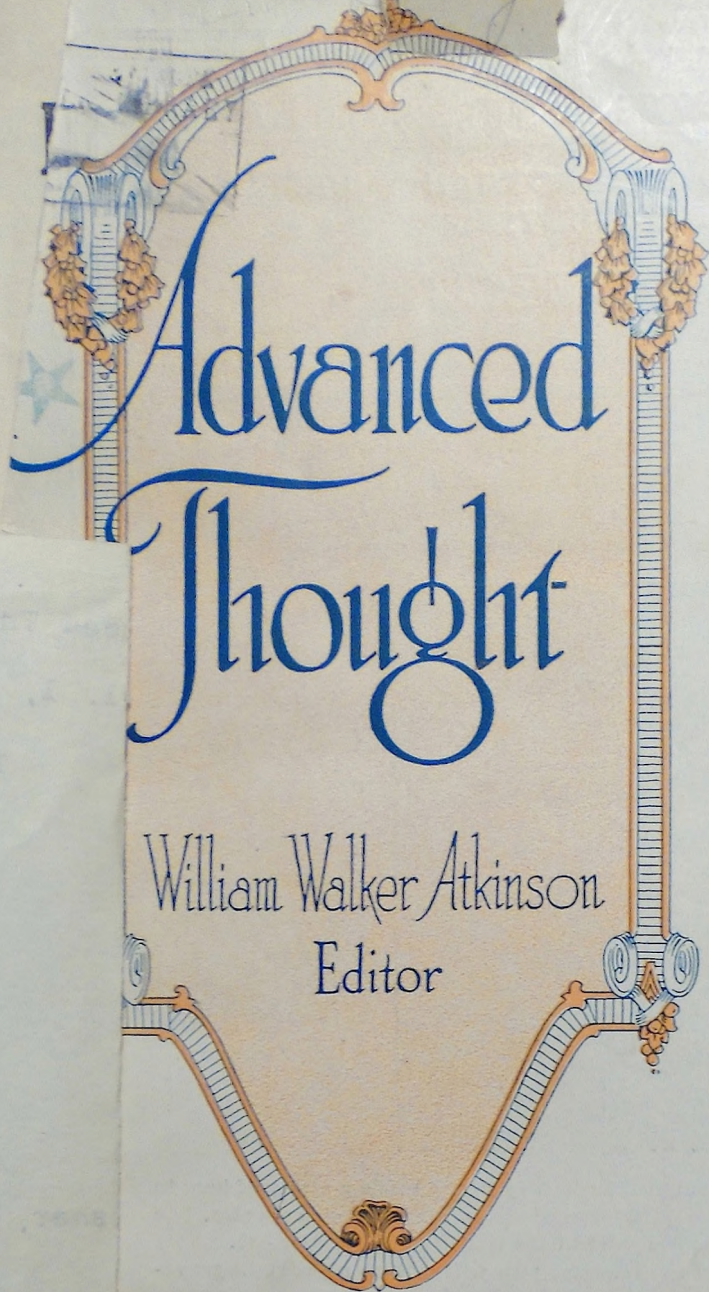
Vol. 1, Nos. 1 to 5 are o. p.

Publisher, Oct. 25, 1917.

*Vol I*  
*Aug 1916*  
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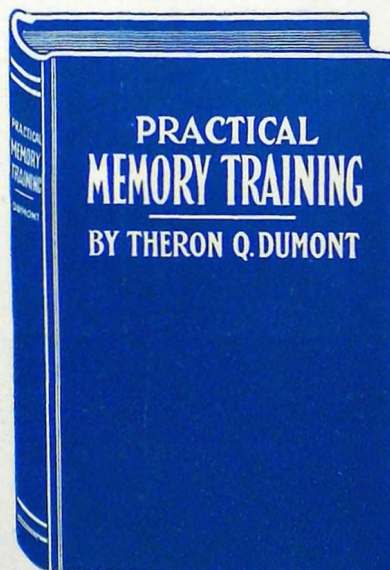
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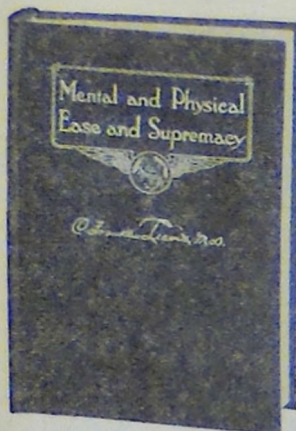
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## Subscription Rates, Etc.

Single Copies, Ten Cents. Yearly Subscription (12 issues) \$1.10

(In United States, Alaska, Cuba, Porto Rico, Mexico, Hawaii and Philippines)

In Canada, \$1.35 a year. In Foreign Countries, \$1.50 a year

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Address all Subscriptions, or other communications to

**Advanced Thought Publishing Co.**

166 N. Michigan Avenue

Chicago, Illinois





# KEYNOTE

For  
Meditation

FOR AUGUST, 1916

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I am growing stronger,  
better, and more efficient  
every day of my life.

---

*Sound the Mental Keynote. Your thought will  
materialize in objective form and action—your  
ideal will become real.*





# ADVANCED THOUGHT

*A Monthly Journal of*

The New Thought, Practical Psychology,  
Yogi Philosophy, Constructive Occultism,  
Metaphysical Healing, Etc.

WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON, Editor

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Vol. I

AUGUST, 1916

No. 6

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## Chips From the Old Block

By William Walker Atkinson

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Stop apologizing for being Yourself!

You ought to be glad that you **are** Yourself, your Whole Self, and nothing but Yourself.

Don't you know you are the product of long ages of time, during which the Powers-That-Be have steadily sought to evolve **YOU**?

Think what a long line of ancestors you have had, each being used to contribute some elements to that wonderful combination that is now **YOU**!

Nature never produces any two things just alike—she seems to love variety and to have things just a little different from other things. And that is why she has evolved **YOU**.

So be Yourself—just Yourself—only Yourself—and fully Yourself. And thank the Powers-That-Be for making you Yourself, and not something else.

If you will only stop mourning over the fact that you are Yourself and not something else, and will get to work **expressing** fully that which is Yourself, then you will be fulfilling Nature's purposes—the purposes for which she has toiled and labored for lo! these many ages.

Didn't know you were of so much importance, did you? Well, you **are**, just the same.

Now, then, get busy and express **YOURSELF**—you're a whole lot bigger, and greater, and grander than you have ever dreamed. And, never, never again, let me hear you apologizing for being “only” Yourself.



# Practical New Thought

By William Walker Atkinson

## VI. BELIEVING AND KNOWING

Some of those who have followed the thought expressed in the several preceding articles of this series, in which I have sought to bring to the attention of the individual the conscious fact of the existence of the "I Am" within him, may have thought that I have dwelt with unnecessary emphasis upon the facts presented. I have met persons who, when their attention has been directed to these important facts of their own being, would calmly say: "Oh, yes, that is very interesting, of course; but it is **nothing new** to me—I have always believed that I have a soul!" These good people utterly missed the vital point of the presentation.

I would frequently feel that I had failed in my presentation of the subject in such cases—that I had not been sufficiently clear in bringing out the essential facts of the proposition. But after a time it dawned upon me that these good people had missed the point altogether, and that they had supposed all the time that I was merely seeking to convince them that they each "**had a soul**"—just as I might have sought to convince them that each of them "**had**" a liver, a heart, lungs, or some other internal organ which they could not see, but which they believed that they "**had**."

I then began to question some of these good folks regarding their conceptions of their "soul." I found (what I had overlooked, but which I might have known) that they conceived of the soul as a gaseous, tenuous subtle something that was in some mysterious way concealed within themselves, but which would emerge from their bodies after the death of the latter. Their idea was that of the subtle body, finer body, astral body, etheric double, ghost, spirit, etc., of the various schools of occultism, metaphysics, and some forms of religious belief. But, in reality, I was thinking of something entirely different.

This idea of the subtle body, spiritual body, etheric double, etc., is something quite different from that of the "I Am." Such finer bodies (even accepting all that is claimed for them by the various schools of thought asserting their existence) are, like the grosser material body, simply **garments** of the Self—garments composed of much finer substance or material, to be sure, but nevertheless garments **worn** by the Self. The Self, or "I Am," is **that which wears those garments**. The "I Am" is Pure Spirit, and Pure Spirit is formless, and does not occupy space. Whatever occupies space is some form of



Matter, or Substance, be it ever so fine. Spirit cannot be thought of as occupying space—can you conceive of giving the measurement or dimensions of the “I Am?” Why, you cannot think of the measurement or dimensions of your “mortal” mind, much less that of Spirit. You might just as well think of Spirit having Weight!

In short, instead of teaching that you “**have**” an “I Am,” I have been trying to show you that you **ARE** the “I Am”—and that You, this “I Am,” “**has**” a body and a mind, and is master to them. If it “**has**” an etheric or spiritual body, that does not alter the case—such a body would be something belonging to it, and not the “I Am” itself. The “I Am” is not something **belonging to** you—it is You, the Real YOU to which all of your personal physical and mental paraphernalia **belongs**. This is the gist of the whole matter—so please ponder over it until you grasp its full meaning and implication.

Again, I am not striving to make you **believe** in the existence of the “I Am”—I am trying to show you that you really **KNOW** that it exists, and that it is You, and You are it! I am not content that you shall merely take it on faith, or just because I say so, or even because your intellect reports the reasonableness of the proposition. I will be satisfied with nothing less than an actual **knowing** and **conscious feeling**, of this fact of your being, on your part. I want you to realize that this is a fundamental fact of your consciousness—which is the most direct and certain kind of “knowing” that you can have.

But, you may say, how can I truthfully assert that I “**know**” such a thing, even though I **feel** it very clearly in consciousness. I can not see it, or feel it by my organs of sense; how can I “**know**” anything that is beyond my senses and actual perception? How can I say that I “**know**” it just as truly as I **know** this red brick in my fireplace? I am quite willing to say that I “**feel**” and “**believe**” the “I Am” to be true; but how can I truthfully say that I “**know**” it?

Well, good friend, let us take a look at this apparently difficult subject. In the first place what do you mean when you say that you **know** this red brick before you? You answer: “Why, because I **see** it and **feel** it, that’s how.” You think that this settles it do you not? Well, it doesn’t! You never really **know** any external object of sense experience—all that you know is the reflected image, picture, or shadow of the thing which appears in your consciousness. Your consciousness is not of the thing itself, but merely of the reflection of it in your mind. Your eye, for instance, is like a camera which receives the light waves carrying the image of the brick. These light waves excite the ends of the optical nerves, and set up vibrations therein. These vibrations are transmitted to your brain-cells, where in some wonderful manner not understood by science they become “**known to**” your consciousness. Your consciousness **knows** only a



"picture of a picture." The same thing is true regarding the sense of feeling, or any and all the other senses.

If I wished to show you how little of the real facts the senses really report, I would call your attention to the fact that your solid brick is really not solid at all, in the eyes of science—that it is really composed of an infinitude of tiny, not solid particles in constant motion—the rapid motion giving you the impression of hardness and solidity, just as the rapidly whirling spokes of a wheel manifest the appearance of solidity; or the movement of a stream of water under high pressure makes that stream as hard and solid as a bar of steel! Likewise, I would call your attention to the fact that the "redness" of the brick which you assert so positively that you "know," is but a phenomenon of the optical nerves, and conditioned upon the character of light waves at that. For instance, late in the afternoon—in the gloaming—your red brick will appear to be purple; a little later it will seem to lack all color. Moreover, to one who is color-blind, the same brick will seem to be green.

But I am not trying to make you doubt the report of your senses—I am not trying to make you believe that Matter is "an illusion of mortal mind," or anything of that sort. There is something there, outside of you, which is the object of your conscious experiences, and which your senses reflect to you in such a way that your consciousness interprets it as "red brick"—no doubt whatever about that, in sound philosophy, in spite of metaphysical hair-splitting. Your "common sense" is to be relied on—no question about that. But, I am trying to show you that you may also "know" something else, outside of sense experience this time—and "know" it in the same way that you "know" the brick, namely by the report of your consciousness.

Webster gives the following definition of Consciousness: "**Knowledge of one's own existence, sensations, feelings, acts, mental operations, etc.**" You will notice that it divides conscious knowledge into two categories, viz.: (1) knowledge of one's own existence; and (2), knowledge of one's sensations, feelings, mental operations, etc." The knowledge of your sensations, of which I have spoken, is **indirect knowledge**—knowledge of your picture of something outside of you. The knowledge of your own existence—the awareness of your "Self," or "I Am," is **direct knowledge**, no reflected picture being present or necessary.

The **direct knowledge of your Self, your "I Am," your own existence, is the most positive form of knowledge that your consciousness can ever have.** You may be tricked by subtle metaphysical argument into doubting your sense-obtained knowledge of outside things. You may doubt the report of your senses, fearing that you have been deceived by a dream, or day dream, or else have been deluded by



sleight-of-hand, or some form of sense-illusion or hallucination—the senses may be deceived in this way, as you know. But you are never, never, under any doubt of the genuineness and validity of your consciousness of your own existence—of your own Self, or “I Am.” Even when under a sense-illusion, or a dream state, your consciousness of “I Am” remains constant and unimpaired. Moreover, if every one of your senses were destroyed, and you were left without reports of any kind from the outside world, then, even then, your consciousness of your Self’s existence—of the fact of your “I Am”—would not be impaired in the slightest.

And, so, you see you really “know” the fact of the “I Am” better, more clearly, more directly, and more positively than you “know” any of the things of your sense experience. In fact, it is the only thing that you do know **directly**, and know **positively**, instead of merely **believing**. You “believe” the reports of your senses, either fully or partially; but you **KNOW** the direct report of consciousness concerning your own being and the reality of the “I Am” which is Yourself. There is no “if or but” about this direct knowledge—there is no partial knowledge, possible doubt or uncertainty, or mere “belief” about this.

And, so, you see that you do not merely “believe in” your “I Am”—you **KNOW** it **absolutely**.

I am telling you this not to prove some point in my philosophy, or for the sake of abstract truth. I tell you, friends, that in this conscious realization of the Reality of your “I Am,” your Being, Your Self, there lies the Secret of Power and Attainment. Make it your own, and you have within your hands the Magic Wand with which wonders are worked. Rightly used, it becomes the Magic Staff of the Master!

### CHARACTER

By Ralph Waldo Emerson

This is that which we call Character—a reserved force which acts directly by presence, and without means. It is conceived of as a certain undemonstrable force, a Familiar or Genius, by whose impulses the man is guided but whose counsels he cannot impart; which is company for him, so that such men are often solitary, or if they chance to be social, do not need society, but can entertain themselves very well alone. The purest literary talent appears at one time great, at another time small, but character is of a stellar and undiminishable greatness. What others effect by talent or by eloquence, this man accomplishes by some magnetism.



# Yogi Philosophy

By Yogi Ramacharaka

## VI. A STUDY IN CAUSE AND EFFECT

In my fourth article of this series (published in the June number of this magazine), I called your attention to a question frequently asked students of the Hindu Philosophy by those who are not informed regarding it, and who are influenced by erroneous conceptions concerning it. This question is: "Is not this Hindu Philosophy the cause of the state of religious darkness, and backward civilization of modern India?"

To a student of the subject of Hindu Religion, Hindu Culture, or Hindu Civilization—even though he may not be interested in or attracted by the Hindu Philosophy—such a question seems ridiculous. To the unprejudiced, informed mind the reasoning back of the question seems on a par with that of the naive, bucolic American citizen who blamed the new administration for the crop-failure of that season; or that of those who would blame upon the Weather Bureau the "bad spell of weather." And, yet, in spite of the patent fallacy of the reasoning involved in the idea, many Western persons of even more than average intelligence seem inclined to entertain it. Therefore, I undertake its answer.

Before entering into the heart of the subject, I wish to call your attention to two implications in the question which are not fully warranted by the facts, viz.: (1) That the religious condition of modern India is one of unrelieved "darkness;" and (2) That India is in a state of unrelieved "backward civilization." I must briefly set you straight on these two points, before I proceed with my main answer.

In the first place, as I hope that I have shown you in my preceding article, the religious condition of India is not one of unrelieved "darkness," but rather one in which there is much of good and much of bad theology, teaching and practice. Those who have been so fortunate as to have been admitted into the highest circles of Hindu social and family life (something that the average Western visitor of India rarely is privileged to share) are quite ready to bear witness to the high ideals of religious, moral, ethical and cultural thought and practice held by these people. To one who is not so privileged, I must refer the literature of cultured India—there he may see the real spirit of the highest Hindu religious thought. To the Westerner who holds to the idea that the Hindus are "heathen idolaters," scarcely above the grade of the African savages, the acquaintance with a cultured Hindu would be a revelation.



In the above consideration, I am assuming, of course, that one should judge religious values from the detached, impersonal and unprejudiced position of the student of Comparative Religions. Obviously, there can be no rational discussion of the subject with one who regards as "in a state of darkness" any other religion simply because it differs from his own creed; this is the hall-mark of the bigot, be he Hindu, Buddhist, Mohammedan, Jew, or Christian. Religions must be judged and valued upon their own merits, or demerits, without any reference to their distinction or variation from one's own religious creed.

In the second place, though many conditions of Hindu life, among the masses of the people, are far from being that which the Westerner, or the educated and cultured Hindu would like; still, on the other hand, it must not be forgotten that Modern India has a culture of its own—a high culture at that. India has its culture, literature, music and art. Not only had its ancient philosophers giant minds, and its metaphysicians a subtle reasoning never surpassed; but, also, its modern sons have attained high positions in art, science, literature, medicine, and philosophy—this is freely admitted by the best Western authorities on these subjects. While its masses are lacking in many things that the West values, its highest classes have a high degree of culture and learning, even from a Western standard. Let us be just and fair, and while regretting the lowest, still admit and commend the highest.

Finally, let us not make the mistake of comparing the **lowest** in Hindu religion and culture with the **highest** in Western religion and culture—this is a fallacy which is easy to fall into, and difficult to avoid. In considering the conditions of India, let us not forget the religious and cultural conditions of Europe in the Middle Ages, when the power of the Church was better established than even now. Let us not forget the religious and cultural conditions of the peasants of, say, Russia, Spain, Italy, Poland, Bohemia, Hungary, The Balkan States, and other European countries; nor those of the Mexican and Central American peons; in all of these lands, remember, the religious and cultural ideals of the educated classes are high. And, nearer home, let us not forget the religious and cultural ideals and conditions of the Negro population of the Southern States of this country; or, for that matter, the religious and cultural conditions of some of the white people of the remote mountain regions of this country. A little thought will show you that religious and cultural conditions depend upon more than mere **creed** and **basic belief**—in India, as well as in the Western lands.



### The Real Causes of Civilization

The great modern teachers of history, sociology and economics show us very plainly that the general material conditions, mental culture, and religious ideals and practice of the masses of people depend to a great extent upon such things as **climatic conditions; racial temperament and characteristics; popular education; political conditions and forms of government; wars, or the absence of wars; foreign conquest and subjection; and, finally, upon economic conditions**—some authorities laying special stress upon the last named factor of economic determination. These same authorities hold that theologies and creeds have but a minor place on the list of determining and modifying causes of the culture and civilization of the masses of any people. **In fact, it is now generally held that instead of so determining and modifying such culture and civilization, theology and creeds are but the effects and results of the changing culture and civilization—logical effects and results, not determining causes and forces.**

Theology and Creeds are seen, by means of historical study, to **follow, not lead** the march of Culture and Civilization—they are born, evolve, change, and finally die, in response to the changing culture and civilization of the masses of the people. The history of all religions, among all peoples, in all lands, and in all times, establishes the correctness of this view. Theologians hold to the contrary, but the facts, and the opinions of the thoughtful, are against them.

### Conditions in Modern India

Now let us consider the conditions in Modern India, material, cultural, and theological, in view of these facts of modern scientific thought. In the first place, we find a population of over 300,000,000 (three hundred million) people, made up of many divergent racial and religious elements. As we have seen in the preceding article, about 100,000,000 (nearly one-third) of these people are really not Hindus in religion, and often not even of the Hindu race. Of this number, about 70,000,000 are the descendants of the ancient Mohamendan conquerors of India, and many millions of the remaining number are of non-Hindu and non-Aryan racial origin. There are more races, sub-races, and varieties of races in India than in Europe, America and North Africa, combined; and as many varieties of languages (spoken and printed), dialects and tongues, as there are varieties of people. It is estimated that there are over one hundred and fifty languages spoken in India; springing from twenty great language-families.

The higher caste Hindus have kept their racial-blood pure through the centuries (this, in fact was the purpose and reason of the original caste distinction of the Hindus), but the lowest castes have assimilated many of the wandering tribes, primitive peoples, and in-



ferior races (slowly, gradually and in small proportion, it is true) until in these lower castes and below-castes there are found distinct traces of Negroid, Malay and Mongolian blood. There are all shades of color, and facial characteristics of race, among the lower castes and below-castes in India. The upper castes, however, show their Aryan characteristics, and original racial marks, as the result of their caste system which preserved their blood in its original purity. In India the people range from the most cultured dwellers of the favored centres, down to the primitive jungle dwellers and semi-aborigines of the remote and less favored regions. India is shut off by mountains and seas from the rest of the world; and contains in her limits a greater variety of peoples, races and languages than any one other part of the world—not excepting China. Within her borders are found all grades of mankind, high and low. She is a world in herself.

The population of India is estimated at over 300,000,000—**nearly one-fifth of the population of the whole world combined.** The population is very dense indeed, in some provinces reaching the extremely high average of **over five hundred persons to the square mile.** This is a wonderfully high rate of population when it is considered that **fully nine-tenths of India's population is rural, or dwelling in very small villages.** A portion of her inhabitants live in remote mountainous regions, or in jungle lands remote from the centres of civilization. Manufacture is noticeably absent in this country; and commerce is primitive and undeveloped, judged by Western standards.

**Agriculture furnishes almost the sole dependence of the people of India,** and living under the prevailing conditions is very hard indeed. As an authority says: "the population of India presses closely upon the means of subsistence. Plague, pestilence and famine are still too common, although improved methods introduced by the government is gradually remedying this sad condition. Wages are at a minimum—a few cents a day serving to keep body and soul together for millions of agricultural laborers, servants and simple artisans." Not much opportunity for culture, education and high religious ideals under these conditions you see.

Education, in the past, for many centuries, was almost entirely limited to the highest castes; but the English Government has remedied this to the extent that the great "middle classes" are now given public education. The lower and lowest castes, and below-castes, however, still remain in dense ignorance and illiteracy. Progress is being aided by the cultured Hindus, though caste distinction hinders them in this co-operation. Even the lower castes will not associate with the castes below them, for that matter—and even the lowest caste will not allow the approach of the below-caste, or the



outcasts. The racial prejudices, and caste distinctions, as well as the varying languages and dialects render the task of the education of India a formidable one. But, still, things are working for the better—the patriotic Hindu sees the light ahead for his people.

As might be imagined, such a variety of peoples, races and sub-races; languages, tongues and dialects; religions, cults, sects, and faiths; must result in a wonderful variety of customs, codes of conduct, systems of morals and ethics, ways of doing things, conventions and standards of action and life. As an authority says: "Nowhere else in the world have so many millions of human beings done so many things in so many ways, as in India."

You see, India is a great "crazy quilt" of a country—all kinds and varieties of peoples, races, languages, customs, codes and religions are there. How hard it is to point to any one thing, and say "**This is India!**" Yet may Western people do this habitually; even Western travelers commit this folly, and report what they have seen of a small portion of India, as representing the whole. They forget that India is half as large as the United States (including Alaska); and as large as Europe (excluding Russia). The Western man of extensive Indian travel knows that no one person knows **all** of India; and that India, like Russia, must be "lived" before its spirit may be grasped.

### What Is Wrong with India?

"But," you may say, "admitting all this, is it not the fault of the cultured Hindus that these conditions have been allowed to survive and persist, after all these centuries of Hindu nationality? Something must be wrong with India." Ah, yes! good friend, something **has** been wrong with India—several things in fact. First, **climatic influences**, which can be understood only by one who has lived in that land. Second, **racial temperament and characteristics**. Third, the **lack of assimilation and unity of purpose** on the part of the conflicting and diversified elements of India's population. And fourth, **India's tragic history** of rule and misrule, wars, bloodshed, conquest, invasion, and exploitation, which have been reflected in her position and condition of economic dependence and inefficiency, and general "backwardness."

### Two Thousand Years of Foreign Conquest

Take a glance at the history of India. Are you aware that **India has been subjected to an almost uninterrupted series of foreign invasions, wars, bloodshed, conquest and exploitation for over two thousand years?** From the time of Alexander the Great, down to the present time, India has been subject to foreign control, in a large measure, and over a large territory. She has been repeatedly overrun by Greek,



African, Mohammedan, Hun, Mongolian, and European ruthless invaders, conquerors, and exploiters. From the year A. D. 1001 to the year A. D. 1757—seven hundred and fifty-six years, India was under the control of her Mohammedan conquerors—and formed the great Mogul Empire. And, finally the various European countries took the sword of empire from the Moguls, and assumed control. For centuries she was literally bathed in blood: And yet, notwithstanding this, the Hindu has maintained his national integrity, and race—and in a measure has influenced the invading peoples, and left the impress of his thought upon them; even in this day the Hindu thought is working like a yeast-germ in the body of Western thought, and bids fair to cause many a strange rising-up of thought and doctrine.

When we consider what only a few years of foreign conquest has done to many a people—either by scattering them like the Jews; or else utterly destroying or assimilating them as in the case of many old races and peoples—even considering the deplorable condition of Poland and other modern countries—it is nothing short of miraculous that the Hindus as a race and people have managed to maintain their racial integrity as a people. I think that the **real causes** of the “state of religious darkness,” and the “backward state of civilization” in modern India may be discovered by one who will turn over the pages of the History of India. The wonder is that there is anything left of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion of India, at all—not to speak of the wonderful Hindu Philosophy which has survived, unimpaired through all the stress and storm of India’s history.

In justice to the present foreign rulers of India, the British, I would say that although the early history of the British Conquest of India (the rule of the East India Company) is filled with records not at all creditable to the early conquerors (English writers, themselves, freely admit this), the present condition of affairs is far better, and the future seems brighter still. India is being taught improved methods of material efficiency, along the lines of agriculture and artisan-ship. Manufactures and commerce may still be hers, although Britain will probably keep her hand on those levers to a great extent.

### Looking Forward

In the meantime, the occultists and spiritual sages of India point to the ancient prophecies of their sages and prophets, all of which picture the return of the Golden Age which once was India’s. The tides of Civilization rise and fall. The course of empire ever wends its way westward, until it again reaches the East. Time is long; and the oriental mind is patient. Perhaps, as some wise Hindus think, the present Western control of India is but a necessary step toward her ultimate Renaissance! But of this, as the Hindus say: “It is in the laps of the gods.”



The pious and devout Hindu worshippers of the higher class—and there are many of them—strive to keep alight the Flame on the ancient altars of their faith; waiting calmly, and patiently, and with faith, for the fulfilment of the ancient prophecies that the **Sanatana**, the ancient Wisdom-Religion of India, will once more mount to its high and proper place, rank, and degree of perfection.

Hindu tradition says that, in due time, the souls of the ancient Hindu sages will once more return to the scene of their former earth-lives, and once more will make the Philosophy of India the standard of metaphysical and spiritual value. Some of the patient watchers think that they see the signs of this already—some think that the souls of their ancient great sages are now working in Western bodies, and Western lands, preparing for the spiritual Renaissance that is to come later on. They say, truly, that from the East all great philosophies and religions have come—and they expect history to repeat herself when the proper point in the evolutionary spiral is reached. They say that the old, occult adage: “Look to the East for Light; and still more Light!” will ever hold true. In the meantime, the soul of India waits, and waits; it knows that time may come, and time may go, but that Truth is eternal.

## THE DEATHLESS ONE

(From the Bhagavad Gita)

Thou grieveest for those that need not thy grief, Arjuna. The truly wise grieve neither for the dead, nor yet for the living. Just as the brave man feareth neither Life nor Death, so doth the wise man avoid grief over either, although the half-wise grieve over either or both, according to mood or circumstance. Those who have attained the Inner Wisdom know these things, and fail to be moved by aught that cometh to pass in this world of change; to such Life and Death are but words, and both are but surface aspects of the deeper being.

That which is unreal hath no shadow of real being, notwithstanding the illusion of appearance and false knowledge. And that which hath Real Being hath never ceased to be, and can never cease to be, in spite of all appearances to the contrary. The wise have inquired into these things, Arjuna, and have discovered the Real Essence, the Inner Meaning of things.



# Heart-to-Heart Talks

By the Editor

In this department the editor gathers his readers around him in a family circle and has a little talk with them, informally and "friendly-like," in the good old-fashioned way.

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## THE GOLDEN MEAN

Are you familiar with the French epigrammatic term, "**Juste Milieu**?" If not, you will do well to make its acquaintance, for it conveys a very important truth. "**Juste Milieu**" means "the golden mean"—the desirable middle ground between the two extremes of any question. The same truth is indicated by the old English proverb: "Truth lies in the middle of the road."

Many of us are apt to manifest impatience at reminders of this kind. We have become so familiar with their misemployment at the hands of "trimmers," compromisers, and dodgers-of-decisions, that all such suggestions savor of indecision, weak will and lack of backbone; and we manifest disgust at the mere mention of them. But, in spite of the common misuse and false application of this idea, it nevertheless expresses a profound truth.

Among the many bits of practical philosophic truth which have come down the stream of time from the dim past, and which are now receiving careful attention from our best modern thinkers, is that which teaches that there are two poles to everything physical or mental—that these poles represent the opposite extremes of the same thing; and that the entire thing is understood only by a synthesis or combination of the two extremes. According to this philosophy the true philosophic attitude is one of "balance" at the exact central point between the two opposing poles—the **juste milieu** or golden mean between the two extremes.

Now, in spite of the perversion of this truth at the hands of those "trimmers" who seek to catch the wind of popular approval coming from all directions—those canny creatures who wish to carry water on both shoulders—careful thought will bring you to the conclusion that there are always "two sides to every question," and that true wisdom consists in a careful balancing of these two sides. No matter how good a thing may be seen to be, it will be found out that if it is carried too far it loses its virtue and becomes a nuisance, and even a harmful thing in many cases. And, no matter how bad a thing may be, careful thought will show that it has something in it that may be saved from the evil wreck and converted to good uses.



We may see the application of the danger of carrying things to extremes in all the activities of life. We see some moral reformer so carried away by the zeal of curing evil conditions that he cuts off some good live wood along with the rotten branches, and thus works a harm to righteousness. We see excessive zeal in this direction robbing young persons (and old) of natural avenues of expression of normal activities, and driving them into far more harmful (though less open) indulgences. We see many cases of this malpractice in treating social conditions, so that like a checked boil they are driven inward only to break out in other directions with renewed force. Many of us have witnessed the evil effects of extreme Puritanical methods applied to young persons.

Along the same lines, we have seen many persons so filled with the idea of the superiority of mind or spirit to body that they have allowed the body to become a wreck, and have thus destroyed the machinery required for the normal manifestation of mind—they have wrecked the temple in which the spirit must dwell. On the other hand, we have seen those who have sung the praises of the body only too well, and have developed their physical instrument at the expense of their mental and spiritual selves. Too often, as Joseph Conrad says, "our virtues, exaggerated, become our faults."

Likewise, we have seen those who, in their impatience of the hypocritical prudery which seems to distinguish so many of our "unco guid" folks, have rushed to the other extreme and have thrown aside the restraints and rules which the experience of the race has proved to be valuable, and so have been wrecked on the rocks of unbalanced sexuality. On the other hand, we are familiar with those who have deemed the very word "sex" a term of reproach, and who have cultivated such an unnatural asceticism and repulsion for Nature's processes that they have been drawn into the whirlpool of perversion and abnormality.

The ancient Greeks had two very simple, though very important, axioms of right living, viz.: "Man, know thyself!" and "**Nothing too much.**" The idea of careful balance and intelligent discrimination distinguished the ancient Grecian philosophic thought. Everywhere was taught the importance of "the golden mean." They knew the danger of **over-emphasis**—they recognized the tendency to lean backward when one wished merely to walk erect. Many of their aphorisms breathed this spirit of moderation and balance, as for instance the following: "Give a pledge, and evil is at hand;" and "Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thyself overwise."

These folks, and many of other lands, recognized the value of nearly all things in moderation, at the right time and in the right place; but, at the same time, taught that evil would arise from lack of moderation, or from allowing the things in question to obtain a mas-



tery over one. An old pagan philosopher once said: "All things are good for me to use properly, decently and in moderation; but no thing is good enough to use me, or to master me." If you prefer good Biblical quotations to these from heathen sources, you may consider this one, from St. Paul: "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." (I think that my Touchstone Inquiry, "Will this thing make me stronger, better and more efficient?" is akin to this idea.)

So in all things, I think that we would be able to reason more intelligently, decide more clearly, and act more efficiently, if we would remember this idea of the "golden mean;" this middle of the road policy; this balancing between the true extremes. By acting upon this idea, one will avoid the danger of carrying a thing too far; of going to an unnatural and unreasonable extreme; of becoming a crank or a fanatic, an extremist or a visionary, a bore and a nuisance.

Moreover, such action would be in accordance with the highest philosophic insight which perceives that every finite statement of truth contains also a mixture of error; that every finite truth is but a half-truth; that there is always to be found some truth which is the exact opposite of any finite statement of truth; that the whole truth is to be arrived at only by taking thesis and antithesis and combining and reconciling them into a new synthesis including both extremes balanced against each other. The common, everyday homely wisdom of the philosopher with the bark on him, expresses this same truth when it says: "There are always two sides to every question; and there is something to be said for each side, and against each side, before we decide the matter **finally.**"

But to apply the spirit of the principle even in this consideration of its very self, I must not fail to look at the "other side" thereof. Accordingly, while advising you not to go to extremes, or to be carried away by too radical ideas, at the same time I feel impelled to exclaim: "**God bless the extremists, for without them we would not be able to find the middle ground!**"

The extremists stand at the two opposing sides of the broad road of Truth, and thus show us the location of these extreme boundaries. The louder that they each shout that his side is the only true position, the more do we realize that there must be an opposite extreme position at equal distance from the middle of the road. The good radical extremists serve a very good purpose—they aid us in **finding the golden mean at the middle of the road.**

You will get this thing clear in your mind when you remember that these radical extremists are simply **over-emphasizing** their own position; each of them is pointing to his own position and claiming



that it is the whole thing, whereas it is only one of **the extreme ends of the whole thing**. There is always an equally extreme opposite point. The golden mean is the exact balance between the two extremes. If you will keep this idea in mind, it will help you to keep your head in many a conflict of opinions—it will provide a solid rock for calm deliberation and decision.

And, finally, remember always that the Master strives ever to maintain the balance between extremes—this is the mark of the Master, and also the reason of his Mastery. The Master walks the tight-rope of life, maintaining a perfectly even balance, control and mastery, by his balancing-pole of Wisdom. And of this Wisdom, this knowledge of the Opposites is not the least. If you can grasp the inner or esoteric meaning of this paragraph, you will be well started on your road to Mastery!

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## PERSONAL LETTERS

Once more I must remind my friends and readers that I cannot answer personal letters. I dislike to have to say this, but I cannot help it. **Your** letter I might find time to answer—but there are so many of you, that I cannot answer all; and it would not be fair to “play favorites.” But, by all means write me personal letters. I like to get them. They do me lots of good. And they will do you good to write them, too. Try it for yourself, some time when you feel the need of a talk to one who will know just what you mean, and who will not misunderstand you; one whose sympathy is big and broad enough to take in all that is human. Maybe it will do you good to get some of those things “out of your system.” Get rid of ‘em, by sending ‘em in a letter to me—I will know what to do with ‘em when they reach me, never fear. But do not look for or expect an answer by letter—I will find a way to answer you in a much more efficacious way, if you will only have faith in your own power to bring such an answer.

If I wanted to be sensational, I could tell you some mighty interesting things about these letterless answers—but I shall not do so. I prefer to let each one of you find out for himself or herself. Remember that your answer need not be limited to **my** personal opinion—the limitations of a personal letter. Instead, you have the power to use me as a focal point of demand upon Something that makes no mistakes in answers—that knows no limitations of personality. So write me **when-ever** you feel like it; and **about whatever** you like; with the understanding that I am not to answer you by letter. But you will receive your answer, never fear—perhaps through this magazine—perhaps in another way. There is a Law back of these things, remember.



## “Questions and Answers”

Conducted by the Editor

In this department the editor publishes and answers communications from the readers of this magazine. Its pages are open to all honest inquirers who ask questions on subjects in which they are interested for the purpose of getting information, or being “set straight,” on any points which have perplexed them. No attention, however, will be paid to communications obviously intended to exploit pet fads of the writers, or to abuse or revile the honest opinions of others. It is understood, of course, that the subjects of the questions shall come within the general field and scope of this magazine, as indicated by our title page. The subjects of Economics, Sociology, Politics, etc., are out of our field, please remember. Make your inquiries as clear, concise and practical as possible, and the editor will do his best to give them the consideration that they merit. The names of inquirers will not be printed, nor need they be given in full if inquirers prefer it—initials serve every purpose in the case

### AGE FEARTHOUGHT

W. A. B. writes: “What is an office man to do for a living after he is forty years of age? My business experience of over twenty years has shown me that after a man passes his fortieth year, he is not wanted. In quite a number of cases I have known ‘old faithfuls’ to be dismissed, and young clerks of mediocre ability employed in their places. I am doing good work, but I can see that I am slowly but surely being squeezed out.”

Now, look here, friend! I don’t know anything about your particular case, of course. Things may be just as you say. I have known of cases in which employers were foolish enough to act in just this way. But, on the other hand, I have found many employers who preferred to keep in their employ the men who had experience in their establishments. I know many employers who feel that it is a positive loss to let an employee go, and to replace him with another. I may go further and say that the Efficiency idea holds that an employer loses money every time he makes a change of this kind. So the feeling is not all in the direction you indicate, not by a good bit.

And, on the other hand, I have known men to get so in a rut in their work, that their employers would have really been excused for dropping them. And, I will also say that I have known men who in spite of age—many years over forty, by the way—have kept “young” in their work by reason of continued interest. No matter how young a man may be, the moment that he loses active interest in his work he becomes stale and “old” in that work. Many a middle-aged, and even older, man has kept his interest alive, and has kept himself **young** by reason thereof. This is the real measure of “age” in work—interest, not years. When the heart keeps young, the head is apt to follow suit.

I may also say that some persons become practically obsessed by this idea of getting old. They set some arbitrary period at which they feel that they are going to grow old. And if they keep up this thought sufficiently long, and with sufficient energy, they do grow old and less valuable at that time of life. Moreover, I have known men to “get ideas” that they are being crowded out—that they are not wanted. An idea of this kind paralyzes the energies of any



man, and renders him liable to the very fate that he fears. Like poor old Job, the thing they have feared comes upon them. Anyone who realizes the dynamic power of thought will see at once how thoughts of this kind may and will affect one. Fearthought is a magnet, as much as is Desire; and for the same reason, i. e., the expectation and belief in the occurrence of the thing.

Now, W. A. B., I do not wish to say that this shoe fits you—I hope it does not. But, at any rate, there are some thoughts here that you should consider. All through your letter you show that your one dominant thought is that you are going to be dropped when you are forty years old, or soon after; and that you feel that the process of crowding you out is now under way; and that you are worried for fear of what you can do after you are crowded out. I am sure that the readers of this magazine will see just what I mean—that your thought of this kind is dominating you. This being true, and it being true that “thoughts are things,” can you not see that you have been, and are, setting into motion the attractive powers of thought in a direction opposed to your own interests?

At any rate, why not give yourself the benefit of the teachings, and reverse your mental attitude and expectant attention. Why not picture things as you would like them to be, and not as you fear they may be. You certainly have been maintaining a negative mental attitude, and not a positive one—irrespective of the facts of the case. If there is anything in the Attractive Power of Thought (and we all know that there is) then it follows that you have been setting into activity these forces against you, instead of in your favor. You would readily see this yourself if the case was that of some one else. Now, wouldn't you? Then why not get busy, and “treat” the situation properly? You owe this to yourself.

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## MEAT EATING

H. K. writes: “We have given up the eating of animal food because we realize that it is not necessary to eat meat or cause pain to another creature in order that we may live. But we do not know how far this extends. Is it right to raise chickens for others to kill, that we may eat the eggs? Is it right to raise cows to get the milk and cream, that others may take them and kill them for food when they are no longer useful for the production of milk? Is it right to raise calves and let them be used for food, even if we don't kill them ourselves? On the other hand, babies cannot live without cow's milk. Will you please give me your views on the question?”

I cannot answer your questions, nor can anyone else answer them for you—for they are matters entirely for the exercise of your own judgment and feelings. Personally, I don't think that there is any question of absolute “right and wrong” about this question of using animal food. It seems to me to be a question entirely for the feelings of the person to decide. I do not know of any authoritative utterance on the subject; nor of any infallible standard of conduct in the matter.

As for myself, I make no pretence of following a non-meat diet. At the same time, I feel that if I were thrown in with a number of vegetarians, and ate at their table, I could do very well without meat. And, moreover, as the years roll by, I feel a greater and greater disgust with the idea of killing animals for food, when there are plenty of good fruits and nuts around to be eaten. I may join the meatless brigade some of these days. But if I do it will not be because I hope to gain some spiritual advantage by reason thereof; or



solely because I think that my own health will be benefited thereby. If I do this thing it will be because I have grown heartily sick of the idea of participating in the slaughtering of beasts for food purposes. At the same time, I never lose sight of the fact that plants have "life," and that there seems to be a law of nature, in this plane of manifestation at least, that "life" must obtain its material supply from other "life" of some sort, as unpleasant as the idea may seem to us.

But, as I have said, I shall probably get sick of the thing—in fact, I am getting that way now. Did you ever hear the story of George Fox, the Quaker, and William Penn. Another Quaker complained that Penn continued to wear his sword, although a Quaker; and asked that Fox forbid it. Fox smiled, and answered: "Nay, friend, let him wear it, so long as he can do so!" In a short time Penn dropped his sword—because he couldn't feel right about it. Do you see the point? But, candidly, friend H. K., are you not walking so straight that you are leaning backward, in the matter of the indirect consequences of raising fowls and cattle? Seems to me a little that way. But that, too, is a matter for your own feelings. I do not know of any standard of "right and wrong" in the matter, to which I can refer you. It seems to me solely a matter of the feelings of persons—for which feelings they generally seek excuses which they call "reasons." Sorry I can not help you out better.

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### HELP WANTED

Misses R. W. and A. C. write: "We have read one of your books, and have found it useful, but it helps us only in a general way, because it is written chiefly for men. We are two young women whose main purpose is to fit ourselves for marriage to the one who approaches as near as possible to our ideal, and to so attract him that he will not pass us by just because we are lacking in our knowledge of human nature. You have said in your book that a man can gain his heart's desire if he only tries hard enough; but what principles can apply to a woman in like position? Most women marry because they are the man's choice, and propinquity does the rest, whether they are suited or not. I have always felt that it is within a woman's power to choose the man she wishes, but I know that I, like many others, are partially lacking in that power. We attract those for whom we do not care. Your book inspired us to the determination to overcome all difficulties, and so perfect our lives with the proper life-partners. Will you not give us the help we need?"

My dear girls, I am afraid that you have come to the wrong shop. Why don't you consult some wise old woman of experience—she could tell you more about the gentle art of Husband Catching in a half-hour, than I could in a month. What does a mere man know about such things? His business is to be caught; not to understand how he is caught. Of course, the principles of Thought Attraction will work in this kind of a case as well as in any other. I have not the slightest doubt but that many good women have attracted "their own" to them in just this way—and quite properly, too. But all I can do is to give you the general rules—and that I have done in the books you mention. I don't know the details of application in such a case as you mention. I have never been a woman (not for many an incarnation, at least) and women don't tell men these little things—they know better. So I will have to confess my ignorance in this case.



## MAN'S SUPERIOR (?) MIND

Mrs. F. O. writes: "Is there any difference between the male and the female mind? Is the male brain stronger and more capable of learning than the female?"

No ma'am! not a bit of it! Don't you let any male man put anything like this over on you. There is no mental work that the mind of man has ever accomplished that the mind of woman has not been able to do. The ranks of the world's thinkers contain many women workers, who hold their own in every particular with their men co-workers. By reason of Woman's economic position, and her special line of usual work, her mind has tended to specialize along certain lines; just as man's has along certain other lines. A few generations of reversed positions would completely reverse this state of affairs. In the lower animals there is no mental distinction between the males and the females, so far as power and keenness of thought is concerned. In fact, as many naturalists have testified, the herds of wild animals frequently choose an old female as their leader because of her superior keenness of perception of danger. It might be a good thing if men would do likewise, for I think a bright old woman will scent danger quicker than will a dozen men. It is a common secret among women that in many things (their judgment of women, for instance) men are like children. The question you ask arises from one of the numerous bumpitious conceits of man—one which he is going to have bumped out of him before long, mark my words. If your men-folks say anything like this to you again, you just keep quiet, but smile at them meaningly, and they will at once imagine that you have "gotten onto" some of their special follies, and will thereafter hold their peace. A recent writer has said that "Man is a combination of Peacock, Pig and Goat!" And, sometimes I am inclined to agree with this when I hear this fool talk about "man's superior mind." Superior fiddlesticks! say I. As Socrates said, two thousand years ago: "There is no sex in intellect."

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## BAD TEMPER

W. E. J. writes: "How can I eliminate my bad temper? I flare up at times, without any cause at all, and I am really ashamed of my behavior in the presence of my family. I would like to overcome this difficulty."

Old man, I know just how you feel. I used to have the same trouble; and used to make the same kind of jackass of myself. If you could only fully realize just how ridiculous we make ourselves when we indulge in these flare-ups, you would inhibit the impulse automatically. If you will study the appearance and actions of another man in this condition, it may help you to neutralize this tendency. But, after all, the best way to get rid of any objectionable habit is to cultivate the opposite one. You will do well to keep before you as an ideal the mental picture of a calm, well-poised, well-balanced person—you will thus tend to materialize your ideal. It is a fine thing to keep before the mind a picture of that which you wish to be. Another good idea for you would be to take the mental position that the world is trying to "get your goat" by making you make a dunce of yourself. If you get this idea well fixed in your mind, you will find that your pride will rise up and resist the "goat getting" process. If you get so that you can regard all signs of rising anger as an indication that there is someone trying to "get your goat," you will learn to grin cheerfully, and say mentally: "Never touched me!" This may seem silly and trifling—but there's some mighty good psychology back of it, I assure you, friend W. E. J. Better



try it out—and stick to it until you make it work. I would suggest Horace Fletcher's "Menticulture" as a good book for you to read.

## "THINKING OF SOMETHING ELSE"

H. C. writes: "On page 6 of your March number, you say: 'It is time to stop laughing at John D. Rockefeller and John Wanamaker, etc.,' and that these men know how to ask God in the right way, hence their riches. Now if that isn't the limit, I don't know what is. No wonder you don't want anything regarding Economics discussed in your magazine; no! it wouldn't be safe. Mrs. Eddy and the Pope knows that trick too—no talking back allowed. But what's the use of saying any more? It's your magazine and you have the right to do as you like in it; but I wanted you to know that there is one man who can't be depended upon to gulp down everything that's dished up in it."

A well-known man once refused to continue his argument with an opponent, giving as his reason the fact that the other person "was thinking of something else," i. e., was interpreting the subject according to his own particular prejudices, instead of viewing it according to the facts of the case. I feel that this is just what this correspondent has been doing—"thinking of something else."

He evidently thinks that I am teaching that Rockefeller is rich because he holds the true orthodox belief, and "stands in with" God by reason thereof. He also seems to think that I am endorsing the modern capitalistic system, with all that this implies. He fails utterly to see that the point I sought to bring out is that the mental attitude of Faith and Confident Expectation held by men like Wanamaker served as a dynamic factor of attracting to them conditions, persons and things conducive to their success—things that helped them to materialize their ideals. Their orthodoxy had nothing to do with it—they would have obtained the same results had they been Mohammedans, or Buddhists, or Hindus; or even atheists believing in an abstract Principle that helped people attain their desires and ideals. Moreover, the capitalistic system of which Rockefeller is a conspicuous example; or the business code of ethics, good or bad adopted by Rockefeller—these were not involved in my statement. I think that anyone who will turn back the pages of this magazine to the article in question will see the injustice of this criticism. But, what's the use? This good man is simply "thinking of something else," and fails to perceive the point I was trying to make. Let him enjoy himself in his own way—it seems to do him a heap of good, and doesn't hurt me any, so joy be to him!

From his concluding remarks, I imagine, however, that he is "peevish" at not being permitted to air his views on economics or sociology in these columns. So many of these amateur sociologists have the scribendi furioso, or the fever for writing and airing their pet theories. Just between ourselves, that is one of the reasons that I drew the lines on these subjects in this department—if I hadn't there wouldn't have been room for anything else. There are many good magazines along the said lines, to which good folks like H. C. are respectfully referred. The trouble there, however, is that there are so many applicants for space, and so little space open to them, that one has to wait too long for his letters to be printed. At least, so I am informed by some of my very good socialistic friends who know, by experience. As for expecting anyone to "gulp down everything that is dished up" in this magazine, I fervently say: "The Lord forbid!" I can imagine nothing further removed from my real wishes. But, here again, our friend is "thinking of something else."



## CONCEPTIONS OF "GOD"

B. F. P. writes: "What is your conception of God? Is He not individual? Is He not the Supreme Mind back of those forces which He has set in motion, or are these forces simply the currents which emanate from His mind? Do we receive these currents from God by induction, the same as we receive them from one another; and is not God more than Principle or the sum total of all these forces?"

Do you know, friend B. F. P., that to answer your question even superficially would mean writing a good sized book. Not that I know so much about the subject that it would require a whole book in which to express my knowledge; but because the subject is such a big one that it would require a book to merely indicate the various points to be covered. This question reminds me of one asked when I edited a magazine a number of years ago. A good lady wrote me asking that I tell her all about God; what He was; what were his properties, qualities and attributes; and what were his intentions and ideas about many important things. I answered her as follows: "Madam, not being God, I cannot answer your questions." I felt that this was a very fine answer, but my conceit was rebuked when another good woman wrote to me, reproving me, and saying: "You are God, and you should not have hesitated to answer the questions." I did not discuss the subject further—I had reached my limit.

However, in order not to be too disobliging, I will say this as a partial answer to this question: I believe that "God" is a term by which men seek to indicate the presence and being of an Absolute and Infinite Reality, which is the explanation and reason of that Cosmic Activity that we call the Universe. I conceive of that Reality as being Unconditioned by any "qualities, properties or attributes," in the sense that we commonly employ those terms. I do not think of this Reality as "personal," because I feel that it must transcend all personality—for personality is limitation. But at the same time, I am far from believing that Reality consists merely of "the sum-total of natural forces"—I believe that all natural forces are but parts of the universal manifestation in the World of Appearances. I believe that Reality is something infinitely greater than either Matter, Force, or even Mind as we know it—all of these so-called Principles being but phases of conditioned manifestation. I consider Reality as so far transcending the power of human reason or imagination that it is futile to attempt to even think of what it must be in its ultimate presence and being—our highest conceptions could only dwarf it.

Finally, I accept the conclusions of some very ancient thinkers who held that this Ultimate Reality is, and must be: "(1) One and one only, without parts, elements or members; and therefore indivisible into these; (2) Unchangeable and Incapable of Change; and (3) Causeless, and Uncaused." I think that in this conception you have the highest possible thought concerning Ultimate Reality; and that these facts of its being cannot be successfully disputed or contradicted.

I think that if these conceptions are thoroughly studied, digested and assimilated, many of our commonly asked questions about "God" will be found to disappear because they are perceived to be meaningless and to have been improperly asked. Some day, I may write a book telling what I know about this subject—and also what I do not and cannot know about it, and why.



## THE SILENCE

R. S. P. writes "(1) What is 'Going into the Silence;' (2) how is it done; (3) just what is accomplished thereby?"

I cannot answer this question in this department, at this time. It would take up too much space. But I hope to be able to work in an article on just this particular subject before long, even if I have to crowd out something else for the month. It is an interesting subject, and I have had many inquiries regarding it.

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## TREATMENTS

H. S. writes: "Do you give treatments for Insomnia? This case is a very bad one, and specialists seem unable to do anything for it."

No, I do not give treatments of any kind. My time is entirely occupied by my writing and editing this magazine, and I could not give the proper time and attention to metaphysical treatments, and so do not accept any cases. You will find an answer to another correspondent in the July magazine, which is the best I can do in the way of an answer at this time. Sometime in the future I may be able to find space for an article on the subject.

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## METAPHYSICAL HEALING

Mrs. A. P. writes: "What is the treatment for a weakness of the muscles of the eyes, which becomes very painful at times? The other trouble is a physical deformity, in the nature of an accumulation of flesh which renders certain parts of my body out of proportion with the adjoining parts; there is no projection of the bones, but only the excessive flesh; what can be done for it?"

I cannot undertake to give specific advice in the treatment of complaints by metaphysical methods. In this magazine, and in my books, I have sought to state the general principles, particularly along the lines of self-healing. But I can not undertake to advise in particular cases, for obvious reasons. The general principles, however, are so universally applicable, that little more is needed in most cases. (1) Faith; (2) Mental Picturing of the Expected Result; and (3) Exercise of the affected parts with the co-operation of the Thought of Health and Normal Functioning; these three things have worked many a cure. So far as the accumulation of flesh is concerned (and I note what you say in the unpublished part of this letter), I should think that the proper methods of exercise would help. Isn't it possible that you are devoting entirely too much thought and attention to this trouble, in the direction of worrying about it? Do you not carry a mental picture of it (exaggerated at that) in mind most of the time? If so, why not reverse the process, and carry about the mental picture of the Desired Condition? I have seen some remarkable changes wrought in just this way. Make the right kind of mental pattern, and see whether you can't make your physical garment conform to it. I know a man here in Chicago who insists that he reduced his weight from 250 pounds to 185 pounds in just this way—and he is a truthful man too, even if he is an insurance agent. Surely it's worth trying, isn't it? But don't waste time in trying, unless you go into it whole-heartedly and in real earnest. There's but little benefit derived from a mere "nibbling" at mental healing.



## LET IT ALONE

J. H. writes: "I wish to learn how to develop my inner forces, so that I may become a spiritualist medium, or a hypnotist. Can you recommend a teacher for me who would help me to come in contact with the spirit forces? Will you kindly tell me what is the best way to start?"

No, I do not know to whom to recommend you. So far as becoming a spiritualistic medium is concerned, you might write to some editor of a journal devoted to spiritualism. It might interest you to know, however, that the average "medium" is a far from happy person. Too often such a degree of negativity is developed that such a one becomes like a windharp, subject to every passing mental current or breeze. I have known a great number of mediums, and have been given their confidence, and I can assure you that the advice of many of them to you would have been: "Let it alone!" As for becoming a hypnotist, I frankly tell you that I have no sympathy with your aspiration in that direction. And I know whereof I speak, when I say this. You would do much better to develop your own physical, mental and spiritual powers than to learn to meddle with those of other persons. I have known a few hypnotists who deserved to be ridden out of town on a rail. And, no matter how good a man may be, he is not good enough to be allowed to dominate the thoughts and mentality of another person. I am not speaking from the prejudice of ignorance in this, either; I have experimented in this phase of mental influence, and have made discoveries regarding it which would prove very interesting reading if they were printed—but they will not be, I assure you. I am glad to say that I have passed by this phase of thought, and have left it forever behind me. With all the earnestness at my command, I say to you: LET IT ALONE!

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A QUESTION OF "EATS"

J. A. M. writes: "In the May issue of your magazine, on page 139, in the article entitled 'Higher Psychic Faculties', the author says: 'Be very careful of your personal habits and of what you eat.' I understand the former, but not the latter. Please enlighten me."

I cannot reach the author of the article in question at this moment. I should think, however, that he meant that, in his opinion, the person striving for psychic or spiritual development should refrain from flesh-eating. I understand that he himself is a very strict vegetarian; and, as I know that many hold that meat eating is not conducive to psychic or spiritual development, I think that this is the point he wishes to emphasize in the article in question. I will try to get him to say something about this matter in some of his future articles. There is no use of my trying to give you his reasons, for I do not see the matter in just the same way, as you may see from a recent answer of mine in this department. But, however, after all, this is a matter which everyone must settle for himself or herself. I am no authority on the subject, and, for that matter, am apt to change to a meatless diet at almost any time, if the spirit moves me so to do. I'm not at all "sot in my ways" on these things.



# A Little Parable

By William Walker Atkinson

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I. Once upon a time there was a little boy whose father took him on a journey in order to show him a large forest of which he had heard much talk. He was taken on a long walk through the densest part of the forest. When asked what he thought of the wonderful forest, the little fellow replied: "I couldn't see the forest—there were too many trees around."

II. Once upon a time some fishes in the sea were discussing the Ocean, of which they had heard. The wisest old fishes dismissed the whole subject as ridiculous, saying: "There isn't any Ocean around here; we have lived here all our lives, and have never seen a sign of it."

III. Once upon a time the birds of the air were discussing the subject of the Atmosphere. The owl closed the discussion by saying, positively and with a wise air: "There hain't no such thing! If there had been I would have come across it when flying around at night; and I have never seen a trace of it in the daytime."

IV. Once upon a time some wise men were discussing the search for The Infinite. They despaired of ever finding it. A little child overheard their disputations, and ventured the query: "Why don't you look for it **within yourselves?** If it exists everywhere, as you say, it must exist inside of your mind and soul; and you should be able to discover it there, shouldn't you?" But the wise men rebuked the child, bidding him to run along and play, and not to disturb his elders in their deep discussions. And so, the child ran to his play; and the wise men are still searching in vain for The Infinite somewhere outside of themselves. What do children know about philosophy, anyway?

Moral: There is such a thing as being too near to a thing to perceive it.

## SAVE YOUR MAGAZINE

Save your *Advanced Thought*; for each number will soon be out of print. The March issue has already disappeared from mortal view---and April is "on the way," following March. The back numbers will soon constitute a valuable *New Thought Library* that cannot be had otherwise.



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## SECOND CONGRESS, IN CHICAGO

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The second Congress of the International New Thought Alliance will be held in the Congress Hotel, Chicago, the week of September 17-24. The Congress Hotel will be the New Thought Headquarters, and the sessions of the Congress will be held in the Elizabethan Room. Mrs. Sarah C. Morse, 1045 East 47th street, Vice-President of the Illinois-Wisconsin District, is making the arrangements for the entertaining of the Congress. The program of the Congress will be made up by the Executive Board of the Alliance, and already many prominent speakers have signified their willingness to assist in the coming Congress. The program will be replete with interest, and all phases of the New Thought will be presented.

Special sessions of the Congress will be held to consider business pertaining to the Alliance, and to this session only members of the Alliance will be admitted.

The New Thought work has been greatly augmented during the past year by reason of the splendid organization which was effected at the first International Congress held in San Francisco last year, and reports will be received from the thirty Vice-Presidents throughout the world of the work accomplished in their districts.

The General Headquarters of the Alliance is located in Washington, D. C., 802 Washington Loan & Trust Bldg., and from this office all business of the Alliance is conducted. The International New Thought Alliance is not an organization in the old sense of the word, but is an organization purely for propaganda and fellowship, and its work is along broad lines which will include all who are teaching and presenting this new way of thinking to the world.



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when **rightly** used, but when wrongly used it is **sure** to bring failure. Most persons concentrate on that which annoys, irritates and makes for failure and loss of memory. When we are sick it is hard to concentrate on the thought of being well. When we are despondent from any cause it is difficult to concentrate on the idea of our ever being happy again. When we have lost money it is easy to concentrate on our loss, but almost impossible to concentrate on our having an abundance again.

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