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Advanced Thought

William Walker Atkinson
Editor

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Advanced Thought Publishing Co.
904 Masonic Temple Chicago, Ill

THE KEYSTONE OF THE MENTAL ARCH

By SHELDON LEAVITT, M. D.

Ever since I came out of Medicine as it is commonly practiced, about seventeen years ago, I have been working away at this question of healing disease by mental and spiritual means. It was seventeen years ago that I published my well-known, and widely-sold book entitled "Psycho-Therapy in the Practice of Medicine and Surgery." In a fourth edition this work was given the title "As Ye Will" and I began to put strong emphasis on the WILL as a curative factor. A few years ago I gave to my practice the expressive name of VOLOOTHERAPY because I had found that WILL is the most positive factor in cure. Now I am using this form of cure in my practice with **superlative effect.**

VOLOOTHERAPY IS THE KEYSTONE OF THE MENTAL ARCH.

To one who is ill it is well nigh useless to say, "Will is the cure for your ailment. Ask and receive; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you"; and expect him to succeed all alone. He is too negative and spineless at the time to do with success what you ask of him. The New Thought philosophy is beautiful, and for a certain proportion of the complainers it will do much good; but it proves insufficient in most of those cases which most need relief. I have ceased to encourage people to struggle alone, but I extend to them THE HELPING HAND.

In my use of Will upon my patients I find it necessary to adapt my Volotherapy to the individual. I make two classes:

Class I. This includes those who by reason of mental inefficiency or deficiency are absolutely unable to do much for themselves. Some of them are so weak and worn by their environment that volition is powerless. They have struggled alone to the breaking-point. Others are too young or too mentally dull to grasp the principles of self-help, and these are sometimes the most responsive. This class includes children, the unconscious and the mentally-alienated.

Class II. Into this class I put those who by virtue of mental training, or by the nature of their troubles, are plainly capable of being re-educated, and who can intelligently co-operate to secure the desired results. In this class are many aspiring souls who long to become well-developed. They are still under the power of unsubdued emotions, but desire to get free from the compelling mental and nerve-storms which so often sweep over them. Most of these men and women are rich in possibilities, and it is a great pleasure for me to give them a helping hand and walk with them along the paths which lead to high levels.

My list of patients is made up largely of those who belong in this class. Among them are those who have been teachers and practitioners of New Thought, but who have failed to reach satisfactory mental and physical footing.

In treating those of the first class I make strong and positive demands. It is not "Human Will," as distinct from Universal Will that is used. It is an opening of the floodgates of Cosmic Will and directing the flow through the channels of the patient's life. It is the plan followed by Jesus in most of his healings; it is the word of command, "Come out of him!" In the case of very ill patients who are unable to help themselves I walk the floor with clinched fists and clenched jaws, affirming and demanding; and I GET MARVELOUS RESULTS.

In treating those of the second class I exercise Will to make them faithful, expectant and determined.

Another thing which I have done is to fit my charges for help to the means of the applicants. I am putting hard work on some cases for only \$2.00 per month, while some pay \$10.00, \$15.00, \$30.00, and one even \$150.00 per month for my "absent" work. And the proof that they are getting what they seek is that they stick.

It is folly for one who is under the power of physical disorder to refuse the Helping Hand and continue to flounder.

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Address all communications to Sheldon Leavitt, M. D., 4665 Lake Park Ave., Chicago.

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*A Monthly Journal of
Mental Science, Practical Psychology,
Yogi Philosophy, Constructive Occultism,
♥ ♥ Metaphysical Healing, Etc. ♥ ♥*

WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON, Editor
ARTHUR GOULD, Business Manager

Vol. IV.

AUGUST, 1919

No. 4

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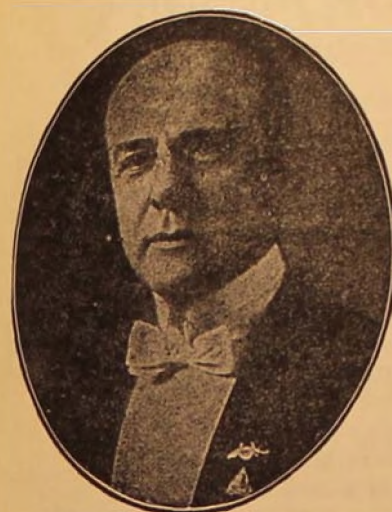
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Fragments From "The Kasidah"

By Haji Abdu El-Yezdi

What endless questions vex the thought, of Whence and Whither, When and How?
What fond and foolish strife to read the Scripture writ on human brow;
As stand we perch on point of Time, betwixt the two Eternities,
Whose awful secrets gathering round with black profound oppress our eyes.

What know'st thou, man, of Life? and yet, for ever twixt the womb, the grave,
Thou pratest of the Coming Life, of Heav'n and Hell thou fain must rave.
The world is old and thou art young; the world is large and thou art small;
Cease atom of a moment's span, to hold thyself an All-in-All.

Fie, fie! you visionary things, ye motes that dance in sunny glow,
Who base and build Eternities on briefest moments here below;
Who pass through Life like caged birds, the captives of a despot will;
Still wond'ring How and When and Why, and Whence and Whither, wond'ring still.

Who knows not Whence he comes nor Why, who kens not Whither bound and When,
Yet such is Allah's choicest gift, the blessing dreamt by foolish men.
Cease Man, to mourn, to weep, to wail; enjoy thy shining hour of sun;
We dance along Death's icy brink, but is the dance less full of fun?

"You changeful finite Creatures strain" (rejoins the Drawer of the Wine),
"The dizzy heights of Infinite Power to fathom with your foot of twine";
"How shall the Shown pretend to ken aught of the Showman or the Show?
Why meanly bargain to believe, which only means thou ne'er canst know?"

You bring down Heav'n to vulgar Earth; your Maker like yourselves you make,
You quake to own a reign of Law, you pray the Law its Laws to break.
You pray, but hath your thoughts e'er weighed how empty vain the prayer must be,
That begs a boon already given, or craves a change of Law to see?

All Faith is false, all Faith is true; Truth is the shattered mirror strown
In myriad bits; while each believes his little bit the whole to own.
As palace mirror'd in the stream, as vapour mingled with the skies,
So weaves the brain of mortal man the tangled web of Truth and Lies.

Yes Truth may be, but 'tis not Here; mankind must ever seek and find it There,
But Where nor I nor you can tell, nor aught earth-mother ever bare.
Enough to think that Truth can be: come sit we where the roses glow,
Indeed he knows not how to know who knows not also to unknow.

Do what thy manhood bids thee do, from none but self expect applause;
He noblest lives, and noblest dies, who makes and keeps his self-made laws.
All other Life is living Death, a world where none but phantoms dwell,
A breath, a wind, a sound, a voice, a tinkling of the camel's bell.

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Chips From the Old Block

By William Walker Atkinson

Much of your desire to change your environment, your surroundings, your occupation, your friends and associates, is really naught but a desire on your part to run away from yourself.

The feverish desire to be in a different place, to have something different from what you now possess, to be surrounded by different persons, is really often but a sign that you are tired and dissatisfied with yourself.

Many persons rush frantically around and about, changing places, friends, occupations, and often even their mates—but usually failing to gain satisfaction, happiness or contentment. Why? Simply because their same old Self is still right there on the job.

You cannot “shake” your Self. You cannot run away from your own shadow. You cannot escape from yourself, no matter how often you change your garments or your name. The same old Self sticks to you tighter than the burr to the back of the sheep.

This being the case, why not give up this foolishness of trying to run away from yourself? Why not try to gain greater content, satisfaction, and happiness by improving yourself, cultivating yourself, training yourself, educating yourself—you cannot get rid of yourself, but you can “make over” yourself.

Stop trying to obtain perfect contentment, satisfaction, and happiness from the outside. Begin to get them from the inside, the only place where these things really abide.

Get on good terms with yourself. Learn to know yourself. Come to an agreement with yourself. Then, and then only, will you ever be able to obtain pleasure and benefit from the outside things.

Get right within—then the without will fall into line with the within. The world is a mirror—it reflects largely that which you present to its reflecting surface.

Stop trying to run away from yourself. You can't do it—and then, you really won't want to do it when you become well acquainted with your Real Self and find what a fine being it really is.

The World and the Individual

By Henry Victor Morgan

The message of Cosmic Truth has nothing to do with limitation. It never mistakes the actual for the possible. It looks not at the things which are seen, which are temporal, but at the things which are unseen, which are eternal. It forever seeks a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, and speaks of things that be not as though they were. It cannot be balked by appearances and forever retains its own estimate. To it consciousness is the only greatness. The sun, moon and stars are not great until they mirror themselves in consciousness.

Primitive man forever has and forever will attribute greatness to objects **outside** of himself. When he listens to a lecture on astronomy, he will say, "How great are the stars. What a pigmy is man." But when reason reigns, the lecture on astronomy will be to him a revelation of his own consciousness and in the humility of a love-lit faith that is scientific, he will say, "How great is the mind God has given me to contain such immensities." The luminous words of the prophet Emerson, "the world exists for the individual," even daring though they are, fall into insignificance when compared with the greater word of Jesus, "All that the Father hath, is mine." There is inspiration also in Whitman's "Before I was born out of my mother's womb, the stars sent influences to look after me." All these words bear witness to the truth that man is a citizen of the cosmos and spiritually related to every part thereof.

The mind of man is subject to influences beyond his consciousness. Great emancipated souls, invisible to the natural man, aided though he is by telescope, spectroscope, and microscope, strengthen and sustain every aspiring soul. But of this, more will be said in another lesson, on "Our Invisible Allies." Let it suffice here to say that such influencing souls never control, nor seek to control, any more than Moses and Elijah controlled Jesus on the mount of transfiguration.

I doubt if any man or woman has ever done very much to list the consciousness of men Godward who has not thus been consciously strengthened and sustained by an unseen presence.

There is not only rapture and ecstasy in this endeavoring to realize our cosmic affinities with suns and stars and the inhabitants thereof, but practical helpfulness for us in the details, and even the drudgeries, of our every day lives. Listen to the triumph call of

Paul in prison: "Wherefore, seeing we are encompassed with so great a cloud of witnesses let us lay aside every weight."

The simplest person who realizes the glory of this thought, though he is toiling in obscurity, becomes a world power greater than king's and counselor's who lack this insight into the mystery of Godliness. In fact, kings and counselors are often unconsciously influenced by the prayers of such. Let one illustration suffice. During a recent series of lectures given in Los Angeles on "The Inspired Life," a man who is a laborer in the ship yards at San Pedro, attended all the meetings. During a private conversation, he very guilelessly related this experience: "One morning while praying and meditating on the deeper things of life I suddenly became aware that I was at the Paris Peace Conference. All that I could see distinctly was the face of President Wilson and he seemed discouraged and perplexed. His face was worn and sad and I treated and prayed for him until I saw him smile."

I had just finished attendance at the May Festival of the Los Angeles metaphysicians, where I heard many good things by the leading teachers, but I heard nothing that for depth of insight and sublimity of power compared with this simple statement. That man could not speak on the platform. His English was not altogether perfect. Many would pass him by and say "Only a laborer," and yet he had exercised a power that may have helped to mould the destiny of nations. I have no doubt that President Wilson as a result of that prayer felt greatly encouraged to stand for the ideal in face of great opposition. I believe that this is what Tennyson visioned when he had King Arthur say:

"Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not the hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

It is thus that each man who catches the vision of God can preach the gospel to the whole world and become a party to all that is or has been done, the acme of things accomplished and encloser of things to be. Whoever sees and avails himself of this open door will never lack opportunity for doing good, nor will he ever secretly long for

greater worlds to conquer. He will know that all men of good will are supporting him in what he is doing by his all-embracing faith. I love to feel, that even as I write this lesson, I am voicing the prayers of my friends, both known and unknown, seen and unseen, for I have thrown the doors of my mind open to every good thought. When I go into a Christian Science, Divine Science, or New Thought testimony meeting and hear of wonderful healings and demonstrations, I rejoice greatly in the work of my hands, for every day I pray for all practitioners. My love thought goes with all doctors and nurses who are endeavoring to alleviate human suffering, and because I have thus prayed I AM in every hospital and beside every patient.

I call this the Kingdom of the Invisible. It is open to all men of good will regardless of race or color, for this consciousness knows no boundaries. Emerson says of the one whom this thought inhabits, "He does not shine and would rather not." They are content to work from beneath. Great, luminous souls these, unknown to fame, but well known to God. Beloved of God, know for your comfort (if you could possibly need other comfort than the consolation of God) that all whom the Cosmic Spirit leads to stand before men never forget you. Should you fail us, our work could not be what it is. We are compelled to listen to tributes that belong as much to you as to us. I could not possibly reveal my own feelings to these unknown shapers of world destinies better than to paraphrase some lines written long ago to the divine feminine in my wife:

I stand in the sun on the heights above
 And men sing their praises to me,
 But the stream could not flash in the sun, my love,
 Were it not for the strength of the sea.
 Nor could I work on the heights above
 Were your strength not under me.

In the light of this truth what wonder that Paul writing to men, who in the objective world were slaves, calls them "kings and priests unto God." And Jesus, speaking to common fishermen, said: "I will give unto you the key to the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven."

"Plan your work,

then

Work your plan."

Why We Think As We Do

By Arthur Gould

A river rises and falls at times but it will remain at a certain level most of the time. The same is true of a man. He may read elevating books, and associate with good people, but when he is not reading or associating with people his thoughts will turn into tracks they have habitually taken. The thoughts that we allow to float through our head most will predominate our thinking. If a man imagines he is going to be a great political orator, he will form a mental picture of himself making a speech amid the plaudits of the multitude. If he thinks he is destined to be a successful business man, he will picture himself as being such. There is no reason he can not be, if he is willing to put forward the necessary effort.

Most men are failures because they indulge too much in pleasant but uneducative roamings. The best way to cure this habit is to stop this kind of dreaming the first moment you become aware of it, and start thinking about some useful subject.

It is a good practice for beginners to write down at first how many times their thoughts will wander from the subject in half an hour. They may wander as often as fifteen times in a half hour. Not knowing how to do things is the cause of failures. Once you realize that your mind wanders it becomes easier to control it. Just the second you find it starts to wander stop it and make it turn into the channel you have chosen. At first you will find this takes considerable effort. But each time you succeed in keeping the mind from wandering, makes it easier to control it the next time. Every time you are successful makes it increasingly easier the next time and in time you will reach a point where your control over your thoughts will be almost absolute. You will be able to tackle the most serious subjects with pleasure. You will find that frivolous and petty trains of thought will become more and more intolerable.

John Stuart Mill says: "I attribute all that I have ever done, or ever shall do, to the rule of never abandoning a puzzle, but again and again returning to it until it was cleared up; never allowing obscure corners of a subject to remain unexplored because they did not appear important; never thinking that I perfectly understood any part of a subject until I understand the whole." Mill's method was, in short, "that of conscious and vehement effort directed towards the end he had in view." He solved his problems by laborious application and study.

William Mento writes of Adam Smith: "His intellectual pro-

ceedings were calm, patient, and regular; he mastered a subject slowly and circumspectly, and carried his principles with steady tenacity through multitudes of details that would have checked many men of greater mental vigor unendowed with the same invincible persistence."

Some have the idea that if we think too much we will be liable to permanently injure our mighty intellects. This of course has happened many times, but usually there is no danger. Thinking on one useful subject for a long while will not injure you any more than thinking on hundreds of useless subjects for the same period.

Of course when you are sleepy or have a headache you should not try to center your thoughts on any certain subject. If your mind feels tired give it rest, either by sleeping or doing some physical work. When the mind is tired, the thinking done will be of such poor quality that it will be practically useless if not harmful.

Thinking done in the evening seldom approaches in efficiency the thinking done in the first hours of the morning. The mind seldom gets tired, but may merely be tired of a particular subject.

An objection may be raised against always trying to control your thoughts. It has often been cited how, when a person wanted to recall a certain name, he could not do it, but when he was not thinking about it it came to him. It is difficult to say just what effects this change in thought, when apparently you have engaged in no reflection during the interval. The mere trying to recall something probably gives a certain "set" to your mind, and without being aware of it you observe facts relating to your problem. Ideas which occur to you in other connections are unconsciously seen in their bearing on the unsolved question. In short, those proclivities of thought which have probably been caused unawares by experience make themselves felt.

Of course we do not expect anybody to control his thoughts all the time, but we want you to know the more you do the better it will be for you. If every man would sit aside fifteen minutes or a half hour each day and practice thinking about one thing only, shutting out any other thoughts, he would soon find it is easy to control his thoughts.

You ask a person what he thinks of so and so and he will tell you what he thinks. Why he thinks the way he does he never stops to analyze. As one writer expresses it, "We often form our opinions on the slightest evidence, yet we are inclined to cling to them with grim tenacity." This is far truer than most people realize. Why?

Because when we form an opinion on something, the chances are we have voiced our opinion to some one, and have therefore declared ourself. To reverse our opinion is to confess we were previously

wrong. You would then be considered inconsistent, which if rightly understood is not such a bad fault. Everyone's judgment is only human and fallible. Never be afraid of changing opinions already formed.

The strong man is never afraid of being branded as inconsistent. He will state what he believes today, and tomorrow what he then believes, even if his opinion is exactly opposite. He does not put forward a theory and attempt to prove this is so. Of course he tries to prove that it is, but if he finds that he was mistaken he acknowledges the fact and then gives his present belief.

Many men form a hypothesis. They then shut out any idea but that it is correct. The mere fact that they are ignorant of a certain thing will prejudice them against it, while knowledge of it will prepossess them in its favor. Most people's opinions are really based on a childish and unworthy attitude. They do not look closely enough into the real reasons in the argument, but will do everything they can to justify their belief. They are really unaware of their true cause and inclination to one side in preference to the other.

Both sides in an argument think they are right, and that the other side is at fault. They can only see their side of the question. They see their side of the question only because they only look for this.

What you want to do is to always look at both sides. Weigh each side carefully and then form your conclusions. Just because you happen to form one opinion don't always hold to this, if you afterwards find out you are wrong. Instead of just trying to prove that you are right, also try to look at it from the opposite side and you will be more likely to be right.

Darwin's advice is well worth remembering. He said: "Whenever a published fact, a new observation or thought came to my notice, which was opposed to my views, I make a memorandum of it without fail and at once; for I had found by experience that such facts and thoughts were far more apt to escape from the memory than favorable ones."

This is one of the reasons why some men become greater than others. They are not content to think that everything is being done the best it can be, and that nothing can be improved. Instead, they know that everything is capable of development. Everything perhaps can be done better and cheaper than it is now being done.

The longer you hold an opinion, the harder it is for you to get rid of it. It becomes almost part of your nature. An opinion is a habit of thought once it becomes lodged in the brain, it is subject to the same laws as a habit of action. The older a person gets the more set he gets in his opinion, and the harder it is for anyone to change

his opinion. This is why business firms like younger employees. The older ones may be capable of doing just as much work, but they have learned a certain way to work and therefore do not fit in well with the organization.

You should be very careful in forming your opinion, for once this gains entrance, any opinion contrary to it will have to dislodge the old one before it can find a resting place.

As Mark Twain has said: "When even the brightest mind in our world has been trained from childhood in a superstition of any kind, it will never be possible for that mind, in its maturity, to examine sincerely, dispassionately, and conscientiously any evidence or any circumstances which shall seem to cast a doubt upon the validity of that superstition."

Mark Twain's opinion was right concerning the vast majority, but this should not be true. We are a Reasoning Race, but if we accept his opinion we would have to admit we are not.

The true fact is most people form their opinions by accident. Most opinions are formed without thought: borrowed opinions, etc. They are hammered into their heads from childhood. This is why almost all of the 400,000,000 Chinamen are Buddhists; that the overwhelming mass of East Indians are Brahmans; that practically all Turks, Persians and Arabians are Mohammedans; that England is Protestant, and Ireland Catholic.

William James gives an example of how even scientists dislike to change their opinion when he said: "Why do so few scientists even look at the evidence for telepathy, so-called? Because they think, as a leading biologist, now dead, once said to me, that even if such a thing were true, scientists ought to band together to keep it suppressed and concealed. It would undo the uniformity of nature, and all sorts of other things without which scientists cannot carry on their pursuits." Darwin writes that he told Sedgwick, the geologist, of how a tropical Volute shell had been found in a gravel pit near Shrewsbury. Sedgwick replied that some one must have thrown it there, and added that if it were "really imbedded there, it would be the greatest misfortune to geology, as it would overthrow all that we know about the superficial deposits of the Midland Countries." Case after case like this could be given. [We should not be so ready to shut out light, even if it does disapprove something we thought was true. Sedgwick tacitly admitted that he not only believed the shell had not been embedded, he actually desired that it had not been. We let our desires determine, to a great extent, the trouble we take to get evidence to substantiate our views.

It is really a harmful practice to fear to change an opinion which you have entertained, after you have reasons to believe it is wrong.

If a thought come to you, and after a time it seems inconsistent with another thought, do not immediately try to throw out one or the other. Instead ponder over the new thought, as if you never had the first. Then do the same thing with the first thought. In time one will reveal its falsity and the other its truth. In many cases you will find both thoughts contained a certain amount of truth, and you will be able to blend the two and thereby have a bigger idea.

The reason most people do not control their thoughts is they do not want to. The only way we can control our thoughts is by wanting to and to become convinced that we can. There should not be the slightest doubt in our minds that we can. Then you should look with perfect indifference on all questions, as to whether they are true or untrue. There is nothing to be gained by thinking they are true when they are not. When we really want to know the truth we put ourselves on the path of getting it.

Many persons adopt the same opinions of others around them, because they fear to disagree. You fear to differ with them in thought, just as you fear difference with them in dress. You fear to look different from the people around you because you would be considered freakish. You fear to think differently because you would be looked upon as "queer." If you would express opinions very different from those held by others, you would be regarded as a mere crank or fanatic with a "screw loose."

MEDITATION

Henry Victor Morgan

O mighty spirit of the Eternal,
Our hearts are open to Thee.
Thou hast revealed Thyself as Life,
And the Universe as Thy manifestation.
Our bodies are Thy dwelling place;
Yea, they are expressions of Thy power.
May we intelligently recognize Thee
Until gladness and singing shall come,
And our flesh rejoice in Thy praise.
It is Thy will we seek, and feel
Thy love enfolds and sustains;
We smile to think Thy greatness
Flows around our incompleteness,
Until our restlessness has departed,
In the consciousness of Thy peace.

It is so.

The Mystic Quest

By Carolyn Woodsworth

(First Paper)

The most highly developed branches of the human family have in common one peculiar characteristic. They tend to produce—sporadically it is true, and usually in the teeth of adverse external circumstances—a curious and definite type of personality; a type which refuses to be satisfied with that which other men call **experience**, and is inclined, in the words of its enemies, to “deny the world in order that it may find Reality.”

We meet these persons in the east and in the west; in the ancient, mediaeval, and modern worlds. Their one passion appears to be the prosecution of a certain spiritual and intangible quest—the finding of a “way out,” or a “way back” to some desirable state in which alone they can satisfy their craving for absolute truth. This quest, for them, has constituted the whole meaning of life—they have made for it without effort sacrifices which have appeared enormous to other men—and it is an indirect testimony to its objective actuality, that whatever the place or period in which they have arisen, their aims, doctrines and methods have been substantially the same. Their experience, therefore, forms a body of evidence, curiously self-consistent and often mutually explanatory, which must be taken into account before we can add up the sum of the energies and potentialities of the human spirit, or reasonably speculate on its relations to the unknown world which lies outside the boundaries of sense.

All men, at one time or another, have fallen in love with the veiled Isis whom they call Truth. With most, this has been but a burning passion—they have seen its hopelessness and have turned to more practical things. But there are others who remain all their lives the devout lovers of Reality—though the manner of their love, the vision which they make unto themselves of the beloved object, varies enormously.

Under whatever symbol they may have objectified their quest, none of these seekers have ever been able to assure the world that they have found, seen face to face, the Reality behind the veil. But if we may trust the reports of the Mystics—and they are reports given with a strange accent of certainty and good faith—they have succeeded, where all others have failed, in establishing immediate communication between the spirit of man, entangled as they declare amongst material things, and that “only Reality,” that immaterial and final Being, which some philosophers call the Absolute, and most theologians call God.

This, they say—and here many who are not Mystics agree with them—is the hidden Truth which is the object of man's craving—the only satisfying goal of his quest. Hence, they should claim from the world the same attention that it gives to other explorers of countries in which we are not competent to adventure ourselves. For the Mystics are the pioneers of the spiritual world, and we have no right to deny validity to their discoveries, merely because we lack the opportunity or the courage necessary to those who would prosecute such explorations for themselves.

It is the object of all popular writing upon the subject of Mysticism to attempt a description, and a justification of these experiences, and the conclusions which have been drawn from them. So remote, however, are these matters from our ordinary habits of thought, that their investigation entails, in all those who would attempt to understand them, a certain definite preparation—a purging of the intellect, as it has been called. As with those who came of old to the Mysteries, purification is here the gate of knowledge. We must come to this encounter with minds clear of prejudice and convention; must deliberately break with our inveterate habit of taking the "visible world" for granted—our lazy assumption that somehow science is "real" and that metaphysics is not. We must pull down our own card-houses—descend, as the Mystics say, "into our nothingness"—and examine for ourselves the foundation of all possible human experience, before we are in a position to criticize the buildings of the visionaries, the poets, and the saints. We must not begin to talk of the "unreal world" of these dreamers until we have discovered—if we can—a real world with which it may be compared.

Such a criticism of Reality is of course the business of philosophy—and we are not all skilled philosophers. Nevertheless, amateurs though we may be in the imperial science of philosophy, we are justified in trespassing to some extent upon the philosophic ground in order to reach a proper starting-point for our consideration of the category of experiences of the Mystics. Let us then go back to the first principles of philosophic thought, in order that we may understand the true significance of the Mystic experience.

Let us begin at the beginning, and remind ourselves of a few of the trite and primary facts which all so-called "practical" persons agree to ignore. That beginning, for human thought, is of course the I, the Ego, the self-conscious subject which is writing these words, or the other self-conscious subject which is reading them. This self-conscious subject, this I or Ego, in either case, declares in the teeth of all arguments, "I AM." Here is a point as to which we all feel quite sure. In spite of the destructive criticism of certain modern writers, who have asserted that the concept of the Ego, as the starting point of philosophy, is a logically unwarrantable assumption, we

venture to state positively that no metaphysician or philosopher has as yet shaken the ordinary individual's belief in his own existence. No such individual has as yet been able to conscientiously assert "I am not." The uncertainties begin for the most of us only when we begin to ask ourselves "what else is?"

To this I, this self-conscious self "imprisoned in the body like an oyster in his shell," as Plato puts it, come as we know a constant stream of messages and experiences. Chief amongst these are the stimulation of the tactile nerves whose result we call "touch"; the vibrations taken up by the optic nerves which we call "light"; and those taken up by the ear, and which we perceive as "sound." What do these experiences mean? The first answer of the unsophisticated Self is, of course, that they indicate the nature of the external world—it is the highly esteemed and unquestioned "evidence of the senses" to which we turn when we are asked "what is the world like?"

From the message received through these senses, which pour in upon us whether we will or no, which batter upon our gateways at every instant and from every side, we construct our "sense-world," which is "the real and solid world" of the so-called "practical" individuals. As the impressions come in—or rather those interpretations of the original impressions which our nervous systems supply—we pounce upon them, much as players in the spelling-game pounce on the separate letters dealt up to them. We sort, accept, reject, and combine them—and then triumphantly produce from them a "concept" which is, we say, the external world. With an enviable and amazing simplicity we attribute our own sensations to the unknown universe. The stars, we say, are bright, the grass is green. To us, and to philosophers like Hume, "Reality consists in impressions and ideas."

It is immediately apparent, however, that this sense-world, this seemingly real external universe—though it may be useful and valid in other respects—cannot be the external world, but merely the Self's projected picture of it. It is a work of art, not a scientific fact; and whilst it may well possess the profound significance proper to great works of art, it is dangerous if treated as a subject of analysis. Very slight investigation, indeed, will be enough to suggest that a picture whose relation to Reality is at best symbollic and approximate, and which would have no meaning for selves whose senses, or channels of communication, happened to be arranged upon a different plan. The evidence of the senses, then, cannot be safely accepted as evidence of the nature of Ultimate Reality—useful servants, the senses are dangerous guides in such a quest. Nor can their testimony disconcert those seekers whose report they appear to contradict.

The conscious self sits, so to speak, at the receiving end of a telegraph wire. On any other theory than that of Mysticism, it is

its one channel of communication with the hypothetical "external world." The receiving instrument registers certain messages. She does not know, and—so long as she remains dependent on that instrument—never can know, the object, the Reality at the other end of the wire, by which those messages are sent; neither can the messages truly disclose the nature of that object. But the Self is justified on the whole in accepting these messages as evidence that **something** exists besides itself and its receiving instrument.

It is obvious that the structural peculiarities of the telegraphic instrument will have exerted a modifying effect upon the message. That which is conveyed as dash and dot, color and shape, may have been received in a very different form. Therefore the message, though it may in a partial sense be relevant to the supposed reality at the other end, can never be adequate to it. There will be fine vibrations which it fails to take up, others which it confuses together. Hence a portion of the message is always lost; or, in other language, there are aspects of the world which we can never know.

The sphere of our possible intellectual knowledge is thus strictly conditioned by the limits of our own personality. On this basis, not the ends of earth, but the external termini of our own sensory nerves, are the termini of our explorations; and to "know oneself" is really to know one's universe. We are locked up with our receiving instruments—we cannot get up and walk away from them in the hope of seeing whither the lines lead. Eckhart's words are still final for us, viz., that "the soul can only approach created things by the voluntary reception of images." Did some mischievous Demiurge choose to tickle our sensory apparatus in a new way, we should receive by this act a new universe.

The late Professor James once suggested as a useful exercise for young idealists a consideration of the changes which would be worked in our ordinary world if the various branches of our receiving instruments happened to exchange duties—if, for instance, we heard all colors, and saw all sounds. All this is less mad than it sounds, when we pause to consider that music is but the interpretation of certain vibrations undertaken by the ear, and color but an interpretation of other vibrations performed by the eye. Were such an alteration of our sense to take place, the world would still be sending us the same messages—that strange unknown world from which, on this hypothesis, we are hermetically sealed—but we should interpret them differently.

Beauty would still be ours, though speaking another tongue. The bird's song would then strike our retina as a pageant of color; we should **see** all the magical tones of the wind, **hear** as a great fugue the repeated and harmonized greens of the forest, the cadences of

the stormy skies. Did we realize how slight an adjustment of our own organs is needed to initiate us into such a world, we should be less contemptuous of those Mystics who tell us that they apprehend the Absolute as "heavenly music," or "uncreated light"; or that "I heard flowers that sounded, and saw notes that sung"; or of reports of "a rare moment of consciousness in which the senses are fused into a single and ineffable act of perception, and color and sound are known as aspects of the same thing."

Such considerations should make less fanatical our determination to make "the real and solid world of common sense" the only standard of Reality. This "world of common sense" is a conceptual world. It **may** represent an external universe; it certainly **does** represent the activity of the human mind. Within that mind it is built up; and there most of us are content "at ease for aye to dwell," like the soul in the Palace of Art.

A direct encounter with Absolute Truth, then, appears to be impossible for normal non-Mystical consciousness. We cannot know the Reality, or even prove the existence, of the simplest object—though this is a limitation which few people realize acutely, and most would strenuously deny. But there persists in the race a type of personality which **does** realize this limitation, and which cannot be content with the sham realities that furnish the universe of the so-called "practical" men. It is necessary, as it seems, to the comfort of persons of this type to form for themselves some image of the Something or Nothing which is at the end of their telegraph lines—some "conception of Being," some "theory of Knowledge." They are tormented by the Unknowable; they ache for First Principles; they demand some Background for "the shadow show of things." In so far as man possesses that temperament, he hungers for Reality, and must satisfy that hunger as best he can—staving off actual starvation, though he may not be filled with satisfying food.

It is doubtful, however, whether any two selves have offered themselves exactly the same image of the Truth outside their gates—for a living metaphysic, like a living religion, is at bottom a strictly personal affair, a matter, as Professor James has reminded us, of vision rather than of argument. Nevertheless such a living metaphysic may—and if it be sound it generally does—escape the stigma of subjectivism by outwardly attaching itself to a traditional School of Philosophy; just as personal religion may and usually does outwardly attach itself to a traditional church.

Let us then, in the next paper of this series, consider shortly the results arrived at by these traditional Schools of Philosophy—the great classic theories concerning the Nature of Reality. In them we will see crystallized the best that the human intellect, left to itself, has been able to achieve.

The Buddhist Doctrine

By Subhadra Bhikshu

(Second Paper)

In our last paper we left Prince Siddhartha Gotama, who had left behind him his wife and child, his pomp and luxury, riding away in the darkness of the night as far as his horse could carry him. He had renounced the world, and was seeking to discover the means of overcoming the many harassing problems of existence. As we have said, he was then in his twenty-ninth year.

He went first to the river Anoma. There he cut off his beautiful long hair with his sword, and gave in charge to his faithful attendant, Channa, his arms, his jewels, and his horse. He bade Channa to take these personal belongings back to Kapilavasthu, and to tell his father, the king, and his wife, the princess, what had become of him.

After the departure of Channa, Siddhartha passed seven days near the banks of the river Anoma, lost in deep meditation, and rejoicing to have taken the first and all-important step in the attainment of knowledge, and to have cast off the shackles of a worldly life. He then exchanged clothes with a passing beggar, and proceeded to Rajarhi, the capital of the kingdom of Magadha.

There were living at Rajagriha two Brahmans, both reputed to be very wise and holy men. Their names were Alara and Uddaka, respectively. He assumed the name of Gotama, and became the disciple of these reputed wise and holy men. These teachers taught the doctrine that the soul may be purified only by prayer, sacrifices and various other religious observances of the orthodox Hindu religions of that time; and that thereby one might, by divine mercy, attain redemption.

But Gotama did not find in their teachings that which he sought. Although he carefully learned all that these Brahmans had to teach him, and joined in all their religious exercise, he failed to obtain the knowledge he longed for; and he finally became convinced that their teaching could no ensure him deliverance from suffering, death, and birth-renewal.

In order to understand the nature of the quest of Gotama, it is necessary to remember that **reincarnation**, or re-birth in countless earth-lives, was the accepted doctrine of his land and times, and was no more to be doubted than the fact of birth and death itself. Had he not been filled with this belief in rebirth, he would have seen in death a relief from the sufferings of earth-life; but, according to his beliefs, death was but the natural stage which inevitably lead to another earth life.

Leaving his orthodox teachers he sought other instructors. He found other Brahmans who taught that deliverance could not be attained by prayer, sacrifices, and other religious observances; but that redemption was attainable only by processes of asceticism and severe self-mortification. Gotama resolved to practice this asceticism and self-mortification in its severest form, and for that purpose he retired into a jungle not far from Uruvela, where in utter solitude he gave himself up to all kinds of penances and self-torture.

The fame of the sanctity of Gotama soon began to spread, and he was joined by five other ascetics, who, full of admiration for his fortitude and perseverance, remained with him, in the sure conviction that such a life of self mortification would lead him speedily to the attainment of supreme knowledge and perfection. They hoped when that time finally came, he would accept themselves as his leading disciples.

Gotama remained in the wilderness for upwards of six years. His bodily strength at last gave way under these continued self-inflictions, vigils, and fastings, but he did not relax. One night, when, lost in deep meditation, he was pacing up and down, he suddenly fell down, utterly exhausted, in a fainting fit. His companions thought that he was dying, but he finally revived.

Recovering from his fainting fit caused by exhaustion, he resolved to forsake his ascetic life. He became convinced that asceticism, instead of giving him the peace of mind and the knowledge he desired, was only a stumbling block in the way of truth and moral perfection. He discontinued his fastings and penances, and was in consequence thereof deserted by his five would-be disciples, who now denounced him as an apostate.

As a consequence of this experience, Gotama, when he finally reached the stage of attainment by another path, denounced ascetic practices and self-mortification as worthless as a means of deliverance and attainment. For this reason, the Buddhists have always rejected all self-torture and mortification of the flesh as useless and injurious, and direct their whole attention to the purification of the heart and will from every evil passion and desire by the increase of self culture and superior knowledge. Their holy men voluntarily give up all worldly possessions, sensual delights, worldly desires, and take the vow of poverty and chastity—but they do not torture the body or mortify the flesh.

But, in spite of his disappointment, and his renunciation of asceticism, Gotama did not for a moment despair of reaching his end. Left entirely to himself and his own devices, he determined henceforward to follow exclusively his own inner light. He abandoned all ascetic practices, and, whilst restraining worldly thought and desire, was intent alone upon the highest development of his

moral and mental faculties. One night he was apprised, in prophetic dreams, that he was approaching his goal.

He awoke from his sleep, bathed in the river Niranjara, and took some boiled rice presented to him by a young maiden named Sujata. He spent the whole day in deep meditation near the bank of the river. Toward evening he sat down beneath a mighty Nigrodha tree (since called the "Bo-tree," or "Tree of knowledge") that stood not far off. He sat there, with his face toward the east, firmly resolved not to leave the spot until he had attained supreme knowledge and understanding.

At last he experienced the final struggle—the supreme temptation. This was the struggle against human wishes and desires, which came back upon him with renewed force, though he had supposed himself to have gained already a complete mastery over them. There came to him the struggle against delusions and love of earthly existence, against that craving, that "will-to-live," which is the motive power of our being and the chief source of all our sufferings. The charms of wealth and power, of honor and glory, the sweet delights of home and love, and all the enjoyments which the world has in store for his favorites, began to glow again in their most brilliant light.

There also came the agony of doubt. But Gotama never wavered in his high purpose and his resolve to die rather than to give up. He wrestled with the terrible emotions, and was victorious. The last remnants of human frailty and of worldly desire was consumed in him. Then the deep peace of Nirvana entered his heart, and the full light of Truth rose within him. The goal was reached, the veil rent, all knowledge attained. He discovered the cause of sorrow, of old age, of death and of birth-renewal. There opened within him the "bright clear eye of Truth." He not only discovered the causes of the evils of life, but also found the remedy therefore, and the true way to deliverance—the way to Nirvana.

Gotama, now the Buddha, remained under the Bo-tree for seven days, absorbed in deep meditation. Then he arose and went to the fig-tree Ajapala. The legends relate that here there came to him Mara, the tempter, and sought to turn him away from his mission of spreading the doctrine of Truth, which is the duty and task of the Buddhas. Mara, the tempter and prince of this world, according to the Buddhist legends, plays the same part in the Buddhist religion as Satan, the prince of darkness, does in the Christian religion. Jesus was tempted in the wilderness by Satan, in the same way as the Buddha was tempted by Mara. The allegory of course represents a mental conflict.

The legends relate that Mara, the tempter, came unto the Buddha, and said unto him: "Pass away now, my Lord, from ex-

instance, satisfied with the blessed truth which you have realized and which but very few can attain. Men are governed by selfish motives only. Earth is their dwelling-place, and there only do they find satisfaction. They are unable to grasp the eternal law of the Universe and of Causation, and they refuse to listen to the great doctrine of absolute renunciation of the will-to-live, of the conquest of earthly wishes and desires, and of the way to final deliverance. Desist, then, from the resolve to preach this doctrine, and pass to eternal peace."

But, the legend states, the Buddha refused to listen to the words of the adversary. Instead, he spurned him with contempt, saying to him: "Get thee hence, evil one. I shall not pass out of existence until this pure doctrine of mine is firmly implanted in the hearts of my followers; until I have succeeded in winning a number of true disciples, who, when I am gone, will, in my stead, spread abroad the saving truth out of pity for the multitudes, for the good, for the salvation, and the deliverance of gods and men."

This reference to "gods" is not intelligible to Western readers unless they understand the Buddhist teachings concerning the existence of the gods, the latter being numerous in the Hindu religion. Buddhism neither affirms nor denies the existence of gods—they are not required for the attainment of moral perfection and salvation. Every one is held to be free to believe in either one or a plurality of gods, if he has a wish to do so; but he must remember that all gods

pass away even as men pass away, and are subject to birth-renewal, even if their lives are of millions of years' duration. The teaching is that the Arahant, or saint, who has worked out his salvation, and above all, the Buddha, is superior to any god. The word "gods" (*Devata*) mentioned by the Buddha, means inhabitants of higher and brighter worlds—higher orders of beings. An Arahant is a man who has attained the fourth and supreme stage of holiness, and with it Nirvana.

Mark, the tempter, left the Buddha. The Buddha then remained three weeks longer near the fig-tree Ajapala, enjoying the perfect bliss of his deliverance, and absorbed in the definite preparation of his doctrine. At the end of that time he rose, and said: "Welcome to all who enter the gates of salvation. He who hath ears to hear, let him hear and believe."

His first disciples were the five ascetics who had formerly dwelt near him, but who had left him in disgust when he had renounced asceticism. He met them again in a grove near Benares, at the hermitage of Migasala. They did not lend a willing ear to his discourse at first, for they regarded him as an apostate who had forsaken the true doctrine. They intended to revile him, and to turn their backs upon him in token of their disapproval of his course. But the majesty of his appearance, and the sublime expression of his

asceticism, made such a deep impression upon their minds that they bowed down before him and listened reverently to his words. These men were Brahmins—men whose whole life had been spent in contemplation, self-denial, and strenuous efforts to attain Eternal Truth. This fact explains how it was possible that in the short space of five months these men should so completely master the doctrine, that they, too, could be teachers.

The first sermon of the Buddha, the one which converted the five ascetics, was upon the subject of *The Establishment of the Moral Order of the Universe, or the Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness*. This sermon contained the fundamental truths of the whole Buddhist Doctrine—the Four Grand Truths. The five ascetics, hearing this sermon, became converted to the Truth taught by the Buddha. They acknowledged him to be the perfectly Enlightened One, the Giver of Truth, the Guide to Nirvana; and they desired to become his disciples. Then the Buddha admitted these five men into the Brotherhood of the Elect (*Sangha*), with the following words: "Welcome, brethren the truth is clear. Live henceforth in holiness, and thus put an end to all suffering."

Of the five ascetics, the aged Kondanya was the first to realize the supreme truth. There opened within him the "clear eye of truth," and he attained the state of an Arahant. The four other disciples soon followed him into this high blissful state of holiness. The next convert and disciple (after the five ascetics) was Yasa, a young nobleman. But the common people, as well as the higher classes, listened to the words of the sublime teacher; for he made no distinction of caste or rank or position as the Brahmins do, but preached the doctrine of salvation to all those disposed to hear him; and his words were all-powerful, searching the innermost heart. At the end of five months the number of his disciples amounted to sixty, not including the lay adherents. Then did the Buddha begin to send forth the brethren in various directions.

Calling the brethren together, the Buddha bade them go out into the world, each separately by himself, and preach the doctrine of salvation. He said to them these words: "You are free from all fetters, either human or divine. Depart, then, and preach the saving truth to all living beings, out of compassion for suffering humanity, and for the benefit and welfare of both gods and men. There are many persons of pure heart and willing mind, who must perish if they do not hear the doctrine of redemption. These will become your supporters and confessors of the truth."

But the Buddha did not remain alone at Benares, after his disciples had been sent forth to preach the doctrine and point out the way. Instead, he returned to Uruvela, where a great number of

Brahmans lived in huts in a wilderness, kept up the sacred fires, and performed the religious rites and ceremonies prescribed in the Vedas. The Buddha preached to them of the consuming fire of sensual desires, of passions and of lusts. He converted many of these men, and they became his disciples. They then proceeded to Rajagriha, where King Bimbisara and a great number of his nobles professed themselves as his adherents. Thus the doctrine of salvation continued to gain ground.

From Rajagriha he went to Kapilavasthu, where dwelt his father, the king, and also the wife and child whom Prince Siddhartha had left behind him years before, when he had started on his Path of Attainment by the road of Renunciation. We shall leave him on this homeward journey for the time being; and in our next month's paper we shall tell what befell the Buddha when he met his father, and his wife and child once more.

ABOUT PHILOSOPHERS

No matter how advanced, how scientific the civilization, the operations that men undertake according to reasoned method are few in number and unimportant compared with such as instinct and common impulse perform of themselves. So little does our conscious will react against our reflex activities that I am afraid to say that human societies exhibit anything approaching an intellectual constitution as distinguished from a natural.

After all is said and done, a metaphysician is not so widely different from the rest of mankind as people think and as he wishes them to think. And then what is thinking? And how do we think? We think with words; that by itself constitutes a sensible basis and brings us back to natural preconditions. Reflect a little; a metaphysician possesses, to build up his system of the universe with, only the perfected cries of apes and dogs. What he styles profound speculation and transcendental method is only setting in a row, arbitrary arranged, the onomatopoetic noises wherewith the brutes expressed hunger and fear and desire in the primeval forests, and to which have gradually become attached meanings that are assumed to be abstract only because they are less definite.

Never fear; this series of petty noises, deadened and enfeebled in the course of ages, that goes to make up a book of philosophy will never teach us too much of the universe to permit us to inhabit it any longer. We are all in the dark together; the only difference is, the savant keeps knocking at the wall, while the ignoramus stays quietly in the middle of the room.—From "The Garden of Epicurus."

Editorial Easy Chair

Seated in which, the editor gathers his readers around him in a family circle and has a little talk with them, informally and "friendlylike," in the good old fashioned way.

By William Walker Atkinson

DID HELEN WILMANS "RENEGE"?

A correspondent writes as follows: "I was formerly a great admirer of Helen Wilmans, and her writings did me a world of good. My faith in her teachings weakened when I was informed that she had renounced her teachings some time before her death—in fact, that her relapse into poverty, and her death were proof that her teachings were false. Will you kindly let me know the truth about this, as I understand that you knew her personally?"

I am very glad to have an opportunity of answering this question. For the truth, as I know it to be, of this matter is far from discreditable to that grand old soul known as Helen Wilmans. I am glad to speak this truth for Helen Wilmans, not only as a matter of justice to her, but also because her written words once spoke the Truth to me, in an hour in which I needed it most, and lifted me out of the slough of despond on to the firm banks of Mastery. Her battle-cry of "I Can, I Will; I Dare, I Do!" proved the inspiration of hundreds of thousands of men and women—and she lived true to them until the last. There was no "reneging," or renunciation there, I am glad to say.

Yes; I knew Helen Wilmans well. For many years, however, after her words had proved an inspiration to me, and help in the hour of dire need, I knew her only through her writings and by means of personal letters, for we had become acquainted through the editorial columns of the two magazines which we respectively edited. I did not meet her in person, however, until the summer of 1905, at which time I was living in southern California; Helen Wilmans being on a short visit to that part of the country in order to rest from the strain of her trial in the court in Florida, where she was under indictment on a charge arising from her "absent treatment" work.

Her mail had been stopped, her healing and publishing business ruined, and her income (which had been variously estimated at from \$25,000 to \$50,000 yearly) had been cut off. [The court case was afterward settled by the imposition of a nominal fine, I believe; but so far as I know her mail was never released, and her business was never again permitted to be resumed.] But she was very far from being reduced to "poverty," as my correspondent evidently believes

to be the fact; and when she died a couple of years later she left a very comfortable estate to her children, I understand.

Those who know the inside history of Helen Wilmans' affairs understand very well the causes which indirectly led to her financial set-back, above stated. Briefly, it may be said that her affection for her husband allowed her to become "sidetracked" in her own business affairs, and involved in interests with which she had no business to be mixed, the result being that her attention was diverted from its proper channel, and her "single mindedness" destroyed. This did not prove that her basic principles of teaching were wrong—though it did prove that she had ceased to apply those principles scientifically. An axiom of mathematics remains true, even though its enunciator may make a miscalculation in its application to a problem, owing to carelessness caused by diverted attention.

Certainly, when I met Helen Wilmans that summer in California, she showed no sign of "weakening," or "renouncing" her teachings. Instead of finding her crushed and careworn from her late strenuous and painful experiences, and her terrible losses, this wonderful woman, then over seventy years of age, manifested a most striking appearance of personal power and positive will—in fact she radiated an actual atmosphere of strength. There was an entire absence of the minor note in her utterances, and the "I Can, I Will; I Do, I Dare!" was strongly in evidence in her. She showed that she was still the Captain of her Soul, and the words of Henley's "Invictus" came into my mind when I saw her. Her head was still "unbowed," and she had not "weakened" in the slightest degree.

I remember one little incident in particular. Her income had been suddenly shut off, and she had expended considerable money in the expenses arising from the legal proceedings against her. She was "property poor," and short of ready cash—her money being locked up in real estate and in her publishing plant, upon which it was difficult to realize speedily. But she would not admit even temporary "lack" of money. Her daughter questioned the advisability of making certain somewhat large expenditures, in view of the reduced condition of the exchequer; but the old lady raised her head like an old lioness, and announced that she did not intend admitting any lack of money in this way, saying "Why, that would be going back on all that I have held and taught to be true, and which enabled me to make the Conquest of Poverty years ago." She added: "If these things are needed, then by all means make the purchase—the supply is there to meet the demand!" Not much sign of "weakening" or "renouncing" or "reneging" there, was there?

The matter of her Conquest of Death then came up in conversation. Now, as many of you know, I have never "taken any stock" in this "Immortality of the Flesh" business; although I have always

believed that by Insistent Desire, Confident Expectation, and Persistent Will the individual may lengthen his years far beyond the time usually allotted the human race—but that one would have to “want to” hard enough, before any such result would be obtainable. I sought to draw out Helen on this point. She looked strong and hearty, full of vigor and energy, in spite of her trying experiences and her seventy years and more. “Helen,” I said, “do you honestly believe that you have conquered Death?” She looked me squarely in the eyes, and said: “Yes; providing that I can maintain my keen desire to live, as I have in the past. I look forward to living for many years more,” then she hesitated, and slowly added, “That is, **providing I want to.**”

I looked inquiringly at her, and she then deliberately said: “Do you know, I find it somewhat difficult to maintain my former keen **desire** to live in the body. I fight against this backsliding, but somehow at times I find my **desire** slipping away from me, and I know that if **that** once weakens my will is gone, and that will be the end of me.” She then said that formerly she had hated the very thought of old age and death, and that this had brought to her the keen desire to live on—the “will-to-live,” which she had manifested for so many years. “But, now,” she added, “now it is merely a hatred of **old age** and **decay** alone—the idea of **death** (sleep, or extinction, or whatever it may be) does not repel me as once it did.” “Do you know, Mr. Atkinson,” she added, somewhat confusedly, “sometimes I think that if it were not for Charlie, I doubt whether I would care for continued life. Of course, this is all nonsense, but it seems very real to me at times.”

Shortly after this interview, I left California for Chicago; and Helen Wilmans returned to Florida. I never saw her again. We exchanged some letters, and she always managed to manifest in her letters her old note of Courage and superiority to Fate. In one of her letters she said: “I have often been criticised for my love of money; and this may have been a just criticism, in a sense. But you must remember that in my early life I was poor—**deadly poor**—and in working out of that condition I raised a very whirlwind of Desire, which while bringing me material wealth, may have also brought the evils of money in its train. Be this as it may, I am now beginning to see other and better things than money, even though I now have less money than for many years. I seem to be starting on the road to a **new Conquest**—of what I know not, but I know I shall **win out**, whatever it is.”

In the summer of 1907, I received my last letter from this wonderful woman. I had dedicated a new book to her, and she wrote thanking me for it. She told me that her faith was as strong as ever, and her spirit still undaunted. “But,” she wrote, “somehow I feel

myself losing my **desire** to live. I know that I can revive my desire by the application of my will—but, do you know, I **don't want** to enough to stir myself. I feel, somehow, as if my work were done. But, nevertheless, I feel that I have much other work to do, somewhere, somehow, sometime—can you throw any light on this feeling? I cannot live without work—and my work here is finished, for they won't let me do it. Is this new feeling the call to work somewhere else—if so, **where?**”

She then went on to say that the idea of a Heaven of idleness, halo-wearing and psalm-singing was repugnant to her, but that “if there is a Heaven of active work, I want to get there, for **here on earth** they won't let me work any more. Without work, I am stagnating—I must go wherever there is work for me.” This from a woman approaching eighty years of age, mind your!

A few months later, her husband, her “Charlie,” her dearly beloved one, passed away from earth. A little later Helen followed him. Sometime later, I wrote in a magazine article these words: “I do not know where Helen Wilmans is now, nor what she is doing, but away down deep in my heart I feel that she has again found her work, somehow, somewhere. For at the last this was her one desire; and her will always followed close upon the heels of her desire—her thought manifested in action very quickly. And, if there be work to be done on other planes of life and being, I am sure that Helen Wilmans has again found her work, and is doing it well. For **there—** wherever it is—as **here**, I feel that Helen Wilmans is ‘making good.’”

No; I can truthfully say that I never found any signs of “weakening,” or “renouncing,” “reneging” in Helen Wilmans, even in the days when the clouds seemed to be descending upon her. To me, she seemed to always stand by her guns; and I am sure that she went down (or up) with colors flying, and band playing The Hymn of Victory—Invictus! She was a giant—but still a woman; and, being a woman, she loved with the love of the Eternal Feminine. Her strong love for her living mate doubtless interfered with the “one-pointedness” of her vision of the Conquest of Poverty; and her love for her dead mate doubtless took away the insistent desire which was the keynote of her Conquest of Death. She paid the price of human love—but doubtless it was well worth that price. Her Will was that of a Superman—but her Heart was that of a Woman. And the Heart proved mightier than the Will—as it is in the habit of doing. “**Take what thou wilt, say the gods to man—but pay the price.**”

No; Helen Wilmans was not a failure; neither did she retract, renounce, nor renege. And her latter-day experiences were not “proof that her teachings were false”—quite the contrary, good friends, quite the contrary.

THE PROPHETS AND THEIR PROFITS

I have just finished reading the July issue of "Scientific Christian," that illuminating exudation from the superconsciousness of the old Sun-god, T. J. Shelton. T. J. evidently has lost none of his customary "pep," judging from the following sample extracted from the aforesaid inspired pages, which I am sure that many of you will enjoy as much as I have.

It seems that His Solarity had indulged in some of his characteristic "Cosmic jesting"—this time at the expense of our mutual friend, F. L. Rawson, of London, England, whose Cosmic Cinema Pictures "which hide Heaven from us" seem to be practically the same thing as Shelton's "Satanic World." Brother Rawson evidently committed the error of taking Shelton too seriously, instead of accepting him as the Cosmic Jester (and a right good jester, too) which he, himself, cheerfully acknowledges himself to be, and in which role he manages to inject into our systems some mighty "high truths" disguised as flippant whimsicalities. And so, Brother Rawson felt moved by the Spirit to write unto Brother Shelton the following epistle:

"Dear Sir, With reference to your correspondent's remark that 'Mrs. Eddy camouflaged Dr. Quimby and now Rawson has camouflaged Mrs. Eddy,' and your statement that my doing this was 'a good investment,' I would like to say that so far from Mrs. Eddy copying Dr. Quimby, I think she was harmed and kept back by her acquaintance with him. There is no question but that Dr. Quimby used his human mind and got his results by hypnotism and mental suggestion, whereas Mrs. Eddy's discovery was that the elimination of sin, disease and suffering could be obtained by a man realizing God and the spiritual world as clearly as possible. There is an essential difference in these two methods. The first leads only to trouble if persisted in; the latter leads to health, holiness and happiness.

"With regard to what you say about putting my wares on the market, and selling them at a high price, I had my accounts made up the other day, and I have lost nearly 2,000 pounds on my books, as I have always tried to keep them down as low as possible in price.

"We make a charge for the healing work done, but the whole of the money received goes toward helping people to obtain a better knowledge of Truth; that is to say, I have a staff of 30 to 40 in the office, who naturally are paid, but there are about 150 to 200 helping me, who, like myself, not only do not take anything for the work, but amongst us we subscribe a large amount every year towards spreading the knowledge of Truth. Yours faithfully, F. L. Rawson."

Whereupon, Brother Shelton radiated as follows in the July issue of his solar bulletin:

"The above letter from my friend Rawson is dated in London April 22d but was not received in time for the June CHRISTIAN else it would have appeared in that number.

"It was the Cosmic Jester and my remarks should have been received as a jest and not in earnest. I don't care anything about Quimby or Eddy or Rawson, or any other individual who is operating in the visible or invisible. All science is practical and the practitioner should not be separated from the science that he is practicing; we don't make any such separation when we operate an engine as an engineer, a piano as a pianist, a hod as a hod carrier, and so on and so forth in all practical science. It is the science that we are practicing and not the person; it is the principle that we are using in carrying a hod or in healing the sick.

"But when we come to religion we get down on our knees and call the practitioners saints and ascribe all the merit to the practitioner instead of to the principle. You should get down on your knees and offer a prayer to Edison every time you turn on the electric light. But we never act the fool except in religion. War is not science; it is religion.

"I think that F. L. Rawson has weakened his own position by not demonstrating Prosperity and even wealth, as well as health and happiness while he is in this kind of work. This thing of giving your service as a sacrifice is old thought; it is moth-eaten and rusty and ought to be thrown into the discard while you vibrate in the wonderful Truth of Being that adds all these things unto you.

"Jesus Christ never taught any such foolishness as to be straining and struggling to give yourself away with all that you know and all that you are to a lot of people who do not appreciate the gift or the giver. I long since quit receiving free patients; never did such patients any good and they were the very first ones to find fault. You are under obligation to get out of poverty and to bring your people out of poverty and get as far from pauperizing and the poorhouse as you get from the hospitals and drug stores.

"Listen to the Lord Christ and he will tell you that everything in the objective is added unto you if you are in the Truth of Being; a hundredfold more than you can get in any other way. He was not a pauper; he dressed as a teacher and ranked among the great ones on the earth; he was invited to banquets among the leaders of the people and he didn't go as a tramp; he accepted the invitations as a gentleman and appeared among men as a man. His garments were so costly that the soldiers cast lots for his vesture; when soldiers throw dice for a garment you may know it is made of the very best material.

"Now, my beloved Rawson, go on your way and demonstrate Health, Happiness and Prosperity. You can make millions of money out of your books and call forth my applause. The Kingdom of God is not an orphan asylum or an old ladies' home. When you find your place in the sun you can build you a mansion on the earth and live like a gentleman. Nothing succeeds like success. Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth!"

And so the matter rests for the present. But as both Brother Rawson and Brother Shelton expect to be present at the Cincinnati Congress of the International New Thought Alliance, in September next, I respectfully suggest that the management stage a debate between these two eminent laborers in the Vineyard of Truth as an "added attraction"—the subject to be **"The Correlation of Prophets and Profits."** I think that this debate would almost persuade me to attend the Congress, particularly as I understand that there are some other interesting debates to be "pulled off" there during the business sessions.

"COMMERCIALISM" AND NEW THOUGHT

Since writing the above, I have noticed two little straws which would seem to indicate that a wind is blowing in the Organized New Thought against what may be called "commercialism" in the practice and preaching of New Thought. These indications are interesting as affording a possible reaction from the once frequently-heard expression among New Thought people that "Prosperity is the proof of the demonstration of New Thought principles"—Prosperity being usually measured by the amount of material possessions which had been accumulated by the individual. The New Thought following were much given to flocking to such leaders and teachers as had

been "successful in demonstrating Supply," i. e., successful in accumulating Money and things bought with Money.

It is true that another class, notably those following the teachings of Annie Rix Militz and her Home of Truth folks, had but little to say concerning "accumulations," but rather seemed to demand merely a full supply of "daily bread," obtained principally through "love offerings," etc. But, as a whole, it might have been truthfully asserted that in the eyes of the general New Thought public the possession of "means" and financial strength on the part of their teachers was accepted as "an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace." "Health, Happiness, and Prosperity" was the old slogan, and but little was heard in condemnation of "the loaves and fishes," for these were held to be the natural result of Right Thinking. Wealth and Financial Success were regarded as quite as "spiritual" things as anything else, and Poverty was regarded as a disease and a sin, and an indication of one's failure to grasp the principles of Truth.

But it would now seem that the "Profits for the Prophets" note has been too persistently and insistently sounded by some of the New Thought teachers—and that the practices of some of the aforesaid teachers have fallen below the standard of "spirituality" set by the ones in authority in organized New Thought. I gather this from the following two quotations from the writings of the President of the I. N. T. Alliance.

In the June, 1919, issue of the official Bulletin of the I. N. T. Alliance contains the following notice, evidently written by its President:

"The Alliance has taken its stand for spirituality and honesty. Truth has no partnership with chicanery. The cause of Christ has no room for the fakir or the chalatan. Nor has it room for commercialism, especially for commercialism or crooked methods and false pretenses. We get what we give. Any other form of getting than that of full value received has within it a false element. In giving the message of the Christ, let us uphold all of the Christ standards."

And in the July issue of Mrs. Militz's magazine, "The Master Mind," the President of the I. N. T. Alliance, has an interesting article, entitled "Building on a Sure Foundation," in which among other things he says:

"A spiritual movement must be like Caesar's wife. Its teachers must be beyond even the suspicion of insincerity, dishonesty, or fraud. The public is prone to look for the fakir and the charlatan in any new cult. The very expectation of finding such renders the public mind prone to magnify even the slight evidence of charlatanism in one or two teachers as proof positive that the whole movement is tinctured. * * * It is as true as of old that we 'cannot serve God and mammon,' and when commercialism enters the door, true spirituality is apt to fly out of the window.

"Through many years of association I have come to know New Thought teachers all over the world. As a whole, there is no more high-minded, sincere or spiritual body of people now before the public. There are, of course, a few exceptions as is the case with any new movement, or any old movement either,

to grind," I would say that to my mind this very pronounced tendency on the part of the officials of the International New Thought Alliance seems to indicate a very decided change of policy from that expressed by the same individuals in the early days of the Organization. At that time there was much talk concerning "drawing the circle wider" in order to take in all the various elements and phases of opinion embraced in the general New Thought movement. There was a very strong emphasis placed upon the idea of **Inclusiveness**. The Alliance was spoken of as **not** a "close organization" of individuals holding identical beliefs, but rather a "federation" or "alliance" of various individuals, and various groups of individuals, holding dissimilar and varying beliefs, though in tacit and implied agreement upon certain very broad and comprehensive general principles. The present "set" of official opinion, however, seems to me to be decidedly away from the idea of **Inclusiveness**, and decidedly in the direction of **Exclusiveness**. In short, the movement now seems to be in the direction of creating a "**denomination**," instead of toward the "undenominational" general form of expression and co-operation. However, once more, this is none of my business.

The only comment I wish to make on this matter of the "Churchification" of Organized New Thought is to express some curiosity concerning the effect of these official announcements (and the probable resulting action) upon that minority in the Alliance which has been proceeding under the belief that New Thought is a matter of scientific, philosophic, metaphysical, and psychological thought, rather than of theological, ecclesiastical, or "religious" teaching and form. I must confess that I am curious to know how these good people—these folks who having studied all the creeds, have accepted none or all of them—will feel when they hear this official call to them to "Come out of the Ocean of Truth, where so many monsters abide—come back to the River of Jordan and be saved."

All hail! the coming "International Church of the New Thought!" Seriously, I think that you have a great future, for there are thousands of persons who insist upon having their "New Thought" administered to them in the Theological Capsule; and who feel at home nowhere where there is lacking the spirit of Ecclesiasticism, and the name and form of "The Church." There is a demand for you. You will attract thousands to your fold. You will prosper materially—and, let us hope, spiritually. You will play your part in the Evolution of Thought, an important part in all probability—and you will supply the wants of many, until you, too, pass away under the Law of Change. As near as I can figure it out, you will be born in Cincinnati, in September next. "May you live long, and prosper."