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THE
LIGHT OF REASON

EDITED BY

JAMES ALLEN

"Place self first, and your whole life
will prove a dismal failure. Place
others first in your thoughts, words,
and deeds, and your life will prove the
very essence of success."

HUGO WRIGHT.

PRICE

3d.



THE
LIGHT OF REASON

DEVOTED TO
THE EXPOUNDING OF THE LAWS OF
BEING AND THE HIGHER LIFE

EDITED BY
JAMES ALLEN

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stand their particular frame of mind, and will feel for them and sympathise with them.

* * *

One of the great obstacles to the attainment of such an attitude of mind is *prejudice*, and until this is removed it is impossible to act towards others as we would wish others to act towards us. Prejudice is destructive of kindness, sympathy, love, and true judgment, and the strength of a man's prejudice will be the measure of his harshness and unkindness towards others, for prejudice and cruelty are inseparable.

• • •

There is no rationality in prejudice, and immediately it is aroused in a man he ceases to act as a reasonable being, and gives way to rashness, anger, and injurious excitement. He does not consider his words nor regard the feelings and liberties of those against whom his prejudice is directed. He has, for the time being, forfeited his manhood, and has descended to the level of an irrational creature.

• • •

While a man is determined to cling to his preconceived opinions, mistaking them for Truth, and refuses to consider dispassionately the position of others, he cannot escape hatred nor arrive at blessedness. The man who strives after gentleness, who aspires to act unselfishly towards others, will put away all his passionate prejudices and petty opinions, and will gradually acquire the power of thinking and feeling for others,

of understanding their particular state of ignorance or knowledge, and thereby entering fully into their hearts and lives, sympathising with them, and seeing them as they are.

* * *

Such a man will not oppose himself to the prejudices of others by introducing his own, but will seek to allay prejudice by introducing sympathy and love, striving to bring out all that is good in men, encouraging the good by appealing to it, and discouraging the evil by ignoring it. He will realise the good in the unselfish efforts of others, though their outward methods may be very different from his own, and will so rid his heart of hatred, and will fill it with love and blessedness.

* * *

When a man is prone to harshly judge and condemn others, he should inquire how far he falls short himself; he should also re-consider those periods of suffering when he himself was misjudged and misunderstood, and, gathering wisdom and love from his own bitter experiences, should studiously and self-sacrificingly refrain from piercing with anguish hearts that are as yet too weak to ignore, too immature and uninstructed to understand.

* * *

Sympathy is not required towards those who are purer and more enlightened than one's self, as the purer one lives above the necessity for it. In such a case reverence

should be exercised, with a striving to lift one's self up to the purer level, and so enter into possession of the larger life. Nor can a man fully understand one who is wiser than himself, and, before condemning, he should earnestly ask himself whether he is, after all, better than the man whom he has singled out as the object of his bitterness. If he is, let him bestow sympathy. If he is not, let him exercise reverence.

• • •

Let those who aim at the right life, who believe that they love Truth, cease to passionately oppose themselves to others, and let them strive to calmly and wisely understand them, and in thus acting towards others they will be conquering themselves; and while sympathising with others their own souls will be fed with the heavenly dews of kindness, and their hearts be strengthened and refreshed in the pleasant pastures of peace.

PEACE hath her battlefield where they who
fight
Win more than honour, vanquish more than
might,
And strike against a fiercer foe
Than one who comes with battle-axe and
bow.

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD.

THE BATTLE OF LIFE.

BY W. H. GILL.

THE object of this paper is to show that a man's commission to fight in the Battle of Life is confined to the little kingdom of his own heart; that he is not at liberty to resist the evil that he thinks exists in other people until he has first overcome the evil that actually exists within himself, and that, even then, he must not render evil for evil but overcome evil with good.

Man, whose heritage and destiny is immortal Life, is associated, during his sojourn in this world, with what has been aptly described as the perversity of human nature—that is, the tendency to do evil continually. This tendency shows itself in two loves, namely, the love of self and the love of the world. From these two loves stream forth all evils and falsities as from two fountains. But, fortunately for man, Divine means are provided by which he can be reformed from his evil nature and raised to a higher plane with a renewed will. By the laws of his Spiritual being these means are placed within his power to use or reject just as he pleases, and this choice of action constitutes his "free

will." Moreover, these means of emancipation from his spiritual bondage are revealed to man in the innumerable writings in the world purporting to be an expression of the Mind of God. Hence in John Bunyan's beautiful allegory the typical Pilgrim is represented as starting on his journey, alone and on foot, reading a Book and carrying on his back a heavy bundle. The Book symbolizes the Truth or "Word" (Logos) of the Divine Love and Wisdom, and the bundle represents the aggregate of man's evil and corrupt affections—that is, the accumulation of sin, his ignorance, pride, self-love, and waywardness of disposition. And this load of sin a man has to get rid of by the three Divinely-appointed processes of Repentance, Reformation, and Regeneration. There was a time when the Pilgrim was ignorant of even the existence of the bundle. And here is what, at first sight, appears a flaw in the story. How could a man have a load on his back and yet not be aware of the fact? This, however, is not a flaw but a stroke of genius, and contains the gist of the whole matter. An old legend describes man as carrying two wallets—a large one in front, and a small one behind. In the foremost one he puts his neighbour's faults, in the other his own. And so, the Pilgrim's load being on his back and out of sight, he hardly knew it was there. How then did he find out he *had* a burden? Because he had been reading the Book and that told him so. And now that his attention was called to the fact he began to feel

there was *something wrong* with him. He felt uncomfortable. At first he cried simply, "What shall I do?" But, as he continued to read and think, the truth dawned gradually into his mind; and, the more he studied the Book and meditated thereon, the more clearly he realised the actual nature of his discomfort. And so by degrees the cause of his troubles began to assume a more definite form until there came a time when it appeared to him in the shape of a load of sins too heavy for him to bear, and then in the anguish of distress he cried out, "What shall I do to be saved?" This was the first step on his pilgrimage—the awakening to the fact that he was a sinner and that all his trouble, all his anxiety, all his difficulties arose from this cause alone, and that his only remedy was to get rid of his bundle with all speed and diligence. Such is the awakening of Conscience in the human soul. The man feels there is something wrong within him which produces mental pain and unrest. What it is exactly he knows not. But gradually, by study and self-examination, he finds out the nature of his malady, and he traces it to two sources within himself, namely, Ignorance of the Laws of his being and wilful Disobedience to the same. Also he makes this wonderful discovery, namely, that he is full of Inward Enemies—his natural Passions—and that he is also full of a company of beautiful angels who stand ever ready to help him to cast out the rebel crew of his Vices; and these are the Virtues

—a goodly company of faithful allies whose kindly help he can command by simply making up his mind to employ their services and co-operate with them against the baneful influence of his Passions. In this struggle against his Inward Enemies consists the Battle of Life.

But, alas, how slow man is to arrive at this knowledge! For a long time all is darkness within. He actually does not know that there are enemies in the camp, much less that there are allies on his side ready to fight with him and for him. And even still less does he realise this most important fact—that he is in control of these opposed forces, and that not one of them can raise a hand to strike or to wound without his own sanction. Thus in his own hands are the issues of the fight—absolutely and unconditionally—to conquer or to die in the Battle of Life. Until his ignorance is dispelled, and the eyes of his understanding are opened by the reading of the Book, he imagines that some malignant Power reigns over the universe and arbitrarily determines his destiny, his fate. That this cruel tyrant of his imagination delights in tormenting the human race with all manner of evil, imposing burdens too heavy to bear, like the one he has been carrying; a harsh and unjust taskmaster requiring the making of bricks without straw, favouring one man and overtaxing another, sending one man to heaven and another to hell. He imagines that all is wrong with the world, that he is surrounded

by enemies, that every man's hand is against him. But the awakening of the Conscience at once begins to correct this false picture of his environment, and gradually he finds that he has the power of shaping his own ends and colouring his own surroundings. If he acts wisely, this knowledge obtained from the Book becomes power, and he forthwith commences operations by applying to this inward and spiritual warfare all the science and skill and device that hitherto he has foolishly expended on fighting with imaginary enemies *outside*, that is to say, the evils which he imagines he sees in his fellow-creatures because his own eyes are evil. He has ever been fighting against his Maker whom he took to be his greatest enemy, and against his fellow-creatures who, as he thought, aided and abetted in making a slave of him and in every way embittering his existence. Now he sees that God is his best Friend, his Father, the Source and Giver of all Love and Wisdom and Power. That in His Strength lies his own strength; in His Blessing lies his own success; in serving Him alone with all his heart lies his own happiness and peace and joy. Now he sees that his appointed warfare is not against God and man but against himself—a spiritual warfare against those principalities and powers of darkness that possess the kingdom of his soul. All these things are written in his Book, and by applying its searchlight to the dark chambers of his soul he begins to see more clearly those Inward Enemies and to

devote all his energies to vanquish and overcome them. He also soon finds that, by the exercise of his will to exterminate his enemies, the quality of it gradually becomes changed; he loses his old waywardness and becomes more reasonable and gentle, more obedient to the gracious Voice of Love within that is continually pleading, "Come unto Me and I will give you Rest." He begins to realise that this Mysterious Presence within him is the source of all his own power, that in obeying the Voice he is all-powerful to defeat his enemies and to resist the temptations of the outside world, while in disregarding the Voice he is helpless and stumbles at every step. Moreover—and this is all-important—in the gentle tone of that still small Voice within him he recognises *the same Voice that speaks in the Book*. It is "The Truth," The Word, The Divine Wisdom.

Many an inquirer, coming upon these conclusions for the first time, will exclaim in surprise, "What! Is that the Battle of Life? I thought that was to be fought in and against the wide wide world, perhaps in foreign lands, on the high seas, with material weapons against foes of flesh and blood." Well, it may be strange, but nevertheless it is true. In that little chamber which we call the human heart is going on the real struggle of a man's life—his spiritual life: it is the council chamber of all his warlike deliberations, the theatre of all the tragedies of his life, and therefore the real battlefield. Nay, rather, it is the deck of his warship, and,

little room for fighting there! The smaller the field of action the nearer the foe, and the more desperate the fight. It is a hand-to-hand struggle for life. When man is led into the wilderness of his own heart for a temptation-combat he is shut in with his enemies. His enemy is his own reflection in the mirror, his own shadow on the wall, the seamy side of him, the dark side of the picture, the powers of darkness which can only be dispelled by the Light of Truth that streams from the pages of the Book. But see! here are more resources; here lies his real hope and confidence. Here is supplied to him by his Captain a whole armoury of weapons both offensive and defensive. His Master, who fought the same fight before him, supplies the needful weapons. Here is the inventory of this "Armour of Light"—the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

But, it may be asked, how about evil in others; are we not to fight against that? In reply to this the Voice says, "No; you see motes in the eyes of others because of the beams in your own." In the same way we may think we detect faults and fallacies in other people's philosophy, religion, politics, conduct, and we want to set them right, but again the Voice says, "No; if you want to reform others, first reform yourself." And so in respect of avoidable temptation from without, even when we think of some possible

good that may come of it, we must flee from it as from a pestilence, for evil is infectious and pitch defileth ; and again the Voice says, " Blessed are the pure in heart." Yes, your heart is the temple of the Holy Spirit ; keep it holy. Your heart is your fort and citadel ; hold the fort, guard the citadel. That, mainly, is your work, and it will need all your vigilance, all your power, all your resources. Then, again, others may provoke us to fight against them in thought, or word, or deed, but obviously we are not obliged to accept the challenge or return the blow. On the contrary our Captain's instructions are emphatic and unmistakable. Rather than retaliate we must offer the other cheek. In such a case we are to use the shield and not the sword. We are to say, " No ; I do not want to hurt you ;" or, better still, to think this, and say nothing, and do nothing. There is sometimes extraordinary power in masterly inactivity and studied silence.

Reader, beware of self-deception, mistaken zeal, self-interested philanthropy. If you would help to take away the sin of the world as well as your own, to lessen the sum total of human misery, cultivate a sweet and gentle disposition towards the world. Self is your only enemy. Outside of self you have no enemies to fight. All are friends. And not only friends but brothers and sisters, and as you treat the world, so the world will treat you. When men have found out and realised these Truths of Life, these Secrets of the Lord, who is the Prince of Peace, then shall

warfare be abolished for ever, and all the swords and bayonets in the world shall be beaten into ploughshares; then shall that inward life-struggle, which is the real Battle of Life, be over for ever, and there shall reign within your soul that heavenly Peace which passeth all understanding.

THE CHARITABLE WAY.

SET not the faults of other folks in view,
But rather mind what thou thyself should'st
do;

For twenty errors of thy neighbour known
Will tend but little to reform your own.

A graceful manner and a friendly ease
Will give a "No," and not at all displeasè ;
And an ill-natur'd or ungraceful "Yes,"
When it is giv'n, is taken much amiss.

To give reproof in anger, to be sure,
Whate'er the fault, is not the way to cure ;
Would a wise doctor offer, dost thou think,
The sick his potion scalding hot to drink ?

Faith, Hope, and Love were question'd
what they thought
Of future glory, which religion taught ;
Now Faith *believ'd* it, firmly, to be true ;
And Hope *expected* so to find it too ;
Love answer'd, smiling with a conscious
glow,

"Believe? Expect?" I know it to be so.

JOHN BYROM.—From *The Inquirer*.

VIRTUE.

BY JAMES ALLEN.

THE throne of Virtue is in the heart, its sceptre is righteousness, and its sway is in the realm of thoughts and deeds. It has no place in the outward accretions of a man,—his clothing, money, possessions, and acts of conformity. It is a living power within, and not a something put on from without, and as such it can thrive under all conditions, even as far as the two extremities of beggary and pomp.

This is made plain by a consideration of the lives of those men of surpassing Virtue who have lived in the past, and whose names and words and deeds are so dearly cherished by mankind. Epictetus, the slave, and Marcus Aurelius, attended on by slaves, are seen to-day to be clothed in the same resplendent Virtue. We do not think of one as greater than the other. Great is the solitary slave, not because of his simple cloak, but because of his superior Virtue. Great is the solitary emperor, the grandeur of whose Virtue far outshines those perishable trappings of state and appurtenances of worldly power with which he is surrounded.

Confucius, the ceremonialist, faultlessly and sumptuously arrayed in the courtly garments of his office ; and Buddha, the disapprover of ceremonial, clothed in the habiliments of a beggar, are alike to-day the adored of untold millions for the faultless and transcendent Virtues which they manifested.

Socrates, the polygamist, is called "Master" by Plato the celibate, and who dare say that the master was less pure, less master of himself and his passions, than the divine pupil ?

George Fox, the contemner of "Steeple-houses," wandering and poor, and clothed in leathern breeches, is one in virtue with Hugh Latimer, the cathedral preacher, living in a palace, and rich, and adorned with priestly vestments.

Thoreau in his cabin in the forest, and Emerson in his well-equipped residence, and surrounded with all refinements, practised the same Virtues and lived the same truth.

Not only do the words of the sages and the acts of the wise ceaselessly and unerringly point to the inward independence of Virtue, but the whole ethical history of the race demonstrates the truth (which men should train themselves to perceive and comprehend) that Virtue and vice have no actual existence in any external thing ; in any custom, contrivance, condition or circumstance, but that they subsist in the heart, and in the heart only.

A man is defiled or made clean by what he *is and does from within*, and not by what

he uses and adopts without. The man who, having become master of his mind and detached his heart from everything but Virtue, will, in pursuing his particular mission for the good of mankind, use and adopt those things and conditions by the employment of which he can best accomplish his high purposes. If by riches, then he will use riches; if by poverty, he will adopt poverty; if by a mean between the two, he will take the middle course. If by being well-clothed, he will clothe himself well; if by mean clothing, he will see that he is meanly clad. If by preaching to the world, he will so preach; if by remaining obscure, then he will so remain. If by writing, he will write; if by not writing, he will not write. If by conforming to established rites and customs, he will conform; and if by abandoning such rites and customs, he will not conform. Whether to be rich or poor, known or unknown, public or private, a householder or a celibate, a governor or a mendicant, a dignitary or a servant, is, to a Master of Virtue, of no primary importance, all such outward conditions being merely accessorial.

Not by money, nor marriage, nor food, nor raiment, nor possessions, nor poverty, nor position, nor servitude, is a man defiled and made vicious; but by the lusts, desires, and follies of his heart. It is covetousness, not money; lust, not marriage; self-indulgence and gluttony, not diet; vanity, not clothing; selfishness, not possessions; ignorance and indolence, not outward poverty; arrogance,

not position ; and meanness of spirit, not servitude, which constitute vice.

Outward things have in them no life, and their possession or absence, their use or non-use is no part of Virtue or vice. These conditions exist only in the heart.

Between the popular misquotation, "Money is the root of all evil," and the true rendering, "The *love* of money is a root of all kinds of evil," the discriminating mind will perceive a vast world of difference. Between the wise and generous use of money, and the greedy love of it for its own sake or for the selfish uses to which it may be put, is the gulf which divides wisdom from folly.

He who says in his heart, "this man is rich and therefore selfish, and this other man is poor and therefore virtuous ;" or, "this man is poor and therefore vicious, and this other man is rich and therefore virtuous," confuses the outer with the inner, the false with the true ; and does not escape hatred, false judgment, and suffering.

He who is given up to the love of externals will judge from externals only, and, not knowing the realities within himself, will not perceive them in his fellow-men. To judge from appearances is to judge false judgment ; to understand the hidden motives of the heart, is to know men as they are.

Plato, the philosopher, invited, one day, a number of his friends to dine with him, and Diogenes, the cynic, hearing of it, entered the house of Plato, an unbidden guest, having first smeared his bare feet with slime

and mud with which, before the host and his assembled guests, he proceeded to defile the beautiful floors and delicate draperies, exclaiming as he did so: "Thus do I trample on the pride of Plato!" The philosopher's dispassionate retort: "Ay, and with greater pride than that of Plato's, O Diogenes!" reveals the wisdom and Virtue of which Plato, as the world has now acceded, was an accomplished master, and forcibly illustrates the truth that pride, and not external possessions, is the great evil.

To be proud of one's renunciations, and to obnoxiously intrude them upon the notice of others, is to be in the same wretched condition as to be vain of one's material accumulations. There is pride of poverty, and pride in riches; pride of sin, and pride in Virtue. To boast of sin, and make a vanity of confession, is of the same unregenerate kind as to boast of Virtue and insinuate personal superiority. Both are alike attitudes of pride, and boasting is folly and vice. He who understands what Virtue is, will banish pride from his heart, and will put away boasting for ever.

Seeing that it is neither possible nor necessary to avoid the use of external things, the wise man, while using them becomingly and in their proper place, will stand aloof from them in his mind, unmoved by them, and with heart detached and free from all love of them. With his mind fixed only upon the eternal Verities, following Truth only, and not following selfish desire, he will

stand fearless and serene amid all the fleeting shows by which he is surrounded, unpolluted by the lust for things, untarnished by their rust, and untroubled by their inevitable decay.

THOUGH a person be ornamented with jewels, the heart may have conquered the senses. The outward form does not constitute religion or affect the mind. . . . A man that dwells in lonely woods and yet covets worldly vanities, is a worldling, while the man in worldly garments may let his heart soar high to heavenly thoughts. There is no distinction between the layman and the hermit, if but both have banished the thought of self.—BUDDHA.

HE is wise who knows others.

He who knows himself is enlightened.

He is strong who conquers others.

He who conquers himself is mighty.

LAO-TZE.

RIGHTEOUSNESS can be practised only when we have freed our mind from the passions of egotism. Perfect peace can dwell only where all vanity has disappeared.—BUDDHA.

“REAL Glory
Springs from the silent conquest of ourselves ;
And without that the conquerer is nought
But the first slave.”

JUDGE not according to the appearance,
but judge righteous judgment.—JESUS.

CHARITY.

As we look for good in others,
Then that good will surely grow ;
And streams of loving-kindness
Out from our own hearts will flow.

Why should we, ourselves so faulty,
Lacking much that we should own,
Be so hasty, blindly judging
What to us is all unknown ?

Let us seek for Truth and virtue,
Noting what is best in all ;
By our love thus leading others
To obey the higher call.

Thus a poor heart, toiling upwards,
Helped, encouraged on Life's way,
Doubtless would less often stumble,
From the path less often stray.

May compassion, then, unbounded
Help us ever to be kind ;
May we gain, our own faults finding,
True humility of mind.

Humbly then our work pursuing,
Loving all, and judging none—
May we journey on life's pathway
Till the setting of its sun.

GERTRUDE M. CAMPBELL.

CHARITY is a virtue of the heart, and not
of the hands.—ADDISON.

WHY DO SOME SUCCEED WHILE OTHERS FAIL?

BY HUGO WRIGHT.

THERE are no doubt a great number of people in the world to-day who are most anxious to lead a better life than what they are doing at the present time, they have a sincere and earnest desire to be up and doing, and an inward feeling that they want to be about their Master's work. They have fully realised the emptiness of the everyday life that they are leading, and they want to start upon a better path, but they do not know where or how to commence. They look back upon their past life, travelling in thought over vast areas, touching here and there upon a few bright spots, until finally they find themselves nestling at their mother's knee, while she explains to them in her own sweet way the great love of God and His wonderful wisdom and Almighty power. Their thoughts enable them for a few moments only to live over again the happy days of childhood when they were practically free from all cares and troubles, and their lives were full of happiness, and the world seemed bright and free. Then

like the flash of a magic wand they find themselves back again in the present time, and they wonder why everything is so changed; wonder why their life is such a failure. There is no longer the inward brightness, and the freedom of childhood seems to be lost for ever. Their first thought is that the world to-day is different, that people are more selfish, and show less consideration for one another than they did in the days gone by; but one more journey in thought over their past lives soon convinces them that the only and sole difference lies within themselves. They have accepted for wisdom the ideas of the world; they have followed the crowd instead of thinking for themselves, and after taking the parcel of worldly wisdom, they have found therein the worldly cares and troubles, and they now realise that the two things are absolutely inseparable, and that the choice must be made between the wisdom of God and the wisdom of the world. They know in their heart of hearts that if they accept the one, and carry it out strictly in every little detail throughout each day, in spite of all jeering, sneering, and opposition, their happiness in its very truest sense will be theirs; but how and where are they to make the start? Let me tell you. It makes no difference what your present position may be, you may be living in a castle of your own, surrounded with innumerable servants, carriages and horses may be yours, and your grounds may extend for miles; or, on the

other hand, you may be living in the very deepest of poverty, out of employment, and on the verge of starvation. Our present circumstances matter not; we all have equal opportunities of doing good, and it is simply through having neglected these chances that we find ourselves to-day devoid of that true peace and happiness that we all so much desire. Therefore let us start at once without any further delay, looking for every possible opportunity of doing some unselfish act that will be beneficial to our fellow-creatures. Don't build castles in the air of what you will do when things are different, but commence immediately to do the work that you were sent into this world to do. Dismiss from your mind all thoughts of your own troubles, and see what you can do to relieve the troubles of others, for while we are so full of self-consideration, we are blind to the chances of doing good which are to-day passing unnoticed under our very eyes. We must, however, not make the universal mistake of imagining that there is any special credit due to us when we simply look after our wives and our families, for what we can do in any way to brighten our homes should be done as a matter of course, but not with the thought that that is all that God requires, for we must ever remember that they are our wives and our families, and to simply love them that love us, leaves us nothing to boast about, for it only amounts to an honest man talking about his honesty. What is wanted in

addition to all these things is absolutely unselfish acts of kindness, performed hourly and daily without the slightest thought of reward, with the plain and simple object of brightening and improving the lives of our fellow-creatures. We can all start upon this work immediately, and wherever we are and whatever we may be doing, let us sink all ideas of self, and see what we can do for others. A helping hand, or a kind word spoken, it may be, to a perfect stranger, if unostentatiously performed, will bring happiness into the lives of others where there may be clouds to-day, and the inward satisfaction and knowledge that we are making ourselves of some use in the world will more than repay us for the time we spend and the little trouble we take in helping our fellow-creatures; and if we well and faithfully carry out our work, never letting one day pass without having performed a certain number of unselfish acts, we shall soon find that our sphere of operation will be extended and the castles we had previously built in the air of what we would do if we could will then become actualities. The labourer is worthy of his hire, and if we do the work first we need have no thoughts about the pay; for all that we require will be added unto us. Place self first, and your whole life will prove a dismal failure. Place others first in your thoughts, words, and deeds, and your life will prove the very essence of success. Start upon your work at once, for we know not when the reapers may come.

PRECIOUS SEEDS.

THINK the best of one another,
As ye journey day by day ;
Kindly thoughts will help and strengthen
Weary travellers on their way ;
Kindly words will cheer and gladden
Many a drooping soul you meet ;
Make the road seem shorter, brighter,
For their tired and aching feet.

Do the best for one another,
Toiling up the hill of life ;
Every little kindly action
Helps another in the strife ;
Every little deed of kindness,
Every little act of love
Spreads like sunshine o'er the pathway
To the heavenly courts above.

Speak the best of one another,
As ye tread the rugged road ;
Words of loving-kindness spoken,
Lighten many a heavy load ;
Never keep a word unspoken
That will hope or comfort give
To a sad and weary brother,
Making life less hard to live.

Let us then be always doing
What we can for others' needs ;
Kindly thoughts and kindly actions,
Loving words are precious seeds ;
Sow them in the early morning,
Sow them still at set of sun ;

Sowing, sowing, ever sowing,
Till your life on earth is done.

CHRISTIE CAMPBELL.

LOVE, THE GREAT REFORMER.

A MAN cannot be a true reformer who is actuated by hatred of some individual or class. His motive power must be love for his fellows.

Love will banish war, caste, slavery, tyranny, and all injustice. It will lead men away from crime. It will drive out cruelty, inhumanity, and uncharitableness.

Love is but another name for brotherhood. It is the foe of all forms of selfishness.

Love begets love. It is a blessing to him that gives and him that takes. It brings forth charity, mercy, forbearance, tolerance, benevolence.

Selfish love is not love at all. It is lust. Real love only strives to bless its objects.

The Essenc.

CULTIVATE the habit of always seeing the best in people, and, more than that, of drawing forth whatever is the best in them.

THEODORE CUYLER.

LOVE is like its Master—omnipresent. There is no house so small that it hath not room for love; there is no castle so wide that it cannot be filled with it.—GEORGE DAWSON.

SACRIFICE.

BY W. H. EVANS.

ONE of the underlying ideas in all religious systems is that of sacrifice. When primitive man began to observe the natural phenomena around him, and to perceive the wonderful order and sequence in the realm of nature, he, in his limitation, assigned the results noticed to the action of spirits and gods.

When his crops failed, and the storms of winter swept over the land with desolating violence, he naturally attributed it to anger on the part of his deity, and in the early dawn of intelligence having found that the giving of some gift to his fellow-men often appeased their anger, he conceived the idea that by a similar method he could appease the wrath of his special god. This probably took the form of some trivial gift, but with the advance of his intellect it took a much larger share of his possessions, until at last his flocks and herds were sacrificed to his god. But not there did it stop; his imagination, unrestrained by reason, ran riot, and disregarding the sacredness of human life, human victims were immolated upon the altars of religion, and it was not until man conceived the daring idea

of sacrificing God himself, that he reached the limits of his wild imaginings.

But underlying this growth was one grand idea which the world's Great Teachers have ever inculcated. These mental phenomena that took such strange and wild forms were the efforts of the human mind to attain some ideal, which had not yet dawned upon humanity. But at last out of the blood and mystery and smoke of sacrificial fires came an angel of light, who shed beams of rosy brilliance across the path of man, who pointed out the way of righteousness and peace, and showed to humanity that not by sacrificing flocks and herds, nor human victims, was the road to purity and love, but by SELF-SACRIFICE.

All the strivings, and all the inhumanities that led up to this were echoes of this divine principle, which, through the ignorance of man, was perverted, and not until the standard was reached where Truth could be revealed did the revelation come.

And now the great doctrine of brotherhood is being taught, and men are listening with eager longing, and there are heart-searchings and questionings in many minds. After the long toilsome ascent from barbarity and ignorance the portal of being is gradually opening, and men are gaining glimpses of the higher life. Selfishness must be overcome, and although the road may yet be long and the work arduous, yet with prophetic vision we see the triumph of right over wrong, and the *realisation* of brotherhood in the world.

There can be no service without sacrifice, and in all the varied reforms and thoughts which are permeating the world to-day, we see the idea of self-sacrifice gaining ground. Truth makes men free, and not only free, but stimulates to action, and there can be no action in the world of truth without self-sacrifice. But the mind clings to the things of the world, and the whispers of the still small voice die away into faint murmurings of reproach, and men turn away from the light, and live in the shadow of self. But still, the fact that the higher life has claimed a passing thought from many is good to contemplate, and peace cannot be known until men turn and listen to the higher promptings which are ever striving to emerge into the sunlight of Love.

When we realise the beauty of self sacrifice, how beautiful does life become. Then we know that the pathway of life is by doing to others as we would be done by.

Not by mere thinking or talking can this be attained, but only by resolute effort, and by determination in goodness. To get peace one must love, and to find Truth one must sacrifice self on the altar of devotion to right and duty. This is the way, the law, walk ye in it and find PEACE!

“ WOULDST thou lead a happy life ?
To others happiness impart ;
The happiness that we bestow
Returns to dwell within our heart.”

LETTERS OF A TRUTH-SEEKER.

II.—THE FINDING OF OUR RELATIONSHIP.

BY HARRY J. STONE.

IT is just when the old attachments are broken, when the thought is free of useless and unnecessary dogmas, that we seek within ourselves the Higher Truth. Strange though it may seem to us at first, out of all discord and chaos at last dawns the consciousness of Unity. Intuition, that voice within, is revealing to us the knowledge of our true relationship with the rest of the Universe. Reason and experience are guiding us by slow and certain steps to the practical realisation of this knowledge in the life. We perceive that we are the indivisible parts of One Life, and not isolated units. Forces are constantly operating around us, and in proportion to our own development and control, do we become receptive of them. All are channels, more or less, for the flow of these forces. Many are already conscious of these facts in the life, and are seeking by thought—control and concentration to open themselves for their unfoldment. All will have knowledge of these truths who are earnestly and truly seeking the Truth.

To enter into the true consciousness of our relationship with these indwelling life-forces is the real method of progress. It is that poise of the mind which alone can bring us into harmony with the Universe. Doubtless we have all realised this to some extent at particular times in the life. It may have been in some shady woodland glen where that deep calm has taken possession of the very depths of the soul, until we feel in tune with the Heart of Nature. Perhaps we have thought at the time that this "mood" was wholly brought about by the character of our surroundings. We shall see however that it is a faculty, and as such capable of development. Are we not masters of our own thoughts? Let us then take up our rightful possession at once, and here and now clear the mind of all the discords that threaten our peace, so that the inner voice may be heard. All the hard and selfish thoughts must be expelled one by one until the mind is calm and receptive. Then in the silence there will come that clearer vision of our true relationship to the Source of Life and Power, and of our own inborn powers and possibilities. Then shall we have dropped the appearance of things, and be at once directly in touch with the Reality that is always active within them, but awaits our recognition. This is the very fountain of that Love, Wisdom, and Health, which shall eventually be expressed in our life. In this place difficulties and doubts do not perplex us, for we see that they are only the

phantoms in the mist arising from our ignorance. It is indeed only the Truth that can make us free ;—the Truth that cannot be given, but must be brought into recognition by the individual within himself.

The importance of making this practice of thought-control one of the main factors in the formation of character cannot be over-estimated. It is by no means new, as all the seers and sages of the past have advocated it in some way. All our experience proves that progress and development are sure if the ideal be patiently fostered. Sudden attainment we must not expect, for it is one thing to catch an intuitive glimpse of such ideals and quite another to realise them in the life. Much indeed will be accomplished at this stage of our search for Truth, if we only see the possibilities that await the true recognition of our own relationship to the Life-forces which are operating in every living thing. Book-learning or Scientific knowledge will not serve us instead of our own development. We will seek the steady unfoldment of the inner faculties, so that we may become receptive of these forces, and manifest them in health of body and holiness of mind.

KNOWLEDGE is not an inert and passive principle, but it must be sought before it can be won ; it is the product of great labour and therefore great sacrifice.—BUCKLE.

THE NATURE OF RETRIBUTION.

BY L. C.

THE nature of retribution is best expressed in the words, "He that is unrighteous, let him do yet more unrighteousness still; and he that is filthy, let him be made yet more filthy still." There is nothing arbitrary about it. It is not the vengeance of an angry deity, but the quiet, unseen, inevitable, everlasting operation of a perfectly natural law; neither more nor less than the scientific necessity that every tree must bear fruit after its own kind. This cannot be too much insisted on, because even yet people will talk of the "wrath" of God; even yet anxious friends will exhort their loved ones when dying to "make their peace with God." But in retribution there is no element of divine wrath, and no amount of peace-making can avert one iota of fruit bearing "after its kind."

It is a well-known part of daily life that the thing we do the first time with difficulty is done the tenth or the hundredth time with ease, until at last the doing of it is *second nature*. The nervous system becomes the willing partner of the moral

life, and little by little the chains of an acquired tendency are bound round the victim, and "he that is unrighteous" brings forth fruit after his kind by being "yet more unrighteous still."

This is true of the physical, the mental, and the moral life. The disused limb becomes the atrophied limb; the unused faculty means loss of that faculty; the rein given to the passions to-day means less of controlling power to-morrow; the unkind thought, the harboured grudge, the resentment cherished, the dishonest action now, make sweetness, forgiveness, uprightness, increasingly difficult of attainment in the days to come. We make the fight harder for ourselves and the conditions harder to grapple with and overcome. As, one by one, the cells of the physical organism die, they are replaced by new ones fashioned in accordance with the tenor of the mind and the habit of the life, so that in our flesh we reap the consequence of our thought. As, one by one, wrong choices are made, the evil thought or the evil action tend to become less volitional and more automatic, and our nervous system is no longer our servant but our tyrant. Thus we become bound in the chains of habit, and habit is only another name for character, and character *may* be only another name for retribution.

It is a terrible thought. None of the hells invented by theologic superstition is half so awful as this. It is the story of

the *might have been*. To feel day by day the numbing impotence of disabilities of one's own creating; to writhe in the grasp of fetters of one's own forging; to stifle and choke in the fumes of one's own making; to realise—when, stripped of all the lies and sophistries with which we envelop ourselves, the soul stands face to face with the stern, merciless logic of facts—the scorn and loathing which we feel for the thing which is yet *ourselves* and from which there is no escape, which lies down with us at night and rises up with us in the morning; which is our own creation and from whose dread presence none can deliver us—could any retribution be more awful than this? The sting of it lies in the fact that it is no heaven-sent thunderbolt, but simply the natural outcome of causes which we have, carelessly or wilfully, knowingly or ignorantly—it matters not which—set in operation.

Happily there is an obverse side to the law, and "he that is holy let him be made yet more holy still," is at once the reward and incentive of all our yearnings and travailings and efforts after righteousness.

HE who plants in Virtue never uproots.

LAO-TZE.

SINCE it is impossible to escape the result of our deeds, let us practice good works.

BUDDHA.

SOUL-BUILDING.

ONE'S character is the effect of soul-building. It may be either a temple or a prison. This is a matter of choice for each soul, and upon the quality of material selected will depend the strength or weakness of character. We cannot pluck figs from thistles. But by desire and action can be builded an impregnable wall—so builded that it will contract and close in upon us, thus peradventure we lose the conscious product of a life's work. But, if we have builded a temple, the character will be infinitely unfolded through such largeness of purpose, that in the ultimate the magnificence and beauty of the soul will be typified in the physical life. Is it not wise that in knowing this we seek to build for ourselves a temple and not a prison?—*The Essene.*

IT is the soul that creates to itself a body, the idea which makes to itself a habitation.
—MAZZINI.

KNOWLEDGE is happiness, because to have knowledge—broad, deep knowledge—is to know true ends from false, and lofty things from low. To know the thoughts and deeds that have marked man's progress is to feel the great heart-throbs of humanity through the centuries; and if one does not feel in these pulsations a heavenward striving, one must indeed be deaf to the harmonies of life.—HELEN KELLER.

THE FAIRER ONE.

BENEATH one roof two human forms behold,
A radiant child, with silky, golden hair,
And face like some sweet flow'r, so fresh
and fair ;

A faded woman, feeble, gray, and old,
With scanty locks, with fingers thin and
cold,

And lined, worn face, all brown and shrivelled-
up—

The face of one who of affliction's cup
Hath deeply drunk—a shore o'er which hath
rolled

Life's stormy billows, leaving bitter trace.

Say, which of these is fairer ? Do you say,

“ Without a doubt, she of the flower-face,

With happy laughter shouting at her play ? ”

The Angels, looking deeper, thus maintain :

“ The other is the fairer of the twain.”

E. DYKE.

THESE are they which came out of great
tribulation.—THE REVELATION.

EXCELLENCE is never granted to man, but
as the reward of labour.

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

“ WISDOM is meek sorrow's patient child,
And empire over self, and all the deep
Strong charities that make men seem like
gods.”

THE JOY OF LIVING.

DUTY and Reason oftentimes seem hard to learn, but soften them gently with Love, and a Light will appear which shall reveal to us the true harmony of living.

For wherever Truth and Reason, and Love and Duty blend, there shall we see the great Principle of Life as a star ever shining before us, which shall never grow dim if we but step faithfully on, joyous, strong, and fearless; doing not great works, maybe, but doing the small things greatly.

"Be noble! and the nobleness which lies
In other men, sleeping, but never dead,
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own."

Let us do our duty and work much, but if we would make our life rich and full, we must *love* much, bear cheerfully, and work joyously.

"Love is the fulfilling of the law." And when we have learnt this lesson, which can only be learnt by living, by experience in loving, we shall be able to feel with the great Master of Life, our true Teacher, whose sweet words still echo throughout the ages, "I and my Father are one."

Then will our joy be full, and the way will be made clear through life to lead and help those who, too, are seeking for more light.

"No star is ever lost we once have seen."

ROSE L. AMOS.

A SONG OF HOPE.

CHILDREN of yesterday,
Heirs of to-morrow,
What are you weaving—
Labour and sorrow?
Look to your looms again;
Faster and faster
Fly the great shuttles
Prepared by the Master.
Life's in the loom,
Room for it—room!

Children of yesterday,
Heirs of to-morrow,
Lighten the labour
And sweeten the sorrow.
Now—while the shuttles fly
Faster and faster,
Up and be at it—
At work with the Master.
He stands at your loom,
Room for Him—room!

Children of yesterday,
Heirs of to-morrow,
Look at your fabric
Of labour and sorrow.
Seamy and dark
With despair and disaster,
Turn it—and lo,
The design of the Master!
The Lord's at the loom,
Room for Him—room!

MARY A. LATHBURY.

OUR TALK WITH CORRESPONDENTS.

Under this heading we are prepared, month by month, to give needful advice, and to deal with the questions and difficulties of our readers. To insure a reply in the subsequent issue, letters should reach us not later than the 7th.

Correspondents may choose their own nom-de-plume, but no letters will be answered unless accompanied by the full name and address as a guarantee of good faith.

BOTANY.—At your age (38), and a man, you certainly ought to have overcome blushing and confusion in the presence of others. Such sensitiveness proceeds from a total misunderstanding of yourself and others which causes you to morbidly and unintelligently brood upon yourself. You can overcome it by intelligently and intently examining your feelings and thoughts with a view to understanding and controlling them. When you are in company, think of others, and give all your attention to them. Be unselfish and thoughtful for others. Avoid impure thoughts; do that which is right; be regular in your habits; avoid all indulgences; rise early and discipline body and mind every day, and you will gradually become enlightened and self-possessed.

W. J.—The phenomena about which you question us is outside the scope of our inquiry. Do you not attach too great an importance to such a trifling display? There is no need to regard anything as a "device of Satan," nor will you find truth in that way. Do not lose yourself in childish wonderment about fleeting phenomena, but seek the imperishable Truth.

V. P. W.—Lying is ignorance because when a man lies he believes that he will gain some good by it. He does not know that a lie brings upon him four great losses, namely: (1) Loss of character; (2) Loss of reputation; (3) Loss of the material profit of his labour; and (4) Loss of happiness. No man can practise lying who is enlightened as to the nature and consequences of such conduct.

THE EDITOR.

THE "LIGHT OF REASON" GATHERINGS.

THE first meeting of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Group was held on January 26th at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. O. Wilson, 57, Cardigan Terrace, Heaton, who will be pleased to hear from any others who may wish to join. It was decided to meet on the last Tuesday in each month.

The Secretary of the West London Group reports that since Mrs. Worley (at whose residence the members meet) has invited special speakers, the attendance and interest have increased. There was an exceptionally good gathering to hear Mr. White's address on January 18th.

The third meeting of the Liverpool and Birkenhead group was held on February 8th. Seven new members were enrolled, and many interesting and helpful thoughts were interchanged. Mr. Edwin Allen gave a most inspiring address on the vital importance of realising the Spirituality of our Being. The lecturer went on to impress his hearers vividly with the thought that, our unity with God once admitted, it followed logically that we are endowed potentially with His Divine Attributes. To unfold these attributes we must live consciously in the knowledge that these Powers are our rightful heritage, and by eliminating all *selfishness* and *error* from our thought and conduct we render the manifestation so much the more true and perfect. Mr. E. Allen also dwelt on the value of the spoken word in strengthening our own faith and helping others.

Suggested subject for thought and discussion: "The Power of Gladness."

A good number attended the February meeting of the Birmingham Group. The Secretary read a chapter from Mrs. Webster's book, "Life," after which Mr. Akehurst read a paper which was greatly appreciated. Two new members were added.

The Secretary of the North London Group reports a splendid meeting on February 6th, when two new members were present, and many useful proposals were put forward for future work.

The West London Group put off their February meeting in favour of the general meeting on February 18th.

OUR LONDON MEETING.

THERE was an excellent attendance of our readers at The New Food Reform Restaurant, 4, Furnival Street, E.C., on the 18th ult. Of the eighty invitations which were issued, seventy-two were present to partake of the refined repast which was provided. Of all the arrangements connected with the dinner we cannot speak too highly; they were carried out perfectly by the kindly manager, Mr. Hall. The gathering was greatly augmented at the after-meeting by the attendance of others who could not come to the dinner, the room being full. The subject of the Editor's address was "The Science of Self-Perfection." Defining the term "Science" as *systematised knowledge*, he went on to say that in this age of science and scientific achievement, the most sublime and important of sciences, that of Self-Perfection, had become somewhat neglected. He then proceeded to show that the pursuit and practice of Religion, that is, the purification and perfection of one's own heart, is strictly scientific, namely, a matter of gaining knowledge by experience. By way of illustration, he then explained that in the pursuit of Physical Science there are five orderly and systematic steps which are interdependent and inseparable, and these steps or stages he defined as: 1. Observation; 2. Experiment; 3. Classification; 4. Deduction; and 5. Knowledge. He explained that there was a further stage which consisted in the application of the acquired knowledge to the enlightenment and betterment of humanity. He then laid down the five stages in the Science of Self-Perfection as: 1. Introspection; 2. Self-Analysis; 3. Adjustment; 4. Righteousness; and 5. Pure Knowledge. The further stage of Wisdom, or the right application of Pure Knowledge, was also introduced. The Editor then systematically expounded and elucidated the various stages, exhorting his hearers to practice them in their daily lives. After the address, a number of questions were asked by the audience, and several gave expression to their thoughts in well-chosen words. Altogether, a very harmonious and instructive evening was spent.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS.

Gems from the Ocean of Truth, by Charles Cattell. Originally published by Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton Kent and Co., Ltd., London, and can now be obtained from the author for 6d. post free. His address is "Emerson," Pokesdown, Hants. The book consists of a large number of thoughts and statements of scientists and classic writers arranged under nine sections, the titles of some of which are as follows:—"Consciousness and Thinking"; "Science and Philosophy"; "Knowledge, Truth, and Justice"; "The Origin and Basis of Morality"; and "Rich and Poor." The book constitutes an admirable selection of profound thoughts.

Glimpses of Factory Life, by Thomas W. Allen; published by The Garden City Press, Ltd., Hitchin, Herts.: price 3d., by post 3½d. The seven sketches which comprise this book read like a strange story, yet there is not a word of fiction in it, the narrative being one of literal and unadorned fact, except in so far as the author's emotional and fervid style of writing embellishes those facts with the writer's captivating art. The daily life of the factory-worker is graphically described, and the undercurrents of factory life are revealed. The author, who is one of our literary contributors, is convinced that factory reform is urgently needed, and the book has this object in view. They whose work lies amongst the working masses should not fail to secure this booklet.

Healing Thoughts, by Charles W. Close, Ph.D., and published by The Doyen-Steward Co., Bangor, Maine, U.S.A., at 6d., is a practical and well-written pamphlet on the mental basis of healing. The chapter on "Hereditry" is very good. He also dilates upon "The Cause of Disease," and "Spirit, Soul, and Body." There are some speculative statements in the book, but the author never loses his hold on real life and experience; his reasoning is clear and logical, and his conclusions are particularly free from prejudice. In his concluding chapter, "Suggestions for Self-Healing," he gives practical hints on diet.

REVIEWS OF MAGAZINES.

"Mind," published in New York, and edited by Charles Brodie Patterson, not only maintains, but continues to improve upon the literary excellence and broad philosophy which have always been marked features in its pages. With the January issue (which contains a full-page portrait of the Editor) the size of the Journal was increased to 112 pages, and the annual subscription was advanced from 10s. to 12s. The February issue contains a very fine article by Benjamin De Casseres on "Maeterlinck and the Cosmic View," in which the divine seership of Maeterlinck is masterfully portrayed. Other articles are "The Vedanta Philosophy," by Emily Palmer Cape; "Man; the Epitome of the Universe," by C. G. Oyston; "Theosophy," by Mary F. Lang; "The Life Radiant," by William Brunton; "Love and Service," by M. J. Weatherbec-Ricc, etc.

"The Race-Builder" is a new monthly magazine edited by Fred Cutliffe, who was formerly associated with the now defunct "Young Oxford." It is published at 2d. by Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row, London, E.C. The Editor is without personal capital, and the continuance of the Journal is entirely dependent on voluntary subscriptions plus the sales. It is well printed and well edited, and the February issue, which is the fourth number, contains the following articles:—"The Struggle for Citizenship," by H. Osman Newland, F.R. Hist. S., F.S.A.; "The Race of Mind," by Frances Swiney; "Social Sketches," by the Editor; and the fourth chapter of a serial story, entitled "A Child of Deneb." The Editorial Notes, headed "Bricks and Mortar," are excellent little dissertations on a variety of subjects.

"Buddhism," published quarterly at Rangoon, Burma. The second issue of this artistically-produced journal has just reached us. Like the first issue, it is full of intelligent matter for vigorous thinkers. Some of the leading articles are:—"Transmigration," by the Editor; "Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist Texts," by Prof. T. W. Rhys Davids; "The Processes of Thought," by Shwe Zan Aung; and "The Noble Eightfold Path," by James Allen.

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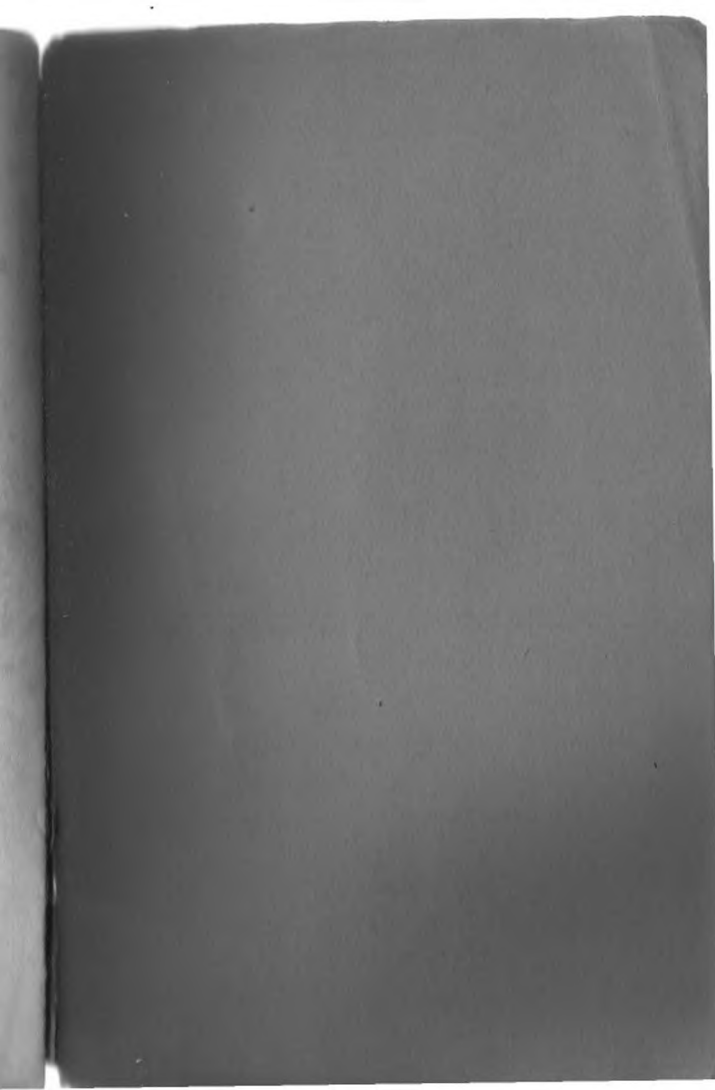
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