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Conducted by A. Osborne Eaves.

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Stray Thoughts.

We have for years, as readers know, referred to the present as the New Age, and it is very close at hand. We have only to look round and see the changes already initiated to know that no description could be truer. Therefore, there was never more room for New Thought than to-day. We have done with effete ideas and conceptions, and we turn our gaze steadfastly and enthusiastically to what lies ahead. All should have courage for whatever is brought forth, for believing that "all is good," that "underneath are the everlasting arms;" failure in any sense is impossible, unless we will it, and even then it is temporary. There is plenty of work for every man and woman in the country, and no excuse for idling. New Thought students should be less lax than the average citizen. Take an example: To-day, in every small town in the United Kingdom movements connected with the coming order of things have begun, and there will be more as the need for them arises. Workers of both sexes are badly needed; there is no room for idlers in the kingdom. Now anyone who has had any experience of public life knows that the workers can be counted on one's hands, though those interested may number hundreds. A literary or other society with over a thousand, or a co-operative society, or a trades union, or football club of a thousand members won't muster thirty for the annual meeting. Of a committee of forty ten won't turn up. All hon. secretaries lament the apathy of their members. What does this mean? Why, that the real worker is a *rara avis*; he is almost unique.

We will admit that people are far busier than used to be the case a century ago, but machinery and systematisation have enabled things to be done in a fraction of the time needed in the past. A man is whisked from north to south by motor in no time; a friend mounts his cycle and in a few moments is chatting with his confrere at the other end of the city or a village a mile or two away. The same thing holds good in the office; a busy employer splits his duties amongst a number of subordinates, who each take so much work off his shoulders. His letters he dictates as fast as he can compose them. The stenographer in his turn, instead of the old laborious method of longhand by means of the writing-machine transcribes his notes in a tithe of the time. The busy woman by a sewing machine removes the drudgery of the needle, and in other departments of the household economises time by means of labour-saving appliances. And so we might go through the whole of man's daily life. Man has the time if he apportions it rightly.

We can each do something wherever we may be situated, and I am pleased to believe that the great bulk of my readers are among those who are "doing their little bit" for the country. It is in public work, however, that there is room for more workers. There is a sort of timidity to be found in those who have not sat on committees of any kind in their church, town, or city. Possibly they feel they are not cut out for this kind of work, but it is more probable that they are merely shy, or lack self-confidence. Naturally, this can be overcome, and there should be fewer people afflicted thus among New Thought students. Let an interest be taken in a town's work and local affairs—both sexes count as one present. If you don't read your local paper you should. Take an interest in what is going on about you. Do not imagine that New Thought is putting self first and thinking of nothing but it. It is true that you cannot help others much till you have helped yourself, and that you must have time for growth, but others have to be thought of. It is only acquiring a habit that is new to you. The reason the public life of so many of our towns is in the hands of illiterate men, who have no originality is because they are case-hardened; they are not unduly sensitive. Men of refinement and intelligence will not enter public life because of what they are subjected to, but thus whole communities are misgoverned. Readers would soon get to understand what a town wanted, and how best to bring reforms about.

Magazines and Books.

Orison Swett Marden quotes Milton in a recent number of "The Nautillus": "He that reigns within himself and rules his passions, his desires, and fears, is more than a king." Most of us admit this, but it is worth repeating now and then as we are in danger of forgetting the fact. The doctor repudiates the excuse that people cannot help it. "We are the victims of our thoughts because we are willing to be subject to them, for no mental influence, short of monomania is so strong that we cannot resist it, or eventually send it flying by the exertion of the right sort of determination. It is only the man with feeble mental muscles who cannot command the forces of the mind."

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The Elixir of Life.

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The curious information—for whatever else the world may think of it, it will doubtless be acknowledged to be that—contained in the article that follows, merits a few words of introduction. The details given on the subject of what had always been considered the most obscure of all human knowledge, came to the author in a way that would seem to the ordinary run of Europeans strange and supernatural. He himself, however, we may assure the reader, is a most thorough disbeliever in the supernatural, though he has learned too much to limit the capabilities of the natural as some do. He is, or rather was, for a few years a humble student of one who possessed great knowledge of this subject. As regards the higher stages of the mystery he has no personal experience, but speaks only as a close observer. He has by experiment and observation verified some of the less transcendental or incipient parts of the "course." And, though it will be impossible for him to give positive testimony as to what lies beyond, he may yet mention that all his own course of study, training, and experience, long and severe as it has been, leads him to the conviction that everything is really as stated.

"Reflection" will easily suggest to the reader the logical inference that in a universe which is essentially impermanent in its conditions, nothing can confer permanency. Therefore, no possible substance, no imaginable combination of drugs, no system of life or discipline, could possibly produce immutability. But the actual prolongation of human life is possible for a time so long as to appear miraculous and incredible to those who regard the span of existence as necessarily limited to at most a couple of hundred years. We may break, as it were, the shock of death, and instead of dying, change a sudden plunge into darkness to a transition into a brighter light. And this may be made so gradual that the passage from one state of existence to another shall have its friction minimized so as to be practically imperceptible.

We must premise by reminding the reader that the Kosmos is One—one under infinite variations and manifestations, and that the so-called man is a "compound being"—composite not only in the exoteric scientific sense of being a congeries of living so-called material units, but also in the esoteric sense of being a succession of seven forms or parts of itself interblending with each other. To put it more clearly we might say that the ethereal forms are but duplicates of the same aspect—each finer one lying within the inter-atomic spaces of the next grosser.

We would have the reader understand that these are no subtleties. In the actual man reflected in your mirror are really several men, or several parts of one composite man; each the exact counterpart of the other, but the "atomic conditions" (for want of a better word) of each of which are so arranged that its atoms interpenetrate those of the next grosser form. It does not concern us that the scientists deny the existence of such an arrangement, because their instruments are inadequate to make their senses perceive it.

(This was written about twenty-five years ago. It is significant that since then, notably within the past ten years, scientific

research into the nature of matter is corroborating the old esoteric teachings to a remarkable extent. The following quotation from a scientific work (Salvation by Science, C. A. Stephens, M D.) lately published, is of value, taken in connection with the above statement about the composite nature of man's bodies :

By ether here we mean simply a medium of attenuation of matter, more minute than the corpuscle. Of the existence of such more minute attenuations there are now evidences. In fact, the present hypothesis is, that there are many such attenuations, one within or below another, as the corpuscle is below the atom going down to more ethereal states not yet possible of demonstration ! A. G. H.)

All we have to say is that if you are anxious to drink of the "Elixir of Life," and live a thousand years or so, you must take our word for the matter at present and proceed on the assumption. We have the actual, visible material body—man, so-called ; though, in fact, but his outer shell—to deal with. Let us bear in mind that science teaches us that about every seven years we change our bodies entirely. (Later discoveries indicate that every particle of the body is renewed about every eleven months.) We only die when our will ceases to be strong enough to make us live. In the majority of cases, death comes when the torture and vital exhaustion accompanying a rapid change in our physical conditions becomes so intense as to weaken, for one single instant the tenacity of the will to exist. Till then, however severe may be the disease, however sharp the pang, we are only sick or wounded as the case may be. This explains the cases of sudden deaths from joy, fright, pain, grief. The sense of a life-task consummated, of the worthlessness of one's existence, if strongly realized, produces death as surely as poison or a rifle bullet. On the other hand, a stern determination to continue to live, has carried many through the crisis of the most severe diseases, in perfect safety.

First, then, must be the determination—the will—the conviction of certainty, to survive and continue. Without that, all else is useless. And to be efficient for the purpose, it must be, not a passing resolution of the moment, a single fierce desire of short duration, but a settled and continued strain, as nearly as can be continued and concentrated without one single moment's relaxation. In a word, the would-be "Immortal" must be on his watch night and day. To live—to live—to live must be his unswerving resolve. He must as little as possible allow himself to be turned aside from it. It may be said that this is the most concentrated form of selfishness ; that it is utterly opposed to all professions of benevolence and regard for the good of humanity. Viewed in a short-sighted way, it is so. But to do good, as in everything else, a man must have time and materials to work with, and this is a necessary means to acquirement of powers by which infinitely more good can be done without them. When these are once mastered, the opportunities to use them will arrive, for there comes a moment when further watching and exertion are no longer needed—the moment when the turning point is safely passed.

But, given the will to live, however powerful, we have seen that in the ordinary course of mundane life the throes of dissolution cannot be checked. The desperate, and again and again renewed struggle of the kosmic elements to proceed with a career

of change despite the will acting within an unprepared body are unavailing. The highest intrepidity of the bravest soldier, the intensest desire of the yearning lover, the hungry greed of the unsatisfied miser, the most undoubting faith of the sternest fanatic, the most deliberate philosophy of the calmest thinker—all alike fail at last. Indeed, sceptics will allege in opposition to the verities of this article that, as a matter of experience, it is often observed that the mildest and the most irresolute of minds and the weakest of physical frames are often seen to resist "death" longer than the powerful will of the high-spirited and most obstinately-egotistic man, and the iron frame of the labourer, the warrior, and the athlete. In reality, however, the key to the secret of these apparently contradictory phenomena is the true conception of the very thing we have already said. If the physical development of the gross "outer shell" proceeds on parallel lines and at an equal rate with that of the will, it stands to reason that no advantage for the purpose of overcoming it, is attained by the latter. The acquisition of the breech-loaders by one modern army confers no absolute superiority if the enemy also becomes possessed of them. Consequently it will be at once apparent, to those who think on the subject, that much of the training by which what is known as "a powerful and determined nature" perfects itself for its own purpose on the stage of the visible world, necessitating and being useless without a parallel development of the "gross" and so-called animal frame, is, in short, neutralised, for the purpose at present treated of, by the fact that its own action has armed the enemy with weapons equal to its own. The force of the impulse to dissolution is rendered equal to the will to oppose it; and being cumulative, subdues the will-power and triumphs at last. On the other hand, it may happen that an apparently weak and vacillating will-power residing in a weak and undeveloped physical frame, may be so reinforced by some unsatisfied desire, for instance, a mother's heart-yearning to remain and support her fatherless children, as to keep down and vanquish the physical throes of a body to which it has become temporarily superior.

The whole rationale, then, of the first condition of existence in this world, is (a) the development of a will so powerful as to overcome the hereditary (in a Darwinian sense) tendencies of the atoms composing the "gross" and palpable animal frame, to hurry on at a particular period in a certain course of cosmic change; and (b) to so weaken the concrete action of that animal frame as to make it more amenable to the power of the will. To defeat an army, you must demoralize and throw it into disorder.

To do this, then, is the real object of the rites, ceremonies, fasts, "prayers," meditations, initiations, and procedures of self-discipline, enjoined by various esoteric Eastern sects, from that course of pure and elevated aspiration which leads to the higher phases of Real Adeptism, down to the fearful and disgusting ordeals which the adherent of the "left-hand road" has to pass through, all the time maintaining his equilibrium. The procedures have their merits and demerits, their separate uses and abuses, their essential and non-essential parts, their various veils, mummeries and labyrinths. But in all, the result aimed at is reached, if by different processes. The will is strengthened, encouraged and directed, and the elements opposing its action

are demoralized. Now, to anyone who has thought out and connected the various evolution theories, as taken, not from any occult source, but from the ordinary scientific manual accessible to all—from the hypothesis of the latest variation in the habits of species; say the acquisition of carnivorous habits by the New Zealand parrot, for instance, to the farthest glimpses backward into space and eternity afforded by the "fire mist" doctrine it will be apparent that they all rest on one basis. That basis is, that the impulse once given to a hypothetical unit has a tendency to continue; and, consequently, that anything "done" by something at a certain time and place tends to repeat itself at other times and places.

Such is the admitted rationale of heredity and avatism. That the same things apply to our ordinary conduct is apparent from the notorious ease with which "habits" bad or good, as the case may be, are acquired, and it will not be questioned that this applies, as a rule, as much to the moral and intellectual as to the physical world.

Furthermore, history and science teach us plainly that certain physical habits conduce to certain moral and intellectual results.

The aspirant to longevity must, then, be on his guard against two dangers. He must be aware especially of impure and animal thoughts. For science shows that thought is dynamic, and the thought-force evolved by nervous action expanding outwardly, must affect the molecular relations of the physical man. The inner men, however sublimated their organism may be, are still composed of actual, not hypothetical, particles, and are still subject to the law that an "action" has a tendency to repeat itself, a tendency to set up analogous action with, and concealed within.

To return to the practical process. A normally healthy mind, in a normally healthy body, is a good starting point. Though exceptionally powerful and self-devoted natures may sometimes recover the ground lost by mental degradation or physical misuse, by employing proper means, under the direction of unswerving resolution.

The prescribed course of self-discipline begins here. It may be said briefly that its essence is a course of moral, mental and physical development, carried on in parallel lines, one being useless without the other.

The physical man must be rendered more ethereal and sensitive; the mental man more penetrating and profound, the moral man more self-denying and philosophical. It will be seen in connection with the doctrine of the tendency to the renewal of action before discussed, that the course of self-discipline recommended by Occultism as the only road to longevity is not a visionary theory dealing with vague ideas, but actually a scientifically devised drill. It is a system by which each particle of the several men composing the septenary individual receives an impulse, and a habit of doing what is necessary for certain purposes of its own free will and with pleasure. Everyone must be practised and perfect in a thing to do it with pleasure. This rule especially applies to the case of the development of man. Virtue to be efficacious must be practised cheerfully, not with reluctance and pain. The general result of an abstention from

certain gross and vicious acts will be (by a modification of the well-known Darwinian law of atrophy from non-usage) to diminish what we may call the relative density and coherence of the outer shell, as a result of its less used molecules; while the diminution in the quantity of its actual constituents will be made up by the increased admission of more ethereal particles.

What physical desires are to be abandoned, and in what order? first and foremost, he must give up alcohol in all forms; for while it supplies no nourishment, it induces a violence of action, the stress of which can only be sustained by very dull, gross and dense elements; and which, by the law of reaction (in commercial phrase, supply and demand) tends to summon them from the surrounding universe, and therefore directly counteracts the object we have in view.

Next comes meat eating, and for the same reason in a minor degree. It increases rapidity of life, the energy of action, the violence of passions. It may be good for a hero who has to fight and die, but not for the sage who would live.

Alongside with and extending beyond all these, the most harmless to others and least gross being the criterion for those to be last abandoned, must be carried on the moral purification. Nor must it be imagined that austerities, as commonly understood, avail much to hasten the etherealizing process. This is the rock on which many of the Eastern esoteric sects have foundered, and the reason they have degenerated into degrading superstitions. The Western Monks and Eastern Yogis who think they will reach the apex of powers by concentrating their thought on certain parts of the body, are practising exercises that serve no other purpose than to strengthen the will, these are examples of one-sided development. It is no use to fast so long as you require food. The ceasing of desire for food, without impairment of health, is the sign which indicates that it should be taken in ever decreasing quantities until the extreme limit compatible with life is reached. A stage will be finally attained where only water will be required.

Meditation must be practised. Meditation is the inexpressible yearning of the inner Self to go outwards towards the Infinite which in olden time was the real meaning of adoration. Through all stages of training the equilibrium of the consciousness—the assurance that all must be right in the kosmos, and therefore with you, a portion of it—must be retained. The process of life must not be hurried, but retained if possible; to do otherwise may do good to others, perhaps even to yourself in other spheres, but it will hasten your dissolution in this.

Nor must externals be neglected. The adept, though apparently immortal, is not invulnerable to agencies without. The sword may still cut, the disease enter, the poison disarrange. The Adept may be more secure from ordinary dangers than the common mortal, but he is by virtue of his superior knowledge, calmness and discrimination. Hence, he who would live to master death must fulfil every sanitary law laid down by science. Pure air, pure water, pure food, gentle exercise, regular hours, pleasant occupations and surroundings are all, if not indispensable at least serviceable to his progress. It is to secure these, as much as silence and solitude, that the sages and occultists of all ages have retired as much as possible to the forest, the desert, the mountains.

When all the conditions necessary are fulfilled, these results will follow. More pleasure will be taken in things pure and spiritual. Gradually gross and material occupations will not only be uncraved for, but literally repulsive. More pleasure will be taken in the simple sensations of Nature the sort of feeling one can remember to have experienced as a child. He will feel more light-hearted, confident, happy. Now the desire for food will begin to lessen. Let it be left off gradually. Nor is fasting required. Take what you feel you require. The food craved for will be the most simple. Fruit and milk will usually be best. After simplifying the quality of your food, gradually as you feel capable of it, diminish the quantity. Later on, the process of cell development will undergo a change; you will become all living and sensitive, and will derive nourishment direct from the ether. However that time is yet far distant. But long before that period has arrived other results, no less surprising than incredible to the uninitiated, will ensue, to give courage in the difficult task. It would be but a truism to repeat what had been alleged by hundreds of writers as to the happiness and content conferred by a life of purity and innocence. But often at the very beginning of the process some real physical result occurs, as, a lingering disease, deemed hopeless, may take a favourable turn. Or some unknown sharpening of the senses may delight one. The rationale of these things is neither miraculous nor difficult of comprehension. In the first place the sudden change of direction of the vital energy must produce results of some kind, in the second it is but natural that the progressive etherization of the dense body should leave the others more at liberty. As each interior body is more rare, active, and volatile than the other, and as each had relation with different elements and properties of the kosmos, the magnificent possibilities gradually unfolding to the neophyte may be imagined.

The educated reader need not be reminded again that one of the great discoveries which has immortalized the name of Darwin is the law that an organism had always a tendency to repeat, at any analogous period in its life, the action of its progenitors. One result of this is, that in general, organized beings usually die at a period (on an average) the same as that of their progenitors. It is true there is a great difference between the actual ages of which individuals of any species die. But, there is in each species, a well-known limit within which the race life dies, and none are known to survive beyond it.

Now supposing every possible sanitary condition has been complied with, every accident and disease avoided, there would still come a time when the particles of the body would feel the hereditary tendency to do that which leads inevitably to dissolution, and would obey it. It is obvious that if by any procedure this critical time could be passed, the subsequent danger of death would be proportionately less as the years progress. Now this, which no ordinary unprepared mind and body can do, is possible to the will and body of one who has been specially prepared. There are fewer of the gross atoms to feel the hereditary bias, there is the help of the re-inforced inner bodies, whose normal duration is greater even in natural death and there is the trained will to direct the whole.

From that time forward the course of the aspirant is clearer,

and with new confidence and new powers, he can press on to perfection, gaining an ever increasing range of relations with the universe.

A deep consideration of all that we have written will give one an idea of what he demands, when he asks to be put in the way of gaining practically higher powers. Well, there as plainly as words can put it is the path.

Appendix

(By A. OSBORNE EAVES.)

The above pages were written years before the "Conquest of Death," "How to Live For Ever," "How to Stay Young," "The Mastery of Death," "Physical Immortality," and several other books on the subject appeared. Christian Science was still in its infancy and New Thought had scarcely come into being. The views were therefore more modestly put forward, more in the nature of a theory. The smallness of the demand for such works by men to-day is a proof of theory being too premature, of being too far ahead of the age. Yet there is nothing new in the idea. The subjugation of the "last enemy to be destroyed" was a favourite subject of the alchemists, from whom our author borrows the title of his thesis. It was the dream of more than one school of thinkers, who, as usual, suffered persecution at the hands of religious bigots. Naturally the theme appealed strongly to the novelist, as it opened up so many interesting and mysterious situations and possibilities.

We need hardly repeat what has become stereotyped to-day—*nothing* can be imagined which is not possible. Further, what has been done once can be done again. At one time the mention of a Master raised an incredulous smile, even among supposedly educated people. Their existence is not doubted to the same extent as it used to be. The adept or Master is strictly a product of Nature. He is a super-man, the outcome of a process of character building carried on for many, many years. The presence on this planet of the savage and the Edison show that evolution is an ever-existing force; there is no evidence to show that man cannot reach a higher point than he has achieved up to the present, and the number of biologists and medical men who see no reason why men should not go on living indefinitely is constantly growing. Old age is designated a disease, and remedies have been devised to cure it. Needless to say, sour milk or drugs will not remove it. The remedy, as our author indicates, is physical and metaphysical, and even he, apparently, was not aware of the discoveries in experimental psychology.

We have science on our side in postulating physical immortality, and seeing that man is immortal to begin with, it only means that he should retain his present body instead of casting it aside and waiting for his next birth, accepting for the moment the teaching of reincarnation. We are not, of course, dependent upon the truth of this principle, which is every day becoming more popular, and will be still more so as time goes on, but it renders the conception of everlasting life in the body more familiar.

Harry Gaze, one of the best known advocates of deathless-

ness, is described by reporters as looking no more than five-and-twenty, and an old friend, Captain Goddard Diamond, another enthusiast of the teaching, does not look his 116 years. He walked twenty miles a day when past the century, and taught a physical culture class.

Generally, those who have attained advanced ages have been very patriarchal in appearance, this being said of the Count de St. Germain, one of the cases of men who have not died. The Masters are not so illogical as to express in their physical envelopes and condition things they must hold to be an illusion—age.

It is only logical to assume that if death can be avoided, keeping young should be easy; it must, in fact, be a *sine qua non*. Life in a body decrepit can only express it partially. Age is only useful for the ripe experience it brings; it is not a necessity to a perfect existence. It is an outward sign that maturity has been passed, and the ever-growing soul can never express maturity in the true sense of the term. One usually takes one's illustrations or examples from Nature, but man in his highest aspect is beyond Nature, just as his mind finds no parallel in it. The higher we climb the less dependent upon Nature we become. One has only to reflect upon man's rise from the savage to his present position to realise this truth.

If the physical body is thought externalised, and if the man of the future can eliminate all conception of age he will not mark the passage of the years upon his body as the tree does by the rings it adds to its trunk. Race-thought, we know, is the primary cause of age, and as man learns to think what is true—that the spirit is absolutely ageless—he will not permit these signs of decrepitude to register themselves upon his frame.

Nature does not manufacture old cells: her work is ever creation, and creation means the making of that which is new. All her handiwork is the putting into expression the life which is eternally pouring forth from the primeval source. Surely man need not be told that it is he himself who is producing age, albeit he does so unconsciously. He accepts age as he does death, as something "natural" and hence inevitable. Both are natural to the mass of people who have no use for perpetual youth or a greatly expanded share of life. The vast bulk of people expect to see palpable evidence of the diminution of the life force after a certain length of time simply because they see it all around them. A few cases in history are the exception; the medical press have recorded cases where the mind having given way in youth, the persons thus afflicted have lost all count of time and remained youthful for more than half a century. If youth can be prolonged unconsciously how much more so may it not be extended by the application of scientific methods of thoughts? If a man becomes that on which he thinks and few will deny this truth—then the man who thinks only and always of youthfulness must express that state in his body.

Remaining young will appeal to more people than the setting aside of death, yet it is only rational to believe that the man or woman who looks young and feels young cannot contemplate death as natural, which should only come with the wearing out of the frame and the fulfilment of every desire.

At any rate, the foregoing pages merit the respectful attention of every student of Practical Idealism.

The Power of Affirmations.

LESSON I.

It is universally granted that music affects the emotions; no one dare question the truth of this assertion. The least musical individual feels his pulse quicken and straightens his backbone when the "Marseillaise" strike upon his ear, whilst few Britons can listen to "Home, sweet Home" sung or played without a flood of recollections passing before them, especially if heard far away from the old country.

Quite as potent, or more so, are living words. History bears witness to this, and other centres of consciousness are quickened than are touched in the case of music. If thoughts, written or uttered, did not awaken response in man of small use would be the art of printing. Well may the premier place in the progress of the world be given to the Press. This, the most potent engine in aid of civilization, fulfils exactly the functions to the mass what Affirmations do to the individuals. As divines, prophets, teachers, authors, philosophers, thinkers, reformers have advanced the evolution of the race, what they have accomplished for mankind in general Affirmations have achieved for the individual.

Very few books dealing with the New Knowledge omit Affirmations, and one periodical which has been running for years has for its sub-title, "A Journal of Affirmations." One might go so far as to say that in the works of every great writer Affirmations will be found, and the reader might keep a notebook and pencil by him to record them as he meets them. Closely allied to them is that important principle which has furnished hundreds of books and affected the evolution of mankind for centuries, though its true value has not been appraised properly even to-day Suggestion.

Suggestion has to be put into the form of Affirmation to secure the fullest results, and when the nature of the mind is better understood the reason becomes manifest.

Man is mind, and mind is fed by impressions impinging upon it from outside. It is true in a higher sense that the real comes not from without but from within. It is that within which man cultivates last, in an advanced state of evolution, because only in it does he contact the highest, but for the present purpose we must confine ourselves to the other aspect.

The not-self, *i.e.*, everything which exists outside man—the world, in brief—is beating, with incessant vibrations upon man's consciousness, or the Self. This beating we term impressions, and we are all subject to them every moment of existence. Only the initiate, the advanced man, can cut himself off from the swirl of vibrations when he will for as long as he desires. The neophyte may from time to time do the same partially, but that is all. This may be understood better by noting how a person under hypnosis gives evidence of powers or phases of consciousness not exhibited normally. No one is more surprised than the subject himself when he is informed of his outpourings. Experiments have been repeated innumerable times in all countries by competent observers, and the stock of knowledge now amassed on the subject is voluminous.

Impressions, then, whether we will or not, strike everlastingly on our minds, which are passive and active in turn. These are the forerunners of ideas, and ideas mould and constitute the mind

as we know it. The whole contents of the mind are modified and changed radically through ideas, so that if we can deepen impressions as they enter the mind our ideas will be materially affected, and the whole contents of the mind thoroughly revolutionised.

LESSON II.

We have absolute power to say whether we will permit an idea to enter the mind or not. This is an important fact to remember, though its full significance may not be apparent at the moment. In truth, we have the solution of freewill here, without elaborate and bulky volumes and a waste of words either for or against. We are at the threshold of fate at this point, and man is absolutely master of his own kingdom. What a man is, that is to say, his character, is indubitably the result of the impressions he has allowed to enter his mind, and when one is tempted to pity oneself and think one is the puppet of circumstances, in the hands of an inexorable power, let him find comfort in this truth. The past he cannot control, but the future he can, because he makes this himself and no one else.

An impression may be accepted or rejected; the choice rests with us alone. When we have once made our choice we cannot alter the result; that is the logical outcome of the choice, but we can choose again later. In fact, whether we know it or not, we are constantly choosing. For the most part it is done unthinkingly, and that is why so many of us make such a mess of our lives.

We cannot escape from impressions, but as we said above we can choose which we will entertain. The moment an impression enters the portal of the mind it is attracted to a group of similar impressions, which it strengthens. The whole mind is composed of groups of impressions, more or less in agreement. Some groups occupy one layer of the mind and other groups other layers. Those groups which receive most impressions are naturally the strongest of all. It is possible to starve a group, which sinks below the threshold of consciousness, only to be called into activity with difficulty.

When certain groups become extremely active they overrun the mind, so to speak. They then select their own impressions, which slip in the back way of the mind unnoticed, and we are sometimes startled to see the strong way in which they have established themselves in our thinking apparatus. It is then that we do things contrary to our better nature and judgment.

It is according to the type of impression that our minds are constituted. Mind-building is thus within the power of everyone. We may not only decide what type of mind we will have, but its calibre and extent—a small mind or a great mind, all this depending on what we feed the mind and how often we supply it with food.

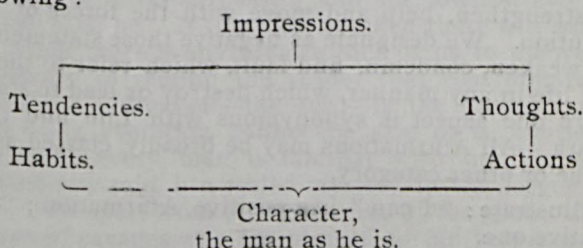
When we talk about "convincing ourselves," we really mean a mind we have created by our own thinking unconsciously, for the greater part. The use of the phrase "convincing ourselves" predicates duality of mind—there is something not ourselves to be convinced, and acted upon, by something else. Much in the same way we differentiate between the real I and the not-I when we say: "My head aches," "my mind is clear"—a recognition of the real I possessing a mind.

And these are not mere figures of speech, but cardinal facts. The mind is the man from the lower standpoint, but from the higher the mind is but the vehicle of that which stands behind it—the real I, though we are not concerned in it for the moment. The sevenfold division of man is the most workable, but when one is writing for popular purposes there is no need to introduce more than is necessary for our obtaining a clear conception of the subject we are discussing, only one thing hinges on another that sometimes it is difficult to keep within the limits one assigns for treatment.

The mind is like a machine that imitates perpetual motion—one part sets another in movement, and the movements are repeated indefinitely.

In this way a man's mind becomes automatic, and he becomes the mere creature of his mind instead of its creator.

Now all New Thought is directed to the obtaining control of the mind, and thus to control circumstances, build a strong character and enlarge one's horizon in every direction. This can be better (and in some cases only) achieved through Affirmations. Putting the matter in diagrammatic form we get the following:



We have not troubled to elaborate each stage in the process as this has been done in other Talisman lesson-booklets. We wish to concentrate the reader's attention on the intimate connection there is between impressions and character. Once this is realised the value of the link made by Affirmation will be more apparent.

Thoughts and ideas nearly always clothe themselves in words, though they remain unspoken. This is not generally admitted when first the statement is met, but all the same it is a fact. Every teacher of linguistics and philologists maintain that in order to learn a language one must *think* in the tongue he wishes to acquire, that is, he must *think in words*. Some people picture what they think, so long as the thought is concrete, not abstract, but our system of Affirmations will apply equally.

Seeing that we are made by our thought, that our thoughts are the logical outcome of the impressions we receive, and the character of the impressions rests with us, we perceive that the complexion of the impression is capable of many changes. Suppose we get an impression that failure is likely to result in some action we have taken and we mention our forebodings to a cheery friend the latter at once retorts: "Nonsense, things won't be as bad as that." His words change the current of our thought and the impression is countered. The thought resulting is one of hope and confidence, and this enables us to plan more successfully, so that in the event of our scheme not turning out as well as we expected we are not unduly depressed about it, or, we feel a chill coming on, and note certain unpleasant "symp-

THE POWER OF AFFIRMATIONS.

toms." We consult a doctor, who laughs at our fears and assures us we are all right. The impression we had created of our condition is thus reversed, or rather a new impression effaces the old one. His impression is at once reinforced by our own, and the effect is marked on the system, actual illness being thereby avoided. The doctor's suggestion that we are well is really another form of Affirmation, which we immediately strengthen. The smallest suspicion or distrust is merely an impression, and it may develop till the foulest crime is committed or consequences fraught with the gravest import to a whole nation result from it. The vastest war involving millions of men may arise from *one impression* finding lodgment in the brain, and this one impression is either a form of Affirmation or speedily becomes one.

LESSON III.

An Affirmation is a statement. This statement may be either positive or negative. We term those statements positive which are constructive, which build, construct, which enhearten, inspire, strengthen, help and move with the forces of progress and evolution. We designate as negative those statements which depress, weaken, condemn, find fault, which refer to the inferior aspect of life in any manner, which destroy or lead to stagnation. In a word one aspect is synonymous with Life and the other with Death. All Affirmations may be broadly classed as coming within one or other category.

To illustrate: "I can" is a positive Affirmation; "I can't" is a negative one.

If we examine our minds carefully we shall see that we are constantly using Affirmations. We are constantly telling ourselves that we can do this or cannot do that; that is to say, we affirm that we possess or deny the power to do certain things, and our actions usually follow along the channel of our thoughts which, as we have seen, are the upshot of our Affirmations. We may say that as a man affirms so he acts.

It is quite true that many people affirm positive and negative statements almost in the same breath. The minds of many people are ever undecided. When a view of a question is presented to them it seems plausible till another statement is put before them. If the opposing views are not put by people the mind itself will preserve them. This condition of mind is very common, and accounts for the seeking of advice, or the opinions of others which is seen on every hand. There may be some excuse where vast issues are at stake, but where the matter under consideration is purely personal or trivial there is not much excuse.

Few people have ever thought, outside the devotees of religion, of the potency of blessings or curses. Educated folk class both as mere superstition invented by a crafty and ignorant priesthood for its own end, but had there been no results springing from them they would have disappeared long ago. It is true that they have been discarded with many of the exploded ideas which a new age had outgrown. Often a gem will be accidentally swept up with the rubbish, and this is a case in point.

him begins to show forth consciousness above the average, as when a man becomes a genius—in words, invention, sculpture, dramatic, art, painting, music, or what not; brilliancy is seldom born with men, and the reason it is so comparatively rare is because it has not been evoked. The choicest flowers have only become such by man's efforts. Weeds are quick to appear where man's care is absent, and the reversion to a lower type always takes place after a few generations, if animals are left to themselves. Aristocracy in thought must for long be extremely limited, so the reader who wonders what there is to discover in anyone need not long be left in wonder. Let us cite one name only—Shakespeare—the reader can think of plenty of lesser lights in every country and in every period. How many fit to be his compeers has the twentieth century produced? Indeed, has mediocrity ever been more marked in any period of history? If the world were effete, if it were in its declining days, or was coming to an end we could understand, but we know from evolution and many other sources that our globe is in its infancy and that unfoldment will continue for aeons. Our Shakespeares will be surpassed, and the lowliest evolved will rank higher than he. If this idea be taken there will be no need to ask whether there is anything in each of us to discover. Nor is it necessary to remind the reader that that long-talked-of principle of the individual—the soul—is the property of every one, and one's evolution cannot be said to be anything like complete until every man is familiar with his highest part, which, as already said, is a sealed mystery to the larger part of mankind. But apart from civilized races of the globe there are the millions of savages who are almost as far below us as the beetle is below a scientist. Eternal progress is not for us alone, but for the least developed cannibal. It seems necessary to emphasise this a little because there seems an idea abroad that the soul is confined to a few foremost races, or possibly a percentage of these. The union of mind with soul provides one with sufficient work for self-discovery for years to come.

Let there be, then, the steady desire for enlightenment, for growth, with as much aspiration as can be summoned, for aspiration prevents egotism of the baser kind creeping in. As no man can live to himself alone, so he cannot grow alone. The growth of every individual quickens that of others and renders their progress less difficult. Aspiration not merely purifies desire, but growth is quicker, because it takes place in subtler matter, the vibrations are raised and another power is invoked.

Evolution proceeds at a more rapid pace, and therefore we have the cosmic forces at our backs. A man never had such an opportunity for making headway, just as the opportunities for education were never greater. There is no excuse for the poorest boy not receiving an education, and there is just as little for anyone to-day not receiving the New Education. Those who wish to help humanity in far more effective ways than heretofore may become pupils of advanced men, the Elder Brothers of the race, and accomplish in a comparatively short time what would under any other circumstances require ten or twenty times as long, and without costing a sou. One of the evidences offered that man can rise to the plane of super-man is instanced by these teachers, who were once men like you and I.

Their existence by the world may be doubted, but that does not alter the fact, and what they have become each human being must one day become. I cite the Masters, as they are called, because of the widespread idea that there is nothing to discover in ourselves. We see it in others, but attribute it to something bestowed by Nature in an arbitrary manner. It seems difficult to assure people that every man has as good a chance as another. The belief in luck and fate is intensely strong, just as is the sense of injustice between the possessing and non-possessing classes. Yet the conception of injustice must be dismissed as unworthy and unthinkable to attribute to the first great cause. Law sums up all, however imperfectly we are able to see it in operation.

Let us instance another reason why there is something to discover in each man. Science tells us that there are large portions of the brain which are never used. It is not that these unused areas are held in reserve to be drawn upon when the cells we have used are worn out. The cells we wear out are at once cast aside and new cells occupy the space they filled, so the unused tracts lie fallow. Much the same is found in reference to the lungs. A comparatively limited portion is used by the bulk of people. Deeper breathing means more life, but breathing being an involuntary act, it is not easy to lengthen the breaths and use more of the lung structure. Psychologists are at one as to the possibility of using more of the brain than is generally brought into play. And what does this mean, except that one awakens latent forces in one's being, or increases considerably those one already uses.

Isolation for a time so that one may examine one's mind is calculated to help in an analysis of one's mental possessions, and one's limitation. One hears the commonplace so often wherever one goes that there is no stimulus to one's best being evoked. Isolation, indeed, is imperative at times, for then concentration becomes easy, and one can track down any trait or trace everything to its source.

A good book as an adjunct to isolation may often be instrumental in starting new trains of thought, and prevent or minimise the possibility of vacuity, and is useful when one knows he is lacking in some special trait he would like to develop. An idea just hinted at by a writer may often be developed. Let the thoughts which arise from reading it be put on paper sometimes as an additional exercise if it does not disturb the trend of thought, and from time to time these notes may be pondered over, or taken into silence and there brooded over. Many statements may be found to be untrue, or very partially true, or deficient in some important element. This practice leads to thoroughness and accuracy as well as clarifying the mind generally. From it will sometimes emerge definite tendencies of thought and self-discovery be promoted.

LESSON XI.

How many people watch their dreams? A handful of the superstitious have recourse to dream books and cull therefrom wonderful and weird prognostications, but apart from them these sleep experiences pass unheeded. One can dream of almost anything, but there are certain limits placed on the dreams: an elderly person rarely dreams he is a child again, or

sees himself much different in personal appearance, nor does he even change his sex. Highly imaginative people transcend the ordinary in their night visitations, and pass through extraordinary experiences.

If one watches one's dreams it will frequently be found that they are of a sameness; there will be a central thought running through them. What it is will naturally depend upon the person, his temperament and type, but more particularly his prevailing frame of mind. Any leading idea, anything which dominates the mind, will be found to influence the dream.

Sometimes, too, one's moral growth will be delineated or indicated by them. One is frequently astonished how much lower one's standard is in the dream life as compared in the waking state, mean and contemptible acts being committed with no compunction whatever, things from which the man himself would revolt in daily life. We are thus able to gauge one's real position in the scale of evolution, and can put our finger on the weak spot far more surely than we could have done otherwise. Some people say they never dream, and for them this analysis of sleep experiences would not prove of any use, but it is probable that they do not remember what they dream, just as those who do recall their dreams have experience in that state of which they know nothing. Experimental psychology has shown that dreams of a certain type can be induced during sleep, and the avenue of the senses conveying sounds and tactile impressions to the brain transmutes in an extraordinary fashion, i.e., a short rap will become an explosion, or a drop or two of water dashed on the face of the sleeper may mean being in a seething whirlpool.

The reaction of dreams on the ordinary type is not understood, because the action takes place often with the subconscious and insidiously affects the ordinary thought.

We exclude for the moment those dreams which are intended to warn the ego of some impending disaster, but may remark in this connection that it is possible to train the dream faculty until it becomes so sensitive that anything inimical is foreseen with greater or less clearness according to the training undergone.

Instead of dreams being confused and meaningless, showing a want of co-ordination among the various vehicles of consciousness, they should be clear, more ideal than the life lived, with scenery that is picturesque and people who are higher than those by whom one is usually surrounded. Conversations and discussions of a bright and helpful character should form the basis of the dreams, and be almost as realistic as the waking life is.

Until dreams become so they should be influenced by the mind, which should always be freed from fear of any kind, thoughts of an inferior or negative sort, and the whole consciousness filled with a healthy and constructive optimism. Instead of dreams finding the dreamer tired in a morning, as is often the case there should be pleasant recollections and a feeling of exhilaration. As time goes on the experiences during sleep will become useful and suggestive, and our dreams a new factor for self-discovery. This object may be furthered by strong desire, as already directed for other desiderata.

We have all developed the power to perceive flaws and the imperfect to an extraordinary extent, showing that this meant years and years of effort, observation, and close observation at

THE DEMAND IMPERATIVE.

that, could only yield the results which have been attained. Even now only he who has specialised in detecting the imperfect can readily see the defects in the apparently perfect, but the standard has risen until very little that is grossly imperfect escapes detection. It has irresistibly led one to seek the imperfect, in fact, to expect it, until it has come to be looked upon as the natural and normal. The perfect, therefore, becomes the exception which proves the rule, the rule in this case meaning that the imperfect is the normal, the common-place—"Give a dog a bad name and hang him." If a man falls once everyone supposes he may fall again; he is almost expected to do so; everything p'ays into the hands of those who think so, and thus a combination of circumstances leads him to fall once more.

Yet the discernment of the imperfect has its uses; to follow the imperfect is to render one blind to perfection, to get side-tracked, to fail to recognise the perfect when presented, or when it is recognised to take any interest in it, because there are so few points in common. We may compare the imperfect with a jangle and the perfect to harmony. Naturally there is little relationship between the two. That there can be an indifference or even distaste to the perfect may be paralleled in the case of a man who lives in the heart of a big city, fond of the rush and bustle, and who suddenly finds himself in a tiny village far away from any town. The scenery might be sublime; Nature might be seen in all her varied moods; yet for him there would be no attraction, no point of contact, and whoever attempted to prove that this communing with Nature might lead him to the heart of things would not meet with much success.

* * * * *

Go back to whatever books you have on the New Knowledge. Read into them the deeper meaning they carry. Do not think they are merely the words of dreamers, but know that those who can see the underlying forces of the kosmos at work confirm all that has been said. There is nothing you cannot achieve; there is no happiness that cannot be yours, no height you would scale that cannot be scaled; no ideal that cannot be realised. There come times to every human being when the miasma of the race envelopes him for a moment, but it rolls on past him, if he but keep his ideal before him. Endeavour to realise that there is but one period—the eternal now—that you have the power to control your thought under whatever circumstances you may be placed, therefore you control your world. If you have made mistakes in the past there is no reason why you need go on repeating them. You yourself, at the centre, are an effulgence, a focus of light, because you are a part of the Great Source; you are greater than your mind, which is not you; you are beyond mind, which is only an instrument through which the real you acts or manifests. When you have faith in the highest you are never disappointed, because in it rests the plentitude of power and love.

I do not know of a single periodical that comes up to "Bibby's Annual" for letterpress and illustration. It follows true New Thought lines—the best is its motto, and plenty of it. "Art as a Spiritual Force," by Hilma M. Burn, shows that Love, Joy, Beauty are awakened by the practice of art in its various forms. It has its use amongst us to-day as much as ever. The pictures make one linger over the pages of this huge shillingsworth, but the limited space does not permit justice to be done; the reader should certainly get the number. "Recuperative Possibilities after the War," by Benjamin S. Johnson, it is full of New Thought, and for this alone it is worth buying. Simple living and self-denial will be necessary after the war. This will lessen the demand for luxuries, and the amount of capital and labour thereby set free can be turned into more useful channels. Both employers and employees were suffering from fatty degeneration of the will to work, and this must disappear. Trades unions must alter their policy of limiting outputs. Ask your bookseller to get you "Bibby's Annual" by all means.

Ervin A. Rice undertakes to answer the question, "Why are we here?" in a volume bearing this title. It is dealt with in a scholarly manner, each principle laid down being considered carefully. Freewill "within the limits of natural law" is laid down; "Every human being is responsible, personally responsible, to himself and God for the use he makes of his opportunities to develop his spiritual capacities." Science finds itself literally compelled to posit an "unseen directing intelligence at the heart of things;" evolution is a necessity; the soul expresses itself in matter successive embodiments, not reincarnation, is taught, though the author does not claim to have any Masters behind his statements as do the theosophists. Exertion is necessary to growth to evolution, and mediumship is decried on account of the degradation to which it so frequently leads. Whilst one does not perhaps find a succinct reply to the title of the book, it contains a very helpful guide to living the wisest life, and as such deserves to be read. It is nicely got up, cloth, just under 150 pp., and probably sold at a dollar. Published by P. F. Pettibone & Co., Chicago.

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X

New Readers should note that lessons and articles which do not appear to commence or end properly, as though a page were missing, are not so in reality, as reference to previous and later issues shows.

X

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PROSPERITY: by Annie Rix Militz

UNSOLICITED TESTIMONIAL.

April 8, 1915.

Dear Mrs. Militz—I take this occasion to write you a few lines to let you know of a wonderful demonstration which I had through reading your book on "Prosperity."

I have heard you speak a number of times, both here and in Alameda, and I have a dear friend who attends in Alameda and she made me a present of your book for Christmas.

As a foundation for my story will say that I am a correspondent in a wholesale house where there are six other employees. Have been with my firm ten years and receive \$100 per month.

I purchased some property, on which I am paying instalments and had several expenses attached to it, and on the 12th of January this year found myself with just \$2 in my purse, which was not a good outlook for the year, considering the payments I had to meet.

I took your book and read, and studied it faithfully for perhaps two weeks, when my employer called me into the private office and informed me that he wanted me to continue my endeavours to increase the business, and that he would give me a check for three hundred and twenty-five dollars as a bonus for the year past.

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Harry Gaze has altered the size and style of his magazine, "Life Culture," a recent issue of which contained a beautiful drawing, "The Storm," illustrating a youth—full of youth's natural attributes. Art is one of the new features, and if it can be continued, readers will appreciate it.

