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Self-Development through Self-Knowledge

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CONTENTS:

STRAY THOUGHTS.

HOW TO REMAIN YOUNG (By Leonard Treverill).

THE SILENCE: HOW ENTERED.

HALF-HOUR'S WITH YOURSELF.

Stray Thoughts.

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The question of "luck" ever presents a fascination for some people—for many, in fact. Belief in it seems to pervade all classes, even side by side with a belief of universal law. Yet the two cannot exist at the same time. If law is universal there is no room for luck, and readers of my "Art of Luck" will understand why the attitude taken up in it is advocated.

In the last issue of the "Nautilus" and I purpose quoting what its alert and breezy editor has to say on the same subject, though the Americanisms may puzzle my readers a little. The title of the article is "The Bunk about Bad Luck" and has been inspired through an "experience story" in an American magazine. "That article," says Mrs. Towne, "does not talk about New Thought, but it is New Thought practically, dynamically applied. I have just sent my copy of it to an educated and near-famous man of sixty out of a job in New York; a talker, not a doer, never persistent, a man full to the bald spot with the bunk about God 'chastening' him and his. Here are some of the things I wrote to him: 'When you put any kind of power anywhere, except in your own self, and in your own *plodding and persistent* efforts on a chosen line, then you are indulging in the 'bunk about bad luck.' It is my experience and my observation from twenty years of careful observing on that line, that things 'peter out' because those with whom we are trying to make connections, find out either from rumour or through trans thought transference, that we are in the *habit* of not sticking to a chosen line UNTIL WE HAVE MASTERED IT.

We must begin at the bottom of anything that offers, AND MAKE GOOD on that job until that job itself promotes us to something better; instead of sticking to the job until it 'peters out' because we do not make good on it, or we leave it because it is

too irksome or monotonous. The fact that a thing gets irksome or monotonous to us is dead sure proof that we are not **PUTTING OURSELVES** into it.

We can become interested in the simplest job in the world, and do it like a master until it opens out to something better, and we command ourselves and put ourselves into it. And we can hate and abhor the best job in the world if our mind is eternally running out on to something else, instead of being *put through our hands* into the job at hand.

In any large city there are a thousand places to take hold, if you have a mind to take hold of them, and to *push them through to mastery*. To illustrate: in New York a position can be had as watchman somewhere on the river front. The Germans are being shoved back inland, and the number of fires that are happening are waking everybody up to the fact that more night watchmen are needed, and that they should be absolutely unimpeachable American men. I am reasonably sure that if you went into the thing with a Good Will you could get an opening as night watchman almost for the asking. If I were in your place I would advertise in the newspapers. Also I would watch all the personals and I would register at the agencies.

And I would *not* register for office work of any description. Just as a makeshift, a way of taking hold at the easiest place. For everybody is tending toward actual manual labour nowadays, and the openings for that are better than in the more *ladylike* lines of work.

And this war is going on until we all get down to some *hard* work every day. Taking hold at the hard work end is the surest way to get a foothold, and by making sure there one gets an opening into something better on the same line. You have tried going in *at the top* of scores of different things, doubtless, and they all 'petered out.' Now why not begin at the bottom where things are *solid* and work up? You are *not* too old to do it. And it will take ten years off your age to **MAKE GOOD** in such employment. Don't run away from New York. If you do *your problem* will tag you. You can find a foothold in New York quicker than anywhere else I know of. And you are smart and bright enough to do it.

You can find a foothold where you do not have to work too long hours a day, provided you are willing to live as you can. There is no city in this country where you can live cheaper and better than in New York city, if you are really determined to do it. There is no other city where they grow Child's restaurants and automats and cafeterias on every corner. And you can get a 'hall bedroom' for a very modest price, I am told. You can live well and do it cheaply in New York, if you will get down to solid earth, instead of trying to 'keep up appearances.' And if you **MAKE GOOD** on the solid earth of useful labour, you will certainly find an opening in due time to something better—by the only door that leads surely to better things, **THE DOOR OF PROMOTION FOR GOOD SERVICE**.

Persistence, getting down to solid earth, taking hold at the first place that useful work offers, and *sticking to it through thick and thin until something better offers in that same identical place*—not in Kalamazoo or Timbuctoo or Chicago or some other far-off place—to my mind this is an **ABSOLUTE ESSENTIAL**, if you are to **GET HOLD** of the world and be anything except a victim

So we see the fierce animal passions which surge through the young in the various species of living things. The life wave reaches its zenith, declines and decadence sets in. Desires become weaker, the hold on life decreases, and at length the moment of emancipation arrives, and the form drops away, and the life is again free to enter a more evolved type. Evolution is only possible by such a process, but in reaching man a new and important factor enters the problem. We encounter a principle which all lower forms of life do not exhibit—individualization, or self-consciousness. On the physical plane man stands at the apex. "How like a god," says one poet; "The shame and glory of the universe," says another writer. As there are sub-human entities so there are super-human entities, but man is supreme in his own kingdom. Research can discover no limit to his powers, no definite line can be drawn as to his possibilities, and so we are not surprised to find that laws governing youth in the kingdoms below him are no longer operative, unless he wish to put himself voluntary under their domination, for man has the power to go backward as well as forward, as shown in the second of the above quotations. He may sink lower than the beasts, as he often does.

So, like the animals he may follow their stages of growth. That is, in fact, what ninety-nine out of every hundred do! Failing to recognise their added human powers they unknowingly ally themselves with the creatures below them. The divine origin of man is overlooked. His long climb from the amoeba to his present stage has not as yet dawned upon him, and so he persists in patterning himself upon the lines of the inferior forms of life below him.

Youth and life are synonymous; life is always young; only its forms or "clothes" exhibit those marks we call age. The mistake that we so commonly make is to take the clothes for the man in them, or the body for the mind, which is a part of the life, specialised for certain purposes. The life contained in the body ever remains young, but the body won't allow it a free expression, so the life breaks up the form having outgrown it.

Life receives the co-operation of the earth in this by the negative aspect of the Law of Attraction, which is known as Gravitation. Its rôle is an extremely important one, drawing the effete to the earth, where it is disintegrated and returned to the elements which formed it. When we say that all is young we mean that inherently everything is, but that animals and man fail to recognise the Law and exhibit signs of disintegration. In proportion to the extent that we come into the recognition of the Law of Youth do we show forth in our bodies the principle of youth. Springtime illustrates this principle in Nature admirably, rejuvenescence being everywhere in evidence.

Man ever looking outwards has confused and misinterpreted what he has seen, and as the years sped on he has measured time by adding year to year, associating each period with signs on the body.

An additional reason why all is young is that all is new. The whole of life must be compared to a fountain which throws up a continuous stream of water; year after year this action goes on, yet the stream is ever new, and manifestation is the same.

The tree that is five hundred years old sends forth each spring leaves that are absolutely new, and it will continue to do so, provided the conditions necessary for its existence are provided. Life having no beginning has equally no end. In this way such a condition as age is impossible. The keynote of life is change, or renewal, and in this sentence lies a whole philosophy.

LESSON. VII.

WHY MAN AGES.

Man has never realized the import of this law and change. He has always considered that he must go through the same process that the animals did. Had life no more to teach man than that he would be justified in holding such a view. Age has seemed to him to be the order of things, so he has accepted it philosophically. Men like Richard Jefferies have risen here and there who have rebelled against the laws of Nature, but failed to perceive the remedy.

First, man ages because he is expected to. Being imitative he does as his neighbour. Had he done his own thinking a different history of mankind might have been written. In some countries he has not yet emerged from barbarism: in the most civilized he has not yet learnt to think constructively. Emerson noted the extreme rarity of the thinkers, and the world might well be warned to beware when one made his appearance in it. Even to-day large masses of men are like sheep: what one does the rest repeat. Who values youth more than woman, yet who is the first to decry "dressing too young?" Custom has decreed that each portion or stage of life shall be distinguished externally. So these artificial barriers to perpetual youth insidiously implant in the mind a constant reminder that youth is a phase of existence, to be displaced by other phases. Whoever associated dignity with youth? What is dignity? A brake on the upwelling life, a cage confining the songster who pines for the beauty and freedom beyond its bars. Dignity is the accompaniment of sober emotions, of a staid decorum at utter variance with the life principle. However unnatural and artificial a habit may be it assumes a naturalness in course of time so that everyone regards it as part and parcel of existence.

This attitude is strengthened by the manner in which life is regarded, "Life is a song" say the Hindu scriptures, but how many believe it? What is life in an overgrown, ugly, modern, industrial town? Every condition tends to sap any conception of youth one may hold. Life as it is and as it might be is as opposite as the poles, so that many come to regard life as something to be got through as best one may. If life were understood we should hear less of the suicides, divorces, crime, sudden death, "accidents," bankruptcies, panics, labour troubles and the innumerable causes of disharmony and strife. Life filled with such dissonances reflects itself upon the minds and bodies of those living in such an atmosphere. There is at the base the optimism which wells up in every heart; soon it is smothered with the impedimenta mentioned above, so we get a see-saw of emotions, feelings, hopes and fears. Worry is one resultant, and we all know how this ages the body. Those who do not worry have that

natural boon joy of life checked to some extent, till they, too, begin to be permanently affected by their surroundings. Repression is substituted all unconsciously for expression, and the deadening tentacles fasten on the uprising life and youth, so that we English are said to take our pleasures sadly. The puritanical spirit has not been extirpated from our national temperament, yet nothing could be more foreign to real life, despite what certain schools of authorities contend, who see in its absence only license and self-indulgence. Pessimism and indifference, even a philosophical or stoical spirit, an attitude of making the best of things are all inimical to the spirit of youth. No man can capture or retain it, for there is nothing in him to mate with it, and youth cannot mate with anything but youth—like to like, as always.

Another reason why man ages is found in the almost universal habit of acquisition. From the moment the infant clutches at everything around it to the closing chapter in life we are all striving to get and to hold. The word "civilization" is only another term for acquiring, the more civilized we become, the more our wants increase. This does not apply to "heathen" countries, naturally; their ideals are spiritual, ours material and intellectual. This mistaken view of life arises largely from the idea of shortage, what man wants. For example, everybody, nearly, works "for a living." The unceremonious scramble in which every class is engaged in getting and holding the existence of the system of banking is rooted in the same idea. The "rainy day" is held over the head of man (civilised) as the nemesis which he may expect unless the strenuous life is led.

But, holding and getting ought to apply to youth? No, because it is utterly opposed to Nature. She gives us the cue, but we are too dull to take it, or rather we *fear* to imitate her, fear being the ruling element in human life at our present stage of evolution. You cannot hold youth, any more than you can by pursuing happiness capture it. Life is ever on the wing, fleeting; so is youth. We will persist in regarding it as an entity, as a material thing, whereas it is a principle, omnipresent, a spirit infusing the vehicles provided for its functioning. Can you seize a moment? What happens when you attempt to pin down or capture the present, it at once becomes the past—it has ceased to be; it is irrevocable. While you embrace youth she withers; the attitude is wrong; as well attempt to catch a shaft of sunlight.

To hold means tension: the nerves are "set." Strain is the characteristic feature of stretching out or holding. "Stretch" admirably describes the exact psychological position. It connotes the idea of clutching and withdrawing to oneself something desired. This attitude closes up, or enfolds or surrounds. The muscles and nerves contract, tenseness supervenes, and whilst the body and mind—it applies in still more force to the mind—are in this state life or youth is automatically shut out. Body and mind are demagnetised. Personal magnetism cannot be manufactured; the Law of Attraction is inhibited. The more sensitive we become the more easily we tense body and mind. Hence, as may be supposed we find rough uncouth people retain their youth longer than sensitive individuals. We make our nervous system so tangled and jangled that the spirit of youth

cannot affect it, and it passes by, leaving us to use up the limited stocks we possess. The art of "letting go" is not easily acquired because both muscles and nerves reach a certain pitch or vibration, and only very slowly can this be altered. Many people go through life in this strung-up condition because they are unaware of any other condition, and do not know the value of relaxation. Unaware of the existence of the real they have clutched at the shadow and been content with it.

The existence of the interior life has never dawned on most people. The great within has never been entered; consciousness has never functioned in the numerous layers or depths wherein the kingdom of causes is found. Man has never tapped the spring of eternal youth. Naturally he could not find if he never sought, for rarely is the discovery made by accident.

Further, he has never expected a longer youth than that which he has seen around him; there could be no visible reason for supposing that he should retain his youth a year longer than the average careful liver. Man does not get what he does not expect to get, though in the case of illness and trouble a superficial observer might suppose this was not true. Nevertheless, it is a fact. Though it has been said that every man thinks everybody except himself is mortal, the same claim with regard to sickness and trouble has not been made. There is at the back of the mind the conception that these conditions are possibilities. In this way one or the other is often expected. The very fact of "taking care," which is universal, shows this. We cannot get what we really do not expect because nothing happens in one's life which has not its legitimate cause, in one's own existence. Man is absolutely his own creator, the cause of everything that transpires in his life, the master of his own destiny.

Scarcely anyone has really desired to remain young. There may have been a feeling of regret that youth was passing, and a natural wish to delay its passage, but not that passionate longing, that intense yearning which would indicate that it came from one's inmost being. Why should man receive that for which he has no use? Whilst Nature is lavish yet she does not shower her gifts on the undeserving, or upon reluctant recipients. Desire in its more marked stages becomes *demand*. Will is linked with the desire, and the trained will cannot be denied anything.

Many seekers there have been for the philosophers' stone, but one and all have failed to realize their dream because they failed to see that the problem is a physical and metaphysical one: they wholly ignored one side. Many have thought that it would be very interesting to extend one's span of youth, but beyond a mild speculation on its why and wherefore their interest has languished. Momentary enthusiasm won't accomplish much in any phase of life, especially in the one with which we are dealing.

A false and perverted teaching has been responsible for deadening the wish to remain young. Based on ignorance the results have been to hold in the bonds of ignorance those who would have thrown off the shackles of age. Tradition again! For centuries man has been misled, misinformed; the right to think for oneself has been denied, so the greatest obstacle to the reten-

tion of youth has been and is to-day ignorance. This has been contributed to by race-lies, or race-thought in which we are to-day ever handicapped. People will deny that such and such a thing as being possible merely because their thought-range has been fixed by heredity, and only by certain methods will this limitation be broken away. If a man says positively and with full belief in the truth of what he says: "This thing is impossible" he is speaking the truth so far as he is concerned. For him the thing is impossible. He has defined the limits of his own kingdom, and no authority can be higher than himself where he himself is the deciding factor.

LESSON VIII.

WHY MAN CAN REMAIN YOUNG.

Why can man remain young? Simply because he wishes to. If man had never wanted to fly the aeroplane would never have been invented, nor would thousands of inventions which surround us on every side. Again, we are told that nothing which the human mind can conceive is impossible of achievement. It may be said that man rarely wishes anything that is impossible of realization, but we are reminded that nearly every great discovery was either denied or pooh-poohed by the wisecracks of the day, just as the wisecracks of to-day deny the claims of the New Knowledge.

The world came into being through a wish or want, desire to express. We have said that life is a perpetual expression, or an unfoldment, and the basis of this unfoldment is desire. It is the pivot on which turns the whole of manifestation. The stone dimly and dumbly desired greater expression and it became a crystal in which lines of cleavage became marked. Later, this was too limiting a sphere, and the form was cast aside for the plant, where beauty, form, colour, fragrance (in some cases), served to express the desire almost unconsciously felt. So evolution went on, and when man was reached desires multiplied. Scarcely a single desire which has been shared by a few people has failed to materialize.

The desire for a much longer youth than is enjoyed to-day will assuredly bring it about, and as the idea of its possibility and desirability spreads the combined thought will quicken the consciousness of man and a new outlook will enter the hearts of thousands, giving rise to ways and means of realizing what the majority will regard as a beautiful dream—too ideal to ever be realized.

It is true that many will admit that the idea is desirable, if only to enable the world's great men to stay amongst us for a longer period and so complete their life-work, or extend, enlarge or improve it in every possible way. But it may not be deemed possible, so that for them it will always remain a delightful theory.

Therefore, the reader who would retain his or her youth must conceive its possibility. He must not scout the idea because of its daring character, or as being new-fangled. He has all past history to teach him that nothing is impossible.

Next, he must be filled with a forceful and determined desire. This is often the outcome of deliberate thought—a matter of growth. If he is indifferent to the idea he cannot conscientiously expect to demonstrate prolonged youth. If it holds out no tempting prospects it is scarcely likely to appeal to him strongly. There must be a *motive* behind the desire, otherwise the desire cannot be an all-impelling or powerful one. If it is merely a matter of curiosity or self-gratification, a novelty, something to boast about, to feed self-conceit, it will be next to impossible to realize the desire; it must be heart-felt; it must come from the highest part of one's nature; it must be the outcome of an intelligent survey of one's innermost nature. If you have no use for it you will not realise it, and for a very simple reason. You are what you are simply by virtue of what you have desired. The dominating desire and thought are you, as you find yourself to-day. You cannot attract or become that which you are not inherently. You may be the cleverest actor and deceive everyone about you as to your true nature, but you cannot possibly deceive yourself. A criminal cannot transform himself into a saint at will, any more than a Zulu can change the colour of his skin to that of a white man. There must be that in you which will respond to that which you seek to be. It is true that every human being is young all the time, that age is as great a delusion as poverty or sickness, judged from the standpoint of the self, but on the plane of manifestation there must be harmonious relations. If a passing whim induced by the imitative faculty were gratified, man would be a miserable wretch. Seeing that a man is as he has willed to be he must remain so till he has outworn the desire which made him as he is.

A man who had lost touch with youth has no use for youth. He must be able to enter heart and soul into its spirit, its aspirations, hopes, ideals. In a word, he must be an idealist. Yet every live man must be an idealist. What can be accomplished in life in a comatose, benumbed, enfeebled frame? The world needs workers more than ever in its past history to lift mankind. If children are to-day considered a valuable asset to the state a man with a well-developed, balanced mind, virile and young body is still more valuable.

Man can remain young because it is in accord with Nature. It is never she who ages man, but man's conception of Nature. He regards it as her system of giving every dog his day, after which she has no more use for him and brushes him aside. Nature never interferes with man's desire to prolong his youth: if it were against her laws then man could not act contrary to her laws. Nature being ever young herself would certainly place no barrier in man's way. Man is actually collaborating with Nature; he is moving in line with evolution because the retaining of youth indefinitely marks an advance to man's power over environment. Physically, there is not much improvement possible, but psychologically he has only begun to live. Fully ninety-five per cent. of his powers are latent, five per cent. sufficing for all he wants to-day to express himself. The comparatively small success which attends his efforts to realise his ideals bear eloquent testimony to the heights he yet has to climb.

Man can remain young because he has full dominion over his own realm, and that realm is all that pertains to body, mind and soul. If he were denied this power then he would be little better than a puppet, a tool in the hands of an arbitrary power. Man knows that he has this power over himself by the examples afforded by those super-men known in certain circles as Masters—names literally true, masters not only of all that refers to their own kingdom, but of the cosmos.

A few years ago it was the custom amongst the so-called educated to smile superciliously at the inaction of those beings, but Their existence has been placed beyond all question by many, the writer, like many more, knowing Their pupils, men and women marked by their spirituality and intellectuality. The secret of perpetual youth, like that of death, has long been solved, and they retain their bodies century after century in splendid vitality, perfect in physique and youth. It is They Who guide the universe, Who are co-workers with the Absolute.

What man has done man can do, and however near the bottom of the mountain which leads to masterhood you and I may stand to-day one and all humanity must rise. Talisman books are constantly dinning it into the ears and minds of their readers that man's goal is nothing short of perfection; anything below this would be a reflection on the competency of the Causeless Cause to evolve a series of universes to their highest possible point. Nothing short of perfection could satisfy That Which is perfect. The Elder Brothers, as the Masters are often called, are exemplars to us, their younger brethren, and what They have evolved to we can attain. Every time we deny man's power to progress we are casting a reflection on the Absolute, and belittling our divine origin. Man's history, apart from the statements in various world scriptures that we are gods, and that it is our right and duty to be perfect, even as our source is perfect, proves most conclusively that he is evolving, and that no one can say to what height he may yet rise. This brings us to a cognate thought.

Man can remain young because he is obviously in a state of transition. He is manifestly imperfect on the plane of expression. His faults and blemishes are patent to all. It is this fact which often leads thoughtless people to see in it the evidence of vile nature, "conceived in sin," and other theological jargon based upon misconception of man's destiny. According to various croakers the world should have come to an end years ago, but it did not. The most cursory glance at the world would have shown the folly of such an idea—a universe not one quarter evolved, faults and flaws on every hand. When a master craftsman undertakes the making of something he does not throw it up in disgust because he meets difficulties. If he finds an error of judgment here and there he remedies the matter, so with the great Architect, Who once putting His hand to the creation of a cosmos does not cease until His handiwork is perfectly complete. Man is not complete and won't be for a few millennia.

As man is in a state of transition one of the first things he will desire is more life and plenty of it. Not the life of a asceticism, which is one of repression, nor self-indulgence, which

means the forgetting of others, the being too self-centred. He will seek a deeper life, a richer, fuller existence, a longer one, so that he may be of greater service to his fellow-man and himself. The average length of life must be increased, and consequently the period of youth must be extended. Any condition which hampers or limits man's efficiency must be eliminated, and age is one of these impediments to progress. Age means the laying aside of life's opportunity, the tacit acceptance and man's work is done, so far as this sphere is concerned, but all evidence points to one fact, that man's work is *never* done. This outlook need not alarm the reader, to whom work often means something distasteful, laborious. In New Thought work and joy mean the same thing. If one's duties are unpalatable one changes them by processes which have been given in other courses, and which need not be repeated here.

Other reasons might be adduced to show why man can remain young, but the above are sufficient for the time being.

LESSON IX.

WHY MAN SHOULD REMAIN YOUNG.

Only a few years ago a phrase which was very current was "Too old at forty." It was an abominable conception, to think that a man should be scrapped after twenty years' working. What was to become of him for the next twenty or possibly forty years that lay ahead? Nobody cared, and here was the tragedy of it.

Yet there must have been some underlying reason for the edict? There was some men aged so rapidly, and at forty they were beginning to lose their efficiency. They could not perform their duties as smartly and thoroughly as their co-workers. Their youth and freshness had departed; their gait and movements lacked the alert and spruce character of the young man. Often they showed signs of impaired health, and if they stayed away from their duties much this was considered a sufficient cause to dispense with their services.

Now although we can never return to the bad old days, there is no doubt the New Age will be more exacting than in the days of the old régime. A far higher standard of efficiency is being demanded already, and if higher salaries are to be paid the worker must be smarter. The competition of foreign markets is necessitating more highly organised systematization in every department. The slacker and the incompetent are useless in the new order of things, and fitness and smartness are only possible in the young. It is well known that new ideas are not absorbed by elderly people. They prefer the old ruts, the ways they have been accustomed to all their lives. They do not take kindly to innovations, their minds, like their bodies, have got into set moulds. Business is like life, the element of newness is always pushing its way to the front. There is no use for back numbers. The Americans have taught us a useful lesson here. They scrap any machine if they meet with one which can do its works more efficiently; they have carried this principle to their employees—the elimination of the unfit, the "survival of the fittest." Business is only a replica of life. One instinctively seeks the best in both, and age and fossilized ideas ill accord with it. *To be continued.*

To practise the silence is to train the mind to draw upon the greatness that is latent in man ; to constantly break bounds ; to transcend the limited ; and to live more and more in that power that makes all things possible. To practise the silence is to constantly press on towards greater things, because to enter into the more perfect consciousness of that absolute life that permeates all things is to gain possession of that life that produces greater things. In other words, to practise the silence is to learn the use in practical life of the wisdom and the power of the superior self.

When entering the silence, no attempt should be made to cause the mind to become a blank. To try to do so is to pervert the actions of the mind, because it is not possible to stop thinking. To live is to think, and since you cannot suspend life, you cannot suspend thought. He who tries to make his mind a blank is simply turning his attention upon whatever ideas he may have of nothingness, and will thereby think just as much about those ideas as he does about tangible things. The result of such thinking will be the formation of a number of false conditions in the mentality, conditions that will interfere directly with clear, consecutive thinking.

When entering the silence, do not think of mystical forces. To enter into those forces is not to enter into the life of the absolute, and the purpose of the silence is to go directly into that life that is absolute. To enter the silence is not to enter into the so-called finer grades of the mental forces or vibrations, but to enter into the consciousness of those principles and laws through which the very finest and the most powerful forces may be brought forth into peaceful, harmonious action. When attention is centred upon different forces or states of being, the mind cannot enter into the consciousness of the principle that lies back of those forces or states ; therefore to enter the silence we must turn attention upon the absolute life at once, and continue to hold attention upon that life by being deeply interested in the perfect calm and the high action of that life.

Instead of trying to keep the mind from thinking, proceed to think about the real, the worthy and the superior that is latent in every part of mind and life. Proceed to form higher and more perfect mental conceptions of the real, the limitless and the absolute, and try to comprehend that greatness that is greatness, that harmony that is harmony, that perfect health that is perfect health, that strength and wholeness that is strength and wholeness. Every step in that direction means another degree in the silent state, the state of the absolute life ; and every step taken in the consciousness of this state will make the personality more powerful and more serene, while the mind will become larger in capacity and more brilliant in thought.

When entering the silence, all anxiety must be avoided, and no feeling must be sentimental. Every tendency towards the emotional will cause the mind to become confused with psychical forces, while anxiety will cause the mind to think too much about those tangible results that are desired instead of turning the whole of attention upon that power that can produce any results desired. To enter the silence, keep the mental eye single upon the great within, and think only of the absolute life—the life that is in perpetual action—action that is immensely strong, very high, yet absolutely still.

THE SILENCE; HOW ENTERED.

(5. BY LIDA A. CHURCHILL).

How shall you gain and keep the poise necessary to the absorption and utilization of the powers which insure victory?

Engrave it on your heart and burn it into your memory that, as Emerson declares, "All power is in silent moments." Every great deed was accomplished in the silence of some brain and heart before the instruments which made the world aware of the victory came into action. As the flame is not the real fire, but the sign and outcome of the fire, so accomplishment is not the real force, but the sign and outcome of the force. The real crucifixion was in Gethesmane. Waterloo was won in Wellington's tent. The Angelus was painted in Millet's brain. All great causes in all the worlds are ever silent, and ever silently conceived.

Water which swirls and foams admits of no reflection. Every one who has had his picture taken can recall the photographer's request, "Now remain perfectly quiet."

Why was this quiet necessary? Because the sensitized plate would otherwise produce nothing but an incoherent unlikeness to anything which the sitter required. The mind is a sensitized plate, and he who is to receive the impression which will result in the most satisfactory action must have his mind quiet. "Be still, and know that I am God." Still, because in no other way can you come into intelligent and vital touch with the All-Love All-Power, All-Oupulence.

You have, at some time, doubtless, tried to give counsel, direction, or encouragement to an extremely excited, hurried, or worried person. You probably did not succeed to any satisfactory degree. Why? Because—and here is a second truth to engrave upon the heart and burn in upon the memory—two are required in the giving of a gift, the receiving of a message. God himself cannot give you anything which you are unwilling or unready to receive.

A lady asked a friend to bring a certain remedy of which the latter had spoken, and the next evening was named as the time when the remedy should be brought. When the friend appeared to keep the appointment, the lady, forgetting that such an appointment had been made, had locked her door and gone to the next room to call. The friend went away. "Why," said the lady afterward, "did you not just bang my door, and demand entrance; I should probably have heard you if you had made enough noise?"

The Great Commissary who has charge of your supplies is willing to send to your door all that you can need or intelligently desire, but you will never, can never, receive these supplies unless you are ready and willing to receive them. He does not bang at doors and demand entrance. "Wilt thou be made whole?" was the question of the Christ to one who needed healing. The power which could raise the dead and still the turmoil of Nature never disregarded man's free will. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," said this same great Master. "If any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in and sup with him."

Mark you, He stands and knocks, but if you would receive Him and all that He brings, you, yourself, must open the door. Never dream that God reveals himself or gives His gifts whether or no!

Another very important step toward creating a receptive soul-centre is the pruning process, cutting off habits or things which excite, depress, or discourage you. The intoxicated or unduly excited or depressed brain, whether these things come from drink, drugs or unwise companionship, very seriously hinder or wholly forbid the poise which makes for power, peace, and opulence. The tongue must be taught silence. All quarrels and argument must be strictly tabooed. In wrangling or arguing one mind is clashing against another, which causes a shock to both, and all shocks are destructive of receptivity, and in many cases prevent for many days together a return to the heart silence which is effective alone of good results. For it is a heart silence to which we must attain. Most of us must live for many hours each day in the midst of outside noises, and long stillness of the hands are, to the majority, impossible. But, like those places fathoms deep in the sea which no storms reach, no turmoil disturbs, so the inner chamber of one's being may be still, whatever the outward conditions. And, mark you, all disturbing influences must be pruned away. One breeze which tosses its surface into foam, or an upheaval of mud from its bottom, will as effectively destroy the power of the lake to reflect as would storm and wind and mud upheaved all together.

"Why," exclaims one, "this means a wholly new mode of life."

Verily it means no less.

And right here is a place to do some serious thinking, to come to a momentous decision. Have the intoxications, the quarrellings, the arguments, the excitements by people or things, brought you any substantial good, any permanent happiness, any power, peace or opulence? If not, is it not the part of wisdom to cut them off, that in their stead may sprout and grow those things which can but mean permanent betterment? If you cannot from experience, observation, or imagination, decide that you have enough of them, that you will leave your delving for the common stone of mere stimulation and dig for the diamond of real happiness, you are not ready to receive this diamond.

Take what you are ready for, what you really want, and *pay for it*. This is the mandate of the law. Work with the law and have all things. Work against or disregard the law, and have nothing worth having, nothing which will remain. All things are yours, but you must claim them aright. Go into the silent centre of your being, and learn of God.

SUMMARY AND EXERCISE:

All power is generated, all great things conceived, in the stillness of the soul-centre, which one may learn to keep always undisturbed, and hence at all times capable of receiving impressions from the All-Intelligence, All-Power. One must be ready to receive, or nothing is given him. Every influence which disturbs the receptivity of the mind must be cut off. A new mode of life must be adopted and fostered.

Say every day, in the quiet of your room or elsewhere:

I am still of heart and of tongue. I invite, and hold myself in the attitude to receive, the intelligence which teaches the Love which protects and satisfies, the Power which invincibilizes, the Peace which blesses. I admit nothing into my life which would prevent or hinder the greatest soul receptivity. I wait in the Silence with and for God.

(6. BY PAUL ELSWORTH).

You have heard of the wonderful things accomplished by "going into the silence." Well, the silence is the second room which you must enter in receptive prayer (Reference had just been made to a "direct and serene appeal to the Father within, definitely formulated in the consciousness.") You have made your body comfortable and have turned your attention inward; you have called to the Father within to quicken you with that tide of spiritual energy which you need. Now, you must remain silent and passive, and you must neither suggest nor affirm to the energy which fills you, nor must you let your attention wander outward to the things of the material world. You are just to rest, to be conscious and awake, but passive and receptive. Don't even "try to feel" the energy working within you, for your imagination has nothing to do with the process; this is not auto-suggestion, nor is it always a process which makes an impression upon your feelings. You may feel nothing, or you may be so shaken that you will be terrified. You are in the hands of the Great One who formed you out of His own spiritual substance, and who best knows how to perfect you in body, consciousness, and estate.

There is no certain time when you must remain in the silence. At first it will perhaps be an unsatisfactory experience, but if you are faithful you will come to recognise these periods when you are conscious, but without formulated thought, and when every cell and fibre is being cleansed and recreated as times of wonderful blessing. At the right time, each withdrawal into the silence will terminate itself. Body and mind will awake with an unmistakable demand to be allowed to go to work. You may then shake yourself physically and mentally, and pass from the chapel of prayer by way of the third room, to realization. Do not hurry away to your regular employment, but pause a few minutes and silently examine the thoughts that come to you. Perhaps the wisdom that you particularly need will be revealed to you at this time. If not, you may pass on, knowing that you are going forth regenerated.

If you find that your attention keeps wandering to things of the outer world, when you are in the place of silence, it will be a help to you to use a "key thought" to bring it back and hold it receptive to the spirit of communion. You may take, for instance the words: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high." Hold them for a moment, realising that you are now in the secret place of the most high. Or you can use those verses of Christ's prayer: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done." Realize what they mean: not that you are going to give up everything worth while in your life, but that you are serenely and gladly calling in the spirit which quickens and perfects, to fill all of your life, instead of merely a little corner of it. But do not fill this time of silence with affirmations or worded prayers; these are wonderfully potent in their places, but this is a time of passivity on your part; simply bring your attention back, if it proves unruly, and keep your receiving apparatus in tune with the spiritual vibrations by a brief consideration of the nature of the process that is taking place, then rest and receive.

No, let the idea be banished once and for all as to Nature standing in man's path of advancement. Because man does not understand Nature he often runs counter to her teachings, but sooner or later he becomes aware of the mistake he has committed, and he retraces his steps. This is experience, and must be paid for, but it is worth paying for, for by its means man has learnt valuable lessons.

These unused brain areas are like a clean slate, ready to be written on. In the time of Locke, the philosopher, it used to be thought that a child came into the world with a mind like a sheet of blank paper, but this theory was soon dispelled, "Innate tendencies" were found; later there has been a leaning towards the reverse theory—that all the brain substance was in use, and there was no room for cultivating new ideas. Now it is known that certain parts are devoted to certain types of thought, and that "inferior" intellects can be improved, developed to almost any extent. It is admitted, in short, that one can grow a character. Probably no system can better show how this can be accomplished than New Thought, for it goes beyond the barrier which modern psychology is ever erecting, only to pull down later and place further off, as facts give the lie to theory.

New ideas can be initiated by thinking with the upper brain. By the law of the association of ideas immediately a person addresses you on any subject that part of the brain which holds the impressions previously made on that particular question is switched on, so to speak, to the normal consciousness. If a new idea is repeated, especially when the mind is in a certain condition, it can be quickly established as a permanent tenant of the consciousness to be recalled at will.

Character readings by various methods have been responsible for much harm to sensitive people and others by dividing mankind into "temperaments," helping to saddle them with weaknesses which they ought to possess in theory, but which in reality were only present in germ. What has been inherited is not there to express itself but to die out. This is a view which never seems to occur to people. Looking at the mind as being a mental garden there are things in it to pull up and others to cultivate. There are tendencies to repress and express. The amount to express depends on the age of the man or woman. A child, let us say, may have ten per cent heredity behind him. This comes out to some extent till he reaches twenty. Then he will have five or three per cent left. And as he grows older he will wear out most of the parental fetters he has borne within him. In the meantime he has been sowing his own seed, and must reap the crop. This seed has been obtained from education and environment—it is not the expression of himself. Yet he has so woven it into his character that he believes it is made up of innate tendencies. Were he transplanted into another set of conditions he would take on those conditions in due course, unless possessed of a very strong individuality.

But whatever one's tendencies, acquired or pre-natal, they must logically come out. The man may continue to manufacture new duplicates, and if he does he remains the same for years and years, the current of his existence setting in one direction. It is difficult to some natures to throw off the incubus of a past, of

heredity, especially when science enunciates its omnipotence. When we know that we ourselves can create at least ninety per cent. of heredity, or our future, this should hearten us, and enable us to laugh at "bad influence," "ill-luck" "misfortune," "handicapped from birth" and other nugatory phrases that paralyze or at least numb our incentive to success.

We all know that the outstanding feature of life is change, and this feature affects the individual just as much as it does nature or those things outside man. Whatever your original ten per cent. tendencies were, were given you as a starting point, or capital, but a man with small capital is never content to let it remain as it is. He can re-invest it in any direction he likes; if he fancies one thing more than another he is at liberty to put his capital in it, and he expects in due season to enlarge it, and succeed.

There is one important law here which the person with little self-reliance should impress upon himself: the only power there is in our tendencies is that we attribute to them or give them. Why a man should seek to learn what his weaknesses are is not clear, for they are so self-evident to anyone who really takes an interest in his own well-being. They stand out, become too prominent, too pronounced, too painful for reflection, that to have them pointed out, instead of making the victim feel the stronger, has exactly the opposite effect, because he thinks he must have been in a bad way when a total stranger can detect them. It magnifies their significance out of all proportion in his eyes—the victim's, that is. The man who for years has said: "I have always lacked self-reliance, so I suppose I always shall" is scarcely likely to throw off the habit till he has altered his point of view.

Never mind what the unthinking say, or how they regard you. If you have hitherto been shy, reserved, seeking solitude, shunning company, the opposite sex, avoiding recognition, disliking to take a hand in public work, or in the affairs of your town do not be perturbed it. The enunciation of the above law should be worth more than the cost of these lessons, if taken to heart, that is, believed in and acted upon. In fact, it should be worth more than money can buy, for there are things—the most stable, most essential—that money is as dirt in comparison.

If you really wish to know your weaknesses you may examine every trait, but not for the purpose of exultation, or denunciation, but merely for stock-taking purposes, for, after all, your character is your stock-in-trade, and if you wished to ascertain your financial position at any point in your business career you would be bound to go through your assets and liabilities and balance one against the other. But don't go to a stranger to be told something that you can find out for yourself and much more thoroughly. Remember that the most expert character-reader can only touch the fringe of the real character, which is hidden in the depths of the subconsciousness. They only see what is thrown on the surface; what the deeps contain is utterly beyond their ken.

Don't forget your good points in making a survey; this is an aspect that does not occur to those who lack self-reliance. They are too absorbed in their deficiencies to remark their

positive qualities. Note, too, another fact of the supremest importance, which I am ever reiterating, because its full significance is so seldom understood—all positive qualities have fifty times or more the weight of negative ones, for all negativities are only shadows, the substance being the positives. Hence if you discover you possess forty weak points and five good ones—and it is a poor character that cannot raise five—your assets outweigh your liabilities, and you may be proud of yourself.

It is noted that the most reliant men have a surplus of egotism—some would call it cheek—in their make-up, and the un-self-reliant individual generally shrinks from this type, for the pushful attitude repels his, so opposite is it to his own character. Yet this excess of a good thing is better than too much negativity, as it does lead to success or happiness, and he is a poor wretch who does not wish to make life a success. The self-made reliant man seems to go about “asking for it,” and he often gets it, for he is snubbed, mimicked, made the butt of behind his back, twitted for his grammatical slips by the Superior Person, but he has too thick a hide to care a cent. The sensitive man shrinks from this type, and piously hopes he may never get like that man, all the time envying him his sangfroid.

Exercise. Read through the present and preceding lessons several times, especially when you feel less self-reliant than usual, or copy out those portions which most appeal to you, and look at them from time to time whenever you have two or three minutes to spare. This practice will begin to link up new parts of brain area with the old, and you may experience ideas that it may after all be possible to bring into the working consciousness.

LESSON III.

It has been recognised that a man may empty himself of ideas and that he requires his mind filling again, and hence the necessity for reading. So it is with the brain. A man can only be what he thinks. He is what his mind is, or as much of it as comes above the threshold of consciousness. A man can never be greater than his mind, which constitutes his thoughts, and actions are only the expression of thought; an action is thought in manifestation. There can be no such thing as an unpremeditated action, or even impulse, because thoughts may be unconsciously harboured and stored away, and only be recalled by a chance word or reminder entering one of the avenues of the five senses, or another vagrant thought may serve to recall it. True, a man may be a prey to wandering thoughts and thus be held not to be responsible for his own actions. The most unexpected things have been done by people deemed incredible of them. A coward does a brave action; a saint startles the world by an excess of debauchery; an unworthy man shows nobility.

Now that something is known of mental physics, and that thoughts can be photographed, the conception of an idea being an indestructible force, possessing form, and coalescing with others of a like type, the fact of similarity compelling combination, opens out many new phases of the subject. If

it be true that man is a prey to his own thoughts or "fancies," and the two words may be taken to be alike when used in this sense, then it follows that he can be affected for good just as he can for evil. It has been said that the world though perpetually going round the sun never traverses exactly the same orbit in space. The whole solar system, including the sun itself, is travelling through space; whatever takes place in the macrocosm is repeated in the microcosm, or man. Your body is never two seconds the same; thousands of atoms are being born, changing, or dying. So your mind is never two seconds the same mind, it is constantly changing. First you decide upon some course, but the next instant you change your mind—if you express volition, instead of decision that in itself is a change. Watch the workings of your mind, when thinking in sequence and not in a chaotic manner. Sequential thinking is a mind in motion, passing from one thought to another, for it is the nature of the mind to throw up images eternally. The mind is only matter finer than physical—etheric, and as these lines may possibly fall into the hands of readers unacquainted with mental science, I would remind them that the latest views of science now regard electricity no longer as a fluid, but as matter, highly attenuated, it may be, but still matter for all that, a definition given years ago by occultism. Pure thought being of atomic structure is subject like all other atoms to disintegration. Being more subtle than ordinary physical matter the vibration of thought is much higher, and can be affected only by thought of a similar type.

The point I wish to make clear here is that the mind is changing, and cannot do otherwise than change, every moment. Continuity of thought is maintained by the automatism of the mind. You may have a string of beads, each differently coloured, of different form and size, yet through all those differing beads the same string runs. So with the mind. You have an automatism impressing each atom born with the consciousness of the mind as a whole, so the mind changes slowly. Whatever be the nature of the mind, however, it may be changed, as has been said, and the fact that a man should be a prey to his own or someone else's fancies being universally admitted proves the teachings advanced above. It logically follows that the *direction* of the mind can be altered, and that with this alteration of direction we have another character. Ponder over these oft-quoted lines taken from Charles Reade, I think:

Sow an act and you reap a habit;
Sow a habit and you reap a character:
Sow a character and you reap a destiny.

I would place before the first line:

Sow a thought and you reap an act.

One statement is as true as the other, and when once the importance of the above extract is realised the reader will wonder why it should not have occurred to him years ago, and how simple it really is. Race-thought, that is, the thought of your ancestry, need no longer weigh with you. You need no longer continue to be a compound of your parents and relatives, but you may begin to express yourself, as it was intended you should do sometimes.

To be continued

of circumstances everlastingly 'petering out.' You have it all in you, but you absolutely must work it out through your hands in useful LABOUR.

The hard work should have come when you were a boy, every young person should be trained to skilful work with the hands.

No human being can *think straight and think square* unless he has learned to *work out* straightness and squareness with his hands.

The world's crooks are all recruited from the ranks of those who have never achieved and thus *proved* straightness and squareness through their hands.

You say your education was of the head and not the hands, and even that was not a 'regular' school education, it consisted chiefly of private tutoring 'for the ministry.' You never sawed and planed and fitted and nailed a house together—as boys in the Holyoke vocational high school are required to do now-a-days. You are a case of arrested development through lack of *skill* in straightness and squareness. The world didn't know about this twenty or thirty years ago.

But it is never too late for a human being to acquire new tricks. Take hold with your hands, *prove out* the straightness and squareness of your ideas and yourself, and you will *get a hand-hold* of yourself and of Life that will enable you to use your head to everlasting advantage to yourself and the world. Make your ideas *prove* themselves through your hands, in real labour, or get out. Go in on these new lines to win, and stick to it until you do.

So shall you build a *solid foundation* for your air castles.

This is the day of distribution of all good things, and included in an honest distribution of all good things, comes an *equal distribution of labour*. The war is forcing LABOUR on all of us, and the person who is wise enough to see this and jump in and make good on the labour end will have the first and best chance to rise. This means men and women alike.

So take hold where you are and make good at LABOUR. Does that sound like a prison sentence? It is not, I assure you: it is just 'sentencing you' to the open door to all your desire.

You have been all these years developing your wits, your mind. Your wits are ahead of the game. You need now to get down and develop your hands and your body, your capacity for useful labour.

Let your strong faculties lie fallow for a while, and develop from the ground up on a new line. That is exactly what the whole world is doing, and you will have to get in line if you are ever to get out of the class of drifters—a class which you yourself abhor.

Everybody in his soul wants to feel that he is a solid and useful member of society, serving his world. Not easily uprooted.

You are not satisfied with your life nor yourself because you have never *rooted* yourself anywhere.

And you have laboured under the misapprehension that you had to root yourself by planting your wits. You might as well transplant a cabbage with the head under ground. It took me a number of years to learn this, but I learned it, by hard work and persistence.

If you are to grow, you have got to get down to the solid earth and plant physical labour: every soul is *compelled* to do a certain amount of skilful work with his hands, in order to be able to *think straight* and to get his bearings in this world. As long as you despise or look down on the labour end of things, the using of your mind and your interest in useful work done with the hands and the *whole body*, you never get the right kind of roots in the world, and you always go with an unsatisfied feeling, because you are out of joint with the world. Nothing *can keep* you down if you first *get down yourself*: begin at the bottom and *grow up*.

And remember that it is not so much what you do at the bottom, as the good spirit, the Good Will, and the PURPOSEFUL, PERSISTENCE with which you do it. The fact that you have done some hard work in your life, under compulsion, and *deserted it at the first possible minute*, does not change things in the least: it is the *intelligent and chosen and purposeful* hard work that has constructive value in growing you up.

It is not what you do but HOW you do it that is the secret of success.

OF COURSE all this may sound to you like cant. I hope you will not take it supinely as another evidence that 'God is chastening whom he loveth.'

God *does* chasten whom he loveth to MAKE THEM MEND THEIR WAYS. And it is no credit to us when we need such an everlasting lot of chastening. It is nothing to brag about, that God has to 'chasten' you: it *is the way of the transgressor* that God makes hard. You are 'chastened' for transgression of God's Law of Love. And God's Law of Love requires every man *to do skillfully, efficiently HIS SHARE of the hard work of the world*. God will continue to 'chasten' you till you get busy on yours.

To lay your 'chastening' off on God is to fool yourself. Only another form of the 'bunk about luck.'

You make your own luck, you make your own chastening, by not believing in and depending upon *yourself*, AND WORKING OUT THE SALVATION OF GOD WHICH IS WITHIN YOU.

Mind you, you have got to *work it out* through your hands through useful labour, intelligently and persistently applied for the good of the world.

In doing this you will come to realize that labour is the only thing in the world that should be paid for in money.

And after plenty of hard work you will probably come to see, with me, that in time labour will be the *only* thing that *will* be paid for in money.

Ideas belong to the world, and there should be no pay for ideas: ideas are the product of collective thinking, and no one person can produce a complete idea: he can only put together the parts of an idea—parts gathered from the four corners of the race's thinking. It takes all the world's inventions for all time to make possible the inventions of Edison. His ideas belong to the race as much as to him. But the *labour* he puts into their development is another story.

