

New Thought.

"By thine own soul's law learn to live,
And if men thwart thee, take no heed,
And if men hate thee, have no care,
Sing thou thy song and do thy deed,
Hope thou thy hope and pray thy prayer."

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Chips From the Old Block.

BY WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON.

Stop Watching the Clock. Good work is not done in that way.

Stop making yourself a slave to your wage or profits. Take an interest in your work—cultivate a love of your creations—and be free.

It is not alone your employer, or your customer, whom you are cheating by this time-serving policy—this plan of doing as little service in the longest possible time. You are cheating yourself. You are depriving yourself of one of the best things of life—a joy in creative work, a love of doing things well.

It is true that your employer, or your customer (as the case may be) suffers from your half-performed work. But you suffer also. No man may continue doing work in this way without deteriorating and degenerating. He degenerates from a free man into a slave.

Any one who performs work as if it were a labor and a curse, instead of a natural impulse of the soul toward expressing itself, makes himself a slave to that work which he has converted into labor. And the law of cause and effect generally gets even by chaining such a person to that labor until it becomes a burden too heavy to bear. The only hope of escape is to stir up an interest in the work, so that it is on the road to becoming a labor of love, and then one may expect to be given something better to do. And, if no one gives him something better to do, he is apt to see something better awaiting which he moves toward without asking.

If a thing is worth doing it is worth doing well, and unless you take an interest in it you cannot do it well. And if you do not do it well, you will never escape the curse of unloved labor, nor have a chance to get something better to do. Doing a thing well does not mean simply making a presentable job of it. It also means that you will mix up a little love and interest, and brains, with your work—put a little of yourself into it.

Don't let your work master you—you must master the work. And the best way to master your work, is to take an interest in it—fall in love with it if you can. A labor of love is generally a joyful task, while the same work done just because you feel that you *must* is a most irksome task.

What is "The New Thought?"

(Second Paper.)

BY WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON.



Students of religious history, or rather, of the history of religions, note the fact that in the majority of religious movements the healing of physical ailments forms an important feature. The prophets and teachers are regarded as having miraculous powers of healing, and the lame, halt and the blind are brought to them to be healed—to be made whole. It is the general experience that less importance seems to be paid to the healing feature after the movement gets well under way, and, in

many cases, after a time, this feature is entirely discarded.

This phenomenon has attended the birth and growth of what is called "New Thought." While "New Thought" is not a religious sect, or cult, a strong religious feeling is manifest under it, and it undoubtedly rests upon a foundation of religious feeling. It is true that it confines its followers to no set creeds or forms, and that among its adherents are members in good standing of nearly every form of religious belief, and many whose religious beliefs are independent of any special creed or form. It is a religious movement in the sense that its followers (that is, the majority of them) are filled with a conviction that the Divine Power is much nearer to us than is usually taught in the churches, and may be relied upon to help and sustain us. Personally, I think that what is known as "New Thought" throws light upon nearly every form of religious belief, enables its students to see the beauties of the particular form of religious belief that they favor, and allows them to get nearer to the heart of it than the majority of their fellow church members. In fact, it makes them take their religion in earnest, instead of merely listening to what is preached, and not "feeling" it. For instance, the statement that in God "we live and move and have our being," means very little to the average church-member, when he hears it read from the pulpit. But to the one who has imbibed some idea of "New Thought" the words express a literal and living truth, and are instinctively felt to be true. In all religions are statements of truth similar to this, but the rank and file of the followers have allowed the truth to be obscured by a mass of theology, form, and custom, and lose sight of the flame that burns steadily, although hidden from sight by the numerous objects that have been piled around it by those whose duty it was to keep the wick trimmed and the lamp clean. All this belongs to another part of this series of articles, and is introduced here

merely for the purpose of explaining why we refer to the "New Thought" as a religious movement, although its followers belong to a hundred different denominations, creeds and churches.

And so it has been with "New Thought" as with the majority of religious movements. Persons have been, and are still, attracted to it because of a belief or hope that their physical ills may be cured. Many have been so healed, and then have been attracted to the other phases of the subject, just as men have been in all other forms of religious movements. And it is this phase of the "New Thought" that I will consider in this paper.

The student of the subject, who will take the pains to examine the matter, will find that in all the forms of varying religious belief, many cures have been wrought by priests, prophets, and preachers. No matter what may have been the doctrines expounded by the teachers, nor what may have been their theory of claims regarding the cures, the fact remains that the cures have been made. Men have been healed, and the sick made well by *all* of the healers, although each have claimed that their cures were made because of some particular form of belief, or in accordance with some particular theory. And this is true to-day, as well as in the past. On all hands we hear claims of wonderful cures—and evidence of the truth of cures—from the teachers and healers of a hundred different schools. Each claims that the cures have been made by virtue of some particular belief and theory, which belief or theory is the only true one. The followers of each particular school of teaching, seeing that the cures are really obtained, readily agree with the claims of the persons performing the healing. They do not stop to analyze or examine the matter. They see the cures performed by persons making certain claims, and listen to the explanation given, and they are satisfied. They very naturally come to the conclusion that the persons making the cures are likely to know more about it than any outsider, and they see no reason for doubting the theory or belief. They confound the result with the cause.

Almost every particular school obtaining cures, ridicules or combats the claims of other schools, notwithstanding that the opposing school may obtain the same degree of success and the same percentage of cures. They take sides, and become earnest partisans. They claim that their particular cult or school is the only "true" one, and that the others are in "error" and mere counterfeits of the real thing.

But the student who stands apart from them all, and who studies the matter from a scientific standpoint, or point-of-view, sees that they *all* are making cures, and, strange to say, *the percentage of cures is about the same in each case*. He sees Dowie claiming that the Devil causes all disease, and that his (Dowie's) prayers cause God to dissolve the Devil's charms, and the patient gets well. This very crude theology

and religion of Dowie may cause a smile to appear on the face of those who take no stock in his claims, and they are very apt to dismiss the modern "Elijah's" claims of healing as a mass of lies, fraud, and deception, or else the result of "imagination" on the part of credulous people. But the student knows that Dowie has performed cures; that is, that many who have followed and believed in him *have* been healed of their physical troubles. Then the Christian Scientists make certain well known claims, and teach that those accepting their theories are cured by virtue of such belief. The scoffer, who does not accept their theories, falls into the error of denying that the cures are made. But the cures *are* made nevertheless, and many, seeing the results, are inclined to accept the theory, although they do not pretend to understand it. And so it goes, each school making its claims, and obtaining a certain percentage of results.

Now what does it all mean? These schools cannot all be right—that is, their theories conflict so that the truth of one must mean the error of at least some of the others. The student must come to the conclusion that they are *all* using some force in Nature, common to all who make use of it, without regard to the particular theory of the user. And, so he looks around a little more. He finds that in all ages similar cures have been made, and have been attributed to a hundred different gods or priesthoods. Sacred objects are in use, and have always been in use, the touch of which has brought and still brings about cures. The Kings of England formerly cured people of the King's evil, by a touch, and the laying on of hands has performed great cures.

And it is not necessary to look for cures in such high quarters. Schlatter the healer brought health to many persons—many other prayer cures, and faith-cures, are well known, and have hundreds of persons willing and ready to testify to results obtained. And outside of these, who does not know many cases of warts having been "pow-wowed" away—of rheumatism cured by horse-chestnuts carried in the pocket—of metal rings having cured neuralgia and rheumatism, and so on to the end of the chapter. Many electric belts, and similar contrivances have no real healing power outside of the faith of those purchasing them, and yet they all work cures. Many patent medicines are worthless, except as a powerful appeal to the faith of those using them, and lo! the flood of testimonials obtained by them from grateful patients. All physicians, who keep up with the times, know of hundreds of cases of patients cured by *placebos*—that is, by bread-pills, and similar prescriptions of like virtue. And yet, the bread-pills are no joke, and have wrought many cures. I could fill many pages with examples and instances of this sort, all showing that the faith of the patient brings into operation certain forces of nature, which make for the cure of physical ailments.

Now, what does all this mean? I take it that it means that there is a force in nature—a mental force, which, when brought into operation from *any* cause, causes changes in the physical condition and structure, and that if the impulse is strong enough the patient is sure to be healed. And that “faith” is one of the best ways to bring this force into play, with the average person. This force is an application of Mind. And it may be called into operation by horse-chestnuts—magnetic belts—sacred springs—holy relics—statues—ceremonies—pow-wows—prayers of Dowie “treatments” of healers of all sorts—affirmations—enthusiasm—repetitions of statements of belief—beliefs themselves—and last, but not least to the real student, an understanding of the force, and a scientific application of it.

Do not misunderstand me, and think that I am ridiculing all these cures and forms of cures. On the contrary, I have seen many cures—real cures—performed by all of the forms and schools. And much good has been accomplished by each and every one of them. Each is suited to the condition, belief, preference, and temperament of some particular class of people, and all work for good. All I am trying to do is to point out to you that they *all* obtain results in certain cases, and that none of them have a monopoly of healing, and that the particular theories of the healers seem to have little to do with the cure. A strong belief in certain theories will work best in some cases—a strong faith in some form of religious teaching will bring the force into play better in some other case, while in a third case, where a man has but little religious faith, and no liking for theories of “mind,” a material object, such as an electric belt, or a horse-chestnut, may do the work where the other means have failed.

The “New Thought” man, notwithstanding his own pet theories, or the claims of the particular school or cult favored by him, will generally agree that “Mind” is back of it all, and we think that all careful observers must come to this conclusion, although it does not follow that they will agree upon a definition of “Mind,” and it is not necessary that they should so agree, in order to obtain results. The facts are to be obtained, whatever the theory—or in spite of the theory.

I will continue this phase of the subject in my next paper. But before closing this article, I wish to say that the position I take is that the real healing force is within the individual, although that force may be called into operation by outside influences, or people, or objects. There is an apparent exception to this rule, in the case of a person whose vital force is depleted—such a person undoubtedly may obtain from another, in some cases, a help in the shape of an imparting and receiving of vital force, which will help to start the machinery in order again, but the real cure must come from within. If some of my readers prefer the theory that all these cures are made from some great force of nature,

outside of the person, but which may be called into operation in the manner I have mentioned, I have no objection to the amendment. In either case it is a working theory, and either view will enable us to handle the matter in the same way. In fact, my own personal belief is that this power, whilst within every person, is also outside of them—in fact, is everywhere in space—the Life Principle—Universal Mind—Vital Force—call it what you will. Consequently, I am willing to work upon any theory that recognizes the force as universal, and possessed by all life, and open to the demand of all seekers.

And, in order to be understood by those who have looked upon this power as a Divine gift, and who may feel that I am attempting to cheapen it, I will add that I also consider that this power is certainly a Divine force, but only in the way that I consider *all* forces Divine—electricity, magnetism, gravitation, light, heat, motion, air are Divine to me. I see God manifesting in the earthworm as well as in the Emerson—in the dungheap as well as in the great mountain. I cannot leave Him out of anything without losing my faith in His existence. And, therefore, in my treatment of this subject, when I speak of the horse-chestnut calling into operation (through faith and belief) certain mental powers that perform the healing work, I do not intend to ridicule. In fact, I view the matter with as much respect and awe, as I do the healing of the afflicted by some great spiritual teacher or as the result of the highest form of religious faith. There is no great or small in God's kingdom—and as the steam may exhibit its force either by raising the lid of the potatopot, or by working the machinery of the great ocean steamer, so may this great force of the mind be called into play by the most trivial and petty thing, without having its dignity and importance lessened. So pray do not accuse me of attempting to lessen the importance of mental healing—on the contrary, I see in it such a great thing, that I will permit myself to see no barriers around it, and, therefore, I see it and respect it in its crudest manifestation as well as in its highest. It is all One—the heritage of every living thing—not fenced off—not cornered—not monopolized—not controlled by a trust—not to be doled out (at so much a dole) by any who claim to have “the only real thing, all others are imitators.” It is as free as Light. It is yours and mine upon demand. It wears the tag or label of no creed, cult, school, or church. It is too big a thing for that. All schools and cults are using it—but, thank God, no one of them *owns* it.

All Things Cometh.

LOUISE RADFORD WELLS.

Some hour, some dreamy hour,
And Spring-time comes,
Hushed with the murmur of her myrmidons—
The faint, low stir of leaves,
The wood-dove's distant moan,
The babled bird-songs,—
When the Winter's flown.

Some hour, some far, sweet hour,
And Summer comes,—
Sweet, drowsy summer, when the wild bee hums;
When across the tangled grasses,
In the opal, dewy dawn,
Steals the breath of woodland passes—
This, when Spring has gone.

These days, these dismal days,
Will swoon and die
'Neath April's sun.
Drear may our Earthland seem,
And veiled her sky,
But Spring will come!

*And so,—and so, my heart,
Take thou the thought;
For thee, its sum.
Far may our vision lie
And long besought,
But it will come!*

Progress.

BY IDA GATLING PENTECOST.



Thus far, progress has gone with a limp. But some day the world's crutches will be outgrown and laid aside.

In the past, ignorance has expressed itself through all kinds of man-conceived punishments, and through war; whereas the highest ministry to this world is to love it, and not to criticise it. Love opens all gates before it, but criticism benumbs and withers a human soul.

Truth ever awaits recognition, and progress is possible only through *individual unfoldment*. Individual unfoldment comes not by protesting against the unsatisfactory conditions outside of itself. It comes not by complaining against things as they are, nor by hurrying. Revolution is not the best *modus operandi*. The sacrifice of human life does not express intelligence. Of course, if the people know no better than policemen's clubs, and prefer to advance the hardest way wading through blood and battle, let them fight as long as they can. On-lookers should study the science of "let." If men prefer to be guided by their brains, instead of by their souls, let them alone. Evolution will teach them where they have been in error, and time reveal their stupidity and ignorance.

Individual unfoldment comes not by venting acrid indignation, nor through hatred of Czars, nor through reformers.

Reformers have good motives, but it seems to me their methods are wrong.

It is ignorant impertinence to want to take a baby from its mother's breast, that it may abandon milk, and eat beefsteak. Such an act would not be kind; it would be interference without understanding. Gradual growth—the passing through each stage of unfoldment, is necessary. Take a man or woman out of their class, and put them in a higher one; the moment you leave them (as the reformer), they drop back hard, to go through again the intervening stages of evolution that they skipped, because of your unwise methods in jerking them ahead *before they were ready*. The world has to use right methods or it cannot win.

Anarchists' methods are not loving enough, and so their desires are not fulfilled. They are irate often, and irateness is blindness. Irateness is defeat, and besides it reacts on itself.

Women's methods with their servants are not always the best; so they have to change often, complaining all the while. As a rule, I

believe the woman herself is the one who is lacking, as she fails in her attitude and actions towards her servants. If a helper (I prefer the word to servant), can cook and clean to suit you pretty well, and if she is honest and sober, I know the secret of keeping her.

Most women exact perfection from their servants, in all directions, when they exact no perfect trait in themselves. It is well to look without, but it is better to look within. Individual growth is suggested by the without, but it takes place from the within.

My commentary on the world is—that it talks and rails too much, and lives too little.

It is fed almost entirely from its brain, and scarcely any from its soul.

We go around looking for candles, (figuratively speaking) when we should be candles—shining lights—ourselves. Few realize that the way to help their fellow men is first to equilibrate themselves.

In an intelligent society there will be no cynics, nor fault-finders. Cynicism is too easy, too childish—the commonest brain can wield destructive criticism, but it requires uncommon brains to build up.

Brick layers get higher wages than house-wreckers. Cynicism is ill health, whereas truth is vigor of mind and body.

False ideas bind. Witness the pinched and dried face of a pessimist. Pessimism shrivels and wrinkles first inside, then out, till the outside becomes an index of the inner. The pessimist looks from a limited and one-sided point of view. The optimist has superior wisdom and insight.

Truth will reinvigorate the jaded organism. Cease the false view. Fancy thinking the world is wholly evil! Imagine a disposition that always takes the least hopeful outlook, that ever looks on the dark side, forever at the shadow, and never at the sunlight!

Of course a false view, sooner or later, creates disease—it is disease. Personal and national health, and happiness, results from the discharge of ignorance from the individual mind and then pouring into its place the light of the soul.

When the real self knows itself it is beyond fear, complaint, resentment, revolution and grief. Living in the mind of spirit is peace.

Strength is still—weakness is agitation. An agitator is like a hair shirt. Wear the hair shirt? As long as you can. Agitate as long as you like, but there is a better way.

Peace is found in resting on the Self that is one. Be patient. It is Godlike, and all else delays. Do not get overzealous, nor anxious. Things work themselves out. Nature never hastens, while people wear themselves sick in their haste. (Sometimes the way to succeed is to do nothing for a while.)

Do not interfere with cause and effect.

If you give the small boy pills and "pain killer" every time he is ill, he will never learn what not to do. Pain and obstacles come to promote.

The other night I attended a dinner given in honor of a noble woman who for 22 years was imprisoned in Siberia. The Russian government was hurting itself more than her, when it kept her there. I saw no resentment in her. Her face was hale and beautiful, and her atmosphere serenely assuring; while decay is behind the face of Russia, and doom in its torrent of blood and tears. Siberia classifies the Czar and exposes his fear. (Fear breeds in ignorance.)

Educate the Czar! How?

Not by hating him, criticizing him, condemning him. Had you been born a Czar you would have been Czarlike. Do unto the Czar as you would wish to be done by if you were the Czar. Give the Czar a chance, either to learn, or to destroy himself. You cannot destroy him. You can only destroy yourself.

There are many methods of self destruction. It is said, "give a man enough rope, and he will hang himself." If a drunkard has a right to drink till he has had enough without interference, why should we not deal thus intelligently with a nation or King?

War and dynamite only delay. Infancy is good, but maturity is better. It is what is *better* than good, that I mean to suggest; the better way, which is less hard, and less awful.

The world is in its infancy of knowledge.

Books, philippics, secret conclaves, indignation meetings, societies for protest, revolutions and battles,—name every hurdle that history has jumped over, and we have by these methods advanced little. War is still raging, people are still fighting and bloodshed is still flowing.

A speaker at this dinner used the word "futile." Nothing is futile to the Seer. Only violence and hate retard.

Many are teaching now, that "all is good," but few are teaching what is better! We have been in the primer of "all is good" long enough. Suppose the world turns over one of its ponderous leaves, and learns what is *best*.

Also at this dinner I heard many expressions for more freedom. Freedom is for all who will find the truth, and the quest is an individual matter. Some one once said, a person and a nation have all the freedom they have *earned*, and are *ready for*. Be that as it may—"the truth shall make you free."

When every one works out his own salvation by this formula, there will be no cry for freedom, for all will possess it. I cannot get freedom for you, nor you for me. Many are trying hard to work out salvation for others, when they have not entirely worked out their own.

O, for the reign of love on this earth!

Isn't that what is the matter?

It cannot come save through *individual* unfoldment.

We must not forget that in the phenomena of existence, there is the grub, the caterpillar, and the butterfly.

Each stage of development is needed for us, as for the perfected butterfly. Forcing yourself, or another, is wrong. Do not get over-zealous for Czar, or peasant. There was once a perfect little lilac bush two feet high, miniature of course, *forced* in growth, but very soon it died, and had to go back into the earth and rest for several years. Goodly and lasting growth requires much time.

A sky-rocket dashes up into the air with nervous haste, but its life is soon expended. The tree grows up slowly and endures long-looking at the stars.

Industriously I repeat, that progress is made not by any expression of antagonism, impatience, ridicule, hatred, war, or bitter argumentation, scoldings, or criticism.

What we have now, I know is the result of all these long brutal methods gone before. But if love were sovereign, we would move on in our race advancement without cruelty and without complainings. Love can blast prison walls and melt into unity and oneness the hardest of ignorant hearts. The voice of the accuser never elevates. Cease being so negative, there is no enthusiasm long where it prevails, no wind in the sails.

The Constructive view is most effective. Cultivate a constructive philosophy and be happy.

To have perfect love is the summit of attainment.

For Love alone constructs, creates and recreates.

The Psychology of Desire.

BY NANCY MCKAY GORDON.

Life is individually a tragedy. Collectively it is a comedy. It is a tragedy to the individual, because of surplus power generated, but which remains unorganized. It is collectively a comedy, because Life is Universal and the attempt to individualize it appears to the personality as an unorganized effort.

Everywhere desire exists and also the thing desired. But because no two individuals have joined hands in an intelligent and loving recognition, the full fruition of desire has not been realized.

Collectively desire is generated and expresses itself in the cry of the masses for bread—more bread—better bread. They suffer for bread to sustain their bodies, for shelter, for clothing and for surroundings that

would transform their hell into heaven. They exchange knowledge for ignorance; love and wisdom they throw aside for hate and discord.

Interwoven with this mass of desire, there is a longing for something greater, something that resembles infinitude. But the Infinite not yet having manifested its most munificent desire is in sequence not fully in accord with the masses. Therefore, the collective mass must suffer until such time as its own desire and that of the Infinite Spirit have become consciously one; each forming a part of the beautiful Whole.

Individually the same law is manifest. For instance I go to my brother-man for what I need and which he has. I am starved, suffering, perishing for food. I desire bread, more bread, better bread! But my brother desires to supply my wants only as he sees fit and I go away from him still hungry. He has a surplus of the substance of which I am in sore need; but he refuses me that which I ask for and I leave him, unsupplied, and he remains self-sufficient.

My desire for that substance is generated to a point where I openly express it in defiance of the law which forbids beggary or charity as crimes against one's self-respect. My desire being so great, so vital, so far-reaching, in despair I give voice to it. Here I have erred as the masses err when they appeal in their extremity to their brothers of the minority.

These brother-men hold in trust the surplus substance and food that others are in sore need of. But their desire in connection with the supply not being in perfect unison or harmony with the desire of the mass, the two are not united, neither co-operative.

My need is not my brother's need; his need is not my need. When the desire of his soul and the desire of my soul shall have become one in expression, and the thing desired shall blend in an all-loving and intelligent recognition of the wants of the other and in service toward each other, then no temptation to beggary will exist and no opportunity for charity be necessary. Then my brother's desire and my own will have become the thing that we both desire.

You will perhaps ask: What is it I desire that I have not? Why am I to go continuously hungry? Ah, pertinent questions these! Nor will you receive the answer to them until you too have hungered for what your brother hungers; not until his desire has become yours will you perceive the real longing of his soul. Not until you thirst as he thirsts, may you have the power to quench his thirst.

The ocean of human love exists everywhere. And the desire for its waters dwells in every human soul. The very evidence of hunger and longing proves that what we most desire exists; for it is impossible to long for that which is not. No desire of either man or woman need ever remain un-experienced. For in all cases the eternal good is the basis of every desire or wish.

The soul has but one desire. That desire is for more knowledge; and it enters into that knowledge or experience for its own benefit, whether consciously or unconsciously. No matter what the appearance of the experience may be, the fulfillment of the desire rests with absolute certainty upon the fact that the foundation principle of every longing, dream or desire exists somewhere, somehow, in the eternal law of the Universe.

Every need of the soul or body is supplied through desire. The very Universe depends upon desire for its existence and sustenance. It underlies all Nature and is the cause of every individual expression. And every individual expression comes forth from an evolved individuality. And every individuality is evolved through desire.

Through desire the worm creeps; through desire for more rapid motion the same little worm grows wings and flies. Desire is that thing in sentient life that longs for more life. As such it can never be in the wrong, for that which longs for more life is surely longing for God!

Desire is the child of itself—and mother-like—it gives birth to tomorrow and the continual duration of birth brings forth the Eternal Day! Desire is never satisfied, through food given or received gratuitously. THE DESIRE is always a desire to DO, to accomplish something, and can only be satisfied *in the doing*, and not by the *getting*.

The body has needs that can be satisfied by *food* obtained anyhow! But the spirit has a desire that can only be satisfied by the accomplishment of it. It never *feeds on what is given it*, because the spirit knows that the gift does not belong to *it* but to the spirit that has offered it!

New Thought, Which is Old Thought.

“In every work, trust thine own soul; for this is the keeping of the commandments.”

— *Ecclesiasticus, Book II.*

The Better Way.

BY URIEL BUCHANAN.



Abnormal, conventional civilization produces men who are creatures of art, made up mainly of hereditary tendencies, acquired habits and erroneous ideas. Under the strain and discord caused by unnatural living, the body loses its vigor and usefulness at a period when life should be full orb'd and the mind at its zenith of power. Men stifle their native strength and simplicity and hide their true impulses under the mask of conventionality.

He who has no gross or ignoble desires to serve may develop his individual powers and become independent of the world's artificial restraints and heartless demands. We revel in the world of appearances, with the consciousness immersed in the senses of physical being. In bondage to the objective life, the better part of our nature sleeps, not dreamlessly, but as one with fettered limbs, yearning for freedom. He who desires and wills, may open the door of subjective sense and emerge into the true and real. Nature throws a flame across the threshold of the inner life, revealing the Infinite Principle. It is not necessary to renounce the objective attractions and destroy the sense of personality. Yet we should conquer the material instincts, the sense of bondage to persons and things, transmuting the gross and sensual into the purified elements of lofty character and unselfish love.

Human life is progress, wrought out in throbbing pulses, desires and yearnings. The one thing which prisons cannot hold, creeds and customs cannot bind and the world's ignorance cannot blight, is human thought. Develop the mind and rely upon reason. Be sincere and dare to express your inmost thoughts. Live in the realm of the useful and avoid empty words. Look for the good in others and fill your days with generous acts. Cease desiring the detrimental. Focus the mind on the true and good. Desire only that which will add to your strength and usefulness. Stop seeking needless experience by contact with the world of appearances. Seek wisdom and interior illumination and invoke visions of the inner world of thought and ideas. When you find the center where wisdom dwells you will find the source of all true knowledge and power. The center of your being is like a sun. From this center radiates the light that illumines the mind. To find this center and awaken the power you must practice concentration and meditation, with purity of purpose and nobility of desire.

There are many centers of energy in the body. The crown of the head is the highest. The heart is the deepest. Every center has a

different rate of vibration. To harmonize these centers with one dominant chord will unite thought with emotion and kindle the magnetic flame of power. Intensity of feeling, intensity of thought and intensity of purpose will arouse the latent energy and give capacity for great achievements. You should keep the mind well centered and in a state of supremacy, unmoved by material influences. You should be master of every emotion. It is absurd for man, the heir of the ages, to be ruled by tyrant thoughts, by cares and desires, cowering like a slave under the lash of circumstance. You should be master of all emotions and cling not to anything that hinders the unfoldment of the divine consciousness.

The supreme moment in the history of the individual is when the divine self turns from the world of mere physical things and recognizes its oneness with the universal. The higher self should control and direct the senses, repressing their waywardness. In all your thoughts and desires, let highest reason guide you, and fix not your ideals beyond the bounds of possible realization.

The supreme goal of life is to realize happiness, truth and love; your means to attain them are reason, faith and experience. The great opportunity of your lifetime is now. To-day is your own. Waste not the hours in thoughtless idleness. The years pass swiftly and are laid to our charge, and time, like life, can never be recalled.

You will be happy and have refreshing sleep if each night you can say to yourself: This day I have neglected no opportunity to improve my conditions and to help others. I have acted in all things according to my best judgment. This day I have lived true to the highest and best. Whatever to-morrow may bring, it cannot deprive me of the serenity of the day that is closing.

Real Victory.

To forgive wrongs darker than death and night;
To suffer woes that hope thinks infinite;
To love and bear; to hope till hope creates
From her own wrecks the thing she contemplates;
Never to change nor falter, nor repent,
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
Good, brave and joyous, beautiful and free;
This is above life, love, empire and victory.

—Shelley.

Practical Mental Science.

BY WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON.

One is apt to think of the emotions as independent from habit. We easily may think of one acquiring habits of action, and even of thinking, but we are apt to regard the emotions as something connected with "feeling" and quite divorced from intellectual effort. Yet, notwithstanding the distinction between the two, both are dependent largely upon habit, and one may repress, increase, develop, and change one's emotions, just as one may regulate habits of action and lines of thought.

It is an axiom of psychology that "Emotions deepen by repetition." If a person allows a state of feeling to thoroughly take possession of him, he will find it easier to yield to the same emotion the second time, and so on, until the particular emotion or feeling becomes second nature to him. If an undesirable emotion shows itself inclined to take up a permanent abode with you, you had better start to work to get rid of it, or, at least to master it. And the best time to do this, is at the start, for each repetition renders the habit more firmly intrenched, and the task of dislodging it more difficult.

Were you ever jealous? If so, you will remember how insidious was its first approach. How subtly it whispered hateful suggestions into your willing ear, and how gradually it followed up such suggestions, until, finally you began to see green. (Jealousy has an effect upon the bile, and causes it to poison the blood. This is why the idea of green is always associated with it.) Then you will remember how the thing seemed to grow, taking possession of you until you scarcely could shake it off. You found it much easier to become jealous the next time. It seemed to bring before you all sorts of objects apparently justifying your suspicions and feeling. Everything began to look green—the green-eyed monster waxed fat.

And so it is with every feeling or emotion. If you give way to a fit of rage, you will find it easier to become angry the next time, on less provocation. The habit of feeling and acting "mean" does not take long to firmly settle itself in its new home if encouraged. Worry is a great habit for growing and waxing fat. People start by worrying about big things, and then begin to worry and fret about some smaller thing. And then the merest trifle worries and distresses them. They imagine that all sorts of evil things are about to befall them. If they start on a journey they are sure that there is going to be a wreck. If a telegram comes, it is sure to contain some dreadful tidings. If a child seems a little quiet, the worrying mother is perfectly sure that it is going to fall ill and die. If the husband seems a little thoughtful, as he revolves some business plan in his mind, then the good wife is sure that he is beginning to cease to

love her, and indulges in a good crying spell. And so it goes, worry, worry, worry, each indulgence making the habit more at home. After a while the continued thought shows itself in action. Not only is the mind poisoned by the blue thoughts, but the forehead shows deep lines between the eyebrows, and the voice takes on that whining, rasping tone so common among worry-burdened people.

Then, the condition of mind known as "fault-finding" is another emotion that grows fat with exercise. First fault is found with this thing, then with that, and finally with everything. Then the person becomes a chronic "nagger"—a burden to friends and relatives, and a thing to be avoided by outsiders. Women make the greatest naggers. Not because men are any better, but simply because a man nagger is apt to have the habit knocked out of him by other men who will not stand his nonsense—he finds that he is making things too hot for himself, and he reforms—while a woman has more of a chance to indulge in the habit. But this nagging is all a matter of habit. It grows from small beginnings, and each time it is indulged in it throws out another root, branch, or tendril, and fastens itself the closer to the one who has given it soil in which to grow.

Envy, uncharitableness, gossip, scandal-mongering, are all habits of this kind. The seeds are in every human breast, and only need a little good soil, and a little watering, to become lusty and strong.

Each time you give way to one of these negative emotions, the easier do you make it for a recurrence of the same thing, or similar ones. Sometimes by encouraging one unworthy emotion, you find that you have given room for the growth of a whole family of these mental weeds.

Now, this is not a good old orthodox preachment against the sin of bad thoughts. It is merely a calling of your attention to the law underlying the psychology of emotions. Nothing new about it—old as the hills—so old that many of us have forgotten all about it.

If you wish to manifest these constantly disagreeable and unpleasant traits, and to suffer the unhappiness that comes from them, by all means do so—that is your own business, and privilege. It's none of mine, and I am not preaching at you—it keeps me busy minding my own business and keeping an eye on my own undesirable habits and actions. I am merely telling you the law regarding the matter, and you may *do* the rest. If you wish to choke out these habits, there are two ways open to you. First, whenever you find yourself indulging in a negative thought or feeling, take right hold of it and say to it firmly, and vigorously "Get out." It won't like this at first, and will bridle up, curve its back and snarl like an offended cat. But never mind—just say "Scat" to it. And the next time it will not be so confident and aggressive—it will have manifested a little of the fear-habit. Each time you repress and choke out a tendency of this kind, the weaker it will become, and the stronger will your will be.

Professor James says: "Refuse to express a passion, and it dies.

Count ten before venting your anger, and its occasion seems ridiculous. Whistling to keep up courage is no mere figure of speech. On the other hand, sit all day in a moping posture, sigh, and reply to everything with a dismal voice, and your melancholy lingers. There is no more valuable precept in moral education than this, as all who have experience know: If we wish to conquer emotional tendencies in ourselves, we must assiduously, and in the first instance, cold-bloodedly, go through the *outward movements* of those contrary dispositions which we prefer to cultivate. . . . Smooth the brow, brighten the eye, contract the dorsal rather than the ventral aspect of the frame, and speak in a major key, pass the genial compliment, and your heart must be frigid indeed if it does not gradually thaw."

Another good way to overcome negative emotions, is to cultivate the emotions directly opposed to the one you wish to eradicate. I will speak of this next month—the cultivation of desirable emotions. It is a timely subject, and one well worthy of your attention.

And—oh, yes, by-the-way, don't forget "The Laughing Philosophy" in this connection. It will give you a changed point-of-view, and an improved mental attitude, so that you will see the humorous side of the thing—and seeing that, you cannot entertain the negative emotion at the same time. So: EYES FRONT! SMILE!

The Man Who Succeeds.

MIRANDA POWERS SWENSON.

Success is for the man who dares
 To think; who neither knows nor cares
 If other feet have gone the way
 He chooses firmly, and today.
 He cuts a straight path, sweeps aside
 Tradition; is not satisfied
 To imitate, or follow where,
 On life's highway, well-worn and bare,
 Humanity's weak, helpless throng
 Still stumbles with its load of wrong.
 He dares to think, and finds within
 Himself a purpose firm to win.
 Success is for the man whose aim
 Is high, who boldly dares to claim
 His Own,—the man who follows not—
 The man who has creative thought!

What is True Sympathy?

FELICIA BLAKE.



Last month I said everything that occurred to me regarding the way people worry, but during the past week I was brought suddenly into contact with an entirely different phase of worry.

I met a friend in one of our large stores; her face first and then her voice told plainly her mental condition and, as usual when we meet, her woes bubbled over. I seem to act like a human Bromo-Seltzer to her troubles; at sight of me they become a seething effervescence and spill over. When we parted she certainly carried less of a burden.

Not twenty minutes later I met another; "I must talk to you," she said.

After a time I exclaimed, "Why, you are both suffering the sorrows of others!"

"Both?" she questioned.

"Well, I mean," I added hastily, "it seems as if there were more persons worrying over the problems of others than I had supposed."

"Perhaps I am selfish," my friend sighed, "to tell you my trials, but it always makes me feel better."

"These hardly seem to be *your* sorrows, but you know you do not hurt me by the telling."

"That sounds cold," she spoke slowly, "and yet I feel your sympathy. But you don't *live* my worries, do you?"

I looked at her thoughtfully.

* * * * *

So there is a decided difference in the kind of worrying done and in the sympathy given. There is a sympathy that is wholesome and uplifting; there is a sympathy that descends to the pain or grief of the sufferer;—the kind that gets down and grovels, so to speak. And there are different grades and shades of these.

Now I remember a number of persons who have suffered with—not for—others..

I know one sensitive, high-strung woman who was made for a time actually unfit for her own duties after she had seen a pitiful lame beggar on the street; another who tortured herself with a friend's burdens; and a third (by the way they are all women!) who almost destroyed her own peace of mind permanently by living over and over again a sadness that had come to her sister.

It is hard not to suffer with one you love? Yes, I know, I know very well—and I am not saying anything against suffering for, or instead of, them—if you can.

"But wouldn't you sympathize with them? Would you just stand off

and coldly philosophize with them? How selfish that sounds!" a horrified voice said once when I had been rash enough to express my views to one who did not understand.

Let us first apply a little of the "cold philosophy" to that question.

If we see a man drowning and if we cannot swim, we will throw ropes or wood to him; shout directions; possibly row out in a boat; we will do anything and everything possible to save his life, but we probably will not jump in and give him a hand saying, "If you must drown, let me drown with you." And we would not be accused of selfishness if we did not.

If a friend is ill we will do all in our power to alleviate his suffering; we will care for and wait upon him, but we will not lie down and be sick too, if we can help it!

That shows a difference between sympathy that helps and sympathy that grovels; whether to give up and be ill with a friend, or whether to be calm and brave, with a firm hold of self, helping the friend to live and be well.

These are extremes, yes; but the same principle that underlies extremes is found through all the way between; we have but to apply it.

It is possible to stand apart in consciousness as if you were another person, and view the working out of affairs—even of your own. When you can stand aside and watch, you have a better perspective, a truer idea of proportion, a clearer judgment. Moisture in the eyes distorts the vision.

It is wise to realize that if you are in confusion, no matter to whom it may belong, you are not of it. Such realization engenders a calmness that dispels confusion.

In a letter recently I was asked; "Is it not unnatural to be calm when conditions are so serious? I seem like another person just watching." Delightful unnaturalness! For things are mighty serious to the person who is down among them working, worrying; mighty serious. And the one who can stand aside calmly watching, is the one to whom we turn in time of real need.

Is that a doctrine of selfishness?

I would not have my friend do differently by me. I would not ask my friend to suffer with me. I would not feel that his heart was aching with my pain. It is enough, *at least* enough, for one person to live a sorrow. But I would have him calm and strong and clear of vision. I would find a firm hand to guide me over the rough place. I would have a steady voice speak to me. True sympathy is a blessed thing.

Perhaps there may be a calm surface that would appear like indifference to those who do not see below it; there may be words spoken that would appear to be without feeling, to those who hear words only; but to deeper minds the genuineness of true sympathy is there. Not the sympathy that descends into the shadows and shivers and aches with you, but the sympathy that reaches down to you in order to lift and guide you into the light.

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EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

Editor, WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON

FRANKLIN L. BERRY

Assistant Editors

LOUISE RADFORD WELLS

The Publisher's Talk.

The first thing we want to speak about this month, is the New Thought Circulating Library.. We have received up to the date of going to press a large number of letters in relation thereto, many of them asking questions which are already answered in our February announcement. We reply to such questions here.

I. The offer, as the advertisement states plainly, was limited to those sending in \$1.00 subscriptions between the date of mailing the February magazine and March 1. **THERE CAN BE NO EXCEPTION MADE TO THIS RULE.** Those sending in subscriptions prior to the February magazine were at liberty to take advantage of the special offers then in force but now withdrawn. Those sending in subscriptions **AFTER** March 1 have the benefit of the special offers advertised in this number of the magazine, of which the February subscribers cannot, of course, take advantage. Is this plain?

II. It is not possible for us to permit members of the Circulating Library to choose the books which shall be sent them. Twelve books are selected by us and each member receives twelve books in the course of the year if their membership is for that length of time. We cannot omit from or add to this list. If you have read "Thought Force," for instance, nevertheless "Thought Force" will come to you in its order, and at the end of a month is to be mailed by you to the person whose name is furnished you. If you do not care to read it again while in your possession you can let some friend do so, **PROVIDED** you hold yourself responsible for the book and **YOURSELF** attend to mailing it to the next member of the Library.

III. Before March 1 we will mail to members application blanks, which state the rules which govern the Library. These must be strictly complied with, as they are essential to an orderly and systematic handling of the books.

IV. You will notice that free memberships in the Library are hereafter to be confined to those who send in **NEW** \$1.00 subscriptions **NOT THEIR OWN.** The Library membership will go to the **SENDER** of the subscription, not to the **NEW SUBSCRIBER.**

Here is another item of business. In sending in a subscription, there is always some special privilege allowed to subscribers. For instance, at the time of sending in a \$1.00 subscription the sender may purchase one of our books for fifty cents, instead of the regular price of \$1.00. **BUT**, should he do so, he would not be entitled to the Library privileges, nor, did he take advantage of the Library, would he be entitled to a reduction in the price of any book purchased. If he has sent in a subscription and a contest letter and received a book in return for the latter, he cannot take advantage of any other privilege. **HE MUST CHOOSE HIS PRIVILEGE** at the **TIME** of sending his subscription and tell us his choice. Also, if he should become one of us on a "trial subscription rate," that rate is itself his privilege and he is entitled to none further.

The Chicago New Thought Federation is to hold a Spring Festival March 30, 31 and April 1. The affair is to be in the nature of an educational bazar and the many decorated booths will contain "articles of usefulness and adornment, choice literature, etc." All interested in New Thought are invited to be present, and detailed information may be secured by addressing the Secretary of the Federation, Mr. True, 70 Dearborn St., Chicago. The Festival is to be held in the Northwestern University Building.

We have received for review a copy of "Thoughts of a Fool," a book dealing with the follies and weaknesses of the present day, and apparently having for its motto, "Call a spade, a spade." At any rate, there is no veiling of the opinions of the writer, iconoclastic, caustic, audacious as many of them are, and social customs and social idols receive a good shaking up in their expression. The book is published by E. Rosenthal & Company, Chicago.

LETTER BOX DEPARTMENT.

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON.

N. J. D.—This correspondent asks: "Will you kindly set me straight on the following matter, which has perplexed me somewhat? In some of your writings you tell us that Fearthought attracts the feared thing to us, and that Fear should be avoided on this account. But in other of your writings you tell us that the majority of things we fear never happen, and that, therefore, it is foolish to fear and worry. This seems to be a contradiction, and I ask you to explain it." This is a good question, and should be of interest to some of our readers. Now, let us see about the answer. In the first place, Fear undoubtedly tends to bring about the happening of the feared thing. It works in several ways. First of all it depresses our physical powers—Fear practically acting as a poison. It decreases our vitality and resisting powers. When the physical condition is impaired, the brain is likely not to act so clearly and keenly as when we are in good health. And with our brains not acting normally, we are not so well prepared to protect ourselves. Then Fear benumbs our thinking faculties by reason of occupying the center of the stage,—right out in the glare of the limelight—and our attention being fixed upon it, we are unable to concentrate upon the things likely to prevent the feared thing. The more one allows fear and worry to occupy his attention, the less fitted is he to meet the questions and problems of life, and to solve them. Fear and Worry never helped anyone, and never will. They act as does the glare of the flame which so occupies the attention of the horses that they fail to escape and are burned to death. I have seen horses who became so fascinated with the burning stable, that coats had to be thrown over their heads before they could be led from their stalls. Fear fascinates those who yield to it just as the glittering eye of the serpent fascinates the bird, who crouches before it unable to lift a wing, while if it but threw off the spell it could be out of the reach of the destroyer in a moment. Fear benumbs the faculties by occupying the center of interest to the exclusion of other thoughts. I have known persons to become sick, actually, from the effects of fear and worry. They would become almost numb and incapable of thought or action. Worry is the child of fear, and possesses the qualities of its parent. In the old days, I have known myself to worry about some little thing, until it so occupied my attention that it seemed to grow out of all proportion to its real importance. The more I worried the larger and quicker it grew, and often it shut out the view of much larger and more important things. I have lain awake at nights worrying about some foolish thing until that thing seemed to be the most important item in my life. And the worst of it was, that the worrying did not help matters at all, but, on the contrary, unfitted me for a calm, forceful meeting of the question or problem. It is true that many of the things I worried about so much, never came to pass (I will reach that part of the question presently), but I am certain that I ran into much trouble because I allowed it to occupy my thoughts until it grew much larger than it was in the beginning—I allowed myself to become morbid on the subject, and actually became fascinated by it. If one earnestly desires a thing, and will concentrate upon it intently, it will soon seem to be the "whole thing" in the world, and every thought and act of the person, conscious and sub-conscious, will tend toward that thing. And the reverse is also true. That is, a fear is another form of "earnest expectation" and concentrated attention, and one's thoughts and acts will be governed by the thing that occupies the center of interest. The working out of the matter is almost identically the same in the case of an earnest desire and the case of a strong fear. Both fascinate and cause our actions to tend in the direction of the thing occupying the center of interest. But—and this is an important "but"—the strong desire is a positive thought and does not tend to benumb our minds or to impair our physical condition, while the fear is a negative thought, and while leading us to the feared thing, also acts adversely upon us, mentally and physically. A strong fear will sometimes cause one to make a desperate effort to get away from the feared thing just as a strong love will cause one to make heroic efforts to succeed, but in the majority of such cases it will be found that the strong fear is really the negative side of a strong love, and it really is the love instead of the fear that is the impelling motive. For instance, a man may fear that his family will suffer from the result of something which threatens, and he will make a desperate effort to escape the calamity, and will often succeed. This seems like a triumph of fear, but let us analyze the matter. Would the man have feared

the result if he had not loved his family very much? Was not the strong love for his wife and children (either or both) the real impelling motive? Was it not a case of the underlying strong love springing into action, after the first chill of fear? I think it was. Is it fear or love that causes a mother to rush to the rescue of her child, in the face of danger to herself? Love, I think. Is it fear of death, or love of life that causes a man to fight against odds? It is very seldom that a negative thought produces good results, and when cases do occur that seem to be the exception to the rule, it often will be seen that the apparent cause—the negative thought—is but the shadow of the strong positive thought that is the real impelling motive. Thoughts take form in action. If you love or desire a thing with sufficient strength your actions will be apt to tend toward that thing. The toddling child forgets that it does not know how to walk, and manages to get over to where you are holding the coveted morsel of food, or the attractive plaything. In the same way, the beginner on the bicycle is apt to run into the post or tree that attracts his attention and which he fears. We all are drawn toward the center of interest and attention. Let us beware of giving to negative thoughts the center of the stage. Then, again, we must remember the occult phase of the subject—the attractive power of thought. Like attracts like in the world of thought, and fear and worry thoughts, if long and steadily indulged in, will attract to us kindred thought emanating from the minds of others, and will add fuel to our fire until it burns so fiercely that it almost consumes us. Such thoughts also will attract to us persons tending to depress us further—things likely to bring about the dreaded thing—and so on to the end of the chapter. This action of thought is an illustration of the saying that “to him who hath shall be given, and from him who hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.” (I am not quite sure that I have quoted correctly, but you will know the passage I mean.) As for Worry, that is even worse than fear, although based upon it. Worry keeps on gnawing away at the heart. Fear, though an undesirable thing, is not insidious and sneaking—it is aggressive and acute in its attacks, while Worry is a mean, sneaking emotion, and keeps working in deeper until it is a chronic complaint. *Fear is the acute form of the disease—Worry the chronic condition.* Now, about the apparently contradictory statement that the “majority of feared things never happen.” I have nothing to take back on this score. I still make the statement, and believe that the experience of every person who has lived in the world of action will bear me out in the statement. The majority of the things about which we fret and fume, while worrying about their possible happening, fade into nothingness, and fail to materialize. This in spite of the fact that we have done the things calculated to make the feared thing happen, or apt to lead us to the feared thing. The thing, however, does not disappear because of our fear and worry—but in spite of it. Even in spite of all the worrying and fearing, and fretting about things which “may come to pass,” a great majority of such things fail to materialize. Just think of it, in spite of all that we do to attract them, they manage to get away from us after all. Our net is not fine enough to catch them. And if we were to enlarge our net still more, a greater proportion would escape entanglement. There is no contradiction here. We are generally agreed that an excessive indulgence in tobacco and liquor tends to shorten a man’s life. And yet we occasionally meet some old weather-beaten chap who has used tobacco in large quantities all of his life—has consumed enormous quantities of bad whisky in his time—and yet he is ninety-five, with good prospects of ten or fifteen more years. And yet none of us would argue that that man had lived so long because he had drank and smoked to excess—we know that he had lived in spite of it. And so it is with fear and worry. We know that these negative thoughts are conducive to the bringing about of undesirable conditions, not to speak of the injury to body and mind, and the pain and discomfort attendant upon the indulgence in such thoughts. And yet, in spite of all the hurtful conditions brought about by fear and worry, we still may positively and truthfully assert “THE MAJORITY OF THE ANTICIPATED THINGS ABOUT WHICH WE FRET AND WORRY, NEVER COME TO PASS,” and that, consequently, all our pain and distress has been for naught. Apropos of my reference to the old drinker, smoker and chewer, who lived to the ripe old age, we feel like giving you the sequel. Here it is. The good old lady, who had told the man about the evil effects of drink and tobacco, and had heard his answering boast that “Here I am at ninety-five, and have drunk heavily and chewed and smoked freely all of my life since I was twenty,” was nonplused for a moment, but her returning enthusiasm brought this rejoinder: “I don’t care if you did. If you *hadn’t* drunk and smoked and chewed all these years, you would have been at least 110 years by this time, instead of only ninety-five.”

Affirmations for March.

FRANKLIN L. BERRY.

I

My soul seeks out its friends.
It gives to them Strength to overcome,
Courage to bear, Endurance to conquer.
They shall not fail. They shall not fail!

II

I send Purity forth to dwell with those who
know her not.
She shall abide with them and they shall see
her face.

III

To those who struggle for bread, I send it;
To those who hunger for love, I give it;
And Peace I speak to those who suffer.

IV

I shall attain Success, realize Happiness and
earn Content; for All is Mine!

Stepping Stones.

Department of the I CAN AND I WILL Circle.

EDITED BY LOUISE RADFORD WELLS.

“I hold it truth with whom who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.”

Somebody writes me, wondering if she is a member of the *I Can and I Will Circle*. Do you want to be, my Canadian friend? Then you are. That is all that is necessary. There are no rules, no requirements, and no bounds to our Circle. Everyone who uses our Key, “I CAN and I WILL,” to unlock the doors which shut him out from peace or prosperity or love or health, is a member of our Circle, whether he knows it or not, whether he wants us or not. We have no limits; the world holds us and we fill its broad arms full to overflowing. We do not all know each other—we do not all know *ourselves*—but we stretch in a great circle, with no beginning, no end, no break or gap, encompassing all. That is the *I Can and I Will Circle*, and you are a member, and I am a member, and Aunt Maria is a member, and Yogi Ramacharaka is a member, and Elizabeth Towne is a member, and there are members in Japan and Australia and India and—Patagonia, probably. And few of us know each other, and many of us never will, but you and I and those who become our friends from time to time can meet here each month and think our thoughts together.

I have had many letters, and I had planned to say many things to you this month, but one letter which has come to us has altered it all. It is from a woman between forty and fifty years of age, who, after an unhappy deserted childhood, was married in her early teens to an habitual drunkard, and has had a life of ill-treatment and neglect, rearing her children as best she could, enduring and suffering. Less than a year ago, her soul woke up to its own rights, and she has begun to assert her individuality and to find, to her surprise, her condition made more bearable. But in this year she has had her first love story. Her **FIRST** love story, understand—at fifty. Through the circumstances of her life there has been included in it a young man of twenty-five or so, good-hearted, generous, kind and thoughtful of others, and she writes me that she loves him, although he does not know. These are her problems: Shall she longer endure the sordidness of her married life, or shall she leave her husband? What shall she do about this love? She feels she would be happy if married to this younger man. Understand, in considering this, that she does not write me at all in heroics or with any attempt to shroud the facts in sentiment and romance. She tells me simply in a few words just her story and leaves it with me. What is she to do?

And so this month, contrary to what I had planned, I am going to tell you what I think about **LOVE**. First, then, will you be surprised when I say I am very glad so beautiful a thing has come into her life to enrich and broaden it? You think, perhaps, that since she is married I should feel this love of hers for other than her husband a sin,—something to be condemned or criticised, or something for which she should feel shame. Why should she be ashamed? Why should any of us feel ashamed that our soul has sought out and recognized something good, pure, holy, beautiful in another? For that is love—the recognition of **THE BEST**. No **REAL** love is wrong—of no real love need we ever feel ashamed. But, here is something you want also to remember: **LOVE** is never wrong, but the **EXPRESSION** of love may be. Do you see the distinction I wish to make? My friend—this friend of ours, who has written to me—has done without love all her life. Can we expect her to love the husband who has beaten and ill-treated her from the time of her early girlhood through long years of maternity, hard toil, and privation? She has been wife, mother, housekeeper—these are duties within our volition; but who can compel love? Her husband has not merited it. Therefore it has not come to him. This is sad, more sad, perhaps, than she ever will realize. But it is the truth.

Then into her life, or rather into the lives of those about her but within her vision, has come this other man. Stored up in her heart all these years has lain this love. She may be forty odd—the love in her heart is only sixteen. She has not outgrown it,—merely *overgrown* it,—and it lies there fresh and young. That is one of the mistakes of life. Some day I shall tell you how vital I feel it that we should keep our emotions from becoming **OVERGROWN** by duties, environment,

repression; and how vital I feel it that they should grow with us, maturing and developing as all else of us matures and develops.

Of what has her life taught her the need? Kindness, consideration, tenderness, care—because these she has not had. Very well; here at last she sees them all, and love at that moment of vision has risen up in her heart and lives. Is there anything to be ashamed of in that? No, surely. We are glad, are we not, that this joy has come to her? For it IS a joy to love.

BUT—and this is the hinge upon which swings right and wrong—the moment her love seeks **EXPRESSION** it has lost its purity, its justification. What is it then? Self-love, only. She has a husband; she has children. I do not say she should remain with a man who brutally ill-treats her. She herself must decide that question, for she alone knows just what duties bind her to him. To my mind, she has a right to respect the dignity of her own soul and her own person, whether living with him or away from him. What she shall do as regards her husband is outside the question of what she shall do as regards her **LOVE**, and as to the latter, I know the answer. She loves the man; very well, let her “be not ashamed,” let her take all the happiness that comes from loving, but hold it in her heart. If she loves him, she desires for him all good. The thoughts that she bears of him and for him will bring him unconscious fruit. She cannot do him good by letting him discover her love. Should she do this it would be only for her own pleasure, and at once her love,—so pure, so beautiful, so well worth guarding,—has become a selfish thing, a transgression, a wrong to herself, to her family, to the man she loves!

And, after all, though I know in this she will not believe me, I do not think her love is so much for the man as for what he represents to her. She has had in all these years no consideration shown her, no regard for her comfort, no thought of her pleasure, and she sees now a man showing all these to those about him. It is **THAT** she loves, I feel sure, rather than the man. All she has missed is made clear to her, and she yearns for it, and her yearning and her tenderness surround him because he has shown it to her, though all unwittingly. The feeling of such a woman for a younger man is after all more a maternal than an equal love. It is a tender care, a desire rather to give happiness than to experience it. I think she is deceiving herself both as to what it is she feels and what constitutes her happiness.

There is another thing I want to say. Let us suppose for a moment that she not only loves but is loved by this man, who, as she tells me, is only about half her age. Let us suppose also that she is absolutely free, legally and morally, to accept this love. Should she do so? Real love has for its ultimate aim the good of the loved one. Would it be for his good to marry a woman twice his age? Would it be for her good? No, for the good of neither. For her it would eventually mean slow wearing heartache, much harder to bear than the abuse of a man she does not love. She could not satisfy him. She has lived through what he has yet to experience. There can be no equality of experience, no mutual simultaneous growth and joy. When he is forty-five, a strong, vigorous man, full of vitality, energy, enjoying all the gifts of life, she will be a woman of seventy-five. Seventy-five! it does not match with youth or a man's prime. Does she want to become a fret, a worry, a **RESPONSIBILITY ONLY**? Something to be cared for **DUTIFULLY**? No. Better to bear our precious gift shut in our hands, its fragrance unchanged, than to taste, only to find it grow bitter to the tongue.

There is only one way open for her—but it is a way of peace and joy and great beauty, if she will but walk in it unswervingly. And that she will, I know with certainty, for in her letter to me, I have heard the keynote of her soul, that, in her own simple words, “keeps claiming the good.” You cannot claim the good without realizing it, **FOR WHAT YOU CLAIM IS YOURS.**

Several of our members have asked the thoughts of our Circle to help them through trouble, weakness or the problems that beset them. Mr. Berry has given us some Affirmations this month suited to these needs. When you repeat Affirmation I, will you do so to strengthen and aid these friends: R. E. Y., A. L. H., A. J. N., C. B., M. M. L., N. L. C., J. W. F., L. C. S., E. S. R.?

O. G. S. asks the help of the Circle for one dear to him. Hold for her the thought of Purity (Affirmation II.).

When you repeat Affirmation III, send your help to C. B. and L. A. W.

The fourth Affirmation is for your own strength.