

THOUGHT, THE BODY-BUILDER.

LESSON II.

To understand the Law of Being is to become master of those conditions called sickness and death. This understanding is the knowledge that works what would now be called miracles. Because to understand the Law is to be one with the Law; and the Law is diseaseless and deathless.

GOOD AND EVIL.

In all the universe there is nothing but good. There is no evil. Evil, like disease, is a misconception of the Law. Evil—the same as disease—has the foundation for its belief in our ignorance of the fact that all is life, and therefore altogether good.

We are not evil. We are ignorant, and it is our ignorance that is counted to us as evil, or sin. But ignorance is undevelopment and undevelopment is not sin. The child is more undeveloped than the man, but he is not therefore more evil. He makes more mistakes than the man, but it is because he has more to learn; his mistakes are helps to him, because he learns from them, and they are therefore good. The race believes

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itself divorced from God ( or good ) which is an absurd idea, since good—the Life Principle—fills the universe, and divorce in a universe is impossible. It remains for the race to learn that “all its evils” are the result of its unripe intelligence, and that error, sickness and death are not positive forces. What the race calls its sins, are simply the mistakes of its negative or unripe condition; they are pitfalls into which we stumble in our blind groping after light. Man is feeling his slow way from animalhood to divinity. What is his guide? I answer, the hope of happiness. From low to high there is one incessant search for happiness. The tiger eats a man to appease his hunger, this being his highest realization of happiness. The murderer kills a man for the revenge he feels to be his due, or for money to purchase some gratification. In either case it is the allurements of happiness that prompts the act; and in both cases the act is the same in character; both acts emanating from the same instinct—the irrepressible desire for happiness. There is no sin in either case, as the word sin is used, meaning an act which merits punishment. The man who kills or wrongs another in the pursuit of happiness, commits a great mistake. What does he need? He needs intelligence; he needs to be raised from the negative pole of life—the animalized and irrational condition—to the positive pole of existence, by education. Suppose that it is not safe to society to turn him at large while



he is being educated? Then shut him up. Society must protect itself, but it need not turn murderer to do so. A very large majority of men on earth to-day are seeking happiness by methods that, though less disastrous than those pursued by the tiger and the murderer, are still prompted by the same mistaken idea. What is the cause of it? Ignorance. What will remedy it? Intelligence. Good exists and is omnipresent; but the race is too ignorant or too negative to grasp this splendid truth; the truth is here, has always been here, but only a few have grown tall enough to see it.

Again I say, "There is no evil." Is not murder evil? you ask. No, it is not. It is one of the incidents of our negative life by which we find that happiness cannot be gained by wronging others. It is a stumble in the dark by which we hurt ourselves and others in trying to open the door for the admission of light. The murder is an act which will eventually prove an aid in establishing the reign of justice. "It will eventually prove a good," you say, "but surely it is not a good now?" "Yes," I answer, "it is even now a misunderstood good, since it leads to that higher, juster thought, which promotes our growth from the negative to the positive pole of life. It is a good whose meaning is not yet made apparent to us, because in our darkened position we can only grasp limited or relative truths. It is these limited or relative truths that we call

evils. In every act of our lives we are seeking happiness, and we are here for no other purpose. Being ignorant, having barely emerged from the negative underlives we have lived from our individual beginnings, we do not know how to seek it. We seek it by mistaken methods, and by our mistakes we learn the true methods. So every mistake becomes a stepping-stone that lifts us to higher planes of thought and life. Without these mistakes we would never have risen to where we now are. This has been our only possible way of climbing from the negative conditions we have left behind us to the divine conditions we are approaching. And thus every one of our so-called sins has only been a mistake which has benefited more of the race than it has harmed. "Pretty hard on the murdered man," you say. Yes, but the race is a unit. It is one universal expression of Being; and always the infinite Law has been "the greatest good to the greatest number." If the apparent sacrifice of one life shows the race a mistaken effort in the pursuit of happiness and a hundred persons profit by the lesson, thus saving a hundred lives, surely the sacrifice has been good. In our darkened situations we have nothing but our mistakes to learn by.

As there is a positive and a negative pole to everything, so there is a positive and a negative pole to truth. Error is the negative pole of truth; hatred is the negative of which love is the positive; death and dis-

ease are the negatives of which life and health are the positives. The physical and spiritual parts of a man are the negative and positive poles to the one mind that is he. Always in our search for truth we grasp the negative first; then we learn our mistake by experience with it. And this mistake becomes the finger-post pointing us to the positive pole, or truth positive. Having tested both sides we then know ourselves on solid ground. Our lesson is well learned and we are ready for another. And in this way the race has been advancing through the negations of truth, up to truth, 'till at last it begins to behold the positive truth and to formulate it in the statement that all is good.

Negative corresponds to ignorance—it is the not knowing. Positive corresponds to intelligence—it is the knowing. In our ascent from lower or undeveloped conditions it cannot be otherwise than that we pass through a period of ignorance concerning universal truth before we reach that point in intelligence where it becomes plain to us.

Life and health are the two great realities. They have existed forever, and will continue to do so. All life is truth on its own plane of development. In every person, or creature, or plant, the conditions or environments are consistent with the development of the person, or creature, or plant. If a man is sick he is in the toils of the negative conditions, which he can only overcome by a knowledge of greater truth.

Sickness seems and is a real condition to a sick man; but it is not an absolute power; it is not a positive thing, as health is, and is nothing to the man who has learned his power to overcome. Sickness is the negation of health, or the denial of the presence of health, or the lack of practical understanding of the fact that health exists and is a positive thing to be attained by positive intelligence. As a man is all mind, mental ignorance of the existence and the ubiquity of the health element is sickness.

"But," says the student, "in this case everybody in the world would be sick all the time, because all are ignorant of the fact that the health element alone exists."

This point is well taken and must be explained. In the first place that condition of health which the race enjoys called "normal" is a very low condition indeed, and in comparison with the high and splendid condition of vitality to which it may attain it is little better than sickness. It is a condition of negation of this wonderful vitality that is in store for us, and is so decided a negation of it that it is open every moment to the inroads of a thousand beliefs in disease, and is constantly tumbling into these beliefs. In this shaky, uncertain condition I have spoken of man's entire condition is diseased. And truly the whole world is so overspread with convictions of the potency of disease that but for the fact that the



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health element is ubiquitous and asserts itself in spite of race convictions, as every absolute truth always does, the whole race would die of its numerous beliefs in disease in less than a year.

Sickness, then, is ignorance of health; an ignorance that cannot help being made manifest on the man's exterior, because he is all mind. The man is a unit, and what he does not know is made apparent on his bodily appearance the same as what he does know. That is, the ignorance or negation of intelligence, either with regard to happiness, or health, or life, makes itself manifest on the man's surface mind (which is his body) the same as his intelligence does.

And is not this an evil? No, it is good, both to the sick man and to others. It is a condition of ignorance to be overcome by a knowledge of this great, absolute truth to which we are all evolving—the truth that all is good. It must be borne in mind that we are growing creatures, and that we have no way to grow except by the recognition and the appropriation of truth, and that if we did not take the penalty of our ignorance we would never learn. It is because we are all mind that we cannot escape the penalty of our ignorance, for every ignorant thought transcribes itself on our external or crude mind (our bodies).

I put my hand into the fire and am burned. It is not because the world believes the fire will burn me that I am burned. It is because my

hand is negative to the fire. And yet I am more intelligent than the fire. How, then, can it burn my hand? I answer that my thought is more positive than the fire; but my thought is the positive pole of my life; and the positive pole of me (my thought) has always denied all relationship to the negative pole of me (my body), and the negative pole thus denied, is less positive than the fire, and is burned by it. The fire cannot burn my thought. It cannot, therefore, destroy the finer or more intelligent part of me. It can only destroy that part of me which I have not so infused with intelligent thought as to render it indestructible. The positive pole of my life has evolved past the hurtful influence of the fire, but the negative pole has not. Therefore the negative is dependent upon the positive pole for its power to resist the influence of the fire. This fact is due to the Law of Growth, which leads us on from incipient developments to greater and greater inheritance of power, and not (as is supposed by some teachers of Mental Science) to our beliefs alone. For it must be borne in mind that in the process of evolution we encounter in our growth from negatives to positives, the negative conditions first, because the unripe always projects from itself the ripe.

The ripe thought is the product of the body. It is true that the body is all thought. But the body is thought that heredity has fixed in certain forms of belief, and from these fixed forms of belief, a freer

quality of thought is generated. Now it is this freer quality of unfixed thought that, being dissatisfied with the fixed habit of thought to which it belongs, and which generated it (namely, the body) is always ready to prospect for new conditions and new truths. This latter quality of thought is invisible to mortal sense, and has been supposed to be a powerless thing except as it prompted to external deeds.

But it is anything but powerless; it is the true body-builder; though heretofore it has not been known in that capacity.

While this fine, intangible thought is the product of the body, the body is also its product.

Do not forget that it is one with the body, and that its relation to the body is as the positive pole of the magnet to the negative pole.

Though evolved from the body, thought has been the body-builder from the first. But as this process took place on the unconscious plane of growth, very little was known of its power.

But now after the deepest study and much experiment, it is known that conscious thought, educated thought, thought that begins to know its own power, can break up the fixed habit of thought, from which it was evolved (the body) and make the body over again in the form it most admires and desires.

Educated thought can change the body's fixed habit of belief in disease, old age and death.



And because this is so, the old dispensation of suffering and weakness and wretchedness is about to close, and the era of man's complete mastery over his body and his surroundings is about to begin.

Man created himself on the unconscious plane through the medium of his blind desires. As an animal, he followed where his desire led, unmindful of consequences; and in doing this he gradually developed from the atom to what he is now.

But his development has been slow recently; and this is because he could go no farther until he had discovered the law of growth, and had found out that thought was the chief factor under the law.

Now, in his animal, or unconscious growth, the desire that constantly led him into better conditions was simply unanalyzed thought. Thought is the great factor in race growth, and in individual growth, whether it defines itself to the thinker or not.

Up to the present point in growth, thought has not been intelligently defined nor its power understood. It has been supposed in general to be a sort of supernumerary in the mental economy except so far as it was pinned down to hard work in the solution of problems and the manufacture of useful things; as to the great bulk of it, that went gadding about building air castles in Spain, and roaming the universe in aimless abandon; it was called Imagination, and was supposed to be a delusion

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and a snare, by those who were "foolish" enough to attach any importance to it.

But it is the imagination that is the body-builder; it is this quality of untrammelled thought that is now recognized as the wings of the body; the lifting power of the body.

And note this, it is not an unintelligent lifting power like steam; it is thought; it is the body's most intelligent, etherial essence, and its most emancipated mentality. It is that part of the body's self which has not succumbed to the fixed habits of the race; it is that part of the body which is free; which feels that it does not have to accept the beliefs or conditions it was born into.

Being educated in a sense of its own power, it refuses to accept any beliefs or conditions that are not pleasing to it.

But it has not known its power until recently. It accepted the race opinion of itself, and considered itself a sort of ornamental appurtenance in the human economy. Thought has only begun to know that it is a power. It does not, even yet, know what a perfectly wonderful power it is; but it is gradually learning this. It does not yet know that it has power to renew and fashion the body out of which it had its birth. It does not know its own power to prevent fire from consuming the body. But it has this power, and in many instances in the world's history it has done this very thing.

A man's body is the product of evolution. The thought generated by the body may be considered a later product of evolution; or rather, that quality of thought that recognizes its own power (for in strict truth the body and the thought are coeval—being one). But it is scientific to affirm that the riper thought of the present day is the latest product of evolution.

The relations of body and thought have always been interactive. At one time the body is the cause and thought the effect. Then, thought will be the cause and the body the effect. This has gone on in a gradually ripening process, unnoticed by the individual until at last, thought has developed to a point where it begins to recognize its power as a factor in growth; moreover, as a free power, unfettered by the fixed beliefs which compose the body.

What a tremendous position this is.

Who doubts that we stand on the threshold of the mightiest revelations our world has yet seen?

Man, self-created and self-creative; and with the knowledge of how to do it.

When man makes a mistake it is a mistake all through and through him, because he is all mind; and this is the reason we are said to take the consequences of our mistakes. We are our own mistakes, and we are



gradually ceasing to be mistakes as we learn more and more of this absolute truth, all is good. We are of a piece with our beliefs. When we believe we are sick, we are sick; first, because we are yet only crude developments, and therefore liable to come under the dominion of negative influence; and second, because after coming under such influence our uneducated thought holds us there, in part, by virtue of its being the master. We need not believe ourselves subject to sickness. We must educate ourselves in a knowledge of good and its omnipresence and omnipotence, and we must learn to unfold the power we have within us for the overcoming of all obstacles. It is there in plentiful supply for all emergencies, and we may have it for the taking and using.

Sickness, though a true condition, is but a relative condition; one that relates to and is dependent upon this particular stage of our growth from negative to positive life. As a relative truth it is helping to open our eyes to a better understanding of absolute truth, and is, therefore, a good thing. It is the disagreeable consequence of a mistaken way of thinking, and of being negative. If we were not sick we would not perceive the negative condition which the sickness indicates, and would not seek for the knowledge by which to overcome it.

Error, sickness and death are negations of Life. The history of the race is a story of its efforts to overcome these results of its negative

condition. In other words, it is an effort to grow larger and stronger and greater by the recognition of more truth, or Life, out of the universe of all-truth or all-good. We express just as much of this all-truth or all-good as we recognize, and no more. But the more we recognize the more positive we become, and the more we outgrow those conditions or beliefs, called error, sickness and death.

Good, Life, is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent. As we come consciously into an understanding of the omnipresence of good, we will become happy, and we will know the true methods by which happiness is secured. We will then make no more of those mistakes the world calls sins and punishes as sins.

As we come consciously into an understanding of the omnipotence of good, we will have power to overcome our environments and to overcome all obstructions, thus widening and deepening our lives and work, not only for our own benefit, but for the benefit of all.

As we come consciously into an understanding of the omniscience of good we will feel the presence of life; we will know that it is around us and in us and above us and below us, and we will not be afraid lest we "dash our foot against a stone" and fall headlong, as we continue our journey through the universe. All of this knowledge will the body imbibe from thought, the body-builder.

The time was when these lives, latent in the one Life, were made manifest, or became organized in individual lives—they were expressed or they became externalized. And very small lives we were in comparison with what we now are. All happiness is in growth, and we became growing creatures. A man only has that which he lives; he only has that which he can accumulate by the process of growth. If ever the time should come when we reached that utmost point of growth called perfection—that point beyond which we cease to grow—life would hold nothing more for us. Growth is life; stagnation is death, whether it occurs in a worm or the highest archangel. When growth ceases life ceases. We are all right, even here in our negative condition, because we can grow out of it. We can only grow in good because there is no evil to appropriate in our growing. We can only grow in intelligence and strength because in our upward climb out of the negatives and into the positives, we leave weakness, which is ignorance, behind us, where it belongs, and advance steadily to the realm of positive intelligence and strength. Matter as a substance distinct from mind does not exist. What we call matter is only the more negative parts of mind; those parts of mind less infused with intelligence. At death the man lays down the negative part of himself because his thought—the positive part of himself—is not sufficiently educated in a knowledge of its own



power to save the body from the Law of the negative conditions—to quicken it, and thus render it positive and consciously alive all through and through, as thought itself is. The first step toward quickening these bodies so that they shall become positive to those negative conditions, or beliefs, called sickness and death, is to show that matter is not a substance distinct from mind. Matter is negative mind, and these bodies of ours, are laboratories for the refining of it into positive mind—thought.

Thought, then, which is evolved from the great body of crude or undigested mind that the world calls matter, is the most active substance that we know anything of, and is by far the most vital and intelligent. Electricity is rapid in its movements, but it does not annihilate time and space, as thought does. It is thought alone that can compass the bounds of a world in a second; and thought is generated by these human brains. Electricity is an unorganized power; thought is its master, and can organize it. The thought which our brains generates is powerful only as it counterparts universal thought, which is Life, or Being. Therefore, thought is the positive pole of the magnet man; it is the captain of the craft, and has the directing power over him.

Thought can make sick and it can make well. Thought grounded in error, or from a negative basis, can make sick; but the same thought



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occupying a positive basis, and educated in the knowledge that all is good or life, can make well quite as easily. Thought, though unseen, is still a substance; a substance as much more powerful than the crude substance called matter as steam is more powerful than water.

Thought, the captain, has never recognized its power over its own craft, nor over the thoughts of other people. And yet, being a substance, it goes out of these human brains and meets the thought emanating from other brains, and an influence is wrought which the individual as a whole (positive and negative poles together) knows almost nothing of.

The thoughts that go out and meet and influence other thoughts bring back no report of the fact, simply because they do not know that they can do so, and, therefore, do not listen for them. That sense by which we can hear these things is rudimentary in us, and will only develop by use. The time is no doubt near at hand when our thoughts will go forth to distant points and bring back to us a perfectly correct report of what has been transpiring in the place where they have been visiting. We are only beginning to be conscious of the power of thought, and we do not even imagine how much it partakes of the omniscience of the Law of Being.

Thought demonstrates its omniscience in proportion as we recognize its quality and power.

It is by thought that we heal. If my thought is grounded in the belief that all is good, or that all is Life, it is positive to your thought, which is grounded in the belief that evil exists and has the power to harm. The truth is always positive to error, and can make a convert of error provided it is conscious of its power, and able to direct its forces aright.

A conscious knowledge of the power of thought is essential to the use of that power. A comparatively weak man who is conscious of the power of thought, and who believes in and trusts his own thought, may gain control over the thoughts of a more intellectual man than himself provided this man is unconscious of the power of thought.

"But this is mesmerism, and it is an evil thing," you say. "Yes," answer, "it is mesmerism, but it is not an evil thing." "And why," you ask, "is it not an evil thing for a mind to gain control over another mind in every way superior to itself, and use it perhaps to serve its own selfish purposes?"

I ask in answer, why is it not evil for the electric storms to devastate the West and the South as they do every spring and fall? There is a great power made manifest in these electric storms that man must discover and appropriate to the use of the world. We would never know that the power existed but for its fearful manifestation. It is just so

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with the power of thought—we have discovered its power through the seeming evil of mesmerism. In both cases the good lies in the power manifested. When this power shall be divested of its sting by the practical knowledge that shall direct it to the world's immediate benefit, we will begin to reap the harvest. It will be the application of a greater power than the race has yet known, operating under the law of good to all; and we will reap the benefits in the increased health and strength of the race—even to so great a degree as to banish all its poverty, disease, old age, and, lastly, death.

The race is in the preparatory department of its education yet. The books and all the implements for learning the higher branches are here now, but we cannot read yet—we have not finished the alphabet.

Thought is the healer. Thought educated in the knowledge of that universal truth—all is good, or all is Life—becomes a power not to be resisted by the negative thought of the negative individual. And the thought of every soul whose belief is grounded in the appearance of evil is negative to even the weakest, frailest thought of him whose belief is grounded in that great truth—all is good, because all is Life.

“Eschew evil and believe in God if you would be saved.” This means that we are to cease to believe in evil and to learn to believe in good; or to cease to believe in death and learn to believe in life if we are to be saved.

Saved from what? Why, saved from so-called sin, and from sickness and death; saved from the undeveloped condition which these words imply, by being lifted into the power which the knowledge of truth confers; and above all, which the knowledge of that best of all truths confers—all is good, because all is Life.

A belief in good, or the all prevalent Principle of Life, is the foundation rock of a world's salvation from error, sickness and death.

A man is all mind. As such he is a bundle of beliefs. What he believes, that he is. Therefore his beliefs are his realities, even though they may be based on the untenable premise of the existence of evil; yet they are his realities as long as he lives them and believes them. In order to be strong, healthful, intelligent, vital, beautiful, a man must believe in good and only good; or Life and only Life.

As I have often said, the whole bible hinges on two words—"believe" and "overcome." I am now dealing with the first of these words—"believe." Believe in good—which means Life and health—and be saved; "believe a lie and be damned." To believe evil is to believe an error, and believing an error is being damned, because no man (being all mind) can escape the penalty of his beliefs. And he who believes in evil (a lie) takes the consequences of his belief in so-called sin, sickness and death, and is thus damned. To cease believing in error is to cease being damned (whether in this world or any other).

If a man believes himself sick, I treat him for his belief. His belief is his real condition. He is sick. Being all mind he is, therefore, a series of beliefs, and "as he thinketh so is he." The man is sick, and his sickness is unmistakable evidence of his negative condition; and this must be overcome, else growth would stagnate in him, and he might as well have never been born. How would a man know he was negative unless he had some unpleasant evidence of it? If there were never a ripple to break our negative condition and suggest an improvement, our condition would not rise above that of the brute. Indeed it would never have risen so high.

Then what is the duty of the teacher? It is to infuse the student with positive thought. All positive thought is based on the belief in absolute Life. The more strongly the teacher is ingrained in the knowledge of absolute Life, the more powerful he is as a teacher. The duty of the teacher, then, is to present all the logic he possibly can in favor of the fact that all is Life. This logic must make its indelible impression on the student's intelligence. The student must be convinced that this logic is correct. This is the teacher's duty. No teacher can do any more than to impress the fact upon the student's intellectual perceptions.

And here where the teacher's work stops the student's work begins; for this truth needs more than a mere intellectual perception of it. It

needs to enter into every part of the student's organization and to remodel him after its own pattern.

It is now nearly nine years since I became convinced of the truth that all is good, because all is Life. It seems to me that the fact was simply painted on me at first, and that it was months before it entered and took possession of me. It became deeper seated gradually as I made it my one subject of thought. But even yet it has not permeated me so perfectly as it will do in time; for day after day strengthens it. New argument to bolster it up seems to spring of itself in my mind, and with every new argument comes fresh vigor to my frame.

When this truth shall have permeated every atom of our bodies there is no guessing how vigorous, how perennially young and beautiful we will be. This is the advent of that age prophesied from the beginning—the age in which man would learn his mastership over all things below him. I say “learn,” for he is already master and does not know it. To make man conscious of his mastery over sickness and death is the meaning of the present great mind movement to which the thinkers of the world are now directing their attention.



### EXPLANATORY.

In lesson two I have said that the body generates thought. I have also said that thought builds the body. Both of these statements are true. Thought and the body are both of one piece, and in respect to time are coeval. In point of fact the body is all thought. It is condensed thought, or thought fixed in certain forms of belief; and from it is constantly being liberated (through the mechanism of the brain) a lighter and more free form of itself that is called "thought" in distinction from "body." But the two are only different forms of one substance, and their relation is interactive. They are cause and effect. Their interchange represents the to and fro current that is inseparable from growth; that is, in fact, the main point in evolution, and which—in the nature of the Law of Being, or the Law of Attraction—cannot be otherwise.

The body generates the thought, and has done so on the unconscious plane of intelligence always; and the thought has permeated the deadness of the body and enlivened and vitalized it and lifted it to higher planes of being, also on the unconscious plane of growth. And so

growth has proceeded until thought has ripened into a consciousness of the situation, and into a knowledge of its own power. And it is now beginning to consciously direct its own power down into the body with a view to make such changes and improvements in the body as are prompted by desire.

Here we see an instance of the action and reaction involved in evolution, or the Law of Growth. The body has now ripened the thought up to a certain perception of its own capacity. And the thought thus ripened now turns and pours the ripened consciousness of its own capacity into the body; thus bringing up the structure of the body to a higher plane of being than it ever was before, and making it capable of engendering higher and better and greater thought, which will again pour its influence into the body for its farther strengthening and uplifting. This is the to and fro current involved in all growth, and in all movement, no matter what the nature of the movement. It is action and reaction. It has its rise in the Law of Attraction; and without it the universe would be as dead as a door nail, and a good deal deader.