

Marion Skidmore Library,
Lily Dale, N. Y.

HOME COURSE IN MENTAL SCIENCE.

BY HELEN WILMANS.

LESSON SEVEN.

FAITH, OUR GUIDE THROUGH THE DARK.

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LESSON VII.

No man has the slightest conception of the Law of Attraction abstracted from the living organisms in which it is manifested. We can only perceive it by that which recognizes it. It is growth in the tree; it is development in the animal; it is evolution in all nature; and in all things, from low to high, evolution is prompted by the desire of the organized creature pushing forth to its own accomplishment. Then all we can know of the Law is that which is made manifest through desire. We cannot do otherwise than believe in the law. Therefore we cannot do otherwise than believe in desire. To throw ourselves upon our desires and trust them is to throw ourselves upon the Law and trust its absolute infallibility. This would be what the theologians would call "trusting God."

In spite of the manner in which we have crucified our desires they have still operated to work all the benefit the world has ever received. Look back to the cave dwellers, and farther, and see that the course of the race has been progressive and not retrogressive. Is not this so?

And what influence has operated to produce this constant improvement; this greater and still greater manifestation of the Law? I answer, it has all been unfolded from the actualization of the desires of man. Every change in government, from the nomadic tribes up through kingcraft to our democracy, has been the growing desires of man acting upon the negative creations about him.

The world exists for the unfoldment of man's desires. The unfoldment of man's desires is the unfoldment of the man. The unfoldment of the man is the making the latent possibilities of the Law manifest in the world of effects, and the multiplying a thousandfold the new uses by which the whole race shall climb the ladder of civilization to higher heights than any previous civilization has ever attained, or ever dreamed possible of attainment.

I am my own eternal want to. I want to do this, and I want to do that, and every want to is the impulse of the Law of Life which I do but embody for the purpose of showing it forth. The Law of Attraction, or the Life Principle—which is the Law of organization, by which atoms cohere in the myriad of forms we see in nature—pushes through my want to. Shall I believe in the Law and execute this want to, or shall I say, "The Law is all wrong; it is a sinful, wretched affair," and so turn aside and drift with the inorganic negatives which my want to could control if I would but trust it?

My want to is my immortal selfhood. It points forever in the direction of happiness; and I have but one object in life—that of being happy. That my want to may lead me in the wrong direction is not to be considered for a moment. It is sure to do so, because we are but children in the dark groping toward the light, and we hurt ourselves and others in the effort. But with happiness as the goal of every effort—the one eternal enticement—"all roads lead to Rome." The load-star of the spirit's everlasting yearning is always shining fair and clear, and our eyes never waver in the intentness with which they regard it, even though our feet may be detained by the brambles in the path, and our bodies bruised all over in blind collision with other struggling bodies on the same journey. As the star becomes brighter and the light clearer, there will be fewer mistakes. And eventually, in the broad light of splendid day, we will perceive that the desirable is the attainable, not only for ourselves, but for all; that the supply is equal to the demand; and then competition will have developed into emulation, where each one, instead of striving to get the most good, will strive to do the most good.

I find myself quoting a good deal from the bible, and yet I have none of that superstitious clinging to the bible that marks the theologian. I have been a student of it, and it contains some remarkable

things that have been quite overlooked by the clergy—one of which is, that there is no special reference made to a future state of life after death. All the promises refer to a fulfillment in this world. In fact everything points to a time when death should be overcome right here, and when the "Lord's chosen" should inhabit the earth forever. The two factors that were to bring about this condition were expressed in the words "believe," and "overcome."

TO HIM THAT CONQUERS.

Every promise in the bible is to him who conquers. Belief comes first, and then conquest.

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the 'tree of life,' which is in the paradise of God."

"He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."

"To him that overcometh will I give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and on that stone a name written which no man knoweth but he that receiveth it."

"And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works unto the end (works out my desires), to him I give authority over the nations."

"He that overcometh shall be arrayed in white garments, and I will in no wise blot his name out of the Book of Life; and I will confess his name before my Father and before the angels."

"He that overcometh, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out no more."

"To him that overcometh I will give to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with the Father on His throne."

To him that overcomes is every promise made. And what is it that is to be overcome?

The religion of the world says that it is our desires that are to be overcome.

I say that if desire could be overcome (which it cannot be, though the pressure put upon it has forced it into a great variety of dreadful expressions) that the Life Principle would be overcome; and nature—which is the visible and audible manifestation of the Life Principle—would be wiped out.

To overcome presupposes that which is to overcome, and that which is to be overcome. That which is to overcome is the Life Principle in man, as expressed in desire. That which is to be overcome is all that stands in the way of the fullest expansion and operation of man's desires.

And what is it that stands most in the way of the expansion and operation of man's desires? It is the thousand and one ignorant beliefs into which the race is born. Beliefs that hedge our desires at every step; that press in on us more and more, making us reflections of themselves

instead of reflections of Life; thus marring and maiming, and finally killing us.

These beliefs are real conditions. Everything being mind, all conditions are beliefs and all beliefs are conditions. These beliefs, or conditions, then, are the crude surroundings which await us at birth, and which are our tools and servants, to be used by us in working out our desires to larger ends than we have yet dreamed of, thus making them our allies in the more perfect manifestation of the Life Principle in the world.

It has been said that a man is a bundle of beliefs; and so he is after being pressed into conformity with the world's beliefs; but in his primordial essence he is not a bundle of beliefs, but a bundle of desires. As spoken from out that unexplored void from whence all life issues, he is an aggregating spark of pure sex fire, to grow and grow forever through his loves, or desires—these loves, or desires, stretching forth all the time and crying, "More, more." And he entered this world of negative beliefs, not to conform to these beliefs, but to shape them to his own liking. There is a life of perpetual conquest before him; perpetual overcoming.

And does man conquer? No, not yet. He conforms to the negative beliefs into which he was born. Now and then he presents a weak

face of semi-resistance to them, always to back down from the contest, defeated. Indeed, he is defeated before he begins the contest—defeated by the belief that even his God is against him; for he has been educated to believe this. And yet, being a bundle of desires, he attempts to actualize them in spite of his belief that they are of the devil. He temporizes with his conscience on this point to a certain extent, and in the meantime builds ramparts, as it were, for his own protection against the overwhelming and constantly encroaching negatives; not knowing that his desires are meant for his guides; not knowing that desire is the heaven-born master of belief, and that he, as the incarnation of desire, has only to announce his mastery in order to see belief give way before him until it is utterly routed and destroyed.

When the full understanding of this great truth—that desire is the master of those conditions or beliefs that have so long mastered us—first burst upon me, I was as one re-born. The very moment this great truth worked its slow way through my thought, and at last banished every cobweb of doubt, I stood revealed to myself as a babe just come into a new world. And, indeed, it was so. I was born out of earth beliefs into the heaven of unlimited aspiration and unlimited fruition.

Forever in search of truth, and never before satisfied to rest one moment, I yet knew, at this point, that I had found a resting place; a

place not on the incline where I might slip back again, but on the summit where it was safe to rest. And for several days I did rest just like a sleeping infant who has passed safely from its dark, narrow, embryotic home into the world of air and light and freedom. I knew that I was safe; I knew that my feet had been placed on the right road, and all I had to do was to push forward.

To push forward, to overcome those negatives which had so long been my master. Being born into the truth, I felt that I had nothing to do but to grow in it.

After a few days, I began to question myself whether I was really growing or not. I went over the old ground. "I am re-born," I said, "into the true life of love, whose manifestation is aspiration, but why do I still remain so weak?" The answer came. I had crushed my desires so long they were almost dead. I recalled the time, and almost the hour, when I could look in the shop windows upon the splendid array of velvets and laces and jewels without wishing any for myself. I recalled how, at that time, I had congratulated myself on the self-conquest this fact showed forth. I did not know that the amount of self-conquest the circumstance registered, also registered the amount of deadness that had come to me as the result of my supposed victory. I remembered how (long ago) any little disappointment nearly broke my heart, and

how glad I was, as time passed, to be able to have my desires crushed without such keen suffering. But every bit of palliation brought by the years was evidence of the amount of death each crushed desire had left; until at last, when the great truth for which I had been so long searching burst upon me, I seemed already dead in the death of every hope my nature had ever given birth to. I was in that fearful and almost irreclaimable condition called "content." I was fast becoming an old woman—something I never intend to be. I saw the whole situation. If I intended to live and grow in the new life to which I had been born through my intelligence, I must, indeed, become again as a little child.

And what is it to become again as a little child? It is to be one continual incarnation of "want;" and to want not only with my soul, but with my body, for body and soul are one. A child is all want; and the moment its thought goes out after a new want, its hands reach for it. Of course the child and its wants are but the type of the man and his wants.

Then in trying to gain strength after my new birth, my first denial was this: "No, I am not dead in negation." (This being dead in negation of life, is what the bible calls being "dead in trespasses and sins against God"—as manifested in our natural desires.)

This was the death that I denied. "I am not dead, but only sleeping. I will awake. I will sedulously affirm the existence of all those pure and harmless desires I once tried to overcome" (too successfully). And so I tried to make myself believe that new dresses and new rings were desirable; and above all things that the desire for anything whatever that would quicken the expiring vitality was desirable. For vitality, which is Life, is born of desire—the child of love.

To overcome our doubts of the divinity of our own desires is now in order. How are we to do this?

We are to do it first of all by a calm, clear conviction that desire is the spirit of growth in a man, as in all things. We can only get this conviction by much thought and introspection. Look within yourself fearlessly, and in utter disregard to the opinions of the churches and of all your friends and acquaintances for demonstration of this truth. Cultivate your own powers of analysis by the closest observation, and turn a deaf ear to everything that does not conform to the conclusion you come to.

These conclusions are pretty sure to be faulty at first, but they are yours; they are a part of you. They are the first effort of growth in the native soil of your own mentality, and as such they are exceedingly valuable, since they demonstrate the productiveness of your own soil.

Having demonstrated this one fact, of which you were almost unconscious before, you have established a certain amount of respect for yourself. You have found out that you are as capable of thought as others, and therefore do not have to hire your thinking done. And so the mere fact that you have established in your mental organism—the self-conscious power of original thought—has lifted you a long way out of the negatives that surrounded you. You are mentally stronger; and as the mental is the physical, you are stronger all over; your vitality is greater and your health is better.

Having now reached a point of greater self-conscious power, go back and read the lessons over. Read them slowly, thoughtfully and critically. Do not accept them because I have proven them true. They are not yours—not a part of your being—until you also have proven them true for yourself by the solidest kind of reasoning. By the time the light of your own intelligence breaks over the mighty fact that desire is the spirit of all life, the great and only prompter to action, you may begin to apply the denials and affirmations to it. You may deny that desire is a sinful thing. You may affirm your respect for it and your confidence in it.

These denials and affirmations are wonderful in their effect, and the student should go alone many times a day to make them. They need

not be spoken aloud. They can be made in the thought and be just as effective.

In the lower orders of life, desire is trusted with implicit confidence; and the result of trusting the desire is growth in the individual and evolution in all nature.

In the lower orders of life the perception that desire is the legitimate impulse of all growth is merely instinctive, or intuitional; instinct or intuition is natural knowledge; is that knowledge of truth, or Life, which has never questioned itself and therefore never thrown doubt upon itself.

As instinct or intuition has ripened into reason in the man—by a process of growth, through which he has called every faculty of his being into question—his doubts have awakened, and they have challenged each separate faculty he possesses to give a strict account of itself. From this point has ensued the gradual unfoldment of intuition into self-conscious reasoning power. The natural intelligence, which is instinct, or intuition, must be understood and endorsed by the man's riper perceptions or else it will not be trusted. These riper perceptions in their gradual unfoldment have passed through ages of infidelity to the natural intelligence expressed by the words instinct and intuition; but now they are coming into a recognition of its value. And this personal recogni-

tion of the value of natural intelligence marks the line between growth on the animal plane, which I call unconscious growth, and growth on the higher plane, which I call conscious growth. Conscious growth is that high order of growth that understands the whole matter and can intelligently co-operate with natural or instinctive growth.

Looking within ourselves we find what all admit to be the intuitional nature; that peculiar faculty which takes it for granted—independent of any reasoning on the subject—that desire is the spirit of all life, and acts accordingly. This intuitional faculty is the undeveloped understanding. It is unbroken in its allegiance to the spirit of itself, which is desire, and by its unfaltering recognition of desire, it clothes desire in flesh and blood, and the desire becomes manifest, or visible, on the external plane.

Intuition is that faculty in man by which he becomes aware of, or feels, the presence of an unerring power within himself that in some mysterious way answers questions for him; or at least inclines him in directions where he will find his questions answered.

*And though so little is known of intuition, yet it is a notable fact that the faculty does command the most unbounded respect from persons who have made the study of mental phenomena a specialty.

And no wonder, because the beginning of all growth is in it—both

of unconscious growth and conscious growth—as I will show farther along.

Intuition is the laboratory through which the latent Life Principle becomes visible in tangible substance. The unfolding of the intuitive perceptions suggests to us the fact that in them there is a well of unfailing vitality to be drawn upon by the cultured intellect, and to be used in the upbuilding of the race; or in man's farther process at self-creation. It is the door opening into the hidden power of a realm of infinite possibilities. The question, then, is this: Is faith something related to intuition, or is it something apart and separate from it?

As a coming light dispels the darkness in front of it, so does intuition send forth in more or less brightness, according as the intuitional nature is more or less developed in the individual, a long stream of light, leading upward forever, and pointing always to shining heights ahead which it is possible for us to attain, through that effort which rests on a secure belief in the omnipresence of good. This stream of light is faith, and it is a clear stream that takes its rise in intuition.

Faith lights up the whole interior man; and this light keeps brightening all along the road that leads to his clear understanding. It points to the time when the full-fledged reasoning powers of the man shall have so developed as to confirm its hopes, desires and aspirations, all of which are the spirit of intuition, and its own spirit also.

Faith is not reason in its full sense. It is the trustfulness of intuition that longs for confirmation by the full-fledged reasoning faculties of the highly developed man. It is intuition in aspiration for something beyond and above its present reach. And when reason has confirmed faith, the individual has stepped up to a very high place indeed—to the place of understanding.

Faith is a guide to understanding, and until we reach understanding the best thing we can do is to trust it. It is the light of our otherwise darkened lives.

The opponent to faith is doubt. Now doubt is of the reasoning faculties, while faith is of intuition—the natural knowing, or the implanted knowing that comes from the earth life.

“But,” the student asks, “is not the reasoning power the same thing as intuition? Is it not intuition developed to a self-conscious plane?”

Yes, it is; but at the point where self-conscious thought begins in man, there doubt is born. Self-conscious thought doubts first before it accepts the evidence of the natural knowing—the intuitional perceptions. With this doubt it becomes aware of the existence of the positive pole of doubt, which is faith. At this juncture the investigating thought perceives the necessity of choosing which it shall rely upon in its farther search for truth. It may rely upon doubt, or it may rely

upon hope, or faith. It soon finds that doubt leads nowhere and ends in absolute darkness, while faith is itself a light, and leads in the direction of more light.

Therefore the growing intellect follows faith. And yet faith has been followed in so wavering and unsteady a manner that the race has been many thousands of years in crossing the line from that condition of natural or animal knowing, called intuition, to the higher condition of self-conscious knowing called the understanding.

And now, as these lessons are meant for practical instruction in the manner of evolving the self-conscious thought that shows man that he is master of all conditions, and can do his own growing, I will give the student something to do right here. He must deny doubt, and affirm faith.

But suppose the question confronting him is one in which it seems more plausible to doubt than to believe? It makes no difference; he is learning a lesson now, and it is a lesson where his mistakes will teach him as much as correct results.

Let us suppose the question is presented to his mind and doubt jumps up, says, "I don't believe it." What then? Why nothing. The matter is ended. Investigation is crushed. The result is so much deadness. But suppose he says to doubt: "There is a plausible side to this (it is not a question unless it has a plausible side) and I will bring faith

to bear on it." Now faith is alive and leads to more life, while doubt is dead and leads nowhere. So the student calls faith into requisition and follows after her. Now the leading characteristic of faith is to glow and burn with constantly increasing brightness the more she is trusted, for she travels in but one direction, and that is toward understanding. Well, let us suppose that the inquirer follows faith. In doing so he will be sure to find the answer to his question either in the negative or the affirmative. The answer may not be what he wanted, nor what he expected, and—by the light of still higher truth—it may not even be correct. But whatever it is, it holds the seed germ of another question, which by following in faith will lead him nearer the truth, and finally he will reach it. To honestly follow faith in the pursuit of truth will lead to its acquisition. I say in the pursuit of truth, and not in the pursuit of theories or creeds. See that your mind is unfettered by past beliefs when you search for truth, and deny unceasingly the power of prejudice.

Remember that doubt is a blight upon every effort you make in search of truth, and refuse to follow it. The person who trusts his doubts is always looking on the gloomy side of life, and never achieves anything. He is wretched from morning until night, and is subject to every disease that he hears of.

But faith is the light of our growing lives. It starts from the fountain-head of intuition within, and gleams in long, straight lines leading upward forever, always toward the realm of the beautiful, the true and the good. And if we walk in its pathway we reach resting places in new altitudes of understanding, where—looking back—each step is seen to stand out in strong light, though we may have passed over it hesitatingly, and with but half-hearted conviction as to its being the true way. And we know that we have done well in trusting the gentle messenger sent out by intuition—the native-born intellect within us.

Now in going out face to face with what the world calls the evils of life, I ask you to exercise your faith for a few days or weeks until the foundation for it shall have become so organized in your mind that understanding will be certain. I do not ask you to trust even faith blindly. If I should do so, and you should comply with my request, you would simply be setting aside your reason, and permitting me to psychologize you. To be psychologized is to have your judgment held in abeyance by the judgment of another person. Indeed your judgment may be held in abeyance by yourself. Your prejudices may so hold you that your reasoning powers are inoperative, in which case you are self-psychologized. This condition is called "statuevolence." But even blind, unquestioning faith is better than the deadness of no faith. Encourage

the growth of faith within yourself, but question it and try it by the light of the science you are learning; also try the science by the light of your faith. In this way you can determine the intelligence of each. As I said before, there is life in faith; for the blindest faith in the world gets organs of vision after a time, and becomes a guide that leads to understanding. If after you first study the lessons, there should be a reaction from the conviction they have planted within you, do not be discouraged. This reaction is the old mode of thought, or habit, of your former life, reasserting itself. At such a time, reports of so-called evil will encompass and confuse you; sickness and death will alarm you; the influence of all the negative forces will sweep over you again; again you will doubt the truth of omnipresent good. Right here is the great need of faith. Right here is the place to make the supreme effort to be faithful. Remember that the endeavor of your life is to cross over from negative to positive beliefs. A belief in evil, or any form of evil is negative. A belief in omnipresent good is positive, and will in time, and by slow degrees, lift the student into an understanding of the science. Therefore, I say, let faith reach out as it is ever trying to do, toward understanding; encourage it; stand by this inner guide as you would stand by your life. The conditions of the race are embryotic. It is in process of being born into higher spiritual light—in process of passing

from the negative to the positive pole of Being. This is the process in which Mental Science is assisting so gloriously now. Therefore when you become discouraged with the study, as students sometimes do, and the wretched habit of your old time thought returns to you, as you look about and see that which appears to be evil looming up on every side, you must call up faith and say, "All these apparent evils are unripe conditions of our embryotic race. They are conditions of negation, full of misunderstanding of truth; full of errors born of clouded minds, not yet strong enough to bear the full light of understanding and to claim the good." Say to yourself, "I will wait for confirmation of what I have received, not because some one has directed me to do so, but because it must be that the absolute truth I have received—the truth that all is good—will vindicate itself to my perfect comprehension in the fullness of time."

I now introduce the student to another statement in Mental Science, so great, so forcible, that it will be many a long day before its full weight can be measured. The statement is this: In a universe of omnipresent good the supply is always equal to the demand. This is a law as unerring as the law of cause and effect. The existence of the Life Principle is the cause; man is the effect. Man, the effect, then, becomes a standing demand upon the cause and the source of supply, and all that he demands

is his for the taking. The supply is always equal to the demand. "Ask and ye shall receive; knock and it shall be opened unto you." But you must knock understandingly. The law is inoperative to him who knocks blindly. An intelligent perception of the principle embodied is necessary to insure a return. Ask, knowing the law that the supply is equal to the demand, and why it is so, and you will surely receive. Thus when you have pressed past your denials, made your affirmations understandingly, and established yourself in conscious relations with Life, or good, treat every patient who comes to you, knowing that by the mere fact of your recognition of the all-pervading presence of Life, and your belief in its power to become apparent on your intelligent demand, that you can heal them. To heal a patient is simply to make the truth that all is Life apparent to him in his own person. If your patient is very ill do not be frightened, but call up faith in the basic Life statement of this science—viz., that all is Life and that the supply of Life is equal to the demand you make upon it, if you make the demand understandingly. Know forever, that all Life is yours for the recognition; that in proportion as you recognize it will be your power to heal.

If you fail to heal your patient, the fault is probably in your ignorance; in your immature knowledge of the power of the Law, and of man's oneness with it. Though more about this will be mentioned

farther on. But in any case your duty is clear. Study the lessons again. Go down again and again into the silence of your intuitional life, and watch and wait for the truth welling up from that source. This will bring you understanding. It will fortify your faith in yourself, and double your ability as a healer and a teacher. Do not at any time hesitate, in view of your own powerlessness, to take a patient who comes to you of his own volition. He was drawn to you by the Law of Attraction, and you can give him that for which he came; for the supply is equal to the demand, and for this very reason you will not fail, if you have intelligent faith. You are the supply to the patient; the patient is the demand upon you. The patient would not have come to you for treatment if your supply had not been equal to his demand, for such is the Law. If you fail to heal the patient it will not be because you had not the actual power at hand to do so—for the supply is equal to the demand—but because you had not faith enough in omnipresent Life as manifested in you, or sufficient understanding of the Law, and so fell into a condition of negation, in which you are drawn into the patient's error, or negative beliefs in sickness and fear; for always, in treating as in teaching, does the measure of your understanding of the science of mind determine the measure of your success.

This is the law of Mental Science as of mathematics. You would

not expect to use the science of mathematics unless you understood the principles.

Students have devoted years and years to the understanding of the principles of mathematics before they could demonstrate the problems that were of such vital importance to them. But the trouble with the Mental Scientist is that he expects to demonstrate long before he understands the principles. You know that your understanding of the principles of mathematics determines the success with which you use figures. So in healing; the understanding of the laws of mind and the invisible process by which it is made to govern so-called matter—or negative mind—is essential to success in performing cures.

Jesus said, "Ask and ye shall receive." In this sentence he foreshadowed the entire result of that great Law—the supply is equal to the demand. But it is recorded of him in another place, where he qualified this remark, and said: "Ask, and if ye ask not amiss, ye shall receive." Have faith, and if it is not unintelligent faith, ignorant faith, that which you have faith in will come to pass. We could not by any possibility whatever, have intelligent faith in a thing unless there was a supply to that faith. The faith implies and includes the demand. The demand implies and includes the supply. The reason we have faith at all, and the only reason we could have it, is because there is a supply to it. How

often I have spoken this idea in other words. Long before I came into the science, my observation and experience induced me to formulate the same thought in these words: "Every intelligent hope is the sure prophecy of its own fulfillment." Jesus constantly enjoined faith. Faith discerns spiritual gifts, even if it be at first blind faith.

Blind faith is a simple trust in something better than we know, without any special evidence of its existence. Faith takes no notice of physical facts. Because it is a refined and positive agent, born of intuition, the original, natural intelligence within us, its action is far above the negatives. It forever gives evidence in accordance with its origin. It is the ever-present witness to the unfolding and unfolded power within us. It has been a saving power all down the ages, and it is pledged to see our establishment in ever higher truths.