

THE CONQUEST OF DEATH

BY

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Poverty," etc.



*Out of the night, 'tis shewn me
Black as the pit, or pale as pol',
I thank whatever gods there be,
For my own little soul."*

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PREFACE

THE strangeness of the title of this work, "The Conquest of Death," will doubtless prompt some, into whose hands it may chance to fall, to lay it down without reading; for the conquest of death, they say, is impossible. Yet, who knows if it be so or not?

The Author of this work has discovered that the conquest of death is altogether within the law, and has sought herein to give some reasons for her belief, which she knows to be worthy of the highest consideration of all the people.

THE AUTHOR.

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To think in the old ruts is to remain in the old conditions.

To think expansively is to grow endlessly in the direction of freedom and happiness.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. CAN DEATH BE OVERCOME?	I
II. THE WRITERS OF THE BIBLE BELIEVED THAT DEATH COULD BE OVERCOME	8
III. IMMORTALITY IN THE FLESH RESTS UPON THE FACT THAT THE HIGHEST ALWAYS HAS POWER TO CONTROL ALL BELOW IT	14
IV. FROM THE STANDPOINT OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE	19
V. THE EFFORT OF JESUS TO OVERCOME DEATH	26
VI. HOW I TRIED TO BOLSTER UP MY HOPE BY SEARCHING FOR OTHERS WHO WOULD BELIEVE IN IT	32
VII. THE GROWTH OF PUBLIC OPINION IN THE DIRECTION OF THE CONQUEST OF DEATH	41
VIII. EVERY HOPE IS THE SURE PROPHECY OF ITS OWN FULFILMENT	52
IX. THE ENDLESS CREATIVENESS OF THE HUMAN INTELLIGENCE	62
X. ALL GROWTH IS A REVOLT AGAINST THE CLAIMS OF THE SO-CALLED LAW OF GRAVITATION	77

CHAPTER	PAGE
XI. THE ONE MIGHTY FACTOR IN RACE GROWTH IS THOUGHT	85
XII. MAN HAS NO FETTERS BUT THOSE OF HIS OWN IGNORANCE: AND NOTHING BUT HIS OWN INTELLIGENCE WILL LIBERATE HIM FROM THEM	91
XIII. DESIRE THE ORGANISING PRINCIPLE	107
XIV. BELIEFS: BOTH FIXED AND UNFIXED	121
XV. THE LAW OF ATTRACTION	126
XVI. THE EGO	132
XVII. ENDLESS PROGRESSION: ITS RETARDA- TION BY FEAR	148
XVIII. MAN'S POWER TO SPEAK THE CREATIVE WORD: EVOLUTION OF THE IDEAL	159
XIX. HEALTH AND STRENGTH AND BEAUTY AND OPULENCE ARE TO BE FOUND IN GREATER FULNESS IN THIS NEW AND WONDERFUL THOUGHT THAN IN ANYTHING ELSE IN THE WHOLE WORLD	178

THE CONQUEST OF DEATH

CHAPTER I

CAN DEATH BE OVERCOME ?

TO many, probably the majority of people, the question, "Can death be overcome?" will appear a foolish one, and a person a foolish person who would, in seriousness, ask it, expecting a serious answer. Yet the question has been asked in all seriousness by some of the greatest minds the world has known, and one whom the Christian world regards most highly has answered it affirmatively, if not with absolute directness. He said, "The last enemy that shall be overcome is death."

Where is one to whom has been given rightful authority to interpret this saying of St Paul as meaning other than what he says—that when man should have overcome all other enemies, should have learned the law of the lightning and have harnessed it; when the winds and the waves had become his servants, and did his bidding; when on land

and on sea man commanded the forces in nature, and was master over the elements, which, in his more ignorant state, he conceived to be engines of the gods, who used them in their anger for his destruction — who has authority or where is the reasonableness in saying that Paul did not mean to express that when man had thus far conquered he should also conquer death? I insist that the language quoted can, in reason, be given no other meaning, and has been otherwise construed simply because the mass of humanity has been unable to conceive of the possibility of immortality in the flesh, and so has been compelled, since it felt that it might not reject the saying, to attribute to it a meaning other than that which it was evidently intended by its author to convey.

Death is everywhere and universally understood to mean the dissolution of a bodily form. Where form does not exist there can be no dissolution, no death. It is absolutely certain, then, that when the apostle used the word, he did so because of the meaning which attached to it, and must, therefore, have meant one of two things—either that men would eventually learn the law by which life could be perpetuated in these bodies indefinitely, or that there

existed spiritual bodies which were subject to dissolution and death, but which might be some time, though they were not yet, able to overcome death.

This latter supposition, that the spiritual body, of which the theologians make so much, is subject to death, is altogether antagonistic to the teachings of every religious organisation founded upon the Bible ; and, since there are but two horns to the dilemma, it is to be hoped that in deciding between them theology will accept the former and concede that which is altogether the most reasonable ; namely, that Paul intended to be understood as referring to our present fleshly bodies when he said death should finally be overcome.

The writer of this is not a theologian—not, at least, in the commonly accepted meaning of the word. She does not believe that all wisdom resided in those men who lived two thousand years ago, or that it died with them. She does believe, however, that there were minds in those days, as in more recent times, whose grasp of natural law so far exceeded that of the mass of humanity as to make their utterances unintelligible to other than the very few. The same condition of things exists to-day, though in a much less marked degree,

the general diffusion of knowledge and the comingling of men and of nations having lifted the race to a plane so much above that upon which it stood two thousand years ago, as to have gone far toward obliterating the line between the most illumined of minds and the many.

But, though the line of demarcation is less distinct, it still exists, and exists largely because of the tendency of the race to cling to old ways and old habits of thought, rejecting the new, simply because it is new, and which, because it is new, appears strange and improbable.

The tendency toward investigation, due to the wonderful discoveries and inventions made within the last half of the century, has, however, so increased in all directions and among all classes—even the most stubborn adherents to ancient lines of thought—that no one need longer fear being considered mad who advances a new idea, provided he can sustain his proposition by a fair show of fact or logic; and it is because of this fact that I anticipate at least a respectful and thoughtful consideration of my work at the hands of the public. Conceding that I am off main-travelled roads, I yet insist that I am not only travelling in the right direction, as designated by the com-

pass of reason, backed by logic, and not unsupported by fact, but that the way has been blazed by others who have preceded me in other centuries. I would not have it understood that I care very greatly whether anybody has ever passed along this way before, for I do not value truth because of its long residence among men ; but I wish to give credit where credit is due, and, further, I am not above quoting precedent, if thereby I can gain a more attentive audience. I believe most sincerely that heaven is a condition, and not a place, and that it cannot be attained while the fear of death exists ; death, which is nothing less than the removal by force, and without their consent, or of that of their friends, of human beings from all their associations and interests just when they are best prepared to be of most service to themselves and to the world.

If the reader likes, he may consider these writings as a protest against such a condition of things ; but I would wish him to first ask himself if he is satisfied with such conditions, and if he knows as an absolute certainty that the power through which he came to exist as an individual is incapable of continuing, or has any settled objection to his continued existence.

The author of this work believes it entirely possible for the human race to overcome death. She believes that Jesus believed it, and that both before and since his time there have been others who believed in and sought for the overcoming of death, and that it will yet be attained. That it has not been is no argument to prove that it will not be. A very great many things that have not yet been proven will be some time. We knew little about steam or steam-engines, electricity or magnetism, or sound waves or the ether a century ago. And the most we now know about some of them is that there is much more to be learned than we yet know. We are only just beginning to get under the blanket beneath which Nature has hidden her secrets ; just beginning to learn a little something about her and about ourselves. We are her children, the eldest and best beloved of our mother — the immortal, the deathless. Shall she not impart the secret of life to us, if by diligence in searching and faithfulness in obeying we prove worthy?

Most implicitly do I believe so.

When I say I believe it possible to overcome death and continue to live in our bodies, I do not mean that our bodies must, necessarily,

continue exactly as they are. It is reasonable to suppose that they will gradually refine and become more beautiful, and that other senses than the five we now possess will develop, and men become more perfect in every way, physically, mentally and morally. This will be a growth, as all things else are, but growth will be much more rapid, though endless, when the fear of death has been removed through a knowledge of the law whereby life may be sustained indefinitely.

CHAPTER II

THE WRITERS OF THE BIBLE BELIEVED THAT DEATH COULD BE OVERCOME

IF we are to give credit, as I suggested, to those who before us sought to blaze the way to continued existence in our present bodies, we must begin with the author of the Book of Genesis. Turn now to that book of the Bible, and read that man was, according to the account there given, created immortal ; that for eating of the forbidden fruit he was condemned to die. Death must here refer to the body ; if not, then it could only mean annihilation—the absence of any future life whatever. If this latter construction be put upon it, it would utterly annihilate every proposition put forward by the theologians, and remove every stone of the foundation upon which rests the Christian church ; nor would the Mohammedans fare better.

It would mean the rankest of materialism ; for, if to die meant the death of what remained after the dissolution of the body, there could be nothing upon which to base a theory of

salvation, since there would be nothing to save. Hence, when it was said to our first parents (as reported in Genesis, chap. 2, v. 17), "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," it must have referred to the death of the fleshly body. If he did not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil—that is, if he did not violate the law of his being, and so become conscious of being out of harmony with it, he would continue always to live; if he did do this, he would die.

I am not now arguing the inspired character of the Bible, nor do I intend to do so in any part of this work; let that be as it may, and let each student of it judge for himself. Whether it is divinely inspired or not is not a vital issue in this connection. Neither is it of vast importance that we agree as to who wrote the Book of Genesis, or when or where it was written. What I am seeking to point out is, that whoever the author may have been, and whether divinely inspired or not, he conceived man to have been possessed, at his first appearance upon earth, of the power to continue in the body indefinitely; that he lost this power through ignorance or failure to obey the

law laid down for him ; that thereafter he could have regained immortal life in the body and become as the gods, had he but eaten of the tree of life—*i.e.* gained such knowledge of the law of his being as would have put him in harmony with the one universal life. Put into plain everyday language, the Bible statement is that in ignorance man violated the law of life and became subject to death ; but that if he had known more ; if he had known enough to eat of the tree of life, which would have been to come into an understanding of the law of his being, he could have continued in the body as long as he wished, and could then have shaped things to his liking, as the gods were supposed to do.

That this is the thought which the authors of Genesis intended to convey is made doubly apparent, when we consider the fact that nowhere in the Old Testament is it made clear that its authors believed in an existence of a soul after the death of the body. This being the case, there is no other possible construction to be put upon the language in Genesis other than that its authors, whether inspired or not, conceived it possible that men might acquire the knowledge which should enable them to command the life forces, and so continue to

live in their present bodies as long as they wished.

The authors of the Old Testament, then, were the first to suggest the possibility, if not to point the way, to immortality in the flesh through a victory over death. That Jesus of Nazareth believed also in immortal life in the flesh is evident in the restoration to life of Lazarus and others, and in declaring that he himself would return to life (restore life to his body) on the third day, and in the repeated healing of diseased bodies, which, if not healed, must speedily have succumbed to the disease by which they were affected.

And now I wish to ask the reader's thoughtful consideration of this proposition. I ask it because of the magnitude of the interests involved, and because I believe that any who may have read thus far will have become sufficiently interested to, at least, be willing to give the author a hearing, and the subject of which she treats a thoughtful consideration.

The question I wish to ask is this: If by any purely mental process health can be restored to a diseased body, is it not reasonable to suppose that the process can be continued indefinitely, and health, which means continued life, made permanent? In other words, if there

is a law by the application of which disease may be eliminated from the system for a time, may it not be that the effect can be made continuous, and disease prevented from ever causing the dissolution of the body?

I do not forget that many—perhaps most people who believe that Jesus really did heal the sick—believed that he possessed miraculous powers; but I would call the attention of all these persons to his assertion that those who believed on him, or as he did, should do greater works than he had done. If he had considered his acts as outside of natural law, and due to some special relation which he bore to Godhead, he would not have declared that others who bore no such special relation should do greater things.

Let us be logical. The interests at stake are the greatest possible to conceive of, and no one among us can afford to do less than to bring to bear the best reasoning power of which he or she is possessed. Jesus did not claim to heal the sick by a power which might not be attained by any one who would follow his instructions, and he did say that others who should come after him should do more than he had been able to do.

Again I ask, if there exists a law by which,

through purely mental processes, and without the use of drugs, diseases of the body can be removed, does it not follow logically that when we have a fuller understanding of the law by which this is done, we shall be able to remove all disease and continue life in the body indefinitely?

Dismissing as not vitally essential to the matter in hand at this moment the question of whether or not Jesus healed through an understanding of natural law, or by virtue of a special relation to a supreme power, I appeal to the ten thousands of living witnesses—people who are alive to-day because they have been healed by mental processes purely, after all efforts at healing by drugs administered by the most noted physicians had failed; I appeal to these witnesses to prove the existence of the law for the healing of disease, and claim that in their evidence is conclusive proof of the existence of a law, which, if understood and applied, will annihilate disease and give the victory over death.

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CHAPTER III

IMMORTALITY IN THE FLESH RESTS UPON THE
FACT THAT THE HIGHEST ALWAYS HAS
POWER TO CONTROL ALL BELOW IT

I AM far from being alone in my search for immortal life in the flesh, or in faith that it can be accomplished, though all who search and hope have not the courage to declare their purpose. Eminent physicians talk of "increasing the tenure of life in man," and of "a renewal of youth" after old age shall have stiffened the joints and lessened the flow of the vital forces. To-day, as I laid aside my pen to scan the papers I found in two dailies of wide circulation and influence a half page in each devoted to accounts of declared discoveries, by a noted professor, of a lymph that is to renew youth in age, and extend the span of life from three-score and ten to many times that number of years. This professed discovery is treated by the great journals of the land with respect, as being a thing that their editors conceived to

be possible. They do well to give such encouragement. Every honest searcher after a knowledge of the hidden laws of being is worthy of commendation and support, however mistaken he may be in his conclusions, or however misleading the clue which he follows. As in ancient times all roads led to Rome, so, in science, all research leads in the direction of ultimate truth. The victory over death will never be gained through the introduction into the circulation of the blood of any lymph or other fluid or solid; but investigation and research bring an increase of knowledge, and every advance in knowledge brings us one step nearer the truth.

We concede to lymph and to drugs a character, an individuality, and the authority which individuality implies. Individuality, whether of the lowest or the highest form, implies character; implies it in the rock as certainly as in the man. The character of any certain drug is the same always, but its relation to, and power over, other individualities vary, as the mental characteristics of individuals vary; hence, the improbability of a science of medicine. Prof. Metchinkoff, or another, may discover a lymph or a drug that will have the effect of helping to sustain life in human

bodies beyond the present average of years ; but nothing except an understanding of the law, and a coming into harmony with it, by which means it is possible to command it, will ever enable man to continue existence in the body at will. These men are not wiser in their day and generation than was Ponce de Leon in his. They seek for the elixir of youth at the same fountainhead. The only difference between the de Leon of 1512 and these searchers of 1900 for lymph, is that these seek to produce what he sought to find—a combination of material substances possessing the power to remove the effects of old age. They search amiss, yet do they approach the truth, who seek through physical means to preserve the physical body. For in the last analysis the physical is one with the mental ; and through searching they will arrive at the great truth that, though one in essence, yet is the physical but the visible expression of the mental, which latter is the overseer and rules ; and to it, and not to the physical, must the appeal be made for the renewal of youth and the conquest over old age and death. That this is true we have demonstrated again and again by actual test. That it is true can be logically demonstrated to any one capable

of deducing a logical conclusion from a presentation of self-evident facts.

For example, the rock crumbles beneath the action of the elements and becomes soil ; slowly, but certainly, the soil becomes soluble, and is drawn into the life of the vegetable whose roots have found lodgment and a home in its depth ; the vegetable is consumed by man and goes to form the tissues of his body, including the brain, which evolves thought, as a flower gives off perfume ; is consumed in thought much as the body is wasted by physical exertion. By a perfectly natural process the rock has evolved into the finest and most powerful element possible to conceive of, proving beyond possibility of mistaking that the physical is in essence one with the mental. And as of the rock, so of every other material object perceived by the senses, including drugs of whatever character or class. They all possess character, but it is of the crudest, and becomes nil when brought into collision with the finer forces on the mental plane. The highest controls by virtue of being highest. If this were not so, then there could be no progress, no growth. If the lowest had power to command the highest, then, indeed, would the race be without hope, and utter annihilation and a

dreamless sleep be of all things most desirable.

But it is not so. The higher forever dominates the lower; and the preservation, indefinitely and at will, of the coarser elements of the body through the action of the finer the mental, is possible of accomplishment.

CHAPTER IV

FROM THE STANDPOINT OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I HAD written a good many pages in this book—not those which appear at the beginning as it is at present arranged, but others further on—when a friend asked permission to read them. As he was a man whose literary ability I greatly respected, I gave him the manuscript. When he returned it he said, “You must not make this a heavy book. You know that it is to be the book of life, and, therefore, it must be a live book.”

“But how?” I asked.

“You must write it from the standpoint of your own experience,” he said. “Then you would put yourself in it, as well as your ideas.”

I hesitated. I am always somewhat daunted by the charge of egoism; and one cannot introduce one’s self into one’s writings without being open to this accusation.

Then I reflected a little while, and I said,

"Surely there is nothing that holds the reader like the personality of the author. His ideas may be fine, but they are all the finer if he vitalises them by putting himself into them."

I am not a person to treat lightly such a suggestion as my friend made. No one places more value upon the word "alive" than I do. If I read a book, it must be a live book, or I lose interest in it and cannot finish it.

This aliveness is not only the great charm of books, but of everything else. Artificial flowers can be made quite as beautiful as the real ones, but who cares for them? They are not alive; they do not call out your affection.

The one charm above all other charms, when I see a new face, may be expressed by the word "aliveness." Beauty and even superior intelligence dwindle into insignificance in comparison with the look of vital power to which I am referring. After all, this look of vital power is beauty; and it is intelligence, too; so my comparison falls dead.

I do not think I exhibited more vitality than other children when I was a child; if I did, it was not in the ordinary way, for I never climbed a tree in my life, nor did any other Tom-boy act that I can recall. Indeed, if it shall ever be written of me, "She is the woman who

conquered death in the body and thereby redeemed the race," my biographer will have nothing remarkable to record of my youth. I was a responsible child, and was much trusted by my mother. But the best part of me was that I had no appetite for what is called the truth. I had the most marvellous imagination, and could not be impressed for any length of time with the actual condition of my surroundings; but lived in air castles, of which I surely was as great an architect as ever existed. I can recall how, when my mother was scolding and threatening me with severe punishment, and sometimes administering it, I would be adding to the last chapter of some wonderful romance that was passing through my mind, so utterly absorbed in my thoughts as not to be aware of what she was saying or doing.

I think that I was born without any conception of death, though the thought was engrafted upon my thought as I grew up. But this was because I was not old enough; neither was my experience ripe enough, to reason upon it. I did reason on it when I became older, and I cast the belief of its power entirely out of my mind.

"What power is there in death," I said, "when death is not a power at all, but the

absence of all power? Life is power, and death is nothing but a contradiction of life."

For years and years I puzzled my brain over this thought. I read the Bible, thinking I should find in it the sure way. I did not find it, for it is not there; but I found many things that illuminate my way now, though they did not do it then. I had to ascend to a higher plane of thought than I had previously attained, in order to make a safe application of the things I found in it.

The Old Testament interested me most, and it still does; for truly it points to the kind of immortality that I have always been searching for—immortality in the flesh. In the meantime the years were doing their worst for me. I was growing old, in spite of the fact that I cherished my dream of ultimate conquest over the enemy that had, so far, submerged the entire race.

During all these years which were passing so rapidly my ideas were dreamlike, and had not yet taken the form of an absolute determination to conquer death. I could see quite clearly, I thought, that the people were going on to the time when they would conquer death, but I placed this time far away off in the future—not knowing that the hour for the execution of a hope comes with the birth of the hope.

So I kept reading the Bible and praying to the God of the Scriptures until my whole life became one unbroken aspiration for truth. I had been a church member, but got nothing from this experience except disappointment; the heaven of the future was not the thing I was searching for; just to think of my soul and its after-death salvation made me impatient. "Others," I said, "may comfort themselves on a promise, but I will not invest my hope in that which requires me to yield up what I have, and desire to keep, for that which, even if attained, I may not find desirable; for how could any reasoning creature really desire the heaven depicted by the orthodox clergy of fifty years ago?"

And yet I was in the dark about the final outcome of my ideas. I knew nothing of how they were to be executed, though I clung to them with the greatest tenacity, and tried many an experiment in working them out.

At one time I was strong in the belief that the favourite disciple of Jesus was still living on the earth; some words that Jesus spoke at his last meeting with John the Divine induced me to believe this, and I built up a theory about it that would read like a romance if I should write it out.

My husband laughed at me for my beliefs, though I only told him a very few of them. I had no idea that he himself had imbibed them, until he came to me one day with beaming eyes, and brought a paper containing a strange theory concerning the power of the race to overcome death. It was founded on the Bible account of creation ; but, beyond showing me that there were others besides myself who were striving for the conquest of death, it did me no good. And yet it did me good in one way ; the circumstance itself revealed the fact that my husband was with me in the thought, though he had never admitted it. This strengthened me, and we got in the habit of discussing the matter together.

I think I have never seen any one who dreaded death so much as he did, unless it was the little child we lost when she was only nine years old, and whose terror concerning it she must have inherited from her father. For my part, I did not have it at all. I have never met any one so entirely free from this fear as I have always been ; but, in spite of this absence of fear, there is no one living more determined than I am to overcome death. With me it is just as if the life principle itself kept pouring its vitality into me, and thus asserting itself through my body,

whether I cared or not. And, in a sense, this was the case, only I did care ; I did recognise it, not only bodily, but in a dim way I recognised it intellectually ; and my salvation lay in this fact. At least, it will lie in this fact when I am saved ; and it would be difficult to convince me that I am not being saved at the present time. But for feeling my own power in the matter of conquering death, I would not now be writing this book. I am as sure that this power is vested in my brain and body as I can ever be of anything in the world.

CHAPTER V

THE EFFORT OF JESUS TO OVERCOME DEATH

UP to this time—I was fifty years old, or thereabouts—my search for eternal life was confined to persons and things outside of myself. I was constantly looking for some one who knew more on the subject than I did, in order that I might hitch myself to his ideas and get a free ticket, as it were, into the promised land. I had tried religion without success, and had besought the help of God until I grew to be ashamed of myself, feeling that God must be too tired of me to tolerate my petitions any longer. These words are not written irreverently ; they are absolutely true. We judge others, even those in the highest places, by ourselves, and I knew how it would be with me. Certain people in my experience, who had been dependent on me, and to whose borrowing and begging I had at first responded freely, but with whom, as the thing continued, I became first annoyed and then disgusted, furnished me with a reason for believing as I did. So it came about that I felt a little

bashful in approaching the "Throne of Grace," and I finally quit it.

But before I quit I had "searched the Scriptures" until I became convinced that they could do nothing for me, except in a general way. They showed me—so I believed—that they were the compendium of the best thought furnished by the world's greatest thinkers of an early age, on the very subject I was spending my life investigating; namely, the conquest of death, not in an unknown future life, but here on our own planet. I followed this idea through the various books of the Old Testament, and saw how, by slow degrees, the feeling of postponement stole in upon the writers, until at last they concluded that they could not save themselves, but that sometime in the future, and as the result of a certain line of descent, a man would be born with power to conquer death for the whole race. When this idea became fixed in their minds, their hopes went away from themselves and centred in a time yet to come. This state of thought—this postponement of effort—was so ruinous that the lives of the people, from lasting many hundreds of years, dwindled to less than a hundred. The reason of this will be explained farther on, when I show the importance of having the thoughts

and hopes that the body and brain generate express themselves in and through the body, instead of gadding away from their proper seat of action and leaving the body to starve. It is an unknown fact at this time that thought feeds the body, but this is one of the greatest of the new truths just beginning to dawn on the race.

Recently, as it seemed to me, as I continued to read the Bible, the first idea held by the old thinkers, the idea that death in the body could be conquered, dwindled out completely ; and all their hopes now pointed to the future coming of the person on whom their salvation depended. Then Jesus came, and though his coming was not in the line of descent prophesied, this line being on Joseph's side and Jesus being the child of Mary, he was nevertheless accepted by enough of the people to become a great character of history, and to project his influence two thousand years into the future.

It is my belief that Jesus taught, as nearly as he dared, the conquest of death in the body. He realised that the faith of the old prophets and seers had departed, and he knew the savagery of the people too well to try to change their opinions by any sudden declaration of his belief. And yet there are times when his belief comes out in his sayings. For instance,

when he was preaching in the Temple and the Jews said to him, "Our fathers taught different from this," Jesus answered, simply, "Your fathers are dead." It was equivalent to saying, if your fathers had taught what I teach, they would have been alive to-day.

The account of the life of Jesus is too brief to give any fixed opinion of him or his views. I have my own opinion, which I shall give. All down the ages there have been men who thought themselves favoured of God, and who believed that they could build up a kingdom of which they would be the head. Some one has written a book called "The Sixteen Crucified Saviours." The history of any one of these would stand for all of them. They were all the sons of virgins, begotten of God; and, if I am not mistaken, every one of them was murdered for his opinion's sake. An account of one is an account of all, which is a fact to shake the faith of every person who prefers truth to fiction.

Jesus claimed to be the person predicted in the Old Testament, of whom his biographers made such clumsy statements, as that he did thus and so that it might be fulfilled as predicted in the Scriptures, as if he sought the Scriptures to find out what he was to claim

and how he was to act. Nevertheless, though it seems a contradiction, he had a certain amount of conviction regarding his claim, and the conviction grew constantly stronger as his power to speak the healing word that cured the people's diseases increased. I have no doubt he became a marvel to himself, and gradually established his claims in his own mind. His disciples believed in him in proportion as his belief in himself increased, until the full force of the entire number of them became an almost irresistible power among the people.

When Jesus began to see unmistakably, as he thought, that he could overcome death, and when threatened and evidently in great danger, he refused to make an effort to escape, though he might easily have done so. When his disciples, who knew that the officers were after him, urged him to go away and thus avoid death, he said something like this to them: "Oh! ye of little faith; knowest thou not that my Father can send more than twelve legions of angels and take me from the cross?"

If these words mean anything, they mean that Jesus expected that which would justify his faith in his claims. They point unmistakably to the fact that he was working

a grand *coup de main* that would establish him at once and forever, in his own and the world's belief, that he was the Son of God and had a right to stand at the head of all men, the Saviour and King—the crowned Prince of Peace.

We find still further confirmation of this in the last words he ever spoke. He had waited in agony for hours, and the help he expected had not come; life was ebbing rapidly, and the end had almost been reached, when he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

It seems a strange thing that people do not see the truth in the Bible statement; but the people are not doing their own thinking to any great extent. They are going to begin to do it very soon, and when they do, we shall see and know and do things that are now considered impossible.

CHAPTER VI

HOW I TRIED TO BOLSTER UP MY HOPE BY
SEARCHING FOR OTHERS WHO WOULD
BELIEVE IN IT

IN the last chapter I referred to the fact that in my search for an escape from death, I kept constantly looking for some person or persons who had gone farther on this line of thought than I had done, and who, therefore, knew more about it. I actually unearthed several fossils, each of whom had some idea to which he was married, and which never expanded beyond its then shape and size. One woman whom I met by appointment, after several quite sensible letters had passed between us, actually told me that she was the Virgin Mary, resurrected and appointed to save the race. Several experiences of this kind threw me back on myself for personal investigation. No one ever called me a fool, even though I made no concealment of my hopes. I talked my ideas to my neighbours, and made many converts among them, and was acknowledged as a leader in thought as far as I was known. People

who themselves had quietly cherished the hope I had begun to exploit abroad came long distances to see me and hear what I had to say, and left me entirely convinced of the possibility of the thing, though I frankly admitted that I did not know how it was to be done. I always declared that I was growing up to a knowledge of it, and that nothing in life could stand in the way of my discovering it.

And nothing has done so; and I have discovered it.

Year after year slid by, and found me always a more interested searcher than before. Year after year I was compelled with greater force to abandon all hope of help from other people; I was being turned home toward myself, and at last began to get a growing conviction of the fact that there was no help for me but in myself.

What a revelation this would have been had it come to me suddenly. But it could never have come in this way. It was a matter of brain development, and slow development, at that. How was it possible for a woman whose whole life had been enslaved by service to others, and who was crushed, as such women generally are, to have confidence in her own ideas, and to believe in herself as the discoverer

of a truth that would bring salvation ; a truth that would light the world with the blessedness of undying hope ? It was not in me to think this, or even to accept the thought when others spoke of it who believed in me. It is true that—led away from all sense of personality when fired by the full scope of the idea—I would talk of it with such vitality as to bring conviction to nearly all who heard me. I talked with great fervour when aroused, but when alone, and the thought came to me that I—poor little I—was really and truly the leader in so tremendous a thing as that which was to conquer death in the bodies of the people, I would shrink from it and reject it ; reject the glory of it, even while seeing that it was true, and that every atom of my body and brain was full of such confirmation as I could not wholly disbelieve.

But, though I could not disbelieve it, since it was born in me like the lily in the bulb, and was growing out of me just as the lily grows out of the bulb, I yet could and did ignore the sense of personality that would have forced the conviction of ownership upon me. I knew that an understanding of how to conquer death was in my grasp, and was unfolding more and more to my perception, but, while I cherished this great fact, I yet

kept my thought from dwelling upon its greatness; or rather, perhaps, it was so big that my unaccustomed thought, not yet free from the world's old beliefs in the power of death, could not grasp it.

I think I should have felt more comfortable, in the circumstances, if some other person had been developing the idea, and I had been accepting it second-hand. I must say of myself that I had no desire to become famous; there were certain things I wanted to do, certain problems I wanted to solve; but it was not for popular applause that I was working. Indeed, I shrunk from notice, and, unless swept to the front by the force of my thought, I was always in the background. As a child, I had shunned attention; I was usually so busy carrying out my own ideas, or thinking my own thoughts, that I wished to be left alone. I am this way even now; I am never lonesome, and I court solitude; but if my solitude is broken in upon by pleasant people, I enjoy their company as much as any one. I am fond of people. All expressions of life are engaging; but man, who stands at the head and represents the best of everything below him—what shall I say of him? I am not satisfied to say simply

that I love him ; I see in him such possibilities of unfoldment that I look upon him as the miracle of all time ; and he excites my wonder and stimulates my admiration to the highest point of grandeur.

With this feeling about others (I may say all others, since even the most degraded tramp contains the seed of immortal growth) it is no wonder that I turned my thoughts inward upon myself, and began to admit to myself, in spite of my natural timidity, that I, too, was capable of everything that my mind could suggest to me as possible of attaining.

I am sure that no one will look upon this as egoism or vanity, since I did not set myself up above others or value my powers above the powers of others. But I did begin to value my own powers in proportion as I discovered the powers of others ; for I could not help seeing that the race is a unit, and that the same law of vital force runs through us all, making us all brothers. And gradually I began to claim my own. I was growing into a proper sense of my own valuation. I was beginning to see such strength in myself that I no longer desired to lean on another ; I was approaching a position of individualism ; and I say now, and shall prove it farther on, that

strict individualism is the salvation of every member of the race, and that there is no salvation outside of it. It is individualism that conquers death.

It is the insanity of egoism that causes men to claim that they are the specially endowed messengers of God to a dying world. There are several of these persons who are flourishing in a small way at this time, and making a good living out of their dupes ; but their influence is growing more and more limited as the process of individualisation in the people goes on. I can readily understand the situation ; there having been a time when I myself was so weak in self-confidence that I searched for a leader ; but with an understanding of the law, the preposterous claims of these modern Christs became at once apparent. There are others who are yet in the condition that I once was in ; they are filled with the desire for something different from the old-time ideas about salvation, but have been taught from infancy to regard themselves as "creeping worms of the dust," unworthy of even decent treatment from the hands of the God who is supposed to have created them ; they are weak ; they must lean ; and they lean on any inflated, deluded, and deluding creature with

sufficient egoism to publish his claims to the world. And so our modern messiahs make their appearance and flourish for a time before their course ends in such characters as Weary Walker and Dusty Rhoades.

My mind being filled with thoughts relating to the subject of conquering death, I soon—without an effort—tested public opinion of a highly cultured order on the subject. I had left California by this time, and was living in Chicago and doing editorial work on a paper there. Of course, I found many acquaintances of a very superior degree of mental ability, and we discussed all the leading ideas of the day. My opinions on every subject except that of the conquest of death were kindly accepted by my friends, but they rejected the idea that eternal life could be achieved in this world, and especially at this time. Some of them were willing to accept the theory if its fulfilment could be put off a few hundred or thousand years, but none of them could be induced to consider the possibility of it in the present generation. These were educated people; they were college-bred men, and their minds were stuffed full of what the world calls learning; and “learning” is the fit name for it—it is far from being wisdom.

It was here that I saw the difference between the natural mind and the mind that had been thrown out of its natural direction by filling it with what is called learning. In my previous association with the people of the little place where I lived, I found many original thinkers and reasoners; minds that were not overcrowded with the rubbish of dead centuries, but fresh and vital and able to do original thinking. These were the minds I impressed with my ideas; and when I contrasted the two different casts of mind as I have described them, I valued book learning less than ever. I had never valued it very highly. I wanted to delve down in the ground; I wanted to get to the root of things and discover the cause of growth. I knew that I must find the law of growth or I would never conquer death.

I have found it, and I shall make the whole thing so clear in these pages that a child can understand it.

In regard to what I said about the indifference of my book-learned friends to my ideas concerning the conquest of death, I must refer to an experience that seems strange. It only required a slight acquaintance with a man or woman to find out just what reach of mind he or she possessed. In most people I soon came

to a mental dead wall beyond which I could not go, and beyond which there would have been no use of going, because there was nothing there. Those persons carried within themselves the stamp of death; they had not advanced far enough in ideal lines of thought to release the dead weight of the old.

But there were other minds into which I could look down and down the perfectly clear depths, and find no obstacle to the upward moving current of life, which has its rise in the beginning of the person's individuality. These persons never rejected a thought because it was new; they were always ready to consider it, and accept it if their reason confirmed it.

From the intellectual capacity of some, when contrasted with this quality of luminosity of others, I perceived that a portion of the race had progressed far enough to throw off the incubus of disease and death, as soon as more knowledge should be evolved on the subject and that another portion of it had not.

CHAPTER VII

THE GROWTH OF PUBLIC OPINION IN THE DIRECTION OF THE CONQUEST OF DEATH

IT was nearly twenty years ago that I severed my connection with the paper that I was then on and with the friends I made while there, and I have often wondered if these friends have relaxed their opposition to what they called my pet hobby. I doubt not that many of them have. The idea is no longer regarded as absurd ; it has become one of intense interest to millions of people. The interest in everything written on the subject is so great that it threatens to become a mania. Every city in America has its Century Clubs, and its Live-For-ever Clubs, and they have spread to the country, and the villages are discussing them. The books that have been written on this subject, and almost forgotten, have been revived, and new editions of them are on the shelves of the bookstores.

There is the beginning of a groundswell of inquiry on the subject ; the whole thinking public is slowly awakening ; and as it does it draws its hopes from the distant heaven of

delusive promise to the prospect of present salvation. Who does not know that "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush"? and who is going to walk in the dark when once he has glimpsed the rising sun?

Introspection is a neglected art. If man would look within himself in his search for truth, he would gain more useful knowledge than all the colleges and all his travels through foreign countries could give him.

Nay, more; the man who goes outside of himself in his effort to gain wisdom bankrupts himself; and the knowledge he acquires may delude, instead of leading him in the direction of highest truth. Nothing can possibly lead any man to a higher growth but the understanding of himself.

What is the most important thing man can possess? I answer, it is himself. And when I say himself, I mean his body, and not his soul. Men have been soul-saving for thousands of years, and all that time the body has been dying of neglect.

Is the body of no importance, that we can afford to ignore it in this way? Is it true that the soul can exist without the body? Who really knows anything about the soul? And who does not know something about the

body? We, at least, know from observation and practical tests that the body exists, and that it is a very convenient thing to have; we know that it is a machine or a combination of machines through which we transact all the business connected with life, and without which we would have no life on the terrestrial plane where we execute all the desires that make life worth living.

That we know almost nothing of ourselves, our resources and undeveloped powers, is because for thousands of years we have devoted our time and talent to exploring the soul—or some imaginary thing we call the soul—to the utter neglect of the body, which there is no doubt about our possessing. Owing to this blunder we know almost nothing about our bodies, and absolutely nothing of our souls, in spite of the fact that we have claimed to know so much about them for so long a time.

The soul—admitting its existence, which I am more than willing to do—is a secondary matter on our present plane of life; we are in a world where bodies, and not souls, do the work which is necessary to be done, in order that our lives be protracted in the fulfilment of those desires which belong to the body, and which are essential to its existence here.

We run this wonderful engine, the body, in a way that would shame a ship's captain in the command of his boat. The captain would want some knowledge of his vessel in order that he might control her properly and keep her from drifting at the mercy of wind and tide ; but man—who owns the greatest piece of mechanism in the world, a piece of mechanism that combines within itself every law of mechanics known and unknown—makes no effort to understand it, and has no conception of the hundredth part of its meaning, or of the thousandth part of its worth to himself.

What it is that lies behind this mechanism, no one knows. What the "I" that is always speaking for itself may be, is a secret. Whether this "I," which says, "My body," is really the body's very self, or some unseen thing hidden in the body or behind the body, no one can tell. The assertion "I" stands for the man, and the "I" not only says, "My body," but it says, "My soul," also. Is the "I" one with the soul or one with the body? Or is it the intelligent union of both?

For my part, I believe that the "I" is all the soul a man has, and that it is the sum-total of the body's entire life ; its memory, in fact ; its record of all the body's transactions,

and that it is one with the body, the body being the external expression of it. The "I" records all the experiences through which a man passes; and if it takes note of these experiences and reasons on them, it becomes wiser every day. That the "I" says, "My body," is only a habit of speech, and does not prove that the body is one thing and the "I" another.

It is because I perceive the truth of the above statement that I have grown into a conviction of the immense importance of the body. The body is the man, and the man is adapted to the place he occupies now; his body correlates the needs of his life here, and this fact leaves the soul out of this treatise. If the soul is needed in another world, we will find it there.

What is the greatest desire of the human being? Let us be honest with ourselves. It is not for the salvation of his soul. We desire the salvation of our souls if it proves impossible to save our bodies; but first of all we want our bodies saved. The most delightful heaven the imagination of genius has devised does not allure us so much as the remnant of this bodily life with all its trials and sufferings.

"All that a man hath will he give for his life." It has always been so, and with the

growing refinement of the race it becomes more so. In the early history of the race men yielded their lives far more readily than they do at this time. Would a man of the present age die for opinion's sake, as the heroes of old once did? No, he would deny everything in order to save his life, wisely thinking that life was far more valuable than opinion, as, indeed, it is.

Life is above all things; life right here, handicapped by our environments, and blurred in every conceivable way by our ignorance, is still more valuable than all else.

In spite of the body's disabilities, and the pain that racks it, and the penury that starves it, we yet value it so much more than the prospective heaven of the future, that we will not end it voluntarily, though we might do so at the cost of a meal, and with less pain than an ordinary spell of indigestion. Does this mean nothing? Do not all things mean something? I assert that the simple facts I am stating will prove to be the most important truths of which the mind can get any conception, when once understood.

The inherent force and determination which always point in one direction, which begin in the elementary life-cells themselves and increase

with every step upward in race growth, have a meaning that no power of imagination can ever extend to its legitimate limits, for, indeed, it has no limits.

This force and this determination are expressed in the love of life in the body, and the avoidance of the body's death. They are manifested in every object in all the world. They manifest in the lowest forms no less than in the highest, as all persons must have observed many times. Turn over the half decayed piece of wood, and see with what hurrying fear the little creatures under it rush to safe places out of our sight. And the vegetables and trees also; note with what tenacity of life they mend their broken limbs, and go on growing in spite of the most adverse conditions. Even the crystals and rocks strive to assume shapes and enter into conditions of greater permanency.

It is the love of life—not of soul life, but of body life—and the hope of prolonging it that makes cowards of us all; in fact, it is the love of life that prompts every action we ever will or can make. No principle within us is so strong as this. “All that a man hath will he give for his life.”

Looking through nature everywhere it is

the same; the one great desire, first of all, is for life; after that come the minor desires. Often when it is necessary to kill something, my sympathy is so drawn into the effort of the creature to save its own life, that I become weak and faint and seem to partially die with it. At least, there is an approximation in my feelings toward this extreme point, and it shows how high my valuation of life is.

Down through the ages all men have accepted—apparently without thought—the belief that death was an unavoidable thing; they have accepted this belief in spite of their desire to live. I say all men; yet, as I have pointed out, there have been exceptions, the writers of the Old Testament having unquestionably had faith in the power of the body to conquer death sometime in the future, if not in their time.

The two facts—the desire to live, and the belief of the people that it is impossible to prolong life eternally in the body under present conditions—are at the foundation of all religions. Every creed in the world has been projected by the human brain, because, first, the desire to protract life was an unconquerable thing; and, secondly, because it did not appear possible to attain it here.

Suppose that men had seen the possibility of overcoming death here, and had gone to work to realise that possibility, would they have projected a place of future abode for themselves after this life was over? It would never have been over; then what need would they have had for a creed to save them in a hereafter? They would have laboured to strengthen themselves in the present; to fortify and improve their external conditions, and to improve and develop the mighty tool for doing this; the only tool any man ever owned or ever will own—*his body*.

I have said that as the race refined death became a greater terror to it; this is because man's increased knowledge of the body has rendered the body more sacred to him. He begins to perceive not only the uses of the body, but the beauty of it, and the happiness to be gotten through it, and his valuation of it increases with his knowledge of what it is worth to him; of not only what it is worth now, but of what it would be worth under more favourable circumstances. His hopes are for his body; his desires are centred upon its perpetuation. In proportion as his respect for his body increases, and his desire for the perpetuation of life in this world keeps growing,

his concern for his soul and for the heaven of the future decreases.

It is this direction of growth in the race, all pointing to farther development here and now, that is causing the churches to go empty on Sundays; it is at the bottom of the complaints that the clergy are making, though they are not aware of it. The preachers are searching in a hundred different directions for the reason of the decline of religious influence, and because they have not yet looked in the right direction they have failed to find the cause. At a recent meeting in Brooklyn where many of the leading ministers of the country were in council, there were those among them who actually said that the indifference to Sunday service was the absence of fear of the devil and hell, which had become almost obliterated from the public mind; and they advised taking up this old piece of idiocy, and again working it in order to get their churches filled. It also came out at this council that there were nearly five thousand Congregational preachers who were without charges.

These facts are stated here in order to strengthen my argument concerning the growth in the race in its valuation of life in the body, and of its increasing indifference to the promises

of a future heaven. The race is becoming more practical every day. It really does not know why it is neglecting the religious services upon which it was wont to give such regular attendance; it only knows that the Sunday sermon does not interest it as the Sunday papers do; and as the growing intelligence of the age has—unconsciously to itself—dulled its fear of the devil, it is not afraid to do what its inclination leads it to do.

Loss of interest in the next world, which has come from an increased interest in this world, is responsible for all the complaints the ministers are making about the falling off of church influence. Concentration is killing theology; it is drawing the powers of the intellect to the work of the present hour; it is bringing the scattered forces and the far roaming hopes home, and centring them upon what there is to do here in this world, and now. The visionary is doomed; the practical has arrived.

CHAPTER VIII

EVERY HOPE IS THE SURE PROPHECY OF ITS OWN FULFILMENT

IN looking back I now see that a belief in death as a fixed and unalterable fact never had full possession of me. I doubt whether in a true sense it really has full possession of anyone; for, while it seems real enough so far as the dying of other people is concerned, we rarely think of it as being an inevitable reality to ourselves. It always seems a far-off and shadowy possibility, but not an irresistible fate, such as a man feels it to be who is under sentence of death for some crime.

And yet reason, so far as our reason is based on observation, tells us that death is as certain to come to us as to the condemned felon in his cell. And why are we so little disturbed by it? Is it because we anticipate life beyond the grave? The felon also anticipates this; and moreover his expectations for happiness in another world are usually as bright to his imagination as ours can be. Then why does he dread death while we do not? It is because

he realises that to him it is inevitable, while we can never quite bring ourselves to do so.

Our reason, based on observation, admits that it is inevitable. No person has ever escaped death yet; but in spite of this fact there is some hidden impulse within us that denies the inevitableness of it. And this hidden impulse betrays the presence, deep down at the very foundation of individual existence, of some unseen spring of ever-present vitality, the discovery of which will overcome death. We feel it though we do not see it; we know it to be true though as yet it has never been proved; and there is an undefined something in man that exists more by feeling than by seeing, and so death is inwardly rejected, while verbally accepted.

If man accepted the belief of death in every part of his consciousness, in his inner as well as his outer self, he would feel about it very much as the condemned felon does. It would occupy his every thought and render him unfit for any effort in life, except a preparation for death. In short, the certain knowledge of coming death would be equivalent to present death, so far as the uses of life are concerned.

But men are not expecting to die; their lives prove it; they are intensely interested in

a thousand schemes of activity on the earth plane ; and they find their greatest happiness in bettering their conditions and in surrounding themselves with objects that are beautiful and pleasing. And these objects do surely give them happiness, which, even though it may be fleeting, stimulates them to greater efforts in the same direction, and ends in the further accumulation of treasures such as the clergy caution us against, and which certainly are not those we are requested to lay up in heaven. Everywhere and all the time in these latter years men are living more and more in the present ; and the wisdom of this has already borne results in the increase in the average length of human life, which is becoming greater every year.

“Death is inevitable.” Men almost universally say this ; but their words do not touch their own convictions ; they do not excite any emotion within them. It is only when they feel its icy touch that they begin to have even the slightest realisation of it as applicable to their own cases. As soon as they begin to feel that death is impending, their fears are aroused and they seek to escape from it.

That they do fear it and seek to escape from it is proof conclusive that there is a way of

escape. There is no truth in the cosmic growth of the race more true than that *every hope is the sure prophecy of its own fulfilment*.

No matter whether we take the evolutionary view, that man created himself, or the Scriptural view, that he was created by a personal God, the very fact that his hope stretches forward into the future is absolute assurance that the future exists, and that it exists for the purpose of fulfilling man's desires. This thought came to me before I had the intellectual grasp to follow it out in all its details, and thereby to prove it conclusively to myself. But I never ceased to believe and to trust it with all the force of my nature; and it was my solace in hours that were dark as midnight. I accepted it as truth, never for a moment clouding it with doubt, even before I had followed it out to the absolute knowing. I felt that it was invulnerable, long before I found out why it was so; long before my reasoning faculties were sufficiently awakened to understand it fully. There was the statement just as I have made it. Every hope is the prophecy of its sure fulfilment—a mighty and incontrovertible truth, that became a part of my brain structure and eventually worked its way to externals, and left its impress upon every atom of my body. It took

the form of a fixed principle that each succeeding experience confirmed, until I began to feel the power of a conqueror, and was lifted from a position of pitiful weakness and self-distrust to one of unswerving strength. In this position fresh vitality was generated by my body, which poured its power into my heretofore sluggish brain, until by slow degrees the whole problem of growth was unfolded.

There is many another expression that helps to unfold the problem of growth or life, but not one of them struck me with such force as this. Every hope is the sure prophecy of its own fulfilment.

And why? Because hope is related to the thing hoped for; this being so, it is inseparable from it. Suppose that there is a God that made us, and that He is great and wise and above all things good and true, then how would it be possible for Him—our Father—to plant a lie deep down in the first impulse of our individual lives, that would prove a most deceptive allurements, holding out promises that He never intended should be realised? Could anyone believe in God and accept this fact?

But suppose we reject the belief in special creation, and dwell for a moment upon the theory of evolution; there will be no difference

in results. If the life-cell, or the first principle of individualised life, whatever it may be, contains the essence that later, under higher development, expands into this hope, then the hope points to the time of realisation and to the conditions that will render realisation possible, as surely as the grain of wheat planted in the ground will germinate and unfold itself until the full prophecy of its being is fulfilled.

Hope, which is an expression of the law of growth in a man, cannot possibly point to that which does not exist. It always streams forth in the direction of the object which is correlated to it; of the object which is its complement, and the acquisition of which fixes it in living substance as a new creation.

The idea that projects life beyond the grave does not fully allay the fear of death; nor does the promise of heaven, with all its attractions, reconcile us to it. So long as even a modicum of the old vitality lasts, we prefer this troublesome and poverty-stricken world to the "spheres of the blest." It is only when the vitality is too low to permit further resistance to death that men, as a rule, become reconciled to go. To be sure, there are abnormal instances where men's imaginations have been so stimulated by descriptions of the world to come,

that they have let go the hold they had upon this one, and have seemed anxious to go. But we all admit that men, in such conditions, are unbalanced.

We do not want to die—this is the plain fact. We do not want to die, no matter how hard life seems, or how enchanting the future is painted for us. We not only do not want to die, but we do not expect it. Death always comes upon us as a surprise.

The race believes that it believes that an implacable and inexorable God has passed sentence of death upon it; it also claims to justify God in having done so; but its position is self-deceptive, and its actions contradict its assumed belief in God's power and wisdom. It is constantly seeking remedies by which it can thwart God's purpose in killing it; and, deep down in the soul of it, it rests more hope in the power of a pill than in the power of God.

It has its body tinker and its soul tinker; and it clings to its body tinker until hope deserts it, and then, in despair, it turns to its soul tinker. And when a loved one has passed through the veil and from out our sight, though we say, "He is happy now; he is in the bosom of God, and sorrow, sickness and death shall touch him no more," we

weep and refuse to be comforted. And I say that it is not the mere pain of separation that wrings our hearts, for he might have gone to another country, or even to another planet, and if he had gone alive, we would not have felt as we do.

And this feeling we have for him—what is it; and why is it what it is?

Now, listen: It is the intuitive perception of a truth that has not yet been made apparent to our reasoning faculties. It is because death is a violation of some natural principle, with which we are not yet acquainted. And, because it is a violation of some natural principle, some innate possibility of infinite value, hidden at present from our dwarfed perceptions, we are rent asunder by it, and cannot reconcile it with our long accepted belief that death is a blessing in disguise. It is human nature overturning human religion.

It seems to me, judging by my own feelings, that if man actually knew that death was to be his doom, from which there was no possibility of escape, he would so dread the event as to make life one protracted horror, and would be prompted to hasten the thing in order to relieve himself from the thought of it; just as men condemned to hang will hang themselves

in their cells to get the fearful catastrophe off their minds.

The fact is, men do not anticipate death for themselves, whatever they may do for others. Undefined in their own minds, there remains fixed forever that intuitive perception of immortality, which belongs to the unchanging and undying life-principle of which they are the expression, or the visible manifestation.

Undefined by themselves, I say ; so undefined is it, so misunderstood by them, and yet so potent that out of it, out of this simple, intuitive perception, this vague feeling of immortality, has arisen every theological creed ever yet projected for the perpetuation of individual life in another stage of existence. Thinkers and reasoners on this subject actually believe they have accepted as inevitable the death of the body, but they still hold fast, with unswerving tenacity, to the feeling of immortality which they find implanted in all men ; and they have, as a last resort, endowed each individual of the race with a soul that is supposed to live beyond the death of the body. This soul they have provided, out of their ample imaginations, with many and various modes of escape from annihilation.

Theology offers another world to us as a

substitute for its unconquerable desire to live. It was the best thing that could be done in the past, while man was so ignorant of the powers of his body ; but this ignorance is beginning to pass away, and the splendours of the heretofore misunderstood functions of the body are on the verge of asserting themselves in a manner that will soon astonish the world.

The belief in the power of death belongs to the unawakened intelligence of a baby race, not yet grown to even the faintest conception of what it is, or what it can do.

Religion is but the pointing of infallible intuition, indicating the fact that there is a road through the untrodden wilderness of fast-coming thought, which experience must traverse, but which has never yet been traversed ; and which, when once traversed, will put an entirely new face upon our implanted belief in immortality.

Man may possess a soul that lives beyond the body, and I hope and believe that he does ; but I know that he possesses a body, and I know, and am proving individually, that this body possesses the power to conquer all its disabilities and save itself here, in the present world, and in the present generation.

CHAPTER IX

THE ENDLESS CREATIVENESS OF THE HUMAN INTELLIGENCE

I AM familiar with the phenomena of spiritualism, and I will say that it—of all the theories extant—furnishes by far the best basis of belief in life beyond the grave. Spiritualism is not humbuggery. It is a genuine thing. Spirits, or what seem to be spirits, do make themselves visible to spectators under certain conditions. The only doubt concerning the matter is not in the genuineness of these apparitions, but in the character of them. Many a time, when entirely alone, they have appeared to me ; and at first I thought them veritable messengers from the other side.

Later, I did not know whether they were genuine spirits of the departed, or thought images, projected by my own mind. Not that they were unreal, for they were not ; they were not pictures ; they were tangible shapes, and lasted for several minutes at a time ; but were they spirits ?

At this time the human mind begins to reveal

itself to me as a mighty, but an unknown thing ; as the seed germ of a power whose possibilities no one has ever tested, or ever will entirely test, because its unfoldment must go on forever.

That the human mind is a great creative power I do know ; that its power to create is absolutely limitless I believe.

By "creative power," I mean the power of making manifest the wonders that are capable of being manifested out of the unseen life-principle, the animating spirit of all creatures and all creations ; the possibilities existing in latency in the Law of Being, or the Principle of Life, or the Law of Attraction ; these wonders, which depend for their manifestation upon individual recognition.

The three terms, Law of Being, Principle of Life, and Law of Attraction—spirit of all things—are different modes of expressing the same thing. There are times when one of these modes of expression seems best adapted to convey my meaning, and times when the other modes seem best. But for this I would simplify the matter by using one of these expressions only ; and, really, it would be more strictly correct to do so ; but I have become so in the habit of using the three terms indiscriminately

that I must beg the reader's indulgence, and keep on with it.

Individual recognition of a power heretofore existing in latency in the unseen spirit of life may be called a creation. The power to recognise is the power to create, if, by the word creation, we mean the making manifest that which has always existed, but has not existed for us, because our intelligence had not ripened to the point where we could see it.

By recognition, then, the subjective power embodied in the life-principle, the spirit of all manifested creatures, becomes an objective creation, or use, or knowledge ; it becomes manifest or made visible.

The spirit of all things is self-existent ; all truth already exists. The universe is a whole ; it is complete ; nothing remains to be added to it. It is the absolute allness of being.

The word truth is another name for life. Man, in his individual capacity, is the recogniser of truth. He correlates truth, or the principle of being, to the extent of his capacity to recognise it. By his recognition of it, he shows it forth in his person. A man is as he believes. This is so because he is all mind. The entire argument in favour of man's power to conquer death rests on the fact that he is

mind—active, vital, undying mind—and that there is no dead matter, as has been supposed.

All things which we call matter are resolvable into one and the same element, as I conclusively proved in a former treatise, that element being thought, mentality, mind. Forms change ; the body may perish, but life, mind, is immortal.

Man, being a mental statement, shows forth in his personality as much of the truth of being as he has the intelligence to recognise ; that is, as much of the power of truth, or the Principle of Attraction, as he can understand, he makes manifest, gives form to, in his person. It is by his power to recognise that he creates or gives form to that which always existed potentially, but was heretofore formless.

Thus, in the absolute sense, there is no new creation ; in a finite sense creation is continuous, and will never cease. When men know their power it will be their privilege to forever make visible, in the objective world, the powers that exist in the infinitude of being, or the principle of life, in such form as they will.

The human mind is constantly revealing new good, or new uses, or new knowledges, out of the Law of Being, simply by recognising them as possibilities to be attained.

Thus, a faint conception of some power beyond that which has ever yet been manifested by any member of the race flits through a man's mind, only to be discarded as absurd and impracticable. But it comes again, and stronger; and yet again, and more powerfully still, until he begins to give it credence. At this point his mind goes on exploring trips into unprospected realms of thought, and brings home much evidence to sustain him in his growing belief, until, at last, he knows that a thing, heretofore considered impossible, is possible; and he goes to work and demonstrates it to others. We call his work a creation, and in a limited sense it is a creation.

The creative power is the power to recognise the possibilities for development existing in the spirit of life, or the Principle of Attraction; it is a power vested in intelligence; and it is by this power alone that nature, with man at its head, exists; it is by this power that nature, with man at its head, is on the road of endless progression through an infinite realm of ever-widening possibilities.

Life is thought to be dual, simply from the fact that it is both seen and unseen. On its unseen side there is the law of being, otherwise called the Law of Attraction, or the principle

of life—the spirit of life. On the seen side there is this same law of being made manifest, individualised, personified, by its own recognition of its powers of individualisation.

All nature—every living form, everything that is visible or external—is intelligence; it is that which has recognised the unseen moving power, or the Principle of Attraction; and that which recognises is mind, or intelligence. Therefore, the whole objective universe is mind; living, thinking mind, and not dead matter. All the substances we see or feel, or that in any way appeal to our senses, are mind, and not matter. Mind or intelligence ranges the entire visible universe; it is real substance; we handle it; we weigh and measure it; we cut it into lengths for building material; we melt it and run it into bars for our railroad cars to run on; our cars and everything we manufacture are made out of various conditions of the one substance of mind.

Mind, in its myriad forms, ranges every degree from solid iron and granite to the rarest ether.

The diamond is one condition of mind; the perfume of a rose is another condition of the same substance; and thought is still another

condition of it, and the most subtle and powerful condition that we know of.

The most difficult task the metaphysician has to perform, is that of rendering apparent to the conception of the student the fact that mind or intelligence is an actual substance, that can be seen and handled.

We have always believed mind to be an unsubstantial thing; a principle that invaded the dead substance of matter and imparted a temporary show of life to it; but we have never conceived the fact that it is matter itself.

We have never conceived the fact that matter is mind; that matter is the visible side of the law of being; or, in other words, that it is the law's recognition of itself, as light may be said to be heat's recognition of itself.

But this is so, and must be so, because no logical philosophy can admit the idea of deadness in the universe. The universe is a universe, and not a diverse. It is all life, pure life; there is not a dead atom in it. If there were even one atom of death in it, or the possibility that there would ever be one, the universe would not be a whole, and it could not endure.

But it is a whole ; it is the unchanging principle of life ; it is—on its unseen or spiritual side—the *Law of Being*, or the Principle of Attraction ; the law or principle whose one function is to *draw* or to *unite*. It is love in its unalloyed essence ; and the recognition of it is intelligence, or mind, expressed in a million varying beliefs, ranging the entire visible creation.

The tree is the externalisation of the Law of Being, or the Principle of Attraction, to the extent of the tree's intelligence. The tree shows forth as much of the good or the life embodied in the Law of Being as it can recognise.

All potentiality, all power, all possibility, reside in the spirit or Principle of Being. To conceive of, imagine, think or desire a thing without giving it form, calling it out of the unformed Principle of Being is, therefore, an impossibility. That which we conceive, we create ; that which we imagine to be, is ; that which we have ceased to believe, no longer exists to us, and never can until we again accept it as being a truth.

Every belief assumes a form—the form of that particular belief. No matter how short-lived the belief may be, or how frail, if it is a belief at all, it is, for the time being, a

recognition of the possibilities resident in the spirit of being. In conceiving a form, we create it within the one universal substance, wherein all creation takes place, the primary or mental.

A belief differs from a thought only in the matter of fixedness; a thought is a transient thing, unless it becomes fixed in a belief, and then it is more permanent, and, therefore, more apparent; it is a fraction of the spirit of being in more decided objectivity than a mere passing thought.

Our thoughts, then, are real things; and though usually invisible, being in a great measure under the control of our bodies—which are the sum-total of our fixed beliefs—they are too frail and fleeting to assume the substantial appearance of bodies. Nevertheless, they are real substance and have form at their inception; and, though invisible, they do become objective to our bodies, and go forth as living, but probably as short-lived, entities.

Thoughts are real because they are intellectual conceptions of something; and there can be no intellectual conception that is not, in its degree, a recognition of that which is—a recognition of some phase of the Principle of Being. There can be no recognition of that which is not, and,

therefore, even the frailest and most fleeting thought has form, whether we see it or not.

But there are certain conditions of a man's mind, usually conditions of negation, conditions of abstraction, during which he is not noticing what is transpiring in his mind, when it is possible for his thoughts to express themselves without the help, or even the cognisance, of the person by whom or from whom they are expressed. In this way they may abstract enough of a man's mentality or body to make themselves visible, not only to the man himself, but to others.

The first time I saw "a spirit" was when a student at a Catholic school. It was a bright moonlight night, and about twenty of us had taken a run from the hall door, down through the crisp snow, to an old tree that grew near the house. I stood for a few minutes quite apart from my companions, and found myself looking up into the tree in that condition of thought which is almost entirely unconscious of itself. I was looking at a woman, who was standing far out on one of the limbs of the tree, and who was balanced lightly on one foot, with her other foot swinging, and her arms raised as she held a pale, blue scarf that the wind filled and swung to and fro. I stood

looking at this marvellous sight without one particle of fear or wonder, or any other feeling that I can recall. The woman's dress was like that of a ballet girl, and the limb on which her foot rested was not larger than a riding whip.

But, as I continued to look, without any special interest in the sight, I was conscious of the babble of voices kept up by the other girls, though unconscious of what they were saying, until one of them cried out, "Oh! look up in the tree." A momentary silence ensued, broken by the simultaneous rush which they made toward the house. In another instant I became conscious of the situation, and, turning, I ran after them, becoming more frightened with each step.

Was this a spirit, or was it a projection from myself?

Since then I have had many experiences similar to this, and they are all marked by the same absence of a certain part of myself, that prevents the feeling in me of fear or wonder, or any emotion whatever. The remembrance of things of this kind has often frightened me after they have passed, and I have many times felt a great dread of their recurrence; but never once have I been frightened, or even astonished, at the time.

In the same frame of mind—a condition in which I, the person of the house, seem to be almost out of my house—I have heard voices that spoke to me; but they never told me anything beyond what I could have conceived without them.

But, perhaps, the most singular of these experiences has been a manifestation of a power that lifts me up, and makes me feel that I do not weigh an ounce. I have lain in bed in a room where the light burned brightly, and have been lifted—bed and all—until I could touch the ceiling with my hand. I have sat on a stout table and been lifted with the table until my head touched the top of the room.

Friends have said that such marked and various manifestations as these could not be accounted for, except on the theory of spirit agency.

But I am not convinced of this, though I would have been glad to accept such a conviction if I could have rested in contentment upon it. The very wonders of the human mind, as they begin to disclose themselves to me during the years I have been devoting myself exclusively to its study, have made it impossible for me to rest such phenomena

upon the generally accepted conclusions of spiritualism.

This chapter is the first of several chapters, all of which aim at the establishment of the principles on which I base my belief in the power of man to conquer death. I hope I have made it clear that the whole visible universe is mind in different forms of expression, but, lest I have not, I will venture to repeat. I say there is no such thing as "dead" matter. That which we call matter is but varying expressions of the one omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent mind, or mentality; that which was and is and ever will be; that to which nothing can be added, neither taken away. The unseen is as much "matter" as the seen. The seen is as certainly "mind" as the unseen; the two are one in endless round of varying expression, in which there is never any death of life, but only changing forms of life. The flint which is to-day—the flint of which you say, "It is matter, it is dead"—to-morrow shall have crumbled, shall have become earth; shall have been absorbed into the stalk of growing wheat; shall have been eaten, and in the brain of man be retransformed into its original element; that from which all things have birth—namely,

mind. All things, therefore, are mind ; nothing but mind ; always and forever mind ; no difference what the form assumed may be.

When I say that all is mind, or that there is no such thing as matter, I mean that there is no dead thing—nothing that is not of and resolvable into mind ; mentality ; potentiality ; that which, though not discernible by the physical senses, yet contains all that is or can be. I do not mean that matter is nothing, that it has no existence. I mean that in its last analysis it is mind, intelligence, and it is not dead ; nor can it ever die.

The infinite mind is measureless. It is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent. In it is all potentiality, the all of all, and outside of it nothing is or can be. Does life exist, and the desire for life in man ? It exists also in the infinite, and it was the desire that called forth form, which first caused the invisible to become visible ; which caused mind to assume the form of rock and tree and animal, and finally of man.

And when men clearly perceive this truth, and when the knowledge of it shall have become truly a part of them—shall, as it were, have infused their conscious selves, will they not know that they can control that which they

are? Knowing is being. When men know that they are deathless they will have become so.

If man and all nature were dead matter, then there would be good reason for death to hold the sceptre over life ; but the fact that what has previously been called dead matter is an ever-living, ever-progressive substance, which constantly evolves individual life out of itself, cannot fail to destroy the power of death as soon as the truth and the law are made known.

In order to make all clear I must show the reader something of the wonderful powers vested in mind. I have spoken of what appeared to be spirits, but which may simply prove to be some, as yet, misunderstood function of the mind. As I go on I shall speak of other things that prove the almost undreamed-of power of mind ; I do so in order to show that there is nothing impossible to the human mind, and in this way lead the reader to see that death is not going to be a difficult thing to conquer, since its conquest only depends upon the farther expansion of our minds. And this expansion depends exclusively on our own effort.

CHAPTER X

ALL GROWTH IS A REVOLT AGAINST THE CLAIMS OF THE SO-CALLED LAW OF GRAVITATION

NO man has tested the powers of his own mind ; no man knows its mysterious complications, or dreams of the strange seed lying dormant within it, and capable of springing up into the blossoming and fruitage of such wonders as it would be madness even to name in these pages.

But in these years of study that I speak of, enough has been revealed to me of the giant power sleeping in the brain of the race, to keep me from wandering off to other worlds for a solution of its exceptional actions. Many things concerning it that will seem fabulous to others, I know to be true ; and, indeed, so great have become my conceptions of its possibilities, that at this time I have pulled up all the stakes that have ever, to me, environed it, and have established it in my belief as respondent in all particulars to that omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent principle of life that men call God.

I think it will readily be seen how—there being no nothing, and thoughts being things—a thought may appear in objectivity from the thinker, and thereby become discernible by the physical senses of the thinker, to others who may be present.

The same thing may be said of the voices we hear.

But these explanations go for nothing, so long as it remains that some seemingly invisible power can overcome the law of gravitation in the human form, and lift it from the earth with evident ease.

This matter remained a mystery to me for years, until I learned that man had the power to become master of the law of gravitation, after which he could float in the air at his will.

“But,” some one remonstrates, “you had no knowledge of this power, and yet you floated; therefore, it must be that some power outside of yourself lifted you.”

For a long time I reasoned this way myself; and I believed that I was lifted by spirit power.

But after a time I considered how it had ever been, that some seemingly accidental exhibition of a new power had come as a forerunner to open the eyes of men to a new possibility within themselves; and I began to see that

this experience of mine might belong to this same class of premature revelations.

I could readily admit that if it were in a man's power to overcome the law of gravity (so-called), accidental conditions of thought might arise within him, unanalysed by himself, that for the time being would lift him into the air.

The more I thought about it, the more I became convinced of it. The more I reasoned on the law of gravitation, the law which seems to draw all things to the centre of the earth, the more clearly I saw that it was the Law of Attraction in its action upon—so-called—dead matter; and that there was no power that could of itself draw anything toward the earth's centre, provided the thing to be drawn *did not want to be drawn in that direction*.

That any substance or thing, no matter how powerful, could refuse to obey this law, proved at once that there was a higher power than the law, or else that the law was not understood.

Of course, I at once assumed that the law was not understood.

The law of gravitation is that power which draws towards the centre of the earth; but what is the Law of Attraction?

I answer that there is but one law, and I

shall call it the Law of Attraction. The — so-called — law of gravitation is the negative action of the Law of Attraction. In other words, it is the Law of Attraction in its action upon what is called dead matter ; it is powerless upon all substances in proportion to the intelligence of the substance. It cannot compel the intelligent will of any creature to obey it. Indeed, I may state it in this way ; that while the law of gravitation, the law that draws to the earth's centre, is operative upon mind in its unawakened condition, it is powerless to act on mind in which a will has been developed. As weak a thing as a blade of grass obeys its own will ; a will that leads it upward instead of downward toward the earth's centre. I saw it rise out of the earth, and begin its little journey toward the sun. I saw as feeble a thing as a crawling worm overcome the earth's attraction, and mount a tree trunk, climbing upward in obedience to its own awakening perceptions of the Law of Attraction expressed in itself as will power.

I saw that while "dead matter," which is mind unconscious of its own will, was held to the earth's centre, that "live matter," which is mind conscious of its own will, was on a journey in another direction.

Then there is no law that holds objects to the earth's centre, provided the objects have a will to travel toward the sun. This so-called law is the law of inertia ; the law of death to the dead ; or, in strict truth, it is the absence, as nearly as can be, of the Law of Attraction, which is the only law of life ; the law of growth.

The law of gravitation is the negative pole of the Law of Attraction, or the law of being.

The peach ripens and falls ; it falls toward the earth. Why ?

Because it is so much inert substance, and it is drawn to a larger body of inert substance. If the peach had been larger and heavier than the earth, it would have drawn the earth to it.

In bodies of equal deadness, by which I mean bodies that are equally lacking in consciousness of will, the power to draw each other is dependent on their size and weight. But once introduce into inert mind (matter) the vitalising principle of conscious will, and the whole statement is changed. Size and weight have nothing to do with the drawing power ; the conscious will is under obedience only to its own desire. The latent power slumbering in matter has awakened, and it has come under obedience to the Law of Attraction.

It has evolved a will that its intelligence

recognises as its leading power, and it goes to any place toward which the will may point, whether toward the earth or away from it. If it goes away from the earth, as all advanced life does in its growth, it goes as far away as its intelligence permits it to go. That is, it goes as far as it believes that it can go ; its belief in this particular marking the limit of its intelligence. Flying creatures are more unlimited in their belief in this one matter than the creatures that remain on the earth. And it is because they do realise more of the Law of Attraction than other creatures that they have sprouted wings. The law of cosmogony expresses itself in conformity with a belief in the Law of Attraction ; and evolution has steadily proceeded on this principle from the first effort of individualism to man.

The Law of Attraction is the law of gravitation raised from a basis of unconscious life or ignorance of life, to a conception of life in which the will becomes the principal factor, and elects for itself the direction in which it shall be attracted. Intelligence refuses obedience to mere bulk and weight, and follows any attraction that seems good to it.

A grain of sand is under obedience to the law of gravitation ; the earth holds it to itself.

But imagine the grain of sand changed to a minute insect ; it instantly declares its freedom from the law that influences the grain of sand, and lifts itself up above the earth. And it will retain its independence of the earth until it dies ; then the earth, by the law of deadness, in which bulk and weight make the attraction, claims its own, and the insect lies helpless upon it.

The whole tendency of evolution is from inertia to activity ; from deadness to life ; from obedience to the law of inert or unawakened substance — the law of gravitation — to the intelligent attraction which is the law of awakened or conscious substance.

In strict truth there is no dead substance, because all substance holds life in latency ; but until the latent life-principle begins to express itself intelligently, this substance is under obedience to the law of gravitation only.

But, as substance does express itself more and more intelligently, the law of gravitation loses its force, and the Law of Attraction is substituted. Thus all individual lives work out their own freedom through intellectual growth.

Intellectual growth is the liberation from the law of gravitation, which is the law of death, or rather the no-law of life ; because death has no

law, but is simply the negation of the Principle of Attraction, which is the law of life.

Man becomes more free from the—so-called—law of—so-called—dead matter with every acquisition of intelligence he makes ; and he is now approaching a plane of knowledge, where he will realise that by the Law of Attraction he can break his allegiance to the earth and float in the air. And this will simply be the beginning of his exploits in this direction.

As I—from some peculiar and accidental consciousness of this great truth—actually floated in the air, so the time will come in which I shall learn how I did it ; and thus be able to do it again.

It is probable that in my then negative condition a higher sense of freedom took possession of me, which my uneducated faculties would have denied, and thus frustrated the phenomenon, but that—for the time being—they were inoperative, and did not put in their ignorant protest.

CHAPTER XI

THE ONE MIGHTY FACTOR IN RACE GROWTH IS THOUGHT

MAN is a compendium of all the lives that have existed before him ; but he does not show forth the full power of all those individual lives. He is—in his present stage of development—a compromise of them all.

The power of all of them, and vastly more power, lies stored in his brain, but it has not yet been expressed in his personality. It is in his power to express, and by his intelligent belief in its presence he will be able to express it.

Belief in self is the key that unlocks all this stored power. If I did not believe I could draw a bucket of water out of the well, I would never draw it. If I did not believe I could write an article, I could never write it. The paralytic believes he cannot move his hand, and he does not move it. The mental healer, in his treatment of this disease, does not even think of the hand ; he directs his thought to the patient's brain, and

corrects his mistaken belief in his own power. All disease is of the brain. A belief in disease is the brain's own under-estimate of its power. The brain has weakened in its belief of what it is and what it can do, and the body shows forth the brain's error.

A woman came to me one day with the sickness of a decade in every part of her body. Long years of a life totally unappreciated by others, and a lack of self-esteem on her own part, had brought her to the condition in which I saw her. Her wonderful eyes, and the entire wreck of her queenly beauty, impressed me greatly. A few minutes' conversation showed me the situation. I did not offer to treat her; I told her how beautiful and how great she was. I told her what splendid possibilities I saw in her mind; she knew I was telling her the truth, and she was well in that hour. Day by day from that time her body showed forth her renewed trust and confidence in her own intellect; her individuality strengthened until the negations that had once submerged and held her under, became the servants that ministered to her uplifting.

The intellect is the shaping power in the body. It is true that the body builds the brain; but the brain reciprocates by building

the body. Every higher thought a man has records itself in some added power in the body; and if this could go on day by day, the body would become more and more a revised expression of a revised mode of thinking.

And just so, in the opposite direction, the body may and does deteriorate.

How is it that the man of science can take an animal's skull, and from its shape tell us just what the animal was like, and what it fed on, and all the particulars concerning it? It is because the brain shapes the body; and when he gets a correct idea of the brain from the shape of the skull, he has no difficulty in describing the animal that owned it, and naming the family to which it belonged.

Familiarity with the correlation between the brain of the animal and the different members of the body of the animal, also enables these men of science to work the same problem backward. They will take any well-defined bone of the animal and describe all the animal's clearly marked characteristics. The relation between the brain and the different parts of the body is exact.

Surely there is a big lesson in this for him who thinks. From the very earliest forms of

organisation clear up to man, there has been a steady increase of brain power, and a steady improvement in the shape of the head. Not in a single instance has there been a sudden jump from low to high. And never has there been any real retrogression. There have been instances in race growth which seemed like retrogression, but which were truly a kind of a retrogressive progression; being but a temporary halt in the upward journey of the incessant brain, or a going back a few paces to bring up the lagging forces.

There is no missing link. Race growth has been as even and steady as the growth of a child from infancy to manhood. And the one factor in its growth has been thought.

Let no one imagine that thought is confined to human beings alone. All creatures think. Animals think; plants think; and even crystals think. They think the thoughts that render them obedient to the operation of the Law of Attraction, by whose power they are drawn into certain forms. The grass thinks; it aspires or desires, and its aspirations or desires find a ready response in nature, and the result is growth. Every upward step in the scale of creation is marked by a greater power of thought in the creatures; and this greater

power of thought produces more powerful creatures. And so thought, even in its lowest forms, expressed in desire, relates the creature, under the ever active Principle of Attraction, to that which it desires; and the stones emerge into gigantic vegetation; the vegetation becomes concentrated into a drop of protoplasm; the protoplasm, by the same potency of thought, expressing the ever-growing desire for an enlarged life, greater happiness and greater freedom, sprouts a digestive system; puts forth from its body the necessary instruments by which to supply the digestive system with food; eyes, ears, claws, legs, members both offensive and defensive, until the ripened man, with his noble brain, is here.

And still the same system of growth goes on. The ripened man is man only in his form; the strength and character of his animal progenitors have passed into his brain and live there in disguise, or show forth in cunningly devised methods for the attainment of that power which the beasts—his forefathers—took by force of muscle and cunning. Society is a compromise based on fear, and religion is a superstition founded also on fear.

And yet this condition is only an attitude in race growth, and it is all right for the stage

of growth it represents. It is not the desirable thing any more than the bitter and unripe peach is the desirable thing ; but it is on the way to becoming the right thing. It will always be becoming more and more the right thing ; for it, like the individuals that compose it, is on the road of endless progression—forever ripening but never ripe ; forever incarnating in itself more and more of the vast possibilities latent in the law of being—the Principle of Attraction—but never exhausting the fulness of the law, and, therefore, never ripe.

CHAPTER XII

MAN HAS NO FETTERS BUT THOSE OF HIS
OWN IGNORANCE: AND NOTHING BUT
HIS OWN INTELLIGENCE WILL LIBERATE
HIM FROM THEM

To think in the old ruts is to remain in the old conditions.

To think expansively is to grow endlessly in the direction of freedom and happiness.

Death is not growth. It solves no problem.

Man at this time is all that his animal progenitors are, and more. The strength of muscle which they exhibited, finds its expression in him, in his brain and not in his muscle. The quality of every faculty they possessed is condensed in his brain; in ceasing to become animal, and in becoming more and more man, the attributes that expressed themselves in the body of animals express themselves with ten-fold more force in the brain of the man.

In fact, the process of growth has been a process of brain making. The awakening of life from the inertia that holds it obedient to that downward attraction, called the law of

gravitation, has been one steady advancement of all things toward brain ; toward the power to think ; toward the freedom that thought alone can insure ; toward the conquest of environment that thought alone can master.

I am not making an exaggerated statement when I say that the road of life, the road of progress, is from a belief in that inert substance we call matter, to a belief in mind.

This inert substance we call matter, and which is under the (so-called) law of gravitation, is, in point of absolute truth, all mind or brain or thought ; but it is unawakened mind, and, therefore, unconscious or "dead" mind ; mind whose powers are latent or unexpressed.

The steady effort of the ages has been to liberate this substance from its unconscious obedience to the law of gravitation—the law of the dead to the dead—by awakening it to a consciousness of its power to think ; thus demonstrating to it that it is mind, living and active and free, subject to the Principle of Attraction only.

I cannot repeat too often the great fact that there is no dead matter ; that there is no death in the universe ; that what is called dead matter is unawakened mind ; that every atom in the world is mind, either awakened to a

sense of its own power, or holding its power in the unconsciousness of latency. It is on this mighty truth that man's salvation depends.

What we call matter is the recognition of something. Every atom of it is a magnet. A magnet is that which recognises the Principle of Attraction within itself. If the recognition is so feeble that it yields obedience only to that comparatively unintelligent force expressed in bulk and weight, it recognises bulk and weight, and yields its recognition to it, and is then said to be under the law of gravitation.

But no matter what it recognises, the fact that it recognises anything at all proves that it is mind. Dead matter cannot recognise. Recognition is a faculty of mind.

The law of being, the Principle of Attraction, exists. No one knows anything about it except that it exists.

It is that unseen principle running through all things, to whose power man can add nothing. It is unchangeable. Our recognition or comprehension of it changes constantly, but it never changes.

All nature, with man at its head, is the recognition or the comprehension of this principle. Not a perfect recognition or comprehension of it—it can never be perfectly

comprehended—but a partial and constantly improving and growing comprehension of it.

Men call this Law of Attraction God; but the word is unscientific and misleading. Substitute the word “law” for “God,” in Pope’s lines, and they would explain all.

“The universe is one stupendous whole
Whose body nature is, and law the soul.”

As our bodies are the perception, or the understanding, or the recognition of our spirits, so is all nature the perception, or the understanding, or the recognition of this infinite spirit—the unseen life-principle which I call the Law of Attraction or the law of being.

Understanding, recognition; the power to perceive, does not belong to anything but mind; therefore, all visible things are mind; no matter how apparently dead this substance called matter may seem, the Law of Attraction is latent in it, and in the farther process of evolution it will recognise the fact, thus proving that it is mind.

And mind, no matter how crude it may be, is one form of brain, out of which the higher or governing brain proceeds; the brain which begets the intelligent will; whose mandate governs the entire body.

It may be said that nature is all brain ranging numberless degrees from coarse to fine, from the crudest substance to the highest thought, as water ranges from solid ice to the invisible gas generated by steam.

That wonderfully volatile fluid we call electricity is, in its own way, a certain form, and a very vital form, of recognition of the Law of Attraction, and is, therefore, mind, brain, intelligence or thought.

Nature, being in all particulars the recognition of that vital principle called the Law of Attraction, it will be seen that she is all mind, whose power to grow lies in her continued power to think more intelligently than she has previously thought.

Our visible world has now thought itself up to its present position, which is a higher point of intelligence than it has ever before reached. From the fiery mass that it was in our first knowledge of it, where the Law of Attraction between the atoms seemed so feeble in its power, because so little recognised, that it appeared to be rather a law of repulsion, on up through every grade of ripening recognition of the law, with its consequent forms of greater intelligence—we have come to this, our present plane of thought.

And yet here, in spite of our past record, with its unflagging development in every direction, there are thousands of our people who affirm that the world has ceased growing.

Or, rather, I may say, there are tens of thousands—nay, millions—who do not know that the whole visible world is a growth in the understanding of the law of being ; who do not believe it ; and who are, therefore, unprepared to accept the statement that its position in growth is still in infancy, and that its power to keep on growing is endless.

But, whether they accept it or not, it is true ; and no truth even approaching the glory of this truth has ever been announced before.

The visible world grows by its acquisition of intelligence, or rather, by its development out of itself of more and more power to recognise the unfailing, the infinite possibilities of the Principle of Attraction, which is the law of being.

Thus, the potency of mind increases daily, and as it increases its environments give way, and happiness and freedom come more readily within its grasp.

The idea that the race has achieved even a minimum of the power that is in store for it is absurd.

The idea that the race must continue to wear its fetters because they are "God-imposed" is still more absurd.

Man has no fetters but those of his own ignorance, and nothing but intelligence will liberate him from such fetters.

You may take from him every visible environment; you may heap him with wealth; you may place him in high position; but, unless he has come into the saving knowledge which an intellectual perception of his own boundless resources yields him, he is not free. Ignorance still holds him and will pull him down to old age, feebleness and the grave.

And what but these—old age, feebleness and the grave—are our real fetters? What have we gained though we conquer everything else, and these remain? It may be that the spirit survives the body, as spiritualism believes it has demonstrated; but even in this case, a man's sphere of activities is removed from his workshop, the earth; and his death is a break in what should be an unbroken line of growth.

I do not believe that true, healthy growth can proceed through the tortuous weakness of old age, decrepitude and death. True intelligence, the farther recognition of the Law, which alone is growth, is not in these condi-

tions. Nothing is in these conditions but the denial or the non-recognition of the Law; which is a slipping back from a certain condition of incarnate intelligence into a condition of ignorance, wherein the previous condition of intelligence, the incarnate condition of it, is denied or cancelled.

Even in this denial or cancellation of the previous condition, it may be that the spirit survives, and I believe that it does; but I do not believe that the person has gained by the change; indeed, I feel certain that he has lost; and, though the loss may not be irreparable, yet it is a mighty loss and ought to be avoided.

And it can be avoided.

If I did not know that the loss of the body—which is the condensed bulk of the man's beliefs—could be avoided, I would never have written so much as the first line of this book.

But I do know it.

I have frequently been asked to establish this statement by producing an instance in which some one had conquered death.

There was a time when there was no animal life on this planet at all; did the fact that there was none then form a true basis of belief that there would never be any?

Because the cave-dwellers had never produced a Plato, was that a valid reason for supposing there would never be one?

Those who are limited to a belief that the race is ripe, and that there will be no farther development than there has already been, are in no condition either to deny or affirm the statements I am prepared to make on this subject. They do not know that the race is a growth. They have never examined its past history; this history that began millions of years before it actually appeared in its present form; and their opinions, as weighed against the opinion of one who has learned the situation by heart, are absolutely worthless.

I have studied this matter of race growth for many years. I began to be the race's champion and defender when a child. I was scarcely out of my teens before a burning sense of disgust for the foolish and false theologies of the day took possession of me. I knew that we were not wilful sinners against a higher power, but simply ignorant children feeling our way through intellectual darkness, and stumbling at every step. Without knowing it, having no positive information by which to bolster up my belief on this subject, I simply held to it because it was part of me, and I

could no more get rid of it than I could get rid of my head. It became the dominant force of my existence, and the chief source of my vitality. In the midst of sickness, it kept me whole ; in positions that would have been death to another, I was unscathed.

In point of fact, it was nothing more than a larger seeing, a deeper recognition of the Life Principle, than that possessed by the average person.

Having more life, I *felt* more life, and death seemed farther away and more indefinite to me than to others.

As I grew older, the possibility of avoiding it entirely began to take form in my intelligence. It was not that I feared death, for it never seemed sufficiently real to fear. The idea of overcoming it came to me as a part of my growth, in which it seemed better to acquiesce consciously, so that I might thereby note every step of its progress. Naturally observant and introspective, I was curious about it ; all my interest was aroused and something firmer than interest ; a deep-seated determination to carry the thing through to success became a fixed factor of my mind.

It is strange how, by simply holding an idea or belief, it aggregates to itself certain

mental building material, until it stands impregnable and apparently deathless. This is now the condition of my belief in the possibility of immortality in the flesh. I have not read books, I have not sought outside of myself for reasons to strengthen my position; I have held to it simply because it has held to me; and out of my own organism has been unfolded the course of reasoning by which I have demonstrated its truth to myself. I believe in it as firmly as I believe in my personal presence in this room; and the world is going to believe it before many years shall pass.

It is true that the spirit of Malthus is widespread at this stage of human development, and questions are frequent as to what will become of the earth's overflowing population if immortality in the flesh should become possible. The natural Malthusian is one who has not penetrated even to the slightest degree into the realm of the ideal, where alone immortality in the flesh can become possible. He does not know that life, when lifted from its belief in the deadness of matter, enters the thought realm, in which the supply is equal to the demand.

But this is so. As soon as a man steps up from a belief in matter as dead substance, and

perceives that all is life, and that every form of life is on the wing, as it were, from lower to higher, and that there is no stagnation possible to growth—he will then know that the earth will not be overcrowded by a too rapidly accumulating population.

The old saying that “there is room at the top” applies here. The pioneers in civilisation or in thought always find themselves rather lonesome than otherwise. The space outside the herds is unlimited. Especially is this true in the realm of thought; the realm of the ideal, which we are now on the verge of entering.

It is true that the world would soon become overcrowded, if people should keep producing children who would never die, unless some way should be provided for them to leave the earth.

But the entire range of creation is open to man, and there is nothing but his ignorance of his own powers and privileges that will keep him in one place.

It is true that no God will ever interfere in his behalf to lift him into more enlarged spheres of activity; but no God will ever prohibit him from lifting himself into these spheres.

Indeed, such lifting is correlated to the man's lifted and enlarged thought. As the man expands in his thought life, he will be met by

more expansive conditions ; and the possibility of fettering him to one point in the universe will cease. It is by thought expansion that a man's fetters fall from him.

Thought is the conqueror of everything that hampers and binds. It cannot make even the smallest conquest over its surroundings, that it does not come at once into relation with external conditions better suited to its enlarged sense of freedom.

Indeed, it almost seems as if these freer conditions constantly pressed in on the thought of the race, as if consciously resolved to be recognised.

The croakers of the world cried out that the coal beds were becoming exhausted, and that the race was doomed in consequence. A wider range of thought was correlated by the substance of electricity, and the world came out of its nervous chill on the subject of coal.

Because balloons have proved a failure, does anyone suppose that the air will never be navigated? Even if gas and machinery fail to accomplish this thing, there is a power latent in man's organism that will do it ; namely, the power of thought, to which all substances are negative.

Immortality in the flesh would be neither

possible nor desirable if man were to remain the helpless and ignorant creature that he now is.

It would not be desirable because the universe can furnish no excuse for the perpetuation of ignorance. It would not be possible, because ignorance is death already; at least, it is the nearest approach to death that life renders possible.

To keep the race forever alive in its present animalised condition, would be to perpetuate ignorance; to keep it as a stagnant pool in the heart of universal progression; and this could not be. Perpetual change is the order of life. He who catches on to higher thought and holds it with a faith so firm that it crystallises into belief, is on the upward move, where higher influences meet him, and fix his thought in tangible substance.

He who turns from his higher thought, doubting its practicability, pinches himself into constantly lowering conditions, until he is pinched out. There is progression for the one, and, at least, a temporary retrogression for the other; but there is no standing still. Therefore, immortality in the present status of universal race thought here in this world is not possible now.

But the dawn of it is here. The beginning

of that credence in the human ideal, which alone will usher it in, is here. It is here for no less a reason than because woman, with her strongly intuitional nature, has come to the front. Woman has brought the morning of a new era with her ; and, as her feet obtain firmer standing in the slushy quagmire of the world's present condition of thought, the morning of her day will brighten into the full splendour of a noon that will arrest and hold the entire interest of the millions of dying souls about us.

This much is already accomplished. The beginning of the dawn is here. Universal thought has begun to move. A ripple runs along the full length of its connected links, even though it is only the few who stand in the front that are capable of seeing the light that shines so brightly ahead.

If this movement had to be confined to our earth, as the Malthusians all must imagine, then its scope would be so small as to furnish a reason for their doubts. But, because man's growth is limitless—and by his ever-increasing power of thought I know that his growth is limitless—the fact shadows forth the possibility of his leaving the earth when he shall have learned how to do so.

More than this. In the economy of nature the time will come when generation will lose itself in regeneration.

Conditions adapt themselves to each other. When one thread is spun out, there is another thread waiting there to meet the outstretched hand of him who has resolved to go ahead. To him who is not so resolved, and who does not know his power to go on, though the thread is there, it is not there for him, because he does not see it. And so he falls, not because life was lacking, but because the individual intelligence with which he should have grasped it was wanting.

CHAPTER XIII

DESIRE THE ORGANISING PRINCIPLE

SINCE the first two atoms came together under the Law of Attraction and produced the earliest specimen of individual life upon our planet, the vitality of the race has been slowly ripening up to the point where immortality in the flesh could become a possible thing. As the vital powers have ripened, conditions have also ripened, to meet the needs of more vital creatures, and thus the supply has been equal to the demand.

Indeed, the saying that the supply is equal to the demand is grounded in the Principle of Attraction. It is one of the absolute truths.

Whether what I call the life of immortality in the flesh is desirable or practical hinges on one point. If the substance all about us that we see in existing forms of life, the forms of minerals, plants and animals is dead matter, infused by living spirit, then our only hope of prolonging our lives will be by some method that will release the spirit from the matter.

And this position is accepted as the truth almost the whole world over.

Dead matter can never be permanently enlivened by spirit, nor is it desirable that spirit should load itself down with something that is forever dead. Moreover, if this is the true condition, it never has been necessary for spirit to be so loaded with the dead weight of matter; and the entire combination has been a very grave mistake, ruining, or, at least, deferring, the happiness of every spirit that ever entered the material life.

If I knew this to be the true situation, I would never move my hand to save my own life; I would look forward to the time when my spirit would drop its load of death, as the chained and barred prisoner looks forward to the hope of freedom.

Long and earnestly I pondered the subject of dead matter with its infusion of living spirit, and wondered why a union of two things so diametrically opposite to each other should be either necessary or desirable. Presently I knew that it could not be; because, if matter is dead, then the Law of Attraction cannot exist in it, and it is absolutely immovable by any force whatever. It has no power to respond to anything; it is helpless; without the principle of

cohesion ; and entirely useless in the building of worlds or of men.

In this thought, which I knew to be correct, I touched the negative pole of the truth I was seeking.

If matter was a dead substance, it was dead, and there was no inherent power in it, and no latent life. It was simply dead, and had no place whatever in the universe of uses. That the substance called matter did exist there was no denying, even through the visionary process of Christian Science. The substance existed ; it was an ever-present and an indispensable reality.

“Indispensable”—this was a fortunate word. Dead matter could not be indispensable ; the sooner dead matter and every form of death should be dispensed with, the better.

What, then, was the substance called dead matter? Did it have life of itself? I answer—yes.

Then, if it has life of itself, what need has it of the infusing spirit which seems to be a different thing from it ; the infusing spirit that only infuses it a few years and then deserts it, leaving it to be again infused by other spirits, or to remain forever helpless?

The more I pondered on this subject, the

more I became convinced that matter had life of itself.

To have life is to be capable of thought. This proposition brought me face to face with the great truth that every atom in the universe had power to think. In other words, that every atom was transfused with the Principle of Attraction, and responsive to every other atom ; and on this fact alone rested the possibility of organised forms.

By slow degrees and never-ceasing thought, I found myself in an immaterial universe ; that is, in a universe where all is living, active, vital intelligence, or mind, or thought, or brain, or knowledge.

Each atom was not a dead thing infused by something else ; it was not a dead thing that yet had the power to recognise the transfusing principle of life within it ; if it were dead it could not recognise anything. But still it existed, and was responsive to other atoms ; what, then, was it ?

It was mind itself ; and mind, which is the recognition of the Law of Attraction, or the law's recognition of itself—substance ; actual substance, to be seen and handled ; to express in its own appearance its own belief in the law, or as much of the law as it could comprehend.

Here, all in an hour, the whole system of evolution opened up to me. The external world, the world of mind, is in constant effort to express more and more of the law of being, the Law of Attraction, which is the principle of life; the unseen side of itself; the positive and unchangeable I AM; the constantly growing recognition of which gives ever-improving expressions of itself, from the smallest and weakest individualised life up to man; and from man as he now stands in his ignorance and helplessness, up through an unending process of improvement, by a constant acquisition of new truths, or an ever-widening recognition of the power of the Law.

The Law of Being, or of Attraction, is to the visible universe what heat is to light. It is the magnetism in the magnet. Every atom is a magnet, and the external or visible part of it is the magnet's recognition of itself, just as light is heat's recognition of itself.

All power is in the law.

By all power, I mean all power of organisation.

In our first knowledge of the world, as stated before, the atoms were so widely diffused as to be almost beyond the reach of each other's attraction. Ages passed; and the law—always constant to itself in its drawing power—had

condensed the fiery mass somewhat ; had brought the atoms closer together, so that its drawing influence began to have a greater effect. Then, as the ages went by, the drawing power overcame the distances more and more, and masses began to assume form.

Through this same process, always increasing in strength, the world was brought to a condition where it became possible for higher conceptions of the Law to be formed. Rocks adhered ; waters gathered themselves together ; a blade of grass put up its daring head, and the first protest of intelligence against bulk and weight, the first rebellion against death, recorded its tiny oath.

But the poor baby life did die ; recognising nothing but the first faint monition of endless individuality, its little effort lost itself to become merged in another and greater effort.

And so one species merged into a nobler one ; one genus disappeared, because its power to recognise nothing farther of the possibilities of the Law became its environment ; an environment that nothing but dissolution could break.

But always the power of the Law was drawing the atoms to closer cohesion ; and the atoms thus cohering were, by their very existence,

proving the greater potency of individuals to recognise the Law of Being or the Principle of Attraction.

And so the recognition of the Principle of Attraction or of Being has proceeded right through the ages; and so it can continue to proceed.

And although recognition of the Principle of Attraction is the externalising power, the power that makes visible, or marks the showing forth of its capabilities, it is a fact that up to the present time, this recognition has been an unconscious recognition; by which I mean a recognition that has expressed itself in uses, and not a recognition that could give a logical account of itself, and thereby become a conscious recognition.

Life has heretofore proceeded entirely on the unconscious plane. It has proceeded in the individual by the individual's recognition of his own personal desires.

Desire is the organising principle; from first to last it has been so.

The recognition of desire is the recognition of the law as expressed individually. It is the individual's recognition of the magnetic or attracting power which he sees within himself. He recognises this attraction or magnet-

ism in himself, and it becomes the law of his individual life. It is that unseen something within him that always cries out for something more than he already possesses. It is the Principle of Life ; the growing principle ; and his recognition of it has brought him steadily up through the centuries from the lowest condition imaginable to his present form, intelligence and strength.

In obedience to his unconscious recognition of this life-principle expressed individually as desire—he, as the tiny drop of protoplasm, acquired a digestive system and all the appendages necessary to supply it with food.

In obedience to his love of life, or his desire to have his life perpetuated, his organism produced a reproductive system ; which as yet only serves a part of his purpose ; since it is only far enough evolved to perpetuate his kind without perpetuating himself.

While generation proceeds in one unbroken stream on the unconscious plane of life, regeneration is not possible except upon the conscious plane ; a plane that the race is now on the verge of reaching.

All growth depends upon the recognition of the law ; but no thing, and no man, can recognise the law in its fulness. Man only recognises

the law in himself, as it is expressed in his desire for something more than he possesses.

The recognition of my desires is the recognition of the Law of Attraction in my own life, as separate and apart from the Law of Attraction expressed in other lives.

The desires I see in myself are evidence of my own self-hood. They form my ego. That I am not in all particulars like my neighbour is because my desires differ from his ; I recognise in the law more good than he does, and thereby show forth an organisation superior to his ; or I recognise less good, and show forth an organisation inferior to his ; or both of us may recognise an equal amount of good, but of different kinds, and may show forth organisations equally good, but different from each other.

And this has been the case all down the scale of being. A blade of grass shows forth as much good as it recognises ; so does a tree, a horse, or an angle worm.

Our bodies are the records of our beliefs ; and just to the extent that we have believed in our desires, which are of the Law, individualised within us, we have been true to the Law, or the principle of growth, and have manifested that which seemed good to us ; therefore, I say that as much "good" as we

have recognised in the Law, we have shown forth in our bodies; thus making our bodies the record of what we desired and believed in.

The forms of life have been growing more complex from the first inception of the first form, which was nothing more than the cohesion through the Principle of Attraction of two or three of the primordial life-cells.

They have been growing more complex, because as they aggregated to themselves more and still more of the life-cells, their desires became more numerous. This increase in the number and character of their desires was all the time making more powerful magnets of them; and so evolution proceeded.

Every visible manifestation of life—mineral, plant and animal—is self-created.

Life may be called two-fold, even though it is a unit. It may be called two-fold because there is a seen and an unseen side to it. On the unseen side we have the Law of Being or the Principle of Life, which is the Law of Attraction. No man knows anything about it except that it exists. We see its effects in the magnet; we see that every life-cell is a magnet, and we know that it is both external and internal; both seen and unseen; both positive and negative. The positive side being

the Law, which is unchanging; the negative side being the recognition of the Law, which is the external side, and which is constantly changing through the increasing or lessening power of individual recognition.

The more an individual recognises of the power of the Law, the more positive he becomes. Man, recognising more of the power of the Law than any other creature, is positive to all other creatures; and being positive to them, he is their master. They supply him in all his many wants. He cuts down the magnificent tree and holds its individuality in subservience to his needs; he kills the animal and eats its flesh in order to satisfy his desire for food; he becomes greater and stronger all the time by sacrificing lives that are negative to him. These lower lives pass constantly into his life; his life would pass into some life higher than his own, but for the fact that his constantly growing brain renders unnecessary any life higher than his. If his brain found its limitation in serving a non-expanding range of uses, like those of the cow or the horse, then nature would beget an organisation superior to his, into which the increasing knowledge of the growing race might extend.

But it is not necessary from the fact that man keeps growing and increasing in knowledge all the time; in this way proving that he has no limitation. In consequence of this fact there will be no higher organisation, except that into which his present organisation will expand by the farther expansion of his intelligence; or his farther recognition of still greater power existing in the Law.

Intelligence or mind is the visible substance of the universe; it is simply the recognition of the Law of Being, which is the Law of Attraction, or the Life-Principle.

Another statement of this idea would be that the words "love" and "intelligence" are an explanation of it all—love being the unseen principle of cohesion. The idea expressed in this manner is not new; it forms the basis of Swedenborg's theory, a theory that he fails to carry out into particulars in his very voluminous writings.

The entire trend of thought is from physical to metaphysical; and it cannot be otherwise, since race growth is in this direction.

A belief in the physical as dead matter is all that now holds the race back from the most rapid and startling growth. Freedom—the goal of the world's desire—lies just ahead,

and here we remain, tethered to a mistake, a mistake that could not hold us one moment, but for the fact that we are all mind, and that our mistakes *are our bodies*. Our mistakes are our beliefs; they are our fixed modes of thought. Therefore, they are our beliefs; and belief is the body of the individual. The body is not the *record* of our beliefs; it *is* our beliefs; it is the sum-total of all our beliefs; for belief, being a mental thing, is real substance; and, whether belief is true or false, it is a substantial thing so long as it lasts.

Believing ourselves living spirits chained to dead matter is a mistake as potent to hold us down to what we call the law of gravitation, as if matter really were a dead substance, instead of being what it really is—pure mind, the recognition of the Law of Being—from which it is inseparable.

The inseparableness of substance from the Law that is its invisible partner, when once seen in its true light, immediately suggests the idea of immortality in the flesh; especially when taken in connection with the fact that man is self-creative.

Indeed, but for man's belief in the deadness of matter, and his still more foolish belief that a God made him, he would even at this time be

diseaseless and deathless ; he would, even now, be on the road of endless progression, led exclusively by his desires for happiness. He would be trusting the Law, and externalising his desire—which is the Law individualised in him ; and his body would be showing forth greater power and beauty daily. He would be on that plane of thought where his body (which is the condensed form of his thought) would be growing each day into a new and ever-beautifying revision of his new and beautifying acquisition of intelligence.

CHAPTER XIV

BELIEFS : BOTH FIXED AND UNFIXED

I NOW leave it to the reader to say whether death is a necessity of our organisation, or a desirable thing, since spirit and matter are not two separate substances ; and I will return to again consider what seems to be the spirit forms described so frequently by Spiritualists, and seen by thousands of people.

Our bodies are the condensed forms of our thoughts, or our beliefs. Thought and belief are in some degree synonymous ; both are forms of recognition ; both are mental expressions. A thought seems not to have the fixed character of a belief ; but it may become a belief, and in doing so it will take its place among other fixed beliefs, and be a part of the visible body. Belief is simply thought that becomes fixed. The body is thought, but it is thought that is fixed ; thought whose correctness is not questioned, and (on the mental plane, where we do really exist, whether we are aware of it or not,) becomes visible. Fixed thought is belief ; and belief is visible thought expressed in a thousand

different forms, each form being its own individual recognition of the possibilities contained in the Law of Being.

Thought—before it becomes fixed in belief—is invisible to our undeveloped perceptions ; it is a reality, though intangible, just as the perfume of flowers and many other ethereal substances, which we are not able to perceive except by their effects.

And yet the power to see these fine substances is latent among the undiscovered possibilities that will some time awaken within us. Even now we get occasional evidences of their existence, when we are off our guard against everything but the commonplace and orthodox attainments of the present. We sometimes forget that we believe in nothing but what we call “established facts,” and in these moments of forgetfulness, it may be that some mighty power within us steals a march on us, and shows itself in something unexpected to, and even unacceptable by, our “sober senses.”

Then it is not impossible that the thought which has so far mastered us as to render us in a measure unconscious of what we are thinking, and watchful of the action of our mind, should suddenly appear before us in the objective.

It is a living thing; each atom of its frail being is transfused by the Law. For the time being, it actually has an individuality of its own; an individuality quite negative, however, to that of its creator, myself, for instance, and holding its objective form in ready obedience to my caprice.

This is the real condition: I have been in a reverie, a careless state of mind, when my thoughts were shaping themselves uncontrolled by my will. My will, which is my ego, being off guard, there is a tendency to disintegration in my body—the sum of my fixed beliefs. Then, stray thoughts, beliefs which are not fixed, may start up from the careless or indolent brain, and actually become sufficiently fixed to be visible. In becoming thus partially fixed, they draw upon the fixed beliefs (my body), which for a time are in a measure unfixed.

And here we have the double presence, the second party, which may either be an exact resemblance of ourselves, or the resemblance of some picture that exists, or has existed, at some previous time in the mind.

I recall an occasion when for a few hours I was so exceedingly negative that these thoughts took objective form by the hundred.

They were literally annihilating me, and I was too weak to resist them. My life seemed to be passing out into them, when the physician was called, and by giving me a stimulant re-established the ego in my organisation, which actually appeared to call into itself and absorb every one of the wandering shapes that were disintegrating my body, and thus becoming objective to me.

That thoughts are things is a fact that cannot be disputed. We might as well say that ether did not exist, because it is invisible, as to say that thought is nothing because it is not seen under ordinary conditions.

There is no nothing. Wherever the Law of Attraction is recognised, even in the feeblest manner, there, though unseen, exists the form of that recognition. Recognition is form. Recognition is the making visible of the Law. The Law is the only thing that can be recognised. It may be recognised in weakness or in strength; but wherever it is recognised, no matter whether the recognition is weak or strong, a manifestation of it is inevitable.

Whether this explanation will apply to every phase of spirit materialisation or not, I cannot say. Nor have I given it in the hope that it will do so; for there is no pleasanter thought

to me than that our loved and dead do really live after they have left this sphere, and can return to us again.

Nor does the fact that our thoughts may take shapes which—under certain conditions—become objective to us, invalidate the claim of Spiritualism, that the spirits of the dead can return and take form.

My real object in saying what I have said is to prove to the reader what I know to be true; that there is no nothing; and that thoughts are things. I also wish to establish the fact that the human mind is an unprospected field, and that no one has even the faintest idea of its latent powers.

In the matter of being lifted from the floor, to which I alluded a few pages back, in connection with other Spiritualistic phenomena, I wish to say that this, too, may be, *and is*, a power that belongs to man; one that he can exercise at will when he comes to know more of himself and his relation to the Law of his being.

CHAPTER XV

THE LAW OF ATTRACTION

IN attempting to define the seeming difference between the law of gravitation and the Law of Attraction, I showed that this seeming difference was a difference in the degree of intelligence in the objects that were attracted. I showed how the words "death to death" would explain the law of gravitation, and "life to life" would explain the Law of Attraction; in short, that the law of gravitation was the negative pole of the Law of Attraction, since its effects were manifested in objects too ignorant of the Law of Attraction to be lifted by it.

I said that with the first awakening of intelligence, which in all objects, from a grain of sand up to a man, is the recognition of innate desire, the objects were lifted upward instead of being held downward. The Law of Attraction is therefore the Law of Life in evolution, while the law of gravitation is the same law of life in latency. All is life either in action or with its powers of action latent.

Therefore, the law of gravitation is the Law of Attraction ; but being the negative pole of the Law, it seems to be rather a denial of the Law than the Law itself.

The law of gravitation glides by imperceptible degrees into the Law of Attraction. They are the same Law, the seeming difference being the different degrees of intelligence that recognise it.

The speck of mould lies close to the earth. It does not recognise the principle of life within it. That principle of life is desire. The Law in individual expression is desire ; and after a time the speck of mould feels the *monitions* of the law ; recognises the desire—the law—and becomes what we call a living organism. It was alive before, but did not know it. That is, the Law of Attraction was in it because it is in all things ; but the recognition was wanting ; or, rather, the degree of recognition within it was too undeveloped for observation.

So long as the recognition was wanting, or too feeble for expression, the speck of mould was simply acted on. With stronger self-recognition came the power of independent action ; and then it became obedient to the Law of Attraction within it as expressed in its own recognised desire ; and with even this

small amount of freedom it moved upward from the earth. The law of gravitation in it had developed into the Law of Attraction. In strict truth, it had always been the Law of Attraction, but was only the Law of Attraction to the intelligence that recognised it as such.

Thus it is seen that a recognition of the Law of Attraction emancipates from a belief in the law of gravitation, or from the non-belief in the Law of Attraction; and thus intelligence becomes master of death to the extent of its power to recognise the Law of Attraction.

I shall have to go over this again in order to make it clear.

There really is no law of gravitation; that is, if I am permitted to define the law of gravitation as that power which draws all objects towards the centre of the earth. For there is no such power.

Every atom in the world is mind, intelligence, recognition of the Law of Life within itself, that when expressed at all is expressed in desire. This Life-Principle which is expressed in the individual as desire exists in latency in every atom; and it is no sooner recognised by the atom than the atom acts in obedience to it. The desire in the atom always leads away from

the earth, and not down into it, showing that the real attraction to which every desire points is upward, and not downward.

The tree is attracted upward and goes on being attracted upward, in obedience to its desire, until its very roots—in a broad sense—are freed from the earth, and it walks on top of the earth in a form of greater freedom. It may have a multitude of feet on the ground, and may move with difficulty, but the same Law of Attraction keeps growing upon its recognition, until in the lapse of ages it stands upon four feet. And so the power of recognition goes on for ages again; and it has so far emancipated itself that it stands on only two feet.

And still the power to recognise the Law, as expressed in desire, goes on; and the freedom from the so-called law of gravitation continues.

This is the case to-day. It has been the case always; and who is there to limit its progress in the future?

Man, as to his personality, is clear mind or intelligence. He is the Law in the objective. The Law as personified in desire is his subjective side; and the seeming two are one.

The Law is inexhaustible. Man's recognition of the Law has its limitations, and these limita-

tions establish his shape, and the shape of every object in nature.

But though we see in man's present shape, and in the power or lack of power manifested by him, the limitations of his intelligence, yet there is no valid reason why there should ever be a limit to his intelligence, or his recognition of the Law. The Law being limitless, his power to recognise it is also limitless. And as every fresh recognition of its power releases him more and more from the deadness called gravitation, and puts him more and more under the influence of the Law of Attraction, which is not towards the earth, but away from it, I say the time is coming when he will float in the air; and that, too, without any foreign appliances, and without any effort beyond the simple recognition of the Law of Attraction. In other words, he will float in the air because he wants to.

It is impossible to form anything like an adequate idea of the power of the Law of Attraction. Every form of organisation depends upon it. Every organised form, according to its needs, recognises the power of the Law, and becomes just what it recognises; or shows forth in its external self that which it perceives to be good.

Recognition is the externalising power ; and it is something that grows. The Law does not grow ; but the recognition of the power of the Law grows constantly in the mind of the untrammelled thinker ; and this is why life is a progression, and not a creation.

Nothing is created ; nothing ever has been created. What we call creation is the thousand forms of recognition of the power of the Law of Attraction.

If recognition may be called creation, and in one sense it may be so called, then forms are self-created.

They are, at least, self-manifested.

It is a half-intuitive perception of this fact that has started the belief called "free moral agency."

If free moral agency means the power to act independently of the Law, then there is no free moral agency ; for the Law is one with the power that exerts it ; and the nearest approach a man can make to freedom is through greater knowledge of the Law, or closer conformity with it.

CHAPTER XVI

THE EGO

“ Out of the night that shelters me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods there be
For my unconquerable soul.”

THE much repetition of the foregoing pages would be unpardonable but for the fact that nothing short of repetition over and over again would make the subject clear to those to whom the idea is new.

There are two parts to this subject. One relates to the Law of Being, or Attraction; the other relates to individual life under the Law.

We know nothing of the Law except that it is the moving spirit of all life, the Life-Principle; that it fills all space absolutely full, leaving no room for the least particle of death. We know that this Life-Principle is altogether alive and vital, and altogether good, and as it fills the universe, therefore, the universe is altogether alive and vital and good. This statement excludes the idea of either death

or evil. And, indeed, there is no death and there is no evil.

The Life-Principle, the Law, is the containant of all possibilities. Man and all creatures externalise in their own personalities these possibilities as rapidly as they recognise them.

Recognition makes apparent or visible those possibilities of the Law, that were unapparent or invisible before they were recognised. In this sense — the sense of externalising or making visible the possibilities of the Law — the power to recognise may be called the creative power ; and from this time on I shall speak of it as creative.

Recognition, then, which is intelligence or mind, creates.

I, therefore, come to the second of the two parts of this subject ; that which relates to creation.

The old question in the catechism, "Who made you?" has never been answered correctly except in one instance ; at least, there is only one instance on record, and that will be found in "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

When Miss Ophelia propounded the question to Topsy, it was answered correctly : "Nobody never made me. I 'spect I growed."

On the hypothesis that there is a personal God, who, in spite of His personality—which

means His limitation—still fills all space ; and on the still farther hypothesis that He made man and all the other creatures, I think it must be admitted that, for an individual of His power and boasted judgment, He made a very poor job of it ; so poor that it is no wonder He got tired of the work of His hands, and gave us over to His coadjutor, the devil, to hide it out of His sight.

Compare this theory with the theory that the race is a growth, and that it takes no step forward in the scale of being except by recognition of more truth, or the gain of more intelligence ; and compare it as it now stands with what it was at the time of the cave dwellers, and see if it, as its own creator, has not the right to be proud of its work.

On the first hypothesis the work was finished at one blow—as it were—and it was a wretched piece of work. On the second hypothesis we see the never-ceasing effort of intellect to climb higher in the intellectual scale ; and as a result, an unfinished, but a constantly progressing race ; a race that we admire and respect because we know that it is where it is by its own effort ; by its own unceasing struggle with ignorance ; by the daily heroism of its past as it journeyed through untrodden

wildernesses of thought, without a solitary guiding light except that which its slowly growing and hardly gained experience yielded it.

Take this glorious race just as it stands to-day, still fettered and still clinging to its chains, but still advancing slowly along the road that promises relief from them, and compare it with the cut-and-dried and finished race that God made, and note the difference in your feelings for the two.

In God's race there is no hope. It was completed at its birth and has done nothing but degenerate ever since. God made it dependent on Himself; and it now finds itself in the dilemma of an abandoned job; God having in a measure washed His hands of it and left it to the tender mercies of its arch-enemy, whom God also made, apparently for no other purpose than that of a scapegoat for His own mistakes.

But the man-made race of evolution began in the smallest possible way. It was not only not perfect at its inception, but it was merely the seed germ of a race. It had no God to depend upon and no inspired guide to lead it. It was self-creative and self-dependent from the first, and it felt its slow but sure way up from its beginning, through the darkness of absolute ignorance. It had no guides

but its mistakes. These mistakes which have been imputed to it as sins have been its only guide-posts to point it in the right direction. And yet it has forged its way through earth and air and fire and water and tempest, and the dense blackness of its own intellectual night, to its present standpoint, where it sees the dawning of light at last. It has scored its triumphs in the conquest of a myriad of obstacles; it has covered itself with bruises and wounds too grievous to tell of; it has left thousands of its numbers to mark each upward step in its progress; and it is here to-day, blood-stained, sick and sore from its head to its feet, but dauntless still, and covered with the glory of its undying courage.

O, beautiful race! A baby race even yet; still foot-bound in the long gowns of its infancy, but ready now to tear away each hampering bond, and walk forth in the broad road of an infinite freedom towards infinite wisdom.

Which will you have—the race that God made, or the race that is now making itself?

Those who look upon the race to condemn it, exhibit about as much judgment as one who, coming to the orange tree at my window, should taste the unripe fruit and pronounce orange culture a failure.

If God made the race, then there would be no need for any action upon its part at all. It is made and finished, and that is all there is of it. But if the race made itself, which it surely did, then it has an endless work before it in making itself over in accordance with its ever-enlarging and ever-beautifying ideal.

And who will deny the presence of the ideal in man? Man, God-made, could have no use for an ideal, since God's work must necessarily be perfect; it might have the power to retrograde, but it evidently could have no power to progress.

And yet we find in man an ideal that is always far ahead of his present attainment. This would not be in him if God had made him; it would be in him if he had made himself; it would be the beautiful implanted hope ever leading him to higher growth, to nobler attainment.

And this ideal is not only in man, but it exists in every organised creature from the lowest form of life on up through the scale to man. It is the aspiration, the desire, the Law incarnate, whose never-ending possibilities are foreshadowed in the creature's intuitive or latent powers of recognition. It is the very

basis of growth in all creatures, and links all creatures together on the road of infinite progression ; proving not only the oneness of the Law, but the oneness of the Law's recognition of itself. For the Law's recognition of itself is one, though expressed in individuals. It is one unbroken chain of recognition that establishes not only the brotherhood of man with man, but the brotherhood of every expression of life with every other expression. For as the Law is one, so the recognition of the Law is one ; thus demonstrating the wholeness and infallibility of the universe.

Every life-cell is an ego. It is a seed germ. When—under the Law of Attraction—two or more of the life-cells unite, they come into *one* understanding of the Law, not into two or three understandings, and the two or three egos become one ego, and possess greater drawing power than the single life-cell.

This is shown in the common magnet. It has its positive and negative pole and demonstrates its power as a whole magnet. It may be broken into a hundred pieces, and each piece will be a perfect magnet with its positive and negative pole. Weld the pieces together again, and the many magnets become one magnet. The magnetism is indivisible ; the recognition

of the magnetism may be individualised ; and it is individualised endlessly in the primordial life-cells. The drawing together of the cells and their cohesion in more complex forms is individual growth.

In individual growth the drawing power of the individual is constantly increased ; as it increases it becomes constantly more positive to the less complex individualities about it, and masters them ; by mastering them it unites their power to its own. The strength of the conquered does, in a sense, pass into the conqueror ; and so we have the law of individual growth, which is by the survival of the fittest.

The magnet's recognition of its own magnetism is its recognition of the Law of Attraction within it.

The man's recognition of desire within himself is the recognition of the Law of Attraction within him.

The leading difference between the magnet and the man is that, while both recognise the Law of Attraction within themselves, the man's recognition is of such a character as to give birth to WILL ; the conscious ego ; while that of the magnet has not advanced so far on the road to consciousness.

In the early stages of individual growth, the creature's recognition of the Law of Attraction within it is perceived to be simple desire. But this desire is the basis of all future growth. The more we gratify desire, the more it grows. This is equivalent to saying, the more we recognise the Law, the more of the power of the Law we embody; for the recognition of desire is the recognition of the Law.

The desire thus recognised by the creature has no moral character whatever; nor has the Law itself any moral character. Morality is an external thing, and belongs to the intelligence.

Desire is a purely selfish attribute.

What then, is the Law of Attraction, the Law that men call God, a selfish principle?

The Law of Attraction has no character whatever; it is neither selfish nor unselfish; it is simply the drawing power, *whole and indivisible*; utterly regardless of morality or individual rights.

With individualisation comes the consciousness of the Law, taking the form of desire. It is utterly selfish; it is the ego; it is the "I" in a struggle with every other "I."

Its selfishness, from its first inception, is only limited by its lack of power. It is its own

centre of the universe, and its own effort is to draw to itself all there is.

The selfishness of the creature increases step by step with the development of higher and still higher types of life. Why? Because development is nothing else but the still greater recognition of individual desire; and desire is the starting-point and the basic principle of self; it is selfishness or selfhood.

The desire of the individual is only limited in its selfish grasping after everything it sees by a still greater desire; the desire for a secure life.

So long as all creatures act from selfish desire, there is one constant state of warfare, and the world is under the dominion of fear. The desire for peace and security dominates the desire for possession, and gradually it becomes the highest desire that justice shall reign, because justice guarantees the greatest happiness. The desire, without ever forsaking the central standpoint of self, always bent on its own happiness, has developed a better conception or a better recognition of what it takes to produce happiness.

Individual life rests exclusively on selfishness; the effort of each to attain its own ends; its own happiness. The best method of attaining these ends, true happiness, is a matter of

intellectual growth : a matter of greater recognition of the Law of Attraction ; the law of infinite union ; the Law as expressed in greater and more complex desires.

The renunciation of one individual to another and the folly of self-sacrifice, become apparent when it is seen that such renunciation and sacrifice rest on the same foundation that all our other actions rest upon. They are performed for the purpose of yielding us the greatest happiness, either here or hereafter.

So it happens that no man can resign the ego. Let him cover it up as he will, it is always the motor that moves him, and always will be. What is religion but giving up something in the present in order that we may get it in the future with infinitely compounded interest? I am willing to give the heathen the twenty dollars I have saved for the purchase of a new dress, if I am convinced that God is my security and will pay me back a hundred-fold. It appears to me as a first-class business transaction, and I will risk "the sacrifice."

The mother love, that beautiful and tender and holy feeling, is self-love. The child is the object of the mother's desire ; probably the very highest object of her desire ; and she

holds it more tenaciously than anything else.

Every form of love rests on desire ; rests on the basis of self. Indeed, every good and beautiful attribute has self-love for its starting point ; self-love worked out through higher and nobler recognition of the Law of Attraction, and individualised in higher and nobler desires.

The growth of desire is the growth and strengthening of the individual.

Society, when it shall have reached a more ideal condition than at present, will have reached it through the strengthening of the individualities composing it ; and these individualities will have become strengthened by a better recognition of their own selfhood as expressed in their enlarged desire.

The total sacrifice of the selfish principle as expressed in desire, if such a thing were possible, would mean the destruction of the ego, which would be annihilation. And this is the impracticable and the impossible religion preached from thousands of pulpits to-day, whose effects are not the making of men, but the prostitution of them to a mistaken renunciation and self-deceptive and often a hypocritical humility. Religion is based on fear.

And I now state boldly that everything in this world that is based on fear must die. It must die, that man may live and love and expand to the glory of true and free individualism through the power of love, whose very nature is incompatible with fear.

The love that is preached from the pulpit is an impossible thing in the character of the religion that preaches it. And why?

Because the religion itself is the most diluted compound of weakness ever concocted for the abject prostration of individuality. It is a doctrine that teaches men to resign their own strength, and to lean on the strength of another; a doctrine that ignores individual power, and throws itself in abject helplessness upon some imaginary power external to the individual. In such circumstances the very effort of a person to love his neighbour as himself becomes a hypocritical pretence. He is not capable of generating love; love is the child of freedom, and the slave of fear is powerless to beget it. No one who is weak in his own selfhood can give himself; and this is love. No one who leans on a power outside of himself can be anything but weak.

It is only when men come into a state of freedom from the ripening of the ego, that

it becomes possible for them to fulfil the claims of the so-called gospel, and love others as they love themselves. For love is the overplus of strength, and they who lean and beg will never be strong enough to generate anything but a counterfeit representative of it.

Love is the outflow of individual strength; the outflow of the individual's very self; there is no outflow to individual weakness; nothing but the absorptive drying up that we perceive in stagnant water.

The time is fast approaching when men will love; and that, too, because self is the moving spring of each person. When we shall become free from fear through the growing knowledge of our own power, we will see in others only the qualities that attract us, and we will flow out to them in desires for their good. Beautiful deeds will become the spontaneous outgrowth of free souls. In an atmosphere of freedom, the kingdom of love will be established.

We would love now if we were free and strong; but we are so fettered and so weak and so full of fears for our own safety, that we cannot get away from the clamouring ego within us for an hour. We cannot come into that condition of noble and lofty repose which

enables us to say, "All things are well at home. I will, therefore, go abroad and see if I cannot make them better for my neighbours." This would be love. It would be the superabundant outflow of strength.

But why should I care—being happy myself—whether others are happy or not? Am I not under obedience to the law of selfishness? In what particular is this personal ego I find within myself to be served by serving others?

I answer that in my still farther recognition of the Law of Attraction I have come into closer relationship with my neighbour; the drawing power of the Law has so shown me his oneness with me that it has become my desire to help him; my whole nature has warmed towards him, because the Law in its fuller manifestation is *Love*. My more complete recognition of the Law has filled me with love, and love seeks an object; it is the expression of the Law of Attraction, and being full of it, my happiness is best served by manifesting it in noble words and generous deeds. And thus, even in the execution of man's loftiest ideal for the universal good, we see that he acts in obedience to his self-love; the love so misunderstood and so condemned by the superficial thought of the age.

The tendency of evolution is the perfecting of individuality ; the concentration of power in the ego. Man must learn that he is self-creative, and that his only hope lies in this fact ; that his only salvation is knowledge ; that knowledge is a constantly growing power.

Seeing this to be so, let every human being take fresh hope.

So long as salvation is supposed to depend on another, it must always seem doubtful ; and this doubt cannot but keep one more or less under the influence of fear.

But when self-salvation is seen to rest on self-dependence, on individual effort, then native courage and will-power come to the rescue, and a man shoulders the burden of his journey, and trudges along the road of endless progression with faith in himself to overcome all obstacles.

And in this frame of mind he grows stronger every hour, no matter how rough the journey ; the rougher the better, since every conquest adds to his strength until he feels his position to be God-like and irresistible.

CHAPTER XVII

ENDLESS PROGRESSION : ITS RETARDATION BY FEAR

SELF-DEPENDENCE in the pursuit of wisdom—this alone is growth.

Whenever a man is in a position that entails the necessity of leaning on some external aid, he is a dying man ; his tendency is downward ; he is under the so-called law of gravitation. Knock the props from under him ; then, if he can stand alone, with faith in his own unaided self, and with the resolution to follow his highest aspirations, indifferent to the criticisms of his neighbours, he has passed the line that lies between the so-called law of gravitation and the Law of Attraction, and has entered the outskirts of a diseaseless and deathless domain of pure life.

That this is a difficult thing to do, no one can doubt. We look abroad and see disease and death everywhere. They seem to be the established order of nature ; to break away from them looks an impossibility. We have not yet discovered that there is no established

order in nature; we cannot yet realise that nature is an ever-varying series of conceptions of the Law, and that disease and death are among these conceptions.

That they are mistaken conceptions, or conceptions based on our ignorance of absolute truth, has not occurred to us. We have not yet found out that all is life, and that the whole chain of growth, from the lowest organic form, up to man, is a gradually growing consciousness of this great truth; this absolute truth; the most important of the few absolute truths we know at this time.

The entire procession of organic forms, I say again, has been but a series of gradually enlarging perceptions of the undeniable truth that there is no death, and can be none; that all is life.

Individual intelligence, individual knowledge of this one mighty truth, is positive salvation from disease and death.

That disease and death should be among the conceptions of nature, is because nature in its conceptions of the truth is a growth. It cannot conceive the full possibilities of the Law of Attraction in a moment, any more than a peach can conceive the possibilities of its fully ripened condition at the moment of its inception.

Let us imagine that nature could be absolutely perfect and beyond the possibility of any farther growth ; that man, as a part of nature, was also perfect. In this case, he would have nothing more to desire, and no farther incentive either to thought or action. Is there anything desirable in such a condition ? Is it not the most terrible form of death that one can imagine ? Dead, and yet conscious of the situation ; dead and yet sufficiently alive to know it. For my part, I should prefer an eternal sleep.

On the other hand, look at nature with man at its head as an ever-growing thing. Look at the Law as expressed individually in desire. In this condition there is always a future ; there is always some happiness to be attained, which, when attained, projects its hope of some other and greater happiness. There is always some obstacle of ignorance to be conquered, the conquering of which brings a greater consciousness of strength and power to him who conquers. There is an ever-enlarging object in life ; an ever-enlarging hope for that which lies beyond ; an ever-enlarging future, which, in passing behind us, strengthens our position in the universe and confirms our mastery more and more. There is always

something to live for; always an object to stimulate effort, and always the deepening and broadening and beautifying manhood and womanhood that is the result of effort. There is always the closer approximation of our external selves to the glorious internal ideal born of desire, and bringing us more and more into a position of oneness with the Law of Attraction, thus uniting us in love and harmony and power.

And in all of this growth, we will eventually exhaust the latent powers of the earth, and enter other spheres of thought and action, whose possibilities will far transcend those of the earth.

And on and on, through a never-ending series of conquests in obedience to the ideal, which allures forever to higher heights and to happier happiness, and to tenderer and nobler love.

There is perfection, but man will never reach it. It is an infinite thing and belongs only to the Law, the unchangeable Principle of Life; the Eternal Unit; the One. Man is many; he represents a million phases of the Law; but not the all of it. His happiness depends on his finiteness; on the absolutely limitless capacity of his power to grow.

The basis of individual life is desire. Desire

is the Law incarnate in the individual. It is the diseaseless and deathless principle. This fact shows that it is of the Law, and not of the intelligence, or the recognition of the Law. The desire exists whether it is recognised or not. Indeed, it is very seldom that the desire is recognised in a man in a way that will make it apparent in his consolidated intelligence, which is his body.

He desires and he recognises that he does desire, but he does not recognise that his desire is a power to be relied upon. He desires, but he fears to trust his desire and trusts his fear instead; thus giving the superior recognition to his fear, and ignoring his desire. In ignoring his desire, he in a measure paralyses its effectiveness; in recognising his fear, he makes the fear paramount in his mind or his intelligence, and it is the fear that is recorded in his intelligence, and not the perfect desire. And this is why these human intelligences—our bodies—are so weak and wretched and diseased, and why they die.

To fear is as much a function of the intellect as to hope. To fear is to believe something that you do not wish to believe. Every belief is a form of intelligence or ignorance (the two words are off the same piece, being nega-

tive and positive poles of truth). To believe what you fear is to make manifest a certain state of mind ; it is a negative state of mind, but this does not prevent it from being a belief ; and to believe anything whatever is to make it manifest or visible ; whether it is a negative belief, by which I mean a belief that denies the absolute truth that all is life, or a positive belief that affirms the infallibility of the Life-Principle.

If a man believes that which he fears, his belief is a traitor to his desire ; it is not at one with his desire, and, therefore, it does not properly clothe his desire or make it manifest.

There is no belief entirely free from the recognition of the desire ; there must be some recognition of desire in every belief, or else the body of man's belief would scarcely cohere enough to give him a personal appearance at all. And men do trust their desires deep down in their intuitional natures much more than they are usually aware of ; from this fact, they live longer than would appear possible when we consider how very much people seem to trust their fears. Desire is so positive a thing that it commands a certain amount of recognition, even though it is unconscious or intuitive recognition.

Life, freedom from disease and old age, depend entirely on the amount and kind of recognition a man gives to his desire. One man recognises his desire as something dangerous to his own salvation and to society, and goes to work to crush it. This crushing process usually strengthens the desire and thereby the individual; but it is apt to render him an inharmonious element in society, not because his desire is evil, but because his mistaken intelligence imputes evil to it. With this imputed character, and with the recognition he has given his desire in trying to crush it, he has become a strong man in a mistaken direction.

For the desire is the Principle of Life in the man. It points forever in the direction of happiness; it is altogether good and diseaseless and deathless, without knowing this fact. It is a part of the altogether good and diseaseless and deathless Law, awaiting individual recognition in order to become manifest or visible on the external (the mental) plane, in an altogether good and diseaseless and deathless individual existence.

When a man—in order to attain some form of that happiness toward which his desire is always pointing—makes the mistake of injuring another, it is not his desire that has erred, but

his intelligence. His desire never points toward the injury of another ; it cannot possibly do so ; it is a portion of the eternal unity, an intelligent recognition of which leads to a condition of unbroken harmony, undying brotherhood, and ever-enlarging love.

The intelligence—which is the individualising factor—does little else thus far in its growth than make mistakes, as it gropes blindly in the direction of the absolute truth that there is no death ; that all is life.

The truth that all is life comes only with a recognition of the Law of Attraction. Ever since the first tiny creature, and before, the trend of ages has been towards the knowing of this truth. And now we know it.

To know it is to be conjoined to it in its diseaselessness and deathlessness. To know it is to be one with it. To know that it is diseaseless and deathless is to know that it is also sinless ; it is to know that the so-called sins of the race have been like the so-called diseases, nothing more than the mistaken beliefs of a baby race, following the dim and murky lights its half-awakened intelligence yielded it, in the direction it thought would lead to happiness.

No man desires to be a criminal. All men

desire happiness. It is the *mistaken* efforts to gratify a desire than can be nothing else but holy, that create the mistaken appearance of sin in the world, and fill it with poor, benighted blunderers whom we call sinners.

Until the growth of intelligence in the race shall demonstrate this to be true, society can do no better than protect itself from the consequences of these mistakes and their mistaken perpetrators, as it is now doing. But a time is coming when a true knowledge on this subject will convert our state prisons into colleges, where the truth will be taught.

More and more the power we have ascribed to "God"—the Law—seems to be centring in the individual. It is evolving through the individual's organisation and is being expressed by him; and in proportion as it is so understood and expressed, man trusts his fears less and his desires more.

Man's organism is the intellectual laboratory for the expression or the making visible and available the power of the Law of Attraction in our world of uses.

The power exists; the Law exists; but it might as well not exist as to find in external life no recognition of it. "Man is God's necessity." The law is simply the invisible frame-

work upon which man strings the wonderful creations of his genius ; it is the infinite breath of life that flows into his every thought, and makes his thoughts external, visible existences.

It is true that without the Law, man could not be ; but it is also true that without man to interpret the Law, and so make it manifest externally, the Law might as well not be.

The belief that the invisible is more important than the visible is a mistake. The belief that individual life, as it refines and spiritualises, becomes less allied to the visible plane and more allied to the invisible plane, is another mistake.

Individual life as it refines and spiritualises will attain a stability and a fixedness, a power of cohesion and concentration on the visible plane, infinitely greater than it now possesses. It will be as much more solid than it is now, as steel is more solid than water ; it will become as much more delicate and compact as alabaster is more delicate and compact than sand. The refining principle that comes through the growth of a superior intelligence will not disintegrate individuals, or cause them to disappear from the external world. Intellectual growth is the constant replacement of a low grade of thought by a higher grade of thought ;

it is the constant acquisition of new truth. New truth relegates to the past every particle of old truth, which in the light of the new truth, has become error, and, therefore, useless.

Every atom of this truth, new and old, is substance; the identical stuff our bodies and everything else we see are made of; and it changes constantly. If we keep on learning new truths, the substance of our bodies refines; grows stronger and more beautiful. If we cease to learn, this substance dries up and falls to the earth under obedience to the negative pole of the Law of Attraction, which says, "The dead to the dead."

Jesus understood this and said, "Let the dead bury their dead." The dead are burying their dead to-day all over the world. But the life of a nobler intelligence has appeared, and death itself is dying.

CHAPTER XVIII

MAN'S POWER TO SPEAK THE CREATIVE WORD : EVOLUTION OF THE IDEAL

THE visible universe is the universe of uses, and man's theatre of ever-progressive action. To pull out of his own brain, as the spider pulls out of its body, an unending web of creations; creations that suggest other creations in a never-ending procession of higher and still higher and more potent uses—this is man's privilege and his destiny.

At a certain point in the acquisition of intelligence, a man arrives at a wonderful fact; he perceives that he is personally creative; sees that his spoken word has the power of life in it; that it heals the sick, banishes old age and drives death away.

He does this through the power of the Law made personal.

That man should be able to make the power of the Law personal in himself is so wonderful a truth that the world is not going to accept it until it sees it demonstrated. But even now the fact is being demonstrated in sufficient force

to prove to the unprejudiced observer that the statement I have made is true.

The people, as a whole, are not looking for anything out of the common occurrences of life ; their preachers and their teachers, their body tinkers and their soul tinkers, are on top of them, and are holding them down with a weight as of mountains. When one poor, struggling creature gets from under, and begins to breathe the pure air of higher intelligence, he distrusts it because of its very purity. He is afraid of it ; its grandeur terrorises him ; he is tempted to crawl back to his old stifling position in order to obtain again that mental stupor he is fain to call " his peace of mind."

The rapidly enlarging thoughts that spring from his liberated brain can find no soil for their germination ; as far as his vision can reach, he sees but an arid desert waste, incapable of responding to his mental touch. He grows hopeless ; the belief in himself and his own ideas, that would make them manifest in external form in spite of the most unfavourable conditions, is wanting ; the disregardful world drifts over his genius and he is lost.

Belief is the clothing power of which desire is the spirit or soul.

Belief is the fruit of intelligence. A man

believes what his intelligence shows him to be true. His belief is his fixed perception of certain facts. As his perception of facts changes, his belief changes.

No one doubts this; but when I say that his body is a faithful record of his beliefs, and shows forth every change of his perceptions, very few people will believe it; and yet it is true.

Beliefs with slight variations run in grooves that produce established types. Cattle represent a certain set of beliefs, and we have their type. Horses represent a set of beliefs, differing somewhat from those of cattle, and we have another type. Man represents another set of beliefs—a more intelligent set of beliefs—and they are faithfully registered in his higher organisation.

There has been very little change in man's beliefs for ages. In all important particulars, he believes substantially what he believed thousands of years ago. He represents the inherited beliefs of many generations. His beliefs have been somewhat changed in a few particulars, but the body of his beliefs is the same. He believes himself to be a limited creature; he believes that God made him in His own image and that God holds his destiny in His hand.

He leans on God or on some other imaginary power; and it is his disbelief in himself as his own maker and the master of his own destiny, that keeps him from farther marked and substantial advancement in his beliefs.

His intellect is locked up within a limit of his own making, and though he is slowly widening this limit in spots, he is contracting it in other spots, and his average growth out of his fetters is very slow.

The belief lying at the root of all his hampering beliefs is a belief in the deadness of the matter out of which he thinks his body is made. He carries the body of death with him from the cradle to the grave. In spite of his ever-present intuition that death is not for him, he admits its existence in his external senses, and he takes the consequences of the admission, and dies.

The few years of his life are insufficient for anything more than the round of ideas pursued by his father; and so he dies without having found any new line of thought by which to change his fixed beliefs. And thus, with human belief in a state of stagnation, the race itself is stagnant. It cannot improve in any decidedly marked manner.

The idea that the race has reached its

ultimate development is one of the most absurd of all its ideas. It may be that the human form has become a crude expression of the shape best adapted to the highest use; and, in that case, there will be no higher race of animal creatures than man. But if this is so, and I believe it is, then the improvement to be made in him by a constantly growing belief in his own unlimited power will show forth—not in any marked change in his bodily structure—but in an ever-strengthening, refining and beautifying process of his present structure. A man can be just what he believes he can be, after he understands the Law. He can do just what he believes he can do, after he has come into the understanding of being.

Therefore, personal power is simply a matter of the understanding of truth; simply a course of mental training in the right direction; the direction towards freedom from every one of his old hampering beliefs in his own limitation, and a consequent emancipation from every description of fear.

All power is in the knowing. By the word power, I do not mean some abstract, far-away force, but a present personal power; a power vested in the individual himself; the power to be precisely what he wants to be, and to do

precisely what he wants to do. A man has no limitations but those imposed by his ignorance of his power.

This is because the external of man is belief. What he believes, even in his ignorance of the Law—he is. When he shall come into an understanding of the Law, and know that it does not circumscribe him in any direction whatever, he can then consult his desires as to what he desires to become, and, recognising that the Law does not stand in the way of his becoming what he desires to be, he slowly begins to grow into it. He speaks the word of his own renewed creation. He begins slowly to grow into the new form of life projected by his ideal.

I say “slowly,” because at first this complete change of belief is very slow indeed. At every step of his progress in it, he is met by the solid wall of his previous beliefs, which have been compacted in him by a thousand generations of ancestors. He not only meets this solid wall in himself, but he can scarcely take a step outside of himself without meeting it in a still more unyielding form from those in whom it has never been shaken at all, and who turn upon him like enraged beasts when they begin to feel the change that is going on in him.

Truly, he who would step up to a higher plane in life must be brave, as well as faithful to the best he knows.

And yet, to one who is thoroughly tired of the world as it is—tired of its mediocre attainments, tired of the entire range of its cheap and wretched thought—any change, however difficult, seems a relief. The energies are stimulated by it; and under the stimulus greater hopes are born and greater courage to insure their ripening.

Anything more dismal than the eternal round of small events that swarm our pathway from the cradle to the grave, to be repeated in each successive generation, I cannot imagine. No wonder if death should be welcomed by the weary pilgrim after his third or fourth journey over this arid and unchanging scene. If a continued existence has nothing better to hold out to us as an inducement to our prolonged lives here, I want nothing of it.

The same thing over and over and over for thousands of years—this has been the history of the race. A generation is born; it drags through untold hardships, gives birth to another generation, and dies.

And, in the circumstances, it ought to be glad to die. It has no incentive to live. More-

over, there is no reason why it should live ; its only use, so far as its growth has carried it, is to propagate its kind in order that the highest form of life on our globe shall not become extinct until the knowledge of self-salvation, through a continued growth, unbroken by death, should come to it.

The possibility of this unbroken line of growth in the individuals of the race has been the ever-alluring, though never-defined hope, by which it was possible for the generations to repeat themselves, until such time as human intelligence had come to that point of development where it could grasp the idea of perpetual and undying growth, and hold fast to it until it became fixed in these forms of personal beliefs, which we call our bodies.

Indeed, evolution, in its whole course, has flowed steadily up to this one hope ; or, rather, because self-perpetuation was an ultimate possibility, all life has ascended the scale in one unbroken stream of higher, and still higher forms towards its actualisation.

To believe it possible to live forever in constant progression towards more refined and more powerful conditions, is the beginning of growth towards these conditions. This belief is the seed germ in the primordial life-cell ; it

has developed in us on the unconscious plane ; that is, without any help from our reasoning powers, until the present time.

The development of this seed germ can only go a certain distance on the unconscious plane. The time comes when unconscious growth—having ripened an intellect of sufficient power—demands the co-operation of that intellect ; or at least, the recognition of its still latent possibilities by that intellect ; or it develops no farther. This is the period when a transition from unconscious to conscious life begins ; in other words, it is a transition from the plane wherein life lived us, to the higher plane where we begin to live ourselves, or to do our own living by our own knowledge of how to do it.

The unconscious plane of life is that plane in which we recognise the Law without knowing what it is, and without giving it any special thought. We simply recognise it as we make it manifest through use. We perform all the uses of life because life is in us ; but our intelligences take no thought about it in any way that can lead to practical results. We know we live, and that is about all we do know.

When unconscious life, as expressed in uses, begins to become conscious life, it shows forth

in a strange and heretofore unknown awakening of the intelligence ; which, as it proceeds, lifts life from its unconscious plane, its plane of uses, to a plane of conscious power in its own ability to express itself in logical statements of itself, and free from compulsory expression in those uses, which, previously, had been its only mode of expression.

It is emancipated from the position of drudgery that was the natural result of its ignorance of its own ability and power, into a position of mastery, when its own logical statement of truth, as it has learned it by self-inspection, establishes its station in the world.

For instance, the man reasons this way : He says, "I have got an understanding of the power vested in the Law of Being ; or at least an understanding of enough of that power to know that nothing can circumscribe it. This for the first part. For the second part, I perceive that desire is the individualised expression of the Law ; and that desire is made manifest or visible in the external world by belief. I have believed in the power of the Law unconsciously, and that belief has manifested itself in all the organs of my body, and in the senses that relate me as an individual to the world of uses. Having realised its power even before I learned

to observe it and reason on it intellectually, now, at this time, when I do observe it and reason upon it intellectually, I am beginning to be amazed at my own stupidity, and the stupidity of the race, that so little should be understood about it.

“For if an unconscious or dumb and blind belief should have brought me up to my present standpoint in creation, what will not a conscious or intelligent belief do for me ; a belief, that, knowing something of the Law, can co-operate with the Law in its manifestation in my body ? ”

If the Law can manifest through blind belief, as it does do, how much more powerfully can it manifest through the intelligent belief that meets its every manifestation with a ready understanding of its meaning ?

The action of the law is correlated to the action of the intelligence ; the greater the activity of the intelligence, the greater the activity of the Law in manifesting. So long as the power of the law to manifest was confined to the dumb intelligence of the body, an intelligence that reciprocated only in added functions to the body, it continued to build the body until the body needed no more of those functions that expressed life only in uses. It had reached a shape of such proportions as,

perhaps, best fitted it for its journey through eternity.

But suppose the Law could—at this stage of man's development—simply hold the man in existence, without any farther attempt at the recognition of truth on his part, what object would be served in the economy of human development?

None at all.

We should have a race stagnant at the completion of its animal life; a race not able to go alone in its own growing strength, and not worth carrying because of its helplessness, its disease and deformity and brutality. Such a condition would furnish us with a spectacle of arrested growth on so huge a scale, as to be beyond comparison with anything of the kind ever witnessed in the universe.

But this is precisely the spectacle we have been looking upon for thousands of years here on this planet. What does it mean?

It means that the Law reciprocates our unconscious recognition up to a certain point only, and never goes beyond that point. It reaches that point with each generation. Each generation then falls away from this unconscious recognition; it dies, and another generation follows in its footsteps, to again

cease its unconscious recognition of the Law, and die.

And what cares the Law? The Law is unheeding. The Law bends to no one's cries or prayers. It is not generous; it has no moral quality; it is simply the Principle of Attraction; the attractive and cohesive power of the universe. It is unchanging; it simply IS. "Men may come and men may go," but it *exists* forever.

But in all these wretched rounds of the ripening generations, the upper brain has been building; the brain that begins to realise and trust and believe in the ideal. And what has the ideal promised? It has promised us happiness; and happiness means freedom in its best sense; freedom from the bonds that have been festering more and more in our worn senses as the ideal brain grew; freedom from all our past conditions. "Conditions" is a word that, being interpreted by the new meaning which the advancing truth has placed upon it, is synonymous with "beliefs." For, if a man is all mind, as to his personality, then his conditions are his beliefs, and his beliefs are his conditions.

And so the ideal brain is promising us relief from the old beliefs, that have held u

so long in the ruts of dead but unburied thought. It is not only furnishing us with new hopes, but it is showing us the feasibility of trusting these hopes to their utmost; and trusting them, they will lift us away from the broken generations that are the result of our unconscious recognition of the Law, into the one unbroken generation that will begin as soon as we yield to the leadings of the ideal, and place our trust upon the infinite possibilities latent in the Law; possibilities we have never yet prospected for.

It is the growing brain, the development of the ideal faculties, that gives us power at this time to perceive more of the power latent in the Law than we have ever before seen. And as it is a fact that—the body being all mind—the more we see of the power of the Law, the more that power becomes incarnate in us; it, therefore, follows that the race is going to accomplish the effort of centuries, and cross the line between its unconscious life of the past, and enter a condition of conscious life for the future.

The ideal faculty in its development makes our desires seem plausible and possible of realisation. No inferior faculty of the brain has ever done this, or ever can do it. The

ideal has not only opened the external world up before us, and given us new incentives to life and effort, but it has opened new departments in the body that correlate the external; that are adapted to the external, and that—under the Law of Attraction—will unite with the external in a new growth, and a nobler growth than the race has yet had.

There is no doubt at all that it has been exclusively by the race's growing recognition of desire, that the ideal faculties have been built. The ideal brain is the new laboratory which desire has formed for the expression of its own peculiar characteristics. Desire has formed it in order to make itself visible and audible in the world of effects. Desire, as a latent and greatly ignored function, desired to be recognised by the individual in whose economy it played so important a part; and in order to do this, it had to build a laboratory in the human brain for the expression of itself. And so we have the faculty of ideality. And it is the growth of this faculty that is now pledged to lift us to a recognition of the vast importance of the Law of Attraction within us as expressed in desire.

It is teaching us even now, in spite of the contempt heaped on our desires by generations

of theologians, to respect desire in ourselves and others. It is teaching a few of us to stand by our desires, and uphold them as we would stand by and uphold our own lives; for we know that desire is the Life-Principle within us, and that it is death to ignore it.

In speaking of desire, the Life-Principle in man, it seems unnecessary to guard it against the misapprehension that has always clouded it in public opinion. Public opinion is a very shallow stream; and no defence that I can make of a word which has lain so long under the drifts of theological rubbish will be understood. To the thinkers, I have only to repeat what I said once before in these pages; that desire is the implanted Life-Principle, without which no plant or animal, no organic form, could ever move at all; indeed, there could be no organic form; for the principle of cohesion would not be expressed in individuals were it not for desire. Desire points always in one direction; the direction of happiness.

That the individual makes most grievous mistakes in seeking the happiness towards which desire always points, is because the individual in his external life is a mental creature, whose only chance to grow is by projecting experimental efforts here, there,

and everywhere; and by the results of these experiments he judges for himself whether he is right or wrong. In this way he has built himself from the smallest possible life, up to the most powerful life on our globe. And in the same way he will go on building himself until experience shall teach him that his highest happiness hangs on the great moral law laid down by Jesus: "Whatsoever ye would that others should do unto you, do ye also unto them."

In believing in my desires, I believe in the Law of Attraction in my body. The Law of Attraction is the power that holds the atoms of my body in cohesion. In our unconscious life, the Law acts without our knowing it; it holds the atoms of our bodies compact until we reach the point of our highest development, or until we are grown. Then, if our *conscious* knowledge of its power could join on to our unconscious knowledge of it, the power would still operate to hold the atoms in such close relation to each other that we would not grow any older.

But when we fail to recognise the Law in our bodies as expressed in desire, then at the point when the unconscious life drops us, we begin to grow old. The growing old process is simply a process of disintegration or falling apart of the

atoms, because we do not begin the process of conscious recognition, and the power vested in unconscious recognition begins to fail. We are then in a condition of negation, wherein the atoms or cells lose their magnetic relation to each other more and more. As this goes on, the different organs of the body become deadened to each other's magnetisms, and become slack in their action, until the whole system gets to be like an old machine, whose wheels have worn smaller and smoother until the cogs do not act in a way to move all its parts harmoniously. This is the condition we call old age.

A similar condition may exist in youth. There may be a non-recognition of the Law of Attraction on the unconscious plane of a child ; and the child may express the condition in many forms of error called disease. And every form of it is non-recognition, either consciously or unconsciously, of the Law of Attraction in the individual as expressed in desire.

A sick person may have a hundred desires, and the desire to live, more than all others ; but even having the desire in its greatest development, he does not trust it ; and it is powerless to save him.

He must not only be conscious of his desire, but he must know that desire is the saving

power, and that to trust it fully, to believe in it as a saving power, is to be saved. This is what the Bible means when it speaks of the saving power of God, and of how God will save to the uttermost all who trust in Him. The old prophets and teachers of that long past age, when the Bible was written, had an inkling of the truth of this matter. For their God is the Law; it is expressed in man in desire; and when comprehended and trusted, the result is absolute and indestructible and ever-refining and progressive life.

By the understanding of his own power as related to the Law of Being, a man's spoken word will recreate him.

CHAPTER XIX

HEALTH AND STRENGTH AND BEAUTY AND
OPULENCE ARE TO BE FOUND IN GREATER
FULNESS IN THIS NEW AND WONDERFUL
THOUGHT THAN IN ANYTHING ELSE IN
THE WHOLE WORLD

FROM the mental standpoint, disease is error ; it cannot consistently be called anything else.

If all is life, as it surely is in absolute truth ; and if man is an individualised understanding of the life, then he may be said to be a mental statement of the Law ; and a statement which he himself has made. Not knowing the absolute truth that all is life ; knowing, indeed, nothing of the Law ; not being able to give anything like a reasonable account of himself ; simply feeling that he lives — it cannot be otherwise than that his statement of being should be extremely weak, and full of errors.

Errors of intelligence are simply negations or denials of the Law, through ignorance of its existence. These negations or denials of absolute truth show forth in a hundred forms of weak and erroneous beliefs. The body being

mind, fixed beliefs, no matter how erroneous, are recorded in it in the degree and character of its weakness.

Everybody was ignorant of the Law. No two persons were ignorant precisely in the same way and to the same extent. So these various shades and grades of ignorance were so many different erroneous statements. These beliefs were predicated upon a fixed conviction in the perishability of matter. Beliefs based upon the accepted idea that matter is perishable could not do otherwise than result in death sooner or later.

The race takes the consequences of its beliefs ; a thing it could not do but for the fact that it is all mind, and that every man's body is a statement of his beliefs, either acquired by himself or inherited from his parents, or both ; modified in nearly all instances by the beliefs of those about him.

For, until a man has learned to think himself out of the fixed beliefs of the race, by the recognition of his own freedom through a knowledge of the Law, he meets with constant environment from the opinions of others ; and this environment does have its influence in shaping him.

No man has any mode of thought that is

absolutely and unalterably fixed, until he comes into the knowledge of the Law. Then all his thoughts begin to adjust themselves to his knowledge of absolute truth, and gradually the entire bulk of his former fixed beliefs (his body) begins to change.

It does not change its type, but its type begins to relax, so as to admit of a series of all-over improvements, corresponding with his revised beliefs in absolute truth; the truth that all is life; and, therefore, good and desirable.

When a man arrives at the knowledge of this one mighty and absolute truth, he has a firm foundation under him for the first time in the history of the race. He now has a logical basis of fact from which to make a new statement of himself. The statement of himself which he has inherited is not, and never has been, a statement for which he, as a reasoning creature, is responsible. It is a statement of the developing animalhood of all the past, which has culminated in him, and which he has accepted in unconsciousness of the fact that he could make a statement that would suit him better.

But he could make no better statement so long as he believed himself to be a creation

of some force outside of himself. He could make no better statement so long as he did not know by what means his present statement had been achieved; he could not even make any special change in the statement of himself; he was helpless as a log in his ignorance of the Law, and of his own power under the Law. And so the same statement simply kept repeating itself over and over as the race proceeded, without any marked departure from the fixed type, until now.

But now the greatest truth that has ever dawned on the race is here; the absolute truth that all is life; that disease, death and old age are erroneous statements regarding life; and that this truth simply awaits universal recognition in order that its vitalising influence shall be expressed in one unbroken current through all the members of the race.

I refer again to that wonderful book, the Bible. "Believe," says the Bible, "and you shall be saved." How can belief save a man unless he is all mind?

Believe in whom?

"Believe in God"; these are the words.

Believe in the power of the Law; these are equivalent words.

God and man are one; the Law and man

are one. God, the Law, is subjective man. The race is God, the Law, made objective.

The Law being the unchangeable Life-Principle, it cannot be diseased and it cannot die. Intelligence may weaken in its recognition of the Law on the unconscious plane, and this weakening may be called disease. Or it may cease to recognise it altogether on the unconscious plane, and this will be called death.

Is it really disease and death? Certainly not. It is simply the individual cessation of any farther power to recognise life; but it is not the death of life.

Non-recognition of life, life that is self-existent and eternal, is no more evidence that death exists than a blind man's belief in darkness is evidence that there is no light.

Therefore, disease is error; it is a mental mistake, and it cannot rightfully be called anything else.

If you knew your neighbour was labouring under some mistaken opinion, would you prescribe a porous plaster and a dose of calomel in order to change it? Would you not, rather, expect that the best course would be to reason with him until you have convinced him that he was in an error.

Even if his condition of error had culminated

in the almost total destruction of his mind, and his conduct endangered the lives of those about him, so that he had to be tied or put under the influence of a narcotic, until such time as the truth could be implanted in his intelligence so firmly as to convince him of his mistake, would not this course be more reasonable than the former one?

If I have made it clear that man, as to his external or visible side, is mind, and not matter, I know that every reader will answer, "Yes."

Being actually startled with this idea when it was first presented to me, I kept experimenting with it, until I demonstrated that it would work perfectly in nine cases out of ten.

And perhaps the strangest part of it is, that in making the argument that convinced the patients of their error in believing in disease, I always did it silently. I seldom spoke aloud to any of them; and when they were cured they knew no more of my method than when they first came. Some of them said God worked through me to perform the cure. Others believed that I had an exceptionally strong "power in prayer," and did not know that prayer and every other form of leaning and begging were as far as possible from my method. Some unusually ignorant people

thought it a species of witchery, and held me in great awe. It came to be believed that I could raise the dead, and do many other things that I was not able to do. The report of my power over disease spread far and wide by word of mouth, and people came to me from across the continent, not only to be cured, but to know how it was done.

It was done by thought transference, but it was the transference of a very unusual character of thought.

In the early pages of this book I tried to establish the fact that thoughts are things. They are substantial, though, usually invisible entities; and it is in the power of the thinker to send them from him into the organisms of others, where they are not only the messengers, but the messages themselves, that are transferred from one brain to another. They leave the strong and positive brain of the person who is grounded in the belief that there is no disease and no death, and they take their abode in the brain of the one whose beliefs are so lacking in knowledge of the absolute truth, as to render him negative to higher thought forms than his own; and here they remain, carrying conviction to the patient, of his mistake, and thus healing him by changing his belief. In healing a

patient, there are two points to be noticed in the silent argument applied.

The first is a consideration of the fact that disease of the body is of mental origin; it is the dis-ease, lack of ease, or mistaken conception of the Law showing forth in the body. It is the fruit of mistaken reasoning made apparent to the senses. This truth is universal. But in spite of the fact that it is universal, and, therefore, of the first importance, it goes for nothing unless individual application can be made of it.

The Law is one thing and the understanding of the Law is another thing. The Law—in its majesty—simply is. Man, who is the individualised interpreter of the Law, changes perpetually; changes in proportion as he knows more and more.

It seems easier to define the Law than to define the man. He is a bundle of desires. By these desires, he is related to everything that he desires. The existence of his desires proves conclusively that what he desires exists, and is for him. His desires—taken in the aggregate—are the sure prophecy of their own fulfilment. They point towards happiness, and thus include health, opulence and beauty.

Under no influence imaginable but that

power vested in the Law of Attraction could the man be related to the object of his desires in a way to insure their fulfilment. He is, therefore, allied to the Law of Attraction and dependent upon it.

But he is not dependent upon it as a slave is dependent on his master. He depends upon it as a freeman depends upon his own efforts. He knows that it will serve him in every effort he may make.

These efforts are all intellectual; they are all of them the strivings of an earnest soul in the pursuit of truth. Knowledge of truth is the only saviour, and he knows it. Knowledge of truth means greater knowledge of the power of the Law.

This is what he desires; greater knowledge of the power of the Law. All of his desires, even unknown to himself, tend to this. Each acquisition of knowledge he may make helps to liberate him from the bonds of his past ignorance; from the wretched beliefs that made themselves manifest as disease, old age and death.

Knowledge is power, and power is freedom, and freedom is happiness. This is the happiness that includes all those minor details of health, opulence and beauty.

Therefore, as close a definition of man as we can come to is to call him an ever-growing desire ; approximating—in his growth—more and more closely to a comprehension of the power of the Law.

The more a man perceives of the power of the Law, the more of that power he incarnates in himself. He thus becomes, at every step of his advancement, to use an old phrase, “nearer to God” ; a state of at-one-ment with the Law, that theologians would call making the atonement.

Perceiving, then, that man is a bundle of desires, all of which point to the attainment of truth, we recognise his desires as legitimate ; and in our silent reasoning with him we strive to justify him in his own estimation by removing the prejudice he has always had against desire.

The masses of mankind are not only prejudiced against their own desires, but they are afraid of them. Their knowledge of desire is confined to the many mistakes heaped upon it by the experimenting ignorance that necessarily marks the growth of an infant race.

Therefore, to justify the patient, in the promptings of his own spirit, as expressed in desire, is one of the first efforts of the silent

argument made to him. He is doubtful whether he has any true right to live at all. He sees himself a bundle of desires, all leading—as he believes—to narrow and selfish ends. He does not see the great object towards which the race is being drawn, and into which it will all be harmonised; his opinion of his own utility, as a member of society, is more than doubtful; and he says, “I would like to live and get well, *if it is God’s will.*”

His intelligence has yielded him no truth that will justify his desire to live and get well; and so he leaves it for someone else to decide. He is completely off his own base; and in endeavouring to rest upon another he has become as a plant whose roots are pulled up out of the ground, and can find no nourishment in that condition.

And so it becomes the effort of the silent argument addressed to him, to strengthen him in his belief of himself; to justify his desires to him, and to establish the ego firmly in his thought.

This gives him mental strength, and as his mental condition is his bodily condition it gives him bodily strength.

To recognise desire in the patient is to recognise what he fails to recognise in himself.

This recognition on the part of another has the same effect in his body as if he recognised it intelligently and consciously himself. And so the patient may be healed without being aware of the character of the great truth that has been poured into his body.

His body, being to a degree a fixed thing, possesses less vitality than his active thought; and very much less than the thought of the person effecting the cure. The body of the patient, then, is decidedly negative, in comparison with the living truth being poured into it, and it gives an unconscious response to it; in the meantime, the patient's own thought is comparatively untouched. At least, it has not been sufficiently influenced by the more positive thought of the healer to come to an understanding of the truth, by which the body is healed.

That the patient's thought is more or less impressed by the healer's more positive thought, is often proved by the questions he asks afterwards; but I have never known a case where his thought—his active intelligence—received the whole truth, as communicated silently by the healer. The patient, in submitting himself to the healer, does practically submit to him his own beliefs, in order to have the healer

change them. But he does this when he consults a physician ; the physician then proceeds to change the patient's belief by his own more positive belief in the power of medicine, and he very often succeeds in doing it.

Where a person rejects the new truth, the truth that there is no disease, and refuses to submit his beliefs to manipulation by the mental method, he creates a barrier that prevents the natural tendency of higher thought to seek its level. But even in this case, the higher and more positive thought will eventually break down the barrier and enter.

Even now, in this silent way, there can be no high and positive thought generating anywhere that does not raise the average thought of the entire race a little higher.

The patient who believes in the power of another's thought to cure him removes all barriers to the entrance of that thought, and soon feels the effect of it. It was on this plan that Jesus healed ; and it was his knowledge of the matter that caused him to say, "According to thy faith, so be it unto thee." He made no test cases of unbelievers ; he knew he was hedged out of their minds. Nor did he heal all he attempted to heal. For, "when he went down into Capernaum, he did no mighty works there, because of their unbelief."

Individuality is a very potent thing indeed. It stands above all things except the Law. It shall not be set aside and overcome even that the person be made healthy and opulent and beautiful. Clothed in the rags of error, and too wretched to make farther effort in its own behalf, it is still the seed germ of all future growth; its ego is obscured, but not destroyed; and no power can prevail against it until it resigns itself.

I cannot enter the realm of your ego without your consent. I may conquer you bodily and make a slave of you, only to groan in despair at the knowledge that the independent ego within your breast scorns me, and holds fast in its own right every thought that fortifies the citadel where it resides—unassailable, indestructible, haughty.

A realisation of the majesty of the undying ego is a strong point in the argument addressed to the patient. The more it is dwelt upon, the more firm and invincible it seems, and the more irresistible its demands. Indeed, as its strength grows upon one's thought, the desires that proceed from it seem commands that no power can disobey; it becomes a focus for the centralisation of all things desirable; and to the opened spiritual sense all

things appear to be drifting to it in helpless obedience to its calm mastery.

Thus is individuality more powerfully individualised in the patient, until a sense of strength comes to him that causes him to lose sight of the negative beliefs that formerly held a place in his mind; and he knows that he is well, though he knows not why.

And so the two points in removing his false beliefs have been freely used; sometimes one and sometimes the other, as each in its turn appeared the more impressive.

There are occasions when it is enough for him who is required to make this silent argument to merely bring himself into a clear perception of the fact that there is no disease and no death. This is rising into the realm of absolute truth, and seeing all things from that standpoint; but it is a universal and not an individual argument. The individual argument is that which perceives the ego, and makes every effort to strengthen it by justifying its desires to itself.

That thousands of cures are made by the mental method, which I have faintly described, no person who has taken the pains to investigate the matter can doubt. The sweeping charges brought against the method rest on

no better foundation than ignorance and prejudice. Many people are wilfully blind, believing it to their interest to learn no more than they now know. For my part, I let go all hold of the past years ago; resolved to remain no longer in the worn-out fields of thought that I so heartily despised, no matter where a fresher and braver line of thought might land me. I was so tired of the dead past, that I knew I had nothing to lose in leaving it, and it was with a feeling akin to that of the most reckless *voyageur*, that I plunged into The New.

And who can tell of the reward that has met me every day?

Each day the light shines a little brighter on this wonderful journey through the realm of The New. Old beliefs are fading fast. The vitalising power of the new and positive truth is literally making me over. Each opening day is met by a brighter recognition of all the joy it holds for those who are looking for joy, and who are expecting the good, and not the evil; until little by little, and by slow degrees, all power to recognise the evil is fading from my intellect; and only the power to perceive the good is remaining.

Do you know what this means?

It means that heaven really exists ; that it lies all about our daily pathway ; and that—at last—through the unveiling of our mental perceptions, we are growing into a recognition of it. There is now a more subtle suggestion of beauty to me in the tiny seed-pod than there was once in the splendid promise of a gorgeous dawn, clothed in its translucent garments of pink and amethyst and blue ; all trimmed with gold-embroidered fleece of downy white. And there is more happiness in the unexpected flower by the roadside than the richest pageant could once yield to me.

Heaven is here, but it only unfolds itself to those who unfold to meet it.

I laugh at the idea of going to a heaven more beautiful than this world, before we have learned to see the beauty that meets us here at every step.

What could we do with more beauty, when we are blind to that which we have ?

Before closing this chapter I will answer an objection that is often brought against the mental method of healing. There is an idea quite prevalent that any mental application of power must be purely mesmeric or hypnotic.

Just what the relation of hypnotism to mental healing is, I do not know ; but I know this :

that while the operator in hypnotism gains control of his patient by the subjugation of the patient's will to his own will, the mental healer does nothing of the kind.

Indeed, what the mental healer does is just the opposite. He knows that the entire result of his efforts in healing depends on his power to strengthen his patient's will.

The mental healer has learned the inestimable value of *individual* will, and has cultivated his own will by a calm and logical perception of its power and its value. He sees that it is the bulwark of his own character, without which he would take his position among the negative forces in life, whose only use is to be expended in the service of others.

He sees that his will is his only salvation in a world whose law of growth is the survival of the fittest, and it assumes such proportions in his estimation that he looks on it as the most important factor in his make-up. It kept him in the ascendancy on the brute plane, and it is pledged to hold him on a level with the most progressive on the intellectual plane.

Realising, then, that the will is the man, he immediately perceives that the trouble with the patient is his failure to recognise his own

will. Therefore, instead of trying to weaken still farther the patient's will by subjugating it to his own will, he begins to strengthen the will of the patient by the mental argument he understands so well.

Surely there is a power heretofore unrecognised in the mind of man; a power that promises so much, that to neglect its investigation would be an infinitely greater piece of folly than to turn indifferently from a collection of treasures richer than anyone has ever heaped up before.

To investigate this mighty subject is all I ask of the reader.

Health and strength and beauty and opulence are in it in greater fulness than can be found in the whole world of thought outside of it.

This much I know.

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