

THOUGHTS ON
THINGS
PSYCHIC

BY

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Thoughts on Things Psychic



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THOUGHTS ON THINGS PSYCHIC

THE THEORY OF "A LOST SOUL."

Even in theological misconceptions there are grains of truth. The idea of hell and eternal punishment of "lost souls" obtains in most religions. Though the idea is largely due to racial hypochondria, it contains elements of truth. Evil is followed by evil. Man has believed that as moral laxity was in direct violation to the revealed laws of an infinite personal god, the transgression must be followed by infinite, eternal punishment; such has been the dogma of theology. Philosophy, however, corrects the argument of theology. It has dismissed the conception of infinite torture for a finite act. It has modified the theory of a personal god.

Hell is not a pit of darkness visible and of everlasting fire. The religious imagination has suffered psychical delusions. It has been working overtime in the zealous effort of bringing truth into closer proximity to the mind through

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symbolism. The fate of a "lost soul" is really worse than the imagination can picture.

According to spiritual science, a "lost soul" is the perishing of personality, the most dreadful event the spirit of man can experience. In considering the subject, two things must be borne in mind: first, the distinction between personality and individuality; secondly, the idea of eternal loss. Individuality is the thread running through all the changes of personality. Personality is a ray of the individual soul incarnated in this sphere of life. The individual projects many of these rays, and each new projection is a new life. The duty of personality manifests in the weaving of earth experience into the substance and truth of the reincarnating soul. It must garner greater knowledge and greater depth of heart. It must control the animal nature of passion and selfishness. This lower nature is ever at effort to pull the higher principles of man to its level. The complete pulling down manifests when the mind joins hands with the animal nature, and inverts the light of reason in the gratification of unbridled desire. Average expression ranges between low and high; complete spiritual undoing balances

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towards lowest and perverted expression. The latter condition, however, is as rare as ultimate perfection, but the possibility of spiritual realization is negatively suggestive of the terrible precipices of ignorance and weakness into which personality may fall.

There is the ascetic who emphasizes the union with Self, the soul of the soul. Like the Christ, he gives up life that he may truly live. The ascetic is the ideal in the struggle for realization. There is the sensuous, decadent, and degenerate psychopathic study, whose delight in bestial desire is far beyond normal viciousness. This monster devises individual and shockingly retrogressive methods of self indulgence. Religion and spiritual effort are mythical to him. He turns his back upon the Spirit of love and compassion. Before him is the pit of unspeakable foulness which purer nature cannot approach without scorching itself. In gloom and darkness, the personality is blind to the light of truth and goodness.

This state is the severance between the spiritual individual and its personal ray. The redeeming light of Self vanishes and leaves the human being, a brute of retrogressive instincts,

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dangerous and without human ruth. It leaves it a prey to its horror-loving and horror-inspiring fury. The living force of such an elemental thing—for human it is no longer—is a putrescence such as is now and then found in the alleyways of life; a putrescence defiling the mental atmosphere with evil influences and doomed to final corruption. Such a disintegrating personality is more destructive and primitive than the man-ape, a resemblance to which form they inhabit in the psychic plane. Indeed, the man-ape is on the upward path, whereas the man-brute is on the last step of the retrogressive path.

In time, the pall of death covers the physical life of the man-brute. He finds himself in a new form, a thing of tremendous power. His greatest delight is in sending his influence to sensitives in low vibration on the earth plane. Goading them to depravities of indescribable character, he vampirizes on their sense enjoyment, or debauches himself in the psychopathic criminal state which often leads the sensitive to murder or self-destruction. Spiritual teachers claim that such a demon can reincarnate, that enough of the mental elements remain for

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physical manifestation. Such a birth brings into expression the monster whose criminal insanities shock humanity.

In terms of natural law, the force which this monster utilizes finally exhausts itself and, as it is gradually more and more spent, vitality recedes. That, too, is spent, and the lurid flame which spreads infection and riot is extinguished. The elements which composed the original personality are dispersed in universal substance and force, to be kneaded and purified to the uses of developing life.

Such depravity is not of sudden origin. It is the climax of lives of perversion, spiritual blindness and shocking iniquity.

THE PRESENCE OF THE IDEAL.

I wandered through the Valley of Life for a very long time. Everywhere did I look for the Ideal. But nowhere was it to be found. I thought its prodigious presence would be visible throughout all time and space. But ever was I confronted by the Real. And the Real so sickened me with its coarseness that my soul staggered in horror.

I said: "Where, then, is the Ideal to be found?" An answer came: "In the glorious paradise of thine own soul, there behold the Ideal."

And amid the turbulence and the cry and the shadow did I seek. Long did I seek. And despaired in the seeking. For my ears were deafened by the shout of the rabble and my soul was scorched by the fever of many passions.

At length a mighty eight-winged Seraphim approached and overwhelmed me with the incense of his presence. I forgot my sorrows and forgotten were the many days and nights of greatest trial when I had labored and labored in

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vain. The angel spoke: "Child, why art thou troubled?" But the incense of his presence overwhelmed me.

After a time of ecstatic beatitude I made answer and said: "I am troubled because things are so Real. Because the Real is so gruesome. Because it is without love and pity. Because it is as a densely woven veil which stops my vision of the Truly Real, The Ideal. To me the perfume of the incense of dew-covered violets and the fretting moan of the sea is far more than the greatest treasures. I am happy with the singing of a bird, and more to me is the beauty of a perfect rose than all the struggle of this hopeless order."

I lay my head on a pillow of moss-covered stone. I gazed into the firmament and saw the splendor of myriad stars. At my feet murmured the interminable ocean. In the immediate distance a nightingale sang her sweetest madrigal. And the beams of a full-shining moon filled my soul with hitherto unknown joy. Softly did I pass into deepest sleep. I dreamed a wonderful dream. And in the dream a Voice admonished: "See thou the wondrous Beauty of the Ideal in all things. Make thou no dis-

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tinctions, for the Ideal is present in all times and in all places, and evermore, O Beloved, is It at peace whether in the lowest or the highest.”

“Thus must thou know. And thy knowledge shall make thee conscious of the oneness and identity of thyself and the Ideal.”

Then did I behold a vast, gorgeous temple of whitest marble streaked with bluest veins. Its spires were covered with gold. In that place ten thousand priests wearing richest raiments and holding in their hands strange books of seals and torches of yellow flame sang perpetual songs of praise. There did my soul kneel in adoration before the throne of the Ideal. Ever after did I tread the ways of Peace.

THE ENRICHMENT OF PERSONALITY.

Personality, though complex, is composite. It is the condensation of innumerable correlated sets of sensations and ideas, separately individual and idiocentric. Personality is the summary of an almost infinite accretion, rather than a thing of recent or spontaneous origin. Personality is only an inheritance of an illimitable past. It is subject to change and modification, and therefore reality and the persistence for which reality calls cannot be accredited to it. Though constantly shifting it is true that personality, or what we choose to call personality, has distinct psychological boundary marks which makes one person different from another. No matter how apparently same may be the conditions under which two develop, no matter how approximate their sameness of thought and expression, there is ever a perfect psychical delineation which makes it impossible for one to merge into the personality of another. Personality, however, does not comprise the truth of individuality. It is the depth of ourselves

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which is the constituent of Being. The changes which personality experiences are only the waves on the surface. They come and they go and all have their respective value in development. They all serve to perfect that which, for lack of better expression, we call Self. Self is the abiding individuality which is the thread holding together the jewels of personal experience. Whatever comes to us is either a positive or negative factor in the education and unfolding of Self. The personality is the form and external expression of the soul of individuality. The sum-total of personality is the aggregate of character and experience which it represents. This aggregate represents the degree of individual evolution. Thus the life of an aged person is the composite of all the experiences undergone throughout his earthly career. Not one state of consciousness alone represents the man, nor any definite number. All states have had their moulding influence on the individuality. True, there is always one set of thoughts in prominence. It may be the musical, the artistic, the scientific, the inventive, the commercial, the religious, the philosophical and so on. Each person may be classified under a respective

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heading, be it the mechanical, the practical or the impractical. There is likewise always a set of pre-eminent emotions, be they highly moral, religious or contraverse. Our continued adjustment to circumstances and events and our relation to others determines the representative self we may express at any given time. But this self is never the same. To-day a person may follow this calling and to-morrow that. To-day he may be under different circumstances and influence than some time since. Now he may be swayed by love and then by hate. All the opposites of emotion and thought have their influence in the ratio of the personal scale in evolution.

The radical features of personality must be balanced in the examination of soul by each person. He must draw lines of demarcation between advantageous and disadvantageous tendencies, efficient and deficient characteristics of mind and heart. For the goal of each person should be the perfection of the best within, the realization of the noblest qualities with which he may find himself possessed. Earth life is the opportunity for the education of souls. We are given so many talents of soul and we must

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enrich these talents by using them to the best advantage. It is life alone which is serious. The accidents to life are ephemeral. Their occurrence has value only in the transforming processes of mind and heart. But the motion of personality, its ebb and its flow, must be constant. We should never falter if we fail, and never stop at success. For in the diminution of experience and its changing value is stagnation. We must never count losses, for the thought of loss leads to depression, and life calls for all the resource we can command. Thus we must realize that time is fleeting and opportunity goes with as much celerity as it comes. We must take time by the forelock and be awake to opportunity. There is no greater regret than that of wasted chance. Our greatest duty is to ourselves, for in helping ourselves we help others. We enlarge our possibilities for service and our area for expression. We should never discount experience for material advantage. For it is infinitely better to be than to have and infinitely better to give than to receive. For in giving we are always on the credit score of life. And this credit is paid to us in the value of richer opportunities and the wealth of great-

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er faculties. We use our personal experience and from its fruits we store the profits in the treasure-house of our individuality and soul where thieves cannot enter, unless we prove thieves to the cause of our personal development.

Piety, or the religious feeling, has little to do in the coloring and shading of the masterpiece of soul we are painting on the canvas of life. The colors are the fruits of experience which the individual painter employs in toning imperfections and pronouncing advantages. Our experiences are the building factors which we are preparing for the construction of the personality we shall express in a future life. Our responsibility to life is appalling. Busied with endless material cares we have little time for deep reflection on the great issues of life and death which the Law employs for our blessing or curse. We should give some time each day to the study and meditation of life and what it means and examine our relation to it. We must give weighty consideration to our present status of development and measure the scale of the advantages we have taken in perfecting soul-inherited virtues of soul and mind.

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We must also have the courage to blame ourselves for the mistakes we have made. But there must be no weeping over the dead past. Let our mistakes be the stepping-stones by which we rise to higher things. Evil and good have equal influence in the evolution of the soul. The new road must be discovered and that means aberrations, struggle and privation. But the mistakes and the fate of earlier pioneers is the wisdom and caution of others. In this manner progress is fashioned and in due time the new road leads to the discovery of new territory with its richness of soil, its advantages of climate and its possibilities for new experience and gain. This outlook is to be cherished with regard to our failings. Failure is often the maladministration of effort. The intention may be right, but the working knowledge may be defective. This working knowledge can only be had in repeated experience, but the goal is worth the effort. In many cases failure is attributable to wilfulness of desire. Life frequently gives the fulfilment of desire and in the end pain is the heritage. Experience is the great teacher. The soul must undergo pain time and time again as the result of inverted desire. It

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must become conscious of the inadvisability of wrong, not because wrong is theoretically wrong or dogmatically condemned, but because evil is its own curse, even as virtue is its own reward. Evil has its uses, but they are negative. The pain which is entailed is hard to bear, but each punishment is an indirect incentive to do better. We never reason ourselves into the right. Our knowledge of what is morally proper is a conscious knowledge with potent influence for right conduct.

Potential within us are many opportunities. Behind this personality is the omnipotence of Spirit. We are surrounded by an ocean of strength. It is not the fault of opportunity if we lose in the battle of life. The means are close at hand. We need only put ourself into relation with Spirit and we are blessed with all the advantages necessary to strengthen our characters and perfect our advantages. The enrichment of personality reaches its climax when we understand that, of ourselves, we can do little, but that infinite strength disposes our needs according to its wisdom and love. We rely not on this immediate self of change, but on that immortal and divine Self which never fails us

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if we are true to the Faith and firm in obedience to the Law. This Faith is the essence of the soul. It is eternally infused. Its cultivation leads to higher perception and ultimately it identifies itself with the highest knowledge. The attractiveness of personality rests in the perfection of the talents of personality. In the enrichment of these is embodied the development, the increase of personal charm and quality. The highest vocation we have is self perfection. The various situations of commercial, religious, artistic or professional life into which we may drift are only avenues or advantages through which we may more fitly express ourselves. The main necessity lies in our attitude. That must ever be correct, though we may find ourselves unfavorably placed and surrounded with inconveniences. If we are spiritually related, each experience has its developing tendency. There is a usefulness in sickness, poverty and misery, if it only strengthens the qualities of patience, perseverance, humility, resignation, if it only broadens our sympathy and pity, if it only educates our feelings into more exquisite proportions by making us sensitive to pain. This is the permissible spirit of asceti-

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cism, resignation to the unavoidable. It is true that need, sorrow and affliction are the solid rocks upon which the structure of character is erected. Greatness of conduct and force of will cannot express themselves in the lap of ease. It takes iron-bound opposition to confront the soul and bring out the spark of strength, knowledge and the ability to cope with disadvantage. The earnest aspirant for self perfection welcomes pain and sorrow. For it is then that the end of life is well kept in mind. The soul is apt to forget its mission if comfortably adjusted to the wants of material life. It is the denial of comfort which makes men rely on the deeper realities of truth and spirit. It makes one resigned to the provident spirit of the Law which knows best and never deserts us. We are never tested beyond our strength. We can meet difficulties triumphantly if we remember that within our nature resides the principle of victory and achievement. It is our fortune to come in contact with opposition, but it is also our destiny to overcome whatever may befall us, for without this overcoming we remain stationary.

A great deal of moral truth is comprised in the pursuit of development. The end of evolu-

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tion is moral, which means that before perfection of soul can be, the instinctive must be subjugated to the needs of spiritual growth. Relatively less importance must be given the outer arrangement than we now give. Our views of the material life must be spiritualized. We must see the material in its relation to the spiritual. In this way all the circumstances of the external are rendered beautiful and useful. They are not regarded either with exaggerated idealism or realism, but proportionately related to the wholesomeness of life. The disadvantage of present idealistic systems is that they are too extreme in their conclusions. They do not fully answer the many-sided view of life. They deny phenomenal reality. This cannot be done, for we live in this world and while we are here we must employ the realities we find in the service of our development. Attaching sole importance to the idealistic conception of the universe makes the mind incapable of truly appreciating the outward arrangement and its practical relation to truth. The average mind is too dependent on external symbols to worship ideals because of their own perfection. We cannot appreciate the glory of the Spirit save as we study,

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the marvellous beauty and order of the universe. We can understand the goodness and all-loving tenderness of Spirit only as we observe the rewards and spiritual unfoldment it bestows for loyalty to its mandates.

Enrichment of personality can alone come when our conception of the things we perceive about us is practical. The sages of spiritual knowledge always seek the practical side of the spiritual life. They do not deny the facts which we sensibly realize. They ask us to see them as presentations of the inner ideal. When the ideal is perceived then is there no further wrangling over appearances. The enrichment of personality is brought about by the change of the ideal of desires. It is necessary to grow apart from unworthy desires and desire those things which will make us richer in experience. The main business in life should be the accumulation of knowledge, not the knowledge of book-learning, but conscious knowledge, the result of experience. If one does not travel, his knowledge of the world is limited. True, he may have studied geography, but that would give him only a theoretical knowledge. Practical knowledge is irrefutable knowledge. The con-

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vincingness of a fact lies in its established proof. So it is necessary to experience, for experience is the really practical proof needed in the discriminations of life. Desires we must have. Desire is the spirit of progress. Dissatisfaction with existing circumstances spurs the soul to the realization of better things. The inanimate does not desire, neither does it evolve. There are times when we unknowingly desire evil conditions by believing that certain circumstances will be to our advantage, when they act otherwise. But even these desires are good. They teach us very good lessons. They may be bitter, but they broaden our knowledge of what is really desirable, good and useful. There is utility in desire and its satisfaction, and there is also utility in the spirit and practice of denial. Neither desire nor denial should be overemphasized. Fanaticism is as condemnable as excess. The even balance must be struggled. Too little or too much food, sleep, exercise and enjoyment is not good for the mind or body. Harmonious adaption to the laws of nature and of the soul is the demand which we must obey. If we fail to strike the happy medium, some faculty is overemphasized to the detriment of an-

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other. The body cannot be neglected for the sake of the mind, for it will die. Too much study and too little recreation and exercise has been the death of many an enthusiastic scholar. The body cannot be too much indulged else the mind will suffer. It will become stupid, inactive and coarse. And both bodily and mental disarrangement have their retrogressive effects upon the full expression of the soul. The perfect person realizes that he has duties to every phase of his nature. Even the soul must not aspire to the point where asceticism will injure the body. One of the greatest saints of the Roman Catholic Church well understood this. Saint Bonaventure writes, that as Saint Francis of Assisi lay on his death-bed suffering from disease induced by his extreme asceticism, he gazed on his emaciated body and said: "I have sinned against my brother, the ass," for so the great ascetic called his mortal frame.

The enrichment of personality constantly remoulds the psychological make-up. It continually expands the boundaries of feeling and thought and thus inhibits the restraint of expression which ignorance involves. Ignorance is the lack of the perception of the infinitely

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possible which surrounds on all sides. The unregenerate view this illimitable field for expansion of temperament and knowledge as a vast sea of night. Thus they shrink into the narrowness of their custom-made views and phases of conduct. The enlightened see the illimitable expanse as the field of spiritual promise, the land of indefinite development and endless opportunity. They gladly leap the boundaries of antiquated belief. It is sometimes dangerous to make this leap. As in the case of Socrates and Giordano Bruno it meant the martyrdom of the body. But the mind lives triumphantly on and the "blood of the martyrs is the seed for new" believers in the tenets for which the free of thought die. The main purpose in the development of the mind or soul is the rehabilitation and new presentation of the old and the introduction of the new. New ideas, new views, novel phases of soul expression enable the soul to soar into the very empyrean of progress. Rapid progress follows reformation of thought. New channels are made for the larger expression of emotion. The conduits for the inspiration so necessary for the growth of the imaginative and intellectual faculties are pressed into

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fullest service. Our entire life is a gradual reformation from the previous status of our mental and spiritual outlook. New experiences are to be welcomed. Change is the magic wand by which the form of Self is changed from dark to lighter shades.

In the permutations of life it is well to bear ever in mind that the manifesting principle of possibilities is the desire *to be*. Poverty is preferable to wealth when the latter induces a shirking of opportunity. Ease and effort are incompatible. A continuous ideal and continuous enthusiasm in attempting to realize it must be established in every soul. All have ideals, but many need education, reconstruction and widened channels of expression. The enrichment of personality is the greatest urge for the realization of the best within. It conjures opportunities. The main fact which should interest the individual is the reaching of higher planes of thought, feeling and expression. When that is firmly implanted, nature provides the means and the modes, even as in terrestrial evolution she introduces changes in the organism of creatures in accordance with their fitness for the new and the more complex.

THE ABYSS OF SPIRIT.

Spirit stands forth alone. Spirit can only be seen by Spirit; Self perceived only by Self; Self known only by Self. The eternal Thinker is conscious alone of His unconditioned existence. The finite manifestations of Self possess separate knowledge, the knowledge of plurality, of manifoldness, and pass through cycles and cycles of existence. Before separate existence can realize unconditioned existence, it must first have relinquished separate existence, selfishness and the ignorance born of these. It must constantly assert the unreality of manifoldness, of duality and plurality and of the myriad superstitious death and birth involve. It must go into the veriest depth of depths of the soul and exclaim to the Infinite Self: "Thou art I, and I am Thou."

The abyss of the soul is forever crying out to the abyss of Spirit asking: "Which is the deeper?" But neither is deeper. Both are incomprehensibly and immeasurably deepest. There is that mighty wisdom by which all rela-

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tive wisdom is encompassed; there is that ocean of emotion in which personal regard is lost in the contemplation and vision of all-embracing love, beauty and adorableness. To perceive that is to perceive the end and all of life. To perceive this is to perceive those realities of which it is said, "No eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard." The moral systems are only high reflex methods calling forth the highest activity of soul. But the realization of Spirit reaches far beyond, through all morality and beyond into that highest truth when the individual is moral, not through struggle, but because it has become natural. So long as there is strife between the lower and the higher, so long is the soul swayed by illusion. But when the person has passed beyond the silence of his innermost nature into the very Spirit of soul, morality is the essence of his expression.

Wherever such a Son of Man treads he radiates nothing but good, speaks nothing but good. He has natural perception of spiritual truth. Universal love and divine compassion form his attitude toward all life. The desire and emotions of such an excelled being are directed to the eternally highest. His emotions are cen-

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tered in the Infinite. His desires manifest in the supreme apostleship to raise the veil of illusion and scatter the mists of ignorance. He is the priest of the Most High. His yearning is to die to the finite that he may become one with endless, eternal, unconditioned, omnipresent existence. Of what pettiness is this separate existence which hinders us from perceiving the Infinite and Perfect One!

He, the Saint, reflecting on the nothingness of form, the emptiness of name, on the cyclings of the Law, which exalts the beggar into royal splendor and humbles the king to the beggar's condition, he, the King, realizing these thoughts, gave up his kingdom. After meditating for many years in the silence of the forest, he stretched his arms to the Sun saying: "Oh passing are all things. This body, this mind, this life, this king-state, this god-state, this state of misery, this state of joy intense, this state of most beautiful love, this state of fear, this state of prosperity, this state of want, all, O Self, are passing! Tell me that which is beyond the passing."

Self, assuming the form of a sage, spoke to the King: "In that thou hast found all things

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to be passing, know, O King, that the Highest can be perceived by the Highest. And the Highest, That are thou."

The King meditating on this teaching attained to the realization which shatters the fetters of the soul. He attained to Self. Unity is the synthesis of life. That synthesis is the acme of thought and feeling. It is the state of Absolute Existence, Absolute Knowledge and Bliss Absolute. "It is described as 'No, No.' It cannot be discerned, for It is the indiscernible." Mind moves within the limitations of sense experience. There is a wall beyond which reason cannot go. Religion commences with faith. True faith is the horizon. Reason crowds the scene with numberless phenomena, but the background is faith. Knowledge is the approach. Faith is the spiritual temple wherein the praises of the Infinite are voiced. Faith leads to vision as knowledge leads to understanding.

The Self within disentangles the veil which covers our spiritual eyes. When that veil is removed we shall see Self as Self, as all in all. The abyss of the soul merges into the abyss of God.

DARKNESS AND LIGHT.

Long is the way of darkness, and dense the night of ignorance.

Steep is the upward ascent from the primeval. And the light which illumines the early path is feeble.

The way is paved with the forms of body and the forms of mind. Thought is as gross as matter, for all is grossness in comparison with the rareness, the superfineness, the æsthetic, the ideal beauty of spirit. All that is gross belongs to the order of illusion.

Illusion is the mother of night, and night, the habitation of the ignorant. Most terrible of the terrible is this illusion, for it is the mother of all terror, of the terrors of birth and of the terrors of death, of the things which seem hopeful and of the things which seem hopeless.

The veil of indiscrimination blinds the vision; the Light is not seen, nor is Its kindly influence felt.

The sacrificial knife is raised and the victim sacrificed on the Altar of Darkness to the Pri-

Darkness and Light

meval Mother, the Mother of Recurrent Terrors. There is much wailing and much woe for all the things that are false, because of their appearance to the Truth. The Truth alone is self-established, for the Truth does not change; for the Truth leads.

The dawn of deliverance is the signal for redemption. The Voice of Truth is the Voice of the Silence. The awakening of the moral life is the morning of deliverance. Its keeping brings the seeker into the unclouded day of Spirit.

There is more truth than is known, and there is more truth in the truth which is already known. The quest of Truth is the business of the soul and, if the soul rightly relates itself, it can expect the fullest revelation of truth. Nothing new can be said. The Truth is the same, and has ever been the same, only its aspects are new, only its definitions suited to time and necessity. The everlasting Truth is ever the saving truth. The Truth is essentially one, essentially ever-present, essentially embodying the exalted principle of omniscience. He who has seen the Truth becomes possessed of the Truth, becomes one with the Truth. In this sense,

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Truth is separate in meaning from its ordinary significance, for it is the Spirit of Truth above all formulas, the Spirit which interprets truth, and guides its dispensations.

“When it is night to all being, then is the man of self-control awake; when all beings are awake, then is the night of the man of knowledge.” The man of self-control, of moral stamina is ever on the *qui vive* against those very things with which men are most occupied. For those things which seem so pleasing to most men, he is least concerned.

His day is their night; their night, his day. Their knowledge is his ignorance; their ignorance, his knowledge.

Out of the night of spiritual darkness duality comes forth; out of the day of spiritual knowledge come unity and the consciousness of unity.

“In this world of manifoldness, he who sees That One running through all; in this world of death, he who perceives That One Infinite Life; in this world of insentience and ignorance, he who sees That One Light and Knowledge, unto him comes eternal peace, unto none else, unto none else.”

REFLECTIONS.

Our entire life includes more or less the elements of suggestion. Imitation is the foundation of the instinctive, mental and social life. The greater number of persons are influenced by the thought and suggestions of leaders, at earnest work to further the development of the community in which they find themselves.

Individuality is the stage of development when the individual mind bursts the bonds of convention and strikes out into new areas of mental, moral or social expression. All great moralists are great individualists; all persons who have climbed the ladder of fame in the pursuit of literature, art, religion, politics or statesmanship, are individualists.

Originality in all things is the expression of the true individual. That originality, however, must conform to the higher understanding of morality, else it is dangerous and pernicious, and should at once be suppressed. All great criminals are original, but they are also dangerous and harmful to the general welfare. We

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must distinguish in the definition of "dangerous and harmful." Evolved ideas practically carried out by some genius may be dangerous and harmful to great numbers, but in this instance the danger is to the under-educated and to the slow in progress. Such danger and harm is of great benefit; it strikes the point of stagnation; it gives the evolutionary impulse. Evolution is ever heralded by the sigh of the birth of the new. Such danger and harm resemble those terrestrial upheavals which purify while they destroy. Surviving forces cannot be destroyed. Nothing can tear down the vital evolutionary element.

The things which meet with destruction have served their allotted occasion. There is, however, that serious danger following in the wake of criminal originality, which menaces good influence that form the stable elements in the preservation of law, order and social harmony. These conditions have nothing of value in place of that which they destroy. They tear down the beautiful and uplifting. They are vandalistic to the advance of mental and spiritual control. Therefore, they must be ousted and their influence counter-balanced.

Reflections

Every person has the right to express his individuality. Experience will teach him, however, the advisability of developing certain traits and suppressing others. The brute instincts in man cry for satisfaction. The passions of social life are only modifications of the instinct to satisfy desire, irrespective of the result such satisfaction bears. The animal and savage instinct of getting creature comforts expresses itself in the might of physical force with brute strength and fang and nail. Our modern system of commerce has evolved from this instinct. The desire to secure as much money as possible, the desire to acquire as much as possible the luxuries and means of sensuous gratification which modern life affords, has accentuated the individuality of many and compelled the average person to abnormal individual expression. The fundamental facts of civilization, the growing complexity of the industrial system, the universal increase in the privileges of social democracy, all lend stimuli to the specialization of individuality.

The question arises, if this turn of individual expression is fortunate and truly developed. The majority of sociologists think not. The in-

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dependence which manifests in the possession of wealth stirs the average person to secure every financial support. The desire for social advancement adds to the flame. This state of society renders the relations of men harsh and brutal. The finer sentiments are lost sight of in the turmoil and rush for the dollar. The artist, the litterateur, the poet or the philosopher, find appreciation only as they are successful, the success frequently depending on fortuitous circumstances. Success, which comes through persistence of effort, through power of will, through unflinching optimism, is extremely rare. It is opportunity which brings the struggling genius from obscurity into public appreciation and success. This opportunity depends on the most unexpected events. Possibly, the meeting of a new acquaintance, a patron of the arts, letters or the sciences, or some equally unlooked-for occasion turns the tide.

Through the exaggerated importance accorded the practical, the finer things of life are directly lost sight of. The collective expression of society at the present is abnormal from a view point of mental and emotional development. The theatres are at the mercy of finan-

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ciers who present the public with "what will pay." Accordingly the vaudeville and the comic opera are the "money features" of the theatre. True, there is a noted revival expressed in the so-called "problem-plays." These, at least, educate the public to higher concepts of social duty and responsibility. But the masterpieces of drama are not in date. Shakespeare is no longer the vogue.

The cause for this variation of public appreciation from superior to mediocre presentations is psychological. The individual, burdened with the responsibilities and pressure of commercial life, expends so much mental and nervous energy in one direction that at the end of the day he has an insufficient amount of energy left to truly appreciate the æsthetic culture of life. An opera or a classic drama requires much mental energy, if the person wishes to gain the best results from his attendance. The expression of developed emotions likewise demands the best of physical and mental energy, but the person engrossed in commercial life has none to give. The theatres do not appear to the instinct of knowledge; they appeal to pleasure.

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The individual represents the general social trend.

The influence of commercial life has deplorable effects on the greater number. The central idea of their lives is the acquisition of money and the privileges it gives. This idea is sophistical and develops a false individuality. The individual is governed by a purpose he has never scrutinized. Question the individual concerning the truly great things in life, and he cites ideals from mental education to the spiritual life. Within the heart, however, he realizes that his practical purpose in life is the governing and effective purpose.

The trouble is that we have not the moral stamina to follow convictions. One realizes what is right, but has not the courage to follow principle. Then the moral laziness of many persons is aggravated by the fear that the following of individual opinion may meet with ridicule or criticism. This condition is exemplified in the lives of young men. They follow a questionable course of conduct solely because they fear that if they do not do so they will incur the contempt of their associates. They do not possess the moral originality and stamina

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to face every opposition with courageous heart.

The expression of individuality demands the manifestation of the best qualities of mind and heart. Individualists are creators of their destiny, for they remain uninfluenced by the opinion of others. In this age of practicality he who thoroughly understands the deeper values of life, unassociated with the pursuit of money or the things which represent it, develops his possibilities to the utmost. He appreciates his relations to the world of commerce; but he has other gods than Mammon. His greatest attention is directed to his personal evolution. He uses every occasion for personal enlightenment. In this sense he is useful to his fellowmen, to himself.

The average individual is collective in origin and expression. The developed individual is original in thought, in emotion, in his attitudes toward his environment, and in his relations to life as such. The average individual rests contented with social conditions, provided his desire for commercial gain and his business are not interfered with. His philosophy rests on the "bread and butter principle." The developed individual is governed by an advanced

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idea or an emotion, or by both. The amenities of life are of relative importance. His purpose is related to higher things. He wishes to express something within him, while the average individual expresses himself in relation to external circumstances. The average individual is purely reflex. All his ideas are borrowed; the quality of his emotion is lessened through their affiliation with the commercial idea by which they are impelled. The average individual is stationary in his residence, and is thus denied that broad experience of the world possessed by the developed individual, who remains in an environment only so long as it is necessary for his greater experience.

Mindful of the passing nature of life the true philosopher seeks the development of those factors which accredit life with true meaning and purpose and discredits the pursuit and indulgence of desire. Though the appeal of the senses is strong he so governs them that the emotions become associated with advanced ideas and ideals. The feelings of men are like fire which is harmful under some conditions and helpful under others. The feelings may unite with instinctive desire for sensuous gratification, or

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they can be controlled and serve in the expression of spiritual ideas. The value in life and the meaning in effort is the education of the mind and heart. The mind must be nourished by elevated ideals. It must seek joy in the pursuit of things developing character. Many persons follow sensuous pleasure, thinking that this will satisfy their thirst for happiness. They find that this sort of pleasure only weakens the senses, dulls the mind, and distracts the attention from worthier purposes and personal duties. There is great joy in the knowledge of having performed one's duty. There is great joy in the service to one's fellow-man. There is great joy in such mental or emotional development which assures the individual that each effort raises him higher in the scale of being. Compared with these joys, the pleasure derived from passion is misery. The astronomer's dog has pleasure in eating his bone; the happiness of the astronomer is the knowledge he reaps and the discovery he makes in his intellectual work. Both the dog and the learned man have pleasure, the difference existing only in the degree. But there are millions of centuries of evolution in the breadth of that degree.

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The mind must not permit itself to be deceived by sophism. Death and sorrow, misery and pain, instruct the soul concerning what truly affords pleasure. In the moments of trial when fortune is swept aside, when death draws near, or when danger threatens, the sophism which deceives the mind into believing that the end and all of happiness centers in material advantage, is destroyed. Experience presents new ideals. The man of spiritual knowledge discriminates between his ideals of happiness, and thus arrives at the perception of true and substantial ideals. Thus his individuality is strengthened and its expression assists and elevates.

THE HARBOR OF WISDOM.

The argosies which sail on the sea of infinite existence in the quest of infinite knowledge are many, but noblest of all are those which bear the crew who have sought the depth of depths, and have found the path which leads out of the shoreless sea into the haven of infinite peace. Out of the darkness, out of the night, and out of the storm and havoc of material distress, out of the night of ignorance and beyond the rocks of rebirth, shines the golden sun of truth. Open thy radiance, O Sun! Shine forth, for thy light is not different from that light which shines in the soul! Thy light and our light is one. The ship of safety which carries the mind into the harbor of wisdom is the law.

The sublime port is the redemption of the individual; it is the sinking of the cargo of selfishness, a burdensome freight, retarding the ship of the soul.

THOUGHTS ON THINGS PSYCHIC.

Within the innermost sanctuary of self is the soul with its wide latitude of personality, personalities which are yet to be.

The garments of self are often confused with its principles. The mind is only a covering which the eternal thinker wears and which brings him into vibration with inferior planes, for there is a vast distinction between the plane on which the soul acts and the planes on which the lower principles, such as the desire and sensuous elements, manifest. An entire series of form and condition is necessary before the voice of the eternal thinker, and the indwelling spirit can be heard on the physical plane.

The mind is uppermost in activity and control of all the principles working beneath it. It is the ruler over the material. This is the esoteric significance attached to the Biblical teaching that man has dominion over all things. The highest principle, by reason of its superior essence and qualities, determines the circumstances, aspect and relation of everything with

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which it comes into contact. The vibrations of mental force are complete in development and most powerful. Men admire and stand in awe at the grandeur of tropical storms; they stand in reverence before the stupendous majesty of Niagara Falls, but to him who perceives the nature and transcendency of mental forces, all this physical power shrinks into nothingness. The discovery of these mental forces reveals an extension of human faculty, such as are suggested in psychology, hypnosis and the science of chemistry, which is gradually becoming metaphysical, so psycho-spiritual are its aspects and recent discoveries.

Great is the power of the material, but inestimably greater are the power and expression of the mental. Men admire this concrete, physical universe, but there are spheres composed of infinitely more attenuated substance. There are infinitely more modes for the expression of consciousness other than the terrestrial.

We look at the universe with a lens of but five senses, and from their experiences our geocentric and anthropomorphic conceptions of philosophy originate. Just as men were accustomed to regard the earth as the primary sphere

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in the cosmos, and the other suns and planets only as related to it, so their philosophies are tinctured with the conception of the transcendental importance of man and of the final goal of evolution as expressed in human intelligence and its continuous development. Psychologists, such as James, however, point to the probability of other phases of existence much higher than human life. Spiritual science asserts that the probability in which scientists concur is a spiritual fact, and that psychology is approaching the border-land of other worlds. These thoughts, gradually related to common knowledge, must profoundly change the philosophy of life.

The senses are not stationary in their latitude of experience, but range beyond and beneath their normal level. They are modified in some persons and greatly extended in others, so that where the former receive but a comparatively limited number of sense impressions and where the distinctness and intensity of sensations are greatly modified, the latter possess such extension of sense susceptibilities as almost to live in another sphere. This extension is subject to evolution and environment, but it may be accelerated by certain dietetic and breathing exer-

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cises. Perception is the manifestation of consciousness; to manifest it requires various instruments and different conditions and environments, and these instruments, conditions and environments are indefinite in variation, complexity and number. It is ridiculous to imagine that consciousness can only manifest itself through the medium of a physical brain, and that states of consciousness are inseparably associated with molecular motions in the brain.

The senses are conditioned within their own activity. Many animals possess far better developed sense susceptibilities than human beings. Strange to say, of human beings, savages and semi-savages have much keener vision, power of endurance and resistance to disease than the highly cultured; they have greater physical stamina and vitality and are more responsive to external stimuli. Developed humanity manifests in coherency of conduct, in the perfecting of the social instinct, in the development of reason and in the education of ideas and of the will. In this evolution it has distanced itself from primitive physical life and, therefore, is inferior to undeveloped humanity, in the expression of physical life.

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The senses have developed from one common source, the tactual sense. As Lafcadio Hearn says: "All the sense organs are fundamentally alike, being evolutionary modifications of the same morphological elements;—and all the senses are modifications of touch. Or, to use the simplest possible language, the organs of sense—sight, smell, taste, even hearing—have been alike developed. Even the human brain, by the modern testimony of histology and embryology is, at its first beginning, merely an in-folding of the epidermis layer."

As the primitively spiritual bears striking resemblance to the original and spiritual source of life, we find that the psychic sense in its relation is similar to the tactual sense in physical relations. It operates from a kindred basis. The variations of the psychic sense, clairaudience, clairvoyance, telepathy and other psychic faculties, are commonly related. When the psychic sense is directed to vision, it is spoken of as psychic sight, when to hearing, as psychic hearing. The muscular reaction to sensation, as example, the lifting of a chair, has its psychic counterpart in what is termed telaesthesia and exteriorization. Psychic perception is a

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matter of feeling. In the seances of the Psychological Research Society the test mediums frequently say: "I see such and such an object or person." Closely questioned regarding their vision, they say that their sight is not so much a vision as a *consciousness* of an object and its qualities and of a person and his feelings and thoughts. They *feel* the color, the form, the vibration and so on. If a person has passed the earth-plane as a suicide, as a criminal sentenced to death, or from shock or disease, the medium *feels* the circumstances, environment and conditions through which death occurred. This refers to the mental type of psychical phenomena. It refers to those phenomena which forecast the future and recite present and past experiences of the persons for whom psychical phenomena are performed.

The physical conditions under which these phenomena occur are generally regarded as abnormal. The psychic is regarded by many as suffering from nervous trouble, and his psychic faculties considered as mental aberrations. There are, without doubt, instances when psychic faculties manifest with disordered nerves, but these instances are few and form no argument

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with regard to all psychic experiences. The drunkard has psychic experience in delirium, but his vision has not the moral or knowing value of the experience of a sage. We know a tree by the fruit it brings forth. If the fruit is sound, the tree is good. All psychic experiences which have a transforming value for good are proper in their causes and in their results. One may have religious experiences which are genuine and reasonable. If super-conscious perception leads to religious insight and truth, its value is important. Abnormal experiences disturb the sanity of the mind and harm the body.

Psychic experiences of the highest order, the mental order, develop with the quickening of the vibrations of the mind. This quickening occurs when the mind is continuously concentrated in a given direction. Continuous concentration means the even, unbroken flow of thought. This form of persistent thought is not the result of spasmodic effort, but of an unintermittent, patient, persevering, well-regulated system. The science of mathematics is not mastered by fits and starts of effort, but by years of concentrated effort. Men devote years of their

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lives toward the realization of certain desires. Great discoveries are the result of long-continued investigation. In the greatest science, that of life, the student must bring infinite patience and strength of purpose to the task. The science of life is revealed through the science of concentration.

The word concentration is much misunderstood. The idea of effort, of positiveness, of activity is associated with it, when the very contrary is needed. Students of mental therapeutics and of practical psychology, unfamiliar with the deeper truths of these sciences, concentrate with the thought of concentration dominant in their mind. The very idea of concentration should be excluded from the mind. That fact alone causes the mind to be too self-conscious, when consciousness should entirely center on its object. If one attempts to concentrate on the abstract principle of truth, and is conscious that he is concentrating, he might as well give up the task. The greatness of an actor lies in the fact that he forgets himself in the portrayal of a character, becoming so identified with it, that the audience is swayed by the realism of the performance. In concentration,

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the mind should become so engrossed with its subject as to be conscious of naught else. There have been thinkers, so taken up with their work that they have forgotten to eat their meals, though the food was before them. Such concentration is efficacious and leads to intuitive perception and immediate insight into the nature of the object concentrated upon. Men have wrested the marvels of the heavens and earth through concentration. All knowledge is the result of persistence of thought and investigation. Deepest concentration has a psychological import. The separation of the mind from its surroundings and its lack of response to outer impressions become so restricted that, though a pistol were shot in the presence of the thinker, he would not hear it. Even the presence of death has no impressive force. Archimedes, the mathematician, was absorbed in geometry when the Roman soldier threatened his life. To the threat, the thinker replied: "Do not disturb my circles." So concentrated was he that the threat was waived aside. The concentration of Archimedes was the result of persistent study. His mind, exalted by the desire to know, was like a magnet. It drew knowledge.

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There is an intimate psychological connection between knowledge and investigation. Investigation is the casual state of knowledge. Knowledge is the effect developing from investigation. Consciousness is attenuated in the direction of thought, and when it absorbs thought, it does not acquire something external to itself. It only transforms that which is apparently external into conscious value and experience. Before the mind grasps the principle of any science, the latter seems separate from the former. But when the science is mastered, consciousness and the science are one. That is the governing idea in all evolution. The persistence of subconscious or rather instinctive desire, in the course of centuries attached wings to the amphibian, and birds peopled the air. The complex structure of the higher mammals, particularly of man, developed with continuity of instinctive desire on the part of the animal to properly relate itself to changing conditions in its environment. Further evolution will unfold through the same avenue.

Desire is largely subconscious. Conscious desire rarely realizes its object, when the latter is out of immediate reach. Subconscious desire

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arouses the latent faculties of the mind which vivify the normal faculties, such as reason, into hyper-activity, when thought is spontaneous and difficult problems solve themselves, as it were, through the quickened activity of the mind. This state is intuition. In memorizing, when a first or second effort fails to present the past word, thought or experience to consciousness, we say: "I cannot think of it just now." Suddenly, what we are trying to think of leaps into consciousness. The process by which segregated states of consciousness of the past are co-ordinated and presented to consciousness is indiscernible. The surface result of the process may be analyzed, and so forth, but the causal element in memory escapes us. It is sufficient to know that the store-house of the sub-conscious mind registers the slightest impression, and that nothing is lost. This thought should cause "the mind to remember its deeds."

Through concentration in any direction, the faculties of the subconscious mind are aroused. Just as greatest scientific discoveries are revealed through the persistence of the desire to know, and through persistent research, so more concerning man's inner nature, the development

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of his potential faculties and their relation to his personal evolution is brought to consciousness, when the mind is eager to explore the area beyond its surface.

The methods for the attainment of knowledge are potential within the depths of each individual soul. The knowledge of the most eminent of the world's thinkers is inherent in all beings. A mine of precious ore is in the desert. Buried beneath the rock and hard soil is untold wealth. But to secure that wealth, the prospector must leave the comforts of city life and wander over trackless wastes, many times in peril of life. Even when the mine is discovered and the assay reveals valuable ore, the owner must struggle with the odds of circumstances to finance its development. When the ore is extracted it goes through the process of refinement. Then it is sent to various distributing points, the mint, factories and so forth. In the desert of life is the mine of knowledge. Gaining possession of that knowledge the soul acquires the greatest treasure. The method of discovering it is by control over the difficulties which present themselves. Such difficulties are the incessant clamorings of desire which tend

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to engage the mind in the pursuit of physical pleasure. The mind, absorbed in the senses, cannot rise superior to them, and thus knowledge is not obtained. The disengagement of the mind from lower physical vibrations and those things which represent physical aggrandizement, such as earthly possessions and material advantages, is reached through the dissociation of the mind from the ideas and emotions representing purely physical life, and through the association of ideas and feelings tending to establish the mind in higher modes of expression. This change in the mind requires a long time. It has taken centuries after centuries of evolution, numbers upon numbers of lives for the development of life as it is represented in human intelligence. The subconscious desire, which is the vital factor in evolutionary modification from simple to complex forms of body, and from simple to complex expression, operates slowly and produces the momentous changes in life only after ages of concentrated effort. Judgment and reason are the highest developed factors. Their practical application to the education of the will and to the revaluation of ideas determines the progress of the individual. The

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mind must leave the turbulence of passion. In the silence of discrimination and self-control, its vision is truer, and its purpose firmer. It is not led astray by the mirages of physical expression; established in heart, it wends its way to the mine of truth. The Voice of the Silence is heard in the calm of self-possession.

It is not sufficient, however, to discover truth and have an estimate of its all-important value in the realization of knowledge. The mine of knowledge must be developed. This development is obtained through discrimination of mind with regard to the circumstances, conditions or personalities which increase the advantages of spiritual progression. Then the ore of knowledge is extracted. From persistence in effort amid the distraction which tempted him, the seeker reaps a treasure that neither rust can destroy and into which thieves cannot break. Precious ore is serviceable as it is distributed and circulated. Knowledge is useful as it is turned into practical results, as it benefits others. The person who has knowledge helps himself more than he does others. The Swami Vivekananda said: "Things are not bettered, but *we* are bettered by making changes

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in them." Perfection in any line is impossible. All motions are circular, and the climax is the point at which retrogression commences. The force which manifests in perfection, which gives meaning to development is dissipated when its purpose is accomplished. Good and evil, sickness and health continue, though moral systems are developed and redeveloped and though hospitals and medical discoveries are ever at service. The miseries of life are remedied in the individual. In properly relating himself to natural and spiritual laws, one becomes master of whatever affects him. Obedient to the law he is blessed in its dispensations. No reform was ever sweeping or permanent. There are always new aspects, new advantages to be gained, new errors to be eradicated.

It is the understanding of the individual which determines his progress in thought. It is the application of his ideas to practical experience which rates his worth. Men know what they should do, but the working out of that knowledge is different. Concentration on knowledge arouses the necessity of responsible action. The passingness of life, the changes which men experience in their fortune, the in-

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stability of everything on which the heart is most centered teach the lesson that beyond the ephemeral phases of existence is the soul, and that its development is the real purposes and permanent fact in individual life. Feelings have greater power than ideas. These thoughts arouse corresponding feelings which, when intense, have a radical value in changing the currents of expression and stimulate enthusiasm to higher purposes.

Desire for knowledge attracts the teacher and renders the pupil fit. That desire must be continuous and determined, else it has only a relative value. The business man's purpose is the acquisition of money, and is expressed in his faithful performance of the duties which commercial life imposes. He sacrifices pleasure and personal comforts to advance his interests. This is effectual desire. When applied to the deeper relations of life, it assumes greater proportions. The discovery of knowledge is more comprehensive a purpose and an effort. It requires greater consistency and will-power. Will-power is the force of persistent desire. It breaks down barriers and impels the mind to the realization of its purpose.

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There is nothing mysterious in concentration. The word implies that consciousness can be focalized to the point where it becomes identified with the object of its attention. As food, though separate from the body before eating, is absorbed in the essence of the body, into flesh, blood and life when it is eaten, so when the mind approaches its object, it absorbs it into its life.

The universe of man is the universe of his mind. Nature is motion. The mind reacts on this motion, and the universe is alive with innumerable forms and different expressions of life. Meditation on the activity of the mind, on its reflex responses to outer impressions affords the soul an idea of the reality of the life of the mind as compared with the action of insensate matter. The body is the instrument through which the motion of external stimuli and the activity of the mind are co-ordinated. But the body is not the only instrument. Consciousness is the reality; there are other instruments through which it manifests than the body. The body relates it to physical life; the mind to mental life; the soul to spiritual life. Of these three existences there are endless differen-

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tiations and degrees. These differentiations and degrees manifest on their respective planes and in their respective manner. Intelligence reacts on rarer impressions than the physical. The universe is everywhere where the mind can imagine. Infinitely beyond and infinitely below this terrestrial life extend innumerable relations of mind between what is mind and what is not mind. Meditation on this thought impresses consciousness with the theoretical knowledge that it is not limited. It is only the instrument through which consciousness expresses itself that is conditioned. This theoretical knowledge may become practical. The miraculous events in the lives of the saints and the sages of all times prove this. The phenomena of spiritualism and hypnosis attest to it. As yet the liberation of consciousness from the instrument through which it expresses itself is little understood. There are many instances where this occurs, but they are not satisfactorily explained. The understanding must ever be individual. One who has a religious experience, such as feeling the presence of God or seeing visions, does not doubt its authenticity. No argument persuades him against his personal

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knowledge. The mystic life is incommunicable. It has powerful force, however. To abandon earthly pursuits, to regard the universe as a myth, and to follow such theories as are practiced by the monastic orders of all ages requires a complete change of mind and the subjugation of physical to mental life. Electricity is an invisible force, and concerning it little is known, yet its force is tremendous. Thus, the power of concentration is infinite, though concentration, itself, is clear to many. Concentration is known only to those who have sufficient mental control to enliven the mind with a single idea and a firm purpose.

There is a superconscious reality to all objective phenomena and a superior life to objective life. Concentration, or the established purpose and idea to get beyond limited expression, lifts the mind beyond normal perception. Just as knowledge is discovered when the mind is quickened through intense thought, so consciousness is quickened through the firm desire to reach beyond limited perception. Inherited memory is transmitted into instinct and impulse and into natural tendencies to certain things and aversion to others. In the light of

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spiritual science, inherited memory is the resultant of individual past lives. Thus, the instinctive emotions that crowd the mind originate in conscious desires and actions of past lives. High-spirited persons with a sensitive consciousness represent the subconscious desire of many past lives to refine the sensibilities in order to experience life with keener feeling. The faculties and possibilities on the surface of personal life are evolved from the impetus and totalized effort of the Past. Continuous desire and the education of ideas will extend the surface expression and give deeper insight into the nature of life.

Concentration is a state rather than an activity. It is a state when there is but one idea in the mind and when the innumerable thought-waves of daily life are suppressed. A thorough distinction between a state of mind and a state of activity must be emphasized. The mind is active in the state of concentration, but the activity is called activity, and the state is called a state. This conception will relieve many misconceptions regarding concentration. There are persons who believe that to think absolutely nothing, to render the mind vacant of any idea

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whatever, to lose the sense of egoism and the thought that they are trying to make the mind vacant, is concentration. Sleep is brought about in that fashion, only in normal sleep there is no effort. It is a sort of self-induced anaesthesia. It resembles a swoon.

Concentration is not a sudden breaking away from normal consciousness. The passing of consciousness from this to other phases of existence is natural. The mind, absorbed in thought, becomes unconscious of the surroundings and vibrations of this plane and is conscious on the plane of ideas and so forth. The mistake is in thinking that the mind is where the body is; it originates in the thought that men are bodies. The unconsciousness of terrestrial life arises through negative conditions. It is not the aim to become unconscious to normal life. Unconsciousness to the occurrences of this plane in concentration is an effect. Many think that the whole of concentration is embodied in becoming unconscious to the experiences of daily life. They accordingly proceed to "think" themselves into this state, with the result that they become psychically afflicted and, instead of

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realizing their desire, become farther removed from it.

The superstition regarding psychical experiences should be eradicated. The paraphernalia of alleged occultism tend to hypnotize the mind into charlatanism. The so-called "hypnotic eye," the rigidity and solemnity of countenance, the sense of superiority, the thought of power over others, the desire to grow in the opinion of others have not the least connection with the spiritual science of concentration. They have brought practical psychology into disrepute. Persons with these qualities employ their smattering of psycho-spiritual truth to dupe the credulous.

The faculty of concentrating the mind is a growth. One cannot learn it in a short time. It comes with mental development and education of the will. Freedom of will manifests itself in self-control. Men are not free by saying so, but by living their thought of freedom in dominion over emotions and thought, not in harmony with spiritual progress. Harnessing natural power demands discovery, invention and great labor. Harnessing thought is far more difficult. It is best to do away with every

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bit of superstition and explain concentration in natural terms. Instead of calling concentration by its name, it may be better understood by calling it fixed attention. Fixed attention brings the idea in simple terms. Examining themselves, many persons claiming concentration, dominion of mind over matter, therapeutic power and so forth, will get a new opinion of these things and of themselves. They will know that their real knowledge is exceedingly limited. When they arrive at that knowledge they are taking the first steps to true knowledge and true power.

Noting his daily life, the individual sees that he rarely exercises fixed attention in any line. If he is a student he will discover that his education consists mainly in stocking his memory with a lot of facts. Memorizing does not require the fixed attention which is demanded in creative thought. It is not in memorizing the thoughts of others that knowledge is gained, but in the individual perception of truth and in personal observation of facts. Fixed attention is necessary, and this is absent with the average student, distracted with numerous other conditions. In any of the walks of life, the indi-

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vidual, who impartially scrutinizes his daily existence, finds that little fixed attention is directed to any purpose. Duties are performed because irresponsibility endangers economic safety and produces other unpleasant and uncomfortable circumstances. The employed business man generally has only a minor interest in his work. His attitude is not personal and is not his personal concern, except as his conception of duty makes him feel so, and that is not the case with the greater number. There is no continuous consistency in his personal relations. He is swayed by impulse, and has no systematic habits.

The lack of fixed attention is manifest in many households. The husband has no regular method of providing, and the wife mismanages. In the struggle for existence no established habits are developed in the children, with the result that the girl develops into a prattling, irresponsible woman, and the boy, according to the chance influences of his associations. Refinement of manners and fixed habits of conduct and business form the basic principle upon which society is founded. Refinement is achieved in fixed attention to the demands of cultivated social life.

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It requires moral control, for the spirit of refinement is the spirit of the choicest qualities of character. Success in business demands fixed attention. Proprietors of business interest have this fixed attention developed. It is necessary for their welfare. That is why, generally speaking, they have fixed habits, because a fixed habit in one direction encourages fixed habits in other directions.

Fixed attention in all the affairs of life rounds out the character, strengthens the will, and induces success in every direction. For this reason it should be cultivated. The man who can think and continuously think in a certain direction accomplishes the purpose identified with his thought. He commands Fortune. He is continuously expectant. He understands that the secret of success is determination, and that determination is only another word for fixed attention.

MORAL TRUTHS.

The breaking of the moral code is the breaking of natural law. All excesses or the practice of conduct leading to excesses are unhealthy, as well as immoral. This affords new views of many things, which, differently considered, lose relation and significance. When men realize that different practices disturb physical equilibrium, they will at least appreciate the uses of the law, even if they fail to follow it. The law is not short-sighted. At times it is simply rendered, and men imagine the truth as something far-fetched and fanciful, but the wisdom is real, as its practical application verifies. We are often blindly led by desire into paths seemingly strewn with pleasures, when, in reality, they are bordered with pain. Many deeds are "like goodly apples, rotten at the heart." We are beguiled by the sophism of desire. The moral has value in that it is protective. The immoral is injurious. When we do wrong it is ourselves whom we injure. The influence of conduct may extend to others, but the individual reaction is

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of far greater consequence. This idea, thoroughly established in consciousness, would inhibit the committal of many a crime. As it is, men believe they are pleasing themselves when they are frequently causing themselves illness and sorrow as a result of thoughtless conduct. It is like a sphere. The presenting side of the sphere seems pleasing and promising, but the opposite side is dark and foreboding. The personality turns the presenting side about to obtain a more complete view, and the dark side shows itself. That is the meaning of immorality. When we are immoral, we are our worst enemies. As the soul evolves, it discovers that it has neither friend nor enemy, but that its own acts attract good and evil conditions. The soul, in this, is absolutely free. Within its own depths lies the power to evoke bliss or pain, and as most persons are in ignorance of how to arouse the hidden forces of the soul, they measure out pain to themselves, although their purpose is self-indulgence. Pain and repeated pain follows, because the soul has not as yet developed the discrimination which distinguishes between the things which truly make for pleasure and the things which cause pain. The ap-

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pearance of things deceive. The eye of the mind must train itself to see beneath the surface and to distinguish the germ of pain in the heart of seeming pleasure. There is no happiness in immoral or selfish acts. Inordinate passion leads to mental and physical ruin. The drain on nervous energy is a robbing of the vital stamina. Passion is the perversion of natural desire. The fire and fever of inordinate desire consume the mental and psychic forces, disturb the instinctive life and destroy the conditions for spiritual harmony and progress. In these things lie the interpretation and logical consistency of right conduct. Right should be enacted not for any sake, but for the sake of right. To be morally right is to be mentally and physically adjusted; it means the harmony and perfect equilibrium of personality. Man's responsibility during the sojourn on earth is the perfection of personality, and personality can be rendered perfect only by controlling its various principles. This presents a worthy attitude in relation to justice and truth. True, there is a humanitarian, an unselfish, and an evolutionary motive for doing right, but the greatest motive is self-perfection.

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It is not in verbal assent to moral codes and in their intellectual support that good is done, but in actual, daily practice. Practice of moral demands will open the door of spiritual knowledge. If we are true to ourselves and develop the very best within us, it follows that we can then be false to no man. We should be moral, because it is unhealthy to be otherwise. Some of the passions are directly telling upon the organs and functions of the body. Anger can cause the rupture of blood vessels and disturb the proper action of the liver; fear will cause nervous prostration, often death. Jealousy and grief also have their effects on the body. Cases are frequently recorded where infants have died as the result of nursing the mother's milk, poisoned by her sudden and violent anger. The nervous and functional troubles arising through inverted desires and emotions are numerous, and often chronic and mortal. Therefore, even from a physical point of view, too much stress cannot be laid on the uses of morality. Morality will not be regarded much longer under a dogmatic or purely religious heading. The time is fast approaching when the morally afflicted will be placed in the same standing as the physically

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afflicted, and treated and cared for. Advanced surgeons are already performing operations upon children of abnormal tendencies and, in frequent instances, complete cures are brought about. There is deeper value and importance attached to the conditions of the morally afflicted, for they are no longer considered wicked, but sick and, as sick persons, need medical or surgical attention. Under the heading of immorality may be included all such insanities as morbid worries of whatever description. Responsible persons have no right to worry. It is sinful. It tends to self-depreciation and to weakness, and weakness is the only original sin. Morbid fears deplete vitality. Worry is as much of a sin as any numbered in the decalogues of religions. The most important influence of worry is its tendency to self-destruction. There are more ways to the suicide's grave than the sudden, fitful, self-destruction almost daily witnessed. There is the self-murder arriving at its purpose by circuitous paths, and of these are worry and passion. In the mind of Him Who wots of all things, the person who drinks himself to the tomb, or slays himself through mad passions, is as guilty of

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suicide as he who deliberately places the revolver to his head and shoots the bullet that sends him to eternity. This is another value of morality, the value of responsibility. The results which this responsibility carries are more terrifying than the wildest fancies of hell, for, unlike hell, they are real and cruel. It is only through pain that experience is gained, and often that pain is bitterest.

Experience is knowledge in the nut-shell; not dry, scholastic learning, but the conscious appreciation of the values of life. It is often a hard drilling. The pursuer of passion, fettered by the iron chain of habit, has a hard time bursting the links of vice. Yet it all lies in the educated will that must be aroused into activity and into determination of purpose. Then the conquest is easy, but this arousing of will is far from the mind of the immoral man. He cannot school his mind to the necessary renunciation, so pain and misery compel him. When a man realizes danger from a certain direction he will not follow the line. The stricken soul must come to the practical realization of the danger and the suffering following the practice of evil conduct and absorb into consciousness the

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experience of pain. Then only can reform be hoped for. Then the will arises equal to the task of conquest over moral infirmities. Then the man can take a new hold on himself, uniting the lower with the higher self. Men are their own executioners. There is no god who punishes. Who shall punish the soul in its nature essentially divine? The essence of the soul is the essence of the law. The law and the individual are one. Therefore, it is the individual himself who inflicts his own punishment. Unacquainted with the vital truth and with that discrimination which distinguishes between good and evil, the soul pursues the mad course of desire, satisfies the cravings of the lower self and thus comes to misfortune.

Each and every channel of imperfect expression has to be reconstructed. Each discord must be brought to harmony, until the entire nature of personality is well related. The only duty in life is the transformation of evil into good habits. In the perfection of character is the perfection of personality, and in the perfection of the personal is the growth of the real individual; and the perfection of the individual

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is the discovery of the soul and its identity with the Supreme.

The soul is a magnet, attracting to itself everything and anything which it desires. Attractive forces attract to themselves only those conditions which are harmonious with their natures. This harmony often becomes inverted, and the attraction and the result are, accordingly, inverted. One thing which, practically applied, is the greatest curse or blessing, is the knowledge that nothing can affect us from outside, that nothing outside of our own nature can impose anything upon us. If someone robs us, it is we who are robbing ourselves. If someone cuts our throat, it is we who are cutting our own throat. If we are illy born and physically deformed, we have ourselves to thank. No one but ourselves is to blame. We are the masters of our fate and the architects of our destiny. In our hands lies the future, perhaps not the immediate future, for that is already determined by deeds, yet that, though not radically changeable, can be bettered by the resolve to live harmoniously. Once the will has been educated and aroused, there is no end to its transforming power for good. Nothing can prevent

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its currents of expression. It is all in the will to be. The will to be leads to exalted heights, transforms the miserable into the divine, changes the currents of evil into good, develops the inner faculties and powers of Spirit, leads to Self-knowledge and, ultimately, to the realization of spiritual consciousness. Therefore, men should make it the master-purpose of their lives to cherish and practically set forth the will to be.

Moral practice is the pathway of redemption. The divine can realize divinity only in the manifestation of divinity. The pure and holy are realized only in the personalization of purity and holiness. That which is beyond birth and death must manifest this beyondness, and this manifestation is brought about through the constant practice of morality and unselfishness. In the core of every life stands that one Self. This is the true; this alone is the immortal fact; this alone is the saving knowledge. This immortal Self is to be reached by the pathway of the glorious and perfect ones, those who have gone before, they the Sons of Light and Truth who have manifested in the Buddha and in the Christ character. These characters express the

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summary of moral practice. They are the essence of all that is pure and holy, all that is good and great, all that is perfect and sublime. This exalted state is reached only through long and wearisome lives of infinite patience and struggle where lapses are frequent and the rise difficult. The goal cannot be reached in a moment. Everything is the result of long, patient and persevering effort. That is why the pathway of the Immortals is beset with obstacles and difficulties at every turn.

What is the nature of the moral? How is it to be determined? What are its essential characteristics? That must be discerned by the soul itself. It is the duty of the soul to lay questions before its individual understanding. It must face each and every moral problem and solve that problem to the exclusive definition of the individual conscience. The soul must find itself through the solution of the moral problems. When it awakens to a sense of personal freedom and discovers that knowledge which leads to the emancipation of the intellect and to the broadening of spiritual vision, then only is it in harmony with moral values. Morality has as deep a value in the order of life as science.

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Its final conclusions are scientific and, as previously stated, hygienic. The entire energy of the universe is far from physical; it is radically moral. It is not mental or scientific; it has purely moral relations. For example, the birth of the globe we inhabit has its ultimate purpose in the perfection of the feelings of its creatures and, as this perfection is to the greatest extent synthesized in man, it is the ethical development of the human race for which the earth is revolving about the sun. This is the purpose for which the sun rises and sets, for which the entire solar system moves and evolves. The ethical has its highest import in the consolidation of the true nature of man and the disintegration of retrogressive impulses and tendencies.

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A teacher has said: "All search is in vain until we begin to perceive that knowledge is within ourselves, and that no one can help us, that we must help ourselves." If it does nothing else, the fact that all knowledge is within ourselves will at least make us independent, rid us of weakness, of diffidence, and make us buoyant in the effort to realize the deepest depths of soul. The struggle is long, the path is long, the goal far removed. The flash of illumination may have visited the soul and have given it inspiration for further effort, but the knowledge that all is within us must have a practical bearing. The knowledge of itself is only of so much value. What is needed is a practical application, and this leads us into the realm of psychology.

Persistent mental endeavor tends to develop the higher brain centers, to specialize them from the average or exceptionally developed to the

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super-normal and beyond the super-normal. We have arrived at intuition. In other words, there is a particular condition of the mind where its activity is greater, more vivid, more accurate than under the process of reasoning. Its discrimination, perception and judgment are truer. Reason has altogether given way to the more steady flowing of the mind. It is a condition of feeling rather than of thinking; of feeling, not as we understand the common term, but of feeling through which mental objects are realized to the eye of intuition with as great a clarity of vision as physical objects are seen by the physical eye. This faculty of exaltation and of higher evolution comes through the constant practice of concentration. It becomes established and furthered in expression, even as the rational element in human nature becomes established and furthered in expression by the constant application of reason to outer relations. So there is no mystery-mongering, nothing in the accepted meaning of the "occult." It is simply evolution carried along normal channels of development. It is no more wonderful than the evolution of the physical senses. It is only a new method of seeing ob-

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jects that are beyond normal sense or rational
vision.

It is the spiritual faculty through which the mind comes into immediate relation with and into the understanding of its own symbols. Under normal circumstances physical vision leaves no doubt as to the object perceived. In rational vision there is seen only the clarity of ideas in their logical sequence, and this is more necessary than the physical vision, because by it we arrive at the realization of that Essence of Truth without which civilization would collapse. The intuitive vision closely resembles the physical vision in so far as the object of its vision has a real, concrete existence. There is the actual feeling, the actual perception of the actual presence of ideas. Unlike the rational vision that deals with abstract conceptions, the intuitive vision deals with objective facts. In other words, the abstract conception of the rational vision becomes translated into terms of consciousness. One can almost see them. Doubt no longer exists as to the reality and to the existence of the truth and all that the truth implies. For example, the truth of the immortality of the soul, of the freedom of the will,

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and like vital truths are no longer matters of debate, or matters to which hesitancy of recognition may accrue. They are objective facts as real; in fact, more real by far than the phenomena of physical existence. It is difficult to adequately interpret the evolved state when consciousness comes into direct relation with ideas. We have so long been slaves to the idea that only that is real which we can see, hear, feel, or otherwise perceive through sense contact. Thoughts, desires and sensations, divested of their physical influence and expression, have no existence in the minds of many. They speak of them, but their speech is tinted with their indefinite and unintelligent idea of thought. What is now suggested for purposes of illustration, and will be later fully dwelt on, is the all-important fact that thoughts are things, possessing an intense reality and motive influence in the physical as well as in the mental order. In the intuitive state these thoughts are dimly *seen*, and the perception is so developed that the mind is assured of their actual existence and meaning. In psychic development, in the higher phases of the intuitive, when psychic consciousness and control are fully

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manifested, this dim sight of thoughts and of their reality and significance and existence, is superseded by true clairvoyance, true and clear sight. The sense of sight has been fully translated to the psychic plane. It is exceedingly difficult to speak of thought-forms and satisfactorily explain them to those who have not as yet even heard of the reality and existence of thought, as men understand reality and existence here in this limited sphere of earth perception. The higher interpretation of thought will be reviewed later. Of course, this condition of the mind, or better said, of consciousness, is of deep psychological value, and will, accordingly, have to be interpreted. The intuitive state is really a psychic state.

The foregoing general intimation with regard to the introspective state of the mind, that of persistent mental endeavor, and the intuitive state leads to the consideration of what, in the Oriental schools of thought, is called concentration. All mental activity, of any description whatever, may be properly termed concentration. When mental activity in any way becomes particularly individualized and carried on for some appreciable time, the term concentration

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is applicable. In normal, daily existence the mind is like a whirlpool. Stray and scattered ideas imperfectly formulated, imperfectly entertained ideas, vague ideas, ideas with little coherency and with a tendency toward dissipation are known to crowd the mind. This condition is undesirable. It leads to the psychological uncertainty of mental activity; it leads to weakness, incoherency and indirection of thought. Thinkers are aware that all attainment, whether artistic, mechanical, or philosophical, is the composite result of strains of thought following in successive and definite strata. In other words, various mental modifications equal in identity, quality and purpose are exclusively entertained by the mind. The mind is the highest universal force and is possessed with the highest gravitation and attraction. Now, when that force is brought from a dissipated condition into a condition of coherency and direction, its power is unlimited. Concentration, therefore, is a focalization of the mind, a centralization of the whole mind about one given point of meditation. The mind is brought into one wave form so that it thinks of nothing else, knows nothing, but the particular variations of thought

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in the mental spectrum. The concentrative faculty is the greatest possession of the soul, because the latter alone is the only illuminating power in the universe. In a relative sense it may be said that the mind is. As men are engulfed in a cosmic ocean of mind and matter, as the real essence of the soul is to many unknown and incommunicable, either by language or symbols, for the purpose of illustration they have to bring the formulae concerning the soul within the range of the understanding. Thus, what is really to be attributed to the soul is relatively attributed to the mind. Mental substance is as unreal as physical substance. To believe otherwise is ignorance, is illusion. The soul, and the soul alone, gives phenomenal existence both to the mind and to the body.

This truth is of supreme importance as a working factor for him who sets about the great quest for Self-knowledge. First, he must come to the understanding that it is not by the ordinary processes of the mind that spiritual development is to be had. Spiritual consciousness has nothing to do with mental activity. Indeed, mental activity is an obstacle rather than of any great assistance. It cannot be too emphatically

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repeated, that all knowledge is at first intuitive and, is through the intuitive and the higher orders of the intuitive, indirectly of divine origin. This fact gives us the secret of divine revelations. All phenomenal knowledge, even as all existence, is derived from the Unconditioned Being, omnipresent, omniscient, and omniexistent, with which, by reason of that omniexistence, we are identical. "Thou art That," the Vedas say. In the same spirit, the Christ said; "I and my Father are one." Thus knowledge is absolute. It is the divine essence. Relative knowledge is relative only because the manifesting conditions for supreme knowledge are miserably limited and finite. All knowledge is intuitive. What reason does is to sanction already intuitive discerned truth.

This conception of knowledge is of tremendous value to the seeker after truth. Next in importance is information with regard to those methods of concentration whereby the mind becomes immediately susceptible to the direct perception of intuitive knowledge. Just as insistence must be made upon the fact that all knowledge is intuitive, so likewise must it be insisted that the mind is only an instrument, a conduit,

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not a creative or an originating, but a distributing and a dispensating factor. With this truth firmly established, the soul in search of Self-understanding will look to its own truth-perceiving faculty. It will endeavor to make soul known unto soul, to allow soul to be illumined by its own light. How is this to be accomplished? This has been the question which has always been asked and variously answered. Some of these answers are metaphysical, some agnostic, some religious. Most of them are wrong. The soul can reveal itself only when both mind and body, when the entire personality, and all its attributes have become passive. The question is, how can this be brought about? The answer is: "By concentration."

Concentration has been greatly misunderstood, generally because it has been misinterpreted by those who wish to herald themselves as teachers of the occult. Another reason for this misunderstanding is that no central idea of concentration and of its methods can ever be truly taught. Concentration is an individual experience and the methods applied are individual. There are given formulae, but they are so far out of reach of normal intelligence and

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practicability that it would have been as well had they never been offered. Besides, all concentration is psychical, and he who would attempt concentration must therefore repair to one who is a master of it, one who has traveled the hyper-normal pathway of menta-psychical consciousness. Concentration has been spoken of as that state of the mind when it is one-formed and one-pointed, when all its activity is specialized into one state. Now, paradoxical as it may seem, condition in reality is not a condition of activity, but one of extreme passivity. That is, the highest climax of concentrative effort places the mind beyond that effort, places it beyond its normal phases, places it into a super-sensuous, and out of the normal into the super-conscious state. Before any of the great spiritual truths, such as the intimate consciousness of the immortality of the soul and of its spiritual superiority over the universe of time, space and causation, and over what we understand as matter, the mind must have become silent with not one of its activities in play.

To come into relation with any spiritual truth we must become conscious of it. This applies not only to the lower order of spiritual

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truth, but to the truth of Self-knowledge. Consciousness alone is knowledge. Reasoning never, because it is not the highest conduit in the revelation of knowledge. Men could reason for thousands of years about the climatic and the geological generalities of Egypt, but what is a ton of reasoning in comparison with the actual presence in the land of the Nile? The same applies to mental and spiritual facts. Reasoning throughout time would not avail, for without the flash of intuition and without its spiritual truth, the human would still be the animal; we should still be guided by the instinctive. It comes to pass, therefore, that all spiritual truths must be intensely realized, actually perceived, and when these things are perceived, and when this order of perception has reached its highest point, then not only Self-knowledge is gained, but knowledge of all things. The incomparable Vedas, and the Vedanta philosophy through which they are expressed make this attainment of realization of spiritual truth and Self-knowledge the very goal and the only goal of religion and religious effort. The words they use to express the necessity of this attainment and the intensity of the perception of spiritual

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realization are the most imperative words ever uttered to men. Therefore it is said in the Upanishads: "That Self, O Maitreyi, is to be seen, heard, perceived and known. When that Self is seen, heard, perceived and known, then all else is known." That Self is the real I of every man. It is the only I in the universe. It is the same I, the same Self residing in the heart of the flower, in the heart of the stars, of the sun and moon, in the heart of the inhabitants of the animal world, of the heaven worlds and of the worlds of hell, in the heart of all human life and in the heart of life that is beyond the human. This thought, of unity is held by science with its declaration of the unity of all life and form and of the identity of all life, form and intelligence with an unknown and indescribable spiritual unity, the sole reality of Being, One without a second.

This is somewhat of an anticipation, but it is the climax of concentration. For concentration to be of any value these truths must be borne in mind. It is only the half-educated who laugh at spiritual assertion, but research into the various departments of science is suggestive of the spiritual findings of our modern day. We

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can only touch upon the psychological phases of concentration. To be fully understood they must be actually perceived. It is difficult for an explorer of some hitherto unknown land to speak of the new conditions, geographical and otherwise, with any great understanding on the part of his hearers. He can use such terms as "vast wilderness," but they are only of a certain representative value. The hearer, to have a complete consciousness of the described facts, must go to that country. It is the same concerning foreign states of consciousness that accrue to the normal consciousness in the higher stages of concentration. An ounce of practice is greater than the perusal of the best-written books describing the psychology of superconsciousness.

The consideration of the concentrative practice includes a meditation on a number of its forms. Some of these forms are mental, others partly mental, partly physical, while again others are psychical. Through the control of the physical, super-physical consciousness develops and thus corresponds with the immediate perception of psychic truth and value. The mental form that is the highest consists in the

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control of the mind and through the mind in the control of the entire psychic element and of the entire personality. All modes of consciousness, whether psychic, mental or physical, become subordinate and subservient to the educated will. This education of the will inadvertently comes through effort to realize Self-knowledge and through the understanding of spiritual truth. The will is the controlling factor, not only of the evolutionary tendency, but of present environment. It serves as the modifying quality of latest expression. It is the force by which character is moulded. The characters of men are the expressions of the degree of strength and of intensity of the will to be. All our moral systems, as well as educational, are conditions of the social order that make for the development of the individual and of the racial will to develop. The psychical states of concentration and the meaning of effort toward the understanding of Self are significant of the education of the will to be, the will to grow out of limited attainment and to reach that point of will-education where the soul becomes one in character with the idea of spiritual unity. Self-knowledge teaches that Self is the unit of

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existence, that It is impersonal, and thus higher than the personal. Self-knowledge admonishes us that our characters should emphasize the practical value of this knowledge; in other words, that we should become as great in expression as we know we are in reality. Thus will and thought come out of the same order. Character and knowledge are of the same arrangement. They are dual phases of one vast ideal. The mental concentrative process is complementary to these thoughts. It signifies that these thoughts must become a part of the general and integral consciousness of the individual, not in modes of thought and speculation, but in modes of character and consciousness. This is the true meaning of concentration. It does not involve the mere thinking of thoughts, but the translation of these thoughts into practical values. It does not mean that one must loosen all mental hold and become mentally inactive. That would be only a polite characterization of laziness. It would lead to mental atrophy and to the suppression of high ideals. What we want is highest expression of ideals. The trouble is that so much meaningless value has been attached to psychological conditions. It is

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always the cry "to have," never the cry "to be." The public understanding of concentration is summed up in a few words that imply the supernatural, the mentally fantastic, the spiritually weird, and the psychically wonder-producing. This condition and attitude cannot be too strenuously denounced. They have led to the persecution and the ridiculing of truly spiritual men and women. In fact, the average person is totally ignorant of the central fact in the true occult conception and meaning of concentration. Then, there are those who lay stress on concentration simply for what psychological advantage and possible occult power may be gained thereby. These are the ones who want to sail through the air, desire that their curiosity be appeased by long-distance sight and hearing. These are the ones who claim to receive letters from the Mahatmas of Thibet and from the Yogis of the Himalayan regions by an occult mail route.

The first thing that those truly desirous of spiritual information will have to learn is that the various psychological phases of occultism, and those that come by concentration are insignificant of themselves. The central and the vital truth in all occultism, the central and the

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highest truth in all concentration is the knowledge and the realization of the soul. Let visionaries have their visions. Let them be content with appearances and with the things on the surface. Let them rest satisfied with the unimportant things that bind the soul into greater bondage and subject it to greater and to more numerous illusions. Psychical phantasmagoria are as misleading as the changes of physical substance. They in no way serve to satisfy the spiritual desire or the religious instinct. Excess of superstition has made the work of true teachers very difficult. They have to fight, not only against innate ignorance and the dogmatic adherence that they find rampant in the world of the average, but they have to battle that hydra-headed monster, superstition, the greatest curse of spiritual blindness. We have seen how, at first, these teachers were surrounded with numerous followers, how their every act was lauded, how they were regarded as almost superhuman, and how hero-worship was paid to them. This was because miracles were expected of them, and psychical phenomena and kindred things, to satisfy the unworthy curiosity of a gaping public. These were not forthcoming.

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Only truth was spoken; the spiritual message and the message of peace, alone, were voiced. We have accordingly observed the falling away of these numbers and the misunderstanding of the mission of these teachers.

It has always been and will always be the mind that is ever desirous of being entertained. Were it as sincerely desirous of truth as it appears on the surface, Utopian conditions would prevail throughout the world. This globe would be changed into a paradise and the race transformed into a race of gods.

Momentary enthusiasm is of no value in the effort at spiritual truth. It is only by patience, by thoroughness and persistence of purpose, by a tremendous faith in self effort and by an unbounded self-confidence that the goal is reached. Then, too, a spirit of cheerfulness that never vacillates, never lowers its level of quality must be maintained. Despondency and weakness of mind are the greatest barriers to the attainment of any success, and especially of spiritual success. Any melancholia, any psychopathic condition which pulls the mind and inhibits its highest expression and activity must be rigidly combatted and successfully overcome by the

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aspirant. Religion is not a matter of sadness or of woeful feeling. Neither is the effort for the development of spiritual consciousness. We of the Western hemisphere have been whipped by the nightmare-fear of hell into believing all sorts of things that are dangerous to believe, things that may lead to unsettled and unsound states of mind. Instead of bringing light, such things bring darkness. Dogmatic religious systems have no place in the index of things leading to spiritual knowledge. It is a sad fact, and the statement may be very unpleasant, but the greater number of religious organizations have been brought about and are sustained through hypnotism and through the paralyzation of the intellect and will. They have origin in the control exercised by the psychopathically developed will of certain leaders. As an example, Mohammed. Certainly he was a great man. He possessed great personal magnetism, great development of will, great hypnotic force, yet he was a psychopathic study. He happened to stumble into those superconscious states to which concentration leads, and stumbling into them is dangerous and disastrous. The subject will have inverted conceptions; he will have il-

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lusions and hallucinations. He will bring only half-truths as the result of his experience. That is why Mohammedanism is tinctured with so much of the irrational. The ethical system is flawless in the integral part, but the psychopathic issue manifests in stupid beliefs and in superstitions. There is no question that Mohammed had some very unusual experiences, experiences of an occult order and of a psychical character. His experience embraces what is known in modern psychology as levitation, as telæsthesia, as clairvoyance, clairaudience and the like, but he experienced them haphazardly, unsystematically, and without any understanding of the conditions which induced them. He would have made an interesting study as a patient in some psychological clinic. The same statements can be made of the uninstructed and personally mystifying experiences of many medieval mystics. Religions, whose founders and dispensers are psychologically off, have been the retrogressive factors in civilization, and by no means the progressive factors they allege themselves to be.

Any doctrine or set of beliefs that cause men to assert weakness, to assert the possibility of

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the annihilation of the soul, to assert subservience to the whims of an extra-cosmic god, given to all the variations of human passions, are damnable, and spread the germ of insanity. The highest spiritual truth cannot be gained through acknowledgement of any weakness. It is not to be gained by sitting down and weeping over sins. Great teachers never speak of "sins." They have a certain horror of the word "sin," because it is identified with the deepest frailties. In place of that word they use the term "mistake." They speak of error and ignorance, but they cannot understand the meaning of the word sin as it is theologically interpreted. Sin is a hideous nightmare. Like the idea of eternal punishment, it has dominated the Western mind to the greatest psychological disaster. Those who have realized Self, those who know their spiritual worth, say that human nature is liable to mistakes. The mind may place its ideal a little too high and fall short of the mark. It may attempt to soar on untrained spiritual and mental wings and, instead of flying, tumble down to earth. Ideals are planted high on the spiritual mountains, and long is the way, and difficult the ascent. There come

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times of weariness and places where onward progress is difficult, but is that a reason why the traveler should weep and profess inherent weakness that would prevent him from going further? The higher minded say: "Put away fear, put away sorrow, but especially, put away weakness." Weakness is the only sin, the only tragedy, the only barrier to the attainment of spiritual truth. If mistakes are made consider them as lessons. Take the result of wrong conduct with resignation. Stand up and declare your strength. Attribute your weakness to physical limitations, to mental uncertainties, and avow the soul to be deathless, fearless and omnipotent, to be one with sinless spirit. Realize these thoughts in your consciousness, then go onward. If the many religions with which we come into relation were purveyors of these thoughts, if they asked their followers to believe in their strength rather than to assert weakness, they could be classified as true religions.

Different by far are the religio-philosophical teachings of the Orient, the source of all religions. There, belief in reincarnation obtains, and a belief in the inherent divinity of man; there obtain truths that pertain to spiritual

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consciousness and development, truths without which no spiritual progress can be made. The great mystics of the Roman Catholic Church and those of other religions arrived at spiritual facts by a process of concentration in which spiritual truth above dogma was revealed to the soul. Their concentration, however, was never classified, or formulated into a separate system. There were general methods such as contemplation that served the same purpose as concentration, but the psychological value and knowledge of the psychological process were unknown. Then, too, the Arabic philosophy with its higher spiritual conclusions became a part of the religious belief of the Franciscan monks, the order that brought forth the greatest mystics of the West. Thus the higher-minded and the more spiritually informed of the West were practitioners, consciously or unconsciously, of concentrative methods that liberated them from dogmatic limitations.

We have somewhat deviated from the subject proper, but only to refer to those conditions that blind spiritual vision and impede the attainment of spiritual and psychic development. We have reviewed the misconceptions of con-

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centration; we have reviewed those psychopathic phases that inhibit the mind and prevent it from asserting its individual power. We have, however, in no way explicitly referred to many details, and one of these details is desire.

Desire is an aspect of the force of mind, the most attractive and influential force in the universe. Desire is one of its strongest modes of action. Desire for truth develops when the mind places itself in relation to the messages of truth. The more persistent the desire, the more authoritative the revelation of truth. Desire added to concentration can wrench any secret from nature. The astronomer centers his mind on the stars, and they give forth their secret; the geologist centers his mind on the inner construction of the earth, and from this concentration we have geology. So with all things. Men concentrated their minds on the vast and meaningful problems of life, and we have Platonism, Kantism, Stoicism, Vedantism, and so on. All mental discovery and attainment ultimately depends on the mind in these two aspects—desire and concentration. We can readily see that if the mind is filled with the desire to know and

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to realize the hidden spring of its spiritual life, it does so. That is the real business of man, the struggle for the development of his spiritual nature, the unravelling of those conditions that blind the vision of the Perfect Self, resident in the innermost soul of all. All else is vain and ephemeral. Desire and concentration take man beyond himself, take him into that intuitive realm where he realizes all things relating to spiritual wisdom and consciousness. He realizes his nature, the composing qualities of mind and body, the elements of his psychic nature, the truth regarding soul and Spirit. There are many historic instances of the attainment of the highest truth, among them being Zoroaster, Swedenborg, Plotinus, Plato, Saint Bonaventure, Al Ghazali, Saint Theresa, and Keshab Chunder Sen.

The most eminent fact about this knowledge is that it is incommunicable in its wholeness. Those who have realized the truth concerning their nature speak in the poor tongue of philosophy or in the inspired diction of ecstatic song. Man can partially appreciate, but never completely. To wholly understand, the soul must reach the same spiritual plane that the discov-

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ers of Self attain. We must, even as they, come to the point of discrimination as to what really serves in the evolution of the spiritual consciousness. This discrimination involves firmness of purpose, enthusiasm of heart and spiritual ecstasy.

There are numerous psychological conditions associated with ecstasy, that superconscious state which concentration and devout meditation induce, or which comes with the passivity of reason and of the whole mind. They have been investigated by our leading psychologists and found to be super-normal and not abnormal, as some people would have men believe. Professor James insists that the concentrative system as it is practiced in India leads to soundness of mind, soundness of body and to soundness of character. It is also claimed that if a man enter into this superconscious state, this ecstatic state, that, even if he is a fool, he comes out of it a sage; if he is a sinner, he becomes a saint. We judge causes by their effects. Effects are symbols of invisible causative factors. We judge a tree by its fruits. In judging the concentrative process sages have declared that it is highly beneficial, and that it possesses no

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pathological elements. Mystics themselves have attested to these conditions that manifest in connection with psychic states. They are conditions that affect the body as well as the normal consciousness. Such conditions are rigidity of body, fixedness of eyes, suspension of speech and respiration, and a general coldness. Saint Theresa, one of the most celebrated mystics of the Roman Catholic Church, Saints Bernard of Clairvaux and Bonaventure have also explained these phenomena in their writings on ecstasy, describing the transcendency of the soul over the physical form during deep meditation. They say that at times when the extremes of ecstasy visit the soul it is as motionless as a dead body, and that even the heart stops beating. On the surface it would seem that these circumstances signified the degeneracy of the normal mental-psychical state, but profound thinkers on psychology, those who mould public opinion along these lines, have repeatedly attested to the salient and psychically sanative factors involved. When certain ecstatic conditions resulting from concentrating are presented, the body may give way under the stress of such expanded emotions out of the ordinary psychic field, that tears in-

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cessantly flow and the face becomes singularly radiant, that the lips separate in a fixed smile and the general expression is divinely soul-inspiring.

We understand the possibility of these states by comparison with affairs other than spiritual. For example, a mathematician may become so engrossed with his work as to forget time and become insensible to any loud noise or even physical hurt. It is the same with the poet and the artist, or with others mentally occupied who are deeply centered in the performance of their work.

There are certain physical associations, super-normal in manifestation, that are associated with a strain of high mental effort, irrespective of the description. In the instance of philosophy or abstract thought, this super-normality is doubly, trebly increased, and we wonder at the majesty of the mind and soul that seem to have become so far removed from the sordid and commonplace surroundings of earth. Likewise is there exceeding great joy following the realization of the ideal in this inferior concentration on the part of the mathematician, and

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so on. The purpose gained, the subject is almost beyond himself with happiness.

This is more vitally true of the ecstatic philosopher or of the religious seeker after spiritual perfection. The reason for this increase of super-normal intensity of expression and of this super-normal intensity of joy is because the end desired and concentrated upon is so much higher, transcendent and glorious. The ecstatic state is visible in a minor and finite sense when sudden joy overcomes the individual upon some surprising condition, such as the unexpected meeting of lover and beloved. When the ideal of love is infinite in adorableness and beauty, when it transcends thought and the many limitations of finite expression, how infinitely more is the ecstatic state in intensity and expression! It is said of one great sage who had realized the infinite within, the Self of all Being, that his soul was translated into such ecstatic love for God, that, at times, he could not even bear to see the grass trodden upon, a flower plucked, or the branch of a tree broken.

We have stepped one step further than the subject proper. We have almost anticipated the essence and the sweetness of spiritual bless-

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edness. We have reached the important conclusion that ecstasy qualifies for independence of soul from body. This implies that the soul under certain conditions may leave the physical instrument through which it expresses itself, and thus pass beyond the physical plane and enter planes otherwise subjective, planes of existence of much finer fibre and vibration. It involves the thought that mind and soul are independent, and it expresses the relative importance of the former. It stands as the peremptory answer to materialistic statements. It may be objected, how are we aware that the soul leaves the body? For the reason of the experience of each night during sleep. Were the soul in the body, why should it not see, why not hear, feel, taste, smell and be generally alive to what is going on about it? Because the soul is not in the body, that is, not wholly so. There is some of the subliminal consciousness remaining that vitalizes and keeps the organs and circulation active. The higher consciousness is absent. It is on the immediately subjective plane. Too much high talk bewilders the very simplest facts of existence. At death, when the entire consciousness leaves the body, the whole

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man is translated to another phase of existence. Because of lack of self-development the majority of men have no memory of the variation of consciousness and no memory of their experiences while out of the body. This memory, however, may be acquired.

It is otherwise in the case of ecstasy, or in the super-conscious state realized through concentration. The man is cognizant of all that takes place. The physical brain is affected and impressions registered upon it, so that the phenomenal consciousness has an adequate memory of all that has occurred, otherwise the claims of ecstasies and mystics would be purely pathological in origin and without any spiritual or psychical meaning. This truth can only be stated. Personal experience must be called into service for individual understanding. This is the key-note and the entire solution of spiritual truth. How can the individual go about to get this experience? By concentration. Short practice, daily increased as the development increases, must be invoked. It takes practice, practice, practice. Without it any understanding of the depths of the soul is superficial. The greatest patience must be exercised. Great re-

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sults cannot be expected at once, but patience conquers everything in the long run. Patience, determination and concentration have been the building factors in all success. It is equally true of individual development to the point of psychical evolution and Self-understanding. A firm will is the compelling power which will disclose and control the internal nature and wrest from the soul the knowledge of its essence and power. No matter for how many minutes concentration is carried on, the result will be so much of a stride toward the goal, so much toward realization and Self-understanding. The minutes should be determined according to individual capability. Adherence to this number and the practice should be religiously kept. As time broadens the possibilities for concentration, as the mind becomes more and more steadied, the number of minutes should be increased from five to ten, from ten to fifteen, until indefinite concentration is attained. The practice should be performed in a place where the subject will not be disturbed, and also at a regular time. As an object of concentration, the beginner may employ any mental fact or series of facts that are instructive and pleasing. Let con-

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centration be centralized as much as possible. In a short time, the subject will find that he is becoming abstract in meditation. He will become motionless. So well is he mentally adjusted that the body takes on the condition of the mind, becomes fixed in one position, even as the mind is focalized into one mental wave. These attitudes of mind continue developing in degree as practice is kept up.

From mere mental facts, let the mind ascend to the contemplation of higher metaphysical concepts, strains of thought that bear immediate relation to the qualities and nature of Self-insight and instruction. This is more difficult, but by this time the practitioner will have become aware of the power of persistence and patience. Let him grapple with the new difficulties and he will find himself amply rewarded for his struggle. Concentration on inferior matters leads to the vivification of the senses, to the development of the mind and the psychic nature, and thus to their final control. Exalted ideals, by their very nature, possess the motive force that elevates consciousness into psychic realms. They possess the faculty of exciting consciousness into menta-psychical states in

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keeping with the order and exaltation of the mental objects concentrated upon. Thus alone can any spiritual consciousness be achieved. In realizing great thoughts, in experiencing great emotions that correspond with great thoughts, the mind is in a state where it appreciates the value of higher things. In this state the follies of the senses, the ambitions of the mind, the fluctuations of desire, the instability of instinctive emotions, pass before it. Unmindful of these waverings, steadied and firmly established in the knowledge of truth and in the knowledge of the spiritual essence of its nature, the soul purges itself from all weakness and indecision, grows strong in spirit, and against its discrimination nothing can prevail. On the highway of spiritual life, the individual travels—his own guide. Strong is he to overcome the difficulties that beset the path, strong to do and to dare. Self-knowledge can only be obtained by the persistence of desire. Instead of through the external stimulus of a teacher, or of a spiritual environment, the soul reaches the goal by strenuous auto-suggestion. The teacher is only a great preacher. We ourselves must make an effort.

We have touched only upon some very vital

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matters such as the independence of mind from matter, such as the soul's innate freedom and immortality, all of which require separate study and notice. Let it suffice that Self-knowledge can be attained, that hope may rise in the hearts of those who have not as yet reached the goal, but who ardently desire truth, self-perfection and spiritual illumination.

One of the supreme truths of the universe is: that like attracts like; like gravitates toward like; like is inseparably affiliated with like. Mentally and spiritually applied, this signifies that where the desire is there also is the object of the desire. At first desire and its object are two separate and distinct things. The object is the Ideal. All depends on the intensity of the desire. The greatest and most admirable quality of desire and its greatest working power is the desire to manifest a greater depth and extension of personality. The quest of the Ideal is the desire to be. To have is the voice of the selfish nature; to be, the voice of the spiritual desire. There come moments of physical weariness when desire weakens in intensity, when it is less enthusiastic, less energetic and aspirant. These moments pass, however, and, if the soul

Psychic Values and Spiritual Consciousness remains firm while they endure, if it does not waver or falter, then is the Path sure-footing—the Path that leads to realization and spiritual consciousness.

The Path is long, but it is not endless. The intensity of one moment's earnest concentration and the intense longing to become and to attain may take the soul beyond years of slow, normal and forced effort. The goal is narrow, but not dangerously so. The length and the narrowness are conditions that serve as lines determining the seeker to gather fresh strength, greater firmness of purpose and decision, and a greater spiritual hold on self. It is within the power of the soul to alter the prevailing circumstances governing the Path. We have it within ourselves to shorten or lengthen it according to our progressive or slothful mental attitudes. We can become firmly established in spiritual life or crowded to the outer circle where lack of effort involves spiritual wrecking. Everything is relative to patience and endeavor.

Identifying spiritual effort with the unfolding of spiritual knowledge, we realize the true Self, the true and omnipresent God.

“He existing, none exists besides.”

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Thought is attributed to the activity of the mind and sense, life to the principle of desire. The first step in spiritual development is to realize that consciousness alone exists; it exists as sensation, and we speak of desire; it exists as the physically expressive, and we speak of the body. Consciousness, however, embodies the entirety of manifestation. Mind, body, desire, and so forth, are but terms used to designate the variation of conscious expression.

Manifestation is a vast stream of consciousness flowing in varied currents of expression, and in various channels of manifestation.

We are half-viewers of the great vital essence which manifests as life and consciousness. There is nothing but life, all-pervading life. At sea one beholds nothing but water. All that they can take in in its widest vision is water, water, water.

Form the concept that everywhere about you, in the infinitely above, in the infinitely below, to the infinitely right and left, permeating your

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heart, mind and soul—is life, endless and eternal. Let this idea become a mental reality, a part and parcel of conscious life. Let it dominate conduct and social relations. Let it well up in the form of emotion. Let the concept and its reality be as fervid a reality as the reality of personal existence. The spirit of the idea is the spirit of the highest truth and of the highest reality. The soul is afloat on this limitless, shoreless ocean of existence without name and form. Differences arise through the separation of the currents on the surface.

In fathomless profundities of the eternal sea, there is silence and rest. Birth and death are the ebb and flow of the tides of the great sea. The numberless waves on the surface are the numberless individual lives. On the surface is disturbance and unrest. In the depths there is no manifestation; in the depths is calm and unthinkable peace.

The profundities are not suggestive of non-existence. Surface life is ephemeral compared with the depth of everlasting life. Existence and non-existence are terms not applicable to that condition beyond both birth and death, and beyond the currents of quality that flow on the

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surface. That condition is nameless and indescribable.

The entirety of the surface life depends on the larger and all-containing existence of the depth. The surface life is individual, composed of name and form. It is reality, but only phenomenal and relative. The life of the surface is forever giving the lie to that state which can alone be truly called existence. In its clamorings, the solemn and æon-silence of the depth is unheeded. There are those, however, who have deafened their ears to the loud clamorings of the surface life and have become sensitive to the all-encompassing calm. In this silence is the secret of knowledge and power. Of themselves, the existence of the surface of life are weak and infantile. They are included in the larger existence of the impenetrable under-sea. In it they sway and move and have their being.

Unconsciously or consciously all manifested power comes from this deeper life. In recognizing this the individual properly relates himself to the truth that controls the motion of all life. The wave has its name and form in distinction to the surrounding water. But it is water, every particle and every atom. It is

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water, water, water only. The human soul is a wave on the sea of existence. Unconditioned by time, name, or form is this ocean before manifestation. During manifestation, name and form are evolved, and these, attached to individualized consciousness, cause the existence of phenomenal lives. These lives lose sight of the primitive unity of life. They fail to realize that their existence is through the unfathomable sea, nameless and formless.

Established in individuality they begin the evolutionary course through various forms and phases of life. Yet phenomenal life is as a flash compared with the eternity of eternities, antecedent to all time, embracing all time. In strict comparison the longest duration is less than the most inconceivable fraction.

The delusion exists, and this delusion is the binding condition that takes the waves and tosses it at random over the surface. Sometimes these tossings are high and well-pitched, sometimes they are low and uneventful. The tossing is the manifestation of infinite law. The dual action of this manifestation comprises the principles of good and evil, of light and darkness, of evolution and dissolution, of birth and

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death, of pleasure and pain, of joy and misery, of all the ups and downs from primitive states of existence, upward and upward, through endless cyclings to human life, and passing beyond human life into god-like existence, beyond and beyond—away beyond the rarest and most intuitive imagination. Duality produces friction, but the friction is useful and good. From friction fire is produced. From friction the new form, the new knowledge and the new power arise. Through friction civilization has been established. By friction character is polished—by the friction of experience.

All birth is accompanied with pain, but the birth is the reward of suffering. Why complain of suffering? Why complain any more than of pleasant experiences? The enjoyment of pleasure is not the end and goal of all effort. The experience of suffering is temporary. Every experience makes for character, for better manifestation, for more exalted manifestation, for the better development of those latent faculties which in their ultimate relation develop the sense of the Divine within.

The spiritual ego on his own plane is conscious of the great array of spiritual facts that

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give tone and character to the religious element. To him truth is patent. It is self-instructive and self-illuminating. There is no argument, no disquisition, no hesitation and no doubt. All is knowledge, for the essence of the thinker is knowledge. Knowledge is the background of his existence. Knowledge is the goal for which he is striving.

These lives and lives of effort, this suffering and woe to which the soul seems destined are merely for a greater purpose than physical evolution, which is, in turn, subject to dissolution. The reason manifests in the experience of the pairs of opposites whereby the soul learns that nothing in them exists that is truly real. Fluctuation after fluctuation. The soul must turn this learning into values of conduct; it must discern the real value that lies in the super-sensuous soul.

The mind infers the existence of something illimitable beyond the mind. The mind must reveal that existence. The mind must speak its finiteness to itself. It must turn the searching light of truth upon its innermost nature. In this searching the redemption of the mind is born; the real Ego, the real Man, the essential

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Thinker are discovered. All these shadows that flit across the mind, and, ghost-like, haunt and befog the vision, will then pale into the nothingness from which they sprang.

The light of Self is the all-penetrating light that commutes darkness into light. "Whom the Self chooses, by him the Self is gained." When the conditions are ready and present for the transmission of intuitive revelation, the Self, the Intelligence within, speaks in loud voice and with self-illuminating language. Discrimination then gives its message. It crushes out the long-lived and self-incriminating, self-destructive indiscrimination that conditions the mind in ignorance. The veil that inhibits the inspiring and all-saving vision of Self is torn asunder. The soul is free.

When a man awakens from deep sleep he does not call the experiences of the dream state real. When an experienced desert traveler sees a mirage, he is able to recognize it for what it is. Existence, in its limited sense, is a dream in which we find ourselves alternately this, alternately that, but in the awakening of the soul we give this dream no more reality than we do the ordinary dream experience. Compared with

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eternity, the duration of endless lives is as short as the second-lasting dreams of sleep. The soul awakened is master of fate, is the essence of existence, knowledge and bliss. It is divine. But it requires time, pre-eminent self-reliance, untold effort, patience and perseverance. Every effort of our lives, every condition of our consciousness, every thought, word and act, all are leading to that perfect understanding, the end of which is life and light eternal. The mind must unfasten the bars that for incalculable ages have imprisoned it in the prison of the flesh, the prison of ignorance, of unbelief, of weakness, of impotence and of self-belittlement. The mind must realize the glory behind the mind, the infinite ocean of existence beyond this surface existence, the intelligence beyond thought, the infinite light beyond this perpetuity of darkness, the undivided bliss beyond this world of insentieny, the infinite peace beyond this continuity of disturbance. It must hear the Voice of the Silence even in the turbulence of the incoherent universal sound.

EMPHASIS IN RELIGION.

Mental indecision is the cause of inversion of thought. Heedlessness invites imperfections of understanding with their disturbing consequences. Men hear truth spoken, but it comes into one ear and flies out of the other. No realization takes place. Half-way methods of understanding cause high flights of uncertain enthusiasm, keying the nerves to a high degree with the inevitable result that the enthusiasm wanes and that the motive and conduct which enthusiasm arouses fall flat.

These thoughts have a significant relation to the hearing, the understanding and the translation of exalted spiritual truth into values of character. Men are not in want of truth. That is what the Christ told to the brothers of Dives in the parable of that rich man. They had Moses and the Prophets to guide them in spiritual ways, but the teachings were meaningless to them. They heard and did not hear. They might have faithfully attended the synagogue.

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The activity of the auricular organ might have impressed the teachings on their brain, but as their minds were far from concentration on spiritual truth and far from its practical adaptation to life, the words were lost. It is the same to-day. The absorption of spiritual truth entirely depends upon a desire to realize it. The way and the understanding open to those whose minds are burdened with the quest to comprehend and practically relate the soul to the deeper and spiritual realities that afford sanity to effort and meaning to life.

We have the Vedas, the Tripetakas; we have the teachings of Confucius and Laotse; we have the Koran and the Bible; we hear truth expressed in numberless ways. We have every ethical and spiritual admonishing that these scriptures interpret. Why is it, then, that men find themselves in the midst of materialism and skepticism and fall prey to their influences? It is because the spiritual word falls upon unheeding ears and because it has no significance of a spiritual character. Truly, there is not an ominous lack of ethical practice, but ethical practice does not of itself essentially contribute to the highest order of spiritual life and spiritual

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consciousness. Normal ethical standards develop through the natural tendency to follow such actions as best contribute to the well-being of the race. Custom and the influence of public opinion confirm this tendency. There is no merit in treading the path others have made. Consistent conduct develops with a spiritual discrimination between what is false and what is true, between what is right and what is wrong, between what is just and what is unjust. This conduct is born of the enlightened and heralds the birth of the individual conscience. The individual conscience coexists with the deepest and spiritually most practical knowledge. The practice of conduct developed through the application of discriminating insight broadens the sympathies and thus spiritualizes consciousness, and the spiritualizing of consciousness is alike the goal in the refinement of thought and in the refinement of feeling. The most exalted spiritual sympathy is complementary to that divine knowledge which scatters the clouds of ignorance and causes the sun of truth to shine in the innermost recesses of the soul.

It is not a lack of teaching that is felt, but a lack of consistent practice. The pearls of

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priceless treasure lie far beneath the surface of spiritual teaching. To secure these pearls men must labor with as great an earnestness and sincerity as they employ in commercial or other temporal pursuits. The man of understanding realizes that truth cannot be had by merely assenting or dissenting to certain creeds. To learn geography one must familiarize himself with it. He must discerningly and perseveringly study the geological, the zoological, the astronomical and other important branches of geography. He must study the distribution of life, animal as well as human, that corresponds with various climatic and geological changes. But it is not alone study that avails. If the student desires to enjoy the full benefit of his study he will travel extensively, furthering his search in a practical way. The same courses must be adopted in the understanding and realization of spiritual truth. The mind must be instructed in those things that will cause it to appreciate the rational facts concerning spiritual realities. When the mind is theoretically confirmed, it must put philosophy into practice. It must transpose knowledge into conscious values. In other words, perception must follow

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the hearing of truth. Abstract science becomes practical when it is associated with everyday life. Abstract mathematics becomes applied mathematics and so on. In this same sense, spiritual knowledge, philosophy must be practically realized, if any actual benefit is to be gained. It is not in knowing what we should do that spiritual consciousness is unfolded and the problems of life are solved, but in doing what we know we should do. Ideas are ineffectual without motive force. This force is supplied by the emotions. It is necessary to arouse the emotions if we would bring the abstract into the concrete. Emotion objectifies knowledge. A man may be informed concerning matters religious, but as he directs his emotions in the realization of truth he makes his theories practical. A man realizes that a poisonous snake is dangerous through his emotions rather than through his thought. He avoids it because he fears it, and fear, like anger, is one of the fundamental tendencies. Through constant association emotion and thought blend, so that in certain instances it cannot be judged decidedly whether the emotion or the thought is predominant.

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The surface of the scriptures of the world is only their appearance. Spiritual teaching is primarily ethical or metaphysical, then it is esoteric, effectual, and the external values are translated into internal, conscious realities. The faculty of spiritual discrimination must be exercised, for it is only in this manner that the deeper meaning of spiritual teaching is discerned. Busied with material interests, identifying all his forces with economic pursuits, man gives no thought to the relations of his soul. Occupied with one series of experience he cannot hope to realize others. The mind is capable of entertaining but one great purpose at a given time. One idea and intent is prominent, crowding all others from the mental spectrum, or giving them but a nominal importance in mental life. The focalization of mental force on spiritual truth is impossible when the mind's attention is diverted in the satisfaction of innumerable disturbing desires and thoughts. The natural trend of the mind is toward unevenness of thought and thus toward unevenness of effort and disposition. This trend must be corrected. No purpose can be achieved when the mind fluctuates from one point to another, when it

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is now swayed by this impulse, now by that desire, when it is overcome by the paradox of its own conditions. The prevailing disposition of the mind must be controlled. The purpose of natural evolution is unity and equilibrium. This purpose is also manifested in the development of the mind. Harnessing the energy of thought that floods the mind, educating the ideas which arouse the emotions, distracting binding and weakening strains of thought and realizing a control over the mind, the individual is on the highway of the realization of the real and the true within his soul.

In one sense, every phase of life is moral. Business has a moral value inasmuch as it teaches the mind the virtue of concentration, and indirectly encourages spontaneity of direction and decision of character. It develops the practical insight and inspires the mind to quickness of conclusion. The mental element in every commercial pursuit is easily recognized. Once we establish the idea that all associations throughout time and space are moral, we directly perceive the proper relation of every event, condition, and circumstance of human life. Desire is the predominating force in the commer-

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cial world. Man's desires increase with greater complexity of social life. Some of these desires represent physical necessities, some comforts, some luxuries, some the greater and greater increase of luxuries and the wealth representing luxuries. Others, however, are of lower planes. Clothing stores, hardware stores, laundries, grocery and shoe stores, breweries, hair-dressing parlors and every imaginable detail of commercial life exists through the collective desire that supports them. All commercial relations are the exteriorization of the clamors of desire. The sciences of embryology, histology, ontogeny, and so forth, explain how differences in organic development arose through the adaptation of life to environment. But the environment is the externalization of the subconscious and instinctive desire permeating life and nature, and objectified in the evolutionary impulses of all animate and inanimate beings. This evolutionary impulse has evolved all the refinements of civilization. The development, however, has been psychical as well as physical. The shops and stores of a city are schools of moral development. Very many of the sturdy and substantial virtues develop in commercial employment.

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The mind is steadied and directed. It becomes efficient, although through a low plane of expression. The principal necessity is the strengthening of the mind so that it rises superior to the distractions and wayward impulses of instinctive life. It is not important under what circumstances the mind improves. What is mainly needed is the development of the mind. Classical education has no practical bearing in the work-a-day world. It seems apparently useless. But when it is observed that the tendencies of the mind have been controlled, the weaker being suppressed and the strong pronounced, when it is observed that in mastering the difficulties of ancient languages and in mastering higher mathematics and the abstruse sciences, the mind has developed superiority and strength, the advantage of a classical education is immediately recognized. It is not Latin or Greek which counts, but the fixed attention, the spirit of enthusiasm and effort, the spirit of initiative and originality that develop through persistence and continuity in mental effort. In realizing joy in mental work, in overcoming obstacles the mind reaches the heroic plane where it can successfully encounter

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the battle of life, and the conflict between the higher and the lower self.

Development is the real issue in all the relations of life. This development arises through fixed attention to the duties that lie before us. It arises through the proper conception and application of the conception of these duties. No duty is mean considered in a sense spiritual. No distinctions are made by the Spirit within. The most menial labor is exalted, if it serves to develop the mind and heart. The Vedanta philosophers of India have a system of realization which is embodied in non-attachment to the fruits of labor, offering them in consecration to the Self within. In other words, the Karma Yogi works neither for fame, nor self-interest, neither for money nor material advantages, but because he finds himself confronted with certain duties, and fulfils them because the Supreme asks that he do so.

These arguments support the theory of spiritual development. Religion is practical. It is for men and for women, for the poor as well as for the rich, for the yellow races as well as the Caucasian, for the fortunate as well as the unfortunate. Realized, it levels all distinction of

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fortune, manifesting the spiritual unity in all diversity. Turning the minds of men into spiritual expression necessitates first of all that they discern the practical necessity of religion. Man eats bread, because without bread he cannot live. He develops his mind, for mind is the evolutionary factor in raising civilization from lower to higher planes. Acquainted with the existence of an immortal principle within the soul of his soul, the principle that sustains the life of his mind and body, man would be fitted with the highest purpose. That purpose is already his, only he cannot discern it. He believes that the purpose of life centers and is expressed in mental and physical evolution, but the spirit of all progression is the spirit that draws man into a gradual conception that neither mind nor body represents the wholeness of life's purpose. Ages ago man believed that all purpose was embodied in the pursuit and satisfaction of bodily enjoyment. Now it is the mind which engages his attention. Even as there existed a time when man was wholly absorbed in bodily pleasures and even as he developed out of this limitation into mental expression and its consequent development, so in

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time will he realize that mind, of itself, is only relative to a deeper life and development without which the life of the mind and the life of the body, and the struggles and the experiences which man undergoes for their development would be useless and meaningless. Without the spirit of truth, life would be characterless. This spirit of truth associates with the knowledge of spiritual values and realities that comprise the existence and immortality of the soul.

There is not sufficient emphasis laid upon words. As an example, we hear long theological essays and dissertations on the dogmas of omnipresence and omniscience. There is an endless rigmarole of words on these subjects. If our learned theologians would cease their learned prattle and take words in the spirit that they were spoken by the Masters, if instead of ransacking the metaphysical world for abstractions they would interpret meanings as they were originally and spiritually interpreted, much religious sectarianism would be removed. Volumes have been written on omnipresence and omniscience. The teachings of the Masters are first of all simple. They have not the metaphysical scribbling habit, nor do they split hairs

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in scholastic argument. It is not in writing books or in preaching custom sermons that a minister can hope to educate his people to the knowledge of spiritual truth, but in voicing already revealed truth by the example of character. That is the meaning. What a man really believes, that will he follow. Convinced of the logic and truth of a measure, a man no longer weighs it in the balance. The sancity and immortality of character is in ratio to the level on which character is expressed and in concord with the ideas that serve as impulses to conduct. All that is left of earthly experience is character, the sum-total of all the efforts occupied in the desire to know, to have and to be. If character is expressed through religious purpose and effort it manifests in the highest sphere. It moves within the vibrations of super-sensuous truth and life. It is identified with the divinity permeating the universe. The highest elements in human nature are those which correspond with the highest and most spiritual aspirations. These are comprised in religion.

Religion is not complex. It is simple, pure, naturally tending to illuminate personality,

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with the fulness and richness of spirit. Religion is not a matter to be discussed, but to be realized. It is not confined within narrow clauses, but extends below and beyond any separate faith. Above all, religion is essentially individual. It has a collective value only as the influence of one religious person may extend to others. Realization is strictly individual. True, by the grace of the Lord, we may merit His assistance; through Him our eyes may be opened, but even then, we gain this divine perception only as we have merited the grace of the Supreme. Nothing is given. Everything is merited. Such is the Law. None are favored. All must ask, seek and strive. All must reach the plane of understanding. That understanding comes through fervid desire. Desire is attained when discrimination has shown the mind the advisability of following the true course, when it has shown it that the narrow is the straight path. Narrow, in the sense, that it is difficult, that it demands renunciation, faith, devotion, loyalty and sincerity. By raising the heart to the Supreme in devotion we become receptive to the inflow of divine knowledge and peace. A very good

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prayer for light is: "O thou, who didst wander over the face of the earth in the mendicant's garb, preaching the Gospel of Truth, help us we beseech thee, that through the mercy of the Blessed Lord, we too may become possessed of that spirit of true faith, true devotion, true love and knowledge that characterized thee." Such a prayer may be offered to Those Sons of Light, such as the Christ, Who by Their lives and example have enriched and directed the growth of humanity at various epochs of its unfoldment.

Religion is not a desert of opinion, a wilderness of thought, a sea of dogma, but the feeling of the presence of God, the knowledge of the unity and identity of the individual soul with the Supreme, and of the unity and identity of the individual soul with the souls of all animate and inanimate beings. In purifying the mind we render it a fit vessel for receiving the precious truth. Desire to know the truth cleanses the mind. The practice of virtue purifies the mind. The spirit of unselfishness which is the spirit of the true Self baptizes the soul in the waters of Spirit, and it is spiritually born of a Son of God. And as a good father

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provides for his child, so the Supreme infuses divine grace, knowledge and power into the aspiring soul.

Concentration on omnipresence and omniscience, if properly directed, leads to a sense of God's presence. It would show the nothingness of this finite self as compared with that One Infinite Self. It would teach the highest lesson. "In this world of manifoldness, he who sees That One running through all; in this world of death, he who sees That One Infinite Life; he who in this world of insentience and ignorance, he who finds That One Light and Knowledge, unto him comes eternal peace, unto none else, unto none else." In sensing That One Infinite Being we realize the Self of selves of all individual existence. Meditating on God leads the soul to the direct perception of God. If one cannot see God, if He must ever remain an object of faith, if He is ever imperceptible to the sense, what conscious knowledge is there concerning Him? "Who has seen Brahma?" If He is indiscernible then religion is mythological. Then has nature beguiled man. Then the saints and those who strive after spiritual perfection are the victims of hallucination.

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When they say that they see God, they are the victims of their own minds. But religion is not hallucination. To religion we must attribute the pronounced developing factors of evolution. To religion we must accredit the substantial values of civilization. To religion is due the honor of dragging man from the abyss of sensuous existence into the pure daylight of mental, spiritual and moral existence.

Mysticism is incommunicable. The indescribable bliss of the saints cannot be phrased. It is beyond words. Expressing their emotions men often say: "Words cannot describe what I felt." The only way they can possibly communicate their emotions when these are mystical is through the expression of their countenance. There is pictured what no words can describe, what no poet could pen, what no painter could color, what no sculptor could mould. For the bliss of ecstasy men have renounced their family ties, they have given up the advantages of worldly life, they have sacrificed life and happiness, they have given up their all in all. They have made this supreme renunciation with a joyous spirit. What to them were all the treasures of a Croesus in com-

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parison with the sweet, ineffable bliss of spiritual communion?

We fail because we fall. We are on the heights. Suddenly a tempting thought, a passing desire seizes us unawares and we fall from the dizzy height of spiritual perfection into the mire of average existence. But the fall is a lesson. Aware of the danger of certain environment, knowing the disastrous consequences following in the wake of certain associations, acquainted with the spiritual distress certain circumstances arouse, we avoid them. A great teacher said: "I am glad that I have done good; I am glad that I have made mistakes." It is through the contrast between opposites that the third factor is valued. The third factor in spiritual relationships is the direct vision of truth, the immediate perception of the divine within, the intuitive process that unfolds that light and knowledge which are alone saving and redeeming.

Character is the means; character is the goal. Character and its influence possess far more reaching results than the reading of a hundred books. The history of a great reformer is more inspirational than the logic of his arguments.

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His life inspires; his logic may be wrong. He may be inconsistent, yet he is sincere. It is his sincerity and the force of his sincerity that are of consequence. It is his exaltation of purpose which interests. One great thought conceived in the gloom of a cave will reach forth and give light, life and force to the whole human race. He who concentrates his mind upon the dogma of omnipresence, or that of omniscience, will have his entire character transformed. It will become god-like, unconquerably pure and perfect. Centering the mind upon the lotus of the heart and seeing in the innermost heart That Effulgent One Whose Light of Life and Whose Presence fills infinite space, the soul rises into the spacious regions of truth. Entranced with the vision of That Effulgent One, it merges into His nature, becoming one with All and united with the nature of the World-Soul. "Thou art my father; thou art my mother; thou art my friend; thou art my companion; thou art my wisdom; thou art my strength; thou art my all in all; thou art my one Lord." Conscious of the real self, the soul asserts: "I never had ignorance, nor fear; I have had neither this nor that. The disturbances of the mind cause

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the infinite variation of mind waves. The soul identified itself with these forms of body and these states of mind. But in reality the soul is Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute."

Placing emphasis on words, signifies that they have conscious values and are conscious forces for the uplifting of the soul and for the proper understanding of spiritual verities. In reference to words teaching Self-knowledge, too great an amount of emphasis cannot be placed on them. "That Self is first to be heard, then meditated upon and then realized," say the Vedas. We must hear, then try and absorb what we have heard. Then only do we realize what is meant. Then truth dawns upon consciousness.

The Self-knower understands why emphasis must be laid on words. We lay stress on anything when we are interested in it, when it appeals to us. Our mind is in immediate relation to what we are hearing and is intensely concentrated thereon. There arises an appropriate emotional response. Similarly is this the case with spiritual statement. We can only appreciate the value of teaching concerning the

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soul when we appreciate the momentous implications its existence represents. Once men know that the soul is, their interest is highly posited. They would gladly call their most interested attention to service. The teaching would reach them in and through themselves. It would make deep channels in the brain. The grooving of new channels is always accompanied with great difficulty. It is hard for the mind to center itself on new conditions. This difficulty is overcome, though, when the new conditions present sufficiently interesting phases. We realize the necessity of becoming interested and of applying the new conditions to conduct. The only essential is that the mind understand the value to be gained by associating itself with concentrative effort. In regard to spiritual matters, the teacher who by his influence can make men realize the existence of soul will cause them to interest themselves in its condition and progress, to listen to truth and to apply it. They will place emphasis on words because they understand the necessity of so doing. Judging from the results obtained by the churches at the present time, the fact that they are experiencing a marked declension in follow-

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ing, that orthodox churches are becoming little more than ethical societies, and that practical materialism is swaying the public mind, we find little communication of spiritual influence from clergymen to laymen and accordingly little emphasis placed on the original meaning of the words of the Great Christ as written in the Christian Gospels.

“STRENGTH.”

On the citadel of Success the pennant
“Strength!” waves.

It is the watchword of the undefeated.

It is the magic-word of those who do and
dare.

On spiritual heights a heroic figure stands.

It is “Strength!” the God of those who toil.

Of those who brook no obstacles.

Strength to the weakling! Strength to the
hesitating! Strength to the self-underrating!

Through practice the athlete becomes power-
ful. Through practice do the weak of body be-
come athletes. Through strength one wrests
from nature the power to live.

The Romans and the Greeks called those acts
virtuous which manifested strength, both moral
and physical. In strength they found the root
of progress. In strength they found that inde-
pendence of spirit that put into their power and
control the greatest nations of the ancient world.

Strength is first of virtues; weakness, the
original sin. The attitude of mind toward life

“Strength”

determines the experiences men receive from life. If they expect nothing, they receive nothing. If they demand their rights, they obtain them.

The world is masked. Tear the horrible mask and the world is your servant. The world is cruel and harsh only as men's ignorance keeps them from asserting themselves. As long as men possess the tendency to cringe, they will find tyrannies of state and tyrannies of custom.

The criticism of the world is bitter only to those who cannot compel room for their ideas. The weak of will merit the contempt of the world. But the strong are rulers of the world. Before their dictatorial souls the world bows.

Fear is the monster which deters men from initiative. Fear is the death-blow to many ideals that, because of its terrorsome aspect, do not come into the light of day. Fear is the vice which throttles virtue and genius—fear of the opinion of others.

No matter how dismal the outlook, the soul is the master of its destiny. It can change the currents of expression by changing its attitude toward life. As long as the mind does not sink into gloom, hope is not lost; opportunity still

“Strength”

awaits seizure; the tides have not turned for the worse. Courage breeds optimism, and optimism is the elixir of life. Who quaffs the chalice of divine strength is free from physical and mental affliction.

Ponce de Leon sought the Fountain of Youth. Across the unknown wastes of the Atlantic he sailed in vain search. The Fountain of Youth is in the strength to keep the mind well-poised, to maintain presence of mind and equilibrium of soul when the tempest of oppression and misfortune is strongest. In that strength the body and mind grow strong. Old age does not come on. The man of strength is ever young.

“A character is formed in the rush of the world,” said Schiller. To keep himself from being crushed one must stand up in strength. The law is relentless; he who is borne to the ground is stampeded by the oncomers. He who carries himself erect, firm in gait, strong in will, reaches the end of life, which is the realization of his purpose.

The coward is aggravated to fight when cornered, or when others, who see him in struggle, jibe him to the fray when his courage

“Strength”

wanes. Whosoever lacks strength should seek a motive that is a living force, impelling the virtue of strength. Moral strength is rare. It is easy to physically assert strength, when goaded on by apparent injustice. But the real hero is he who has the strength of his convictions; he is the hero who can say “No” when impulses press in the tendency to wrong conduct.

Power and strength to him who secures his purpose! Strength was the nectar of the Gods that made their bodies adamant in build, and their minds imperative. The confident man anticipates success by his attitude. He never distrusts the outcome of his efforts. If they fail, he does not waste his time in mourning the loss. He studies the conditions which made him fail. He never questions his strength. Of that he is assured. He observes his mistakes with the intention of winning his end by avoiding them.

Strength pounds barriers to pieces. Sure-footed, it climbs the mountain of life, overleaping chasms of doubt and hesitation into which the weaklings of life fall. The strong man carries the heavy burden of life's responsibilities with the same whole-heartedness with which he enjoys his moments of pleasure.

“Strength”

The mind should never be disturbed. The greatest victory over self, self-mastery and the many joys that accrue to it manifest as the result of a pleasant attitude. The Hindoos conceive the creative principle of nature as the Divine Mother. This universe is Her child with whom She is playing hide and seek. The Mother closes her eyes and the world loses sight of Her. She opens them and some see Her. This playing continues throughout eternity. But it is only play.

If men have the strength to take this position, they are playing with life and death, with misery and pleasure, with poverty and wealth, with sickness and health, with good and evil, and so forth. Misery does not last; joy does not last. Both vanish. The play alone continues. Life is change, and we are changing places in the play accordingly as we know more concerning it. When we have learned the game, we touch the Mother, and remain with Her in perpetual bliss.

This is spiritual strength, the climax of all strength. The spiritual giant has mastered the elements of his nature. He stretches forth his hands, and evil and ignorance, the two worst

“Strength”

foes of the soul, the foes that bind its will, disperse into the phantom nature from which they arose. His persistent strength and the strength of his persistent demand have gained him the greatest bliss, a knowledge of Self, the supreme joy of Self-revelation.

Whosoever starts out in life with a weak purpose dies by his own inefficiency. Aimlessly wandering, he is the victim of his own weaknesses which rob him of his talents of mind and heart. Taking to mind the examples of the men who have performed great deeds, let him arouse himself from the lethargy of soul into which he has fallen.

Fear is a fundamental instinct. Weakness develops from fear. To crush out weakness and to liberate the soul from the thralldom of things which weakness induces, fear must be eradicated. That is achieved through discrimination with regard to the nature of the conditions that cause fear. Frequently it will be discovered that the motives of fear are phantom, having reality only as the mind colors them with certain fear-inspiring qualities. Apart from these qualities transposed upon passing occurrences, fear does not exist.

“Strength”

It requires spiritual knowledge, however, to place the mind into the position to face the conditions of fear intrepidly. Convinced of the spiritual existence of the soul and of its immortality, the mind is less anxious concerning the things that befall the body. The body comes and goes, but the soul remains. Nothing can disturb the soul. Seated in strength, it rises Phoenix-like after the perishing of bodies, assuming new forms to carry out its purposes.

The weak must learn the lesson of strength, its positive necessity in the realization of any ideal. Experience shows that there is nothing of which the soul need stand in fear. “Birthless, deathless and changeless,” the soul fearlessly faces all circumstances, for its background is Strength Infinite.

THE UNITY OF LIFE.

The ideal of the unity of all life, of the ultimate evolutionary origin and goal of all beings, is highly emphasized by Thomas Traherne, a profound mystic of the seventeenth century. In his writings appear the following ecstatic words he expressed in realizing the nature of Him who is the "I" of all:

"Miraculous are the effects of Divine Wisdom. He loveth everyone, maketh everyone infinitely happy and is infinitely happy in everyone. He giveth all the world to me, He giveth it to everyone in giving it to all, and giveth it wholly to me in giving it to everyone for everyone's sake. He is infinitely happy in everyone; as many times, therefore, as there are happy persons He is infinitely happy. Everyone is infinitely happy in everyone, everyone, therefore, is as many times infinitely happy as there are happy persons. He is infinitely happy above all their happiness in comprehending all. And I, comprehending His and theirs, am, Oh, how happy!"

The Unity of Life.

“Here is love, here is a kingdom. Where all are knit in infinite unity all are happy in each other. All are like deities. Everyone the end of all things, everyone supreme, everyone a treasure, and a joy of all, and everyone most infinitely delighted in being so. All things are ever joys for everyone’s sake, and infinitely richer to everyone for the sake of all. The same thing is multiplied by being enjoyed. And He that is greatest is most by treasure. This is the effect of making images. And by all their love is every image exalted. Comprehending in His nature all angels, all cherubims, all seraphims, all worlds, all creatures, we are blessed forever.”

Had the name of the mystic not been attached to this outburst of spiritual intuition and emotion, the reader might imagine it written by some divinely inspired, enthusiastic disciple of the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, so far-reaching is the metaphysical idea involved, so all-inclusive is it, and so far is it beyond the ordinary Western dogmatism.

It is a canticle naturally expressed, even as a jar, filled with its contents, naturally overflows. It is the expression of deeply felt emotion. By

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the supreme "Divine Wisdom," he has impersonalized it far beyond its customary meaning. He speaks of it as embracing Deity itself. This wisdom is the knowledge of the real Self, the Divine Ego. The idea conveys the end of such knowledge.

This might infer that Self-knowledge leads to the atrophy of the emotions, that, after long continued discrimination between those things which man believed to be Self and the truly and real Self, he would be a vast intellect, one whose sole exclamation would be: "I am." But Traherne and his life tell us different, and so do the mystics and ecstasies of all ages.

THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF REALITY.

The spider is caught within its own net. Reality! Does not reason momentarily and explicitly tell us that the senses are, in their very nature, deceptive?

Of one thing rest assured; if true reality is to be conceded to the evanescent then we are materialists. Those who have not *seen* the Truth are materialists.

Idealism is as mythical as realism. When we take the axe of spiritual discrimination and split the Wheel, we realize.

And realization—how can it be described? Language is inadequate. Thought is conditioned. Feeling is everything. When we can *feel* we are one with Truth. Otherwise we are still ensnared in Samsara, in this ocean of mind and matter.

Can we tell our emotions? No, we *feel* them. The voice is smothered. Thought cannot reach the depth of feeling.

Thought is like water; feeling is like solid rock.

MASKS.

Whosoever is false to what he believes, wears a mask. He is a hypocrite. Whosoever falsifies his life in betraying his soul into the hands of his own insincerity is a liar to the Self within him.

The light of the Self penetrates the inmost thoughts of a man, and his is indeed a terrible fate who wilfully violates his better knowledge through opposing conduct.

The man who is not loyal to the interests represented in his social and moral duties wears a mask through which he steals the treasures of life from others, for who fails to perform his duty is robbing the world of his service. He is a thief.

It is passing strange how men, reared in the conception that certain practices are against all social ethics, can mock their souls and their fellow-men in attending to the conventionalities and respectabilities for pretense while they soil their souls with the misery they cause others through nefarious business or social practices.

Masks

The man who violently confronts the truth within him by giving it the lie in his conduct does not or cannot appreciate the terrible catastrophe he is preparing for himself, for to cast aside the higher callings and possibilities of personality is to betray one's self into the darkest fate—the fate of retrogression.

They who wear masks are not as dangerous to society as to themselves. Unawares they plan their spiritual death while they imagine they are tending to their best welfare.

THE VALUE IN LIFE.

The value in life is growth. With growth there is a certain exhilaration that encourages further research into the great problem for which man exists. The mind is the child of the soul and through the association of the former with the multiform phases of existence the soul expands into hitherto unknown realms of knowledge and power. It is knowledge for which man is striving. The meaning of existence centers in the solution of the problem "to know." Each mind is conditioned in power and expression by the limitations of its knowledge. Each mind is unconditioned in so far as it has rent the veil of ignorance and developed the faculty of understanding. The experiences of life serve in the transformation of the mind. From lower it rises to higher levels. From ignorance of certain conditions it rises to understanding them through experience. Man comes into relations with phenomena. First he observes them. Failing to use discrimination

The Value in Life

as to their character and as to the consequences of their relation to him he either avoids them, sensing pain, or follows them, sensing pleasure. Repeated connection with conditions determines the mental attitude. The mind, subject to change, experiences new attitudes toward the same circumstances. Where first there may have been an appeal, where first the conditions seemed attractive and desirable, they later assume negative and undesirable proportions. It is not a change in the external, but in the internal. It is the mind which lays emphasis, importance and significance upon the objects of its relations. It is the mind which rates the values in experience, determining their usefulness or unusefulness. The mind is the arbiter between itself and experiences. As the mind increases in knowledge, as it becomes more and more related to phenomena, its perspective and perception enlarge. It absorbs a greater number and a greater variety of outer impressions transforming them into new conscious values. With the growth of the mind its spirit of discrimination is developed.

The main factor in all mental evolution is discrimination. Through contrast discrimina-

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tion is born. It is born through recognition by the mind of differences in outer circumstances. Every moment the mind experiences new sets of sensations. These sensations color the mental spectrum, biasing it either in one direction or another. It is without doubt that the mind is subject to physical inharmonies. For this reason the body must be appreciated. Its service to the mind must be recognized. The body is purified by external methods, the mind by internal. But the physical precedes the mental in the order of purification. Therefore, it behooves the individual to establish sanity of body. "A sound mind in a sound body," was the motto followed in the education of the ancient Greeks. They fully understood the relation of the mind to the body and the relation of the body to the mind. Though the soul is ultimately free from the uncertainties and inequalities of the physical, it is not so while it identifies itself with the sensual desires of the body. The mind must correct the wanderings of the senses. It must instruct itself concerning the important need of arranging the vibrations of the body in such a manner that they best serve the interest of the soul. If the body is subject

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to serious infirmities the mind is affected. When the instruments of the soul are disturbed they inhibit the proper flow of life and knowledge from the Source of Omnipresence and Omniscience.

OUR RELATIONS TO OTHERS.

As long as human beings come into close contact they are bound to differ both by reason of idiosyncracies of temperament and by reason of psychic differences in relations to environment.

Men shovel the snow from the paths about their houses and places of business. They shovel away that which is useless and obstructive. This is a symbol to be realized in our personal lives. You cannot get along with another unless you shovel the factors from the house of your mind and disposition that cause wide differences between the former and yourself. You have to take people as they come without getting out of sorts.

You are first the lord of your mind. Nothing disturbs it, save as weakness and impatience invite trouble. All are subject to unreasonable and unjustifiable moods—and moods are always a picture of psychic disturbances beneath the conscious spectrum. To give way to a mood

Our Relations to Others

is to strengthen the tendency to unbalancement of mind. A mood is a devil. Knife it with the will to be superior to the whims of the animal within. A mood is a psychic distemper and is as real as a hurt to the body.

Change environment when moods come. If you can do nothing else, lock yourself up. You are psychically deranged and, from a vibration point of view, you are dangerous.

You realize that the greatest control is the control over the feelings that toss the uncontrolled personality to the shores of chance and sorrow. It is strange from the surface vision. A mood is something past normal consciousness in origin. But the will can exclude it by positiveness, if it is unwelcome. If the will gives way through self-sympathy, one more link in the chain of purely reflex life is riveted.

Why should the moods of others concern you, so long as you radiate good from your own life? The strength of the rush of your own mind will crush the vibrations that come to harm you. Fire will not burn water—the two are chemically opposite, having no absolute effect on each other. So, if you predestine the character of the mind by habit, if you pre-strengthen it against

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all stray connections, you are never influenced by others. Your aura is chemically self-centered and diametrically opposed to the weakness either of the thought of evil or of uncontrolled minds.

The sun affects the waters of the earth only in a relative manner. It may draw them into vapors, but it returns them in the form of snow and rain. So, though others may and do influence your mind, they can make no radical change, if you are within the strength of your self-conquered soul.

We have no responsibilities to others. No one has any responsibility to another. The only responsibility is to one's self. To thine own self be true; then it follows that you are true to all men. If your responsibility to yourself includes responsibility to others, unselfishly perform the duty to yourself. Then right will come.

No one should make a martyr of himself. It is not in suffering that heroes are born, but in control. Your responsibility to others ceases when you have unselfishly performed your duty. Let not emotion lead you astray into false reasoning and into false purposes.

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It is objected that sometimes it is foolish to be unselfish, that unselfishness often has a source in sentimentality. Never in the sight of the individual conscience. Foolishness concerns itself and concurs with wrong motive. That follows because of inconsistency to carry out what is known to be *true*.

Our duties to others flood each motion of our life. But it is all summed in standing erect as a rock which allows the waves to beat idly against it. You should be a rock in this social sea. Let whims and temperaments and personalities touch your soul with indifference. Good alone should respond, and in good is service. You are a servant of Self, and each overcoming is a lifting of the veil.

We must remember that selfishness is nature. In feeling for others—for personalities—often the pall of selfishness covers the otherwise bright surface of action. We want to benefit others, but ourselves are frequently the main issue. We will make money and distribute it to the poor only when we have so much that what we give is a nothingness, a thing unmissed and lost without thought. So in life we give of our personality only those things which we want to;

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and, if we fail to get what we in turn are seeking, we soon lose our loving attitudes.

Sacrifice, renunciation; these are the tests of life.

Experience is good, even when it is negative. We meet people to gain experience and to learn a new fact, or an old one more intensely. Apathy is a mood. You should be so strong that hell itself could not disturb your calm.

Apathy is associated with the spirit of death or of rebellion. Calm is the smile of the Buddha.

Learn how to undermine limitations. It is the higher nature that determines. It is the urge evolutionary.

POSSIBILITIES.

One cannot too emphatically pronounce the possibilities within the soul. Egotism, in truth, is despicable, but not respectability. Where, if not from your own spirit, will you receive sympathy and strength? This reception is inspiration, or the Spirit of God within, prompting to the higher, the holier and purer.

It is singular that men of apparently broad sympathies should die in their live bodies. For when the soul responds to nothing, it dies to the plane of manifestation while the body lives.

The courage of one's convictions should encourage the possibilities for action. When a man sleeps his faculties are latent. So many men sleep by reason of enforced dormant faculties through indolence.

There is something loathsome in corruption; there is something repulsive in stagnation. When the mind of a man dies through the atrophy of his possibilities there is something dead and repulsive concerning him.

Once it has started, fire feeds through its

Possibilities

flames. Mind is supported by mind, once it has been aroused. The Divine Promethean Spark enlivens the dying fire of the soul. The fuel of the mind is its *potentiæ*.

The pyramids of Egypt symbolize not alone human energy, but spiritual truth. So the pyramids of the mind stand not alone as tributes of praise to the energy of the artisan, but as live images of spiritual achievement. The tangible evidence of greatness is its external application. It manifests in fervid enthusiasm and in great deeds.

The strength of a Cæsarian character is complex, the ratio of difference in evolution in comparison with the career and with the greatness of career of a Dolabella or other minor man. Therefore, the man who sinks his heart in the fleshpot of his senses and desire is a swine, penned in a sty of personally pressed circumstance.

The dagger of a Cassius or a Brutus kills the Caesar of the spirit. These are the rebellious, the licentious and to-be-heard claimants of bodily gratification.

The relationship of the body should be as the relationship between an Atticus and a Cicero.

Possibilities

That is, the Atticus of the body should serve as the negative instrument through which the eloquence of the spiritual Cicero can prolifically manifest.

In war with the Cimbri, Marius utilized the forces of the concentrated Roman army to put the barbarians beyond the Alps. Concentrated desire for spiritual illumination is the potent commander driving back the barbarians of thought, evil and low, beyond the Alps of mental activity.

Hannibal was able to throw his spear across the walls of Rome, because the waning spirit of Roman courage made him come so near. The forces of evil vibrations attack the natural barriers of prevention of evil of the mind by the latter retreating from the strength of the spiritual Self.

The mind is the Catiline of the estate of the soul if it ambitiously strives to become the autocrat and to overthrow the paternal authority of Self.

Numa Pompilius, that divine law-giver of the Romans, saw the symbolism of spiritual facts and of spiritual influence and thus instituted the religious rites and the religious spirit

Possibilities

that encouraged the Stoic development of Roman soul-life. Self is the Numa Pompilius, giving the personal ray the teachings of religious and of spiritual life.

The strength of a spiritual position is the test of martyrdom, not alone the martyrdom of body, but the martyrdom of desire and the martyrdom of social ostracism. The Christian Martyrs of the empire bear testimony to the strength of religious convictions. That strength becomes personalized in each and every soul that strives for Truth and realizes it.

THE INFINITE.

Nameless and formless the Spirit within shines forth, unconditioned and everlasting. What name is befitting the soul? How shall Infinite Effulgence be manifested? Too great a light blinds the senses. Too great a truth is too exhilarating for the student. The boundless, infinite Sentience, incomprehensibly dimensioned in Being and Intelligence, rests Unseen and Unthinkable in the shore of His Own omnipresent and superomnipresent consciousness.

A light, small and feeble, is visible. To greater and greater degrees expands the possibility of vision. But visionless to mortal sight is He Who breathes in all Beings.

Firmly rooted in Impenetrable Bliss, the Most Excellent and Most High, is aware and not aware of the accidents in time and in space.

The personality of God is the principle of the universe, but the principle of God is the principle of the Unimaginable, and Unknowable, the Absolute, the Unproducing, the

The Infinite

Dreamless, the Inexhaustible, the Sourceless One.

His principle manifests in Truth portrayed in various ethical and religious presentations. His principle manifests as the object of love and as the enthusiasm of the striving soul. His principle is personalized in the souls of those who are patient with their destiny, seeking naught. His principle is discerned in the self-sacrificing, worldless souls. His principle manifests in the tireless seeker after truth, and, above all, in persevering, ever-enthusiastic, unwearying and undying love of the devoteé.

Who shall proclaim the Tat Tvam Asi (Thou art That) unless the Tat Tvam Asi is to him a reality deeper than personal consciousness? Who shall say, "I am God," unless in him Divinity and Godhead manifests in purity of thought and in universal, all-embracing sympathy?

The Truth, that is, the Spirit of Truth, is stationary, deathless and immutable. The various visions of Truth change as the needs of the soul become greater and as the soul ascends into higher regions of spirituality.

And the Truth is God.

THE RISE OF THE PROFOUNDER EMOTIONS.

The emotions are the foundation of being. Resurrecting them from their impersonal strata one brings them into the glow of conscious life.

Religion, or rather the religious instinct, is fundamental. It is as deep as the functional instincts. It is difficult to fully comprehend the reality of feelings. Do not go to the psychologist. We are a study to ourselves. When we are overwhelmed with the spiritual emotions, something makes us unmindful. I might even say unconscious of the body.

Now, it is in this experience that the spirit within us expands out of normal and strictly personal into the superior consciousness that eventually manifests in the *cognition* of the divinity within.

It is not a rapid or spontaneous growth and yet it may be. It is the growth of a consciousness, for consciousness develops as any other phenomenon. The point, however, is never realized. If you realized the point as a distinc-

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tion between it and the road traveled, we have not reached it. We still realize difference. When we reach that point we do not realize it as a state of perfection. We are conscious of no relative growth or of any relative life.

The God is unconscious of the world. Brahman is Self-contained. When we *know*, the state implies that something has been acquired. The state of Brahman is unacquired. *It is*. It does not grow or become. It never was finite. The very fact of Brahman and the only fact to be predicted is *Isness*.

The wave is the wave. The ocean is the ocean. As long as the wave, even in the slightest degree, maintains the illusion of self-existence, it is a wave. No matter, even if it speaks of finiteness and recognizes the Spirit of the Infinite Waters as the background of its existence. It is not absorbed. Absorption. Om Mani Padme Hum is the prayer which, translated, means: "Oh, the Jewel in the Lotus." The Lotus is the soul; the Jewel is the Spirit of God. The wave merges its phenomenal appearance, but the Ocean alone exists.

Can you conceive the ocean removed and the wave still existing in separate form? Then, it

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is the Ocean alone which exists. The wave is the Ocean, not a part. It is the waters of the Ocean; it is the Ocean. It is the motion of the Ocean. It is of the spirit and of the essence of the Ocean. It is the Ocean conditioned into wave expression. If we put on our garments do *we* change because of their appearance? The ocean clothes itself with waves.

But even the clothing by which the waves have form—even they—are of the Highest. To come to practical science, or rather to voice the Upanishads: “Even threads are Brahman. The thread is composed of still finer particles, these of still finer, these of the unimpressible, omnipresent ether.”

All forms are composed of one substance which is the form of Brahman. And yet we must conceive the form of Brahman as infinitely distinct from the physical interpretation of substance. The table on which one may write, reduced to its component elements, is far different from the solid we imagine. So, Brahman, though the universe is Its form, is utterly and incomprehensibly distinct from matter or thought, which is only rarified matter.

It is not necessary to crack the brain over

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these matters. The soul of man knows apart from the reason. The mind within the mind makes us comprehend. Trust its whisperings, but, above all, we must trust our feelings. Feelings are deeper than ideas.

Some say that feelings are dangerous guides. Let them distinguish between the feverish feelings of passion and the intuitions of Self and their corresponding emotions.

We must make unselfishness the test of our feelings. Then we shall *know*.

THE SPIRIT OF WOMANHOOD.

The relationships between people are first of all subconscious. The conscious relationship is the manifestation of the subconscious affinity and spiritual proximity. There are instances where great men have realized themselves through association with women apparently of inferior intelligence; but the woman is the well of the man's success. There are certain conditions necessary for the manifestation of manhood; these conditions women supply. And as for superiority: was Cicero the greater for having saved Rome, or Romulus the greater for having founded it? Is the woman greater for supplying the human needs and the subconscious relationship which make a man, or is the man greater because of the development?

One cannot develop without the other. Behind both is that complex psychic and spiritual connection which makes them One. They are radiations of this Oneness. The Vedas teach that "the real man and the real woman" are

The Spirit of Womanhood

bound to each other and related by eternity. One develops through the other.

Woman is the seed and the soil; man the blossom and fruit. Woman is negative, but she materializes the soul of man—the positive. The same process holds on each plane. Woman is the goddess of birth. A great mind cannot fully manifest unless the “indescribable somethings” of personal need are rendered. These “somethings” the woman nature gives. It is like the cat and the stove. The man nature is psychially adjoined in association with woman nature.

This, however, implies deep and many truths. Is woman the superior or the inferior; the dominating or the subject principle? In the world of practical experience, in this material world, she is the subject—man the power and ruler. But as a man develops he absorbs the woman nature. Sensitiveness, refinement and delicacy of thought, speech, movement and general deportment characterize the truly developed man. He is the offspring of the Feminine, alike in spirit and expression.

Yet even in the practical world of money and power, we find the under-current of woman. Men control affairs and women control men.

The Spirit of Womanhood

The deep power, exercised through feminine influence, cannot be too highly estimated. Men depend upon the woman nature for their spirit of battle with the world. From the sympathy of the woman the courage of the man arises.

And it is always the one woman. Every great man whom history cites had this one woman; she is not the woman of desire, but the woman of the spirit. True, there may have been "other women," but they were the playthings of a passing passion. Louis the Fourteenth had his Madame de la Vallière whose name he spoke on his death-bed. She it was who truly exercised the lasting influence on this spirited, disconnected character. Napoleon had his Josephine. Though he discarded her she was the making of his masterful manliness and, until she met him, she was accused of coquettishness.

When a man develops, apparently without the sympathy and encouragement of a woman, he is nevertheless led on by the Eternal Feminine. The priests of religions are moved by the Feminine Spirit of Divine Love of which Goethe spoke. Their lives are lives of feeling and suasion.

The Spirit of Womanhood

The heart of a woman is a man's standing ground. Though hit hard in the conflict with life, a man is soothed, comforted and encouraged through the "nameless something" of "the" woman.

The Middle Ages have passed. The sensual, soulless attitude of Mohammedanism, too, will pass. The savage has passed with his physical dominion over woman. Though great numbers are still savage in spirit and desire, the race is becoming more lucid in its conception of woman's position. The age of true womanhood, unaggressive, uplifting and non-sensuous is at hand. The woman is the mother nature. The woman clings, cherishes, depends. In her weakness lies her greatest strength. The love of a woman for a man is misconceived. It may have a physical basis. All manifestation has physical counterparts. But the spirit of undying affection has not origin in the putrescence of flesh. And the love that loses its ideal is the love that perishes, the love that begins to die from birth.

The moulding of ideals is the aim of nature. In this moulding she has physical tools. But the Master-Artist discards the tools when the

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ideal is imaged on the canvas of life. Men are the creatures of the moment of life. Women are the creatures of impulse. They live to influence.

True love expresses itself in steadfastness and in principle. It is rooted in the ground of moral truth. The eyes of the mind are dimmed with passion—and from them, in time, the tears of sorrow will flow. Who will throw his treasure to the swine? Who will cast a soul to the winds? Who will dare soil a white image of God? Who will desecrate the precious gift of a true love? The swine and the winds are the untamed physical desires which arouse the slumbering beast within.

The whips of the law and the whips of social development have penned the swine, but desire loosens the lock. Therefore, a man should hesitate and a woman consider ere the deepest words have passed between them, for the mind must be right and the soul must desire more than a handful of dust or a bag of bones. Purlinded by the incarnate weakness of body, the soul reaches out for satisfaction of sense, but it finds only husks.

One may compare the influence from a math-

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ematical point of view. Before two can exist, one must be, and the continued increase is the result of birth from the preceding figure. The largest sum depends on the apparently lesser; the woman on the man. The sum of creation depends on the Mother-Principle. The Mother-Principle is the unit. It is the primeval substance. The spirit of universal intelligence breathed, and substance manifested in form.

Thus it is in the microcosm—a replica of the macrocosm. The spirit of the man is ambitious; it breathes over the nature of the woman in love and from this springs not only the child of material birth, but a child of the mind, manifesting in the deeds and virtues of both and in their development.

Buddha had his Yosadhara and Krishna his Raddha. The woman is the vehicle for spiritual development and transmission. She gives birth to principle as well as to form. In the field of intellectual activity, men predominate; but intuitionally the woman stands in the foreground. The advantages are common and inter-related. Through the development of one the other is equally assisted. The feminine is the mother of mind. The Greeks had their Pallas

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Athene. The feminine is the Mother of Spirit. Sri Ramakrishna had his Sarada-devi.

The supreme lesson embodied is the spirit of unselfishness manifesting on the part of the man to the woman and on the part of the woman to the man. No rivalry should exist, for it leads to contention and misunderstanding. Such is the trouble in the social consternation concerning the increase of assertiveness and of independence of women in the field hitherto occupied solely by men.

Reason as we may, the inevitableness of the future occurrence outweighs the arguments pro and con.

That woman has taken her strong position in the world of affairs practical proves that it is a matter of necessity and general development that she does. Nature is sponsor for some of our ideals, but many of them she discards. And, as for social custom and usage, she fails to consider human reasons. She upsets moral and social laws and introduces the radically new and wipes out the principles of stagnation. It is the law of the survival of the fittest. Nor need man think that the oncoming of woman into the area of business and politics will tend

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to make women masculine. We may urge and protest, but the urge of nature is the upward urge.

Woman must become as self-dependent as man. Upon the spirit of independence, particularly material independence, are the noblest virtues and the truest associations formed. Independence works for uprighteousness and for sincerity of ideals and of ideas. Dependence encourages the vices of deception and abjectness with their train of evil.

Freedom of spirit! It is that for which men have striven and for which they have died. They have gained freedom politically and religiously. They now cry for economic freedom. And what they ask for themselves they must allow for womankind, for a difference in sex and in temperament is not a difference in soul and in spirit.

When men and women are individually free to follow the dictates of the higher conscience within them, their souls and expression will develop in the fulness.

NIGHT AND RESURRECTION.

The guest of Night, robed in sable garments, smiles at forlorn Happiness, for the Night is larger than the Day.

But when the Sun God shines, Happiness and Day resume their accustomed hey-day.

Clouds pall the light of the Sun. And within the soul there are clouds often blacker than night and more portentuous than the black cloud of Elijah's prayer.

The soul is sufficiently elastic so that it may even embrace hell itself. Woe be to the man so distressed, for the hell of the mind is the destruction of both body and soul.

And the torch of God's greatest messengers can but feebly illumine the newer path rising out of hell into normal vistas and into the daylight and joy of life renewed.

Aquarius, bearer and spirit of water, is the symbol of the mental metamorphosis, for the longest torture and the greatest torment pass as do all things.

Night and Resurrection

“De profundis clamavi ad te, Domine.” Out of the depths I have cried unto Thee, O Lord.

The fires of divine compassion consume the forms of miseries that deaden the soul burdened with which it is as a lifeless bit of clay.

Phoenix-like, the soul rises from its depression of death into the life and into the harmony of the resurrecting Self.

The low notes of death and the mortal terror of the lost, the lost who neither see happiness nor hear the divine chorus of life, reach the ears of God.

The tears of the distressed are His tears; their despair His despair; their misery, His misery.

But His Almightyness breathes away the torture and the terror and breathes in the sweet, ineffable calm and resignation which are the lingering shadows before the dawn of the resurrection of the soul.

“When it is darkest the light of God and His grace begin to shine;” so says the ancient proverb.

VIBRATION.

Vibration is composed of the psychic thread of accordance and discordance. They are formed of thought substance and moved by thought power. They are not thought, but a creation of thought, for we find that even stones and vegetable and animal properties radiate vibration. But they are mostly physical. The physical vibration is the respectively individualized bit of universal intelligence, instinctively or chemically involved in the minor orders of life, later evolving. As men are almost exclusively imbued with the physical, they are more sensitive to coarser and to physical than to rarer and spiritual vibrations.

This universe is a matter of thought. We make distinctions that only appear because of our limitations of sense. Think for a moment of the ultimate elements of matter, how rare, how super-physical. The finest and purest and final elements of matter are elements of mind. In this men find the existence of omnipresent intelligence, even in the smallest atom of atoms.

Vibration

The body is a composite of thought. No organic activity can occur through chance. Organic activity is the fulfilment of the mandates of law, and where there is law there is intelligence, for one presupposes the other.

If you should drift to a desert island in your voyage across unknown seas and, landing, should find a geometrical figure on the sands would you not immediately suspect the presence of an intelligent being?

Then, applied to the pre-historic or pre-human ages of evolution, the facts of geometrical progression would necessitate Intelligence, would it not? We should remember what Plato called God or the Creative Principle: "The Great Geometrician."

The Swami Vivekananda says that the original mistake consists in thinking that we are bodies. Thus, if we could interpret the psychic significance of life and the spiritual nature of the soul, we would recollect the words of the Buddha: "All that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thoughts; it is made up of our thoughts."

Our progress is of and through thought. What we think has not only mental and spiritual but

Vibration

equally physical values. It is in these physical values that vibration has origin.

The manifestation of thought in any being depends on the physical medium. With human beings this medium is the nervous system. Now, the nervous system is composed of numberless fibres in themselves composed of rarest physical matter—that is visible matter. The nervous system represents an unimaginable aeon of development through lower physical forms. The subconscious mind is in most intimate relationship with the network of the nerves. The subconscious mind is the educated animal within us that pumps the blood, regulates its movement, performs the functions of the body, creates desire to nourish the body, and warns the being resident within the body of disorder by creating a violent disturbance—disease.

Thought is the omni-working power. It is the ruler and creator of form and of the events occurring to form. Words cannot describe this intense power. Take the power of the rushing Niagara or of the tempestuous falls of Zambezi, or take the entire power represented in physical energy. It is nothing, positively nothing in comparison with the omnipotence of thought,

Vibration

for thought, manifested in human energy, harnesses all natural power; yet human energy is atomical in comparison with the energy of beings superior to the human race—and these exist multitudinously.

Vibration is the action of thought. It is the arm of thought that reaches and grasps and crushes or builds.

All of us are dynamos, mighty dynamos. But the dynamo, of itself, is nothing. Intelligence must work the dynamo. Then it is useful and its energy definitely concentrated. The mind is an engine of power undreamed. Fill it with the fuel of evil thought and intention and it burns itself out without any result. This burning out is excess. The end is insanity or death, usually death. Not alone a death of the body, but a weakening and a deadening of mind and soul.

The new power system by which heat is sent through pipes to relatively enormous distances, is to my mind a fair symbol of the truth herein represented. The individual is a home engine where power is compelled through intense desire or thought. There is no limit to the radiating influence. You cannot imagine the ultimate

Vibration

radius of a single idea. The tremendous connection in thought circulation is the truth that a stray thought of relative consequence may be telepathically caught by some mind and inflamed to unusual proportions, instituting radical, remarkable and momentous conditions. That is why even the individual karma is as great and as deep and as wonderful and as mysterious as the action of universal karma.

From the spiritual side of life the forms and radiations of thought are clearly seen. Men see only the visible results. As an example, when a war is declared, all of which men are cognizant is one aggregation of armed men under superiors marching against and fighting other armed men, but to the spiritual vision there is a procession of thought forms and vibrations, multi-colored and colored with different, indefinite shades of intensity that might be compared with a midnight sky aflame with numberless and various rockets. Then there are the animal vibrations of aggressiveness, of fear and terror, of brute delight and brute cruelty. Millions upon millions *ad indefinitum* of thought influences rise into the astral world as the smoke rises from a dusky manufacturing city. Clouds

Vibration

of thought dust of immense proportions storm that world and influence and disturb the natural adjustments of its plane.

The astral man, encased in mortal flesh, is likewise affected by these thought forms. And the strangeness of these forms comes through their remarkable colors. Some are of reddish hue, others of red-brown, others of black, others of white, others of mixed colors, others of colors beyond and beneath normal extension of vision. One might compare their vibrations to electric charges. An orator, gifted and eloquent, sends forth such currents of thought that his audience is intensively aroused, electrified, and a feeling permeates the place as though it were filled with stimulating essences.

A vibration is to a thought what odor and taste are to food, or what color is to a landscape.

Thought, like all other currents of Being, has the two-fold aspect of good and evil. To the enlightened, good is only another name for progressive, evil another name for retrogressive—for the terms, respectively, are creative or destructive.

Yet thought is only matter, only combinations of exquisitely sensitized substance. 'As invisi-

Vibration

ble electricity is to visible light, so mind is to matter. Both are of one underlying substance-making reality. That reality is the creative will. Schopenhauer is wrong only in emphasizing his conclusion as final—for there is nothing final, not even consciousness.

The will uses combinations of mind and combinations of matter to manifest itself. Will is the factor that changes homogeneous mind and matter into heterogeneous combinations, personal and sentient. In other words, the individual will has as its storehouse of expression undifferentiated substance and undifferentiated intelligence. In manifestation, the individual, through the mysterious activity of the will, changes the impersonal mind-stuff into personal intelligence. To do this he employs undifferentiated substance which is only the coarse expression of thought, its outer crust. Thus arise thought and form.

Now what is the will? The will is the focalization of consciousness. As the stretching out of the arm is to the shoulder, as motion is to the body, so will is the motion of consciousness.

Here we come to deep reflection.

Unqualified consciousness is consciousness

Vibration

without motion. This is Nirvana. Nirvana is the death of the will.

So the distinction is had between the will and the substances of thought and form. Will is the going-out of consciousness. In this motion Avidya, ignorance, is born. For no matter how infinite the motion, the motion is always relative to the potentia of *consciousness* which cannot be described even by the word infinite.

And consciousness, what is that? From the lowest being to the highest, consciousness is experience. Therefore consciousness, in one sense, is the product of motion. All relative consciousness is not consciousness, for it is bred and developed in the limitless ocean of thought and form, and thought and form are Nescience. Unqualified consciousness is not consciousness as men and gods comprehend it. For what is consciousness unqualified? It is Nothing. Unqualified consciousness, Nirvana, God, Freedom, Immortality are but incomparably human terms for Something Indescribable.

Human beings speak of mind and matter as if these two summed the Infinite Reality of the knowable and possible universe, but there are existences multiform beyond thought, and ex-

Vibration

istences and combinations beyond form. Human being are anthropomorphic in their philosophy. Conditioned by space and time, they imagine that there can be no relative Being except as manifest through time and in form.

Just as reason has its limits, so intelligent existence and space-occupying combinations have their limits. And even beyond these, Nirvana is far removed. The worlds of disincarnate or of unearthly beings are still conditioned by space and time, but that does not prevent still rarer, inconceivable existences who remain unlimited. The conception of Brahman or of God is as permeating as all space and time. This quality, however, is accreditable of many gods. As you are told that a Buddha, though having passed into Nirvana, may resume form and individual existence proving his potential distinctness even in Nirvana, so these mighty existences, timeless and spaceless, are personal and yet impersonal. From these existences the gods and subordinate gods spring. These are the archangels of the cosmos—and of what is not the cosmos.

Can you conceive a god as a force? The force may be his form. And that force may be omni-

Vibration

present; as an example, gravitation. Gravitation may be a god, and that is an impersonal principle, yet it governs the motion of space-filling worlds.

DEATH.

The countenance is pallid. The eyes have lost their lustre. Friends surround the death-bed. Life wavers and flutters. The senses are dormant. Breathing is difficult. Silence and terror. Fear and dissolution. The final sigh ending the misery that commenced with the sigh of the first-born.

Passion has ceased its play. Gone are the fleeting interests of life. The bonds of personality are being shattered—all proving the isolation of the individual and the relativeness of all friends, fortune and connections.

The death rattle. The low whisperings of those who surround. The soul gradually passes from the fulness of mortal life into the regions of other worlds.

The catafalque. The death ceremony. Pall and the color of black. Torches and song. The spirit of eulogy. The anguish, when for the last time the face is seen, and then the body is carried from the place of mourning. The solitude of the final resting place.

Death

The vision returns to the form and the grace and to the beauty of physical loveliness. But flesh perishes. The vision returns to the depths of emotion, but emotion that fades even as all things. Death, Mother of Life, swallows all. And the death of the body symbolizes the death of all things that have origin and expression.

The vision returns to the colors of the life of industry. Ships strew the seas, and their wreckage lies in the deep. The gold of commerce, as the iron, is subject to rust.

The vision returns to the things held sacred, but the soul loosens all ties, for beyond the grave is neither creed, nor denomination; neither priest, nor dogma.

The vision returns to the accidents and experiences of bodily life, but the world recedes from the vision of the dead.

The meaning and the purpose of life shine forth. The dominating principle, controlling and connecting the threads of earthly experience, examines the soul. The mind, naked of body and bodily environment, is brought before the tribunal of the Greater Memory.

The Greater Memory represses and impresses. It tells the true; it speaks the sincerity of pur-

Death

pose. With sinister spirit it stands as a Me-
phisto mocking the desire-clad actions of selfish-
ness.

A cold statue, replica of the earthly man,
stands in pressing view before the disincarnate
soul. Writhing in passion, frenzied by desires,
tormented by the avarices of flesh, the desire-
man, overcome with vain feeling, attempts to
embrace the statue, but it is lifeless. The pur-
gatory of passion consumes the astral life as the
fever of desire killed the earthly body. It is
the instance of Tantalus in Tartarus.

Dark phantasms, spectres of past deeds, are
the demons' lashing the ignorant soul. Ignor-
ance, the arch-demon, the Lucifer crushing the
expression and development of Spirit, sways the
life of the spiritually blind.

The death that distresses mortals is but a
trifle in comparison with the death that distorts
and deforms the body of bliss, bringing it into
the nameless abyss of retrogression.

TRUTH.

Is truth a changing recognition of underlying reality, or is it something permanent and unchangeable? Can the mind of man know truth, or must the questions regarding the life of man and the problems of the universe ever remain questions and problems? Are we always to be puzzled by theories? Is there a final and an authoritative answer, or is reason ever to delude us?

Truth, as it relates itself to human knowledge, is never satisfying to the soul. Abstract, theoretical knowledge, is largely the super-physical bearings of the physically-nourished mind.

Truth flees from us. Though men madly pursue, they never reach the ever advancing flight of that which must ever be before. As the senses always remain dead to the ultimate gratification of desires, so must reason ever pursue and vainly pursue that which is of reason and still beyond it.

Truth is a known quantity, but its unknowable aspects are infinite. Where then shall the soul of man rest?

Truth

In the light of "pure reason" men are always limited by what they know rather than by what they do not know. What they know is of the studied, tedious efforts of aeon-developed mentality, counterpart of the molecular brain. What we know is the ballast tying to the material ground the soaring kite of the real and truth-cognizing mind.

What we know must eventually be superseded by what is as yet unknown. The currents of thought flood and flow in different directions, but the currents of the sea are only its motion. They do not solve the "whyness" of the sea.

What we know will witness the day when it is set as ignorance. A blue curtain rises and falls. It is the curtain of the ether which conditions the currents of thought. The rarest substance is the physical transmittory medium. As the rareness and super-physicalness of life manifest in the degree, the soul is placed in more direction with the vibrations of thought, higher and more truth-bearing than ordinary.

The flash of genius does not have origin in the molecular motion of the brain. It is God-inspired and may have reaching effects through generations to come. The genius of a Buddha

Truth

or the genius of a Cæsar is the luminous ghost which, like a pillar of fire, shows the path that men follow.

Now, the thoughts of a Cæsar are not the product of logical training or of experimentation or of observation, but of the science of the super-normal relations between a greatly developed consciousness and its environment, great in possibilities and complex in quality and in condition. In other words, a Cæsar is a god in soul, a god in expression. Now was Hercules greater, though he was apotheosized as a national deity?

Truth within a Cæsar manifests in a Cæsar's deportment, life and action, in his impression upon life as he finds it and in his influence in the development of social forms and progress. Truth, above all, has practical signification, and the defeat of the Gauls was as much a manifestation of the power of truth as were the thoughts of Epictetus or of Zeno.

Morality is embodied in each and every phase of existence, and the burning of Nero's palace had its place in the moral order as much as did the teachings of Paul.

For truth is first objective, then subjective,

Truth

and it is the objective phase that should be emphasized. The objective elements of truth manifest not in creed, but in conduct; not in piety, but in manliness and in womanliness.

Morality is not set. What to one man is moral is a vice to a distant brother. Chastity is the feature of one religion—the ostracism of another religion. Christianity represents the former, Mohammedanism, the latter.

Truth should be taken apart from religious denominationalism. Religion is not dogma but truth. And truth—that is character. The character of a man, when best represented, is his interpretation of religion and truth.

Arminius, when he fought legions of Varus, was religious; when he murdered those legions he was also religious. Did not Sri Krishna tell Arjuna that he should fight—not because it is brutal to fight, but because it was his duty?

And in the pursuance of duty religion develops. What is this but Karma Yoga, India's great method of reaching the goal of Becoming?

We should do what lies before us, not because it pleases us, but because it is ours to do. If, after we have retired, a pet dog or cat should cry from suffering we should relieve their trou-

Truth

ble, not because we want to remain undisturbed, but because it is the duty to help any being in distress.

Napoleon, to the spiritual eye, was a moral force. To his contemporaries and to himself and to posterity he was a man of impulses, of thought, of power, of desire and of personality, but in the law he was alternately the scourge and the blessing of the race.

The law sends a genius into the world to accomplish some purpose, to resurrect or erect some ideal, to render more manifold the possibilities for progression, to cause and to re-cause the racial spirit to manifest on a more elaborate scale and into a field of greater direction.

The map of Europe changed with the successful ambitions of Napoleon. Thousands of lives were shaped into power or from power by the moral force of the law embodied in his personality.

Thus, men come and men go, but the law remains. The persistence of the racial character, its growth and positiveness, is the vital aim of the law. Personalities are but instruments.

“MORITURI TE SALUTANT.”

(Those Who Are About to Die Salute Thee.)

The gilded purple panoply; the tiers rise one above the other. A night, illumined with the torches of the amphitheatre; the roar of starving lions; the chatter of women, the giddy impatience of children, the loud noise of Bacchantians, the stately presence of the vestals, the sombre faces of the senators, the august countenance of the consuls and of the emperor.

The expanse of the arena; the brute faces of the keepers; cruel dominance of the masters of the circus; the lofty disdain of Greek slaves and of barbarian captives.

The striking of the gong; the vociferous acclaim of the thousands. The even tread of the gladiators whose faces, lighted by the torches, seem sinister.

The coming before the imperial dais; the salute, “Vale, Cæsar, morituri te salutant.” The sounding of cymbals and of trumpets. The crash and creaking of chained doors; the pounc-

“Morituri Te Salutant”

ing into the arena of stealthy, crouching beasts from the distant provinces of Africa and Asia.

The struggle bitter that proved feast to the eyes of the holiday thousands. The pains of rending claws; the flash of steel; the mad roar of the beasts mixed with the savage, blood-thirsting voice of the spectators, the shout of the fighting gladiators and the cries and distress of the wounded and dying.

This is but a glowing picture of the “Morituri Te Salutant” of the present day.

The great arena of economic life. The mocking thousands who down-thumb the loser in the fight. The mocking thousands, concerned in their own happiness, who condemn to a life worse than the gladiator’s *the man who cannot*. The slipshod life of the gladiators of Time and Greed who must fight in the arena of poverty for a crumb. These are the victims.

The gladiators of old fought for applause and ambition. But the economic captive fights from despair, encumbered by the thousand inconveniences of poverty, and armed with nothing but the desperateness that makes viciousness and brutality storm the world.

“Vale, Cæsar, morituri te salutant.” “Hail

“Morituri Te Salutant”

world. The suicide who is about to die curses thee.”

And the blood of the gladiators rose in praise to the Spirit of Rome, but the blood of the man crushed in the arena of Money Greed cries to the gods of vengeance.

INSTINCT—INTUITION— INSPIRATION.

No man, not even the greatest, can tell you the motives and the impulses of your mind. You alone know. You feel them, and all the sayings of a psychologist are only inferential. The individual doubts not his feelings. No man can argue you out of your feelings. In this sense follow them implicitly. Of course, by these are meant the intuitional feelings, those which are never wrong, never selfish.

Feelings which impel us in certain directions only appear new. They appear new to the surface consciousness, to the consciousness of this earth-life. Such feelings are the voices of past experiences. Sensations make us feel at oneness with the person just met, or they make us feel unreasonably distant—and we cannot help following them. With regard to a subject of which we have never previously heard, not even in a previous life, one will not feel these sensations. With regard to other subjects, known in lives past, they will seem new, but they are readily assimilated.

Instinct is intuition manifest in the physical;

Instinct—Intuition—Inspiration

it manifests in the morphological evolution of new forms of physical life. There is a normal standard of physical intuition. Degeneracy is its debasement.

Higher intuition manifests in the spontaneous discovery of truth, in moral discernment, in service, in intellectual ardor and bliss, and in relating consciousness to higher forms, and in severing its intimate physical connection.

Inspiration and intuition are the same. Inspiration, however, is sometimes used to designate the intuition coming from the highest or divine planes.

Whatever comes to you is impersonal in the sense that once it has been imbibed, it is others; that is, others receive the benefit. You become a teacher of the message, either in word or by example, for intuition is compelling.

There are two minds. This science recognizes. The first of these is the conscious mind; the other is the mind that is not the conscious. Now the latter may be divided into two parts, that which regulates the functions of the body and that which reaches out to the spheres of thought and consciousness ungrasped by the normal mind.

Instinct—Intuition—Inspiration

Now, in the first of these, intuition can never originate; in the second phase it may and does. Intuition, when it does come, is an impelling thought. It strikes at one point. As the intuition is flashed across normal consciousness, it is disseminated into various sensations and into various reasons that prompt the course of action.

A man is not governed by experience. Experience is only the habit developed from the first action—which is intuitional.

All intuition arises outside of the normal consciousness. The thirst for keener satisfaction of passion that develops with greater social restraint has developed and fixed the vices that are common outcasts both in public opinion and in law which represents public opinion, both in the eyes of the individual conscience and in the eyes of truth. Vice rises from the lower elements of the mind that is not conscious. Witness the cleverness of the insane. The cunning of the weazel in securing and sucking the blood of its prey is physically intuitive.

To make the distinction clear: let intuition be considered as of psychic origin; instinct as of physical origin, and inspiration as spiritual.

THE SUBJECT AND THE OBJECT MIND.

The subject mind is the dupe of the object mind unless the latter is firmly centered. The experiences of the object mind have potent influence on the character of the subject mind. The subject mind is the funnel through which the object mind comes into relation with psychic being; but the subject mind, unless properly educated, receives all impressions and does not distinguish, and the object mind is thereby puzzled.

The object mind is strange. The subject mind is strange. But the object mind is less strange. The subject mind is the relief of the object mind, but the object mind peers externally and thus is puzzled with regard to the perfect inflow of truth from the subject mind.

The object mind must be educated by reason. Then there is no foolishness or imposition from the subject mind. The subject mind is stronger than the object mind, disturbs the object mind and may even cause it to become deranged if the

The Subject and the Object Mind

subject mind becomes disconnected by reason of the derangement of the subject mind through excesses, superstition, and so forth.

The subject mind is like a root; the object mind is like a tree. The object mind, however, depends on the seed. The subject mind is the life of the object mind. The object mind is too much concerned with objective things. If the object mind ceases its persistent externalization and gazes inward, it beholds the all-branching subject mind.

The subject mind is the all-including mind. First it appears as a small shoot, manifesting a much conditioned personality. That is the beginning of the evolutionary course. Then it develops and develops and increases the complexity and uniformity of the subject mind. Then the object mind becomes stouter in self-assertion, developing strong individuality and assuming greater conscious and social responsibilities. The subject mind increases and increases, more and more objectifying itself, until its projection loses sight of its origin and concerns itself solely with the phenomena of objective existence.

The ramifications of the object mind are

The Subject and the Object Mind

founded in the basic subject mind; they are rooted in the foundation of that which reaches beyond time and is unconditioned by spaces. It is established in self-sufficiency by reason of the permanent and persistent existence of the subject mind.

When the soul commences to realize the exhaustless mine of intelligence beneath the conscious area, it expands into wider avenues of consciousness and embraces a greater and more extensive field of potential manifestation.

The higher mind can be so directed as to be of positive assistance in the development and comprehension of the object mind. The object mind is dependent upon the subject mind for the better and speedier evolution of its developing faculties.

The object mind is assisted in this direction when it studiously informs itself of those truths that pertain to the soul, and by conforming in conduct to the newer and spiritual knowledge. Every man must discover the Path for himself, and this Path is chosen when the mind has attained to a certain discrimination between the things that work ignorance and the things that make for greater unfoldment of soul.

The Subject and the Object Mind

Thus right living and right thought and speech are of invaluable assistance in forming a well-connected medium of transmission between the subject and the object mind.

The deepest spiritual wisdom hinges upon the performance of ordinary truth as it is delivered to man in the scriptures of the world.

PREGNANT TRUTHS.

Enquire! What is the motive prompting? Are you sincere, or are you merely a pass-timer, merely a player with priceless treasures of superlative truth? Be candid. Seek, but seek with the mind directed to the fulness of the light of Surya (the Sun-God).

The wheels move, and with their revolving the cycles of time begin and end. It is an infinite illusion. Open the eyes. Gaze into the firmament. You see the blue. In reality the color does not exist. It is a myth. The colors of existence, too, are mythical. It is all a deep symbolism. The glory and the light of the external manifest the glory and the light of the immortal and imperishable soul.

A great teacher said: "This universe is a myth. The truth can be summed in two words, Brahmasatyam, Jaganmythya." Translated, these words mean that Brahman or the Spiritual Principle is alone real, and that the world is unreal.

We live within the omnipresent, all-time ocean of truth. Purify the mind. Then it becomes

Pregnant Truths

a proper conduit for the inbreathing of God.

These worlds, thought, relative truth, time and life are nominal. Even the highest truth succumbs to the highest consciousness—the consciousness of Brahman. Said the Rishis of old, and with intensity of soul did they express it: “All is evanescent. Wherein doth the soul find truth? In the senses? The body dies and disintegrates. In the mind? That, too, is a wheel of change. In the spirit of God slumbers the Infinite and the True.

Yoga is the same in significance as religion. The Latin verb from which the Latin noun religion is derived means to bind back or to rebind. Yoga is the Sanscrit noun for union. Now, the final aim in life is the re-binding of the soul to the Dominant and the Highest. By yoga we reunite the soul with the Highest Bliss. All exists within the soul. Within the depths of Being reside the cognition of time, space and form and the spiritual principle through which these are manifested and developed. Useful and ornamental as tinsels to relative development, they—the things of time and form—are to be discarded when the spiritual Self takes His abode within the heart.

Pregnant Truths

The center is nowhere. The lines are the phantasms of phenomenal growth and reproduction. It is, to all appearances, a meaningless cycling into indefinite directions, disconnected and indescribable, pointing nowhere, meaning nothing. A dream. Avidya. Ignorance. Why should the scientists and the sages differ? In the spiritual extreme, there is no law, nor truth, for laws and the changing formulas of truth are as relative as the things that are blindly impelled. If the truth is seen, law fails and all the forms of both truth and ignorance—for even these are degrees of nothingness. *It*, the everlasting Self, alone is.

Where law is, bondage exists. Self is above all. This universe is in every sense a myth.

The Truth, in its wide circle, encycling the cycling of existence, crushes the serpent of error. The soul that does not believe in the Omnipresent Truth is doomed, for blind men are led by the blind, and the spirit of darkness is a void of nothingness, and *nothing* are those who labor in darkness.

The Spirit manifests in the Greater Memory, in talents and faculties, in opportunities and successes, in aspiration and, above all, in realiza-

Pregnant Truths

tion. The goal is far distant, yet the star of hope, the light of devotion and the Sun of Truth make the path easy, and they brighten the way.

A man is a man and walks the ways of men. An animal body. A mind, fortified by omnipotence, and a soul aflame with the fire of Divineness. The warp and the woof weave.

Though children, we have the responsibilities of gods, for the influence of our lives are not bound by space or by time. This thought should lend decision to character and formulate the truth into every word, thought and deed.

Of all that remains the sum is character. Man, remember thy deeds for they pursue thee even though the soul flees centuries before the result.

This universe is first of all a universe of thought-combinations. Matter is a secondary consideration. It is the materialization of thought or of desire which is also a mode of thought. Thoughts that you think, thoughts that you voice, thoughts that you affect in conduct, are bonds. These are the only heaven and hell—they are YOU.

THE APPEAL OF MYSTICISM.

In the hidden depths of the background of conscious life is a profound sense and reverence of the mystical. The soul is naturally inclined to it. Something voices the truth that the wholeness of life is not revealed in its surface expression, but this expression changes and changes and will ever change, and that the underlying basis of these changes consists in the immutable support of the infinitely possible that continually manifests itself in the new and the more evolved.

Men are miserably bound by the senses. They cannot reach out beyond an extremely limited boundary of feeling and sense observation. Beyond the experiences of the senses and beyond their objects is the Infinitely Beyond. That Infinitely Beyond appeals to us through the mystical sense.

To cultivate the mystical sense we must endeavor to appreciate the truth that permeates all space and all time, and realize in so far as it is possible, that truth in our daily conduct and

The Appeal of Mysticism

impress it on our daily environment. That develops a super-sensuous vision of truth and makes the soul cognizant of the realities beneath and beyond the surface appearance of things.

The Infinitely Beyond is the Absolute Existence including temporal existence. That Absolute Existence has been variously named; above all it has been called God. The ideal to be translated into conscious value is that this Absolute Existence is one and identical with its finite manifestations, one and identical with every soul from the lemental and atomic to the human and the super-human.

Realizing this, Life itself is realized.

KARMA RELATIONS.

Karma relations are indeed few. A Karma relation is one primevally bound to another, having an identity of spiritual essence, with the same evolutionary drift and with the same ultimate destiny of finding each other when the mind of one has strayed into some devious path. Just as a planet is intimately related to its destiny, so a Karma relation is bound to its mate. But, in the very final sense, there is but one Karma relation, the spiritual affinity. These find their ultimate union in the realization of a same and, to them, supreme ideal.

Others are Karma relations, but only relatively so because they come but to go and to come again and to go until, at length, the development of one overlaps the development of the other, and then their relations and sympathy end. By sympathy, emotional sympathy is not meant, but the sympathy of necessity.

Those who come into our lives we may never wish to have come again. Fate changes the mind's relations. Where first pleasure and sen-

Karma Relations

timent were, there later comes a loosening of all ties. When a woman or a man are through with their loves, they mock them. Wide breaches of feeling distance them. When one has outgrown surroundings, the people who know him fail to understand. They manifest on different planes of thought and expression. Socrates was widely separated from Xanthippe. And a marriage of the body or a union through physical or mental proximity is not Karmic or spiritual in the absolute sense. As one changes his clothes with the fashions, so one changes his friends and relations with the changing fashions and needs of the mind. Behold life! Just as one may put a garment off for several days or for a season, and then puts it on when the time demands it, so the individual Self changes its friends and relations; but sometimes it renews experiences of past seasons. And as sometimes men wear certain clothes because they have none other, so often souls come together through necessity, and as sometimes men complain of their poverty, so sometimes they complain of their friends and relations.

When the goal is reached, then is there Kai-
valya, isolation. All Karma having passed, all

Karma Relations

relative conditions and connections also pass. In this sense every soul stands isolated, for the Spirit is One, not many, nay, not even two.

You may compare human relations in this way: when two persons are absorbed by one ideal, it is the ideal which lives and the personalities are mythical. There are loves that endure for a time and then break upon the shores of times. When overcome with the passing feeling of passion, men and women swear away their souls, and later they laugh. But when "She" comes then is there true love. So all friends and relations are Karmic in the degree, sometimes the degree being intense and enduring from lives to lives, but there is but one real bride to each lover, but one real mate to each soul.

In the case where a man and a woman separate, the man is not a Dante, nor the woman a Beatrice; that is, the woman does not compose the man's highest ideal, nor is the man a Dante in depth or rareness of feeling.

SOME THOUGHTS ON AN UNDERSTANDING OF LIFE.

Life is not a matter of intellectual perception, but of conscious experience. There are hundred-fold occasions when we cannot express feeling in intellectual terms, owing to the poverty of language and for the fact that educated feeling transcends reason. It is the refinement of feeling rather than the perfection of the things of thought to which life tends. Feeling is the determining and actual medium in all perception. Understanding and sympathy between friends is emotional rather than rational. It is founded on educated sensibilities rather than on any critical analysis of character. One can never explain feeling, yet he is more certain of what he feels than of what he thinks. Feeling is a higher expression of consciousness. Philosophers say that consciousness can be extended beyond ordinary rational perception. Reason is also an expression of consciousness, but it is slow and ponderous in comparison with the higher intuitions of feeling.

Some Thoughts on an Understanding of Life

Feeling is instantaneous, direct, invariably true and infallible. Reason infers, but what we feel is conditioned by positive experience. It is a spontaneous discernment of the object or quality recognized. Feeling acts in a higher degree on the mental plane. Regularly it acts on the plane of desire, but when desire is elevated beyond the physical and selfishly emotional, when it rises to the mental and spiritual planes, then feeling is the best and most immediate avenue for personal progression. Feeling, when controlled, is the easiest and most direct of the paths that lead the personal to the feet of the super-personal Self.

A great spiritual teacher of the century past said that the present age was the time and the opportunity for the unfoldment of the spirit through the emotions. Feeling, properly directed, is the highest possible manifestation of the soul, for then it is divine. Feeling and the value of feeling are found in the method of direction. Fire may burn a child, but with fire one can also cook food. Similarly with feeling. Feeling may degrade or upbuild, as the currents of its direction are improperly or properly channelled. Selfishness, for example, causes many

Some Thoughts on an Understanding of Life

to seek happiness at the expense of the comfort and welfare of others, but selfishness may cause the mother to sacrifice herself for her child and prompt the sinner to abandon his ways because such abandonment would serve his very highest interests.

In the circumstances of individual life it is wise to strengthen the idea that the true understanding of life is ever associated with pain. It requires the greatest moral courage to take this position. Yet, when one pauses to reflect on the central truths and the evolutionary facts of his moral and mental development, he comes to an intimate appreciation of the uses of struggle and pain. Painful experiences mould the personality into a nobler cast. The dross of superficiality is removed and the individual possesses the unalloyed ore of personal growth.

Pain is something from which we flee in terror, yet it relentlessly pursues us until the particular lesson it wishes to instil is learned at the particular time and under the necessary environment. The existence of the law of compensation manifests in its divinely exact justice. We must accept as inevitable and imperative the facts of life as we come into relation

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with them, neither falsely enthusing when they flatter us, nor becoming unreasonably despondent when they are against us. The spirit may live in conformity with nature as it obeys natural laws, and natural laws include spiritual laws. Truth manifests irrespective of personality, and, in this sense, actualizes its decrees in the affairs of men with unequivocal impartiality. And if a man complains of the drift of his fortunes he is as unjust to himself as if he should deny rational truth, though it stand patent and irrefutable.

Our environment and the innumerable circumstances and accidents of our lives already exist in the foreshadowings of the subconscious personality which, like a magnet, draws those facts, both mental and physical, to itself that are congenial to its individual nature. Thus, in determining the apparent injustice of any feature or phase of personal life, the individual must penetrate the folds of sophism and discover the outward fact as related to and born of inner selfishness.

The sage, giving an accidental importance to the ephemeral incidents of bodily life, remembers the persistence of character and so devotes

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himself in all experiences that from them he may reap a larger place in the scale of being. The end and purpose of this bodily life is to undergo uneven experiences that from the unevenness of pleasure and pain the happy state of spiritual equilibrium may be had. The motive principle of the spiritual ideal is the development of high mental and emotional attitudes that may work for the ultimate manifestation of the divinity within the depths of manhood and womanhood. The integration of a spiritual consciousness is attained through the disintegration of a lower mental and emotional consciousness. In other words, the world of the senses must give way to the world of mental realities and spiritual truth. The evanescent pleasures of passion and desire must recede before the oncoming of the joys of the mind and the bliss of the spirit.

This is an age of blindest materialism when the forces of the senses build high the fabric of social convenience and material advancement. But the climax has been reached in ages previous to this. The havoc of rawer, cruder and barbarous influences annihilated the social status of ancient Rome. So, in the due course

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of the conflict between the retrogressive and the progressive units of evolution, the time will come when the highest levels of present social development must lower before the tempestuous onrush of more vital and more active and evolutionary things to come and to be realized in the future. Experiences change. The soul alone persists.

Life is something far-reaching in opportunity. It admits of the widest variations of good and of evil. No matter how deep the abyss into which a soul may have fallen, the ascent can be made, and, in very fact, must be made, for the urge impels and, if its more gentle whisperings are not heeded, it violently compels. It is good to see the realities of life in their truest and existing proportions. We must become the spectator of the things that affect us, and not confusedly identify ourselves with them. We must get out of the perspective, so that we can get a fair and exact view of the spiritual background of our life and impartially judge its shifting scenes. Then the day of life is unclouded, for, seeing things in their reality, we are not overcome by their surface presentation. There is a moral manifestation of truth

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in our lives and it rises or falls in the degree.

Disciplining the mind, the feelings and the will so that they are more convincing and truth-bearing we come to the practical relations of the spiritual life which all are capable of expressing if their ideals are right and if their purposes are firm. That spiritual life is the real life. It is that real life which we must pronounce, for that is permanent. It is the truth. It disseminates goodness and strength and virtuous desire. It instils the longing to expand into the greater orders of life, to overcome the narrowness and the falseness and the nothingness of the life prompted by the material desire to acquire and to gain and to continue to acquire and to gain. The saddest fact in the life of many an individual is his utter lack of discrimination between the things that develop the reality of the soul and the things that cloud that reality.

An understanding of life is best had through a perfect Self consciousness, a consciousness that reaches and discovers something immortal beyond this shifting mortality, a permanent ego beyond this changing personality, an eternal and everlasting Self supporting and encouraging the

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spiritual aspirations of this lower self. This
consciousness is gained through persistently de-
siring it, through earnestly praying for the light
that penetrates the densities of material igno-
rance and floods the soul with the spiritual
vision that enables it to grasp facts and verities
deeper and truer and more real than the phe-
nomena of fleeting mortal existence.

THE END

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