THE VOICE OF THE SPIRIT

as heard in the heart

of

AN UNKNOWN MINSTREL

Second and enlarged edition;
formerly published under title, "OVERTONES"

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Gift of
Surg. H. H. Hughes
1/7/54

To my dear Mother and Father

In Memory

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"On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven, a perfect round."

ROBERT BROWNING

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Foreword

The Need of the Times

WITH all the material inventions and miraculous mechanical progress of the present day, there is an appalling lack of knowledge or conviction concerning spiritual truths. These talks have been called forth because of that need, in the hope of answering the cry of some burdened heart.

The papers are short so that they may be easily read and assimilated. Let the words sink deep into consciousness. Memorize lines that appeal to you. Read night and morning if you can, certainly at night before you go to bed. If you can fall asleep with some of these thoughts uppermost, you will so impress the subconscious that inspiration will come to you from that great reservoir and you will see a change for the better in all the conditions affecting you most closely.

We have spoken the word with power and know that it will not return to us void. Take the word into your own life and lift your experiences from barrenness to beauty. So be it!

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No. 1

"Awake, Arise, and Sing!"

IN these troubled times the world needs joy, the joy of knowledge that life and love are eternal, that the only thing that counts is character. With this conviction and the realization that God's will must be done in the beyond and on earth, we can face our own future and the future of the world with confidence. Without this conviction we are lost in the mists of ignorance and despair.

These papers are intended to throw light on man's problems and destiny. There can be nothing new to those who have truly grasped the Christ teachings, but for those who have wandered afar off or those who are crushed by overwhelming loss and its resulting hopelessness there is a definite message. Too many consider themselves too busy to study the truths of the Spirit, little knowing how these truths simplify life and lift burdens from human shoulders. In short, for most people today a rekindling of faith must come.

We sleep in ignorance and doubt. We dread the morning light which calls us to another day of dreariness and despair. Our eyes have lost the vision without which we perish. Things must come to a crisis when the world has gone so far away from the plan for humanity. After the crisis, health may be restored.

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These talks round out the harmony of a new day. First we must awake, open our eyes to truth; then we must arise, to the full stature of man; then spontaneously the heart will sing as the false shadows vanish into the nothingness from which they came. In the dawn of creation the stars sang together. With the melody in the awakened heart will blend the voices of that majestic chorus, the chorus of Alleluias to the risen Lord.

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No. 2

The Message of Creation

THIS seems a subject entirely too great to be condensed into a page or two. But the greatest ideas in life are always the simplest, just as the truly great people are always the least complicated. They are usually men or women with one consuming gift or purpose to which all their energies are directed. Is not Unity the essence of simplicity? It is of this Unity, the underlying message of Creation, of which we wish to speak.

Veiled by the mists of Sense and Matter, the Truth lies hidden, but it has never been hidden to the great Seers. In all material and concrete manifestations their inner vision has beheld the radiant, Divine center. Science is gradually catching up with the mystics. Even stone has been proved to be thrilling, pulsating Life, the molecules in motion. So St. Francis could call the birds and beasts his little brothers because in each living thing—and all things are filled with vibratory life—he could recognize the spark which truly makes "Nature's social union." Is this not the secret of the lion's lying down with the lamb and the little child who leads them? If there were no ignorance of this vital truth, with the consequent fear and hate which come from ignorance, there would be no discord or danger in the world today. We should

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re-enter the garden of Eden. The promised Golden Age would return. God's will would actually be done on earth as it is in Heaven, for earth and Heaven would become one in consciousness.

If we would stop for a moment to analyze very simply this vital truth of God in all His creation, we should catch glimpses of the joy such a realization implies. We should cease our worry about many things; we should literally cast our burden on the Lord, as we have been told to do; we should be like the lilies of the field, drinking in the free wine of dew, air, and sunlight; we should be centers of radiant peace, stilling the tumult of our environment. Can you visualize a day without worry, hurry, sorrow, pain, regret? The burden of Atlas would drop from our bent and aching shoulders. The Master Self would take control, bringing us only our best good.

But, no, the world hugs its misery and plunges headlong into suffering. Eventually we find our way back, but meanwhile so many unnecessary tears, so many crushed and despairing hearts!

The secret of Creation is the Divine Essence within all forms, the true and indestructible Self of the form created, the God-Pattern. Brood over this as God brooded over the waters. Results will follow in the healing of your soul and in the radiant transformation of your life.

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No. 3

"Open, Sesame!"

YOU remember the story of the magic words that opened the treasure cave. You recall the ecstasy of your childish thrills when the hidden wealth stood revealed. How often in this strange world with its bitter-sweet draughts of pleasure and of pain do we long for a magic word to solve our problems, open closed doors, reveal long-sought riches of joy, hope, beauty, abundance, love.

These treasures are waiting for those who have the courage to try the experiment. Do you think you could live for a whole day during which no sad or negative thought crossed your mind? Could you actually build for your soul "a wider room

With windows to open and let in the sun

And the breeze of the world blowing through?" Could you make a practice of thanking God each morning for a beautiful day, and then seeing only beauty in that day?

Work with the power of constructive imagination. We are told we are made in the image and likeness of God. We don't now understand just what that means. But no one who thinks at all can picture the vast Creative Power as other than beauty, abundance, strength, perfection. Try giving this unseen Force a chance. Build your perfect

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world, live in it, see it, admit only beauty in your thought realm.

As Glad said in dingy Apple Blossom Court, "It may be lies, but it's cheerful lies as 'elps yer."

Even her mite of faith was blessed a thousandfold. You remember her story in "The Dawn of a Tomorrow?"

The great storehouse of abundance is waiting for the magic of Faith. "Believe and ye shall receive." Transform your daily round by the rose radiance of your fondest dreams. Picture the loveliness your soul craves. We belong to a universe of beauty did we but know it. We are in a realm of beauty could we but see it.

At first this may take an effort of will, especially for those who have most of their lives looked on the dark side. We shall have to return to those childhood days when imagination played unchecked and we actually were what we pretended to be.

"Faith's a fact. It isn't a mere word. It's a live wire straight from omnipotence," some one has said.

Faith is in truth a magnet which draws from the great etheric storehouse the treasure waiting there for the use of all humanity. Constructive imagination, the realization that we are children of the King—these are the "Open Sesame."

Can you try the experiment? Look for trouble and you certainly will find it. Why not look for

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joy, beauty, the gifts that belong to you as a part of your Divine inheritance?

Perhaps one of our greatest regrets when we reach the other shore will be the realization that we played the part of the pauper when we really are the prince. The world needs joy, beauty, sunshine. How tragic to have missed, not only for ourselves but for those whose lives we touch, the glory from which we came and to which we return!

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No. 4

The Call of the Unseen

ON the surface this is a strange combination of words, somewhat unintelligible; but it has deep meaning. To those immersed in the affairs of a material world, deep in their own personal worries and responsibilities, the unseen is the least of their considerations. It is therefore difficult for them to hear its call. We are all, however, intent on a bell to summon us to the telephone if we are expecting a message. In moments of lonely relaxation we often long for the sound of a beloved voice and sometimes hear it calling us. Unfortunately most of our waking hours are given over to concrete sounds and images. Only the poets, philosophers, artists and musicians keep their inner eyes and ears open. We might include in their distinguished company a few rare scientists.

What is this Unseen? It is hard to describe to those imprisoned in the walls of a self-centered, three dimensional world. You must envision it with the eye of faith. All that is loveliest and best, the most perfect beauty you have ever known, the truest friends you have ever had, the fondest hopes you have ever cherished, the greatest ideals your mind can grasp—all these are a small part of the Unseen.

In what way does the call come? What is its purpose? When you are attuned to those vibrations which are in harmony with the great symphony

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of the universe, the call comes in multitudinous ways: nature, people, books, life experiences. The important point is that you be able to register it and answer in an immediate electrical response. The purpose is not only to lift you in your own development and help you master your own personal problems; but far more important than this the whole tempo of the world is quickened. You remember the metaphors of the salt and the candle. "Ye are the salt of the earth. . . Ye are the light of the world. A town built on a mountain-top cannot be hidden." Even one small light may start a conflagration.

A simple illustration to make the title clear is the touching story of the child, Samuel, who waited for the Unseen to call. "Speak, Lord; for Thy servant heareth." We are few of us so highly developed that we can approach the purity of this sensitive young instrument. Yet in our own way we can answer to the call of Beauty, Perfection, the Ideal; and as time passes, our receiving apparatus will become more and more sensitive until higher and higher planes can reach us.

What dignity and grace enfold a life so dedicated! What a blessing to the world is such an instrument, however humble! Automatically clouds lift; ugliness vanishes; and the tragic star of Earth becomes brighter as its note in the chord of Creation blends more harmoniously into the universal chorus. Watch for the call in your own heart.

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No. 5

The Unseen Universe

IT is difficult for those encased in physical bodies in a material world to picture the truth of a universe visible to those in the encircling sphere but invisible to those whose eyes are holden. The scriptures tell us of the "cloud of witnesses." They also mention various superphysical gifts: the gift of healing, the gift of prophecy, the ability to see visions and dream dreams,—in short, the power to contact that finer, more spiritual world encircling and interpenetrating this earth we know so well.

The telescope and the microscope have helped to make plain objects beyond and below the normal range of vision. The radio has helped to emphasize the truth of waves in the ether. But no instrument has yet been devised to convey vibrations from one world to another. The only instrument we now know is the brain of man, and a nervous system especially attuned to register thought waves sent by others in the body and out of it.

There is a definite message in the unseen, a message of hope, the certainty of continuity, the reality of the force called prayer, the waves of love and longing which interpenetrate the worlds. So many are today being sent suddenly from the physical body that it is becoming a vital necessity

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to restore to humanity the faith that rests on knowledge. Too many insist on feeling the wounds in the hands and side. Too few are ready to accept with conviction that which having not seen they believe.

Our instruments are "jangled, out of tune, and harsh." A jazz-crazed world knows not the mountain silence, the morning stars, the musical message of the winds. We are out of tune with the rhythm of Nature, which might play upon the harp of our own being and make us sensitive instruments to the call of the unseen. A whole universe stands waiting for those who are ready to open their ears that they may hear and their hearts that they may understand.

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No. 6

The Cloud of Witnesses

WE pass over this phrase as inconsequential when in reality it is one of the most vital in human experience. Guardian angels, be they ever so humble, are common. Look back over your own life to moments of protection, unexpected chivalry, ready help. If we could see these invisible ministers we should be lifted up above the common round of every day and never doubt again the eternal verities, which remain the same whether we know them consciously or not.

Once upon a time a soul was lonely in heaven; so to give her work she was sent to guard a youth in a great city. Now it happened that this person had fine possibilities but one weakness. This weakness was the flaw in an otherwise perfect armor.

"What can I do? How can I help?" With this unselfish cry in her heart the lonely angel forgot her loneliness and stayed patiently by.

Time and again she intervened to stave off disaster. Then when the danger was over, she returned, unknown and unthanked, to ask for another assignment.

Service is the law of Spirit.

"Thousands at His bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest."

You feel you are alone, friendless. You never made

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a greater mistake. If you could only put your material world where it belongs, realizing you are making but a temporary sojourn away from your true home, and then raise your consciousness to the spiritual level where you belong, you would know the truth of the "cloud of witnesses."

Gates unlock before them. Walls become transparent. Loving arms enfold you in warm embrace. If you would only open your eyes to see, your ears to hear, your heart to understand!

"He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."

There is a condition, however. Man must first recognize that he is a spiritual being and raise his thought to that level. The S O S that is not sent cannot be answered. First must come the desire, the prayer, the faith, then gratitude which knows help is unfailing, however dark the night.

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No. 7

The Invisible Made Visible

WE have grown so accustomed to the telescope, the microscope, the X ray that we forget the miracle of their invention. Before man had them to use he knew nothing of far-off planets, nebulae, and spectra; he knew nothing of germs, toxins, and anti-toxins; he knew nothing of hidden growths within the body, misplacements, and other causes of disease and pain. Now science has unfolded a great panorama where once was a blank wall.

Even so, we are still going through life with blinkers on. Some are near-sighted, some far-sighted, some color-blind; but worse than that, the eyes and ears of the soul are closed. So much beauty on every hand, so many melodies, so much vivid color and perfume, so much loveliness—and we cannot see, hear, touch, or smell it. All these finer senses are there, waiting to be developed.

We read sometimes of one who has been blind from birth and who suddenly by just the right operation at the right time opens his eyes and sees. To such the world seems strange and new, in part perhaps painful in some of the ugliness which before had been blissfully hidden to the eyes of the imagination. This very real invisible world, however, of which we are speaking has for the

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pure soul only delightful surprises, ecstatic glimpses of perfect loveliness.

How can the invisible be made visible? First, you must believe it is there, surrounding your world, interpenetrating it. Then you must make time every day to commune with it in prayer, and meditation upon eternal truths. The importance of this communion cannot be overestimated. Your life here, however busy, is short and fleeting. There is nothing you can take with you except yourself. Is it not well worth the effort to prepare for the change which all must make? Such a happy change, too, for those who love truth and beauty, and await with joy reunion with their nearest and dearest.

This reunion is possible here and now. There are no barriers to love in this world or the next or between the worlds. To the eye of faith, to the loving heart, the so-called invisible, which is all around us waiting for recognition, can become the visible, only in fleeting glimpses perhaps, but still glimpses so real that we know the truth and cast aside our doubts forevermore.

A world waits for recognition as truly as did the western continent wait for its Columbus, its Balboa, its Magellan. Love calls, and to that call Love answers.

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No. 8

Radio Reception

IF you turn the knob on a radio, touching different stations for a minute or so, you realize the wide variety of waves permeating space. Jokes, prayers, jazz, concert music—all varieties of human thought and emotion make their way into the atmosphere. What a revelation of etheric transmission!

Our receiving sets must be properly attuned if we are to make the most of this mystery called life. Strange and variable the moods of humanity! If we are badly out of tune ourselves we may vibrate a veritable poison, which, infringing on the sensitive consciousness of another, may add its cumulative power to a mood already desperate and drive that poor unfortunate completely over the precipice. Or lifted to a plane of lofty thought, we may still the troubled waters around us and radiate life and power, giving new hope to the depressed and peace where most needed.

Grave, indeed, is the responsibility of human radio transmitters, both for sending and receiving. Just as one discordant element can break up a family or any social unit, the right attitude can quench the flames of smoldering resentment and save the situation before real disaster breaks. Vibrations lifted high enough can open our inner eyes

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and ears to a world of beauty and enchantment. With such vision we are never quite the same again, however deeply we may sink back into the material world. Moments of recollection flash when least expected. We know because we have seen and heard.

In a world intended to be beautiful why vibrate to the ugly? Even if we have to raise ourselves by our boot-straps, we should make the effort. Just as we turn off an offending radio program and try for something more to our taste, so we can exclude from our stream of consciousness the ignoble and the discordant. For us it need not exist. In the real essence of things it does not exist anyway. Like all illusion, the ugly passes and only beauty remains, for beauty is eternal in the heavens.

Slow ofttimes and painful is the adjustment of our human radio. But how vital for our progress and well-being! Will you be a cesspool or a fountain, a pawnshop or a shrine, a curse or a blessing? The choice is yours.

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No. 9

The Ladder of Dreams

HOW little we realize when we lie down to rest at night that we are partly released from the physical world to wander for a brief time in a plane a little nearer to Reality for those whose hearts are pure and whose souls are at least partly awakened. I refer to the Dream World wherein visions come and memories may be carried back to waking consciousness.

This Dream World has many aspects. It may be a realm of beauty or of foreboding. It may harbor promises of life or conceal the poisons of death. To those who pass its portals must come guides to take the wayfarers safely above the morasses and hidden dangers.

A sensitive soul in whom the spiritual nature is awakening often catches glimpses of future events. The impressions carried back into the waking consciousness should be strictly followed. Such forewarnings are priceless to those blest with such prevision. These glimpses of truth should be remembered and obeyed.

At all times and in all places men have been warned in dream and vision. Joseph interpreted the years of plenty and of famine and acted accordingly. If our minds and hearts were centered on things above we could avoid many pitfalls. But

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the voice of sense excludes the still small voice of Spirit. In sleep on rare occasions the spiritual Self can so impress the physical brain that these precious glimpses can be carried into the waking hour.

In a world of danger, disappointment and death we long for assurance of those realms afar, that home where our faltering steps would turn and our weary hearts find rest.

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No. 10

The Chemistry of Thought

IN the forefront of scientific discovery and achievement stand the chemists, whose marvelous findings too often, alas, are used for destruction rather than for construction. All great forces are two-edged swords, depending on their use. Unhappily there may be perversion of Good or God, and so we have evil or the devil. But we must never forget the all-Good. In its ultimate analysis all is good—God. We return to the Father, each in his own way, following his own Karma or Fate, for which he alone is responsible.

"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of gods, or messengers of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." In this marvelous realm of thought whence all begins and from which all things emanate we find the ether of substance. In vibratory attunement are the minds of men. We are told in the scriptures to think only those thoughts which are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. There is a definite and vital reason for this advice, for we attract to ourselves conditions corresponding to our thoughts. Why build a prison-house, a dungeon, in which to walk "benighted under the mid-day sun" when the blue heaven is ours for the asking, the radiance of

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the sunlight, the fragrance of flowers, and all the perfection of beauty in a universe which should be a garden of Eden and can be again? Man has only to return to his true Self and by the power of that Selfhood transform his personal desert into a veritable garden in which his God may walk in the cool of the day.

Do you not realize how all is regulated by thought? Thoughts of sickness never made anyone well or happy; thoughts of poverty never brought any one into a land of plenty. On the contrary, our very fear creates the adverse condition we would avoid, and we are plunged into countless miseries of our own making.

Will you not believe that Divine Love intends you to be happy, healthy, wealthy, and wise? All parents wish only the best for their children and bend all their energies to that end. Would our Father-Mother God be any less concerned about us than our earthly parents? He has implanted in us a spark of His own God-fire. He has given us free will whereby to raise ourselves from the mire to the stars. Thought is the key. Through our spiritual radio we can attune ourselves to any station we wish to contact. The thought first, then the form!

"There's nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so."

Truly we are children of the King who holds the wealth of the world in His hands, and we walk as orphans, backs bent, eyes down, hearts heavy to

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breaking. Why not try for one day the marvelous power of a lofty thought? Only by our own experience can we know the truth which will set us free.

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No. 11

The Tapestry of Dreams

"We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

OUT of the no where into the here, and again into the no where! Yet strangely enough, "no where" easily becomes "now here." The omnipresent Eternal! Our life on earth is a part of a much greater whole the beginning and the end of which we cannot see. But the present is very much our job.

What is the "stuff that dreams are made on?" The tapestry of life is woven on the loom of thought. Thought is the stuff-substance of which life and dreams are made. Eventually if the thought is held long enough it takes material form. How important, then, to guard our thoughts and turn them into channels of beauty. In the hands of the weaver the tapestry grows day by day. It may be perfect. It may be spoiled by imperfections. The essential is the loveliness of the pattern, however crossed by mistakes. Some of the weaving must be ripped out and done again. The pattern must be firmly held in mind and patiently followed.

Dreams—the subject of many libraries, the playground of the psychoanalysts as well as the

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poets and the philosophers. The fabric of a dream, rainbow-colored in the moonlight. Tragic is a soul from whom dreams are gone.

"Our little life is rounded with a sleep." On a hard path the years are long. Tears dim the way and blind is the going. Few escape crosses and disappointments. If we only knew it, however, we have the choice of fabrics and designs. The weaving, too, is our responsibility. It may be careless or perfect, ugly or beautiful, according to our dreams, our thought patterns. This so-called sleep from which we come and to which we go may be the most intense activity. It behooves us to direct well our lives that we may enter the beyond with a consciousness rich in noble thoughts and deeds, ready for wider usefulness of untrammeled activity as God directs.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." Where there are no dreams the heart dies. We come, "trailing clouds of glory." Why go beaten and broken? Hold fast to the dreams of which beauty is made. They are the warp and the woof for the tapestry of life, a tapestry long in the making, coexistent with each human soul.

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No. 12

The Song of Songs

TO him who is in tune with the Divine harmony the song of Creation is revealed. It sings in his innermost being. It attunes him to higher worlds in which the planets move in majestic rhythm as the morning stars sing together and the redeemed chant their hymns around the throne of God.

Nothing has the power to link the worlds as has music. It raises the rate of vibration in worried, material human thoughts. It attracts angelic listeners from higher planes. They can always visit us though our way to them is barred by our own ignorance and indifference. "On the wings of song"—how true the metaphor!

The song of songs is the melody within, the harmony in immortal souls, which encased in "this muddy vesture of decay" we cannot hear. The stars in their courses sing to the "young-eyed cherubins." The music deep within the heart reechoes this heavenly harmony; but we, troubled about many things, are deaf to both melodies.

Still the song is there, fulfilling its own nature. Joyous, vibrant, ever rhythmic, life should move on in harmony with the chord of Creation.

But does it? Before the ear can hear it must have lost its sensitiveness to the outer world. Only as we shut out the noises of our material environ-

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ment can we center on the rhythm within, which beats in time to the cosmic rhythm. Then we can listen to the "song of life," meditate upon it, and "learn from it the lesson of harmony."

How vital the law of rhythm: intake and outflow of the breath, the beating of the heart, the procession of the seasons, day and night, waking and sleeping, life and death. With no volition on our part Nature proceeds on her rhythmic march. Why not listen to that magic music as the Great Mother lulls her children to sleep, bringing them the outer stillness which releases the inner harmony and makes possible renewed activity.

Can we not, however, find this perfect rhythm in waking consciousness? Can we not still the outer self and release the soul power within? Then truly shall we "mount up with wings as eagles; we shall run, and not be weary; we shall walk and not faint."

The song of songs, waiting to be discovered by each for himself in his own heart!

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No. 13

The Continuity of Life

IN spite of all the evidence in the scriptures, in spite of all the poets and philosophers, in spite of every cry of the human heart, there are still those who say there is no life beyond. To them three score years and ten are all that is—all the sorrows, suffering, disappointment, despair gone through in vain! How can people deny the truth of a life undying—a continuity which gives the answer to all the puzzles, a reason for all the apparent injustice? If this one earth-life were all there is, frankly the game would not be worth the candle.

To love and never meet again the ones we love, never to have the chance to make good, to undo mistakes, to heal old wounds, to show regret, to put our arms around our dear ones and ask forgiveness! How can any one from whose sight a beloved face has gone harbor such a blasphemy as the belief that this world is all there is, in a crazy scheme of things which has no meaning.

On the contrary, the scheme is not crazy. It has a profound meaning. The long ascent of man is more than the journey from the cradle to the grave. Eons have gone into his making and eons more will pass before he is perfected, whether here or elsewhere is now immaterial. There are "many

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mansions" in the Father's house. Graduation from the school of so-called life is a long and painful process, with many set-backs.

How could one in a mere seventy years complete all the lessons, correct all the errors, and feel, "It is finished." Far from life's having finished, it has only just begun as a new day of the soul dawns. Spring follows winter, dawn the dark. The mystery of the rebirth of Nature in the spring, the majesty of the sunrise as its glow spreads behind the mountains—are these not perfect analogies? Greatest of all, however, is the cry of love, a cry of powerful that it pierces even the veil and opens glimpses into something far better than we have ever known.

The true mystics have the answer. It is a risen Lord they seek. In the simple things of every day, in our thoughts and prayers, with our roses and candles, we are sending into the unseen wireless waves of love and longing, waves that register and return with healing in their wake.

No death—only transition! The dropping of an outworn garment to function in robes of beauty! The butterfly leaves the dark cocoon; each soul has its chance. The low-vaulted past" is left with the past, where it belongs, as deathless man builds new chambers, wider rooms, until at last he is free. "I will make him who is victorious a pillar in the temple of my God and he shall never lose his place there."

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No. 14

The Way of Life

"I AM the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." These are difficult words for those who do not understand the mystery of Being. We are far more complex than we realize. The outer man apparently so overshadows the inner in the minds of most people that they do not even think of the only permanent entity,—the invisible, spiritual creation of the God-Head. The words of Christ show the way to the only life worthy of the name, the only lasting and real of all our experiences. We so identify ourselves with this world that the material seems the sum total of existence.

What is this way of which Our Lord speaks? The way of the Spirit, the Christ in man. This alone leads to the fountain of all Spirit, the original Source, the Father. We are one with Him, He in us and we in Him. This realization of abundant life comes only through a change in consciousness, the second birth so-called, a quickening of the inner Higher Self. We must become vibration conscious. The moment we realize that our "mind is a center of Divine operation, opening up ever bigger and better conditions," that moment we enter the way of the Christ consciousness.

Freedom, peace, serenity, abundance mark the

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path of the Spirit. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Again, as did the woman of Samaria, we hear the immortal invitation: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Figuratively we crawl along the ground with our faces to the dust when we could mount up with wings as of eagles.

Is it not time to find this Christ center and identify ourselves with the only sane purpose of living? So many opportunities lost! So much ignorance and suffering! "Know thyself" was the ancient teaching; use the Christ center and thereby develop the fruits of the Spirit. This is the way of true life; all other roads lead to bitter disappointment and tragic futility. Begin now to focus your whole being in the Christ consciousness. Thereby you will find peace, security, serenity. Your eyes will see, your ears hear, your heart rejoice. "Where I am, there ye may be also." So be it, Lord Jesu!

John 14:2-3

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No. 15

The Wisdom of the Ages

ALONG the corridors of Time have walked a few silent initiates who through sacrifice and devotion attained the heights. Ever ready to pass on the light of Truth to those whose hearts were prepared, they gave their priceless knowledge and went their way onward and upward. Sometimes the love of bewildered humanity brought them again to this material world, a sacrifice great indeed for those who have attained.

The penalty of knowledge is misunderstanding. Those in advance of their time have ever been reviled and persecuted even unto death. The failure of their mission was not theirs. "He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief."

Ever sacred in the archives of the universe has reposed the ancient Wisdom, waiting to be tapped by those who know the way. It is no light obligation to receive this knowledge, for the giver is responsible for the series of effects set in motion by those to whom the truth is entrusted. Untouched by the upheavals of humanity, unchanged by the procession of the centuries, the ancient Wisdom remains waiting for the few who have earned the right to know and to pass it on for the eventual saving of humanity.

There is no hurry in the economy of the uni-

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verse, no loss, no waste. Unchanging Law prevails whereby the will of the Creator is done on earth and in the beyond. The free will of man must lead him to the fountain, lest he perish in the desert, as many do, until once more an opportunity is given to those who through sacrifice and suffering have set their feet upon the path of knowledge.

Seek the Truth at all costs! Let nothing stand in the way of your sacred search! The gates of the eternal city are waiting to be opened. Then comes the peace that passes understanding, for through spiritual illumination the puzzles are solved, the tangles are made straight, the mystery of life revealed.

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No. 16

The Reality of Spirit

TO men whose eyes are blinded by the material world the reality of spirit seems fantastic.

"How can that be real which I can not see, touch, taste, smell or feel?" queries the skeptic.

How indeed to him? But what about others whose inner senses are beginning to function? How explain the fleeting fragrance, the symbolic dream, the flash of intuition, the world of invention, the inspiration of the artist, the voice of conscience, the power of love? We all recognize the evidence of these intangible contacts with higher or inner realms of being. But why are most human beings so dead to the world of reality?

For that is what Spirit is, the one and only Reality. All material things change. Look at our physical bodies: the weakness of the infant, the strength of maturity, the helplessness of age—a complete cycle—but not such a cycle for the spirit. It returns to its homeland, rich in experience, awakened and purified by suffering and sorrow, strengthened by its sojourn in a place to which by its very nature it does not belong but which can and usually does serve as a school. The far country of the prodigal son with its husks, its swine, its dregs of disappointment sends us back to our

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true and only home, the bosom of our Father, the realm of undying Spirit.

It is difficult indeed to detach ourselves from the impacts pressing upon the five senses, the currents of average human thought, though the very fact that thought is vibratory, the miraculous power of the radio, should prove beyond the shadow of a doubt the reality of the invisible realm which is our rightful home, the home from which we came and to which we return, bringing our sheaves or our tares with us.

The time will come when even the man in the street through the development of certain centers in the brain will know the unseen as the seen, the unreal as the real. But spiritual values cannot be recognized until man knows himself as the spiritual being he in truth is. So long as he wants only the material he will see only the material. So long as he chooses to shut himself up in a world of five senses, just so long will he stay there. It takes the shock of suffering, of loss, of bitter pain and disillusionment to free us from the fetters of earth-bound existence. Our will is free. We build our own confines.

But in the long range, which is vital to our true well-being, the material or the spiritual, the ephemeral or the eternal, illusion or reality? On our choice depends the issue of many lives.

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No. 17

Mind Over Matter

BOTH mind and matter are necessary to expression in the physical world. They are the rider and the horse, the rider needing his horse to make the journey, the horse needing the control of the rider to reach his appointed destination. Notice, however, the importance of the guiding hand of the rider.

In this journey through the limitations of earth the mind is more important than we realize, for while some limitations are more or less fixed by the scheme of things we may overcome many more than we now believe possible. No one need live in a narrow room, shut out from sunlight and air, if he wills a more stately abode.

We have many authentic cases where mind has overcome physical illness. The will to live, the abiding love for dear ones who need us, the utter refusal to let go may bring one back when the gates of this world seem almost to have closed upon the earthly journey.

It is of a still greater importance of mind that we wish to speak. The Divine spark within man that makes him man, the overshadowing Power that guides him every step of the way in spite of his mistakes and unnecessary detours into swamps and morasses, this dynamo of energy which makes

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no mistakes and can, if properly used, work miracles—this is the great Mind over matter in which man must find his center. Then to him a whole new world is possible—a world of light, beauty, harmony, accomplishment for the race of which he is a part.

All the great workers of the world have consciously or unconsciously tuned in on this great magnetic field of spiritual energy and power, this storehouse of knowledge—past, present and to come. The poet catches the poem which is to enkindle those hearts ready to receive it; the musician hears the melodies which are to lift thousands out of their lower selves into a realm of beauty; the artist catches a vision and crystallizes the fleeting dream of loveliness in color and form on his canvas; the lover, the mother, the father suddenly knows in a flash of intuition that the glory of love is sacrifice, the utter forgetfulness of self in the well-being of the one beloved. Thus the Divine Mind over and within us broods upon the surface of the waters of materiality, and when the time is ripe, a new hour strikes for a rebirth, the true birthday of the soul when it is born again of water and the Spirit to become "God-centered." Then through the vehicle of a human body the great light of Infinite Mind flows unimpeded, and the race rises be it ever so little on its long, spiral course of spiritual unfoldment. Mind over matter! What glorious possibilities await us!

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No. 18

The Pressure of the Multitude

EMERSON praises the man who in the midst of the crowd can keep the independence of solitude. What weaklings we are—reeds trembling in the lightest breeze! Unlike the "lordly cedar, green with boughs," when we go down we leave no "lonesome place against the sky." On the contrary we are not even missed—one of the multitude where countless thousands stand to take our insignificant place.

Instead of having our own thoughts we re-echo the meaningless ideas of others. Like sponges we absorb the radio, the cinema, the propaganda of the printed page, and give no heed to the voice of Truth crying in the wilderness of our wasted lives.

Only so many hours in the day, so many days in the week, so many weeks in the year, so many years to make or mar this fabric which we call our own! What have we to show for the hectic rush, the feverish days and nights? Nothing! A precious gift lost!

Meantime Truth is ours for the asking: "Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you." But we must leave the crowd if we would hear the still, small voice. We must shut the door on the noisy distractions of the outer court if we would find the peace of the upper room.

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"Many loved Truth, and lavished life's best oil
Amid the dust of books to find her,
Content at last, for guerdon of their toil,
With the cast mantle she hath left behind her."

Other men's thoughts, hopes, dreams, visions—good in their way if noble and lofty—but why depend on others, even so select a company, when there is a direct short-cut if one will only believe that within his own heart lies the answer to every problem.

"Know thyself" was the ancient teaching. Seek within, not without. In the throng, but not of it, untouched by the confused vibrations of the crowd, tune in to the melodies of the inner radio, tap the Christ-force which is ours for the asking. So make your way amid the multitude, and unknown to yourself you will be a benediction. When you have passed, to some at least it will seem "like the ceasing of exquisite music."

The dominance of the world! What a tragedy! "No room in the inn" when the things that matter most are crowded out and the empty days go by, the gift of life wasted, the puzzle of the agony unsolved!

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No. 19

The Twilight of the Soul

DAWN and dusk are two mystic hours in the twenty-four. It is as if heaven and earth drew together in communion when the sun rises above the eastern mountains and sinks from view on the western horizon. In these moments it is easier to attune to the unseen and grasp the hands held out to us in wordless love.

The twilight of the soul is not the twilight of the gods. On the contrary, it is perhaps the most vital period in a human life, that period when the shadows deepen, the rush of work is over, and one more day or incarnation approaches its close. At this time memory makes a circle of events. Childhood days return; youth and manhood pass before the inner vision. Happenings fall into proper relationship. We see the meaning of much that puzzles us. We know we are nearing a safe harbor, sure repose, and peace at the last. "In the sunlit path of the setting sun" we walk secure, as the shadows of twilight cover the purple hills.

This review of the panorama of the past prepares us for the future. We see our mistakes, recognize the causes of our failures and build in a soul strength which will make us immune to that particular weakness again.

Peaceful is the twilight. The busy world is si-

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lent; even Nature dreams. Peace covers the hills; the trees are motionless; the birds sleep in the branches. We know we, too, shall sleep to waken to a day beautiful beyond belief in a land west of the sunset and the evening star.

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No. 20

The Creative Power of Being

WE have heard of the creative power of thought. We know that thoughts externalize in concrete form. We begin to realize "There's nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so." Few, however, know that the very act of existing carries with it creative power.

The reason for this is very simple. We are parts of a whole, little worlds in a universe. We are made of the One Substance, a creative substance, without which there would be no expression in form whatever. This creative substance, or so-called subconscious mind, eventually determines the conditions, good or bad, in which we find ourselves. The astonishing thing, however, is that we make our own circumstances by the very act of being.

Instead, then, of the conception of puppets pulled by the strings of fate, substitute the noble realization that each human being is the master of his destiny, the captain of his soul. We create our own conditions. The tragedy in many a life is its ignorance of its own power. By inverted thinking of evil, failure, limitation, it creates these experiences, utterly unaware of its own divine responsibilities. External environment becomes more and more difficult and reacts on the thinker, caus-

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ing him to send out still darker thoughts of failure and despair.

Rather than reasoning from the visible to the invisible, we must reverse the process and begin with the invisible or the only Reality. This Reality is perfect beauty, order, perfection, bliss. We must cling to that truth as a drowning man clings to the rope which is to haul him to safety. Begin with the perfect pattern in the invisible, hold it, know it as the only truth, and by your faith bring it into manifestation. In this way you use the creative power of being as it exists in the Creative Intelligence.

By knowing ourselves a part of this great Power and letting it work in, through, and for us, we reach a fulfillment of our individual lives in a way that would be utterly impossible if we had only ourselves to depend on. In other words, we must let God work for us, the God in us, who is standing at the door, awaiting our recognition. The most powerful of friends, the source of infinite supply, the essence of joy and ecstasy is ever with us to take the direction of our misdirected lives into His keeping. It remains for us to make the contact, to tap this great reservoir of creative force so that our own experience may move in harmony with its resplendent beauty.

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No. 21

The Power Behind the Throne

IN the strange chances of life some seem to have everything in their favor, others are constantly battling adverse odds. On the surface there is apparently no justice, but in reality a fundamental law is at work. The Power behind the throne, the Spirit, sees that for our growth certain experiences are absolutely necessary. If we have had an easy time in past lives, we must expand our consciousness to include another kind of experience, where grinding toil for daily bread builds in a backbone instead of a wishbone. If we have been strong and well, we must know physical handicaps to build in patience and sympathy. Rapid changes may come when progress is hastened and much can be assimilated in a short time.

The point is, it makes little difference fundamentally what happens to us but it makes all the difference in the world how we take what happens. The past makes our present; our attitude towards the present is the free will which determines our future. The Power behind the throne stands ready to help us lift ourselves in consciousness to the point where we can transcend our difficulties and develop through trials to a higher stature of manhood and womanhood. "Whom the

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Lord loveth He chasteneth," or to use the words of Robert Browning,

"Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
Be our joys three-parts pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!"

In another way the Spirit is active, namely when an individual through consecrated effort and utter forgetfulness of the personal self accomplishes great and lasting good for the world. It behooves such a one to know that it is the Power behind the throne, or Spirit, that is at work. Then true humility comes, the humility of the worker who knows the great underlying truths of life.

In short, we are spiritual beings on a long earth pilgrimage, many of us still in the prison-house of the material world. It is for us to decide by the gift of free will whether we choose to remain behind bars or step out into the sunlight. The key to open the heavy doors is in our hands if we but knew it. With the recognition of our spiritual heritage comes freedom to enter the throne-room where a great Power stands ready to use us for vital work as princes in the household of the King.

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No. 22

The Secret of Success

MUCH misunderstanding prevails as to the meaning of the word, success. To most people it means money—the more money, the greater the success. But to the man who knows, success may be failure in the eyes of the world. King Arthur in Tennyson's "Idylls of the King" was apparently a failure. In the true sense, however, he accomplished his mission. That his ideals were too high for the people of his day had no effect on the truth of those ideals. The failure was the court's, not Arthur's. He must perforce return whence he had come until the age was ready to understand his mission. In a far deeper sense, the same is true of all "the glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, the noble army of Martyrs." The greatest example of all is our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

First, then, we must have a true understanding of the word, success. It is in its deepest sense spiritual consciousness. If through the experiences of life, our joys and sorrows, we can rise in the scale we have succeeded. Nor does this imply selfish aspiration to achieve spirituality. The greatest are those who serve, just for the joy of service. The short cut, of course, is love; for with love, or

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sympathetic understanding of all living things, we instinctively serve with little or no thought of the personal self.

It is vital in true success to establish contact with the higher planes. The connection must be kept, the channel being clear and unobstructed. This is not easy in the pressure of modern life. Destructive forces beat upon us, seeking entrance. The radio receiving set of consciousness must be kept in order, the dial tuned in to the higher vibrations. In this way a channel forms into which no obstruction can enter. The work is not easy. Day after day the will of the aspirant must be ready, for it is through will we rise—the will to learn, to do, and to be silent.

It is only after the change called death that many learn the meaning of success and realize what miserable failures their lives were, though position, wealth, power, and great gifts in the eyes of the world were theirs. Again, some patient, simple soul in the so-called lower walks of life may awake to the realization that on the higher planes he has been a true success. It is the old story of the rich man and the beggar, as told in the gospels.

If only a few grasp these essential truths, the light grows stronger. The miracle of the spread of the Christ teachings through a mere handful of unlettered men is proof of this. The great plan for

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men must and will be carried out. In a sense that is not our affair; it is the work of higher forces. However, we can do our part in this great plan by raising ourselves in spiritual consciousness. This is the secret of the only true success.

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No. 23

White Magic

THE term which connotes evil, Black Magic, is more or less commonly known, but less is said about its opposite, the magic that works for spiritual good. That there is what seems to be magic no one doubts. These forces seem mysterious only because we are not familiar with the laws that make such action possible.

The miracles of our Lord were all based on laws the operation of which man is not yet developed enough to understand. The material world so surrounds us that we fail to realize that this apparent physical density is interpenetrated by thousands of vibrations unrecognized by man. The fact, however, remains.

We have approached the threshold of these mysteries in the discovery of wireless, thought transmission, radium, psychic phenomena, dreams. Yet how little is known about the ether and the superconscious powers occasionally manifested in human beings.

The root of many mysteries is the secret of vibration and those unseen affinities and repulsions which play upon the more or less sensitive organism of the human mind. Intuitions, presentiments, foreknowledge, a whole realm of more or less unexplored psychology is linked with these

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vibratory waves which play unseen upon us, registering if we are attuned to their rate or glancing off unnoticed if the sensitive receiving set of our consciousness responds to another key.

It is no accident that all the scriptures of the world stress the need of lofty thought. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Through this white magic of thought we make ourselves receiving sets for beauty, as a result of which we transform not only our own lives but radiate in increasing power an uplifting vibration to the world we contact.

Not enough is made of this power of man's mind. Too often is this great force used for selfishness and evil, attracting unseen aids in its own destruction, as witness the witches in "Macbeth." Angels are on call, too—bands of ministering spirits, a multitude of witnesses. Far more powerful are these vibrations for good, the true white magic, which, given a chance, will transform a world of ugliness into beauty. With love in the heart, the problem is solved, for love thinketh no evil. Raise the whole tenor of your thought, and give white magic a chance to show its transforming power.

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No. 24

The Veil of Stars

HOW strange to consider a veil of stars; yet that is exactly the message of the heavens. We think we see brilliant points of light in a field of blue. In reality we see a glittering veil hiding the mystery of creation.

In a single star is the secret of the universe. First a cloudy mass, whirling rapidly until condensed into vapor-like radiance; then the vapor congealing into more solid form; then the birth of a constellation!

Man, too, a universe in himself! Spirit confined in matter to return again to spirit—the tabernacle not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

It is well to look at the stars, to watch for recurring friends and call them by name: glorious Venus, star of evening; Orion in stately march across the southern sky; the majestic Dipper in the north; Sirius—a noble company. On a clear night in pure country air a countless host of diamonds fill the heavens.

"Forget-me-nots of the angels"—more than that, the garment of God Himself! Our feeble vision could not endure the brilliant glory of Divine Majesty; we must see as through a veil until such time as we ourselves, clothed in the white robes

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of those who serve, are ready to know the Reality behind the veil, the ineffable Beauty of the many mansions.

"Great Father of Glory, pure Father of Light,
Thine Angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
All laud we would render: O help us to see
'Tis only the splendour of light hideth Thee."

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No. 25

The Heavenly Vision

"I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." So spoke the great apostle Paul of his experience on the road to Damascus.

For each human being there is a journey to Damascus and a heavenly vision. Often, however, the eyes and the ears are closed as the mind broods over earthly cares and trivial worries. We follow the road with gaze bent down on the dusty highway. The forces of air, sunlight, and stars fall on us unheeded as we plod with weary feet, our minds a chaos of material cares.

How can we obey the heavenly vision if we do not see or hear it? First must come the realization that we have great powers within us, waiting to unfold. Then must follow the steady will to let nothing interfere with the development of our higher life.

For most of us there is no glorious mission like that of the apostle Paul, but for all there is work to do. Even the consciousness of a spiritual reality spreads like leaven in the lump of the world's materialism. Today, especially, is such a realization needed in a universe torn by strife and hatred. Bent double "with toil and trouble," we catch wicked whispers of doubt and despair. The wires of communication are "jangled, out of tune, and

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harsh." Our first duty, then, is to set the house of the physical self in order, that it may be a worthy dwelling for the High Intelligence ready to use it once we open the door.

We need not look for worldly success and distinction. Paul's great work was a path of hardship and danger. To the true disciple nothing matters but obedience to the vision. The Knights of the Grail followed through morass and fen, darkness and danger, stopping at nothing until they found the object of their search. "Lead and I follow!" was their battle-cry.

The only tragedy is failure to see, hear, and obey. The only disaster is the closing of the higher channels whereby we move in the darkness of ignorance and despair. The only unforgivable sin is the sin against the Holy Spirit: failure to see in the first place, or having seen to lose the gleam through disobedience.

All must come in the appointed time and place. Blessed are they who help to prepare the way, clearing the shadows of darkness and doubt by the light which they have never allowed to grow dim, the light that shone upon their path as they walked their own lonely road to Damascus.

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No. 26

Impulse versus Intuition

THESE two forces in human life are very powerful. Intuition, the short cut to Truth, works only for good. Impulse may be good or evil. To act on impulse is often dangerous. To follow intuition is always safe.

How are we to distinguish between them? Intuition obeys the voice within. It takes the direct line to the source of knowledge. Impulse may come from the lower self; intuition, never. We act on impulses, good and bad. Emotion is the motive force. Obviously we should hold our impulses under tight control and cultivate our intuition.

How can this be done? How can the bridge between the higher and the lower man be crossed? First, we must recognize the existence of the higher man and make a determined, persistent, daily effort to contact the spiritual side of being. We can try to see God in all His works. We can lose ourselves in the beauty of sky and sea, woodland and meadow, rocks and hills, flowers and birds. Nature is a great releasing force for Spirit, breaking down the barriers that keep us "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd." By touching the Universal, we touch the fringes of Truth's garment. Another way is prayer and meditation. By realizing that we are a part of the Divine, with a place in the Great Plan,

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we lift our consciousness higher and draw closer to the realm of Truth. The vibrations of the physical are quickened and gradually attuned to catch messages from planes beyond, where vision is clearer and truer.

All great work is the result of intuition. Many a plan has been made in the still watches of the night, to be carried into waking consciousness. The inventor, brooding over his problem, sees in a flash the answer. The advice "to sleep on it" is based on profound truth. Morning brings a solution. We know intuitively what to do.

Akin to intuition is inspiration. The painter, the musician, the writer catch the vision and transmit it through their own peculiar gift. Here, again, we have an analogy to radio. We have only to be keyed to the proper rate of vibration to catch the message of truth or beauty, waiting to be registered by the soul qualified to transmit it to others who are themselves ready to receive.

Here, too, a little leaven lightens the whole mass. Darkness flees before the light. The world today, as never before, needs souls who recognize so powerfully the spiritual nature of man that through their attunement with higher realms the higher may overcome the lower, and darkness be driven out by light.

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No. 27

The Importance of Faith

WE are told that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Have you ever analyzed those words? Substance,—material form, concrete evidence for the five senses—Hope, the purely spiritual force which carries the human race through sickness and suffering, loss and grief, disappointment to the point of despair—Hope, the great treasure of perplexed humanity, the promise of better days, the dawn behind the dark, the stars hidden by clouds, the spring which follows the winter storms. Faith makes possible a proof to human eyes that what was unseen is now seen, what was apparently lost is now found, what existed only in the higher realms of creative energy has now taken material form. Faith spurs on the great leaders in all fields of human endeavor. The discoverer, the inventor, the priest, the teacher, the parent, the lover—each one glimpses a vision of something as yet unseen by the common man and through the dynamic power of faith brings his dream into actuality. So it was with Columbus in the world of discovery; so it was with Edison, Ford and Wright in the world of invention; so it is with all who love and see only the best in those they love; so it has been with all the great teachers from Mark Hopkins to

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the Christ. Faith in the unseen, faith in the inherent beauty and goodness of the human heart, faith in the promises of God!

Why stumble along a dreary pathway? Lift your eyes to the hills from whence cometh your help, the hills of faith, of dream, that evidence of a Creator who made them and when He had made them found them good.

Today as never before the world needs faith, for faith is indeed "a live wire that stretches into the invisible." Have faith in the Eternal, have faith in yourself since you are a part of the Eternal, have faith in your brothers who are a part of you —and according to your faith it will be done unto you.

"And He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." Both ends of the battery are necessary. There must be a receiving as well as a sending station. Attune yourself by faith and behold a miracle! Him that hath ears let him hear. The Spirit still speaks to the understanding heart.

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No. 28

The Problem of Evil

DID you ever read the novel, "The Sorrows of Satan?" It is difficult to understand this great fallen angel. We associate him with horns and a tail. We shudder at the mention of his name. We think of him as glorying in the sins and misery of the human race. We do not know the real truth about evil at all, such a mass of superstition and legend has overshadowed the subject.

Why not consider this personification of wickedness from an entirely different point of view? May he not represent wrong choice, the free will which takes the path down instead of up? Does he really exist at all, or is he symbolic of the inverted good? We have pairs of opposites throughout nature: darkness, light; cold, heat; winter, summer; death, life. On the emotional plane we run the gamut of love, hate; courage, fear; joy, despair; success, failure; good, evil. Yet each of these pairs is in a sense one unit, two faces of the same coin.

What is the reason for this strange contradiction, leading to so much confusion and suffering? It would seem as if one of the objects of growth were the attainment of balance, the overcoming of evil by good, the absorption of the lower into the higher. In that sense can evil possibly be a

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separate entity? Is it shadow or reality? The answer is plain. Just as the shadows flee before the sun, so Satan or sin vanishes into the abyss when Michael, the leader of the heavenly hosts, takes the field against him.

Do you see the analogy? There are great sorrows connected with all evil: suffering always follows sin. One of the most difficult things to understand is the fact that we must suffer for the sins of others. We have race karma, national karma, family karma, personal karma. No man can live to himself alone. The problem of evil is part of the fabric of our lives, its threads interwoven with the whole web of existence. Yet, in a sense, evil doesn't exist any more than do the shadows. At night they seem horribly real, but in the light of day where are they? Vanished into oblivion!

Are not these the sorrows of Satan, if we wish to personify this figure of will gone wrong? Evil choices bring their inevitable train of human suffering; but the one who knows realizes that such suffering is only a smelting-furnace in which the gold emerges from the dross. The dross is thrown away, forgotten; the gold remains. Evil is, then, in reality an agent of Good, or God, testing, refining, purifying all that is best and noblest. In the metaphysical sense there is no evil—it is only a passing shadow on the path leading to perfection.

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No. 29

The Call to Arms

WITH the echo of battle heard round the world, we are constantly aware of marching men, onrushing tanks, the loud drone of airplanes massed for attack. It is not, however, of such a call to arms that we wish to speak. The conflict each of us must wage is silent, a war within one's inner self. Michael and Lucifer are still in opposition in the heart of man. Which is to gain the victory?

The gift of free will makes the outcome our own peculiar responsibility. We can join the heavenly hosts or the Satanic forces. But we cannot escape the conflict. We take it with us wherever we go. The gifts of the Spirit against the lusts of the flesh and the pride of life! Old is the battle—as old as the history of the human race. No one can escape it. In one form or another comes the call to arms.

The victory can never be settled by one battle. Again and again the opposing forces meet. Each conquest, of course, strengthens the winning side. But the lower must be completely submerged in the higher before the day is won. This is a long and painful process of ups and downs. A life may seem to end in apparent defeat. It may nevertheless be victorious defeat from which the temporarily vanquished will rise again to victory.

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If the soul would live, the call to arms demands instant obedience. Recognize the warring forces within you and take your stand firmly with the Eternal. The lower man is but chaff before the wind. He lives his little day and then is seen no more. Futile his selfish endeavors, his petty pride, his worldly ambition! If we would win the grim conflict we must identify ourselves with the Eternal. Then, and then only, can we find peace, and help to establish peace upon the earth.

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No. 30

"Deliver Us from Evil"

WITH these solemn words in the Lord's prayer we think also of the agony in the garden and the cry: "Nevertheless not what I will, but what Thou wilt." In the Litany, too, we pray God to hear us as we beseech His help in freeing us from sin and the effects of sin—from plague, pestilence and famine—from danger on land and sea—and from those much more insidious and much greater mental and spiritual dangers, culminating in hardness of heart and contempt of God's holy Word and Commandment.

The psalmist shows the way in his paean of faith as he sings: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

There is evil in this world and in the next. No one can deny that fact. We carry our sins with us wherever we are until we heartily repent and turn our faces homeward. Two great dangers are ignorance and fear. Weakness of will might be added, but this is an effect rather than a cause. With true knowledge we know our only deliverance is the following of God's will. Such a course automatically eliminates fear, for "if God be with us, who can be against us?" Physical suffering, even

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death, are of no relative importance once the aim is clear and the goal defined.

The grisly shadows and horrors of the night flee at the break of dawn. The path is clear in the rays of the rising sun. The Presence that has led us through the night is with us all the way. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as of eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

Immortal souls have nothing to fear, once the relative importance of life's experiences becomes clear. Nothing can separate us from the love of God. We automatically deliver ourselves from evil when we follow the highest that we know, putting the material world in its proper place and centering our hopes and aspirations in the Eternal.

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No. 31

The Right to Win

BEHIND victory must be a logical reason—greater skill, more careful planning, deeper insight than the opposing force. More important than all this, however, is a long chain of cause and effect leading into a far distant past. We are so accustomed to consider the present only and forget the foundations on which the present rests. There can be no illogical phenomena. For everything there is a reason.

Take the small discords of daily life. Some people seem to bring us only unhappiness. Others are like a spring in a weary land. If we could go back into the distant past, beyond our present three score years and ten, we should find the reasons for many of the perplexing problems of the present. The point is, we must work largely in the dark, for to few is given the knowledge which would solve the puzzle.

What should be our attitude in this maze of bewilderment in which we so often find ourselves? In any circumstance we must keep unbroken the link with our spiritual or higher Self. This means patience, long-suffering, courage, prayer for light and leading. Such a rhythm of lofty vibration will sooner or later work to pour oil on troubled waters

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or lift us entirely out of the condition in which we walk, bewildered.

In short, we must earn the right to victory. The only victory worth the name is spiritual. To the blind world it may seem defeat, as in the case of all those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Victory, however, is sure as registered on the higher planes. The Caesars, Napoleons, the Croesuses and Cleopatras are wind-blown particles on the sands of Time. Most of us have not even their claim, such as it is, to fame. All, however, must weave the chequered fabric we call life. In our own hands is the answer to our problems. Only through identification with our higher selves and constant attunement to the best we know can we earn the right to ultimate victory.

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No. 32

The True Meaning of Power

THE world today is torn in a struggle for so-called power. Nation is pitted against nation, class against class, race against race. In the maelstrom of human conflict, Satanic forces are let loose. Again, Good and Evil are at each other's throats. There can be only one outcome. However long the struggle and uncertain the victory, Truth must ultimately triumph. It may not be your concept of Truth or mine. So often the wish is father to the thought. But God's will must be done in earth as in heaven. His Truth is omnipotent.

What then is Power? It is not earthly position, wealth, worldly influence, a seat among the material mighty. These things are left behind on the return to the homeland. Power in its true sense belongs only to the realm of Spirit: the power of self-control, the power to forgive as you would be forgiven, the power to live in the Eternal in a world centered on the ephemeral, the power to know yourself as unconquerable spirit which "shall cease to be never."

The early apostles were sent forth with empty hands, but how steadfast and confident were their hearts. Prison, shipwreck, torture availed nothing. The flame of the Spirit is unquenchable. They met death with a smile, knowing that their Redeemer

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lives and that in their spiritual bodies they would join Him in the mansions prepared for them.

Where is the army of martyrs today? How many voluntarily choose the way of the cross? How many of their own free will take the road of poverty, chastity and obedience to the Higher Self? Is it any wonder that turmoil rages in a world where evil is let loose?

This is no time for faint hearts. There is no place today for doubt or despair. Above the hopeless confusion of a world gone mad, the stars still follow in their courses, the sun still shines, the laws of Nature remain unchanged.

What Power is in our hands did we but know it! The Power that made it possible for a few humble men to carry a great light, passing the flame unquenched to others ready to carry on in their turn as instruments in a cause which could not fail because the Power of the Universe was its source and inspiration.

What has become of the faith that enabled the early martyrs to face torture and hideous death? What has become of the courage that makes all pioneering possible? Where is our vision?

Strong and hardy souls develop in adversity. The testing times for a nation or an individual are the great opportunities. If we fail, we fail only to rise again. Sooner or later we must come to our senses. For some, the road is long and uphill all the way. Swift and steep is the descent to Avernus.

Power—the poise of a soul-centered man or

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woman who maintains unshaken his contact with the source of Being! Such a heart lives in the realization that "neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come—shall be able to separate us from the love of God." This is the true meaning of Power.

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No. 33

The Way of the Transgressor

IT has often been a question how a so-called God of Love can permit suffering, or even, as some so wrongly think, inflict punishment. We punish ourselves. Only by suffering can we open our eyes to the truth, recognize our sins, cease from our mistakes and learn to do well. Suffering is the kindest of all teachers. It roots out causes of evil. Though the operation be heroic, the patient always recovers in the light of knowledge. Some cannot learn from the experience of the race. Some are ignorant and know not what they do. To both must come wisdom and healing.

It is a far deeper problem when this wrongdoing involves others, sometimes whole peoples. Then the race karma is swift and terrible. Woe to those from whom the offenses come. Even the ones innocently involved must suffer in some degree, but heavy is the penalty for those whose power and responsibility are great.

Prayer is a mighty force when properly used. We must learn to pray more and more that God's will may be done on earth as it is in heaven. Selfish prayers have no place in the scheme of things. The forces of good work unceasingly for the development of the whole. No one unit can stay the onward march of events as planned in the bosom of

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Time. How futile our selfish pleas! If they conflict with the good of the whole, they must of course be swept aside and like all selfish endeavors be lost.

Such transgressors are many today. Hence the present strife and world chaos! A new race is a-borning and birth means travail. From the ruins of past mistakes will spring the flower of a new civilization in which spiritual development must precede or in any case keep pace with material invention; else humanity as we know it today is doomed. The days of lost Atlantis must not return. The knowledge then was great; but the transgressors met their doom because wickedness prevailed and hearts were evil.

"Be our guide in the time of temptation and deliver us from evil." So the Christ prayed for a stiff-necked generation. That prayer should reecho round the world today while there is yet time to restore to sanity peoples who seem to have forgotten spiritual values and the pain that comes to all who break the higher laws.

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No. 34

The Meaning of Pain

IT is a natural impulse of every normal person to wish to avoid pain. No one likes to suffer, though suffering in one form or another comes to every human being. It may be physical; it may be mental or emotional; but come it must.

Many philosophers have sought the meaning of pain. Many brave souls have borne it uncomplainingly. For all the questions there have been few answers, since many of these problems go deep into past causes about which we at present know little.

Pain is usually the sign of something wrong—a maladjustment in some delicate part of the mechanism that is man's make-up. Some pain can be reached and forgotten; but the deeper the cause, the more intricate the problem. Not all difficulties can be solved; some must bear to the end a burden known only to themselves.

What is the purpose of this apparently cruel suffering? Until we have the vision of the long panorama of the past, we cannot answer this intelligently; but we do know that pain bravely borne refines, sweetens, ennobles character. It purifies the gold from the dross, developing the spiritual nature to such an extent that when release comes, the purified finer vehicle leaves the

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worn-out physical to enter an advanced state that would have been impossible without the refining process of years of suffering nobly endured.

This refining process is akin to the tuning of a musical instrument whereby sweeter and truer notes are made possible. Pain has its own divinity through the suffering of the Blessed One. In pain new life is born; in pain the old life is relinquished. In the coming and the going so much pain! Again in the years between, periods of pain!

As the Master Hand plays upon the chords of the human soul, some strings seem stretched to breaking, but through the melody runs a sweeter, clearer note because the tested instrument has met the strain and given forth the deep, rich tones of a vehicle delicately attuned and vibrantly responsive. The deepest sweetness in human character comes from pain bravely and intelligently borne. Only through this refinement can the harp of man's being respond in sensitive accord to the vibrations that touch him from the higher worlds.

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No. 35

"In Mercy Given"

IT is difficult indeed sometimes to understand why we are called upon to bear such heavy burdens. Blameless lives suffer severe punishment. We question the law of Justice, failing to see into the far distant past through the present to the future. In the Eternal the omnipresent Now prevails. Our knowledge, however, is limited to a brief three score years and ten. Even that we do not know or understand. Who can fathom the heart of another when he cannot analyze even himself? Conflicting impulses leading to bad mistakes from which suffering must inevitably come!

"All that Thou sendest me
In mercy given."

For what purpose? To purge and refine that we may draw nearer to God. But we must grasp the distinction as to the cause of our suffering before we can understand the love and the mercy that mitigate the blows for which we ourselves are responsible. Yes, somewhere along the line the fault is ours. Back, beyond "the sleep and the forgetting" that marks the birth of this particular life experience there is a long range of lives, the mistakes and sins of which we could not face were we to meet them all at one time. The debts must be paid. Our sins are forgiven, of course,

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when we honestly repent; but the effects are still to be transmuted. The disease must be cured, the cause of the trouble removed.

Heroic operations are often necessary, not only on the individual but on the body politic and social. Lives are thrown with apparent carelessness into the discard, but who are we with our limited knowledge to know what debts are being paid, what effects met and cancelled, never to be met again.

"In mercy given!" Is it not a great mercy that we are permitted to wipe out sin? Hearts cleansed by purifying fire until only pure gold remains! The sacrifice of Christ on the cross was indeed a sacrifice for sin whereby men might learn to know God and the way to Him. At the same time, suffering points the way for us, too. There is no greater teacher. Before the Great Physician can heal, He must eradicate the cause of the trouble. A heroic operation may be necessary.

The eye of faith looks through the clouds and sees the star of hope. No matter how far we stray, the love of our Father follows us. Our sufferings, which we have brought upon ourselves in this or in past lives, are truly "in mercy given," for it is suffering that brings us back to the Father's house. On the return home our chief business is to find the right way. All that comes to us, therefore, must be met in the spirit that animates a wanderer who has lost the road and longs for light that he may find his path again.

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A God of love, not of wrath! We are our own agents of destruction. Yet always at some point in the far journey there comes an awakening, a realization that something is terribly wrong.

"Then let my way appear
Steps unto heaven;
All that Thou sendest me
In mercy given!"

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No. 36

The Wine Press

HAVE you ever thought that the juice of the grape would be lost were it not for the wine press? Wine has been so misused that we forget its purpose. Christ changed the water into wine at the wedding-feast. Christ blessed the wine at the last supper. We drink this consecrated wine when we kneel at the communion rail. It would be worth the effort to collect references to wine through sacred and profane literature. In most cases, like all the gifts of Nature, it has a poetry of its own. It is only man's misuse of Nature's forces that has turned heaven into hell.

The wine press! Each grape bruised to nothingness while its juice mingles with similar drops to form the united whole.

In a way the process is similar to human experience. Our crushed and broken hearts add their drops to the suffering of the world and form in the great crucible of life a distilled essence that lifts us nearer to the great Master of the Cross.

Individual will resigned to the will of God! Personal pride lost in the contemplation of the Gethsemane of human life! Selfish ambition overwhelmed by the utter futility of sterile planning!

Only through the wine press of the blood of the heart can the feet of the disciple ever reach the

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heights, those heights which transcend all suffering, those heights which in the Divine Plan all must reach when the broken arcs become the perfect round.

The wine of Creation in which all have a share! Give gladly of your heart, little brother. Welcome the wine press!

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No. 37

The Trend of the Times

WHEN values are upside down, nations crumbling, individual lives crushed, minds lost in perplexity and confusion, it is well to attempt an approach to sanity in an analysis of the purpose of living. To many, life is a series of accidents: the accident of birth, changes of fortune, haphazard meetings, "ships that pass in the night," friends made and lost, strange enmities and aversions, all the crazy happenings in a wild scheme of things. The whole confusing panorama of individual and national life seems a hopeless mess. Is this too black a picture?

How explain the inequalities of Fate? Dark, dirty tenements not fit for dogs over against palatial estates, left in the care of servants! Aged parents neglected by the children for whom they toiled and sacrificed! Injustice on the throne! The purpose and aim of life ignored!

Where find Truth upon the earth? Those in high position false to their charge! The money-changers ever in the temple, the Judases in the seats of power! Once more,

"The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed."

Does the whole world have to be smashed to bits to bring men and women to their senses? It would seem so if the stiff-necked refuse to learn in any

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other way. Atlantis, Tyre, Sodom and Gomorrah, Babylon, Greece, Rome—one by one mighty empires fell and new races arose.

There is no escaping the sword of retribution. Effects of past causes must be met. Man can always, however, set good causes in motion and prepare for himself a better harvest for the future.

The trend of the times is forcing us to recognize the truth that we are spiritual beings, far from our homeland. In three score years and ten, more or less, we pass a day in the school of experience. We reap what we sow. The seeds of wheat and tares may have been planted in the far-distant past, beyond our present knowledge or control. Reap this harvest we must; but future harvests are entirely in our own keeping for good or ill.

Suffering brings us to our senses, or else submerges us completely. When men and women are forced to their knees in recognition of the Great Power in which they live and move and have their being, then and only then will the trend of the times be understood and sanity return to a world of chaos.

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No. 38

The Potter and the Clay

WE have heard it said that everything depends on the point of view. Some can make a mountain of misery out of a molehill of trouble. Others can make the obstacle a stepping-stone. But few today realize the part each plays in the creation of his own destiny. The potter and his clay, the artist and his colors, the musician and his harmonies—each is a creator of use and beauty. So, too, is the humdrum man in the street if he but knew it.

Once upon a time when the world was young, this strange being called man gained the gift of free will—free will within limits, for he could not escape the effects of past causes he himself had set in motion. Some used this free will to rebel against Divine Law. Such automatically condemned themselves to the darkness of suffering, because their disobedience and ignorance led them into sin. Others found peace and contentment in following the commandments of God, using their free will in glad obedience to the Higher Law.

Strangely enough, the Father-Mother heart yearns after the lost sheep of the fold. The story of the prodigal son repeats itself. Always at some point along the path the right help appears to

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lighten the darkness and lead upward weary feet, lost in morasses of their own making.

We, too, are potters, working in the clay of human destiny, our own and that of others. We can make ourselves tall and straight, or we can bend double under a load of imaginary burdens. We can help mold the lives of others into the stature of men, or we can help ruin them almost beyond repair.

The Great Artist of our destiny, however, never gives up. His plan of perfection acts as a magnet for wills that need guidance and feet that have slipped. Patience and persistence are His. One spoiled life does not mean complete wreckage. The clay of character remains to be remolded by a purified and chastened will. The blemishes disappear in the reworking. Lines of suffering give strength and beauty as the inner glow of Spirit transforms blemishes into perfection and ruin into restoration.

Work with the Great Artist, not against Him. Beautiful is His plan and wonderful His hope for the countless myriads who slowly work their way from the mire to the stars.

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No. 39

The Road to Recovery

HOW cheering the news from a sick room that the patient is on the road to recovery! Joy fills the home. Sad faces smile again and weary eyes light with the assurance of renewed hope. So might it be with all of us if we knew wherein recovery lies. Recovery of what? Health, yes, but far more important those soul treasures which are the heritage of humanity, treasures lost when the gate of Eden closed behind us.

How can this immeasurable wealth be regained? What magic word will reopen the store-house? "Except ye become as little children" ye can in no wise enter in. What are the characteristics of a child? Faith in its parents, trust and confidence in their power and goodness, unquestioning belief in their word, sunny friendliness and good will. Have we that faith in our Heavenly Father? Do we even read His promises, let alone believe them and build on them? Do we stop to think of His power and protection? How far away we go on wrong roads, leading nowhere, when all the time we have only to take His hand as trusting children and He will lead us through the green pastures and beside the still waters.

This is the only road to recovery, the recovery of our faith in a Divine Father. Until we take that

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road as individuals and as a nation we shall be lost in the slough of despond, getting deeper and deeper into abysmal misery. How simple the expedient, how easy the way out and up, how stupid the unhappy people who close their ears to the promises of an all-wise and loving Father! There can be no recovery until we as individuals and as a nation return to God.

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No. 40

The Records of the Past

IT seems odd to dwell upon the past when we should set our eyes upon the future if we are to grow in knowledge and achievement. Yet that is what most people like to do. They brood over the years behind and forget the promise of the years ahead.

We pain ourselves unnecessarily in grieving over past blunders, even past sins. Each leaves its mark; karma exacts the toll. But even so, the law of justice is the law of Love. We rise on our dead selves to higher things.

Suppose you make a grievous mistake. We all do. You suffer; you may even cause suffering to others. In spite of that you gain in knowledge, and knowledge makes you strong.

The race moves in spirals, as do individuals. A great wrong brings great suffering; great suffering refines the gold in human character. That gold is our only treasure in heaven, the one precious asset we take with us on the long journey of the soul.

The records of the past are important because they are the foundation stones of the future. A mighty chain of cause and effect accompanies man on his progress or retrogression. But he must learn at whatever cost. Better the price of pain than

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sluggish security! Pain drives us on to seek for causes, explanations, understanding of our own and other people's motives. We are here to grow at whatever sacrifice.

The past is important, then, in its bearing upon the present and the future. However, we live in the eternal, in which past, present, and future blend into one great whole—a march of Time wherein all has its place as the Spirit strives toward greater understanding, a closer approach to the perfection which is its destiny.

Do you think the martyrs dwell upon their martyrdom? Do you think the saints brood over their sins? All rejoice in the song of Creation as the race moves onward and upward to the goal which is ever just beyond its grasp.

Dwell not upon the past. Thank God for love, for life, for the promises that never fail. Believe and rejoice. Let your joy be full. Do not think you have completed your life. Every day brings new adventures, new opportunities. Look for them; wait for them; expect them. In the bosom of Time they are yours for the asking. Why not ask? Claim the gifts of the Present and the Future. The records of the Past are closed with the seal of God's unchanging Love.

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No. 41

Anniversaries

SO many years to yesterday! Yet yesterday is as vivid as today. The highlights of life grow brighter with the years. Each recurring anniversary intensifies the brilliance, dimmed only by tears for the days that are gone.

The walls of Time are hung with pictures. Memory is a television apparatus which annihilates distance and brings vividly to the eyes of love the scenes of long ago. It is a blessed provision that most of us have no power to scan the future. To the eye of faith those events rest with God. It is best to leave them there.

"I would sing," cried the poet. "But of what shall I sing?"

"Green earth after winter, hope after despair, life and love after death," came the answer.

We look back over our lives and see nothing but change: loved voices stilled; plans gone awry; dreams turned to dust. Yet along this tragic pathway are beacon lights, guiding us in the sure knowledge that the maze has a meaning, that Divine plans never go wrong in spite of the ignorance and obstinacy of man.

Some lives may be wasted, but in that very waste is a meaning for the soul to grasp as it gropes its way onward and upward through the

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mists of Time. Even in the fog shine the beacon lights of the years. The maze takes pattern and meaning. Threads break when they no longer serve the design.

Hold fast to the beacon lights of memory—homely, familiar scenes of days long gone. Believe that the road leads ever upward though it may turn in devious ways through shadowed valleys. High courage, strong faith, the power and serenity of the hills carry us through many a detour. Suffering serves only to keep beloved faces of the past haloed in memory. The milestones may be gravestones of the physical; but the spiritual, undimmed and undying, beckons us ever onward over the brow of the hill to a new horizon.

So, as the years pass, the anniversary dates of those we love take added significance. We are alone, perhaps, awaiting the call ourselves, our work for this incarnation apparently done. Or we may still be thoughtless children, surrounded by loving care. In our ignorance we think the world was made for us. How little we know the years ahead with their heartbreak and disillusion.

In the Beyond, we are told, there are no time divisions such as ours. We realize this more and more as the days pass. Some events of long ago seem like yesterday, so vivid is our memory. A whole span of difficult, uneventful years is in retrospect like a watch in the night. Time becomes purely subjective.

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The birthdays into this world and the next are merely milestones on the long journey of the soul. Some miles are dark, dreary, and desperate; others, filled with beauty and promise. We journey on through desert and prairie, over hill and dale, along dark canyons and steep precipices, beside still waters in green pastures. We cannot stop until we reach the end appointed.

The subjective element is all important in these experiences. What is a desert to some may blossom as a garden to others. Even a desert, in retrospect, becomes a garden if love was there. Values rearrange themselves. Rough stones are priceless pearls of memory on the rosary of a cross.

Do you think for a moment that you are alone on these anniversaries? Your loving thought bridges the gap of time and space. Unseen hands touch you in blessing. Voices, long since hushed, call in love across the years. Angel forms beckon you onward as they bid you be of good courage through the night.

Cherish these days. Remember your so-called dead. Your rose is a candle; your love, a prayer. Be gentle, also, to the so-called living while they walk at your side. No one knows what a single year will bring. We meet only to part; but where love rules, we part, thank God, only to meet again.

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No. 42

The Gifts of the Magi

IN the story of the birth of the infant Saviour appear the fascinating figures of the wise men from the East who brought their gifts to Christ, the King. Three wise men are commonly reported, though there is a charming story about a fourth who was diverted from his journey to help others in distress along the way. It is of this "other wise man" we wish to speak.

He started out with a priceless jewel, so the story goes, but when he came to the end of his journey he had nothing left, as he had given all to those who besought his help on the way. Would it astonish you to know that his gift was greater than the combined treasure of all the others? He arrived empty-handed to find an empty manger. On the unseen planes, however, the Christ knew and recognized the priceless tribute which was his.

What was this tribute? The souls of those whom the traveller had restored to happiness and wholesome living.

We seem at times to have wasted our strength and missed our quest. Not so, if even one life has been made brighter for our passing or one glimpse into a larger world been given to another in despair. The by-products of a life may be more important than the life itself. The quest may be a

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failure in the eyes of the world, but in reality its mission may have been fulfilled according to the Plan.

Be not too sure what your gift or your mission is. It may be helping lame dogs over stiles. It may be scattering seed among the alien corn. The power to see the Divine in the humble, your instant response to the need of another human being, —what greater gift than this can be laid at the feet of the King?

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No. 43

Letting Go the Past

WHILE we are in many ways the result of past thought and action, it is a wise Providence that causes us to forget much of what has gone before in the long climb upward. We do not come new-made into this present earth life. It has been a long journey with many slips and falls. It would crush us to know all these sins and shortcomings in long past experiences. Only when we are far on the road is it given us to remember, and then only in occasional flashes.

Even in these three score years and ten of our present life experience it is most necessary to let go the past. We have spoken of the futility of regret. In our daily repetition of the Lord's Prayer we ask to be forgiven as we forgive others who sin against us. This forgiveness should be spontaneous on our part, and the matter dropped once and for all. We go through life with such a load on our shoulders. We have done those things we ought not to have done and have left undone those things we ought to have done. True enough, but the only purpose in acknowledging this fact is to put it behind us, resolving in the future to leave affairs to Spirit, put our burden on Christ, and go free.

Or we hug to ourselves undue pride in past

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achievements and successes, not realizing that the best things we can ever do are the work of the Power behind us, acting through us. Of ourselves we can accomplish nothing really great.

Our chief objective, then, should be to clear all channels of accretions and obstructions. The past is past—let it go, thanking God for its blessings and forgetting all else. It is the present that concerns us. Mind, heart, the whole being must be serene, calm, poised, centered on the Eternal. This is impossible if we hug to ourselves the burden of Atlas.

We are not only to let go of the past but we are to be unworried about the future. Who are we to match our puny wills with God's will?

"Our wills are ours to make them thine."

Only so can soul-growth and its consequent peace transform our lives.

The early apostles went forth with nothing except their readiness to be channels for the word of God. If they met persecution and death, it was as nothing to them, so firm and unshaken was their faith. There was no time for Peter to grieve because he had denied his Lord, no time for Paul to brood over the days when he as Saul had persecuted his brothers.

Some day all wrongs will be righted; our loved ones will understand and forgive; trifles which have loomed large through the years will appear the nothings they really were and be lost in the oblivion where they belong.

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Try to look upon each day as a unit of life—one part you have finished. If in that one day you can lift your consciousness to the plane where it belongs, you will come through in peace, trusting the Light that leads you, free from regret for the past or worry for the future.

God, the all-Good, the Father can take care of those we love far better than we can. The same mighty Power can guide us far better than our limited personal will could possibly do. Why not know true freedom, freedom of Spirit? Regrets and fears have no place in the God-centered life. Let go the past. Eternity is here and now. Live in the Eternal.

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No. 44

Out of the Deeps

IN despair we cry unto a Power greater than ourselves. Trouble brings us to our knees. Perhaps this is the reason affliction comes, to keep us from wandering too far from the homeward path. For those whose lives are carefree, flooded with sunshine, there is no longing for the Power to which we turn in hours of darkness and despair. It was only after the prodigal had tired of the husks that the swine did eat that he arose and returned to his Father.

With the coming of war the race writhes in agony. It matters not the country. All are human beings. All suffer,—the men who die, the women and children who stay at home. Often no homes are left as refugees trudge the shell-torn roads, their weary feet bound for God knows where.

The roadside crosses have their worshippers again. The shrines are once more alight with votive candles. The Ave Marias are sung with breaking hearts. By many a lonely bed a mother or a wife kneels in prayer or watches through a sleepless night.

"It must needs be that offenses come." We must be forced to our knees. It seems to take suffering to bring us to our senses. Strange, this, for man was made to rejoice. The world was made and

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found good. The heavenly hosts sing around the great white throne. Only on the dark star of Earth must we go through the valley of the shadow to find the great Peace, the Holy Spirit, ever ready to guide, sustain, inspire. But it takes Sorrow to open the door—Sorrow whose other name is Hope.

In the darkest night the Star shines. Out of the deeps into the great Peace—out of the storm into the green pastures of the Homeland!

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No. 45

The Breath of Beauty

YOU may wonder what this phrase means. Let us explain. Breath is the essence of life. Without breath there can be no life. The infant fills its lungs with its first cry; the dying leave the physical body with their last sigh. All through our sojourn in the material world there is a constant inhalation and exhalation. So true is this of all organisms that we have veritable atmospheres around cities as around individuals and their homes.

This constant inhalation and exhalation has its own rhythm or vibration. Like magnets we are drawn to that environment to which we instinctively respond, whether we are consciously aware of the drawing power or not. There are certain places which please us for a time and then leave us with the inexplicable urge to move on. The same is true of people. They may hold us for a while. Then we become dissatisfied and seek another environment.

In this restless rhythm of life two things stand out: the need of man for beauty and his instinctive search for happiness. In undeveloped natures we are reminded of the buzzing of a moth around a flame, a flame which sooner or later will be the

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end of the moth. However misguided the blind, immature soul, it nonetheless seeks for that which seems beautiful, though in effect deadly.

Pitiful attempts at adornment, however artificial, are once more the expression of the instinctive longing for beauty. There may be absolute lack of taste; colors may be crude and unbecoming; but the cry of every human being as in the first wail of the newborn babe is for breath—the breath of beauty.

If we were more developed, if we understood the real, inner truths of being, we could so easily satisfy this instinctive urge to regain that which we have known and lost. Do you think the Garden of Eden is a fanciful myth? Do you believe the house of many mansions is an empty promise? If you do, however much money you may have in your purse, you are starving in the midst of plenty.

The whole breath-taking Universe is centered on Beauty, Perfection, Bliss. If we are breathing the miasmic air of the swamps, it is our own fault. We choose to dwell in them when the spicy wine of the pines and the sea is ours for the asking. To be sure, we are not always free to come and go. At the same time the mind is free. With our thoughts we can build a world of beauty, live in it, breathe it, and in time it is ours.

With every conscious indrawing of breath can you not call for the breath of beauty? Can you not

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breathe it out upon the world? Like bread cast upon the waters you shall find it after many days. Beauty—Blessings ever are unfolding to you if you will breathe, move and have your being in the atmosphere of God's love.

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No. 46

"Halt!"

THIS word of four letters is one of the great weapons of Nature. By weapon, in this instance, we mean a truly beneficent power. When we are headed down hill in self-destruction, our physical organism calls a halt. We are laid low in sickness with plenty of time to think. If we are wise, we try to reason out the cause of our trouble. If that is beyond our power, our thoughts at least take a more serious turn as we face a future, handicapped by illness.

Sometimes the command to halt comes in the form of retribution other than sickness. Our past catches up with us. It may be the law of the land which puts us behind bars, literally or figuratively. This time of testing through mental suffering again gives us forced opportunity to think in an effort to reason out the cause of present difficulties.

Sometimes we are halted by lack of time or money or the right environment. The cherished plans which mean so much are blocked for reasons beyond our control. If we only knew the true story of our place in the Great Plan, we should realize that this particular road is not ours. We have no place thereon.

It may be that Death cries, "Halt." A young life, full of promise, is cut off before its time. So it

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seems to us in our fog and ignorance. War and its accompanying plagues still torture a world gone wrong. We think this is the only plane for expression and development. We forget the many mansions in our Father's house. When earthly life becomes too impossible the "halt" of Death is a blessed release, beckoning to higher paths of lofty adventure.

Here we must stay, however, until our work is done. The halt of illness, limitation, disappointment, sorrow and suffering must be faced in the heroic conviction that God orders all things well. Whether we stand and wait, or right-about face, we must as good soldiers obey orders. Obedience to the Higher Law is the purpose of all experience. How much wiser to obey instinctively, gladly. When we cannot see the reason for these tragic "Halts" we must realize the working of a Power greater than ourselves, knowing that His will, not ours, must be done in our apparently broken lives.

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No. 47

The Foolishness of Fear

"LET not your heart be troubled." We need this admonition today when the world seems to be tumbling about our heads. What do to? Where to go? The puzzle becomes more and more intricate; the truth, more and more elusive.

"Ye believe in God, believe also in me." But how many today really believe in God? A large proportion of mankind have turned atheistic and are teaching this godless doctrine to the young. May that not be one of the signs of approaching dissolution? Without the fundamental conviction of an overruling Providence we are automatically doomed to the rocks of self-destruction.

"I go to prepare a place for you. But if I go, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

The cause of all our fear is the identification of ourselves with the physical body. If we could once dissociate our real selves from the temporary garment we now wear, we should understand the foolishness of fear. Nothing can harm the Spirit. Nothing can quench the Eternal flame of which we are a spark. Fear and suffering belong only to those who have severed themselves from the Higher Forces. In due time, through purification, even these tragic souls will arrive.

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War, plague, pestilence, and famine have no place in the many mansions. "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Take hold, then, of Eternity in the here and now,—knowing that Spirit is invincible, indestructible, and eternal. What happens to the physical is relatively unimportant. Only the Spirit remains.

"Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Radiant in the positive assurance that all is well with our souls, we face the future in joyful confidence. We may be in full physical strength; we may be approaching the end of this particular journey. But if God is with us, who can be against us? Even Death has no terrors. "I will come again and receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also." Co-workers with God in the building of His universe and the carrying out of His plans! What is there to fear under His leadership?

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No. 48

The Fullness of Time

THIS striking phrase illustrates a great law of Nature,—no rush, no hurry, no forced growth. The life in mineral, plant, animal and man must take its accustomed course. Growth can never be hurried. Yet growth is irresistible. We are impelled onward and upward whether we consciously will or not.

Granted that some conditions are more favorable than others, that is a part of the fullness of time. When we have earned the right, the tide turns. We go with it instead of against it. But first there must be the testing of an adverse current.

"Sweet are the uses of adversity;
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head."

In the fullness of time winter gives way to spring. In the fullness of time buds blossom, birds return. In the fullness of time dawn breaks, however dark the night. Yes, in the fullness of time our experience here merges into the release of death. Why fear this step in our upward course? The Divinity that shapes our ends, in spite of our ignorant blundering, works out the plan for each soul until our eyes are opened. Then we are able consciously to cooperate and thus accelerate our own development and the progress of the whole.

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The chief difficulty, the stumbling-block, is ignorance of our place in the scheme of things. The frightful waste, the suffering we bring upon ourselves, is appalling. But the law which gave us free will must take its course until in the fullness of time we are brought to our senses. There are no short cuts: the fertile soil, the seed, the stalk, the sun and the rain precede the full corn in the ear. Growth is slow, but once started, sure.

Peace and security come when we rest upon the law instead of fighting against it. All Nature indicates Law, which is only another name for Divine Intelligence. The orderly progress of the seasons, day and night, the courses of the stars, the great principles of physics, chemistry, biology, medicine, which unfold as man's knowledge and experimentation open the way—all these are proof of a great Power behind the scenes. The fool in his heart may say there is no God. In his blindness he misses entirely the meaning of Creation. Suffering, in the fullness of time, brings him back to the Father's house.

Why not work with the law instead of against it? "Know thyself" was the ancient precept. Study the work of God in His creation, and in the fullness of time you, too, will gain a vision of the light which never shone on land or sea.

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No. 49

The Sword of Damocles

PARALYZING fear is one of man's worst foes. It may be likened to the sword suspended by a hair, about to fall at any moment. The astonishing thing is that like the dagger in "Macbeth" we create the sword by our own imaginings of dire events to come.

The power of thought like all great forces is twofold in its nature. It may be used to kill or cure. No constructive effort of man has ever found fruition except through creative thought. Most evil befalls him by the wrong use of this great gift of imagination. The bridges we cross unnecessarily, the hopes that die in the malaria of fear, the achievements that might have been, the lives that might have made good—paralyzed in unreasoning inertia and equally unintelligent discouragement—what unnecessary tragedies!

It is well to hold fast to your dreams in silence. Plant the seed, give it the moisture and the sunshine of hope, and let Nature do her work. She works silently but surely. Discussion brings in negative thought. Before you realize you are being swayed by the opinions of others. The greater your idea, the more opposition you are likely to find from those who do not understand.

False fears, false imaginings work havoc. Not

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only do they prevent all achievement but they actually create adverse circumstances. The common sense which otherwise would be man's wall of protection is thrown to the winds in the panic of fear and despair.

The sword of Damocles hangs on the hair of your own wrong thought. Move out from under the cobwebs that have made such a creation possible. Your mind is a force to be used as you see fit. The lunatic sees horrible pictures, says Shakespeare, but the lover and the poet create a world of beauty and give

"to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

The ancient alchemist dreamed of transmuting base metals into gold. Was it altogether a dream? The magic of thought creates what we will. The sword of Damocles may become the star of hope, achievement. Remember, however dark the night,

"Behind the cloud
Shines thy star."

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No. 50

Delayed—by Doubts!

OFTEN we go to the station to meet a friend and find the train listed as late, delayed an hour, two hours, sometimes even six hours. Washouts, snowslides, sections held up while the section ahead takes the right of way. Time lost, nerves frayed, dear ones anxious—all the dismay that comes from delayed or broken appointments.

It is exhilarating to be on time. At this corner of the crossroads an important experience awaits me. But if I am late I miss the contact.

Late—what does this mean in a metaphysical sense? It means failure to grasp opportunities, failure to grow, a vision of the truth but how often a slipping back—until the years pass in frustration and the heart dies, unsatisfied.

Doubt—the synonym of negation, the questioning Thomas who must feel the wounds in the hands and side before he will recognize the Blessed One. Faith, on the contrary, takes the short cut. Not having seen, it believes. Like a child it trusts the promises of its Father. With hand outstretched it grasps the guidance offered and goes on its way triumphant to meet opportunities at the appointed time.

We are told that when the pupil is ready, the teacher is ready, also. "Behold I stand at the door

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and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." The teacher ready, waiting; the pupil so distracted by the voices of the world he cannot hear that inner voice at the door of his being—and the teacher cannot enter.

Delay on the road of knowledge—more suffering to be undergone, more precious time wasted, more loss to be incurred until old and gray we return from a fruitless quest to find the Grail at our own door!

Meanwhile we have missed the chance of light-hearted, joyous living. We might have made so many people happy. We might have been so happy ourselves. Must we always learn by suffering? Doubt closes the door. Horrible, if our doubts have closed doors for others! We know people who habitually throw cold water on every plan suggested. It is bad enough to delay ourselves on the road upward; to be a stumbling-block in the path of another is far worse.

Eventually, in God's good time, we like to think that all will arrive, all the tears be wiped away, all the doubts forever banished. But meantime what joys are missed, what peace is lost. Would it not be sensible each day to build constructively in faith, banishing all doubt to the limbo where it belongs? Then according to our faith will it be done unto us.

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No. 51

The Significance of Trees

"Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree."

THESE lines of a soldier-poet have become a household word, familiar the country over. Like many accustomed sights and sounds, repetition has dulled the inner significance. "Familiarity breeds contempt." It is only the far-distant on the other side of the hill that attracts wandering fancies. We follow the wild geese in a phantom flight and miss the bluebird at our very door.

Trees, like cathedrals, raise graceful spires to the sky. Their roots are sunk deep in our common earth, hidden in the mysterious foundation of a material world. In the Spring, when the sap begins to flow, the buds of another year open in leaf and blossom for a new resurrection. As the days pass, the birds return and build their nests. Life unfolds in beauty.

The cycle follows its accustomed round. Through leafy days of summer and glorious pageantry of fall, the year marches on to bare boughs and wintry blasts. Now the stars no longer hide behind the topmost branches. The whole expanse of heaven stands revealed, as frosty nights give the atmosphere their own peculiar radiance.

The life of the tree has a definite significance for

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man. Bud and blossom, leaf and bare bough—the analogy is plain. But never forget, when winter comes, the clear vision of the stars. When our lives like the winter trees are stripped to the essentials of stark simplicity we have a clearer vision of the heavens.

Why not lose ourselves occasionally among the trees? If we could tune only for a moment into the rhythmic life of Nature we might penetrate the veil between the unseen and the seen, and catch glimpses of an enchanted world, a world which paradoxically enough is the only world of reality.

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No. 52

The Test of Mastery

WHAT is a master? How is mastery attained? In the world of affairs we have a master in business, the great executive who handles large deals and directs concerns of many ramifications. In art, we have the master in music, color, technique, beauty. In college, we have the master's degree next in line following the A.B. of graduation. In earlier stages of learning, we say a child has mastered the alphabet or the multiplication table or the spelling demons. In all these instances, small or great, mastery means perfection in work —certainly the attainment of a fixed standard of varying degrees of complexity.

We have masters, also, in the great school of wisdom or life experience. This degree, like the others, is attained only by strenuous effort, often through considerable suffering. Each step of the way the disciple overcomes some handicap of the lower nature until he has transmuted weakness into strength, ignorance into knowledge. This is often a very slow process, as slow as the supplanting of a bad habit by a good one. It is often attended by failure and complete discouragement, but the stumbler falls only to rise again, pressing on with renewed determination.

The chief object of life is indeed the growth

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towards eventual mastery. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." There are no if's or but's in this admonition. The command is clear-cut and unmistakable. Neither are any half-way measures accepted. Perfection, without any limitations whatsoever, is the goal.

How can this be attained? What is the test by which the pupil qualifies? Both questions have the same answer—"the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." In other words, when the Spirit in us has taken complete control of our lives, so that we do not even consider the lower self with its material weaknesses and limitations, then we are approaching the stature of the Christ, or the Divine nature in us. This is Mastery. When this complete unfoldment occurs, we have an attunement with the Source of all life, which replaces all error with perfection, so that we become true graduates from this particular plane of expression. We need never return unless drawn by the great renunciation, as was the Christ, who left his spiritual home to take up the burdens of the flesh that He might help us, His weaker brethren.

Whether we consciously will it or not, this is the goal set for the race. Some will take longer than others to achieve the great result. All, however, must eventually arrive, though perhaps after many set-backs. We do not like to think of lost souls—rather let us say retarded souls. The shep-

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herd went to infinite trouble to find the sheep that was lost. Each human being, however, in the final analysis, must pass his own examination on the road to Mastery.

Life seems hopelessly full of difficulties, perplexities, and sorrows. Each situation, nevertheless, must be mastered before we set ourselves free. If we study the law of cause and effect, we master what the Easterners call karma, or the fate we cannot avoid. Only the development of the Christ consciousness can lead us step by step on the road to the final goal. This is the purpose of all our experiences and the only reason for our existence.

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No. 53

The Ties That Bind

AN instinctive urge in every living thing is the love of liberty. We dislike the suggestion of limitation in any form. We are in an age of self-expression, subjective expansion. The difficulty is that the self expressing is the lower, personal side with its emphasis on the small ego, who wants what it wants when it wants it. The whole tendency toward this self-centered freedom of activity misses the great purpose of living, the purpose of discipline.

Here, again, we have a most unpopular word. Few would voluntarily choose discipline unless that discipline led the way to greater freedom. It is of this only true freedom we wish to speak, the freedom that comes from obedience to the Higher Law. This is the straight and narrow path, deviation from which spells disaster. These are the true ties that bind, the ties of spiritual obedience to the highest we know.

After all, this discipline is very simple: Love God and keep His commandments; love your neighbor as yourself. Analyze the ramifications of these simple statements, however, and you find all the complex puzzles of so-called modern civilization. We are bound to God by the very nature of our being. We cannot escape. "If I take the wings of

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the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." How suicidal to rebel against the ties that eventually will draw us back to the homeland from which we came! The love for our neighbor is another matter. Herein lie all the complexities of human relationship. The ties that bind! How futile to try to cut them until the debt is paid. There is no escape except through obedience to the law. And what is the law?

"Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

"Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

"Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."

Fortunately not all our human relationships are those of anger and heartbreak. Lovely moments come to gentle souls when they walk hand in hand in the harmony of perfect companionship. These rare ties which we count as our greatest blessings must sometimes be temporarily put aside when old debts remain to be paid before we can progress on the long journey of the soul.

Death is merely an incident of life. If our path happens to be hard and lonely, or blocked by the bitterness of subtle and inexplicable antagonisms we have only to remember the law: "Agree with

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thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him." Return good for evil. Do as you would be done by. Thus the difficult ties are loosed and the soul is free to continue its journey. Old debts have been paid, and new light illumines our path.

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No. 54

Liberation

MORNING breaks over the eastern hills, and my heart cries, "Rise with the dawn!" Gone are the shadows of night, the doubts and fears, the agony of mind and heart. A new world awaits me, rich in beauty and expectation. Can this be death? My body is free and strong, light and vibrant. I have no fear, no pain, only the supreme joy of liberation. I go to meet my own.

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No. 55

The Gate of Hope

IT is not far away on a distant road around the hillside. It is near at hand. At night you enter the magic portal and wander through the enchanted lands of spirit. Roses are there, and violets, fragrant flowers of remembrance and of promise. Here are your loved ones, lost awhile. Here wait the friends you never knew. Here are the songs you have yet to sing. Here is all the loveliness you have still to meet.

Open the gate of hope when evening comes. Doubt not nor question but go your way in peace into the promised land, the land of spirit, radiant with joy and beauty.

Over the mountains steal the shadows of the night. The sea grows black under the foaming waves. The stars appear over the broad heavens. Man turns to sleep in palace or in hovel. Only for those who know does the gate open. Many find not the way nor care therefor. But the lovers, the poets, the seers, the searchers after beauty long to lift the latch, wending their way homeward to the realms of Spirit.

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No. 56

The Courage That Never Fails

JUST the thought of heroism uplifts the race! The thousands who walk the humble paths of duty, in peace and in war, the unsung heroes whose names go into oblivion—these on the one hand and the "noble army of martyrs" on the other—what a host of heroes the human race has produced! Faithful unto death, be that death insignificant or spectacular, here is a company that thrills even the most hardheaded agnostic.

Whence the power to bear prison, torture, violent death? Whence the power to meet the cheerless days, chained to a bed of suffering? Whence the power to climb to the top floor of a burning house to save a child left in its crib? Whence the power to go over the top in a hopeless cause?

If we needed proof of the essential divinity of man we should find it here. The courage to live and to die with "confidence steadfast unto the end," with heart undaunted! Man's destiny is truly glorious when he can keep the consciousness that he is a divine spirit, clothed for the time being in a material form. The garment is relatively unimportant; the Spirit is the guiding force which nothing can kill. If God be with us, who can be against us? Sooner or later we lay down these bodies. Three score years and ten, more or less,

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what matters it? But to live as heroes, with courage high in our hearts, that is the real test.

"The noble army of martyrs!" Can you not see them amid the white-robed throng before the throne of God?

For most of us there is no call to martyrdom. "The daily round, the common task"—these are ours. But they can be glorified with "the light that never shone on land or sea." They can make music, the music of inner harmony between us and our task, the courage that failed not along the way.

Once the goal is clear, there is no question. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.—I go to prepare a place for you."

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No. 57

The Gates of Deliverance

AS a child, perhaps you were accustomed to swing upon a gate. It might have led into a pasture or it might have been the front gate, to pass through which meant home and mother.

Life has many gates: the greatest being of course those of birth and death. Take the gate of recovery to health after illness. How bright the world seems! How kind your loved ones are! How wonderful it is to return to your place in the activities of life. Or perhaps the gate of love swings open. For the moment you do not realize that it may be also the gate of pain. You enter joyfully to taste the bitter-sweet of the most complex of life's experiences.

Or you may open the gate of the garden. We have two gardens in sacred history: the garden of Eden and the garden of Gethsemane. In both the swinging of the gate was caused by sin. The gate of Eden closed on outcasts who wilfully disobeyed the higher law. The gate of Gethsemane had to open due to the blind ignorance and greed of those who refused to recognize Truth when they had the opportunity.

These gates are ever in a sense opening and closing, as similar experiences come to individual human beings.

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There are also other gates, the gates to the Temple. Of those it is not permitted to speak, but when the disciple is ready the teacher comes. One portal after another swings open when the time is ripe. After that new scenes appear, paths leading to green pastures and quiet waters, the beauty of which it is beyond the power of man to conceive.

Be a wise keeper of the gates that they may in truth be gates of deliverance!

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No. 58

Silence, a Mystic Power

WE know the strange silence that comes before a storm when all Nature holds its breath. We know the silence of a summer night. We know the silence of the frozen snowfields. We know the strange silence of death, when the lips we love are closed in this world to open in thanksgiving in the next. We know in part the silence in which Nature works—the fertile soil, the seed, the tender green shoots, the tall corn, and at last the food ready for man's use. The whole mechanism of man works in silence, each part fulfilling its function.

Spirit, the animating Power in all creation, is a silent force. For this reason if we would express the full majesty within us, we too must cultivate the silence. Inner communion with the Source of Being works only in silence, shut out from the maelstrom of material noise.

We talk entirely too much about nothing. Vital energy is wasted. Idle words do active harm—especially unkind, adversely critical words, or negative words of doubt, unbelief.

The greatest thoughts, culminating in deeds, are conceived in silence. The inventor alone in his workshop or his room, the poet and the musician catching heavenly harmonies, the executive planning moves that will affect many people, the healer

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with his prayers for his patient as he directs magnetic waves of healing, the deep communion of the mystic and the saint, even the longing of the humble aspirant who takes the first step on the path—all these work in silent concentration.

As the seed grows, so does an idea planted in the great ether of God's love. In this unseen treasure house is untold abundance for mankind. There are no depressions in God's economy. Depressions are man-made. Dream your dream in silence, see it completed in beauty, give thanks for the gift about to be received, then in silence and faith await its manifestation.

Never for one moment doubt the truth of God's promises. Work steadily in silence, and in due season you shall reap if you faint not.

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No. 59

Do, Dare, and Be Silent

WHEN we look through the realm of Nature, we find all the vital operations of life, growth, and development following their quiet course in complete silence. The seed in the earth sounds no trumpets to announce its steady rise in the darkness; the bird in the egg is silent as he grows, waiting for a much later date before he bursts into song; the little child under his mother's heart develops silently. Soon enough will his protesting cry announce his arrival in a cold world. The stars move silently in their courses; they may make heavenly music for "the young-eyed cherubins" but we cannot hear it. Great plans take form in the silence of the individual soul. The things that are most holy to us, if we are wise, we keep to ourselves in silence.

What is the reason for this law of Nature? It is a pity we do not study her operations more carefully and pattern our own conduct on hers. With all her vast prodigality, Nature follows a pattern of strict economy or balance. The law of cause and effect demands that these two forces be in perfect equilibrium. Nature follows that law implicitly and as it were holds her breath lest one side of the scales should dip ever so little from the perfect

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adjustment. Do you see the analogy? We have a certain amount of force to expend in order to get a certain result. Every ounce of energy should be put in the given direction if we expect a corresponding return. This demands silent concentration, or if concentration implies too much difficult personal effort, at least we must give silent reverence to the power of the Absolute working through us. We should stand at attention, prayerful onlookers, while the law that we have set in motion works.

All meditation, from its very nature, requires silence. We cannot tune in to the great radio center if the air is filled with static. We are told to pray to our Father in secret, not to shout our petitions from the housetops that we may be seen of men.

What a noisy, impossible world it is! Constant confusion! Now the screeching of automobile horns is not enough; the eternal din of the radio is not enough; but in certain parts of the world we must have the inferno of bombing airplanes, explosives, giant guns. As if this could result in conquest!

The only conquest is the realization of the divinity of one's own soul. Slowly but surely the light will spread when truth begins to glow in even a few human hearts. This is the only real victory for individuals or for nations. It is a silent achievement, however.

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"How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still,
The dear Christ enters in."

The great purpose for which we have been created, namely the recognition of our oneness with God, can be achieved only in complete silence, known but to ourselves and to the Power which is "closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet."

Cultivate silence that you may clearly hear the voice of the silence.

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No. 60

The Gleam in the Gloom

WE have all seen light-houses on or near rock-bound coasts, and heard stories of the heroism of their keepers. But no story can equal that of Christ and His disciples—no story can surpass the marvelous courage of the early Christians. Thrown to the lions, chained to torture, spat upon, stoned, crucified, they carried the torch, the light of which never has been and never can be extinguished. It is the light that never shone on land or sea, the light of another world, the world of spirit, which "neither death nor life,—nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come" can ever quench.

How futile for man to match his weak wits against God's plan! Into the darkness of human mistakes, human agony, into the gloom of black despair comes the gleam. Those whose eyes are opened follow it without question or hesitation. Onward they go like knights of old, armed with the strength of ten because their hearts are pure.

Or if action is denied them for a time by force of circumstances, they also serve as they stand and wait. Their steadfast confidence that all is well, their faith that God's will must and will be done on earth as in heaven, their intuitive wisdom in leaving the solution to a Heavenly Father, their

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quickness to hear when He speaks and act according to His bidding—all these form the nucleus of a light which when God is ready enkindles the hearts of all His children.

In the gloom a gleam! The captain of the ship, alert in the darkness, catches the signal and saves passengers and crew from the rocks in an angry sea. In the gloom a gleam! The poet, thrilled by the vision, seeks to arouse the soul of beauty in man. The artist catches the glow and transmits it on imperishable canvas for those who have eyes to see. In the gloom a gleam! The prophet, knowing the pattern of the past, intuitively knows the plan for the future and gives courage to those who catch his inspiration.

In the darkest night of all history, in the deepest agony of the human soul, the star shines—the star of the Spirit in man, which many waters cannot quench nor tears dim nor gloom vanquish—the star which some day all will follow to find the Christ gleam in the Bethlehem manger, the Divine Spark which conquers even the blackness of death.

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No. 61

The Poetry of the Commonplace

SO many scientific inventions and discoveries have filled the last four decades that most marvels of yesterday become the common things of today. The electric light, the automobile, the moving picture, the airplane, the automatic refrigerator, air conditioning, the radio—all these apparent impossibilities are now established facts.

What has become of the poetry of living? Jaded sensibilities find no allurement in the miracles of sunrise, sunset, stars, the march of the seasons; no poetry in the strange attractions and repulsions we feel toward other human beings; no poetry in dull performance of duty, daily sacrifice, heavy burdens; no poetry in heroic surrender to loss, disappointment, death!

How much we need the opening of our eyes that we may see, our ears that we may hear, our hearts that we may understand! The miracle of thought alone is worthy of our deepest study and reverence. The mysterious energies and substances, the infinitesimal vibrations of which we know little or nothing, the whole realm of spiritual knowledge is a vast library of poetry still to be interpreted, let alone read.

Yet the ordinary man in the street seems thoroughly commonplace. He trudges along life's dusty

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highways, intent on food and shelter. He knows nothing about the mystery that is himself, and cares less. Intent on getting ahead, he steadily loses the only true scale of values.

The birds, the flowers, the mountains and the sea, the trees and the clouds, the stars—these know the secrets of the poets—yes, the secrets of the common man who could be a poet if he would open his heart to the mystery of the God without and within.

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No. 62

The Futility of Regret

LIFE is made up of mistakes. If it were not, we should not be the imperfect beings we are, put on the earth to grow by experience. The sorrow we cause is often a bitter regret on the other side of the veil. But that very sorrow purifies human hearts, makes them more tender and compassionate, helps them understand the intricate labyrinth of human emotion, and shows beyond the shadow of a doubt the unity of the human race. Even in a material world sorrow evokes far more sympathy than does joy. It is much easier to weep with those who weep than to rejoice at another's good fortune. There can be no jealousy in sorrow. It evokes an immediate outpouring of fellow-feeling.

In certain respects, then, regrets are futile. You might have loved more tenderly those now gone from human sight. You might have been more forgiving. You might have put yourself in another's place and tried to see from his point of view. All this you might have done and didn't. You cannot pass that particular way again.

But there are other ways, other lives, other chances. The very pang of your regretful sorrow strikes a chord in the heart you feel beyond your power to touch. But it is not beyond your reach. Love surmounts every barrier of time and space.

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It travels on the wings of thought. It reaches the uttermost bounds of the universe in notes of purest music. Love is indeed a symphony—unselfish, pure, regretful love.

All that might have been and was not, you have here and now, for their love reaches groping hands to you as they beyond the veil see their mistakes, too. One day all shall be righted. Sorrow makes love more piercingly sweet.

Thank God that human hearts are as they are—feeble, yes, but strong too, strong because of the very human weakness. Without mistakes there could be no minor chords to give a haunting refrain, a refrain which lingers on until loved ones meet again in perfect understanding to greet a better day.

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No. 63

Thine Is the Victory

"THANKS be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." How few understand the broad implication of these words! What victory? How given? In this day of bonds, slogans, V insignia, and war propaganda, who stops to think of the one thing that makes true conquest possible? How far removed these twentieth century concepts from the days of the early Christians!

Few would consider it victory to be torn to death in the arena, to be burned at the stake, to be tortured in ways such as only devilish ingenuity could devise. How many think of any death as victory? Yet wherever a man or woman remains true to his belief, wherever faith rises supreme above flesh, there indeed is true victory, the results of which affect the whole world.

Nature does not proclaim her miracles with loud flourish of trumpet and drum. She works silently, secretly, but oh, so surely. When the time is ripe, the result appears. It is only man "who struts and frets his hour upon the stage," to the delight of a fickle audience. There is nothing permanent or sure in any purely human plans. If God is the silent partner, a very different tale unfolds.

How does Christ give us the victory? The Christ

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force is irresistible. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit," saith the Lord of hosts, the God of battles. But what battles? The struggle between good and evil, the lower and the higher. This struggle can never cease until all return to the fold,—tested, tried, triumphant.

The battle is not spectacular. There are no victory medals, no bands and bugles, no flags waving in the breeze. The hero may go dishonored to a forgotten grave, but he helped to push the curtain of darkness back, be it ever so little, that the light of a better day might shine upon a lost star which must eventually return to its place in the heavens. Quiet, silent victories over the lower self! Unheralded and unknown, they are the leaven that lightens the lump, feeble rays of the dawn that will eventually illumine the world.

If you would have peace, you must identify yourself with this Christ force. As the humblest worker in the ranks, you listen only to obey. The world well lost, you push forward to the goal for which you were created, that of co-worker through the Christ force with God Himself.

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No. 64

The Only Safe Refuge

WAR emphasizes the urgent need of safety, especially for the civilian population. In such crises we have our air-raid shelters and other devices. In peace time we have our cyclone cellars, safe deposit boxes, savings-banks, life insurance companies, pension systems, social security plans —all devised to meet the instinctive urge to "play safe." Few seem to realize that human plans are no protection whatever. The only real refuge is the inner realization of the Great Plan for men. With this intuitive knowledge and the contact which it brings, man is always surrounded with a wall of invisible power.

Sacred story is full of such instances. We have Noah in the ark; Daniel in the lions' den; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the fiery furnace; Paul in ship-wreck and in prison. Careful examination of the Bible brings to light many more such narratives. "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."—"There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." And what is the reason for this protection? "Because thou

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hast made the Lord who is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation."

In so-called modern times we have not only the invisible cloak of the old fairy stories but extraordinary cases of almost supernatural rescue in war, and in accidents on land, sea, or in the air. Sometimes such deliverance comes in unexpected warning before the event so that the person concerned changes his plans accordingly.

If we accept the law of justice on the inner planes—and no thinking person can reject it—we must see that protection is a part of that law. In grave difficulties, which apparently we cannot escape, unexpected help arrives. Sometimes in heavy affliction devoted love wraps us in its cloak and protects us from the storm. Or we rest secure in the knowledge: "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."

Whatever our lot may be, we never know at what moment it may change. Fortunes are swept away over night; Death draws the curtain between us and our nearest and dearest; and we stand apparently alone. Or the world misunderstands our motives and condemns us unheard. In all these chances and changes of fortune, our only refuge is the conviction that there is a Great Plan for all humanity and consequent security for ourselves.

One man built his house upon the sand. "The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds

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blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." But another built his house upon a rock. In the storms that house fell not, for the builder had heard and obeyed the higher law. So simple is this law, so safe the refuge; yet so few rest secure in the Great Rock of the Ages, the development of the Christ consciousness in every human soul.

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No. 65

Our Great Inheritance

SO much emphasis is put on money that it has become the dominating thought in most people's lives. It is natural that this should be so, for there must be a certain amount of money to provide the common necessities of every day. Where the supply is small, more and more importance attaches itself to the wherewithal of comfortable daily living.

The trouble is, we approach the problem from the wrong angle. It is necessary for people to be active if they are to keep well and even half way happy. For this reason most people must work for a living. They are not punished but privileged to join in constructive effort not only for themselves but for others.

Wealth, however, in its true sense is far removed from money. Wealth belongs to character —resourcefulness, wisdom, vision, imagination, faith, prayer—these regulate wealth in the deep sense of the word. It is these qualities we take with us, while our pocket-books are happily left behind.

Try using your soul powers constructively. The field is limitless. In the pioneer days brave men and women pushed on through hardship and danger to new frontiers. The opportunities today are

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just as great, even greater. We need pioneers in the spirit, those whose faith and intuition are so strong that they will catch glimpses of realms yet unexplored and take hold of promises made long since by the greatest of Teachers.

It would be well worthwhile to note the very definite promises in the New Testament. It would be still better to have the faith of a little child and put these promises conclusively to the test, believing, and giving thanks in advance.

How little gratitude we show for what we have! The common blessings of every day—sunshine, air, water, health, the love of those nearest and dearest, home be it ever so humble,—these are treasures valued only after they are gone. Instead of appreciation for the blessings we already have, there is the constant demand for more, more, more! Only infinite patience would endure such short-sighted childishness. After all, we have a long road to travel on the path upward. Stumbling feet are to be expected when there is no vision.

This inner wealth, however, on the true road cannot be lost. It belongs to the fruits of the Spirit: the realization that we are children of the King, whose unlimited spiritual stores are ours for the asking. Seeking a kingdom,—our inheritance as a child of the King—what a wealth of promise, what a fascinating voyage of discovery!

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No. 66

Divine Promises

IF we should collect the promises in the Bible and make them a part of our own consciousness, we should find ourselves rich indeed. Try it for yourself. It stands to reason, does it not, that the Power that made heaven and earth, with the fullness therein, would have untold abundance in His keeping.

We are warned to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Then all these *things* shall be added unto us. It is a question of harmony with the highest we know. The paradox, however, follows that once we have risen to the loftiest we can attain, the question of material abundance becomes unimportant. If we think of it at all, we regard it only as a means to an end.

"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" In the lofty vibration of the Divine we find the emphasis entirely on soul needs. As soon as we put spiritual values first, the necessary material help follows. If, however, we stress the material we lose even that which we have when it comes time to cross the portal. The early apostles were sent forth empty-handed. How rich, though, were their minds and hearts! How developed their souls! To them it mattered not at all what became of the personal

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self. Their supreme aim was obedience in the carrying out of their Divine mission.

Do you not see how we put the ephemeral before the eternal? Complete faith and the will to rise to the highest we know will bring a richness of life such as we never imagined even in our wildest dreams. Gain through loss, victory through defeat —we must rearrange all our values. We gain the higher by loss of the lower; we win the spiritual by defeat of the material. When we put the emphasis where it belongs—in the hand of God, who leadeth us—we experience that true abundance and joy of Spirit which is ours for eternity if we will but listen to His promises and put our lives entirely in His hands.

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No. 67

Peace, Be Still!

THE Master quieted the waters by the simple word. So can we quiet the storms of doubt and fear. We live in a world of thought. We create our peace or its opposite. Vibration calls to vibration; like attracts like.

Your world is sad. Change the rate of your thoughts. You then vibrate joy, and joy takes form in the plastic substance of creation.

Your world is tempestuous. Emotions play unchecked upon and in the hearts of men. Greed, hate, fear, envy and all uncharitableness! But the voice of Love falls upon the waves. Peace follows the storm. The billows cease their foaming and the troubled heart mirrors the peace of those higher realms of Being, where beauty and order reign under the rule of Law.

Like attracts like. Try to understand how simple the process is. Thought waves play upon etheric substance, molding it as the potter molds his clay. Beauty follows the longing for beauty; the desire for knowledge opens the door of Truth. It is as simple as the rule that one and one make two. Work with the Law, not against it.

Peace, be still! Find the Master in the depths of your own being and hearken to His voice.

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No. 68

The Voice in the Garden

WE follow our own sweet will and think in our foolishness that we can escape the consequences of our follies. As if we could escape from ourselves and the voice of the God within us! Though we take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the sea, the voice is ever with us.

Why try to run away from this most precious of birthrights? The God within, the real Self of our little selves, is our greatest treasure, the rock of our salvation, our only help in the tragedies of our transitory lives.

The voice calls to us in the cool of the day, the voice of Love seeking its own. The stubborn, the stiff-necked, the wilfully sinful pretend not to hear; but sooner or later by strange and devious paths they must return to the Father's house and hearken to His call.

Meanwhile the gates of Eden close behind them, their inheritance lost for a time, as they wander in bitterness, drinking the cup of desolation to the dregs. But the Self is ever with them, waiting patiently for the moment when it can make itself heard, never losing the love for this part of its own Being, the all-embracing Love which includes all that It has made.

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Why choose the wilderness when peace and beauty are ours for the asking? Why be tossed in the storm and shipwrecked upon the rocks when a safe harbor waits if we will but listen to our all-wise Pilot? Must we suffer in the desert before we can appreciate the gift of the garden? But wherever we go, the Voice is with us until at last we are ready to hear and to follow where the Master leads.

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No. 69

Make Room for Joy

"THIS is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." The world needs joy as never before. So much heartbreak beclouds the spiritual sun and ruins physical well-being. Too much grief may end in death and launch a soul prematurely into realms too dark for peace and development. Each day could bring its own peculiar joys if we would open the door. The sunlight, the sky, the trees—even snow, rain, hail—all the works of Nature "praise Him and magnify Him forever."

We may start bravely off in the morning at peace with ourselves and the world, and then collide with another's cross-current of anger or despair. If we are weak, hurt or taken off our guard, we catch this disturbed vibration and our own sensitive organism responds to the lower key. Instead, we should be poised enough to hold our ground in loving silence and thereby help a disturbed soul to regain its own equilibrium.

Too late come the regrets of what we might have done and failed to do. Hurt pride, a form of selfishness, festers like a grievous wound, spreading infection. We need the poise of a rope-walker, secure in our own inner serenity. So much can be accomplished by the silent power of thought. Wire-

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less waves of love and longing repair many a broken bond in this world and the next. But few understand this miracle of reconciliation and need the word of forgiveness spoken here and now.

The joy of the Spirit is a spring of perpetual refreshment. The knowledge that all is well, that nothing can separate us from the love of God, raises the whole tempo of being, not only for the serene soul whose experience has brought sure conviction but also for a sorely troubled world, engulfed in the red torment of war and destruction. With joy in the heart there is no place for hate, harsh and ugly. Here, again, a little leaven lighteneth the whole lump.

Make room for joy: the joy of little children, the joy of birds in song, the joy of growing leaves and buds, the joy of selfless constructive service. Even though we suffer the torments of Job, it is still possible to vibrate a serenity bordering on ecstasy—the spiritual ecstasy of saints and martyrs, or the selfless devotion of pure and noble love.

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No. 70

The Great Peace

ARMISTICE DAY celebrates the truce of 1918, to be followed in only twenty-one years by another war. "Peace, peace, there is no peace!" This frenzied cry fills the high heavens and tears apart the veils between the planes. Suffering has its repercussions throughout the universe, so closely are all bound together in the One Life. Not one sparrow falls to the ground "without your Father."—"Fear ye not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows."

What a strange contradiction! Men so valuable that they serve only as cannon fodder. Life so worthless that it is mown down like the grass before the reaper. Is there no explanation? Can there be peace upon the earth?

Assuredly yes! All storms pass. However black the clouds and dangerous the lightning, the tempest consumes itself. The sky in reality has never lost its deep sapphire blue; the stars continue to move undisturbed in their course. Behind all the storm, peace reigns unmoved, untouched.

So it is in the divine essence of man. The lower self makes violent conditions in man's outer life. His angers, jealousies, hatreds stir up dark storm-clouds; yet within, the real man is unchanged. Even if his physical body must be destroyed or

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destroy itself through the bad causes its wearer sets in motion, the owner of the body is the same. The Spirit shall never cease to be. And the essence of Spirit is peace.

There is in a most vital sense a Great Peace. Like the deep blue sky it is steadfast, unaffected by the passing rages set in motion by pigmy man. The Great Peace is the center of soul growth wherein the body is sometimes a help and more often a handicap. But both are in a way inseparably connected; one needs the other.

"To man, propose this test—
Thy body at its best,
How far can that project thy soul on its lone way?

* * * *

"Let us not always say
'Spite of this flesh today
'I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!'
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry 'All good things
'Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul!' "

Both so needed, but in the final analysis the Great Peace can be attained only by the complete control of the lower, physical man. The rider of the horse needs the horse for his journey, but woe betide him if the horse gets out of control.

The object of all experience is the attainment of the Great Peace, the lifting of consciousness above the turmoil of the tempest so that the

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waters subside, the waves are still and Quiet broods over the deep. As long as man goes from one extreme to another, failing to maintain the perfect balance and poise of Nature's rhythm, the serene working out of the law of the universe, he cannot hope to attain. The moment, however, that he can live in the consciousness of the Higher Self, he rises to the level on which live all those who have learned the secret purpose of life and who walk secure in the knowledge of the peace "which passeth all understanding."

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No. 71

"Come to Me"

THIS invitation is for those who labor and are heavy laden that they may find rest for their souls. Strange it is that it takes sorrow and suffering to bring us to our knees in the call for help which we so sorely need. "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." Can you stretch your imagination far enough to know the metaphysical truth that the Christ within can bear all burdens and let the one who trusts Him go free?

We often wrap our troubles as a pleasant cloak around us. We rejoice in being miserable. We like to pour forth the story of our lives into any ear ready to listen. All this is preposterous for creatures supposed to be radiant images of the Divine.

There is great truth in mental science, which dwells only on perfection and ignores the passing ache and pain. In essence we are perfect. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Let the Spirit carry you through all your experiences. Trust a greater Power for light and leading. No one walks alone. He attracts the companions of his own choice in the seen and the unseen. It is possible to live radiantly beyond the reach of care. To do this, however, requires the dexterity of a rope-walker, per-

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fect equilibrium of balance, supreme confidence in the Self within, which is giving us the experiences we most need for more rounded development.

"Come to me." The invitation is direct, clear, easy to accept. We pass it by in willful ignorance and straightway find ourselves engulfed in troubles of our own making. We choose the hard way of trial by experience and end in the depths of despondency.

"Come to me." Take the promise literally and see what miracles will transform your life. You can follow the roughest road and not feel the rocks. You will run and not be weary. You will walk and not faint. Hug your troubles if you like. The birds will still sing, the flowers bloom, and the sun shine for the more developed souls who take the Christ at His word.

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No. 72

Peace through Prayer

THE chief trouble with this so-called progressive age is that it has left prayer out of the scheme of things. The wires that should connect man and his Maker have been cut by material thinking, which causes a sharp cleavage between earth and higher realms. At the other end of the line, however, the connection has never been disturbed. The receiving and sending apparatus is perfect.

You remember the Ancient Mariner, who killed the albatross, the bird of good omen? The climax of his suffering came when he found himself unable to pray. Alone, on a wide sea of agony, he suffered the torments of the damned until at last a whisper of blessing crossed his lips, blessing of the water snakes which before had seemed "slimy things" crawling "with legs

Upon a slimy sea."

Now their colors radiant in the moonlight, they shared with him in his utter loneliness the gift of life, and suddenly they were transformed into beauty so that unaware he blessed them. This prayer, for all blessings are prayers, restored the connection which he himself had broken by sin,

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and straightway a group of angelic spirits came to guide him to the home harbor.

In this deeply mystic poem Coleridge presents a great truth, peace through prayer. The moment man can pray, he opens the gates of heaven from which comes immediate help. Immediate? Yes, in the sense that a cause is set going. Sooner or later the effect of that cause appears. In the meantime the soul begins to find peace. If it has wandered far, the process may or may not be slow. For the average person the longer the journey into the far country, the longer the return to the Father's house. At the same time, with peace in the heart distance becomes unimportant. A goal is in sight, where before was aimless, miserable wandering among the swine.

If your radio gives notes jangled, out of tune and harsh, you call at once for an expert to put your machine in order. How much more important is the radio receiving set of your own soul! In this repair work, however, you must be your own mechanic.

The world needs peace today. The twentieth century was hailed with hope. It promised so much. What do we see? A chaotic mass of hate, suffering, despair. One lighthouse on a rocky coast may save many a soul in the black night. Set your light of peace aglow by steady prayer, sweet communion with those inner worlds of peace, whereby the stormy waves in your own heart are stilled.

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Who knows how far your influence will reach, for through you when you have reached that inner stillness will shine the radiant light of indestructible and timeless Spirit, "the peace that passeth understanding."

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No. 73

"Seek and Ye Shall Find"

WE all know the discomfort of hunting for something we have lost. The realization that there is nothing lost or mislaid, that everything is in its right place, often works like a charm to lead us to the spot in which with the perversity of inanimate objects lies the missing treasure.

In a far deeper sense there is a seeking and a finding. A desire long hidden in the heart eventually materializes in concrete manifestation. Hence the warning in all religions to think only the best and most beautiful lest we attract evil and disaster. That which we most desire gravitates in our direction as does also that which we most fear. Look for trouble and we certainly find it.

There is another seeking and finding—the search for the Holy Grail, the Higher Self, the Spirit with its light that "never shone on land or sea." This is the only seeking worth the while, for which the saints and mystics have counted the world well lost. The inner voice of Truth still speaks to the inner ear. The radiant light of another world still shines for the inner eye. The patient hand of the Teacher still knocks at the inner heart.

The vain wishes of the world materialize in ashes to the touch. Power, wealth, position, beauty,

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charm vanish at the turn of the road. These all are gone, and what remains? Utter futility! "Storied urn and animated bust" are cold comfort on the road to the beyond. Short is the memory of man. Monuments crumble in the sands of time as the winds of oblivion sweep the broken bits into nothingness. All the seeking vain! Why? Because nothing selfish can endure. If we would truly live, we must forge our link with the eternal and identify ourselves with the only truly permanent, the world of Spirit.

"Seek and ye shall find." "Know thyself." It is the inner man who takes the long journey from which there is no escape. The inner man, the Spiritual Self, must be sought and found if we are to have peace on the pathway. We have the full assurance, the knowledge of the true scale of values, but we sell it for a song and go stripped ever after. Weigh well what you would seek, for that will you assuredly find. The sick man looks for health, the miser for gold, the dictator for power, the butterfly for beauty, the scholar for knowledge. Why not ask yourself where *you* are going?

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No. 74

Say It With Prayers

THERE is a close relationship between prayers and flowers. Each is an expression of divine intent. Each is a form of worship to the highest we know. Flowers on the altar mingle their perfume with the incense of devotion, and their colors with the candles of adoration. A flower is a prayer, reaching heavenward in beauty.

We little realize the power of prayer in daily life. If we did, we would pray more, not for concrete return but for the lifting of our vibrations to a higher key. The philosopher's stone, whereby base metal turned to gold, was no idle dream but a profound metaphysical fact, symbolic of the power of man to transform the base metal of material thinking into the pure gold of spiritual reality.

Through prayer comes a stillness like oil on a troubled sea. When all is calm, our being is more easily attuned to higher ranges of thought and feeling. In this higher vibration we can reach our nearest and dearest on the direct line of purest love, unselfish in its spiritual quality, asking nothing in return. These prayers of the spirit bring immediate response. If our eyes were opened, we could see for ourselves. As it is, a live wire goes into the invisible, carrying our message of love. Meanwhile our receiving set becomes more nearly

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harmonized to catch higher waves of consciousness. On the wings of prayer we rise as the flower seeks the sun.

In the silence commune with the Great Spirit. Hopes, regrets, aspirations and failures dissolve in the ocean which carries our bark on its bosom to the haven where we would be. To each call comes an immediate response in the purifying of our vehicles. Music, flowers, incense and prayer all rise heavenward in worship of the Highest. Attune yourself to the invisible, and rise to the realm of Spirit, the source of beauty and harmony, the fountain of Divine Love.

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No. 75

The Agony in the Garden

IN lesser degrees of anguish this experience comes to most human beings. Sometimes it is the result of loss, death, the suffering that is worse than death. The black night of the soul descends on all who attempt to walk the upward path. How shall the darkness be faced?

If we turn to the familiar scene of Gethsemane, we find the answer in solitary communion with the Great Spirit of whom we are a spark. There is no help from any other source. No one can do for us what we must do for ourselves. The agony must be faced, mastered, and the outcome left in the hands of Higher Powers, even if it means death upon the cross.

There are many kinds of crosses, many forms of death. The slow anguish of a broken heart, the attempt to carry on against hopeless odds, misunderstandings, mental cruelty that takes all joy from the days and makes them a torment—each in its own way is a small Gethsemane.

Is there no ray of light in the fog? No source of spiritual strength? Turn to the garden for your answer. You find a night of prayer—alone— and at the end complete resignation to the will of God. There is no other way. Keep unsevered your connection with the higher realms. Never lose touch

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with your only source of strength. Know that the cup must pass even though you drink it to the dregs. Once emptied, it is gone. The debt is paid.

In the ultimate analysis nothing can harm a soul except loss of faith, and the subsequent blackness that seems to separate him from the Source of Being. With that contact kept, all is well, even to death upon the cross.

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No. 76

The Summons to Prayer

ONE of the most touching practices in the Mohammedan belief is the call to prayer, when great multitudes prostrate themselves before Allah, the Supreme One. It matters not what we call the Divine Creative Intelligence but it makes all the difference in the world whether we recognize it or not. The present day with its ever recurring crises of war and preparation for war demands a recognition of the vital need of this summons to prayer.

Indeed, the cause of all the trouble in the world today is the complete lack of spirituality in the make-up of most of the people in it. Only a few lights illumine the darkness, where awakened souls are steadfast in their cry for guidance and inspiration. Free will allows us to go only so far; then the effects of the bad causes we have set in motion begin to operate and we are brought to a halt. In the suffering that ensues we turn to the Power we have been neglecting and send out a call for help. By that time the radio system which should link us with higher realms of activity has become rusted by lack of use. Time is perforce lost until we are in a position to make the connection which we ourselves have broken by our own wilful stupidity.

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You see then how necessary it is to keep our contact with the Supreme. Daily meditation, or prayer, is vital in the life of man. It is really more important than food or drink, for what is the use of a well-nourished physical body in which a withered soul rattles like the shrunken kernel of a bad nut. The shell is valueless, fit only for the refuse-heap.

It is a mad world, my masters. Values completely reversed! The cart put before the horse in a crazy patchwork which would make the high gods laugh were it not so utterly tragic! The tragedy is not so much for those who know and fail to practice. They deserve all the punishment in store for them. But the real tragedy is for those who have never been taught what life is all about. Like Topsy, they "just grow"—a physical shell. For this neglect it were better that the so-called teachers of the young, including their parents, should tie a mill-stone about their necks and be cast into the bottom of the sea.

Is it too late? No, suffering usually brings us to our senses. The pity is that the young should have to suffer for the folly of their elders. Think this over, you parents and teachers. Are you the blind, leading the blind toward a bottomless pit? Or do you hear the call to prayer and bow in reverence before the Power in Whom we all must live and move and have our being?

Great is Allah! May His peace abide with us!

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No. 77

"Thy Kingdom Come to Us"

WHAT is the kingdom? When and how will it come? We pray for its appearance on earth as it is in heaven. We accept it in faith as the perfection of all our hopes and dreams. We forget that the kingdom is within us, not without. It must come first in the hearts of men before it can find material expression. It is spiritual in its essence and is marked by the fruits of the spirit: "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

A far cry from the kingdom when we look at the earth today! The opposite of each of these spiritual qualities is on the rampage. The lights on our tragic star are dimmed by deep fogs of ignorance and sin. But even one light gives hope of the lifting of the miasma and a blowing clear by the winds of restored faith.

Through the dark night of the soul strength comes; great is the reward of those who pass the test. No one can go forward, however, unless his will is one-pointed and his heart pure. Many fires refine the gold. Not an ounce of dross can remain.

When the kingdom comes in one heart, other lives catch the light of Spirit. The glow spreads as the sunlight which thaws the ice in frozen streams before the buds of spring appear. The in-

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fluence of one life for good is beyond measure. Only so can the kingdom come—"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

The kingdom within! A universal realm, not exclusive property fenced and guarded. Selfishness cannot enter, or greed, or general uncharitableness. Vibrations of harmony are the essential, harmony with the Divine Will, whereby men rise to the stature of their full possibilities.

Would it not seem the part of wisdom to learn more about this kingdom? Material treasures stay in a material world. Man moves on alone, with only himself for company, drawn to those on his own level. If he is far from home, he must arise in due time and go to the Father. Meanwhile wasted lives, lost opportunities, pitiful ignorance, unnecessary suffering! If the selfish ambition which impels many people could only be turned to the Father's business, what miracles would follow! Great laws lie beyond our knowledge—beauty, peace, fulfillment exceeding the power of the human mind to conceive. Meanwhile we walk in darkest night through which no stars can shine. Hearts break under the load; the light of the Spirit flickers and seems to die.

All the time the kingdom within us waits for the magic word which will make it ours, the word which signifies our glad obedience to the will of our Heavenly Father. "Not my will but Thine be done." So be it!

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No. 78

Our Daily Bread

"GIVE us this day our daily bread." How often we say this prayer with no realization of its power.

"What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?—If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

The apostles went on their respective missions with no money in their possession, no food, no material means of support. The old prophets were fed by the ravens. The marching hosts received manna in the wilderness. But never forget that great was their faith. Material food is necessary, yes, for a material body. But greater far is the spiritual food which is ours for the asking. Therefore we are told to seek first the kingdom of heaven and all these *things* will be added unto us.

On the contrary, we put the material before the spiritual. We say to ourselves, "I must plan for the future. I must save for my old age. I must see that we have enough to carry us through." So like the young man who had many possessions we center on the material and in time build such a prison-house around our souls that we walk in darkness.

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The bread of heaven, the water of the Spirit whereby we neither hunger nor thirst any more! By the simple act of faith the spiritual reservoirs open to our needs when we put Spirit first. We are so accustomed to the importance of worldly goods that we forget entirely the transitory nature of all things material. The savings of a life-time can be swept away over night. A turn of Fortune's wheel and all is gone. But Spirit ever remains. It passes even the gates of death.

Our daily bread! In such unexpected ways it comes. We think we have the whole burden to carry. If we would only cast our care on the great spiritual forces around us, we should fare much better. Personal plans fail through lack of wisdom or circumstances over which we have no control. God's plans can never fail. If we through our own ignorance and lack of faith make a mess of things, the Providence that rules our ends works on nonetheless and gives us help in spite of ourselves. This help may be material or spiritual. Sometimes it comes in the form of release from the physical entirely. Unhappy the soul, however, who has so concentrated on the material that he has lost sight of the spiritual. He cannot have light until he seeks it with all his heart—that daily bread without which the earth is a wilderness and the dark night of death dark indeed.

"O send out thy light and thy truth, that they

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may lead us, and bring us unto thy holy hill, and to thy dwelling."

There shall we neither hunger nor thirst, and the Lord Himself will wipe away all tears from our eyes.

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No. 79

Thanksgiving

"O GIVE thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever." So sings the Psalmist. The prayer-book has a magnificent thanksgiving in which all the forces of Nature, the angelic hosts, and all living things join in a paean of praise. This sense of gratitude is a purifying force as refreshing as a long draught of water from an ice-cold spring. The whole make-up of man is refreshed in a glow of well-being. The frozen gates of the heart are unlocked. The gladness that pours forth longs to spend itself on others, to share the joy that overflows.

This is one of the secrets of the Christmastide. Every evil force seems suspended in that sacred and hallowed time. Even the most wretched, unless their armor is too thickened by selfish misery, thrill to the general sense of kindly well-being. Since thoughts are things, kind vibrations fill the atmosphere. The happiness of children leavens the lump, and for a brief season the dark star shines.

Why must this experience of grateful good-will be limited to one part of the year only? How can we carry into our own daily lives the Christmas peace? It takes steady practice of an almost literal acceptance of our Lord's teachings: the return of good for evil; the forgiveness of wrongs,

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real or fancied; daily communion wherein our spiritual natures are refreshed, strengthened, and purified; the acceptance of God's will for us; constant dependence on the promises of light and leading.

A few rare souls have attained this daily radiance which most of us feel in greater or less degree at the festival periods only. By so much we lose the joy of living which would otherwise be ours—that carefree joy of children at play, the delightful abandon of most young creatures who have no burdens.

If we are miserable, we have only ourselves to thank. Somewhere along the line we have set a cause in motion which can bring only suffering. Such debts must be paid. But they can be met graciously, if not thankfully. Only by paying the obligation can we win our freedom. The sooner, the better for all concerned!

No two people look at so-called calamity in exactly the same way. To some it is a challenge that bids them

"Not sit nor stand but go!"

To others it is a crushing blow that paralyzes and utterly confuses. A few even relish misery and roll it as a sweet morsel under their tongue. Such people are plague-spots in the body social.

Grasp the small moments of joy. Watch for them. Thrill to them. The clouds at sunset, Orion in the southern sky on a clear night, the fresh green of spring, the riotous color of autumn, the bare boughs of winter, those "ruined choirs where

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no birds sing"—so many works declare the glory of God. "They worship and magnify Him forever."

Of all His creation, only man with the gift of free-will brings ruin and destruction, hate and murder to what was once an earthly paradise. So the night of darkness sets in, the black night of the soul, the sojourn among the swine, and then at last the return from the far country.

Most of us return a little way at Thanksgiving and Christmas. The powerful vibrations at work reach even the dullest minds and hearts. For some who think they are lonely, these recurring festivals bring only sadness. But loneliness is selfish self-centeredness.

"No one ever walks alone
If in his heart be love;
The angels guard his every step
And music from above."

Rejoice, therefore, and be glad "that your joy may be full."

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No. 80

Hail and Farewell!

THE coming and the going, the beginning and the ending! How strange the mystery of it is! How little we know and understand!

We come from a world of which we remember nothing. If we are fortunate, love awaits us; tender hands care for our helplessness. Gradually we begin to know and love in return those to whose protection our infancy and youth have been entrusted.

The wheel of time slowly revolves. Our eyes and thoughts are centered on the future. Bright hopes beckon. The happy days are always just ahead, always just beyond our reach. Heavier years weigh us down; duties and responsibilities burden us. Still our dreams center on the future with better days just over the horizon.

Gradually we realize the greater part of our lives is behind us. In thought we return to those happy years now gone—years that at the time we did not appreciate, did not know as the blessings they really were. The mind lives more and more in the past as it completes the cycle of one more life experience.

Then comes the moment of farewell. The dear arms that welcomed us are once more waiting, but this time in another world. The mystery of our

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going is even greater than the miracle of our coming. But go we must. We would not have it otherwise. We know we shall meet our own. It is truly a "joyful quest."

How much happiness, though, we have missed along the way. First, the future beckoned us; then, the past. Meanwhile the blessings of the present went unrecognized until it was too late.

Our only consolation is the sure knowledge that each experience had its purpose, its meaning in our development. Some day, somewhere, somehow we shall understand; while the loving peace of the Christ consciousness transmutes every sorrow into joy, every loss into gain. The road is long, and uphill all the way; but at the top Love waits for us, the mists are gone, and in the Eternal Now we find the goal so long beyond our reach.

Hail and Farewell! The Alpha and the Omega, "the beginning and the ending sent from above." Even in us is that Christ-force, seeking ever for expression, expansion until we return to the Father to "go no more out."

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No. 81

The Blessing of a Contrite Heart

"BEFORE the ear can hear, it must have lost its sensitiveness to the outer world." Before the path can be entered, the "feet must be washed in the blood of the heart." The appeal of the outer world is no longer heard when the heart is broken. Tears dim "the garish day." Pride no longer rules the will. The values of life take their proper place and assume their right proportion. Man's whole outlook changes. His feet, "washed in the blood of the heart," are ready to take the first step upon the path.

Only by the ascent of this path does the aspirant reach the kingdom. Blessed therefore are the poor, the contrite and humble in spirit: for "theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Pride has no place now when earthly ambitions lie broken and the futility of selfish planning for material ends becomes apparent. We can understand why this beatitude comes first. It gives the key to the series. Without the suffering that comes from personal loss, without the closing of the outer senses to worldly pride, the inner vision cannot open. The true direction of man's pilgrimage cannot be found. Lost in quagmires of his own making, his feet, stained with the blood of the heart, must find the true path to the homeland.

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What is the center of your life? What is your fondest wish? The time will come when you stand alone. Love, wealth, position, friends, earthly ambitions of pride and power vanish. As you came alone, so you depart, having only yourself for company on the path which you yourself have chosen. Consider well the true scale of values. Lucifer fell through rebellious pride. Christ blesses those who, stripped of worldly hopes, center their consciousness on the true path, the path of a broken and a contrite heart. The kingdom awaits all whose personal wills have been submerged and purified, those who can truly say, "Not my will but Thine be done."

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No. 82

The Blessing of the Meek

"BLESSED are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Who are the meek? Those who are willing to submit their will to God's will. It is a paradox that we gain our life by losing it. The same holds true in this matter of making our wills God's will. All things are His in heaven and on earth. With Him there is no lack, no restriction, no care and worry. "The earth and the fulness thereof" are His, the sea and all that is therein. By union with Him we become automatically heirs of His kingdom.

Strangely enough, however, when we have reached that stage of union we no longer care for earthly power. Inheriting the earth holds little attraction when once we have grasped the meaning of life here and its relation to life beyond. Three score years and ten are not eternity. Why not build for eternity?

The trouble is so few understand the real continuity of soul experience. Here today and gone tomorrow! What is the use? To the average man who has forgotten, or never really knew, the meaning of soul development, life may indeed be

> "a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing."

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Or he may be so puffed up by temporary worldly success that he thinks himself a little lord of creation. What folly! How few down the ages are remembered either for good or ill!

Why does our Lord, then, bless the meek? "Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these *things* shall be added unto you." In other words, material blessings are an effect, in which the truly spiritual man is not primarily interested. His interest is to further the coming of his Father's kingdom. The change of focus, however, enables him to gain a long-range view wherein past and present, present and future assume their right proportion. He knows the "why's" and the "wherefore's." The earth is truly his because to him it means little or nothing. He stands upon it as upon a springboard to test his strength and agility for conquests yet to come—tests of will and lofty purpose.

By the perversity of fate, or what you will, when we no longer want what we have once so fervently desired, we find it in our grasp. When the earth is truly ours, it no longer interests us except as we can use it as a testing ground toward heaven.

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No. 83

To Those Who Mourn

IT is difficult for those in deep sorrow to realize the true meaning of the experience known as death. To us left behind there seems to be only the anguish of separation, often doubt, and even despair. If we only knew the rapture of the souls who have been released as God's children from the shadows of the physical world! It is like coming out of a smoky tunnel into glorious sunlight under a blue sky. We must, of course, stay our appointed time and do our appointed work, but it is an insult to a loving Father to doubt for one moment that our dear ones are not far better off in His care than they were in ours. His care is on all the planes, but in the physical world we are prone to forget His nearness and feel that we must do everything ourselves. He has told us to cast our burden on Him. He has assured us that we are ever in His keeping. He has promised to take us to the place prepared for us, one of the many mansions. But when our loved ones precede us on the path that all must travel, we doubt His wise Providence. We set our puny wills against His divine will and dare to question and rebel.

Must His promises be proved as if they were mathematical formulae? Must we see the unseen before we can believe? Must we feel the wounds

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in the hands and side before we acknowledge the risen Lord? Christ was good to Thomas even though Thomas doubted. He is good to us even though we doubt. But remember His blessing on those "that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Grief is selfish. It draws our dear ones earthward. Rather let us prayerfully leave them in God's keeping, knowing that He doeth all things well.

"Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove;

"Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not why;
He thinks he was not made to die;
And Thou hast made him: Thou art just."

"Believing where we cannot prove!" That is the secret of peace for us and for those we love, those dear ones who when our time comes will be "waiting at Heaven's gate."

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No. 84

The Blessing of Sorrow

FOR those in grief there is a special blessing—"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Of what nature is that comfort? Only those who have known can tell. Even for them words are difficult. The language of the heart is a silent tongue.

We look back over the years and find so many changes, changes which seem to us for the worse. Familiar landmarks gone—beloved faces vanished! There seems no adequate recompense for our agony of personal loss. Yet we have a sacred promise, the blessing of comfort. How does this comfort come? What form does it take?

Closed in by our five senses,—"cabin'd, cribb'd, confined"—we cannot know the truth of the unseen except by intuitions and impressions,—intangibles which mean far more than anything we can see, hear, touch, taste, or smell. Peace comes in sleep, sometimes happy dreams. A deep, inner consciousness of immortality cannot be denied. The loss of all we held dear opens the gates to a world far more permanent and real than the tortured star on which most men and women spend a worried existence. Without sorrow we are self-satisfied. We have no interest in eternal verities. The

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world of the senses claims us completely and shuts us in a prisonhouse of vain imaginings.

Sorrow stirs the spirit to activity. It shakes off self-satisfied contentment. It tries the wings of escape to a light that does not singe and an air that does not stupify. "Blessed are they that mourn." Only through sorrow comes comfort. The eternal riddle must be solved by every human soul. That soul will never rouse from sleep unless shaken by loss and grief.

Rain falls to refresh the earth. Without it there could be no flowers or fruits, no carpet of grass, no bower of leaves in hot noontides. Sorrow likewise recreates the heart, softening the hardness, mellowing, refining, purifying. Comfort comes in countless ways: growth of soul, sensitiveness to human needs, and most priceless gift, the knowledge that there is no loss, no separation in the world of spirit.

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No. 85

The Blessing of the Truth-Seekers

"BLESSED are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

The desire must come first, then the fulfillment. It is the wish that is always father to the thought. Then if the will is strong enough, results inevitably follow. There is a great body of secret teaching unknown to the multitude. It is reserved for the inner school, for the disciples who through sacrifice and devotion have earned the right to the knowledge for which they thirst. "Ask for the truth, and it shall be given to you; seek God and you shall find Him; knock at the gates of God's spirit-world and it shall be opened to you."

The teaching comes in strange ways. We are guided to the right book; we hear the right lecture or sermon; we meet the right friend; we go through the right experiences. It is these experiences which are so very necessary. It seems at times as if we had endured about all we could for one incarnation. Then another crushing experience comes our way and we long for death. Disillusionment is complete. This is the testing-time. There can be no retreat. We have knocked at the door of knowledge. We must enter the portals of the way. It is perforce the way of the cross.

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Yet remember the blessing: the hunger will be satisfied; the thirst will be quenched. Who are we that we should question the terms? The great laws of the house of learning must be obeyed. If we lack the necessary requirements we must perforce wait until our preparation is complete. It is no light thing to ask for knowledge. Strong hearts, stout courage must meet the test. This is no path for weaklings. It is for that very reason a glorious road, trodden by a noble company. When trials become too crushing, hands are stretched out to help. When darkness is too intense, a ray of light penetrates the blackness. Rich is the reward beyond all comprehension, but count well the cost. Every debt must be paid to the uttermost farthing. Every interest must be subordinated to this one goal. Long is the road and uphill all the way, but at the end peace and priceless illumination.

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No. 86

The Blessing of the Merciful

"BLESSED are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." By the law of cause and effect this beatitude explains itself. We reap what we sow. Our actions return to us like boomerangs for good or ill. The Lord's Prayer bids us to ask forgiveness of our sins in the same measure that we forgive those who trespass against us. Only as we forgive others can we hope to be forgiven ourselves.

"We do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy."

There is good reason for the precept, "Let not the sun go down upon your anger." All debts must be repaid to the last infinitesimal measure of justice. Accumulated resentment only adds to the burden which must be discharged to the last jot and tittle before the soul can climb the path upward. If this debt is not paid in one life it remains to be discharged in another. The law is automatic in its workings. This apparent severity is in its essence the most loving kindness. The patient cannot recover until he has been purged of all impurities. The sooner this is done, the speedier is the restoration to health. Why carry over a load of bitter-

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ness? Only by mercy to others can we obtain mercy for ourselves.

We, too, have many debts. We, too, must meet judgment. Who is so perfect that he has not wronged another soul? It may have been only in thought, but thought is so powerful that it can cause definite injury to a soul in a negative, receptive condition, tuned to receive that particular vibration. Our angry thoughts stir up anger in others, just as thoughts of love and mercy clear troubled atmospheres with healing power in their wings. We may have a load of accumulated debt of which in this life we have no knowledge. We can work out only so much at a time. Nothing, however, wipes the slate clean so quickly as a generous attitude of non-judgment, patience, long suffering, and mercy.

The unseen seems so far away, so non-existent. If we but realized the vital reality of invisible forces, we should control the lower emotions of anger, hate, desire for revenge, and rise above their forked lightnings to a higher plane of peace and security.

Only as we forgive, can we hope to receive forgiveness. In other words, our souls must be purged of earth-binding poison before we can leave the prison-house of our own making to rise to realms of light and healing. We should pay our debts while there is yet time:

"Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the

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adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

"Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."

Prisons of our own making! How tragic is the suffering of those who find it impossible to forgive!

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No. 87

The Blessing of Purity

"BLESSED are the pure in heart: for they shall experience the nearness of God in their lives." The Sermon on the Mount is the essence of all Christ's teaching. We need only these few lines to show us the way, the truth, and the life. There is nothing complicated, abstract, or unintelligible. The directions are clear and unmistakable.

Why is purity of intention all important? The complex mechanism of man is easily clogged by the obstructions of the senses. The machine refuses to go but can readily slide down the nearest precipice. Purity implies perfect running order—oil in the mechanism, oneness of purpose. When the aim is clear, it is easier to reach the goal, granted sufficient will power.

"My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure."

By purity is not meant colorless innocence. Purity implies cleansing, a washing away of all that hinders, a one-pointed determination to live in the Higher Self.

Lifted above the fogs and morasses, the vision clears. The soul sees with the eye of Spirit. With unerring intuition it finds the short cut to Truth. In a poetic as well as a literal sense, the complex being that is man, freed from all burden of the

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lower nature, links his aims with the Eternal. Spirit beckons him onward and upward. The fetters that bind have been long since loosed. A freed soul takes the homeward path to the Father's house, wherein are many mansions.

Why does this beatitude mean so much? It is the key to all spiritual achievement. Other blessings follow as effects from this supreme conquest. With the cleansing as by fire only pure gold remains. Such purity comes only from struggle, suffering, and hardship. Like children we cling to the toys of human life which must be pulled from our grasp. Tried and tested, we grow with each small victory over the lower self, until at last maturity comes. We know the truth, and that truth sets us free.

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No. 88

The Blessing of the Peacemakers

"BLESSED are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Today, especially, we feel this need. Today we have a magnificent opportunity to demonstrate our kinship with the Father. Perhaps at no other time in world history has such a pressing need arisen, for now as never before the whole world is bound together by inventions and discoveries. The radio and the airplane have helped to annihilate distance in time and space. News flashes come with the speed of thought. What injures one branch of the human family harms all, so close is the connection.

As never before, we are our brother's keeper. What hurts him rebounds like a boomerang on us. We can no longer pass by on the other side. This does not mean we are not to mind our own business; but it does mean we are to stand ready to help.

How can we help in the great effort for peace? Hate runs wild among all races and peoples. Commercial competition, class strife, racial antagonism, nation against nation in the lust for power! How can our Lord find peace upon the earth? All power is His to carry out the Divine Plan. We, as creatures of free will, must know "our wills are ours" to make them His. That is the test.

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Love must replace hate. The relative importance of ephemeral versus eternal values must be crystal-clear. What does it profit individuals or nations if they gain the whole world and lose their own soul? We forget that vengeance is the Lord's —not ours. We are admonished to forgive until seventy times seven.

The role of the peacemaker is not easy. He may be misunderstood and abused by the very ones he seeks to help. No rosy path is promised to those on the upward way. But inner peace is theirs, freedom from worry since a Great Power bears their burdens; close contact with spiritual forces gives flashes of intuition; a higher wisdom guides them as they help unfold the plan for men.

No relation is more precious than that of a child to its father. Our Father is primarily the Prince of Peace. Blessed, therefore, are those who through prayer and guidance make their wills His in pouring oil on troubled waters. They radiate waves of His love and compassion for all His children. In time, above the maelstrom of angry seas will come the order, "Peace, be still." Blessed indeed are those who work to prepare the way. They are the children of God.

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No. 89

The Blessing of Those Persecuted for Righteousness' Sake

"BLESSED are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you, for my sake.

"Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

In these days of clever propaganda it is difficult to know the true from the false. Most unthinking people accept at face value the daily food of the newspaper, the radio, the stage and the publisher. Intent on his own immediate concerns, the reader absorbs false and true, and does not stop to analyze the pro's and con's. He cannot read between the lines or see any other side than that presented by the powerful publicity machine at work.

If a brave soul has the courage to know the truth and proclaim it, he is hounded and persecuted to the point of death. There are so many refined ways of killing: grapevine whispering, poison pen slanders, loss of friends and prestige, loss of money and position. As in the days of the prophets the mob is ever ready to throw the first

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stone. Then the martyrdom is on in full force.

Why try to combat stupidity, selfishness, and greed? Why try to spread ideas ahead of the time? Where would progress be if no one had had the courage to pioneer, to dream dreams, and see visions? The world would have remained in a state of barbarism even greater than that of today if the prophets and the martyrs had not had the courage of their convictions. The scorned idea of yesterday becomes the accepted standard of tomorrow. Gradually light spreads even though the light-bringer may have been nailed to a cross.

"The noble army of martyrs"—a glorious host! Blessed indeed is he whose soul so burns in devotion to truth that he is willing to sacrifice even life itself for what he believes. Resistless is the power of such selfless devotion. In the loss of the small, personal self the Higher Self is found. Such a one loses his life only to save it. He has been an active agent in the God-drama of humanity. Somewhere, some time other heroic hearts will kindle in the flame he helped to carry, and so will dawn a new day of Truth as God's plan for men unfolds. A privilege, indeed, to have a part in so glorious a mission!

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No. 90

The Wings of the Morning

WHAT refreshment is in these words! We can close our eyes and feel the salt sea air as the spray flies in our faces and the sails fill with the swelling breeze. On the wings of the morning we sail into unchartered seas, the glow of youth in our hearts.

How different for most people is the sail toward the West at sunset. This should be glory, too; but is it? "Going West!" sad and poignant thought because we understand not at all.

Strong souls are those that can keep poised on the wings of the morning though years bring their toll of storms and shipwreck. You remember Tennyson's "Ulysses"? He and his comrades

"ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads" . . .

On the wings of the morning they rode triumphant to meet adventure in the great world where life was good, though difficult,—good because difficult—with strength to move earth and heaven. In his old age Ulysses sees a different picture:

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"The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices."

Yet again the great adventurer would push off

"To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

In the long circuit of life, if we but knew it, we travel ever to the East on the wings of the morning. New dawns, new horizons, new worlds—the salt sea air in our lungs, the wind and the spray in our faces, the song of hope in our hearts! No age, no weakness, eternal youth of the Spirit as the great wings carry us ever on to meet the heroic ones of ages past and to feel the thrill of new adventures, greater than we have ever known!

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No. 91

Treasures in Heaven

IT is not easy to impress the minds of people in the material world, where so much centers on material possessions, with the sure conviction that we are born to lay up treasures in Heaven, as the Lord Christ taught so many centuries ago. What are the essential treasures to which the human race and every soul in it is heir? Treasures of long-suffering and compassion, faith in the spiritual wealth of the unseen, belief in God's love for His creation, gratitude for beauty and eyes to see it—in short, all the joyful confidence that comes from the knowledge that a host of ministering helpers surround us when through our own sinful ignorance we dash our feet against the stones.

It is imperative that we learn these truths in the earth life, for without them we fail to grow to the measure of which we otherwise should have been capable. Then beyond the veil come regrets for what might have been, and a determination to right old wrongs.

We want you to think of the invisible helpers as busy still with the affairs of earth. How can great souls rest when so much is wrong in the world and people so blind? Bands of workers are more than occupied trying to soften the effects of the crimes against humanity perpetrated here. In-

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justice, cruelty, slaughter of the innocent, all the horror of warfare—these they must mitigate insofar as devoted work can undo what should never have happened in the first place.

The effects of world horror are far-reaching. Unseen ministers try to soften blows for multitudes of innocent people. In the war-zones they are tireless. How can they rest in selfish bliss?

A new day approaches. What will it bring? For you it offers opportunities each hour to show in your life the peace and love that should be your chief treasure as a child of a Divine Father.

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