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THE Light of Reason

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THE
LIGHT OF REASON.

VOL. VII. SEPTEMBER 1st, 1905. No. 9.

EDITORIAL.

WE have recently received two money orders each for 4/-, one from Ceylon, the other from India, without any accompanying letters to indicate who sent them or for what purpose they were sent. Will the senders of these amounts please write us.

* * *

THOSE who wish the Editor to visit their town or district on his next tour, should write without delay, so that dates may be fixed. On his next tour the Editor will (in addressing public meetings and meetings of Groups) expound the Law of the Higher Life both in the letter and the spirit, definitely pointing out and explaining the rules and methods by which enlightenment is attained; but when invited to speak before the members of any particular school of thought or religious denomination, he

will give a general address on the particular phase of Truth which would most strongly appeal to them.

* * *

In our Editorial last month we dealt with the relationship between the master and his pupil, and it will serve to further elucidate such relationship, as well as to make plainer one of the commonest paths of right and virtue, if we now deal with a quality which is essentially necessary to the spiritual advancement of a disciple of the highest, as well as to the maintenance of unity and harmony in the family, in society, and in the world at large, namely, the quality of reverence.

* * *

In the present age there is a considerable declension from the virtue of reverence. Railing against dignities ; contempt of elders ; dictating duties to pastors ; speaking frivolously and lightly of superiors ; addressing parents disrespectfully, or speaking of them in irreverent terms—all these practices—so prevalent to-day—have a deep signification, revealing, as they do, the moral nature of the times, and pointing to the necessity for the restoration of the simple virtues, without the practice of which, all preaching about the loftier virtues and the knowledge of Truth is so much vanity and delusion.

* * *

Reverence is due to elders, parents and the aged, to temporal or spiritual dignities, or to those placed in positions of command and

authority, irrespective of their personal characters, and because of the central law on which all these conditions rest. He who is striving after the unselfish and righteous life, will put aside all personal judgments, and will give the reverence due to age and position, and in thus putting aside self, and learning to obey the lesser law, he will prepare himself to comprehend and obey the Greater Law of the divine life. For the soldier to disobey his General, the pupil to instruct his teacher, the child to ignore the commands of its parents, or the citizen to defy the laws of his country—this would be the reign of anarchy, it would be confusion finished and complete.

* * *

Now as reverence is called forth by that which is worthy of reverence, it becomes the duty of parents, leaders and teachers to conduct themselves as befits the dignity of their position. The exercise of thoughtfulness, gravity, will, and wisdom fosters the virtue of reverence. Thoughtlessness, lightness, weakness, and folly cannot call forth the reverence of men. Goodness and strength will call forth reverence, for virtue possesses an inherent power and dignity which uplifts by its very presence. Virtue commands respect. Strength inspires to obedience. Great is the responsibility of parents, guardians, leaders and teachers, and the restoration and cultivation of the virtue of reverence rests largely with them.

* * *

And the follower of Truth, the searcher for

the Supreme Good, will give unbounded reverence to all that is noble and great and true—to both the lesser and greater teachers of the past who by their lives of transcendent virtue and words of wisdom have saved humanity from confusion and destruction; to all the goodness and purity manifested by men in the present; to the power and majesty inherent in the universe, and to the Great Law of Good by which it is upheld; always he will walk with reverent feet, conscious that he is in the presence of the Eternal.

No man doth safely rule, but he that hath learned gladly to obey.—THOMAS A KEMPIS.

If I am master and thou art master who shall drive the asses? — ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

OBEDIENCE is our universal Duty and Destiny; wherein whoso will not bend must break.—CARLYLE.

He who laughs at an impertinence makes himself its accomplice. — ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

THE world is full of judgment days; and into every assembly that a man enters, in every action he attempts he is gauged and stamped.—EMERSON.

THE choicest of all effulgences is the shining of knowledge on men of understanding.—DESATIR.

THE GREAT RECONCILIATION.

BY JAMES ALLEN.

A child had been playing with a ball, one half of which was red, while the other half was coloured green. Two visitors sat opposite each other, and conversed across a table on which the ball rested. One saw only the red portion of the ball, the other saw only the green. After leaving the house, one incidentally mentioned the red ball; thereupon the other remarked, "No, it is a green ball." Then the first man contradicted, "You are wrong, it is a red ball." Then arose a protracted altercation, and each was so sure of his ground, and so fully convinced that the other was wrong, that the thought of admitting each in himself the possibility of error, and going back to the ball for a more thorough explanation could not enter their minds. Finally they separated very much disturbed, and each secretly condemning the other for his lack of perception and bad judgment. Both men stated the truth about the portion of the ball which they saw, but while the ball was both red and green, it was neither a green ball nor a red one, but a red *and* green one. The child knew.

Now the above is a parable. The ball is Life, the child is Wisdom, and the two men are the partisans and controversialists.

Life and the universe are made up of com-

binations of opposites. Each man sees the side which is most prominently presented to his consciousness, and he regards it as the whole of life, and maintains it to be the truth, contradicting presentments of the other aspects of life as false. Wisdom sees the perfect sphericity of life, and beholds all apparent contradictions and extremes bound together in one grand eternal reconciliation.

The pessimist sees only the dark side of life. He sees the pain and misery, the sorrow and death, and he despairs because of the blackness of life. The optimist sees only the light side of life. He sees the pleasure and comfort, the gladness and happy unions, and he is elated because of the brightness of life. Each sees correctly, but he sees only one half of life. Pessimism is not life; it is despair. Optimism is not life; it is hope. The wise man is done with both hope and despair, elation and depression; he has found the "golden mean" which avoids extremes. He is neither an optimist nor a pessimist; he sees things as they are.

Men form themselves into opposing camps under the banners of Materialism and Spiritualism, Agnosticism and Christianity, Annihilation and Immortality, and carry on, from age to age, the warfare of words which sometimes leads to blows. Yet, in every instance, both sides are stating the truth about a particular aspect of life. The contradictions are apparent only; in the reality of things all aspects are harmoniously related.

Prejudice sees only that which it wishes to see. Wisdom has no personal wishes ; it sees that which is.

Plain are the visible, material facts of life ; equally plain are the invisible, spiritual facts of life. Knowledge is possessed, but it is surrounded by the shores of the Unknown. Life is sure ; of the same surety also is death. Materialism and Spirituality are one ; the Known and the Unknown are one ; life and death are one.

One says, "Man is immortal." Another says, "Man is mortal." The wise man is silent, having found the middle way.

Opposites are not separate ; they exist by virtue of each other ; they are the converse sides of the same thing, and are eternally reconciled. Man, introducing an arbitrary separation between them, produces suffering and sorrow and strife.

Always half the world is in light and half in darkness ; half mankind is in life and half in death ; half in tears and half in laughter ; man is compounded of mind and matter. Wisdom stands poised, silent, serene, midway between all extremes.

To see the harmonious relations of all opposites ; to reconcile all extremes ; to be gentle, selfless, and free from contention—that it is to have returned Home in peace ; that it is to be at rest in The Great Reconciliation.

THE Perfect seeth unity in multiplicity, and multiplicity in unity.—DESATIR.

REVERENCE.

Sweet Reverence! How fair art thou!

How linked with majesty thy grace!

How noble thine expansive brow!

And how divine thy speaking face!

Friends of long standing now are we,

Yet still with awe thou canst me thrill;

Nor would I solve thy mystery

Which baffles but attracts me still.

I met thee first in childhood's days,

And loved thee ere I knew thy name;

For thou didst guard life's mystic ways,

And offered help to tread the same.

Together in the courts of God

We sought for wisdom from on high;

And none than thou more softly trod;

And none as thou brought heaven so nigh.

Sweet Reverence, thine eyes are sad;

Say, what hath hurt or grieved thee?

Is it that some no more are glad

To journey in thy company?

Is it that some no longer seek

Thy blessed presence when they pray?

No longer care to hear thee speak;

And from thy counsel turn away?

Be sad no more: Sure they are blind

Who thus refuse thine offered grace;

With me at least thou e're shalt find

A welcome, and a dwelling place.

FLORENCE M. SOLOMON.

RECREATION.

BY CHRISTIANA DUCKWORTH.

THE provision, which from time immemorial to the present day, all states and religions have always made for the observance of national and religious holidays, establishes beyond doubt the necessity for a certain amount of leisure and recreation if the welfare of nations and consequently of individuals is to be duly considered.

One of the most remarkable of these provisions is exhibited in the Jewish law. There was not only to be a day of rest, one day in seven, but also one year in seven was to be kept as a land sabbath; and still more, every 50th year was to be kept as a Jubilee, because seven periods of seven years had elapsed.

In fact throughout the Jewish law a most careful and exact system of holidays was promulgated both for the national well-being and also to prevent those too poor to protect themselves from being deprived of their holidays by reason of their great necessities.

Admitting the necessity for rest in the form of recreation, one naturally wants to know what recreation is and why it should be so universally necessary.

We may obtain a satisfactory answer to these questions if we look a little closer at the word itself.

Though pronounced recreation and holding a signification of its own, generally accepted as amusement, we find that it consists of two words, "re-creation" both holding intrinsic meanings.

In Skeats etymological dictionary, in addition to the definition 'amusement' etc; we find that 'recreation' "originally meant recovery from illness, hence amusement."

Any one who has recovered from a severe fever, when the body has been reduced to such a wasted condition as to be absolutely unrecognisable and hardly a possible tenement for the spirit, would realise the full force of the two words re-creation.

Once the crisis is past, the body is built day by day as it were by an invisible power: it is deftly moulded by a faithful sculptor in the space of a few weeks out of perfectly new material, exactly true to the old familiar model.

The normal signification of recreation having its origin in recovery from illness, we see therefore that the deeper meaning is to recuperate or restore both mind and body after toil, and some dictionaries add "after sorrow." In other words recreation temporarily removes the pressure toil and sorrow cause, and in addition provides pleasant opportunities for the invisible sculptor to constantly remodel the body, before it be reduced to as feeble and wasted a condition as that induced by disease.

But the second half of our question still remains unanswered, viz "why should recreation be such a universal necessity?'

The definition, a 'refreshment after toil and sorrow' will help us, for the word sorrow in this connection has a deep signification. We all know that work is most beneficial and necessary for the welfare and happiness of all human beings: we all know that congenial work is infinitely less fatiguing than uncongenial work: we all know that congenial work in happy healthful surroundings, and especially for the benefit of those we love, is, comparatively speaking, almost untiring to a person in good health. Contrariwise, we all know the devastating effects of sorrow, grief, and mental friction of one sort and another on the bodily health and how quickly change of scene and thought become necessary if the unduly wasted tissues are to be repaired or re-created.

The inevitable conclusion from the above is that it is not so much work, even hard work, that makes recreation a necessity as the conditions of the work itself. In a word, happiness largely minimises the necessity for recreation after toil. That it should do so, explains the necessity for recreation.

Recreation gives, or attempts to give, in doses and periodically, the very happiness and joy we should find (given the right conditions) actually infused into and as an integral part of our work.

It is strange how new and rather startling to some people this idea seems to be that work, no matter how continuous, far from being exhausting in itself, should rather prove to be recuperative in its accomplishment. But far

from being new, the conception has been presented more or less clearly to the world in the familiar words "Take my yoke upon you, . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Soul, as we to-day understand, means the subjective mind of man which has perfect control over all bodily functions and what is generally called the involuntary nervous system; in fact, soul is the invisible sculptor that remoulds or re-creates the body by which the eye or spirit manifests itself.

That rest to this soul, by means of suggestion through the will and brain is the ultimate object of recreation, is plainly indicated by the fact that sorrow, mental unrest, and unhappy conditions of work, create a demand for recreation quicker by far than work under the contrary conditions.

Now a yoke as we all know is not the burden itself, but an instrument comfortably adapted to the shoulders of a man to enable him to carry a heavy burden with ease.

If we can really define what Jesus actually meant by His "Yoke," we shall have found the condition which will make of work a recuperative rather than an exhaustive agent.

AFTER men's attempts to realize their ideals and reform society without reforming themselves have ended in disaster, and, sobered by sufferings, they submit themselves afresh to the hard discipline which has brought us thus far, further progress may be made.—SPENCER.

ON QUIET.

BY FRANCIS S. BLIZARD.

FEW conditions are more helpful to culture than that of quiet. It is only when the loud and insistent voices of the world are hushed that we are fully conscious of the higher vibrations which are ever ready to appeal to our innermost depths, but must be listened for, so delicate are they, so much finer than the loud-tongued notes of earth.

Stillness always has a soothing effect—it is the mind's true atmosphere—and produces a receptive attitude, even an expectant one. Noise, on the other hand, lessens or removes the receptivity, and renders concentration difficult if not impossible.

At dead of night a large city bears an aspect which is strange and wonderful ; for a time, at least, the mingled voices are hushed, and the stars look down upon a scene of stillness which is in harmony with themselves. Here we can reflect at will without distraction, and commune with ourselves on many subjects which the scene suggests, but only by virtue of the quiet. A few hours later, and the busy din has recommenced and now 'twere folly to attempt to ruminate ; to do so would be to court interruptions every minute.

Who has not felt a sense of rest and peace

when, having left city life for a time, he finds himself in sylvan glade or verdant meadow, and nature is hushed save for ripple of brook as it sparkles and dances on its way, or the soft sighing of the breeze in the wood? How different he thinks all this to the scenes he has just quitted! And not only has the scene changed, but he fancies he has changed with it. He, too, has become still and restful, and the currents of his thoughts are harmony: no longer is he swayed entirely by the present as he gazes on the scene around him, each different portion of it suggests some profitable train of thought which he follows half unconsciously, but with a sense of pleasure. It is as though someone were talking to him in a soft whisper and he replying in thought only. His mind reviews the past and runs on into the possibilities of the future, and he has become as it were a spectator of his own actions, and is able to see them in a clearer light than before.

At such times one is able to see how much of value there is in quiet, and what real need there is for the town-dweller to seek after some spot where he may be alone with Nature and with Nature's God.

But the noises of the city are not the only ones which must be silenced; there are those inward noises too which distract and hinder—passion, envy, self-seeking, pride—whose clamorous sounds are so ready to drown the Heavenly harmonies, and to destroy our peace, and which are far more potent hindrances to our spiritual progress than the mere din and

bustle of the city which, disturbing as it may be, has little power to work us harm.

He who gives way to wrong can know nothing of inward peace and quiet, for he has banished both by his action.

The impatient man too will be a stranger to peace until he has learned patience.

Endurance must be cultivated, for this is essential to peace, when times of trial and stress arrive and the troubled waters surround us.

Faith is wanted, strong and unswerving, to enable us to look beyond the darkness of present trial and difficulty to the brightness which lies beyond, and shall be ours if only we faint not.

Resignation may perchance be necessary to enable us to bear patiently the discipline which is necessary—for without it we shall be likely to “kick against the pricks” to our own injury.

But above all it is necessary that we look repeatedly away from earth and its absorbing pleasures and cares, and aspire to those spiritual verities which are life itself—our present and future possession—and of which the things of earth are but the types and shadows. Thus we shall find quiet and refreshment, even when surrounded by the jarring sounds of the world, for we shall have strength to prevent their entry into our sanctuary and they shall no longer be able to molest our peace.

ALL souls are Thine, the wings of morning bear
None from that Presence which is everywhere.

WHITTIER.

LIFE.

INTO the vista of "What might have been"
Another day has passed, and with it all
The deeds undone, the harsh unkindly words,
The actions whose sole motives were for "self,"
The thoughts unguarded, wherein crept the
 beast,
Are past and gone—into the "Might have been."

What opportunities for doing good
Are held within a single earthly day;
What burdens we may lighten, if we will,
What sorrow we may soothe, what wounds may
 heal;
What tiny germs of happiness lie hid
Within the soul, if we will let them grow.

Full many a weary year has rolled away
Since first to suffering men and women here,
The prophet's words, "If thou wilt cast thy
 bread
Upon the waters, after many days
It shall be found by thee," came clear and true,
And now, as then, they sound in heedless ears.

For this old world of ours might yet be made
Into a Paradise so sweet and pure
That life would be a glorious, sinless dream
Of happiness, if men would only see
The meaning of that ancient prophecy,
And scatter seeds of kindness as they pass.

“For whatsoc'er humanity doth sow,
That also it shall reap and garner in.”
And this is the Divine immortal Law
Which men transgress, and understand it not;
For though the gift of sight is given to men,
They use it not aright, and so are blind.

But still, a time will come, and that ere long,
When men shall understand the laws of Life
So far as they affect himself on earth;
And he will see their great simplicity,
And wonder why he was so blind before
As not to see and understand them well.

And man will see that all the wretchedness,
And all the misery, and want, and sin,
Are caused through lack of Love and Faith,
and Strength:
Love that doth beautify and purify,
Faith that can overcome all obstacles,
Strength that endures the conflict cheerfully.

And all good gifts and every perfect gift
Is from above, and cometh softly down
From Him who is the Father of all lights,
With Whom is neither variableness
Nor any shade of turning,—and to men
The gifts are given, to do with as they will.

Freely we have received these perfect gifts,
And unto those that hear, a clear command
Rings down, and penetrates the soul of man:
“To all the suffering souls around thee now
Freely distribute these My heavenly gifts,
And untold treasure shall be thine in Heaven.

"Freely ye have received, oh freely give,
E'en to the end, e'en though thy very life
Is spent in giving, helping, cherishing,
Cheering the cheerless, cherishing the poor,
Helping the helpless, beating down the bad
With goodness that compels allegiance to 't.

"And not in heaven only, but on earth
Thou shalt have some reward, and gratitude
Will shine in many a brighter, happier face
For thy endeavours; yet on earth thy lot
Will not be of the smoothest, for the truth
Is oft misunderstood, and trampled on."

Two forces are at work upon the earth,
And man may choose whichever one he will.
Two banners wave unseen among the throngs,
Amid the busy haunts of men and things,
And hover o'er the battlefield of earth.

And one is rampant as a ravenous beast,
With black and bloodstained jaws unsatisfied
And foul and hideous, and his name is vice;
In many and chameleonlike disguises,
With many a subtle art he tries to win
Adherents to his flag, whose sign is death.

And one is gentle, beautiful, and pure,
And holy, and his countenance doth shine
All radiant as the sun in heaven; his name
Is Virtue, and to all his followers
He gives the strength of ten, to fight and win
A deathless glory for the flag of life.

And Virtue is for e'er at war with vice,

And men must fight whether they will or no,
For each of us an influence doth wield
Either for good or bad, there's no halfway,
Either by our own actions or our words
We make our comrades better men or worse.

For none of us can live unto himself,
However much he would ; if he doth go
And hide within some narrow hermit cell
To "keep himself unspotted from the world,"
Lo, men will say : "A man has gone from us
To take the utmost care of his *own* soul."

Therefore our gifts can not be laid aside,
Either misused or well-used they must be ;
And the right use of them will justly fix
The measure of our happiness and peace ;
For if we are to reach our "Promised Land,"
Our heaven must be begun for us on earth.

So, as each day goes past, each man must try
To do his duty, and to speak the truth ;
To do to others as he would that they
Should do unto himself, be merciful
And just, and pure in all his works ;—and God
Will see unto the rest ;—all will be well.

HAROLD GREENWOOD.

THE good mind dignifies every employment.
It is the men who make the situations mean.
A high and holy aim, a pure and good heart
ennobles every position ; even the gibbet is
ennobled when it bears a Christ.—GEORGE
BROWN.

IN PROGRESSING, OUR MIND
MODIFIES ITS IDEAS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF LAMENNAIS,
BY GRACE HUTCHISON.

Truth grows, broadens ceaselessly, for in itself it is infinite. Like a divine stream, it flows from its eternal principle, waters and fertilises the furthest depths of the universe, quenching the searching minds that are carried on its divine waves and, in its invariable course that nothing can impede, that nothing can hinder, raises them little by little to the source whence it came. And, as it is infinite, no one, whoever he may be, no matter at what period life may have been given to him, can vaunt himself of possessing it completely. What proportion, what common measure exists between truth and him? An imperceptible shell on the shore saying to itself: I have the ocean in me! No state then, more unreasoning than that of retaining unchangeable ideas, when they are those which form to some extent, the bed on which truth progressing perpetually flows. For this state implies, either the persuasion that one knows all, that one has seen all, conceived all, or, the will to see no further, nor to conceive anything higher, and when, to add to this one presumes to make of this insignificant idea the last stage of humanity, which in passing by has been clutched at as one clutches at

a rock overhanging the river, no tongue can furnish words to express such excessive unreasonableness.

Solva said : " I grow old always learning." This advancement in knowledge, this continual evolution of the intelligence into truth, is one of the first laws of the mind. But all knowledge, each new thought, does not only add itself to the ideas and to the knowledge already acquired, it modifies them still more, whilst intermingling with them ; so that the mind cannot grow in light, widen its horizon, penetrate further, without finding something to re-order in its ideas and previous judgments. Those who announce with superiority the pretension of being unchangeable in this sense, who say : As for me, I have never changed, my opinions are the same as they were ten, thirty years ago, those persons miserably err, they have too much faith in their own stupidity. But there is no one who, wishing it or no, that is not influenced by the general progress. In spite of oneself one advances, the crowd carries you forward, and the weak vanity that disputes this movement is dragged backward at every step, and sees its unchangeable convictions disappearing little by little in the distance.

As for us, our purest and most satisfying joy is to feel nothing in ourselves that impedes this marvellous impulse, which is not of one person, but of every one, the result of which is the development of truth in the reason of all. This development, in our eyes, encloses all the terrestrial aspirations of man ; for he cannot

believe in truth without believing also in love, and love and truth are the two elements of his life progressively most perfect.

DISCIPLINE.

THERE is nothing so important in the raising of a child as discipline. A child must be taught obedience, or it will bring reproach upon its parents, and sorrow to itself.

Better be a little severe in the beginning, if need be, and bring the child into a state of respectful obedience, than to let it have its own way, and work its own ruin.

No longer ago than yesterday, I heard a father speaking positively to a boy who needed correction. The mother at once took the boy's part and replied to the father, defending the boy, whereupon a little daughter put in and spoke to the father in most disrespectful language.

The father turned and left the room in sorrow, leaving his wife, son, and daughter in triumphant mastery of the field.

Homes without heads, homes without discipline, where lawlessness prevails from the very cradle, are the fountains from whence flow the vast amount of licentiousness, drunkenness, and crime, which plagues the earth to-day.—
EXTRACT.

TAKE each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.—SHAKSPERE.

GOD AND MAMMON.

BY THOMAS W. ALLEN.

It is often said of certain persons that they are trying "to make the most of both worlds," which implies that these persons although not at all vile or depraved, are somewhat epicurean in their tastes, and whilst aspiring to a purer and nobler life hereafter, still seek pleasure and happiness in material things. In a word they are trying to serve both God and Mammon. The folly of this proceeding is obvious to the most superficial observer, for not only are the real joys of life forfeited, but even the sensual pleasures granted to the worldling are also lost. Like the dog in the fable of the "Dog and the Shadow," in their desire to secure both present and future happiness both are missed; for, to the man of depraved nature, destitute alike of moral and spiritual perception, there is a certain amount of gross, animal enjoyment derived from sensual pleasures, which is altogether denied the man who possesses that spark of divinity which the longings for a higher and better life prove. Hence the fatuity of endeavouring to serve both God and Mammon. Foolish, because utterly impossible. Between light and darkness, good and evil, righteousness and sin there is no affinity, they are so entirely opposed one to the other as to

be impossible of assimilation. But, alas! how often do we not see the attempt made to commingle these two contrary elements, followed inevitably by a speedy and disastrous failure. Many, lacking knowledge, plead that the present organization of society compels them to serve Mammon, against their inclinations. As John Wesley said in one of his sermons:—"Many if we exhort them to keep a conscience void of offence, to abstain from what they are convinced is evil, do not scruple to reply, " How then must we live? Must we not take care of ourselves, and of our families? "And this they imagine to be a sufficient reason for continuing in known, wilful sin. They say, and perhaps think, they would serve God now, were it not that they should, by and bye, lose their bread. They would prepare for Eternity, but they are afraid of wanting the necessaries of life. So they serve the devil for a morsel of bread; they rush into hell for fear of want; they throw away their poor souls, lest they should, some time or other, fall short of what is needful for their bodies!

"It is not strange that they who thus take the matter out of God's hand should be so often disappointed of the very things they seek; that, while they throw away heaven to secure the things of earth, they lose the one, but do not gain the other. . . . Taking thought for temporal things, they have little concern for things eternal, and lose the very portion which they have chosen. There is a visible blast on all their undertakings; whatsoever they do, it

doth not prosper ; insomuch, that after they have forsaken God for the world, they lose what they sought, as well as what they sought not : they fall short of the kingdom of God, and His Righteousness ; nor yet are other things added unto them."

It is a law that admits of no exception that he who tries to accomplish many things fails in all. No man can 'run with the hare and hold with the hounds' for long ; neither can he be both one of the children of light, and of the hosts of darkness.

Even in worldly matters dispersion always spells disaster, while concentration compels success ; and he who would attain to purity of life and conduct must focus all his powers of mind upon this one object, and all other things, all other aims or desires must be subordinate and subservient to the one supreme desire for personal righteousness. With singleness of mind and purpose in the pursuit of right, a man may face all the forces of evil with equanimity, but if he halt between two opinions he is surely lost—lost in the byways of fear, dissatisfaction and disaster. "No man can serve *two* masters." He "cannot serve God and Mammon."

THE law is not made for a righteous man, and does not apply to him. His right-mindedness lifts him above the coercions and restraints of law, save only as it is a guide to the most fitting and proper action.—*The Herald of Peace.*

REALITY.

BY TRUTHSEEKER.

If life is to be real it must be emancipated from every sort of slavery to self and evil, and if the multitude of outward things are not what they seem, how shall we escape from the chains which bind us to the unreal and the untrue? Divine Wisdom says: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness," and all needful things shall be added. And herein lies the great secret of Reality. This Kingdom within—this Kingdom of God—is the one real thing in the wide universe, the one real thing in the life-history of our race. Under all the stages of growth or decadence in the life of mankind we have evidence of the vanity and valuelessness of mere self-seeking as a permanent possession for the soul; from the time of the ancient Kings who "came, and saw, and conquered," and then passed away, even as the races they subjugated also passed, down to the time when the parable of the "rich fool" was spoken, the everlasting law has been clearly manifested, by which selfishness has been shown to lead only to failure and disappointment, and the only reality has been found with the self-sacrificing souls who in their devotion to duty and obedience to the highest they knew, have laid down their lives rather than claim their material rights. The first require-

ment of anyone who will live for the Kingdom of Heaven is a solemn conviction that it is *here* and therefore *to be lived for*.

In relation to this Kingdom, then, we are in precisely the same position as in relation to material nature around us. We cannot create a drop of dew, or rain, or a solitary sunbeam. We can do no more than utilise the divine influences and energies that are placed at our disposal. But how much is involved in that never strikes us until we compare the uncultivated waste with the rich luxuriance of skilled cultivation. Even then we are not aware of the enormous amount of unused influences that await a higher condition of intelligence, and of patient, faithful skill. If to this one would add the consideration that the spiritual influences as much exceed in power the material as the spirit is more exalted than the body, our poor doubts would turn to confidence that the things that seem impossible among men are more than possible the moment we are conscious of divine powers.

Two principles are constantly taught us by which to mould our conduct: first, that the Kingdom must come through our individual actions guided by love: and second, that wherever love is cherished it has a divinely expansive power in itself.

There are also these two essential conditions to further guide us. First, that we can work for the Kingdom of Heaven only as we are in sympathy with it—that is, are ourselves heavenly—and second, we can only obtain the

heavenly sympathy by striving for it. "We become good by true efforts to do good ; that is, love can only exist and grow by exercise and operation." So wrote one of the most self-sacrificing men ever known to the present writer, and one who had a clearer view of the great realities of life and being than any man intimately known to him during a long life. Therefore if we would escape from the thralldom of the unreal and the passing material life, we must strenuously set ourselves to work and live for the highest we know. And then from every stage of advance we may make, we shall see a pathway into still greater and more beautiful worlds of light and truth and peace soon, as Bunyan's pilgrims saw the gates of the celestial city from the tops of the delectable mountains.

To souls who have had such a vision, the allurements of Demas and the silver mine, and the sensual delights of vanity fair offer no attraction ; and even the valley of the shadow of death has no terrors.

So, for those who aspire to live in a real world, beyond the power of carking care and the maxims of the worldly-wise, there is an ever-widening prospect of goodness and truth, an ever-growing power of faith and love and patience ; a way into newness of life and perfect peace such as is spoken of by a modern singer, who says :

" Their's is the song that never dies,
Of love, and joy, and trust ;
Immortal still while temples rise,
And crumble into dust."

We see, therefore, that not only may "temples rise and crumble," but that the most ambitious schemes of men and nations may fail and pass and be forgotten, but a life like that of any of the great and wise who lived amidst the eternal realities, becomes eternal in its influence, and progressively benevolent in its action upon all who are able to absorb the same principles, and obey the same truth, and live in the same spirit of love. For life is real and earnest as we learn that man was made not merely to lead a sensual life, and to mourn and die, but to overcome, and become a very king in the realms of freedom and holiness, where shams have no power and the falsehoods of the senses no longer rule, because the Kingdom of Heaven is the Great Reality, and, as that Kingdom rules over us, the lesser things of life recede, and righteousness alone is loved and rejoiced in. If, therefore, we would live in a world of reality, we cannot do better than follow the advice of the Philosopher Kant, and "Act according to that maxim only which you can wish at the same time to become a universal law." This carried out would make life faultless and blessed.

LET a man therefore strive to purify his thoughts. What a man *thinks*, that he *is*; this is the old secret.—THE UPANISHAD.

By the street of "Bye and Bye" one arrives at the house of "Never."—ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

ASPIRATION.

BY JOHN D. MACDONALD.

Aspiration emerges from mere desire when the wish is for the ennoblement of character and not for material gain.

When the clog of selfishness lifts before a vision of nobleness, it reveals the permanent and transient, the gold and the dross.

After the pursuance of many objects, after the striving for material possessions, the futility and emptiness of it all breaks upon us at the moment when its acquirement should bring solace.

Possibilities of happiness by other means than the possession, in abundance, of material things, rarely appeal to the individual—such power does the trend of the world's way exercise upon the pliant members of all communities. Apart from the differences of association, whether the degree be high or low, the stream carries with it the unawakened. If any escape, it is those of simple mind.

Many have moments of lofty thoughts, but the stir of life continually submerges these things, and the exercise which would give them life and form is forgotten. Reaction questions as to whether they are within the bounds of reason.

Cold selfishness would shut out the warmth of true sentiment—yet such is the susceptibility

of man that it will creep in at oddest moments, and leave a longing unfulfilled. Hero worship first lifts us from the rut and awakens us to the capabilities within us.

We stand afar off and gaze in rapture at the beauty of character portrayed, and invest it with life. Imitation rouses our latent power, and the commonplace is uplifted by the stimulus and surge of our thought. Thoughts spring forth like beautiful melodies, and only ignorance of self belies the capabilities of fulfilment in life. Action follows thought, and through this channel we express that which dominates us.

Rise and be doing—increase the power of aspiration — uplift it from the mire of vain desire, and know that thoughts are things. By the cultivation of steadfast purpose thou shalt rise from the weakness of self. Undo the cringing hold of gross opinion, and walk as one who knows thy object in life—as the master of thy mind and servant of thy noble thoughts.

IN what then consists the opposition between the pursuit of natural and the pursuit of spiritual good?—the desire of physical supplies, and the aspiration after the kingdom of God? It lies in this :—He who seeks after “what he shall eat and what he shall drink” is one whose *chief conscious aim is to get such things*. He who seeks first “the kingdom of God” is one whose chief conscious aim is *not to get them unworthily*.—MARTINEAU.

SPIRITUAL SIGHT.

BY ALFRED W. BERRY.

THE gift of the Spirit is the reward of the persistent searcher after truth. After many trials, many disappointments, and many defeats he renounces all personal desires, and at that time he finds all that he has sought for.

Then he is pervaded with a happiness that does not depend upon outward circumstances, and he sees with clear vision that everything is working together for good.

He who has once received this sight possesses a faith in his fellow-creatures that can never fail,—he sees truth in everything,—all nature seems to come very close to him,—the very trees, he feels would speak to him if they could, and tell him “all is good.”

Such supreme happiness many may have occasionally experienced, although they may not be able to explain it, but it enters more as a reality into their lives than anything else they have experienced, and of this they are fully conscious.

It must be remembered that the growth of the spirit is a natural growth. We must be patient that we may not hinder its harmonious development. There are times of darkness, when all that has been found seems to slip away again; when that calm strength we once

possessed gives way to fear ; but this relapse is not real, it is only apparent, it is the stepping-stone to higher development and consequent power.

The soul must remain true to the light it has received until every cloud of darkness has rolled away. The fight may be long, but the victory is certain, and those who have experienced the first-fruits of that victory may rest assured that the Kingdom of Heaven is verily at hand.

FADED FLOWERS.

A simple gift of half dead flowers,
 As though the giver's pleading eyes would
 say,
 Let me of Life's Eternal Waters drink,
 And I shall look with gladness on the day ;
 Once more my fading eyes shall see the light,
 My pale lips take a deeper, warmer hue,
 My wan cheeks find the roundness they have
 lost,
 My poor hands drop the rosemary and rue.
 E. K.

THE Heavenly Reason strives not, but it is sure to conquer. It speaks not, but it is sure to respond. It summons not, but it comes of itself. It works patiently, but is sure in its designs. Heaven's net is vast, so vast. It is wide meshed, but it loses nothing.—LAO-TZE.

THE SILENT MESSAGE.

BY H. L. PEARCE.

JEANIE was tired—so tired; lonely, oh! so lonely.

Drawing a chair to the open window she sat down, wearily. Like a storm-tossed ship her soul was labouring heavily—ploughing silently through the swell of some great emotion—unfathomable. She tried to understand, but failed, and soon her thoughts were merged in the shadowy sea of Doubt.

No guide she had.

Half unconsciously her hands clasped and fell softly amidst a mass of ivy clustering round, forming a pillow of rest to which her head instinctively drooped. Her thoughts were far in the hazy twilight and wandered into a waking dream—the muse of an absent soul seeking some far-away fugitive Peace.

As if to befriend her lonely desolation a gentle breeze sprang up and breathed into her aching heart sweet fragrance of sleeping flowers below—staying awhile to play amid the waves of dark brown hair that hung loosely from her shoulders. A tender lustre graced the eyes that gazed beyond in wistful longing—a longing that grew in intensity as the inward storm gathered force. But calm came soon—there was One who understood.

The ever-deepening shadows, the soothing rustle of waving trees and grasses, lifted her soul beyond the range of earthly sorrow, and drew from her lips in a faint whisper, "Peace." The shadows dimly echoed, a little moonbeam stole a loving glance, and the sleeping roses beneath her breathed a fragrant breath of Hope.

Out of the silence the ripple of a stream caught and charmed her ear as it ran on in silvery threads from stone to stone murmuring its tender song. It carried her dreamily far away : farther, farther yet—and its music grew fainter—an exquisite stillness reigned ; no sign, no sound, no word ; just the sweet consciousness that the Eternal Power that holds and guards each precious life was near—so near. A slumbering sanctuary within her was awakened. With all emotion quickened, yet sublimely calm, she learned nor doubt, nor fear, nor sorrow need remain—the very stillness told her of the Love there is—and shall be. A Love whose sunshine can dispel all darkness ; a Love that falls in gentle showers to cleanse and render pure ; that steals so softly on the soul to lift man upward.

Jeanie had found the heart's one prayer that brings the future near—upon whose gleaming ray the soul leaps out to claim its own and brings back gracious gifts of Peace and Joy.

That night she dreamed sweet sunny dreams, and heard a faint voice whispering, ' All is well.'

A HAVEN OF PEACE.

AMID the hurry and bustle of ordinary life, many a soul is yearning for a taste of the condition implied by the above heading. In this world there are numerous separate interests. Each one seems to have a claim upon us as we come in its way, and verily some of them "claim us as their own."

And so it comes about that if we are desirous of making progress towards a more harmonious state of being, we must see that these interests are dealt with, and if good results are to be obtained, dealt with correctly. It must be understood what each important interest means, and those which do not ring true must not be allowed to influence us.

What is herein suggested may not appear to be the easiest path in life, but the most destitute cannot make an effort on these lines without being benefitted in some way. And we must remember that ever as we hold fast to the good that we see, the unseen good is reaching out to us a helpful influence.

The haven of peace is within our reach here; the very desire for it is an argument in favour of that; and to the persevering and patient soul it comes.

F. HORSLEY.

Not as I will! The darkness feels
More safe than light when this thought steals
Like whispered voice to calm and bless
All unrest and all loneliness.—H. H.

MEMORIES.

I prayed to God to take the burden from me,
The burning memory of my illspent years,
That sins and errors might be all forgotten,
That I might not remember all my fears.

Oh foolish prayer! Thank God it was not
answered;

For surely all my sins were steps to be
But gropings which would lead me thro' the
darkness,

Else how could I have found my way to
Thee?

And thus it is that sin is but a by-road;

Its sorrows soon or late will make us learn
That God within ourselves alone will bring us
The peace for which our hearts still vainly
yearn.

Then profit by the memory that is waking;
Remembrance of the past will make thee
strong;

Let not its errors cause thy spirit sadness;
The good will overcome the past ere long.

SYDNEY RIST.

OUR different ideas are stepping-stones;
how we get from one to another we do not
know; something carries us. We (our
conscious selves) do not take the step. The
creative and informing spirit, which is *within*
us and not *of* us, is recognised everywhere in
real life.—OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

OUR GROUPS AND THEIR WORK.

NORTH LONDON GROUP.—Meeting on July 15th. The speaker for the evening was prevented from coming to address us. However, two excellent articles from the June number of "Mind" were read, and a lengthy discussion helped us to assimilate the truths expressed by the writers.

Children's Outing, July 22nd. The following paragraph, which appeared in The Islington Gazette of July 26th, gives an account of the Outing:—

ST. GILES'S CHRISTIAN MISSION.

CALEDONIAN ROAD BRANCH SUNDAY SCHOOL.

"On Saturday, the members of the North London Group of Light of Reason Readers took a party of children from the above Mission to Finchley. The spot selected for the excursion was known as the 'Rough Lots,' and at one time was the resort of foot-pads and highwaymen on the Great North-road. Here the children enjoyed their picnic, blissfully regardless of the wild associations of the place.

"The party was a small one—only 21 boys and girls—but 21 merry faces reflected the sunlight, 21 hearts were made glad, to say nothing of the enjoyment of those who watched them. Each child hugged (more or less lovingly) a huge bunch of wild flowers which he or she had picked for competition. And, even better than this pretty souvenir which would quickly fade in the atmosphere of Caledonian-road, in each little brain was stored the memory of the glorious ride on the top of the new electric cars; of a picnic among the ferns; of races won and lost; of tug-o'-wars pulled off amidst much shouting and merry laughter; of the Barton airship that manœuvred in the sky over the Alexandra Palace while the party were at tea. All these, and many other memories will be kept fresh by some of the children who are writing essays on the outing.

"Only 21 children, all supremely happy; and thanks to the able management of Mr. Burnett and Mr. Cooke,

all supremely good. A thousand pities it could not have been 50 times that number."

The children's essays on their day in the country proved very interesting. Of course they unanimously agreed that they had enjoyed the treat very much, and in the majority of the essays the important factors in the sum of their enjoyment seem to lie in the things they won as prizes, or the food they ate. Here and there, however, sentiment and budding powers of observation are disclosed.

There is much scope for work of this nature amongst London children, but at present our funds are very small and only permit of us carrying it out on a very limited scale. Perhaps some of our London or Provincial Readers who cannot attend the Group Meetings could help in this way.—*Harry J. Stone, Hon. Secretary.*

WEST LONDON GROUP.—On July 12th Mr. Judge gave the group a very helpful address on the problems of life; explaining the reasons of disease, suffering, and trouble of all kinds, by showing that the wrong conditions must exist in the mind before they can be exhibited in the life, and that truly it is that "As a man thinketh so is he." The speaker invited questions at the close of his address, and several members availed themselves of the opportunity of further understanding the subject. Mrs. Worley, at the close, thanked him most heartily on behalf of all present for his able address, and his kindness in again visiting the Group.

Mr. Harry Gaze, from Los Angeles, will address us on September 6th.—*Louise Clow, Hon. Secretary.*

HOME GROUP, ILFRACOMBE.—On July 21st, Mrs. Shaw read a "thought-provoking" essay on "Education," in which she explained her idea of true education as the development of character and conscience, in distinction to the mere acquiring of knowledge. She quoted George Macdonald on "Polish," which is not a mere veneer, but the hard polish of the discipline of life rubbing away the angularities of our faults and failings, and so bringing to view the beauty of underlying character. The conversation which followed turned

chiefly on the subject of "conscience," which was regarded as an evidence of the divine in man.

August 4th.—Mr. Patrick read a thoughtful and interesting paper on Browning's "Paracelsus," in which he analysed the teachings of the poem. Briefly summarised, it is that the cultivation of the intellect at the expense of the emotional, or love nature, must result in failure, for it means a one-sided development, cold and hard. Equally also the development of the emotional, or love nature, and the neglect of the intellect means failure in the opposite direction. The perfect character must have an all-round development. To be conscious of failure is the first step in the path of progress. In the conversation which followed, many remarks tended to further elucidate the subject.

August 11th.—Mr. Allen gave us a thoughtful address on "The Middle Way in Action," or, as he also expressed it, "The Impersonal Way." As a rule we are given to laying too much stress upon our own opinions and ways, in opposition to other peoples' opinions and ways; then follow arguments, quarrellings and wars. Whereas if we could avoid, or, better still, eliminate all thought of *self* we should be free from extremes and walk the middle path of peace and calmness. And in order to attain the power to do this, we must, he told us, cultivate poise of character, self-control and calmness, and acquire humility and gentleness. An interesting incident from the life of Buddha, and others from our own times, were related to illustrate in a practical way what was meant by the middle path, and how it would work in daily life. The path consisted in avoiding the extremes of weakness on the one hand, and violent resistance on the other, and taking the path of impersonal Truth.—A. S. Wormald, Secretary.

WOLVERHAMPTON GROUP.—A few friends are arranging a Light of Reason Group for Wolverhampton, and would be pleased to hear of other friends interested. Address, Mr. Smith, Hon. Secretary, 31, Lichfield Street, Wolverhampton.

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