

DIVINE ADJUSTMENT



Henry Thomas Hamblin

Love is the key to every situation in life.

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Preface

There is an ever-present principle of perfection which, when co-operated with, brings our own personal life into a state of order. There is beneath the surface of things an inner harmony into which we can enter, and with which we can become at-one.

This is the Inner Secret of all true religions; - to show people how to find this interior order and harmony. and to become adjusted to them, and at one with them.

Many today are finding their life discordant: nothing goes smoothly: everywhere they go they find trouble, and everything they do is done with strain and friction. The cause of all this disharmony is that they are out of adjustment with the principle of order; they are not working in agreement with the laws which govern their being: they are not thinking and living in accord with the interior harmony which is beneath the surface of things.

They all desire that their outward life should be adjusted and harmonised, but before this can become possible they must themselves become inwardly adjusted to the laws and principles of life. Infinite Wisdom is always ready and willing to lead us into the way of order and peace. Infinite Love for ever calls us to enter the Inner Harmony which is the Reality. Also, all the experiences of life have the same object in view; to bring us into a state of Divine Adjustment.

The object of this book is to help people to find their way by an understanding of life and the laws and principles which govern it.

Henry Thomas Hamblin

'The Way of the Spirit is harmony and peace.'

1

THE STREAM OF BLESSEDNESS

*"There is a River known of old
From which the prophets drew;
A living stream that ever flows
The whole creation through.
And they who find this mystic stream
Shall never thirst again;
It flows from out the throne of God
To all the sons of men."* (Henry Victor Morgan)

Too long has mankind suffered from the belief that it is not only "born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards," but condemned to endure it, and that there is no way of escape. It is still a common belief amongst many of us, who profess to believe in God, that disharmony is inevitable. If we escape from certain evils, then we say we are "lucky". Too often, alas! our only belief, as far as this life goes, is not in God (a God who is of any practical use or help in this life), but in chance and luck.

If we are lucky, well and good. If we are unlucky, then we must grin and bear it. Many of us do not believe that there is any practical help to be derived from prayer. We think that at its best, it is a beneficial exercise for the soul. In this modernistic age those who think differently are often sneered at as believers in magic. In other words, man is a victim to chance and luck, to the elements, to certain powers of destruction, or to influences which may either raise him up, or cast him down; but yet over none of these has he any power of his own; and as for God - well, He does not or cannot Interfere.

It is true that so long as, and to the extent that, we hold these views, we must remain victims of fate, or chance, or luck, and of powers of evil and destruction. If we exclude from our mind all belief in the God-given spiritual power promised to His children: liberty, mastery, dominion (not by the self, but that power and mastery that is experienced by those who enter the liberty of the sons of God), we must forever remain weak slaves and victims of fate, or chance, or whatever it is that plagues and torments man.

Even scientists, such as Sir James Jeans and others, are coming round to the metaphysical idea that the world is not so much a thing external to ourselves, as it is something that is held in the mind. This is no new belief, for it has been accepted, in the past, by nearly all thinkers who, by processes of reasoning, discovered that the only thing of which they could

be certain was consciousness.

Without going so far as to accept such a belief or reasoning, en bloc, we can at least see that if we refuse to hold, or are incapable of holding, any idea of a life greater than that of man as a helpless creature, the prey of countless evils and misfortunes, then we must continue to remain victims of fate and chance. If it is not in the mind, it cannot be in the life.

If we do not include God, Liberty, Good, Love, freedom, dominion over nature and circumstances, harmony and order, etc. in our philosophy, if we do not include these within our mental grasp, then assuredly they can never appear in our life and experience. If we do not believe in God, or in liberty and overcoming, we narrow our life and its possibilities down to those of the savage. We shut out of our mind, and consequently out of our life, all the most glorious things in the universe. We shut out of our experience all the possibilities and potentialities of god-hood. The object of possessing a mind such as man possesses, capable of limitless expansion, is that we may grow above the beast, above the savage, above the intellectual, and become god-men.

It is true that the greatest achievements of which we are capable, are that we may love compassionately, be faithful and true, be patient and steadfast, and pure and noble. But even these "fruits", which are of the heart rather than of the mind, have first to be included in the mind, before they can be brought into consciousness and welded into the character. Yet in addition to these "fruits of the spirit," it is necessary for us to enter into the truth about God, that He is a God of love, order, harmony, wholeness, beauty, and peace; otherwise our lives are full of anxiety and care instead of being carefree and full of joy.

My point is just this: that if we do not believe that greater things are possible, they must of necessity remain impossible in our experience; whereas if we accept this larger truth about God and life, thus bringing it within the horizon of our thought and the boundaries of our mind, then greater and more glorious things become possible.

The first step, then, is to believe that greater things are possible, to believe that we are greater than we seem, that we are spiritual beings, living in a spiritual universe, governed by spiritual laws, and that all things are ours, if we do but exercise faith.

First of all, then, we have to believe that God really is good, that life is good, that there is a friendliness in things, that a good and wise purpose is working out, or which is seeking to find expression. This truth may be, and is, stated in a number of different ways: but it is always the same

truth. It is generally stated as "all good comes from the Lord". This is a fundamental truth. At first we think that we can create our own good. We think that we can visualize it, and will it into manifestation. If we succeed in doing this we find that such "good" is only fleeting; for 'Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted, shall be rooted up'; and, also, 'Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it'. This beginning stage of conscious effort is necessary, and has its place in the scheme of things, but it is a stage that has to be left behind. It is only preliminary. Really, the first step is to acknowledge that all good comes from the Lord.

But what do we mean by "coming from the Lord"? First of all, what do we mean by the term "Lord"? By it I mean the One Creative Centre or Spiritual Source from Which all creation or manifestation springs. This, in its essence, is pure and perfect. God, the Source, is perfect, and can express only order and perfection.

Perfect order and good can come only from the One Source of all order and good. "All things were made by him, and without him there was not any thing made that was made." All that is real and perfect and good comes from the One Divine Source, and nothing else is permanent, or real, or of God. Neither can good come from any other source, for there is only one Source, one God, one Good.

The first lesson, then, that we have to learn, is that all good comes from the Lord, the One Source and Fountain of Good. It is not necessary to define what is meant by the term good, for we each know intuitively what is good, and what is not good. We know that sin, such as lust, impurity, selfishness, hate, uncharitableness, untruthfulness, insincerity, unfaithfulness, living below our ideals, fear, mistrust, is not good, but evil. We also know that disease, sickness, penury, disaster, disharmony, wretchedness, misery, care, anxiety, ugliness, disorder are evil and not of God, although He can bring good out of every experience. Intuition tells us that the Divine idea concerning each one of us and the world in general is perfect, and that this Idea is not merely a negative absence of evil, but a positive expression of love, truth, order, beauty, wholeness - in other words, Heaven.

Heaven is where the Lord is, and where, consequently, Divine Order is. When we are conscious of the Divine presence we are in a state of Heavenly consciousness. Actually, the Divine Idea is for ever being perfectly expressed, but we live in a lower consciousness (a form of separate consciousness), in which we fail either to live up to our privileges and possibilities, or to apprehend or appreciate the Divine beauty and order.

Divine Love and Wisdom are continually endeavouring to lead us into the right way - the way of order, perfection and harmony. But, man, being a free agent, cannot be forced or overruled, he must come to the Truth in his own way, and of his own free will. In the true Path of Life is harmony, peace, beauty, order and infinite good. Everything comes to pass at the right time, and everybody and everything is in his and its right place at the right time, and the whole works harmoniously in co-operation and coordination with one Supreme Will, which is Infinite Love guided by Infinite Wisdom.

The disorders of life are due to our being out of the harmonious Stream of Life and Blessedness, instead of in it. Such disasters and disorders are not "sent to try us," but to guide us into the Path or Stream of true harmony and blessedness.

What I have termed "a Stream of Blessedness", Swedenborg terms "The Stream of Providence". The meaning is identical. God is not the author of disorder and misery, but is a God of love, harmony, beauty and perfection. We enter into a state of blessedness, or into the Divine Providence, to the extent that we acknowledge that all good comes from the Lord, and then to depend upon the Divine, instead of upon ourselves, or upon human channels, or worldly methods. To the extent that we surrender to the Divine, do we bring the Divine order into our life; or, rather are we brought into the Stream of Divine Providence or state of blessedness.

I have said that the first step is to acknowledge that all good comes from the Lord. We have seen that "good" is a heavenly state of affairs. Consequently, 'good' can come only from Heaven, the presence of God, and the expression of the Divine Idea. But, before proceeding farther, let me make yet another digression. Some readers may already be in revolt, and want to say: 'Yes, but what about discipline, what about chastening, what about being purified in the fires of affliction?' I am aware of all this. In fact, I have just read in Ecclesiasticus the following: "My son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation. Set thy heart aright and constantly endure, and make not haste in time of trouble. Whatsoever is brought upon thee take cheerfully, and be patient when thou art changed to a low estate. For gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity." But such quotations of which there are many in the Bible merely go to prove my point.

All the chastenings of life are due to the fact that we are not in the Stream of Blessedness. We attract them to ourselves, and bring them into our life, through not living in harmony with the Divine. We do not heed

the Heavenly impulses from within which would fain guide us into paths of peace and harmony. We still listen to the voice of desire, still follow the impulses of self, still live in a state of spiritual lethargy, instead of braving the mountain passes of spiritual attainment. The inevitable result of all this is suffering. Owing, however, to the working of a beneficent law - the operation of Divine love and wisdom - the effect of our wrong thinking and acting is that what is brought to us, is not punishment, but remedial experience. Thus it is that one of the secrets of the true art of living is to meet all life's experience with co-operation, and in a flexible and adaptable manner.

But all such suffering and experience would not be necessary if (a) we were already perfect and all-wise, or (b) if we always followed the impulses of the Divine within us, to live our life on a higher level. We put ourselves, then, in the stream of the Divine Blessedness or Providence, partly through acknowledging that all good comes from the Spirit, from the One Central Source, and not from ourselves, or our own efforts; and partly through depending upon the Divine Source instead of upon our own efforts, wisdom, or subtlety. But, so I have found, it is necessary that this acknowledgment that all good, all wisdom, and all deliverance, etc., come from God should not remain merely an intellectual assent, or belief. It is true that we must first start with belief, but this must pass on to a state of knowing, or realization through experience. "First within, then without: first in the unseen, then in the seen. We learn the first truths about life even as children are slowly taught but the further stage is one of actual knowing through experience. It is a matter of attainment. Those who remain in a state of mere belief can never enter into freedom, or live a wider and more spacious life. But those who pass on to a state of real knowing, attain to a wider consciousness, in which they are free, to that degree, from the limitations which restrict man, and which keep him bound, a helpless victim, to the wheel of painful experience. Here, as in all spiritual truths, there is a subtle paradox. It is through choosing the difficult path that we find ourselves in a state of freedom: it is through choosing the easy path that we find life increasingly difficult. If we seek the personal happiness of the selfhood we never find it: if we follow the painful path of duty and high achievement we find rest to our soul, and joy which transcends mere happiness, even as the mountain towers above the plain.

Most readers will want to know if suffering may legitimately be avoided. Some may have discovered that through an attitude of the mind and will suffering can to a large extent be either accepted or refused. Experience has taught me that it is wise to accept all life's experiences and meet them in a spirit of co-operation. It is through being in mental conflict with them that many evils arise. Thus we have yet another paradox, which is, that if

we accept life's experiences, thus accepting anything that life may bring, we not only rise above fear and apprehension, because we accept that which we have feared, but we also avoid the suffering that conflict and strain, due to opposition, cause. All this is somewhat subtle and difficult to understand, but through experience and through meditation, being helped and instructed by the Spirit, we enter into an inner understanding of this great truth. Swedenborg truly says: 'To those who are in perception it is granted by the Lord to know good and truth by an interior way'. It is through spiritual perception that we are able to understand in an interior way these great truths which are a complete enigma to the finest intellects.

The object of life is simply to prepare us for higher service, to make us ready for the sublime revelation that is waiting for us, and to build us up so that we can bear the responsibility that the revelation entails. We can meet all this with co-operation, willingness and self-discipline; or we can wait for painful experience to drive us into the Path; or we can oppose life's experiences, and thus cause further and quite unnecessary suffering.

If the object of life is to prepare us for godhood (or Sons-of-Godhood) - and no one can read the Bible understandingly without coming to this conclusion - then there is one Royal Road which most people can follow, and this is Meditation. We become changed into the likeness of that which we contemplate. If we meditate upon God, and upon the qualities which we attribute to Him, which are the highest qualities of character that we can imagine, then gradually these same qualities become built up in us. Concurrently, the evils in our nature and selfhood die and pass away. Through contemplating the Divine, we become changed into the nature of the Divine. This is the positive way of destroying all sin, weakness, and imperfection. It is due to nothing that we can do ourselves. It is the work of the Spirit. All that we have to do is to contemplate; but this, however, is an accomplishment that is the result of much practice and patient persistence and perseverance.

When we contemplate we do not have any desire in our heart for anything except to know God and be changed into His likeness. We have no thought about avoiding experience or suffering; therefore, there is no conflict - no conflict between ourselves and the leading of the Spirit: no conflict between ourselves and life's experience: no conflict between a thought that God is love, and a thought that God is one who sends suffering. All conflict ceases, and we rest in the Divine Presence, willing to receive all that life can give us, knowing that whatever it is, it must be good; and that through 'trusting the current that knows the way', we are carried along on a Stream of Blessedness to our highest good.

During such times of quiet contemplation of the Divine, instead of the fears that afflict the selfhood or finite personality, come glorious revelations of blessing and love and care. As Edward Carpenter wrote: "All the Divine forces hasten to minister to our eternal joy".

We become blissfully conscious of a state of blessedness, of ministering angels, of being led harmoniously in paths of peace and eternal joy. We then know that all is well, and that in our experience the best is yet to be.

2

ON RESISTING THE TEMPTATION TO FEAR, AND THE OVERCOMING OF THE SIN OF DOUBT

"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke XII. 32)

The life of the true man is a life of mastery. Not of mastery over others. but of mastery over 'self' and all its weaknesses and indulgences, and over fear. He who overcomes himself and his fears becomes a master of life and all its experiences.

Nowadays, we are told, in the popular Press, "not to worry," by which is meant that we should dismiss the cause of our worry from our mind, and that we should go to see a funny play instead, or do, or see something that would cheer us up. This is good advice as far as it goes; but unfortunately it does not go far enough. neither are its effects lasting. When the performance is concluded, back comes the cloud of worry, with its fears and apprehensions, worse than before.

Religious people speak of "leaving it to a Higher Power". This is not much better than the advice given in the popular press, because although it acknowledges a Power higher than that of the world, it yet uses the term only as a kind of anaesthetic. It does not master the trouble, but merely causes one to sink down into a state of coma, allowing things to drift. Only too often it is simply a mere hoping for the best. People who give or follow such advice are not masters, but are simply slaves of those influences and experiences, which overwhelm man if he does not overcome them, and rise above them.

But the overcoming of fear is something more than "not worrying". Merely dismissing a thing from the mind for a time is not mastering it. It is not the act of a hero, but of a coward. It is merely putting off the evil day. Later on the trouble has to be met, and by that time it may have assumed giant's dimensions. The more we shrink from a trouble, and the more we try to run away from it, the worse it appears to be. Fear becomes our master, if we accept it. The only wise thing to do is to meet it now, and destroy it, while it is yet young and small, before it grows into a domineering and destroying giant.

Nowadays, it is known that we are subjects of suggestion. We are not tempted by an individual with horns and tail, but by suggestion. It is known, also, that the suggestion that we accept becomes part of our life. Fear is suggestion of evil. If we accept it, evil becomes part of our life; but

if we destroy the fear, evil cannot enter our life. When fear has been cast out we find that the thing of which we were afraid, either never reaches us, or turns out to be blessing.

The great thing to be overcome is fear, because "fear hath torment". And not only so, it is the cause of disease and ill-health, and of failure, unhappiness, and a host of negative ills. Fear cannot be overcome by running away from the thing or experience of which we are afraid or which we dislike. Suggestion of evil, which strikes fear in our heart, cannot be destroyed by refusing to meet its challenge and going to an entertainment instead. Fear must be faced; it must be met, challenged and overcome. When this is accomplished, we generally find that there is no substance behind the fear. But even if this is not so, we find that the experience is not as bad as we expected, and that power is given us to pass through it creditably.

I want to emphasize the point that if fear is killed and suggestion defeated, so that they find no lodging place in our mind, the thing that we fear does not materialize. If we overcome our fear, the thing of which we are afraid is overcome also. The event may come, but not the fearful thing that we feared. Thus what we have to do is to become perfectly fearless about the thing or threatened experience that causes the fear.

Here let me digress a little in order to point out two errors into which we all are liable to fall. First the use of thought control in the wrong way, or of a false right thinking, which of course is not right thinking at all. We may think that we are controlling our thoughts and practicing right thinking by avoiding all thoughts of difficulty, disharmony, unpleasant duty or event that we know must be met in the near future. This is an insidious evil, more destructive to character than the habit of worrying. This mental cowardice is an evil that feeds and flourishes on itself; it saps the will, undermines the character and reduces one to impotency. The more we practice it the weaker we become, and the less able to carry on the battle of life. If we dodge the issue in this way, in our thoughts, then it becomes impossible for us to meet life with resolution; impossible to make firm and wise decisions; impossible for us to stand firm when the great moral crises of life sweep down upon us.

Every thought of evil that challenges us: every thought of difficult duties that have yet to be met: every reminder of unpleasant experiences lying in store, must not be dodged but must be met, challenged, and overcome through a mental use of the will, and through a recognition and affirmation of the power of God and the reality of Truth. This must be done firmly until we overcome in our mind the difficulties that we are tempted to dodge, and we have a consciousness of victory. Inward victory

is necessary first, after which an outward overcoming becomes possible. If we continually gain the victory, mentally, over our difficulties and the things we dread we become stable in mind, firm in will, wise in choice, and generally balanced and poised.

The second error into which we are liable to fall is to fight against the experience which we dread, instead of becoming unafraid towards it. This is the cause of great suffering, for the semi-enlightened man knows enough about the power of prayer and the use of mind forces to create a great deal of extra trouble for himself. He tries to alter his life to suit himself, instead of seeking to go where life would lead him. He thus creates an inferno for himself; whereas Life would fain lead him, through experience, to his highest good, wherein is joy, harmony and peace. We have to overcome, although we must not rebel against, or run away from, the experience that we dread. What has to be overcome is not so much the experience as our own weakness. We have to overcome our fears; we have to overcome our reluctance to face life's difficulties, we have to go forward willingly to touch the bottom of every experience. Paradoxically, we must not attempt to overcome fear because we fear the cause of our fear, and wish to remove it. What we have to do is to destroy fear, so that we can face the issue, not merely bravely, but entirely without fear; and willingly, welcoming the experience with co-operation, thanking God for it, and praising Him for it.

Elsewhere I have said: "Overcome depression, and you overcome the cause of your depression." It is equally true to say that if you overcome fear, you overcome the cause of your fear. Fear is of two kinds. There is the fear that is generated by some threatened unpleasant or painful experience of life. There are also the nameless fears of neurasthenia. I will deal with the former first. The remedy in each case is the same, yet in one sense it is different, as we shall show later.

First, then, let us consider the fear that is generated by difficult and alarming events, conditions or experiences. "Coming events cast their shadows before", in the form of fears, apprehensions, forebodings of impending evil, etc. Some sensitive people know when "evil" is approaching, through a sense of uneasiness. If they are uninstructed in such matters they simply worry and suffer, waiting for the calamity which in course of time duly comes to pass. Those who know what to do, at once set to work to realize the truth about God, His Divine order, and of themselves as children of God. until a sense of relief and peace is experienced. If they continue to maintain this sense of peace, then, when the evil happening comes to pass, they find that they are not involved in it, or are brought victoriously through it. Some may say at this point, that, if a coming event can be avoided, then it is not a coming event, but

only a possibility, and all the talk about past, present and future being one is so much moonshine. Dunne shows us in his New Theory of the Universe. that while past, present and future are all stretched out as in one line, and the future is just as real as the past and the present; yet it is possible nevertheless, to avoid an experience. I explain this by the fact that the future as revealed in dreams, second sight. and such like, is not the real, perfect and true happening of life at all, but only the false. But this falsity, if it manifests, is as real in our present consciousness as anything can be. Indeed, because they are not the Real, such events can be avoided, not by seeking to avoid them, but through realizing the Truth.

I have already stated that we should never shrink from any experience; but be it noted, that God is the author of life and the protector of it and is not the cause of any negative ill. The Divine Providence does not lead us into danger, or disease, or accidents, or calamities, but protects us from them, if we do but deal with each event of life aright; and if we do but live every moment in conscious realization of the presence of God.

The obvious thing to do is to realize the Truth. What do I mean by Truth? I mean the truth about God - Love, and the truth about ourselves, as children of God abiding in the Light. God is Infinite Love, Divine Wisdom, Inexhaustible Resource, Omnipotent Power, and much more. God is Life Itself, Health, Wholeness, Harmony and all that is good. God, Who is all this; God, Who is the One Great Father Spirit, who is the Lord Omnipotent reigning supreme, is our Father. And we are His spiritual sons and daughters. Sons of God, spiritual beings, immortal, eternal, joint heirs with Jesus Christ - the friends of God.

Those who walk in the Light realize that they are spiritual beings, living in a spiritual universe, which is governed by spiritual laws, and that they are upheld by spiritual powers; while all the Divine Forces and the whole resources of a Heavenly Universe are behind them. Those who can but realize this find that it is true in spite of all the confusion and disorder of the world. They are in the world (of disorder) , yet not of it. There is protection for every step. There is supply for every need. There is order at all times. The Divine Order is a reality. In it, every child of God is in his right place, at the right time, doing his right work, and doing it perfectly, as the late Mr. Rawson very wisely used to say.

If we did but live every moment in conscious realization of this great truth, which is the Truth about God, ourselves and the Universe, the ninety-first Psalm would be true in our experience. It would be true because fear (the suggestion of evil) would be killed utterly and have no power over us.

I can believe literally in the story of Daniel in the lions den. He, being a man of God, and one who had ventured his all and done great things for God, was delivered entirely from all fear. Because of this no animal could touch him. If we only had the same faith and trust and the same absence of fear through a realization of the presence and power of God, the Reality, we too would be immune.

Many of our readers are passing through experiences just as alarming, and probably more wearing and disintegrating. Long struggles with misfortune, long drawn out illnesses of loved ones, unemployment, misunderstanding by others, misrepresentations, and other troubles, these they think may be harder to endure than the sharp and sudden experience of Daniel. But the remedy is the same, and that is God - to throw oneself utterly and completely upon God. so that fear is utterly routed. The power of God is always available; and when it acts it always restores harmony - in the case of sickness, health - in the case of disorder of life in any form, order and peace. God is not a God of disease, sickness and disorder, but of health, wholeness, harmony, order.

The troubles, disorders and disasters of life fill us with fear. We must look upon them as temptations. All these suggestions of impending evil are temptations. Our duty is to overcome them, to resist them, to send them about their business. If we kill the fear by finding God, and taking our stand in Eternal Truth, then the temptation is overcome and we are delivered. Let me emphasize once more the important point that fear must be overcome. Thoughts of fear, or suggestions of evil, must not be dodged, for then they enter the subconscious to bring forth fruit after their kind in the outer life. They must be overcome by Truth, for no evil can stand against it. If one of our near relatives has died of an insidious disease, the fear-thought will come to us that we too will fall a victim to it. We must not on the one hand accept this suggestion, nor on the other hand, lightly dismiss it or dodge it, hoping for the best, but fearing the worst. What we must do is to meet the thought or suggestion boldly, bring it into the Light of Truth and let the Light dissolve it away. In the realization of God as Life, and as Wholeness, and of ourselves as children of God sharing with our Father His life and His wholeness, the fear is destroyed. and with it whatever modicum of actuality it had behind it. Every other form of fear can be killed in the same way. and must be killed if we are to live lives of victory and overcoming. We should never retire to rest without destroying all our fears.

Now a word or two about the nameless fears of neurasthenia in its various forms. Fear is not the cause of neurasthenia, but is a product of it. Yet, in spite of this, the cure of this disease is accomplished almost

entirely by the overcoming of fear. In other words, overcome your fear, and you overcome your neurasthenia. Neurasthenics suffer from lack of the power of concentration, of application, and also from nameless fears. The cause is one, and the cure is one. No one can cure a neurasthenic, he has to work out his own salvation. This is not the time or place to discuss the cause or causes of neurasthenia, sufficient for our purpose is the fact that by the overcoming of his fears the Neurasthenic can win his way back to health and happiness. But how can he overcome his fears ? His life is full of fears. He is subjected to waves of fear which dominate him. They sweep down upon him at intervals, and overwhelm him. How can he overcome ? He can overcome by taking his stand in Truth. A spiritually awakened person has a great advantage over one who is not awakened. The latter can only follow his Nerve Specialist's advice to deny his fears and to affirm that he is strong and unafraid. This is very much like trying to lift oneself by one's own belt, but it is the best that can be done in the circumstances. With one who knows he is a child of God it is very different. Here let me digress once more. Some may say: "But how can I know that I am a child of God, or that I am spiritually awakened?" The answer is that if you have any love of spiritual and heavenly things at all, and even if you have but a small measure of understanding of spiritual things you may know that the Spirit of God is in you: and not only in you, but coming into expression through you, thus galvanizing you into life - the real life. No one can love or understand spiritual things at all except the Spirit be in him, for spiritual things can only be spiritually discerned. I said a moment ago that the neurasthenic can overcome his fears by taking his stand in Truth. It is a great day when he realizes the truth of the words "Within you is the Power". When once a man awakens to this truth he is a changed being. He knows that the Power within him is not the power of his usual self-hood, but the Power of the Infinite.

In his battle and struggle towards liberty and sanity he has to distinguish at all times the difference between the power of his finite self, and the Power of the Infinite that is within him. If he relies on the Power of "self", he falls. If he relies on the Power of the Infinite, he overcomes. "I can do all things", said Paul, "through Christ which strengthens me". And again, "Yet not I but Christ". This expresses perfectly what I want to convey. All things are possible through the Infinite Power, the Power of the Eternal Logos, within us. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." We are sons of God, because this same Word has been born in us.

Now, as a child of the Kingdom - as one in whom dwells the Infinite Life and Power of the Universe - the sufferer must refuse to accept the fear thoughts that attack him, or the suggestions of evil that assail him. He must look upon all such suggestions as temptations to sin. To doubt the

Power within us, is to sin, for this Power is God. He can say: I am a child of God. Within me is the whole Power of the Universe. I go forward with Joy willingly to meet every experience, knowing that I shall find God in it, and Divine Love behind it. Whatever the experience may be, it can lead me only to my highest good. I welcome it, and thank God for it. The Divine Power within laughs at my fears. I walk in the Light; I abide in the Light; I am yoked with Christ and all is well."

'Be yoked with Me (walk in union with Me) and ye shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.'

3
**ON DIVINE PROVIDENCE, ATTAINMENT,
AND OTHER PROBLEMS**

"He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's Sake." (Psalm XXIII)

The following is the substance of a letter which was sent me.

'Several friends have been discussing the different kinds of teaching derived from a study of the 91st Psalm and the lessons of the Beatitudes. The former seems to speak of temporal blessings so openly, of protection from ills, of immunity from plague and generally of a life surrounded by an environment which keeps away all strife. Jesus Christ on the other hand spoke openly to His followers of persecution and hardship. He must have known the 91st Psalm and yet He did not appear to be a living example of its wonderful teaching. The early Christian martyrs had, indeed, a sorry time of tribulation and the 91st Psalm could mean nothing to them of physical comfort, or health, or troubles overcome.

Do you think the Psalm is to be interpreted spiritually ? Yet it speaks so openly of the dangers of life of today as of old. Possibly if Christ had lived more to Himself He might have claimed the protection of God, but then He could not have achieved His mission.

Many people take the meaning to be literal and to operate in daily life. I should like to do so, but it would make life so easy (if all we did were to prosper) it might take away all the experience which is such a necessary part of our discipline.

I quite agree that if we are God's children, we should develop a 'Go-d consciousness' which puts above the power of all evil, but whether we can live on the higher plane of worldly success and above the reach of all life's little troubles I have my doubts.

"If you feel able to express an opinion on the above problem in the near future I am quite sure many people will be greatly interested.'

In reply I must first point out that the 91st Psalm does not refer to persecution but to a state of adeptship or attainment, which makes the adept a master of negative ills and disorders. This is a state of mastery, but it is not the highest form of attainment. The teaching of Jesus Christ leads up to the highest and last stage of attainment, such as was achieved by John. The 91st Psalm refers to the lower stage.

It is a mistake, however, to think that it is easy to live accordingly to the 91st Psalm. Let those who think so try it and then see if they find it easy.

To live up to the teaching of the 91st Psalm requires such a high state of faith and spiritual activity as to be quite beyond the comprehension, or even the imagination, of most people.

Instead of discussing this matter, it is really very much better if we put the teaching to a practical test and thus start on the great life of spiritual adventure.

We can arrive at merely a part of the state of mastership as outlined in the 91st Psalm only through passing through the most searching experiences, through making great ventures in faith, and through trusting ourselves and our all to God. When we have found out the secret of Divine Providence and Spiritual Protection, when we have become great in prayer, and when, as it were, we can bend the whole universe to our will, we are called upon to give it all up, and prepare ourselves for the second and last stage of the great adventure. The Old Testament teaches the first stage, the New Testament teaches the second stage.

That great apostle of faith, George Muller, became a master not only of circumstances, but also of the elements. After reaching the age of 70 he traveled the world over on several great preaching tours. On one of his voyages the vessel in which he was travelling was brought almost to a standstill by a dense fog. As a delay in the voyage would have prevented Muller from appearing at a meeting at which he was pledged to appear, he took the Captain below and made him kneel down while he (Muller) prayed for the fog to disperse. The Captain thought his strange passenger was mad, but Muller told him to go with him on deck and see the fog clear away. Sure enough, when they reached the deck the fog was already clearing, and soon disappeared altogether; thus enabling the passage to be concluded in time for the meeting to be attended at the appointed time. Muller had prayed to some purpose for over fifty years, and KNEW that when he prayed that for which he prayed was already accomplished.

Like Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus he could pray:
Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard me. And I know that Thou hearest me always." He possessed this power and in such a circumstance, in which he found himself, he felt justified in using it. It was not for himself, for his own pleasure or convenience, but in order that the Lord's work might be done.

But the time came when Muller had to surrender all this, and more, even himself. 'There was a day,' he relates, "when I died, utterly died. I died to George Muller, his opinions, preferences, taste and will - died to the world, its approval or censure - died to the approval or blame even of my brethren and friends and since then I have studied only to show myself

approved unto God'. What happened to George Muller was what happens to all who seek entrance to the Path of Attainment as shown and taught by our Lord Jesus Christ. He had to surrender all that he had attained to and achieved. He had to surrender the great Dr. Muller, the renowned man of faith and prayer. He had to surrender his power to control his life and circumstances, and even forces of Nature and the elements. He had to become just a child, or mere clay in the hands of the Potter. Then it was that a greater Muller, or shall I say, a greater than Muller, arose. Henceforward he was a different being, shaped and fashioned by God into His own likeness and image. George Muller had entered upon the second and last stage. The first stage, be it noted, is just as important and necessary as the second.

John Wesley once went to preach on a Village Green. He was met by the local bully, a terror of a man, noted for his violence and fury. He had his arms full of stones, and thereupon said that if Wesley attempted to preach he would stone him, which of course would have meant death, or serious permanent injury. John Wesley simply tapped the man on the shoulder and said: "Look here, my friend, you cannot throw a single stone unless my Heavenly Father allows you to." The bully dropped the stones and became John Wesley's supporter and body guard. John Wesley knew the truth of the 91st Psalm, and without such knowledge and realization he would have been helpless. But towards God, Wesley was as a little child, desiring only that He should lead him on in his own way and at His own time.

That Jesus was a unique Master of the first stage was evident. He mastered all the forces of Nature. No one could assault Him, or even touch Him. His life was a life of positive mastery, and not the negative existence which some seem to think it was. Some people seem to think that the life of Jesus was a very negative thing. They apparently imagine that He and His disciples were poor, hungry, ragged, and so on. On the contrary, although they refused to hold any possessions they were not poor. All their needs were well supplied, and they had money to give to the poor. The disciples always spoke of the poor as a class quite distinct from themselves. It is one thing to spurn wealth, refusing all possessions, and quite another thing to be a negative victim of poverty.

The life of Jesus was a life of mastery and positive strength. Negative ills had no power over Him. And yet He was Love incarnate, and taught 'service', washing the disciples' feet as an object-lesson for them. Neither did anyone 'take' the life of Jesus. Hear what He said about it. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have the power to lay it down. and I have power to take it

again."

But there came a time when all this mastery had to be given up. All who are willing to enter the very narrow path of final attainment have to give up all that they have gained. Those who will not are those of whom Jesus spoke thus: "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father in Heaven. ...Many will say unto me ...Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name ? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you."

Doing the will of the Indwelling Lord is the second stage. We are brought to a stage where we have only one desire and that is that the Divine Will should be done. This corresponds to Christ's Gethsemane, where He surrendered all, and said: "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." This is the surrender of the personal will. This experience is beautifully described in Newman's hymn, *Lead, Kindly Light*. After this, events and experiences come to us, which if met co-operatively, result in the crucifixion and death of the self, and the resurrection, or raising up into fullness of life, of the Christ self, or Christ in us. All this corresponds to the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus. Again, after further experiences, there is the ascension to the Heavenly, or Universal consciousness, as typified in the bodily ascension of Jesus Christ.

Going back to the difficulties discussed by certain of our readers, Jesus was invulnerable, and was untouchable by the forces of evil, until He, of His own free will (following on His surrender in the Garden) , took down His defences. He was then taken by the soldiers. Otherwise they could not have touched Him, or hurt a hair of His head. Jesus did this so that the experience could come to Him for which He had come into the world.

It was the same with the martyrs, I think, personally that either they were great awakened souls who came to earth for the sole purpose of enduring martyrdom, or they were souls who could reach attainment, at a bound, through martyrdom. The death of the self would be accomplished at one fell blow, so that they might enter or find the new life which is the great objective of all seeking souls, The one who will not give up his life (not necessarily literally, but in heart, mind and will) loses it (the real life) , while he who is willing to lose his life, finds the life which is eternal in the Heavens, and which means far more than this, Nothing less than martyrdom would have satisfied them, and they could have had no joy if they had not fulfilled their glorious destiny (which was what Jesus termed doing the will of the Father). Not only so, but if they had refused martyrdom they would of all people have been the most miserable and to

be pitied.

Followers of Christ must always be ready and willing to suffer persecution. We are nowhere promised that it will be avoided, Indeed our Lord said: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." Again, He said: "Verily, I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's but he shall receive a hundredfold with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

Everything in this life looks the opposite of what it really is. It looks dreadful to suffer for Truth, yet it really is the greatest joy, and it is the entrance to far greater joys than can be imagined or described; or rather, to bliss which is far higher than the greatest joy. Because of this, martyrs went to the stake singing, and they sang in the flames. I believe that the Lord so possessed them that they transcended mere physical pain.

Although in these times we are not called upon to suffer martyrdom at the stake, yet we have to be willing to be stripped of all things, and to suffer all things, and to endure all things, and even to lay down our life, for the sake of the Kingdom so that the Indwelling Lord can come into His own, and that we find our true identity. It is seldom necessary that these things should be experienced literally, for what is needed most of all is the inward surrender of the heart, of the will, of our all. Then, when this takes place, we find that which no tongue can describe.

But while such persecution as the early Christians experienced is not in vogue today, yet all who are true followers of Jesus are nevertheless persecuted in other ways. Some may even think that they would rather have been a martyr, in the old days with their heroism and adventure, than pass through the scorn and ridicule of the world today. We all know how hard it is to be a fool for Christ. We all know how difficult to bear is ridicule. Some would rather be burned or fight a duel, than be subjected to ridicule and cruel, sarcastic tongues.

But the way has to be trodden by all aspirants. It is not an easy way, for the Path of Attainment is a greater thing than is generally realized, for it is the greatest thing in the Universe. But if we are yoked with Christ we find His words true. "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." No aspirant can avoid going through all the necessary stages of attainment, even as typified in the Gospels. If he is a true seeker he is already passing through them, and, possibly through lack of knowledge, may wonder what is the matter, or where he has gone wrong. If he meets all his experiences with willing co-operation, and with understanding, he

will find that they are all entrances into joy and ever-increasing joy. Being yoked with Christ does not lead to negative ills or disorders, but to adventures, and to conflict with those powers which hate His name and nature. and indeed, all for which the Name of Christ stands.

Some may say? Why should there be a crucifixion? Why martyrdom?

Where is the necessity of such sacrifice and suffering?

These questions can be answered without entering into any theological or doctrinal discussion; and the answer is this. The lower cannot be raised to the higher except the higher stoops down to raise the lower. The "higher" is Love; and love, true love, desires to give itself for the sake of others. Indeed, it is not satisfied, neither can it be happy, except when it is doing so. You, dear reader, are doing, every day, the same thing that the martyrs did. You sacrifice your own comfort for the sake of helping or making happy and comfortable someone less happily circumstanced than yourself. You willingly give up your seat in the train to one who is older, or weaker, than yourself. You are just sitting down to a meal, perhaps, when someone, who is in trouble, calls at your door. In spite of the protests of your wife and family you leave your meal to spoil, in order to attend to the needs of the helpless, or lacking one. A woman sits up all night with a sick neighbour, sometimes night after night. She thinks nothing of it; yet she is exhibiting the same spirit that has animated in the past all martyrs. No work of social betterment has ever been accomplished except through the whole-hearted, devoted, self-sacrificing service of a few, who have given their strength, their health, yea, their very life for the sake of the common good. All such have had to face calumny, spite, misrepresentation and persecution, loss and suffering, for the sake of the cause they have held dear; and they have given gladly all that they had to life and the world. All pioneers of any new movement for the raising of humanity meet with bitter hostility. There are always to be found noble souls who are willing to lose all and to give themselves and their life for the cause. This is their joy and happiness.

But let us not spend time or energy in argument or speculation. Let us realize instead, and rejoice in the fact, that God is Love, God is Good, God is Wisdom, and desires for us only our highest good. Let us realize that Good comes entirely from the Lord (our Divine Spiritual Source) and Good only. Realizing and acknowledging this let us go forward with confidence and joy, allowing the Spirit to bear us forward on the bosom of the Tide of Life, which is a Stream of Blessedness, to our highest good; knowing that all is well, and that our destiny is far more glorious than we can imagine.

A perfect Divine plan is being unfolded; and it is our joy and privilege to cooperate with it, and thus help our brother man to reach his high and

glorious destiny.

Let us get down to actual facts and to firm reality by realizing, and living in the realization, that God is Love, and that behind every experience is Divine love. All the time that we spend in speculation is a waste of time and opportunity to realize the Truth. If instead of trying to puzzle these things out we meditate upon and realize the truth about God, and about ourselves as children of God, leaving the future in Divine hands, then all is well.

Whatever experience comes to us is a blessed one. In it we find Love itself, and through it are brought into closer fellowship and union with Christ. Such a life, lived in co-operation with the will of the Indwelling God, gives greatly improved health, and joy indescribable. It also gives us peace. "My peace I give unto you. Not as the world gives give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye believe in God, believe also in Me." Can we not imagine these words coming from the Lord within, the Indwelling God who is ordering our life, and ever seeking to lead us to our highest good?

"Ye believe in a God Transcendent and afar off, believe also in Me, the Lord within, Who desires to lead you to your highest good, if you will but cooperate, and be willing to go wherever I may lead you. You may not think, at times, that it is the best way. But My way for you is always the best way, and it leads to your eternal joy. You may want to go your own way, the way of self-hood, the way of self-will. But this can bring only suffering, unhappiness and discord to you. I, alone, know the way, and I can bring you into freedom, liberty and everlasting joy." Can we not hear the same Indwelling Lord say also, from the depths of our inmost being: 'Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' It looks both heavy and difficult, and is difficult if we hold back, but if we co-operate, if we let go of self and go willingly, then we find that the yoke is indeed easy, while the burden is a source of constant renewal of strength.

Let me close by pointing out that things are not what they seem and that although it looks difficult to follow the Divine Way, it is only so at first, and then mainly is appearance. The way of co-operation with the purpose and will of the Divine is the only path that can lead us to joy, peace, and happiness. It is also the only path that can lead us to liberty. We can never lose anything or become poorer by giving up ourselves, or what the self likes, to God. For whatever we give up is restored to us a hundredfold, even as our Lord said; or rather we find that He underestimated it, for we are given something that is infinitely more precious than that which we

have surrendered, Also, through this surrender, we avoid an amount of suffering, the extent of which cannot be realized, so great is it. If we do not surrender them we find that life removes things from us; things that we hold dear, so that the parting is very painful. But If we surrender ourselves and our all to the Lord within, Who is desirous of ruling our life, we find that nothing is taken away from us, for the reason that no such experience is necessary.

Again, through our surrender to the Indwelling Love and Wisdom, all conflict ceases; and this produces health, the most precious of all earthly possessions. Ill-health and disease are produced by inward conflict as also are other painful and negative states. The inward surrender produces peace and rest, harmony and joy, so that health follows naturally, even as the sun rises after the night of darkness.

Again, disease is produced by strain, anxiety and care. When we surrender our all to God, there is no further strain, or anxiousness, or fear, for all these ungodly and health-destroying states of mind pass away. When we have surrendered all to the Lord, then there is nothing about which we can be anxious, for the reason that all things are in His care. When once we give God liberty to act as He pleases; when we surrender to Life and allow It to lead us where It pleases, we enter into peace and joy. It was said a moment ago that the path of surrender leads to liberty. It is the only path that can do so. Surrendering to the Lord is surrendering the things that keep us from Him, and from liberty and freedom. When we have given all we find that we can trust 'the Current which knows the Way" - the way that is care-free; that is, a state of liberty from negative ills, from inhibitions, from all that holds and binds. Finally, at whichever stage each individual may be, it is the best at the time. The circumstances in which we find ourselves are the best for us at the time. The duty which lies before us and which is right at hand is our path of unfoldment. Doing household work, or answering a shop bell, or working in an office, or nursing a sick neighbour, or relation, may seem prosaic and ordinary. It may be, but to do our duty faithfully as unto God or as an offering to Life; to follow the promptings of the Lord within; to live the Golden Rule at all times; to endeavour to be love in every situation that life brings to us, is to enter the Path of Attainment, which is to lead a life of high adventure, Doing spectacular things is not; unless of course they are forced upon us.

In all events and circumstances of life let us remember that all Good comes from the Lord and Good only. Also that through trusting in God the Infinite, we are protected from every ill and preserved in every time of danger. Also, that all supply comes from the Lord, Who is the only Substance and only Source of all that we need. If we live in this higher

consciousness we find that all is well, and we know that all will be well.

4

INDIVIDUALITY AND STRENGTH

"If God is with me, I am in the majority."

"If God is for us, who can be against us?"

In spite of all that has been said in these pages about surrender and nonresistance, it must not be thought for a moment that we should surrender our individuality, or that we should allow another ego to dominate us. The 'I' of the individual must always remain as distinct from other individual egos. For reasons which cannot be given here it is necessary that this should be so. Each one of us should be positive and non-receptive to other egos, especially to those of a strong dominating kind.

We should be negative, or receptive, only towards God. Paul said: 'Yet not I, but Christ'. He made his surrender only to God and Christ. While it is true that we have to surrender our all to God, it is equally true that we must do nothing of the kind to other egos. Instead, it is necessary for us to develop strength and individuality. We have to become so strong that no dominating ego, either incarnate or discarnate, can have any power or influence over us. We have to maintain our liberty. And be free, individualized beings. If we do not thus maintain our freedom, we not only become weak creatures without individuality or character, but we also are liable to find ourselves dominated by some strong ego to such an extent that our life ceases to be our own.

But how can we maintain this strong attitude and yet be loving to all mankind? Loving humanity, however, does not mean being weakly affectionate, or "being in love", or surrendering ourselves to others in any way. Loving humanity means pouring out upon all a benediction of goodwill and blessing. A positive attitude is maintained. It is like the sun pouring out his rays upon both the evil and the good. One who is sufficiently advanced to love universally is strong enough to be lonely, and be in a raised-up position, from which he desires only to give in a spirit of benediction. Such a one, although he does not allow himself to sink down into a condition of general affectionate receptivity, and thus, in a sense, maintaining an aloof attitude, is yet willing to give himself for others, although he rigidly refuses to give himself to others. His love being universal is as the love of the Divine. Jesus Christ gave in a positive way. He said: "No man takes it (my life) from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."

INDIVIDUALITY REMAINS

Although it is true that the One Spirit - the Spirit of Christ - indwells all who have entered the new birth, yet each soul is an individualized unit. While it is possible to reach a state of universal consciousness in which the soul knows itself to be the soul of all men and even of all things, yet the individuality remains. There is unity combined with individuality, in place of separateness and selfish personality. Giving up the self is a surrender to the Lord alone. It is no surrender of the individuality; neither does it mean allowing stronger egos to dominate us, and thus to rob us of our freedom and individuality.

The Lord Jesus lived in a state of complete realization of Himself being the Incarnate Word, and could say not only, "I am the Son of God", but "I and the Father are one". The former statement represents one stage of attainment, according to Meister Eckhart, and the latter statement to a later and final stage of attainment. Yet, in spite of this, the Lord Jesus was most strongly individualized. There is no danger of confusing Him with Buddha, or Krishna, or any other great and enlightened teacher who claimed to have reached the final stage of illumination. They are each themselves, they each have their own respective, strongly-marked individuality. In fact, the higher their attainment, the more they tower above ordinary men, and the more strongly marked their individuality.

INDIVIDUAL ATTAINMENT TO UNIVERSAL CONSCIOUSNESS

The great Christian mystics attained to a similar realization as their Lord. "I am the way," said the Lord Jesus. That is, the way to the same realization.

In passing let it be pointed out that the extraordinary claims made by the mystics, while legitimate for them, would be rank blasphemy if made by unattained people.

But to continue, each mystic has his or her own strong individuality. Although they all enter the Universal Consciousness they do not lose their own individuality. No two mystics are alike. Who could confuse Lady Julian with Madame Guyon or Jacob Boehme with Meister Eckhart? Some, however, who read this, may be of the naturally strong ego class. The danger in this case is a tendency to dominate others. Owing to a change of heart, it may be a loving domination; but, even so, it must cease. No ego must dominate another, even from the best of motives. Maintain a strong individualistic attitude, yes. But there must never be anything approaching a domination of others. Perfect liberty must be given to others, and such gentleness extended that the weakest and the most timid child of God may take courage to expand and express his or

her individuality in the sunshine of our love and benediction.

FREEDOM NECESSARY

Unless we guard against it we are all liable to become the victims of suggestion. Other people with whom we are in contact may employ suggestion against us, either consciously or unconsciously. This may be done "for our good," but we must not allow it. It is much better for us to be free, and to make mistakes, than to be coerced into pursuing an exemplary course of action. It follows, of course, that we, on our part, must not coerce others, even by prayer, no matter how good and well-meaning our motive might be. Again, the books we read and even advertisements may affect us through suggestion. The picture of a man suffering from influenza used by an advertiser of a useless, highly priced nostrum may affect us adversely, by suggesting the possibility of our falling a victim to the epidemic. It may inject fear into us, in a subtle manner, so that unconsciously our defense is undermined.

We are surrounded by suggestions of all kinds. Even temptation is suggestion. Reading of poverty, penury and distress, may suggest to us that we may at sometime be reduced to the same pitiable condition. This is a temptation to sin against God, through doubting Him. We may be tempted to think that in an unfriendly world where self-interest rules instead of love, we may be forsaken and brought down to destitution. This is the sin of doubt. It is due to suggestion. If we allow it to find a lodging place within us, we lay ourselves open to the possibility of such a thing coming to pass. The suggestion must be killed as soon as it comes to us, and this can be accomplished by affirming Truth, God's truth about the matter, or the truth about God, and the truth about ourselves as children of God.

NOT RESISTANCE, BUT DENIAL

In passing, may I point out that the domination of other and stronger egos cannot be defeated by making 'ructions', and creating angry scenes. All such displays are exhibitions of weakness, and through indulging in them we give ourselves into the hands of the enemy. We can overcome, however, by being quietly firm, mentally denying that others have any power over us. This is possible through realizing the Truth, and thus becoming established in God. If we stand firm in God, then no domination and no suggestion can affect us. "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." We have to realize that God, Who is Love, is all in all, and the only reality. It is very necessary that we should possess this strong realization of the Allness of Good. Particularly is this the case with those who are inclined to be psychic and open to psychic invasions, as they are called. People, who through ignorance, have

practiced a negative, passive form of prayer, may find that they are being attacked by a power or entity that not only seeks to dominate them, but which endeavours to enter and possess their personality. This, of course, must be denied any reality. Those who are troubled in this way can refuse to recognize it, and declare that it has no reality; at the same time affirming the reality and allness of God, the All-Good, and that God loves them and that they are safe in His love.

MISLEADING VOICES

Again, some may hear voices, which unfortunately they think are the Voice of God. If they challenge them, and deny them any reality, and if they refuse to be guided or influenced by them, then all is well. But if they listen to them they find that they become dominated and obsessed, so that they have no will of their own. This domination may not be confined to the one possessed, but through him it may be extended to others. The possessed one may think that he is the mouthpiece of God, and that he has a message to certain people which they must accept, because it is the Voice of God. If they give way they in turn become the victim of the same strong dominating entity. If anyone comes to you, or writes to you saying that the Lord has told him that you are to do a certain thing, have nothing whatever to do with him or it. Refuse to be influenced in this way. Maintain your own individuality by refusing point blank to do anything of the kind. Be guided by your own genius, common-sense and good judgment, and the good advice of those more experienced in these things than you yourself are. This sort of thing is not of the Lord; it is an insidious attempt to ensnare you. The Lord will guide you and bring you safely through all the difficulties and perplexities of this life, if you take your stand in God and Truth. It will be through the practical experience of life, that you will learn Divine Truth, and find God, if you will only be yourself, maintain your own individuality and freedom, always taking your stand in God, and God alone.

THE MARK OF THE SPIRITUAL MAN

Those who are possessed by a dominating spirit, although outwardly they may be perfect, and they themselves quite sincere, for they genuinely and unreservedly believe that the voice which they obey implicitly is the Voice of God, can be detected by those who are experienced in such matters. When meeting those who are genuinely led by the Spirit, and in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells, one can feel and come into loving fellowship with a gentle sensitive nature or presence which makes us think of the Lord Jesus. We say to ourselves, this surely is like unto Jesus Christ, it is as though we were in the presence of the Master Himself. We feel that we are dealing with one so gentle, tender and sensitive that we must tread

gently and speak softly, for fear of damaging so delicate a soul. It is like handling a rare and precious, fragile piece of china. How carefully we hold it, lest our rough clumsy hands should damage or break it! Such a soul never thrusts himself where he is not wanted; he is so considerate of others, so anxious not to cause trouble, so willing to take the lowest place, that those in whom the Light has begun to shine are filled with joy. There is a real communion of saints, a loving fellowship of the spirit, that is of the Lord; and which we know by intuition is of High Heaven itself.

DETECTING THE DOMINATING SPIRIT

But in the case of those who are possessed by a dominating spirit, and who claim to be the mouthpiece of God, the reverse is the case. They may declare that they have reached the highest attainment, and because of this they speak with an assumption of authority, but inwardly we can find no joy or fellowship. Such people lack the inward gentleness and consideration for others, and the hidden Christlike nature that we find in the true brother who is filled with the Spirit of God. We sense the dominating spirit, instead of the Spirit of Christ.

Such persons claim always to be in the right. They never apologize or admit that they are in the wrong. They claim to be directed by the Voice of God, so that everything they do is always right. They claim to be the mouthpiece of God, dictating to others what they should do, and how they should act. All such attempts at domination, and indeed, any form of domination, must be denied any power. The law of non-resistance applies in such cases, so that we do not fight and cause "ructions", but act in love yet with firmness, taking our stand in God and Truth, thus preserving our own individual life, maintaining our own individual freedom. and being subservient only to God.

Of course, there are also those poor souls who are suffering from religious mania. In them we do not sense the strong dominating ego, but what we do sense is very disturbing; and in dealing with such cases we have to be very sure of the Allness or All Power of Good, of our own freedom and individuality, and of the fact that God, the Omnipotent, is our Rock and Fortress. These cases seem to be the result of two main causes, viz., (1) a lowering of bodily strength, due to fasting or lack of nourishing food, and (2) through listening to voices. and accepting the suggestion that he or she is a being specially chosen by Heaven to deliver a wonderful message to mankind. This subtle flattery seems to be fatal in some cases. The poor deluded one swallows the bait, and ever afterwards firmly believes that he or she is some special and wonderful instrument of Heaven, and the voice to which he or she listens is the Voice of God, and nothing less. Such a sad fate can be avoided by keeping the body

adequately nourished, and through maintaining at all times a state of humility which refuses any suggestion that one is a wonderful being, specially selected by Heaven to give a great message to the world, and also through refusing to listen to voices. People who are liable to fall victims to mania are congenitally unbalanced. They seem to lack commonsense, sound judgment and a sense of proportion.

Such should always endeavour to live a poised and balanced life, engaging in all the practical affairs of life, and giving these their principal attention. Such people are inclined too much towards the spiritual and psychic. They should, therefore, pay more attention to the practical affairs of life, in order to restore a state of healthy balance. This life is given us to live in a practical way. Our rationality, reason and good, sound, common-sense are given to us to use, and to guide us, so that we can live the life of good citizens. and be of help to others, and of some use in the world.

HOW TO BECOME STRONG

Now, many of us may recognize the necessity of being strongly individualistic and capable of resisting suggestion, but how to develop such strength, or how, or from whence, to procure it may present a difficult problem.

Reading and intellectual knowledge, however, will not bring us into a state of realization of the Truth. These have their legitimate use, but they can take us only part of the way. It is one thing, for instance, to read a portion of Scripture that describes a state of liberty that may be ours; and quite another thing to be able to realize the truth of it. Some of us, probably, have been reading the Bible all our life, yet it has been read without understanding, so that it has poured through our mind, like water through a sieve. We may have believed that there is power and strength to be found in the inspired word, but we have never been able to lay hold of it.

The mere reading of the word of God is not sufficient. To read a whole chapter, as one would an ordinary book, is better than not reading the Bible at all, but it will never bring the reader into a state of realization, or actual knowing by the soul, There is strength and power, wisdom and all knowledge, to be found in the word of God, but they are underneath the surface. I am not now referring to any esoteric or mystical interpretations that can be brought to light through any key or system of interpretation. They lead one to a deeper intellectual interpretation, but do not help as far as realization is concerned. Neither when I say that the realization of truth, or the inner meaning of Scripture, lies beneath the surface do I

mean that there is some deep idea or mystery that can be dug out by close application and study. What I really should say, probably, is that Truth is within us, or that it is revealed to us inwardly, to the soul, through the awakening of an inward spiritual faculty. This is the work of the Spirit of Truth Himself, Who indwells us, and is ever ready to reveal Truth to us, not through the intellect, but direct to the soul.

George Muller says; 'As the outward man is not fit for work for any length of time except we take food, and as this is one of the first things we do in the morning, so it should be with the Inner man. We should take food for that, as everyone must allow. Now, what is the food for the inner man? Not prayer, but the Word of God, so that it only passes through our minds just as water runs through a pipe, but considering what we read, pondering over it, and applying it to our hearts.'

A SUGGESTED METHOD

But how shall we read or study the Bible so that by so doing we may enter into Truth, and also find strength in realizing Its power ? Certainly, not by reading chapter after chapter; and, certainly, not by studying the Sacred Scripture as one would study a Text Book of Science. The first thing to do is to acknowledge that the surface or literal meaning, while valuable, cannot bring us to an inner understanding. The next thing to do is to acknowledge that the Bible really refers to our own soul, its wanderings, its journey back to God, and final reconciliation and union. The next thing to do - and this is most important - is to acknowledge that we cannot understand or enter into Truth, of ourselves, and that it is only as the Spirit of Truth (Who is our sole teacher) within us reveals Truth to our souls, that we can enter into a realization of Truth.

Having got thus far, we next see that it is while we meditate, or reflect, upon a small portion of Scripture, not trying to understand it, either literally or intellectually, but making ourselves inwardly receptive to the influence of the Spirit of Truth within, that it becomes possible for Truth to be revealed direct to our soul and for us to enter into a state of strength and confidence.

Now, in order to develop strength and maintain our individuality, without, of course, inflating the self-hood, let us, take, say, the second verse of Psalm 18. 'The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, In Whom I will trust.'

When we commence we may find our mind in a state of chaos. Fear, or the domination of others, may send our thoughts tearing round and round, so that we cannot think of Truth at all, or concentrate upon the words before us. We, therefore, find it impossible to become quiet, or

make any progress, because of our agitated state of mind. The best thing to do is first to pray for those who are the cause of our fear or agitation. We should not, however, pray that they may be coerced into doing this, that, or the other, or that they should be made to refrain from doing certain things; but we should pray that they may be Divinely blessed, and that they be led to do the right thing, and be guided in the right way, according to the will of God. When praying for others we must always give them perfect liberty, and also we must give God perfect liberty, praying that blessing may abound and God's perfect will be done, freely and without let or hindrance from ourselves.

When we have prayed for those who trouble us, even though it may seem folly to do so, we find that our mind becomes calmer and more tranquil.

CONCENTRATION

Now we can take the first statement of Truth. 'The Lord is my Rock.' But still we may find that the mind pays no attention, because it is undisciplined and filled with anxious fears, resentments, and thoughts that are foreign to Truth. If however, we focus all our attention on the words, at the same time trying to shut out all unwanted thoughts, and repeat the statement of Truth over and over again, we gradually find that the mind becomes stilled, and a sense of understanding comes to us, and with it a great uplift of soul, and a sense of peace. We gradually become aware that we are established in the Infinite, that we have our being in the Eternal and that the Lord Omnipotent is our refuge, our strength, and our deliverer. Then we know that all is well, and that we are free from all domination, and that our strength is the strength of God and Omnipotence; or rather, that we have no strength of our own, but that the inexhaustible resources of the Infinite are ours to draw upon; and that in our weakness God's strength is made manifest .

It will be noticed that David does not say that he is his own rock, but that it is the Lord Who is his Rock. To declare that we are strength or power may produce a false sense of strength and power, but it does not lead us to the rock - "the Rock that is higher than I". What we need is something that will connect us with Omnipotence - with the One Power of the Universe. To declare that we ourselves are this Power shuts the door of attainment in our face. It cuts us off from our one and only source - from all Life and Power. But the words of our text are indeed a statement of Truth, for they connect us to the One Power, yes, rather, to the one Source of Power. Thus do we become established in the Eternal, and become conscious of it. We enter into realization, which is something that can only be experienced, for it cannot be described.

ALLOWING FREEDOM TO OTHERS

But this realization, that we are grounded in the Eternal, and that the One and Only Power is the Power upon which we rely, and which can never fail us, does not cause us to dominate others. What we claim for ourselves we readily grant to others. We claim to live our own individual life to develop our own particular genius, and to follow our own higher intuition; and, therefore, we desire that other people should do the same. The trouble that some parents experience is very often due to the fact that they try to dominate their children and make them conform to their own pattern, instead of allowing each one to give expression to his or her own individuality. There is trouble among friends, due to the same failing, and even trouble among the saints! While we must retain our freedom, and reject and shake off all attempts to dominate us, we must be equally certain that we do not become guilty of trying to dominate others. We must allow them the same liberty that we demand for ourselves.

GOD OUR STRENGTH IN EVERY SITUATION OF LIFE

But this subject of the strength of God is far too good and helpful to be abandoned at this stage. The Lord God Omnipotent is our strength and our impregnable defense in every situation in life. The realization of this truth will bring us victoriously through every experience. If we are exposed to danger, it will protect us, for no evil can touch the one who is entirely unafraid, through putting his trust in the Only Power. The realization that God is the Only Power, makes the powers that are not of God have no effect. This is rather an obscure paradox, but many will understand what I mean.

Again, we must be exposed to infection. The realization of this truth that the Lord is our Rock, will make us immune. I knew a man once who used to visit patients suffering from the Plague. He was so unafraid, as a result of prayer, and was so sure of God's protection, that he was immune, and thus went scatheless.

Yet, again, we may have to meet experiences in everyday life every whit as difficult and trying as any met on the battlefields of France. The battles which are forever being carried on in the business world, for instance, are as merciless and devastating as any actual warfare. No mercy is shown to the weak; they are ruthlessly pushed to the wall. But in all these trying experiences, God is our rock and our strength, and the realization of this will bring us safely through, even 'though an host be encamped against us'. The Power that is in us and for us, is greater than the powers arrayed against us. The realization of God as the Only Power and as our Rock and Defense, puts to flight the lesser powers, which actually are not

powers at all.

OVERCOMING FEAR

And yet again, we may be subject to nervous fears. It is terrible to suffer from nameless fears. Some people are so obsessed with fear and apprehension that even to see the postman coming to their house almost stops the beating of their heart, through the fear that he may be bringing a letter bearing bad news. The great remedy is realization of the truth about God, as our Rock and Strength, and the truth about ourselves as children of God, hiding in the rock - 'the Rock that is higher than I' . Just one thing more before concluding this chapter. We may be the victim of some weakness of character, and there may seem no way of escape. The path of victory lies in realizing God as our Rock and Strength, instead of fighting against the habit or weakness of character. We cannot gain the victory over ourselves by fighting a weakness, but only by finding in God that which supplies the deficiency that is the cause of our repeated failure.

The cause of all failure, and all failings, is due to a deficiency, i.e., a lack of God, or God quality, The remedy, obviously, is not to attack our failing which is but a negative effect, but to supply the deficiency which is the cause of our failing. Our prayerful attitude at all times should therefore be. "Lord, fill me with Thyself, so that all deficiencies may be made good. and that Christ may triumph in me, and be all-in-all to me."

A NEW VISION

"Behold, I make all things new." - Rev. 21. 5.

Most of us have heard of Pandora and the Magic Box. According to Greek mythology, Pandora was the first woman on earth. She was made from clay by the god Hephaestus. She was greatly endowed with mental gifts, but she was also possessed of a great curiosity. Up to this time mankind had lived in perfect harmony and free from evil, but through Pandora's curiosity earthly conditions became greatly changed. There was a box in the house of Epimetheus, her husband, which she was forbidden to open. But her curiosity overcame her, and she opened the box, whereupon all the evils that afflict mankind escaped. She endeavoured to repair her mistake by shutting it again quickly, but, alas, she was only successful in preventing Hope from escaping. So runs the story of Greek mythology, and it has a curious and interesting resemblance to the Bible allegory of the Garden of Eden. Today, it is as though a Box of a different kind had been opened. At one time we thought that God afflicted us, and that God did not want us to enjoy life on this earth at all. We used to think that there was no remedy in this life, and that at the best we could only look forward to a better existence beyond the grave. Every hope that we were permitted to indulge in was a post mortem hope. Religion to us was largely a post mortem religion. Even the word "peace" reminded us of cemeteries and graveyards, with their artificial flowers under a glass dome, together with a deeply black-bordered memorial card.

But now, thank God, a new day has dawned, a new hope has arisen, a brighter and better idea has come to man. Deeply embedded in the subconscious mind of the race is a belief that there is an evil purpose in life, that there is some sinister motive, some omnipotent malignant power from which no one is safe, and which neither mankind nor God can control. If it were true that there is such an omnipotent power or influence for evil, it is obvious that God could not control it, for no power could control omnipotence.

The idea is demonstrably false for it is a philosophical impossibility for two omnipotent powers to have being. There can be only one omnipotent power, otherwise it would not be omnipotent. Therefore we take our stand upon this truth that there is only one Omnipotent Power and this Good: that there is only one Omnipotent Being and He is Love.

The natural man judges by appearances, but the child of God lays hold by faith of the truth that God is Love and Good; and he never lets go of it, in spite of appearances, and of those sense evidences that war against his

belief. Judging by appearances, life is often an evil thing; but faith tells us that such is not the case, that life is good, and that man is the cause of his own troubles. Life, so faith and spiritual understanding tell us, is good; but through man's separation from it (the true life) and by his opposition to it (subconscious mostly) a state of disorder is produced. Now there is not only embedded in man a belief in evil and its inevitableness, but there is also a love of doing those things which, because they are contrary to the Divine order, produce suffering. Some teachers suggest that we 'kill out desire', because desire produces suffering. We, however, cannot agree with this. We do not want to avoid suffering. We want to find out its meaning, to discover its cause, and to direct our desires into better channels so that they shall produce harmony in place of disorder. It is the wrong direction of desire that produces disorder. One who is capable of the lowest desires, is also capable of the highest. The greatest sinner is capable of becoming the greatest saint. A person who is capable of being neither very bad nor very good is a sort of alpaca, neither a sheep nor a goat.

Our Lord's allegory of the sheep and the goats, makes no provision for the alpaca, Let us not then try to make ourselves into spiritual alpacas, but rather direct our desires heavenward, cultivating the life of God in our soul. Through so doing our desires become transmuted, so that they are changed into a Heavenly nature. By the term "Heavenly nature" I do not mean longing for a better land and an easier life, but that our desires should be of the nature of the Divine order of Truth, of righteousness. According to our desires so are our thoughts. Because thoughts are creative, so do we become like unto our thoughts, and our life also. There is nothing evil in the life which God has given us, but only good. It is a Stream of Blessedness which carries us along harmoniously to our highest good. It is not our own goodness or right thinking that carries us along to good and all that is lovely, true and heavenly, but the essential goodness of the Stream of Life itself. We must at all times acknowledge that all good is in the Stream and not in ourselves, otherwise we may have to pass through experiences similar to those of Job. He was tested because he thought that his good fortune was the result of his righteousness. That was his only fault. He had to learn that even the righteous may be tried and tested until they realize and acknowledge that all good comes from the Lord, and is not the result of their own righteousness.

We all have to learn this lesson, that goodness is in the Stream of Life and not in ourselves. The most that we can do is to co-operate with the Good, and thus allow the essential, innate Good, which is God in expression, to manifest. It is perfectly true that we ourselves are daily using energy that has its origin in God, and according to the way we

either use it, or misuse it, it produces good or evil; but that is only one aspect of Truth. There is another aspect of Truth which is, that Life itself is a stream, essentially good in character and purpose, which will carry us on to our highest good, if we will but allow it to do so. Life is good, and its intention is good. Whatever is evil is due to an interruption in consciousness, but not in Reality, of the Divine Good Intention. We can either live, work and think in harmony with Life the Good, or against it. If we work against it every possible disorder may arise. We all, however, may be tested and tried and winnowed like wheat, but this is only a good process which if co-operated with by us and met with steadfastness, leads us to greater good, harmony and joy.

GOD ALWAYS HAS SOMETHING BETTER IN STORE

Life is progress towards higher and better things; that is, if we co-operate with it. Of course, if we believe that life is evil, that it is a gradual deterioration, descending step by step into greater darkness and misery, it may become so in our experience. But, if we meet life in the right way, acknowledging its essential goodness, and looking for increasing good and blessing, then it becomes possible for these to come to pass in our experience. Life, because it is a progression toward higher and better things, has always something better for us in store. If, however, we think it to be evil, we act in such a way as to thwart its good purpose, thus bringing about disorder instead of harmony. But this is not the fault of Life, but of our misuse of it. Life is good in essence, being the product of Infinite Wisdom and Love, consequently it seeks to lead us to higher and better things, and to carry us on its bosom to that which is harmonious, beautiful and true. The realization of this truth that the intention of life is good and not evil - has proved to be a revelation, and the beginning of a new life to many. It is the Divine intention that we should be blessed, and that our life should be blessed. The processes of winnowing and testing are only for a time.

Their purpose is to open up the way for greater blessing and for a more complete realization of Love as the motive of life and the sustaining law and principle of the universe.

The unbelieving man judges by appearances: he sees evil, or what he thinks is evil, on every hand, and decides that life is evil in intention, that there is a malignant power abroad which may seize him at any moment. The man of faith, on the other hand, believes the reverse to be the case. He starts with the premise that life God is Good, and Love and Wisdom, and that He rules the universe no matter how much outward events may make such a belief appear to be misplaced. He believes that "the Lord omnipotent reigneth," and that evil is no positive reality, but a negative

departure from the good. He believes that if he maintains his faith in the Good in face of seeming evil, then his faith will be vindicated sooner or later. He who puts his faith in God can never be "let down" or forsaken. The only condition is that faith has to be maintained even to the last ditch, and even when that may seem lost. In times of extremity God can help us only when all shred of trust in self, or "the arm of flesh," is abandoned, and when the only thing the soul can do is to give up the struggle and cast itself entirely and completely upon God. When this is done, and persisted in, then faith is vindicated; and it is found that Truth has power to demonstrate itself.

Actually, we do not have to battle and struggle, but only to put Truth forward, to take our stand in it (or behind it), and to depend upon it. Then, if we do this, Truth, which is omnipotent, demonstrates itself by own power.

I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD

'In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world,' said Jesus. He was referring to the persecution which would come upon his disciples. In spite of it all he could say: 'Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.' These words are as true today as when they were uttered. There is no one who has not a certain amount of tribulation in his life, and all who are true to the light that they have, and are true representatives of Christ, meet with persecution and ridicule. But these things are only for a time. We discover that there is a Power for good that is greater than 'the world'. We find that the great truth that God is Love, Order, Harmony, Wholeness, and the only Reality, is able to demonstrate itself; for the reason that it is the only Reality.

And the One who said that He had overcome the world, was Love incarnate. The burden of his teaching was 'love'. It is through love and non-resistance, that we are to overcome. Love is the key to every situation in life. What would LOVE do? is a question which, if asked in the face of annoying and exasperating experiences, will always lead us into the right path of action, so that we are enabled to do just the right thing, through which harmony can be either maintained or restored.

THE POWER IN US

The New Vision that has come to us reveals to us the fact that the Power of the Infinite is in us, and is not exterior to ourselves. At one time we thought that the Power was a long way off, but now we know, even as Paul did, that it is within. It is not the power of the finite man at all, but is the very life of God. Through comprehending the love of Christ which

passeth knowledge, so Paul tells us, we become filled with all the fullness of God. Then he speaks of Him Who is able to do for us exceeding abundantly, above all we can ask or think, according to the power that works in us.

Wonderful words these, if we will only accept them. It is not our own power of which Paul speaks, but the power, the whole power, of the Infinite. All the fullness of God filling us. Mighty and wonderful things become possible, through the Power that works in us.

But we must not aspire to perform wonderful feats of a magical or occult character. The wonder of the power in us is that it enables us patiently to work through the experiences of life, so that we become victorious. Unto him that overcomes great and wonderful things are promised - things so great and wonderful, indeed, as to leave us gasping. These great things do not come to us through the waving of a magic wand, but they are won by the patient "working through" of present conditions.

Our life may appear to be very restricted; our occupation may apparently lead nowhere; limitations may hem us in on every hand; we may feel suffocated by the hopelessness of it all. It may seem useless to continue; the only thing possible, so it may appear, would be to run away from it all, or in some way or other to cut the knot, or the tangled skein that baffles us and fills us with a feeling of hopelessness and despair. But there is no way of escape except the path of victory. All short cuts are a fallacy. If we rebel against life, we find that we are fighting against powers so great and overwhelming that it is like a man trying to stem the torrent of Victoria Falls. Or again, if we run away from experience, choosing an easier and happier path, we find that we have become a victim of a far greater tyranny than that from which we have run away. The way of escape is always along the path of victory. There is no exception to this rule.

While it is futile for man to try to oppose the power of gigantic waterfalls, he can yet harness it to his use. The energy that lies hidden in those swiftly moving waters can be converted into electrical power, which, in turn, can be carried by cable to light distant towns, to turn its machinery, and bring prosperity to man. In the same way, while we cannot successfully oppose life, yet hidden powers enable us to overcome and work through all experiences, until we become master of our life, through mastery over ourselves.

Within you is the power - the power that works in us - by means of which He is able to do for us exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think. God is able to do these wonders 'according to the power that works

in us' if we go His way. That is, if we follow the path of life, which indeed is also the path of victory. If we go God's way we can never become failures, for God can never fail. God's way is the only right one for us. It is not a sanctimonious path, but one of true service.

POWER TO BE WELL

"The Power that works in us" is universal in its application. It is not only a power for righteousness; it is not only a power that can bring us victoriously through all the experiences of life, but it is also a power that can keep us in health. Ill-health, I find, is mostly due to a lack of life. A plant that lacks life-energy through living in a poor soil is subject to diseases or parasitic invasions. The same plant, nourished in good soil, or soil enriched by the use of fertilizers, would possess such powers of resistance that the parasitic diseases would not be able to attack it successfully. It is the same with man. If he lacks life, then he may manifest various weaknesses, diseases and disorders. The more attention he pays to these the worse they may become; or if he apparently overcomes one set of symptoms, then another disorder soon appears. Ill-health, disease, etc. cannot be eradicated by attacking them, for they are only results, or effects, and an evidence of deficiency in life-power. What is needed is more life-power. If we concentrate upon this, instead of upon our ailments, then there is some hope of success, because we are seeking to remedy the cause, instead of fighting against the effect. If we open ourselves to accept 'the Power that works in us', we receive a greater measure of life-power (or realize its presence), and then the weaknesses and disorders from which we may have suffered soon become things of the past.

POWER TO SUCCEED

The truest success is to live one's life in such a way that one becomes a master instead of a slave. The basis of true success is character. Every difficulty met is a test of character. Every difficulty overcome is a stone well laid in the edifice of a true and lasting godlike success. God is not a weak failure, and does not want us to be failures. He measures success, however, not in terms of money or fame, but in terms of character and true worth. The cultivation and display of a fine character may not always bring worldly or material success, although not infrequently they do, but are in themselves the truest success. The amount of money that a man may have made, or the fame he may have won, can never bring satisfaction in the hour of death, when all things are beheld in the light of Eternity. But the victories of character, the possession of qualities of sterling worth, these are the things that satisfy when all the baubles of life are seen in their true light, and assessed at their real value.

The Power that works in us, creates and builds up character, which is in itself the only success, and the only basis of truly successful achievement. "Within you is the Power." This is the keynote of the New Vision that has come to man.

DIVINE ADJUSTMENT

"I realized that it was through Love that life, God's creation, came into being, and that through that same love it is sustained, and ever shall be."

Julian of Norwich.

Sooner or later those of us who are seeking the Kingdom are brought to the point when we have to acknowledge that we can do nothing right of ourselves, and that the only thing that matters and the only thing that can deliver us is a Divine adjustment.

Early on, in the new life of the spirit, we think that we can do very well, aided by Divine Powers. It is really extraordinary how well we can manage, what wonders we can perform, the extent that we can help others, and how mighty we are in prayer. But this elementary stage, which is both good and necessary at the time, has to be left behind. It is only a phase, and we must be willing to relinquish it. Like everything else in the life of the spirit we have to give up a thing, only in order to allow something far better to come into our life. Some, through lack of knowledge, strive by might and main to retain the old experience. They make themselves quite distraught through so doing, and they experience much unnecessary suffering. They would think it very foolish of a caterpillar if it became distraught when it reached the next stage of its metamorphosis. They would see the foolishness of it because they know that the change is for the better. They would also meet their own metamorphosis of life in a co-operative spirit if they knew that the change is for the better, and that it is necessary to give up what has been gained, in order that entrance may be made into a fuller and more spacious and blessed life.

At first, we accomplish things ourselves by the use of inward powers. This is a great advance on the old method of striving to accomplish things by the use of our surface powers, a way that is trying and exhausting in the extreme. We are astonished at what these powers can achieve. But after a time we discover that while we possess powers which can be directed towards certain ends which appear to us to be desirable, yet the achievement of our aims and purpose, brings neither happiness nor true harmony into the life.

For instance, a man may be poor, and may decide that if he can only become well-to-do or rich, he will be happy, and a state of harmony will also be brought into his life. People sometimes write to me saying: 'Before anything can be put right in my life I must have money. All my troubles, sufferings and difficulties are due to lack of money, therefore, the first

thing to do is to get money." This seems only reasonable to a beginner, but later experience proves to him that he is wrong, if he demands wealth he finds, when he has acquired it, that he is far more miserable, and his life far more full of trouble, disaster and tragedy than when he was poor. Again, another may say: 'Before any advance can be made my health must be restored.' Yet when he has demanded and obtained health from life, he may find all sorts of other troubles afflicting him, or his health and strength may lead him astray into all sorts of enjoyments and perhaps follies, so that his last state is worse than the first.

Or again, another may demand that he be successful. His aim may be most meritorious, for his work may aim at the uplift of humanity. Yet, when he has attained success, he finds that his life is full of care and complications, so that it becomes more and more difficult and unsatisfying. Some, however, may make none of these mistakes, and yet after years of seeking God, and striving to live the life of the Spirit, and a life of faith, find their life so full of difficulty, and so complicated, that they can go on no farther. No matter to which type it is that we belong. we discover at last that we cannot adjust our own life. but that it needs a Divine adjustment, for it is only Infinite Wisdom that can ever find a way of deliverance out of the complicated and hopeless position in which we find ourselves.

Now what is meant by Divine adjustment? What is meant is an adjustment in our life and affairs that is brought about by a power and intelligence greater than our own; and not only so, but an adjustment that is brought about by Infinite Wisdom, Infinite Knowledge and Infinite Love; not through a violation of law, but by bringing the life into harmony with law. The one law of life and of the Universe is love, so that it is simple to follow and obey. but not easy Paul says that love is the fulfillment of the law. We also know that love is life, and that it is the great healer and restorer. Therefore, if we desire that there should be brought about a state of Divine adjustment we must first be willing to love all, including our enemies.

Life is a stream - actually, a stream of blessedness, harmony and good - and all is well if we remain in it. Our sufferings and perplexities are due to our wandering away from the stream. Such sufferings are merely due to the fact that we have strayed from our true environment; and they have the effect of driving us back to the stream of harmony and good. Love is the key to every situation of life, because Love is the law and principle governing life. It is true that we wander from the harmonious stream of blessedness which is our true environment, through lust, impurity, doubt, fear, envy, or thoughts of these things; but these are all violations of the law of true love, because we cannot indulge in any of

them without wronging somebody.

But to return, Life becomes so complicated and involved, it is like a tangled skein, that is in such a mesh that no one can unravel it. Or, it is as though we come up against a wall so solid that it forbids all further progress. Then we recognize the fact that it is nothing less than the Wisdom of God that can cope with the situation at all. We realize that we have come to the end of our tether. We declare that if we are to be delivered at all, then God must deliver us in His own way, and at His own time, according to His infinite wisdom, knowledge, love and power. The only contribution that we can make is to give in to Love, and to trust the Current that knows the way, calling upon God to deal with us entirely in His own way.

It is when this great surrender is made that the Power of God can operate on our behalf. Before the surrender is made, It cannot operate, for the reason that self-Will stands in the way. When self-will is removed, then the power of God can come in, to bring about a perfect (perfect because it is of the Divine Order) adjustment. It is only self-will and the lack of trust in God that prevents our good from coming to us, or which keeps us out of our true environment, which, in itself, is entirely good and harmonious. Divine adjustment would not be necessary if we lived in the consciousness of Truth and if we kept in the Stream of Blessedness, which is our true environment. This is so, for the reason that, all the time we are in the Stream. we abide in a state of perfect adjustment, and are in tune with the harmony of Heaven.

Now most of us probably need a Divine adjustment to be made, either in our affairs, or in our health, or in our character. It may be that circumstances have become difficult, through adverse world conditions, or through the wrong doing of others, or from a variety of causes. Every door is bolted and barred, every avenue of escape closed, everything that is attempted seems doomed to failure. The problem is so complicated that there is to human wisdom no way out - it seems as though the tangled skein of life can never be unraveled. But, where man fails, and where man is completely baffled and helpless, all things are clear and straightforward to the Mind that is infinite Where the human, finite mind fails the Infinite Mind can accomplish all things, with ease and entirely without effort. This is not surprising when we remember that there is only the Reality, and that this is perfect. All that is not perfect is, in an Absolute sense, only an appearance, for the Reality alone is, or has any real being or substance. Infinite Mind sees the perfect reality, it beholds the Truth, and then all appearance of complexity and difficulty fades away. Our difficulties are cleared up, like the dissolving of a morning mist at the appearance of the rising sun; and this is so because God gives us eyes to see the Truth, and a

mind to understand It, and a heart to love a situation which would fill us with anger, resentment or fear.

We have to remember that God's love and wisdom are forever seeking to help us, and to lead us to our highest good. There is no power working against us, really, for 'the Lord omnipotent reigneth,' and our life is in His hands. We have also to remember that truth is Reality, and there is nothing real apart from Reality. We know that Truth is perfection, harmony and order; so that all that is imperfect, disharmonious and disorderly cannot be of Truth, or Reality, but is only an appearance. We have also to remember we can do nothing of ourselves to cure our troubles, but that the power of God and Truth can do so. We have reached the stage when, in one sense, we have to leave off doing anything ourselves, and instead to stand on one side and see the salvation of the Lord. We put our whole trust in God, in complete abandonment; and then it is that the wonderful thing is brought to pass.

But some may desire healing. It may be that their ill-health is such, and their attempts to find a remedy so unsuccessful, that they are in despair of ever enjoying health again. All orthodox medical resources may have been explored, but all in vain. Perhaps unorthodox methods have also been tried with equal ineffectiveness. Faith healing, prayer, right thinking, various cults, all appealed to in vain, and yet there has come no release, still there comes no change !

It is at this point, when every thing has failed, that it is time to surrender all to God, and to declare that if one is to be healed, then God must do it Himself entirely in His own way, and at His own time. It is then, when the sufferer gives up entirely, that a beautiful healing takes place; a healing that is as effortless and lovely as the rising of the sun. It is when anxious effort and desire are relinquished that it becomes possible for the Spirit to restore all things to a state of wholeness, beauty and perfection. In other words when self-effort (most valuable in the case of less spiritually awakened people) is surrendered, that a Divine adjustment is brought about, entirely without effort or strain.

In all classes of healing, ranging from the magnetic kind and suggestion, up to the highest forms of spiritual and Divine healing, it is vital to bear in mind that the power is not of ourselves, but that it is a Power greater than ourselves that works through us, according to Divine law, as soon as we allow it to do so, by providing the right conditions. 'Yet not I, but Christ,' must always be the attitude of the healer or rather, the channel or instrument of healing.

CHRIST REIGNING IN US

Finally, we may need a Divine adjustment as regards character and sin. Even a wrong thought is a sin, so we certainly all need a deliverance in this respect. Most of us have weaknesses of character, hardness of heart, wrong states of mind, un-Christlike desires from which it is our most earnest wish we should become free. Indeed our faults are so many, when we candidly examine ourselves and our motives, that it may seem impossible that they can ever be overcome. But if we acknowledge that God alone can heal our moral character, and renew our hearts, and change our desires; and also if we hold the whole matter up, so to speak, so that the Divine light and action can operate upon It, then we find that steadily and surely a regenerative change does take place, until we grow into the likeness of the Son of God.

We have to realize that Christ is in us, and is the hope of our glory. That is, a reigning Christ is reigning in us. Every wrong thought and desire can be wiped out if we appeal to the Indwelling Spirit of Jesus Christ to wipe it out, so that we can see once again His purity and perfection. This necessitates constant vigilance on our part.

We have to do our share in the work of change and regeneration. We have to co-operate with Christ; we have to watch the gate of our thoughts and desires; we have to be ready to deal with evil suggestions, one of the worst of which is doubt of God's ability and willingness to save, deliver, provide for, protect and keep. While we cannot save or change ourselves, yet at the first sign of danger we can appeal to the Christ to wipe out the evil thought, desire or suggestion, and at the same time, to reveal his beauty, purity, love, patience and loving-kindness in its place. He "is able to do for us exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us." He is able to change us into His own likeness, and "to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."

Gradually the 'self' ('self' is our greatest and most persistent and subtle devil) is reduced in strength until it is abolished altogether, and only Christ remains, so that He is all in all. Yet we do not lose our real identity or true individuality; but, rather, it is revealed in us. This is the great mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages, and which Jesus Christ came to reveal. He came to become the first-born of many brethren; to establish a new order of men, who should become like unto Himself. This mystery is hidden from the wise (the intellectuals) and prudent, but is revealed unto babes, i.e., those who have been born again of the Spirit, or from above, and who are thus capable of learning spiritual things, and of growth in a new life; a life that is not that of an

ordinary man, but of the Immortals.

CREATIVE IMAGINATION

'Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God.'-
Romans XI, 33.

There is a right and a wrong way of doing everything; there is a right and a wrong way of using the Creative Imagination. By visualizing and strong willing, the imagination can be used, or rather, mis-used in such a way as to produce results. But these have no permanence, and can bring no real harmony into being. Such results are a creation of the mind of separateness and because of this have no divine foundation; therefore, like the house built upon the sand, spoken of by Jesus, they fall into ruin, because they have no true foundation.

The mind is creative. Our outward life is largely the result of the activity of our mind. It is also the result of the activity of the race mind. The human race has thought itself into its present state of disharmony, mostly subconsciously. It is for ever creating evil and disorder for itself. But we are called by God to cease doing this, and instead, to think God's thoughts after Him. To do this is, of course, the highest form of right thinking. 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.' Some of our readers may object to being called wicked, for the reason that they have put aside all carnal desires; but there is no greater sin than that of doubt, and most people will admit having had their doubts and fears, when everything in their life has appeared to go wrong. Again, they may object to being called 'unrighteous'; but righteousness is Divine order, and most of us surely admit that we do not live in a state of Divine order, and that our thought life is not in accord with it.

We see, therefore, that the Scriptural quotation refers to us. We are invited to forsake our 'ways' (attitude of mind and mode of life), and also our thoughts (creators of disorder), and return to the Lord (the One Source of all Harmony and Perfection).

We are invited to do this because God's thoughts (Reality and Truth) are so different from our human thoughts. 'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.' Man's thoughts and man's ways produce disharmony, disorder and suffering. But God's thoughts and God's ways produce harmony, order, beauty and joy.

God is a God of Wholeness. The life that He has designed for man is a state of perfect wholeness. If we return to the Lord and forsake our wrong thoughts and ways, so that God's thoughts and ways may be followed, then a state of wholeness is brought about that is in itself a healing of the whole life, right from the centre to the circumference. It is because of this that I have used, elsewhere, the term Healing the 'Hard Times' Consciousness, for it is true healing that is needed; a Divine adjustment, a restoration to a state of complete wholeness.

All methods of healing either of mind, body or state, that are of the human mind, while they may produce a temporary relief, can never bring about a state of wholeness and Divine order.

The Divine invitation is not for us to visualize and concentrate upon in order to produce with our mental powers wealth, money and other things which when rightly used are necessary, but which, if thought too much of, become tyrants of the worst description; but instead the call comes for us to return unto the Lord, the author of all order and wholeness, and to forsake our thoughts, in order that the thoughts of God which are wholeness, perfection and harmony, should be allowed to operate, to our eternal good, and that of other people and the world at large.

But how can one return unto the Lord in the sense in which it is being interpreted in this article, it may be asked. People write to say that they have been Christians all their life, or for many years, yet they know nothing of the power of which we speak, and in no church can they find any instruction in the matter. They say that we possess something which they lack, how can they discover it. In reply it may be stated at once that information concerning the hidden things of the Spirit does not come to us, and cannot be found by us, until we are ready for it. But when we are ready for it, what we need comes to us just at the right moment.

THE ONE POWER OF INFINITE GOOD

In order for healing to manifest in our life, and a state of wholeness to encompass and permeate it through and through, we have to turn to a Power greater than ourselves. We have also to believe that this Power is the only power. If we cannot at present believe it, we can declare it to be so. If we do this, then the truth of the matter is revealed to us later, generally in the midst of some trying experience. The reason this is necessary is a paradox. If we do not believe and declare that there is only one Power, the Power of Infinite Good, then we become conscious of other powers. By declaring the truth about God as the only Power, the other seeming powers, or powers of a lower plane, are dispersed or destroyed. In the Christ or God Consciousness of pure spiritual knowing of Truth there are no such powers, but only the One Power of Love and

Good. By declaring the Truth in spite of all temptations to believe otherwise, we enter the consciousness in which we know there is only the Good. This paradox is a great mystery to all who cannot enter into the Truth by means of spiritual knowing; but those who seek the Truth, acknowledging that spiritual things can only be spiritually discerned, will surely enter into a state of understanding.

"In the world," said our Lord, "ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." This might be metaphysically interpreted as: "In the material consciousness there is trouble, disorder, want, failure and every form of disharmony to which you are subject, or enslaved, to the extent that you remain or live in the material consciousness. But be hopeful with a sure and certain hope, for I have overcome the material consciousness with all its claims and suggestions of evil, disorder, and want, and have reached the pure spiritual consciousness of my Father, in which all is perfect, beautiful, harmonious, and Heavenly." Because of this "overcoming of the world" we are set free from the power of material laws and enslavements, to the extent that we acknowledge, believe, and accept the deliverance of Christ in the matter. Our salvation is a complete one, emancipating us from sin, from sickness and from the power of Mammon, but only if we believe it and accept it, and enter into the consciousness of it. Until we do so, our creative imagination continues to bring evil, disorder and disharmony into manifestation. It brings us under the power of those influences from which Christ came to deliver us. When, however, we enter the Christ Consciousness which has overcome the world, or outer or material consciousness, our creative imagination is brought into correspondence with the Divine imagination which can only create that which is beautiful, harmonious, lovely and good.

THE SECRET OF ADJUSTMENT

Thus we see that order and harmony, bounty and sufficiency, are brought into our life, not by our own mental power, but through the Life, Power, Imagination and Mind of God being allowed to manifest in a Divinely normal manner. The Divine word goes forth unimpeded and undistorted by man's contrary will and false imagination, to bring forth beauty, loveliness, order and harmonious perfection. "So shall My word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." And the result of all this is a state of blessing, poetically described by Isaiah: "Ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands."

"Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier

shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." This describes a perfect state of Blessedness, a complete healing of the whole life, through a Divine adjustment, so that a state of harmony, wholeness and order is brought into being.

"Be not deceived," said Paul, "whatsoever a man soweth (in his inward thought and imagination) that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh (the outward man and life that is not in harmony with God) shall of the flesh reap corruption (everything that is not of God comes to naught): but he that soweth to the Spirit (the Source of all harmony, order, beauty, and perfection, and Heavenly conditions) shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting (the life of God which is perfect order and harmony, and which can never grow weak or fade away.)"

But how, it may be asked, are we to deal with life in the light of Scriptural teaching which is so at variance with generally accepted worldly wisdom? When faced by hard times and periods of financial difficulty, our first tendency is to shut up our pockets. We feel that we must not only cut out unnecessary and frivolous expenditure on ourselves (which of course is the right thing to do) but that we must also cease our liberal giving to the Lord's work. This policy is dictated by fear and doubt in God's goodness, and His ability to deliver us. If we adopt it we encourage our fears, we increase our doubt in God (a deadly sin this), and thus make it impossible for good to flow to us. But, if we continue giving, we keep the channel clear so that God's free supply can flow into our life. If we cease to give we block the channel so that no good can come in. I remember once receiving two letters by the same post. One was from a man in rather straitened circumstances, who wrote to say that he could not continue to subscribe to our magazine, the cost of which, by the way, works out at approximately one penny per week. I have never heard from, or of, the man since. How poverty-stricken his mind was in thinking that he could not afford one penny per week for a Magazine which would have revealed to him, month by month, the knowledge that he needed to overcome his limited condition. Such knowledge is acquired through regular reading and reflection. The Truth is presented, month by month, in various forms and ways, so that in course of time the reader is able to understand and live it. Such information is not dearly acquired at the cost of one penny per week, and to spend such a sum would not be a great venture of faith. Yet this man, who had experienced a temporary set-back, thought, in his panic and fear, that he could not afford this trifling sum.

The other letter was from a man who had lost all, and who was destitute, save for a few shillings. He sent almost his last coin in renewing his Magazine subscription, declaring that he had decided to do so, as an act

of faith. He almost immediately became the recipient of an unexpected £100. Cynics will say that he would have received the £100 in any case, but those who are experienced in the spiritual life, and in living by faith, do not believe that such would have been the case.

Infinite Mind knows the end from the beginning and does not see events one after another, one at a time, as we do. Actually, there is no time or space, as we know them; therefore, God is not bound or limited by time. I give these two illustrations from memory; my description may not be exactly correct in every minute detail, but actually it is true in substance. Many times have I been astonished by people giving up their subscriptions because of temporary shortage of money. In their panic they thought that they could not afford a subscription that has purposely been made so low that it amounts to one penny per week. By so doing, and by so acting, they limited themselves in actual fact, and entered into a bondage of financial limitation.

EXAMPLES OF FAITH

On the other hand, far more often have I been amazed, at the faith shown by many, who in the face of alarming circumstances have not only continued their subscriptions but have continued to help the work that helped them; supporting it with a thankful heart, in order that its helpfulness might be extended to other lives. Such men and women of faith keep the channel open for Divine good to flow into their life and affairs. They perform acts of faith, and, through so doing, prove God, Who, when proved, is found always to be a God Who never fails those who put their trust in Him. Such men and women through their faith and acts and steadfastness of mind enter into a state of Blessedness. Those who act differently, shutting up their pockets against the Lord's work (it does not matter which branch of the Lord's work is supported, so long as we give to it in a willing spirit) enter, not into a state of Blessedness, but the reverse of this. In the Old Testament it is called a curse. I interpret this to mean that man by his wrong attitude of mind and lack of faith, removes himself from the sphere of Divine Blessing, so that his life becomes like a barren wilderness. The following is what God's word says concerning the blessing that follows tithing. 'Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that they may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.' This is from Malachi iii, 10, and it is sufficient justification. I think, of all that has been written in this article. From this passage we see that by tithing we prove God, and He promises that if we so prove Him, He will bless us abundantly.

ALWAYS RENDERING SERVICE

In closing, let me say that I am dealing mostly with the inward and spiritual aspect of the subject. Outwardly we have to be "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." That is, we have to be industrious, do everything as unto the Lord, and do all in our power to improve our service, so as to deserve success and prosperity. But such industry as we display must not occupy all our time, otherwise we defeat the very object we have in view. Every day, if possible twice a day, we should sit quietly, realizing the truth about God as our Father, and the truth about ourselves as children of God. This may seem selfish to some readers; and to such it must be pointed out that we can best serve the world by being successful and happy ourselves. If we are weak, miserable, low-spirited and in a state of failure and poverty, we are not in a fit state to help others. When, however, we have overcome, the very fact that we have passed through difficult times ourselves makes us capable of sympathizing with, and helping and encouraging, those who are also passing through hard times and trying experiences. The real source of supply is spiritual. Those who realize and acknowledge this know that the plenty that comes to them does not impoverish others, for the reason that the Divine supply is infinite and inexhaustible. The Divine abundance exhibited by Jesus in feeding the five thousand did not impoverish other people.

It can never be exhausted any more than the source of electricity can be exhausted, or the energy of the atom can become run down and weakened. The Divine Power that heals can never be exhausted, and when a person is healed he or she does not deprive someone else of his share of health. Those who can realize this, and live in the consciousness of it, enter into liberty.

Now there may be some of our readers who are prosperous at the present time who may think that it is not necessary for them to give heed to this lesson. It is, however, very necessary that they should take heed, and for two reasons. In the first place, if they are not living in the consciousness of Divine plenty, their period of leanness may come at any time, catching them unawares. The second reason is that they should seek and find the Divine Consciousness of eternal supply for the sake of others. As Henry Victor Morgan once said in a letter to me: 'I am sure we can add to the sum total of human happiness at this time by keeping the high watch of the soul.'

Those of us who can keep on the mountain top are able to help the whole world, probably far more than we are aware of. Waiting upon God in order to know the Truth about temporal supply, so I have found, is a

wonderful help in the spiritual life. We learn to know God, as an available God, as a hearing, acting God, a God who never lets us down, although we may be kept waiting, it is true, until the last minute. And how great the joy that is experienced when the answer comes, and faith is vindicated. It is so wonderful it is useless to attempt to describe it. I can only recommend readers to experience it.

8 ON OVERCOMING

'No one is made strong by God but he who feels himself weak of his own strength.' - St. Augustine

Either we overcome life, or life overcomes us. By the term 'overcoming life' I mean being victorious in all the experiences of life that we are called upon to face. The unenlightened take life as it comes, patiently enduring with bravery and fortitude the blows which may come to them. Because of their endurance and patience we admire such people, and salute them. If they never allow life's experiences to 'get them down', then they are conquerors, in spite of the fact that they do not understand what it is all about. One man said to me once: 'Life is an enigma'. He said it in such a way that one could see that he had thought much about life, and could see neither reason nor good in it. When we consider how bravely people meet life, in spite of the fact that it is an enigma to them, a thing without purpose, or meaning, we are filled with admiration and awe. Their bravery, fortitude and patience are so fine, they are an object lesson to professedly enlightened people, who unfortunately do not always exhibit the same high quality of courage and endurance as the unenlightened.

THE CONQUERING SPIRIT

If life's experiences get a man down, then he is beaten. Life has won that round, at any rate. But if a man refuses to be 'downed' and never gives up the fight, then he is a conqueror, in spite of all the apparent failures which may come to him.

If people who do not know anything about life, or its purpose, or the rules which govern our existence on this plane, can do as well as they do, then those who understand life and its rules should be able to accomplish much more. They can do so, if they will work consistently in the Unseen, or on the subjective side. The Subjective is the World of Cause. The Objective is the World of Effect. The former is spiritual. The latter is material.

EVIL FATE, OR A PERFECT DIVINE IDEA?

Most people are believers in fate. They believe that what is to be, has to be. Learned people tell us that nothing happens; we simply come up against things. 'Everything', so they tell us, 'has already happened, past, present, and future are all the same, the end is known from the beginning and all is fixed and unalterable. Therefore, whatever trouble is in store for us, must come to us; or rather, we come to it, like passing a milestone

on the road.' What have we to say, in the face of such reasoning? The answer is a simple one, and it is simple because it is Truth. It is, that there are no evil happenings in our life, really. Our life is perfect as it is imagined in the Divine Mind. Only good is designed for us, and good only can come to us if we abide in Truth. The evil happenings of life are not the real and true, but are a distortion or departure from it. If Truth is realized in the mind, then the harmony and order of the true image in God's Mind concerning us, is allowed to appear. The things which we are supposed to be fated to experience, need not come to us; for if we abide in Truth they have place in our consciousness.

REALIZING THAT WHICH TRULY IS

The important thing is for us to know the Truth, because it is then that the Truth sets us free. By the term 'to know', I mean to enter into a state of Realization. When troubles loom on the horizon then is the time to seek a realization of Truth. We do not have to work against the threatened trouble, but simply to realize the Truth. People sometimes write asking me to work against certain 'claims' (whatever they may be), but I do not know anything about 'claims' and I know nothing about working against anything. By realizing Truth, all that is not Truth must disappear, and only that which is Divine Good remains. The fault is always in our own mind. When, through turning to God, we are cleansed by Truth, we begin to see things as they really are, in Truth and not as they falsely appear to our finite mind.

THE SHADOW OF COMING EVENTS

Coming events cast their shadows before. When we are sufficiently sensitive we become conscious of coming events before they appear. A sense of foreboding, or a fit of depression, or a feeling of unrest and uneasiness comes upon us. Then is the time to turn to the Infinite and Eternal, seeking a realization of the actual truth of the situation. This may prove to be far from easy. The more difficult it is, the more need there is for us to find God. When realization is reached, with its calm and peace and certainty, then the battle is won, and the threatened trouble cannot manifest, or if it does, it is so modified that we see evidences of the Divine in it, in fact a manifestation of the Divine Love. We then see clearly what a fearful thing it would have been if it had been allowed to develop, and are grateful and joyful in consequence.

It is necessary to face the matter boldly, and work through it, also overcoming our fears and forebodings, until a clear realization is reached, in which we enter into peace, joy and certainty. It is then that what would otherwise have manifested as an accident, or illness, or loss, or other

disastrous event, is broken up. This is not accomplished by fighting or working against the event, but by realizing Divine Truth. This splits up the false manifestation, so that the beauty and harmony of Truth can be revealed. Truth is of God, and God is Truth. Through realizing Truth we find that God is present, and that in His presence is fullness of joy.

OVERCOMING DEPRESSION

Coming evil events bring upon us a feeling of depression in advance. Certain mystics tell us to give way to depression, because it is good for the soul. I cannot agree. My experience has been that it is necessary to overcome depression by finding God. Then we are filled with joy and laughter; and this is the normal state for a child of God.

We should look upon depression as a temptation of the devil: something to be overcome by the application of Truth. even as our Lord overcame His temptations by quoting the Word of God. Some time ago I met a Christian man, noted for his piety and goodness of heart and character. who replied, when asked how he was, that he suffered 'so badly' from depression. As he said this, all joy and animation went out of his face, and he became the picture of weariness and despair. I told him that he must not give way to it, and that he should meditate upon, and affirm, all the precious promises of God, and thus, by so doing, overcome his depression. But, all-though his face lighted up a little as I spoke of the 'precious promises', yet I could see that he did not believe what I said, and that he was firmly convinced that it was only a Doctor with his drugs and chemicals who could cure him. This man went down and down in health, thus causing other people a lot of inconvenience, trouble and suffering, and finally died in the same terribly depressed condition. I am firmly convinced that if that man, early on, had overcome his depression by repeated declarations of Truth, he would have become normal and been a blessing to others, for many years.

OVERCOMING THE CAUSE OF DEPRESSION

If we overcome our depression then we overcome whatever it is that is causing the depression. It may be the shadow of a coming 'evil' happening, or it may be a miserable state of health. In either case if we dissipate the fog of depression then the cause of it is destroyed. Or our depression may be due to a loved one who is in trouble, or in danger. Immediately, we should get to work, and not rest until we have overcome and reached a state of realization, in which we receive the, 'all clear' signal. By 'getting to work' I mean praying and waiting upon God until we realize that there is nothing but God's love, harmony and order, and therefore that all is well.

OVERCOMING TROUBLES IN ADVANCE

It is usual for people to try to dismiss their fears, apprehensions, depressions, etc., from their mind. This is better than worrying about them; but it does not overcome them in advance. Impending trouble, dismissed from the mind for a time, is as acute as ever, when it arrives. A man may know that at Quarter Day his rent must be paid. Putting the matter out of his mind will not pay his rent. He may keep on dismissing it from his mind, but when Quarter Day comes he has still his rent to pay. Dismissing the matter from his mind has not paid his rent for him. Leaving matters to a Higher Power, and saying 'I am sure things will work out all right', will never deliver us from our troubles, or enable us to overcome them. The man, if he is sensible, thinks about his rent day and prepares to meet it by industry and forethought. In the same way, in spiritual work, dismissing a trouble from the mind, or drowning our fears in pleasure or diversions, never overcomes the evil that is threatening us. Whatever it is that is troubling us must be faced and 'worked through', until we realize Truth. Every time that we do this, Truth tends to neutralize the impending evil, and also it prepares us for meeting a difficult experience successfully; or, alternatively, it may change the character of the experience altogether, from an evil one to one that is very good.

POWER OF PRAYER OF REALIZATION

Prayer of this type not only tends to reduce or change the character of the coming experience, but it also prepares us to meet it with fortitude, steadfastness, wisdom, patience, and a high courage. We must ever remember that it is we who have to be changed. If we were to see always with the eyes of Christ (Archetypal Man, God's Perfect Son) we would see everything in absolute perfection - perfection beyond our highest imagination. It is because our eyes are of the earth, earthy, that we see imperfection, disorder, trouble and evil. The prayer of our heart, therefore, should always be for new eyes, the eyes of Christ and a new heart, and a new understanding.

A BANEFUL THOUGHT HABIT

The habit of depressed thinking must be overcome by each one of us, if ever we are to rise above the experiences of life. Many are naturally given to morbid trains of thought. They see themselves the victims of accidents; they imagine themselves dying, and wonder what will happen to their sorrowing dependants. Or they see themselves old and forsaken without means or friends, but they console themselves with the thought that there will be the Poor House, or the Old Age Pension, and that perhaps they

will be able to put up with it. Or, again, they see themselves diseased and suffering, lingering on a bed of pain. And so they go on. They wonder what will happen when the next war comes: what will happen when civilization is destroyed, and those who are still living live like savages in a forest. They gloomily ponder over what will happen to their children when they are dead, when there is no one to look after them. The above is no exaggeration. It seems to be natural for the human mind to think in this way. No wonder man creates trouble for himself, if he feeds his subconscious mind in this manner.

THE WAY TO OVERCOME

Now in contrast to all this depressed, morbid thinking let us say: 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. What a contrast! How it cuts right at the root of our wrong thinking!

Our Lord won His encounter with temptation, by quoting Scripture. We can do the same. If, when the temptation comes to us to doubt, and fear, and to judge by appearances, or we are attacked by a bout of morbid, pessimistic thinking, we affirm: 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want', we at once see the folly and falseness of our doubts and fears. How can we ever want any good thing, when the Lord, the One Power, the Infinite Source of all things, the Maker and Ruler of the whole earth, is our shepherd? At once we glide into a sense of peace and security. We know that all our wants are abundantly supplied, always; from before the foundations of the world, and always in the eternal now. Again, when we are attacked by fears of accidents and of possible disasters, and when waves of pessimistic thinking about such things begin to take possession of our mind, if then we affirm bravely: 'There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling', it will go far to set us free, and to restore our confidence.

OTHER METHODS

But, when we are attacked by forebodings of something that really is going to happen (in the ordinary course of events); when we are oppressed by a sense of impending evil, then we have a far more difficult task. At such a time there seems to be no light, no understanding, no possibility of realization. The Heavens seem to be as brass, and we are weighted down with a great load of darkness, which seems too heavy for us to bear.

Then it is necessary for us to deal with the matter in a very energetic and determined fashion. We have to be determined not to retire to rest until we have overcome, and received the 'all clear' signal, and know and

realize that all is well. We have to go systematically to work. We have to destroy the whole suggestion of evil. We have to deny it a place in our consciousness. We can say: 'Because I am a child of God I refuse to accept this suggestion of evil.' We can affirm that because of our sonship and of the love of God, we are free in the liberty of the sons of God. Many methods may be tried, but one of the best is to keep on reading over, and meditating upon, the 91st Psalm, or a small part of it. At first no relief or understanding comes, but, as a result of persistence and determination, after a while some sense of the truth contained beneath the words that we read begins to penetrate our consciousness. This should encourage us to renewed efforts, so that we persevere until at last we enter into peace, knowing that all is well.

GOD, THE ONLY REMEDY

God is the only remedy for all our ills, and the way to find God is through the Scriptures. Not by reading the Bible as one would read an ordinary book, but by reflecting upon a portion of it, perseveringly, until the hidden meaning floods the consciousness. Each time that we achieve this we make it easier for us to do the same thing on a future occasion. In course of time we become adepts. To become an adept requires no learning or scholarship. All that is needed is a spiritually awakened consciousness, together with determination and perseverance. The Path of Victory lies right before you. It is yours to enter. There are no restrictions, no barriers, except those that you raise yourself. The way to liberation is open in front of you, it is open to all who are willing to pay the price. The prize is worth ten million times the price that one has to pay in sustained effort and persevering seeking. It is not an easy road, yet it can be followed by all who are in earnest - and it leads to the Liberty of the Sons of God.

LAYING UP TREASURE

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Matth.VI:19-21)

This passage has often been explained as meaning poverty and renunciation in this life, in order to reap the reward of eternal happiness in the next life. But such is not the true meaning. An understanding and realization of its true meaning, not only saves the soul by establishing it in the Eternal, but it also establishes our every-day life in a state of true and enduring supply of substance. This is so, because we become rooted in Reality: we find the true and only Substance, of which material supply and abundance are but reflections on the screen of time. Our Lord tells us not to lay up for ourselves treasures on earth. This does not mean that we are to possess nothing, in a material sense. We may, or may not, possess anything of this world's goods, and we may be equally free, if our affections are set, and our attention concentrated upon, the Reality that is behind all phenomena and this changing life, and not upon the possession that may or may not be ours.

SEEK THE TRUE SUBSTANCE

There are two reasons why we should seek and find the true Substance, of which outward supply and things are but a reflection, and they are these. Ist: If we put our trust in material riches, then, because of the changeable and precarious nature of this present life our whole thought-life becomes centered upon material things, so that the spiritual life languishes, and our real life (the life of the soul) dies; and then we are dead indeed. We have all known men who were very happy when they were young and poor. They were joyous Christians, always full of the joy of the Spirit, and they showed it in their face and bearing. But they became remarkably successful in their material affairs; and now 'the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches' have choked the word, and they are spiritually about as dead as the Dodo. Rather pathetically they show us their property and their motor cars, talking to us about everything save the life of the Spirit. They cannot speak about this because they have none: it is dead, killed not by prosperity, but through setting their heart and mind upon acquiring it, thus neglecting the only Real and True. 'For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.' Concentrating and putting our desire upon material wealth and possessions spells death to the soul, and takes away all the real joy of life; for Mammon is a hard

taskmaster. One who allows himself to become immersed in the cares of this world, no matter whether he be rich or poor, successful or unsuccessful, shuts out the Heavenly vision; and not only loses all joy, but becomes as dead as the dead things upon which he concentrates.

If, however, we 'lay up treasures in Heaven', that is, if we desire God, the only true Substance, instead of concentrating upon the fleeting treasures of the material world, we enter into a state of joy such as can only be experienced, for it can never be described. Our spiritual life also grows and flourishes, so that we renew our strength, we mount up with wings as eagles; we are able to run, and not be weary; and walk and not faint. But as for those who do not make this contact with Reality 'even the youths {the strong and well endowed} shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall'. {See Isaiah XI. 29-31) There is every reason then why we should seek God, Reality, the only True Substance. It is so obvious, and of such tremendous importance, overshadowing everything else, that the wonder is that the vast majority of people refuse to take heed, but go on seeking satisfaction in the baubles of life, which really never satisfy, and which only too often elude them, or break in their hands, so that they do not even have the opportunity of enjoying the fleeting delights for which they sacrifice all that is truly worth having.

SECRETS OF HEALTH

There is another aspect of this subject, and this is its relation to health. The cares of this life are destructive to health. Concentrating upon the things of this life, too much, to the exclusion of Divine and Causal things connected with our true life in God, destroys vitality and undermines health. This is why no weakling can win in the terrific struggle for material riches. Millionaires have to be tremendously strong or wiry, physically. Those who strive for wealth in the ordinary way have so many cares and anxieties, and the strain is so terrific, that their health, only too often, is undermined, so that even if success is achieved they find that they have paid too high a price for it.

But this applies to all classes, to the rich and the poor, to the successful and the unsuccessful, to the employer and the employed. All who turn their attention to material things, and do not seek the Reality and the true Substance, are cut off from their true life. Worry, care, anxiety, strain, all these destroy the health, and bring about breakdowns, if not serious diseases. 'But they that wait upon the Lord', (the true Life and Author of Life) 'shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles: they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.' The second reason why we should lay up treasures in Heaven, i.e. seek and rely upon God. the Eternal Reality and Substance, instead of seeking

for, and relying upon material wealth and worldly possessions, is this: When we seek Reality we find the One Source of all supply and abundance. God is the supreme and only Substance, eternal and unchanging. God-Substance can never change, or fail, or pass away. Substance, the Reality behind all supply, is the cause of phenomena. It is, to supply, what the cinema film is to the screen. The pictures on the screen pass away. If the light fails, no pictures are seen on the screen, or if the focus of the Bioscope is altered nothing can be seen clearly, but the film still remains, and can be reproduced at will, at any time. If we look upon the screen as if it were the reality, then no matter how closely we may examine it, we can never understand it, for it is not real, but only a receiver of pictures which are reflected or projected thereon. If we would understand the mystery of the pictures which we see, we must look not on the screen, but into the Projector. There we find the film which is the cause of all phenomena. In the same way if we look at life as it appears, we can never understand it, and we find its phenomena ever changing and disappearing. We see something that we like, but if we try to grasp it, we find that there is nothing to grasp, and that already the picture has changed. Therefore, we have to seek the Reality, God, in order to find that which is real, unchanging and everlasting. When we have found God, we have found That which causes the phenomena, The Reality behind unreality, the Substance that is behind the fleeting things of life: that which abides the while other things fade away.

FLEETING THINGS

No observer of life can fail to have noticed how fleeting and unreliable are such things as riches, fame, popularity, possessions, material supply. One day we may possess a good business - the next we may have none. One day we may be in a lucrative position - the next we may be seeking a job. One day we may receive fat dividends from investments - the next we may find that they have all passed away. There is nothing substantial, certain, or real, about the so-called good things of life. If we depend on them, then, only too often they slip through our fingers like sand. Some such experience as this is sometimes necessary, in order to make us think of, and appreciate, that which is eternal and enduring, and which nothing can shake or move. When our life is shaken up, and earthly props are taken away, we begin a search for that which is real, secure, enduring, and which can never fail us. We start our quest for Reality.

What we call "supply", the wherewithal by which to live, is an expression or manifestation of an idea. Its insecurity and fickle nature are due to the fact that it is an expression of man's idea, which is imperfect. Our body, with its liability to ill-health and disease, represents what we have thought about ourselves. Our changing circumstances also represent

what we have thought about supply. These are not perfect because of our imperfect ideas and thoughts. There is nothing perfect, or enduring, in anything that is created by the human mind. Within itself it contains the seeds of its own death and decay. But the creation of God, the real Divine Idea and Thought, is enduring, eternal, and for ever perfect. A perfect God cannot create imperfection, nor anything in which there is death and decay. Everything exists for ever perfect in Reality, but, by our wrong ideas and thoughts we divorce ourselves from this perfection. As Paul says: 'All have sinned and come short of the glory (or glorious perfection, or Divine Order) of God.' What is needed then is that we become united with the Real and Perfect, so that our ideas correspond with the Divine. For supply we need to become rooted in eternal and unfailing Substance, the permanent Reality that forever stands behind what we term supply.

There is much solid, sound, definite and vital teaching, to this effect, in the Bible. In the first Psalm we read: 'Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly (those who do not trust God for everything); nor stands in the way of sinners (those who fall short of God's glory and perfection): nor sits in the seat of the scornful (those who scoff at trusting in an available God): but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth meditate (bringing his thoughts and ideas into harmony and correspondence with Divine truth, law and order); he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper.' The roots of the tree reach to the river, so that in a "hot and weary land", when the inevitable drought comes, it is unaffected, for it draws its nourishment from inexhaustible sources. By this allegory we are taught that it is possible to be rooted in the Eternal Substance, so that the droughts which come to the soul, and also to the outward man in the form of 'Hard Times', and World Depressions cannot affect him.

TRUE PROSPERITY

And whatsoever he does shall prosper', both in his spiritual life and in his outward life. One who waits upon the Lord, and meditates daily upon His word, especially those parts that are strong affirmations of Truth (God's precious promises), becomes strong and mighty in soul and spirit. He becomes conscious of a new power that thrills him, of an expansion of consciousness in which he knows that all is well. Also, he prospers in the outward life. George Muller waited upon God, for the nourishment of his own soul, and was greatly prospered both in his spiritual life, in health of body, and as regards supply. Apart from nearly a million and a half pounds sterling (\$7,500,000) or so given him for his work, for which no appeals were made, his income rose from about £50 per annum to over £3,000 per annum. He had to pass through times of universal depression,

but always he was maintained, blessed and prospered. George Muller did all this in order to prove to Christian people that God was still an available God. Each one of us can do the same. God is greater than any depression, greater than the intense difficulties that beset modern men in business, whether employers or employed. Their paths are beset with very great difficulties and uncertainties, but God is greater than them all. Every difficulty must give way to Truth, because Truth is the only Reality. Every time that we turn to God we 'lay up treasures in Heaven where moth and rust doth not corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.' If we take our stand in Truth, refusing to give way, then Truth by its own power demonstrates itself and vindicates our faith. But it is necessary to change the whole thought-life and consciousness, so that we think and live in the consciousness of the reality of Divine Substance. How can this be accomplished ? First of all we have to give up certain wrong habits of thought, replacing them by right habits. The following is a list of thoughts that have to be avoided. It must be remembered that thoughts represent desires, and these in turn arouse emotions. First there is our human desire, next comes the thought (which can be controlled) after which is aroused an emotion that cannot be controlled. By right thinking desires become transmuted, and emotions (if undesirable) prevented from arising. I shall therefore deal only with thoughts.

THOUGHTS TO AVOID

Wishing (Day Dreaming).
Self-pity.
Lust, Immorality and Passion.
Fear and doubt.
Lack. Limitation.

All the above effectively keep away prosperity and abundance. They eat out the very heart of a man.

THOUGHTS TO CULTIVATE

Good will, blessing, and benediction.
Achievement and accomplishment.
Praise and thanksgiving.
Consecration to God and Higher Service.
Trusting in God the Only Power.
Divine Inexhaustible Substance.

The above helps to change the mind so that it becomes a magnet.
The above rough table gives some idea of what has to be done in the way

of changing one's thoughts. In course of time the new, constructive, positive, God-established thoughts filter into, and occupy the subconscious mind, so that a consciousness of Truth is entered into.

TRUTH THINKING

It is also necessary at all times, to think of oneself as a spiritual being, inhabiting eternity, living in a spiritual universe, governed by spiritual laws. We cannot alter Divine Law to suit our own personal convenience, but we can work in harmony with it, so that only good, order, harmony and peaceful conditions manifest.

It is also necessary to state in words the truth about Reality, about ourselves, and about life. Each one can say:
God is Spirit, and I am his child. Therefore, I am a spiritual being, inhabiting Eternity. I live in a spiritual universe, which is governed by spiritual laws, with which it is my joy and privilege to work in harmony. Because I am a child of God, the only Substance and Reality, I am established in Eternal, Unchanging Substance, which always supports me in an Eternal Now.

Such a statement as this, gives us a consciousness Eternal Being, in which we know that all is well, and that our treasure is in Heaven (Unchanging Reality); and that all our needs, both spiritual and temporal, are always abundantly supplied. Then, as a result of this inward realization - this living in a consciousness that the spiritual is the only real, and that spiritual law and Truth must of their own power, demonstrate themselves, if relied upon - the outward manifestation follows. We may have to wait for it in patience, but 'Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him Commit thy way unto the Lord, and trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.... Delight thyself also in the Lord and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.'

10
THE POWER OF WORDS

'By thy words shalt thou be justified, and by thy words shalt thou be condemned.' Matth. 12,37.

Probably most of us think that there is little or no power in words, but such is very far from being the case. Words possess power and because of this, we should be very careful as to which words we use, and in what way we use them.

In ancient times and later, a curse was regarded as very powerful and destructive, bringing bad fortune and suffering to the one upon whom it was placed. On the contrary a blessing was looked upon as very powerful and constructive, bringing good fortune to the one who was a recipient of it. Not only was it believed that the curse or the blessing continued with a person for the length of this life, but it was also thought that it extended to several of the generations that followed and also that it clung to the bearer of the curse or blessing throughout the next life. Whatever power there may have been in these ancient curses and blessings must have been due principally to the power of the spoken word.

In various Scriptures. the power of the spoken word is recognized. In the Bible, creation is attributed to the utterance of a spoken word. Even the Greek *logos* is translated "word," as representing the Life and Creative Force of Deity. coming forth into human manifestation.

Coming to modern times we find the power of words also recognized. They are represented as belonging to two categories: (1) Positive, and (2) Negative; the positive being constructive because they represent positive and constructive thoughts; the negative being destructive because they are an expression of weak and futile thoughts.

VIBRATION

Words appear to possess a power and vibration of their own, a power that differs according to their quality or character. Thus positive words have the ability to awaken in us feelings and powers akin to themselves. We can easily prove this for ourselves. If, when discouraged or depressed, we repeat to ourselves the words: courage, strength, hope, faith, victory, overcoming, joy, happiness, etc., we find that there is something within us that responds to the power and vibration of the words uttered, so that we are raised above our weakness and depression to such an extent that we are able once again to face up the difficulties and problems of life. This may prove to be a turning point or crisis in our life. If we allow ourselves

to become depressed and discouraged we go down and down, life becoming more and more trying and difficult as we travel downwards. If, however, we overcome our depression and discouragement, we are able to rise to higher achievement and to a stable, satisfying success.

It is hardly necessary to add that if instead of making use of positive words, we make use of such expressions as : 'I am fed up', or 'Everything is against me', or 'Everything I do ends in failure', or 'Everyone has good luck except I', or 'What is the use of trying, it is always the same result: disappointment, failure, injustice, bad treatment from others', and so on, then the results are disastrous. There is something within man that responds to these words and expressions, that clouds his sky, destroys his hope, undermines his effort, takes away his initiative, and puts him on the human scrap-heap, where he joins the derelicts, or to change the metaphor the flotsam and jetsam of life that drift hither and thither just wherever the tide an current takes them.

But, if anyone wishes to test the truth of what has been said, let him, when discouraged and depressed, repeat to himself, for a time, such negative and weakening words as the following: weakness, failure, defeat, misery, despair, etc. If he does so, and I most certainly recommend him not to, he will find his misery, wretchedness and inability to master his life's problems greatly increased, so that there seems to be no way of escape for him.

RISING FROM THE SLOUGH OF DESPAIR

So we see that if positive words are used systematically and intelligently, they enable us to rise, through their inherent power, out of the slough of failure, depression and despair to a state of mind and will that makes victory, overcoming and achievement possible.

One of the greatest difficulties with which some people are confronted is a low state of health combined with impaired vitality. They simply cannot face up to life, or they experience very great difficulty in doing so, for the reason that they feel too ill and low-spirited to deal with their affairs in a bright, cheerful and capable manner.

Opportunities pass them by, and their powers for service are hampered, because they do not feel fit enough to deal promptly and energetically with each situation as it arises. Everything is a trouble instead of a joy; also, they may be inclined to be irritable and peevish, although their real nature is benign and kindly, Because of this, people are driven from them, so that they suffer from a continual state of privation.

Such people, owing to their state of ill-health and lack of life-power, are apt to think thoughts of a corresponding character and to express such thoughts in language of a like nature. They may make such remarks as "I am not well," or „ I am half dead with indigestion „ or "My liver is terrible," or " I am a martyr to headache " or similar expressions, They are not aware that through the power of the spoken word they are strengthening and establishing their state of ill-health, whenever they make use of such expressions; but such is actually the case. Through the use of negative expressions of this kind they gradually build up a consciousness of sickness, disease, ill-health, lowered vitality, etc., in which they live, in much the same way that a person lives in a cottage. They are limited by the restrictions that they have placed upon themselves or they are bound by the chains of their own creation, through the power of the words which they have used to their own detriment.

REVERSED SUGGESTION

Readers may perhaps jump to the conclusion that all that is necessary is to say the very opposite of the negative sentences which have been mentioned: thus, instead of saying: 'I am not well'... the sufferer should say ..'I am well'. This simple remedy, however, generally proves to be no remedy at all, because the statement is so obviously not true. Those who, when they are sick or diseased, make use of such suggestions as 'I am well', or 'I am health', generally find that their trouble becomes worse. This is due to what is called reversed suggestion. This is said to be present when the sub-conscious mind refuses to accept the suggestion of health that is forced upon it, and in consequence produces the very opposite of that which is desired. This is why auto-suggestion has been termed by some, as telling lies to oneself. It was in order to avoid reversed suggestion that Coué created his famous formula: 'Every day and in every way I become better and better'. This suggestion had to be repeated a number of times quietly and dreamily just as the patient was falling asleep, the idea being to avoid affronting the sub-conscious mind, and instead to introduce the idea of health cunningly into it, in such a subtle way as to cause the suggestion to be accepted and acted upon.

Other teachings achieve the same end by using the word 'man' in the place of the words 'I am'. The word 'man' is used in the sense of teacher man, the Ideal or Pattern Man created in the likeness of God, Who is the Archetype or Prototype of humanity. Instead of using the suggestion 'I am well', or 'I am health', they declare that man (the real man or Archetype) is perfect and whole, etc. Such a statement is less likely to affront the subconscious mind, for the reason that it is not telling lies to oneself, but is a statement of Absolute Truth.

A method that is both easy and effective is simply to repeat the words which express or describe the desired condition, without using either the prefix 'I am' or 'man is'. Repeating the words Life, Health, Wholeness, Joy, Happiness, etc., has the effect of stirring up new life within so that a better state of health comes into being. It may be wondered why the words Joy and Happiness are included, as, apparently, they have nothing to do with health. This is just the point. They have everything to do with health. In order to be healthy we have to cultivate a feeling and spirit of joy and happiness.

There is no greater tonic, and no such builder-up of genuine health than the spirit of joy and gladness. These are not the product of outward circumstances, but they come from within. Joy comes from exercising a will to be happy and to rejoice.

It is like a flower; it needs cultivation, and the more it is cultivated and nourished, the more beautiful it becomes. Even repeating the word 'joy' produces corresponding vibrations within us that lift our sorrows, destroy our depression, and raise us to higher levels of thought, feeling and expression.

DIVINE POWER EXPRESSED

The power of the spoken word may seem to be a minus quantity to some, perhaps. So it always will be if they do not make use of it. The lame man at the gate of temple would never have been healed if Peter and John had not believed in the power of the spoken word. They believed that the positive words they used were but expression or utterance of Divine Power. Because of this the man who was lame from his birth and hitherto had been carried about, and who lived by begging, immediately received strength and went into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God. It will at once be said that this was no exhibition of the power of the spoken word, because Peter was filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, and it was through this power that he healed. It is true that Peter was filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and was very conscious of the fact, but it was through the spoken word that he gave expression to the power within him. If Peter had remained dumb, the lame man would never have been healed. Perhaps there are those who might be blest through you, reader, if you too were to make use of the spoken word. So long as you think you have no power, and remain dumb, there can be no demonstration of the good which follows the spoken word.

The spoken word can be made use of in every situation of life. An alarming or unpleasant experience can be blessed by the spoken word. If it is blessed audibly with the Holy Spirit, it has to reveal its true

character. Even an evil or sinful propensity or power can be blessed and made to change into the real and true power of which it is a distortion or 'mis-manifestation'. The words: 'I baptize thee with the Holy Spirit', when spoken with firmness, calmness and reverence, will always change the character of any situation, or propensity, revealing the real and true in place of that which is but a distortion or mis-direction of it. Our Lord, when he was tempted, was able to overcome, simply by the use of the spoken word. He met each temptation with a quotation from Scripture. This was more than enough for the Tempter who had nothing whatever to say in return.

A PIT WORKER'S TESTIMONY

I recently received a letter from one who works in 'the pit' (a coal mine). It is work which is very arduous a most trying, as I can personally testify. This friend had been laid up mainly through an injury, and he went back to work too soon. He had a very severe pain in his side due to the injury and it got so bad that he did not know what to do. However, he thought he would try a statement of Truth. He therefore started repeating the 23 Psalm. When he reached 'He restoreth my soul', it was as though an electric shock went through him, and he recovered and continued his work. Two days later the experience was repeated, and again he repeated the 23rd Psalm and other texts, and this time he was completely healed. Verily is the Scripture true: 'He sent His word and healed them; and delivered them from their distresses' .

Finally, prayer is the most potent form of using the power of the spoken word. When we pray we pass behind the veil of time and sense and enter the Eternal. Then indeed do our words possess tremendous power, and we have to be very careful how we use them. Negative prayer should be avoided, for the reason that it brings negative results. Our Lord did not teach us to pray in a negative manner. He never taught us to pray for suffering, or negative ills, or for poverty or woe, but for blessing and good. He also taught us to pray for good, not in a negative or beseeching way, but in a positive manner. What is termed the Lord's Prayer is an illustration of how to make use of the creative word. In it there is total absence of whining supplication. It was a series of statements similar to the creative words of Elohim. In Genesis we read: 'And God said; Let there be light. and there was light'. The Lord's Prayer is like it. In it we are taught to pray after this fashion: 'Thy Kingdom come. Thy Will be done. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead Us not into temptation. Deliver us from evil'. These words of power, we are taught. have to be pronounced when in the Secret Place, behind the veil of time and sense, where we are in contact with Infinite Power, and when our words are quick and powerful.

SECURITY NEEDED

We are living in times when the means of life are precarious. Great changes in our social system are pending. Today there is no security to be found in outward things. Nearly everything that we once considered firm and lasting is now crumbling away. In the midst of all the change and upset that surrounds us we need something secure. We need something that can raise us from the impermanent world of time and sense, into a higher consciousness of eternal, unchanging Reality. This we find in the power of the spoken word.

If we turn from the welter of unrest and change around us, and repeat, say, the first verse of Psalm 125 we find ourselves lifted right above the changing scenes of life into a higher region where we 'breathe the sweet ether blowing of the breath of God'. Here is the verse, and it is a positive statement of absolute Truth: -'They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever' .

It was my privilege to speak at a meeting last night. The room was filled with the best and most helpful listeners that any speaker could ever have had the good fortune to address. The minds of all people were filled with the thoughts of the great financial crisis through which our country, in common with others, was passing.

We were led to take the 125th Psalm as our reading and when the first verse was read it seemed as if a spell fell upon the meeting. Instantly we felt that we were all transported to another world in which we were raised above all the changing scenes and cares of the ordinary life as it were upon a mountain top. Yes. we felt indeed that we were on that Mount Zion, which cannot be removed but which abideth for ever. We were reminded of that famous passage in Isaiah where it says: 'They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, even as the waters cover the sea'.

THE POWER OF SCRIPTURE

This experience proved once again, if proof were needed, that there is a mighty spiritual power contained in the words of the Scripture - a power that is greater far than all the forces of disorder that are seething around us.

'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee' is for ever true. Our mind becomes stayed upon Reality - the True, the Unchanging, Unfailing Power and Love of God - to the extent that we make use of the power of the word of God, spoken and uttered with

calmness and faith. To the extent that we stay our mind upon God, and to the extent that we establish it in Eternal Truth, are we freed from the change and turmoil that goes on around us. 'Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night (when fear and worry claim one); nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. 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.' If we were to acknowledge more than we do the power of the spoken word, especially the word of Scripture, and if we applied it in every situation of life, we would of a surety live better and more harmonious lives. It is not the Divine will, neither is it in the Divine plan that we should live lives of disorder. Our Lord's rebuke to the winds and waves when the storm arose on the lake should be a lesson to all. Jesus not only rebuked the waves and the wind, but he also rebuked His disciples for their lack of faith and unbelief. He was disappointed with them that they too did not rebuke the sea and wind, and bring about a great calm. God wants us to use the power of the spoken word to bring about conditions of harmony and peace, otherwise the great example of Jesus would not have been given us. Whenever our Lord saw disharmony he rebuked it. When he met those who were diseased or afflicted He commanded them to be made whole. Even those who were dead he raised to life by the power of His spoken word.

For two centuries this work was continued by the early Church, of healing the sick, raising the dead to life and manifesting supernatural powers by the use of the spoken word. Today, people wish they could also bring harmony into their lives and those of others. But wishing is of no use at all: it simply removes that for which we wish farther from us. The use of the spoken word, however, brings that which we desire nearer, and, if we have faith, into actuality. The life of the average man is poor, weak and depressed, and he is the victim of forces of disorder for the reason that he does not make use of the power of the spoken word: he does not rebuke the winds and the waves in the storms of his life, but, like the disciples, he becomes frightened and agitated so that his frail bark is overwhelmed.

WORDS OF ETERNAL TRUTH

The spoken word must be the word of Eternal Truth. It is because it is Eternal Truth in expression (in word form) that it is powerful. When using the spoken word we must remember that it is not our power that is being used, but that it is the power of Truth contained in the word of Truth that is being brought into action. Truth possesses the power to manifest itself, no matter how difficult the circumstances may be. Truth

is omnipotent and needs only to be expressed in the form of the spoken word, in faith. When this is done it manifests its power in the form of order, harmony, wholeness and peace. To all who are in trouble and distress I would speak again the word of Eli unto Hannah.

'Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of Him.'

LOVE, LIFE, AND LIGHT

'In Him Was life; and the life was the light of men.' - John 1.4.

It has been said that if a man would but meditate for a certain time every day upon the first five verses of John's Gospel, he would enter into that state of consciousness and Divine union which Jesus termed the Kingdom of God or Heaven. St John's Gospel is not primarily historical, but mystical. Outwardly it conforms more or less to the historical tradition; but inwardly it is a great mystical work, the object of which is to reveal to those who are sufficiently read, and who possess the necessary earnestness, the great mysteries which have been hidden from the foundation of the world.

This expression (from the foundation of the world) used several times in the New Testament, is very apt and expressive. Truth is eternal, and therefore always was and is, and forever will be. It is always present, and always has been present. Although present, it is not revealed. That is to say it is never revealed to the uninitiated, but only to those who are ready. Truth, if it were revealed to the vulgar gaze, or to the unprepared, in heart and understanding, would destroy. It is because of this that one should never make use of occult methods which awaken certain centers, artificially. Breathing exercises of an occult nature may be very fascinating, but they are fraught with danger. Deep interior breathing develops itself as we become more advanced in spiritual understanding: therefore, it should never be practiced artificially.

The mysteries of the Kingdom are hidden and veiled. This is the reason for symbolism, myths, parables, etc. Their interior meaning can be understood by those who are ready for a measure of the Truth, but the uninitiated can only see the exterior meaning. Truth (or the Divine Mysteries), is withheld from a person until he is ready for a revelation of it. It is equally true that when man is ready, the teaching that he needs always comes to him just at the right moment. In some apparently chance or accidental manner, he receives something that changes his life altogether.

Truth then is eternal, without beginning or end. It is also veiled or hidden from the vulgar gaze. But, at the same time, it is open to all, and is withheld from none. This is a paradox; but all Truth is paradoxical. Everything is, and yet is not; and there are always two sides to the shield. What is obvious on the outer, is different from that which is on the inner side. Yet both are true, at the time. External or exoteric truth is Truth to the beginner, but is very different from the esoteric Truth known as

Truth by the initiate. Each one has revealed to him that aspect of Truth, or that amount of Truth for which he is ready and capable of receiving at the time. When he has assimilated that which he is ready to receive, he passes on to acquire further knowledge, and to enter into deeper understanding.

NOTHING HAPHAZARD

There is nothing haphazard about the life of even the humblest seeker of Truth. Everything is Divinely arranged. There is a Path which all aspirants have to follow, and the great example of this is the life of Jesus. When we realize that we have to live a similar life and also to pass through similar experiences, either literally or mystically, it becomes easier to understand life, and to co-operate with its experiences. We enter into peace when we awaken to the fact that life is not haphazard at all, but that it is governed by immutable laws, which, if acknowledged and obeyed, bring us always to our highest good, and to our eternal joy and happiness.

One who sets out on the search for Truth soon discovers that he is being disciplined. But this is only in order that he may be prepared to receive Truth and all the blessings and joys that Truth brings. Being disciplined is sometimes called passing through 'the stripping process', and sometimes, 'passing through the fire'. It is always a good process, although it may not always be to our liking.

It is a great help if we co-operate with the experiences that come to us, or which we come up against. Indeed, the painfulness is almost entirely due to the resistance and opposition that we offer to the refining experiences that we have to meet. The stripping process is for this sole purpose, to remove from us those things which are a hindrance to us, and which prevent us from entering into the true life of Joy and liberty, and Infinite progression.

I do not mean that when we are bereaved through the loss of a loved one, that that loved one has been a hindrance to our unfoldment, but through the apparent loss, we are led to seek for God more earnestly, and to cast off the things which hinder us, and bind us to earth. Some men, living wicked lives, have become changed through the loss of someone whom they loved very dearly. The shock and grief have caused them to hate the life they were living, and to desire, strongly, to live a life worthy of the great love of the one who had been, as it were, snatched from them. The loved one was not a hindrance, but the grief caused by the passing produced a change of heart and mind that in turn produced a hatred and loathing of sin and a great desire for pure and holy living. In this way

does life deal with us, stripping us of all that hinders and obstructs our true progress, or causing us to give it up of our own volition, so that we can be brought into the Way of Truth.

Many of Us make life more difficult than it need be through looking upon the experiences, which are inseparable from the new life as evil instead of good. To the regenerating soul there can be no evil in any experience that may come to it. By this I do not mean that there are not terrible evils in the world, for everyone must admit that there are. What I mean is that the aspiring soul is led by the Holy Spirit, and every experience that is encountered is designed by Infinite Wisdom and Love, and therefore cannot be evil, but only good. If it looks evil, that is only an appearance, for nothing that is brought to us by Infinite Wisdom and Love can be anything but good. Because this is true, we make a practice of blessing every situation, even when the appearance may seem dark. We then find that each experience works out in ways of good.

ALL EXPERIENCES GOOD

We may meet with disappointments, difficulties and apparent losses in life. These are not evil; because, if we bless them, and meet them with cooperation, they turn out to be very good, and stepping stones to higher and better things. Thus we find that there is no evil in life, but only good; that is if we think and act in the right way.

We meet with temptation of course, and the thing that we are tempted to do is evil. Because of this we have to watch and pray, so that we are not ensnared by it, even as our Lord said. Through not becoming ensnared, and through our victory and overcoming in the power of the Spirit, the experience is turned into a blessing, so that good comes out of it in the form of virtue, and a stronger character.

There is an infinitely wise object in every experience that comes to us. If it flings us into a rage, then we may know we have both pride and resentment to overcome.

If it fills us with fear, we know that we have fear and the sin of doubt to overcome. If it depresses us, then we may know that we have not yet entered into our true life in God which is infinite joy. There is always something to be learnt from every experience; for, if it were not necessary, we would not attract it.

Life, then, becomes very much easier, and the aspirant very much happier, if experiences are met in an understanding manner. The reason why an initiate's life is so calm and peaceful is largely due to the fact that,

through knowledge and self-control, he is able to meet all experiences in the right way. The reason why the beginner's life is in such a turmoil is largely due to the fact that through lack of knowledge and self-control he does not meet his experiences in the right and best way. But, he learns from experience, progressing step by step, until he too becomes an adept. We all have to learn to walk before we may run: we must never despise the day of small things. The beginner's failing is that he runs about too much, first reading this, and then trying that. He does not allow himself to be quiet; he is in a turmoil all the time. When he fails to obtain good results he wants to know what is the matter. He leaves undone the things he ought to do, and does the things he ought not to do, consequently there is no health in him. In spite of his mistakes, however, he is striving for the Kingdom, and because of this he is guided into the Way of Truth, through many failures.

QUIETNESS ESSENTIAL

His mistake is that he never allows himself to become quiet, This of course is the secret of all attainment, 'Be still and know that I am God.' Be still and know what God is, The beginner must cease fluttering about like trapped bird, and must learn to discipline his mind, so that he can become quiet, with his whole attention fixed upon God. When the surface mind becomes stilled, the One Mind that is perfect is enabled thereby to function. Be still, and then know. Truth does not come through the intellect, or through searching for knowledge, or through asking questions, or through discussions or arguments. It is not in the wind, or the earthquake, or the fire, but in the 'still' small voice, which is not a voice, really, but welling up of Truth from within the soul.

Most people, before they become conscious Truth-seekers (that is, they who are seeking of their own volition, instead of being blindly driven by circumstances) pass through the storm and the earthquake. They pass through experiences which wreck and ruin their lives and circumstances. They cannot find God in these great and trying events, but through them they are pushed forward to the experience which might be described as the fire, And God is not to be found in the fire; but the fire purges and burns up all that hinders and separates, so that the aspirant is prepared for the next stage which is 'Light' .

God is not the disorder, the violence, or the fire, but is the Light. It is true that Paul said: 'For our God is a consuming fire,' but by that he meant that all who would seek and find God, must pass through the fire, before they could come to the Light. This is described by some as the purging stage, which is merely another term for the stripping stage. Through it the aspirant parts company with that which hinders and keeps him from

his highest good.

It must not be thought, however, that man is deserted and forsaken when passing through the experiences which precede his entrance into the Path. While, in one sense, God is not in the wind, earthquake and fire, yet in another He is never nearer than at such times. Jacob Boehme teaches that the Love of God can be and can go where God (in His essentiality) cannot. The Light may shine in the darkness, but the darkness apprehends it not. Man may not be able to apprehend the Presence, but Love is with him all the time. It is Love that leads him and draws him towards the Light.

PASSING THROUGH THE FIRE

It might be said that the Light is the outcome of the fire. But, actually, fire is the Light incompletely or imperfectly apprehended. One who is in the Light is unaware of the fire. Man has to pass through the fire because of his separateness from the Light. Instead of the Light being the outcome of the fire, it is seen that the fire and the anguish are but a form of disorder that man, as it were, creates for himself through his own state of disorder and separateness. The Light is always and forever the Light. That it appears as fire to the aspirant is no fault of the Light, but is due to man's separation from, and unlikeness, to the Light. 'God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.'

If we walk in the light, as He {the Eternal Son or Archetypal Man} is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son (symbol of the regenerative life and power of the Logos) cleanseth us from all sin (destroys in us the tendency to sin, so that we sin no more). 'He that loves his brother abides in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.'

From these extracts from John's Epistle we see that love is the key, and also the standard by which we are judged. If we love our brother (or neighbour) we walk in the Light.

'But if we do not love our brother we are in darkness, and walk in darkness, and do not know where we are going, because the darkness has blinded our eyes (1. John ii. II.)

What has to be overcome in us, then, is mostly a lack of love for our brother man, which means that our self-love has to be destroyed. It is even as this is achieved, and a genuine love and compassion cultivated within our hearts, that we are able to pass into and abide in the Light. The fires of bereavement and sorrow burn away our hardness of heart, our selfishness and love of self. Have not we all found that our own deep sorrow has made us compassionate and gentle towards others? Yes, the

fire prepares us for the Light, through generating in our hearts a true love and genuine compassion.

THE LIFE OF THE LOGOS

But God is not only the Light. He is also the Life and the Source of all life. 'In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.'

William Law says that the only salvation is the life of God in the soul; and there are few who would find fault with his definition. Just as the life was in Him (the Logos), so also must it be in us. And as the Logos found bodily form in Jesus, so also must He live in us. The Eternal Word has forever to be made flesh. Said Meister Eckhart: 'When all things were in mid-silence, God spake His silent Word into my soul'. It is through this new life in us that we are able to join with John in his ecstatic cry: 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God.' It is through our awakening to this great fact that we realize that inwardly and truly we are at-one with the Power that produced the stars, and called universes into being.

'In the twinkling of an eye shall we be changed', said Paul. One moment we may be poor, blind, feeble earth-bound creatures, groping amongst the dust on an insignificant mud-ball, lost in an immensity of stellar space; and the next moment we may realize our true inward nature, and rejoice in the fact that we are verily sons of God - sons who are growing up to be like their Father - in other words, gods in the making. It might be thought that there is a danger in all this - a danger of selfpride and glory. But actually there is none, for the reason that it is only the humble in heart who find God. 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see the God.' That is, the heart that is purged of all self, self-interest, self-serving, self-love, and self-pride. It is only as we let go of self, thus removing the personal ego out of the way, that Christ (the Son) in us can arise and bring the glorious truth into actuality and consciousness.

It follows, then, that because we can never realize our Sonship, and true inward nature, except we surrender our 'self', and all pride and egohood, that there is no danger of this knowledge making us puffed up. Much rather does it make us feel humble, so that we acknowledge that of our finite material selves we can do nothing. It is only the life of God in our soul that makes such glorious things possible, and by which we possess any life at all.

This is the great mystery hidden from the foundation of the world, this change of consciousness, when the old life, is given up, making room for the new life, which is the life of God, no less.

CHRISTMAS DAY IN THE SOUL

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of the infant child Jesus. This happy event has its mystical counterpart in the birth of Christ in our own soul. This again is a mystical way of describing the birth of a new life within us, which is no less than the life of God.

But some may want to know how it is possible to awaken the new life within them. They may be earnest seekers, yet they cannot find God, neither can they realize Truth, or find within themselves any trace of the new spiritual life. Let such meditate upon the text at the head of this article 'In Him was life, and the life was the light of men'. Let them sit upright in a chair, quietly with nerves and muscles relaxed, breathing freely, deeply, but naturally, and while they direct their attention to the words, keeping out all extraneous thought, let them see interiorly within themselves the Inward Light. Let them make a practice of doing this every day, and they will surely become conscious of Light within, and of new life animating them, making them conscious of the glorious fact that they are sons of God.

'Christ is in you and is the hope of your glory', said Paul, according to one translator. May Christ live in each one of us, and arise in us in glory and power.

12 **THROUGH FAITH TO FREEDOM**

'Into the glorious liberty of the children of God.'

As a preliminary to writing on any subject it is necessary first of all to define our terms; for, if we do not, the reader may receive an erroneous idea, through attaching a meaning to the terms used different from the meaning attached to them in the mind of the writer.

First of all, then, what is meant by the term "faith"? Paul says; "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," or, in other words, that faith is the assurance we have concerning the things we hope for; and the inward conviction we possess respecting the things which are unseen and eternal. It is an inward spiritual faculty that is awakened in us through the indwelling of the Spirit of Truth. It is through the use of this faculty that we are able to believe in the reality of things that we cannot see, and to put our trust in a God Whom we also cannot see. Through the exercise of this faculty we not only are able to believe in this which cannot be proved by any external evidence, but we are also enabled to hang on to that which we believe until we see it manifested.

Saints in all ages have been able to trust their soul to God. "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." This text or declaration of belief in a God who can save the soul and bring man into eternal life, is still the foundation of faith of thousands and I have nothing to add to it. We must all admit that the welfare of the soul is of primary importance, 'for what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall he give in exchange for his soul? But, while this is true, it is not right that we should limit God's power to the next life. God is a God who is available in this life, as well as in the life to come. Also, it is through finding God in the practical affairs and experiences of life that we are regenerated. It is only through regeneration that eternal life becomes possible and as regeneration is worked out in the practical experiences of life, then these of necessity are of first class importance. Life is a practical thing, filled to the brim with practical experience. It is given us to live in a practical way. Life is the great initiator. Through its experiences and discipline we learn to exercise faith, and in so doing become regenerated, or re-born, and re-made from above, and our selfnature changed into god-nature.

Regeneration is of such extreme importance that it would not be worth while spending a moment in writing about living a life of faith if it were

not for the fact that to live by faith and thus be victorious is in itself the Path.

By the term 'regeneration' I do not mean conversion. This is but the entrance to the new life. Regeneration is a lengthy process, consisting of several stages, during which we become entirely changed in character and disposition, and concurrently with this change there is built up within us a Celestial body, the possession of which alone makes it possible for us to function in Celestial Spheres. 'Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.' The work of regeneration proceeds the while we are dealing with the practical affairs of life, bringing God into our daily work, and, in the Power of Omnipotence, rising victorious over our difficulties. Put briefly, faith, or rather the exercise of faith, can be described as " Trusting God instead of judging by appearances." By the term " God," I mean the Creative Fount and Source of all life and manifestation. This Creative Life expresses perfection, i.e., Divine order, to the extent that we trust It and allow It scope to manifest itself in time and space conditions. It cannot manifest imperfection or disorder, but only perfection and order, these being inherent in Itself. THAT which is perfect can only manifest perfection. This is where the man of faith or right thinker (one who thinks from the standpoint of Truth) differs from all other men. When he sees disorder of any kind (disease, poverty, disharmony, misery) he knows that it is not Truth, but is a manifestation of "not-Truth"- a form of disorder due to man's separateness from God and his belief in something other than Truth. The man of faith declares the disorder to be not the Truth, and affirms the Truth as it is in God. He puts his trust in It, relies upon It, and gives It time to manifest. Truth is omnipotent because it is the only reality and the only thing that is true in the Universe.

By the term " appearances," I mean life and circumstances as they appear to be. Disease is an appearance only, it is not Truth; as was proved by the Lord Jesus Who was Truth incarnate and lived in its perfect realization. Jesus did not accept as Truth the blindness of the man who was born blind. He recognized only the Truth about the man - the Truth in the mind of God about the man - and the man received his sight. Error must always flee at the approach of Truth, for the simple reason that Truth is the only thing there is. By 'appearances' then, I mean those states and conditions that are generally accepted by humanity as real, and which are disorderly, i.e., not manifesting the Divine order and perfection. What I wish to draw attention to, therefore, is the use of faith in the practical affairs of life. Somehow, in spite of the cloud of witnesses described so eloquently in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews; and in spite

of the example set by George Muller and others in modern times, the majority of those of us who call ourselves Christian, do not live lives of faith as far as this world is concerned. We may believe that Divine Power is available in times of moral temptation; but we do not believe in an available God or Power which can make us victorious in the practical affairs of life. The term 'victoriously', is used advisedly. Living in faith, as I understand it, does not mean retiring from the world, or giving up our work in order that we may live a so-called spiritual life. Some think otherwise, and retire to some monastery or Retreat. If we live truly a life of faith we overcome and become victorious in the circumstances in which we now find ourselves. We may be tempted to give up our job or retire from the arena of modern life, but if we examine our motives we find that we wish to do this in order to avoid the difficulties of our life, and to escape from them to something more congenial. We find also that we have been deceiving ourselves by thinking that our motive is a noble one - that it is solely in order that we might live a higher life, one of faith in God, instead of by our own exertions, that we desire to retire from the conflict, This is a subtle temptation, but we can counter it by remembering that we must never run away from any experience. What is required of us is to overcome and be victorious in our present circumstances.

If our life is difficult, then this proves that we have not yet mastered our problem, To master our present problems is to live the life of faith. When this is achieved other avenues of service open up before us without any seeking on our part. The life of faith is a victorious life, lived in the place where we are now, in the circumstances in which we now are. To do this is to maintain the positive attitude which always wins, in the long run, To do otherwise is to adopt the negative attitude which always leads to failure and to added trouble and difficulty.

If we endeavour to overcome in our present circumstances then we find that God is infinite, and His omnipotence is available according to the extent of our faith. But this infinite Power is not available if we do not even believe in it. So long as people believe that there is no available God, they can experience only that which confirms their belief. If they do not believe in an available God it is obvious that they will never find any evidence of His power. Our mind is either closed or expanded by our beliefs. If we believe that God is not available, but that we are bound by natural law, then we are limited by natural law, because our mind is closed to anything higher. Before we can experience anything greater in life than that which comes to the ordinary material man, we have to admit it into our mind. Our life is limited by the boundaries or walls of our mind. The more closely walled our mind, the more limited our life; for the reason that life, as we know it, is a reflection of our mind.

But on the other hand, if we push back the boundaries of our mind, so as to admit larger and less cramped ideas of life and the universe, then greater things become possible. When we admit into our mind an idea of the possibility of the (so called) impossible being accomplished, then it is brought within the bounds of possibility for us. This is why our Lord said: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." The Power is infinite, but lack of faith makes it non-available.

Faith, then, as the term is used in this article, is the exercising of a spiritual faculty, through which we are able to lay hold of Omnipotence, thus making It available, so that that which is humanly impossible becomes Divinely possible.

Next, what is meant by the term 'freedom'? The meaning that I wish to attach to the term is two-fold. First, a consciousness of freedom that is born of a realization that the Infinite and Omnipotent is our Father and Friend. We become completely carefree when we realize that the Lord is the Source of our life (the life that animates our body), and of the life of experience (through which we are led day by day), and of all that is necessary for our life and expression. We then know what the Psalmist meant when he said: "He brought me forth into a large place." In this "large place" every barrier and limitation falls away, and we stand in the Eternal.

"All the Divine forces ministering to our eternal joy."

We enter into freedom from all care, for who can have a care when the Infinite God is our All, our Father and Friend. We enter into freedom from all fear, for who can fear, when Omnipotence is our Friend, and Infinite Love and Infinite Wisdom our parents?

Secondly, we enter into a state of freedom in worldly or practical affairs. Through obeying Heavenly laws instead of the laws of self-interest and Mammon, we come under the laws and protection of Heaven. The forces which hold others in slavery, binding some in the bondage of golden chains, on the one hand, and forcing others into situations of penury and want, on the other, are powerless to affect the one who is established in God, the One Source of the Universe. The blessing of Jehovah rests upon the one whose mind is stayed upon God and who lives a life of faith in God. This is "the blessing which maketh rich, and with which He (Jehovah) added no sorrow." Not rich in worldly possessions, but rich in the knowledge that all our needs are met both now and will be forever, so that we can say with Carpenter, "All is well; today and a million years

hence, equally". This is the blessing which makes us rich in the knowledge that Infinite Wisdom and Omniscience are guiding and leading us on to our eternal Good, and to higher and more glorious things.

We are able to stand aside, unhurried and unafraid:

"Content to let the world go by, To know no gain or loss."

Grounded in the Eternal, with our mind stayed upon God, we know that the only effect that circumstances and the experiences of life can have is to provide a blessing for us. All things work together for our good: even angels for "are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" But such freedom, or anything approaching it, does not come of itself. While it is true that all good comes from the Lord (the One Central Source of Life and Its manifestations), yet the state of knowing and certainty which makes freedom possible, or which constitutes freedom, can be arrived at only through the exercise of faith, such exercise of faith also necessitating the passing through of all the experiences which testing God and Life brings. When we live a life which tests God, or Life, then we find that God, or Life, is also testing us. It is through this 'proving' or testing, that our faith is exercised, and developed. Concurrently with this process of growth a state of awareness arises, so that it becomes possible for us to say: 'I know in whom I have believed'. We know beyond any question of doubt or uncertainty at all that an available God, "able to do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think".

The world is passing through a time of depression and fear. This depression and anxiety should find no place in the life and mind of those who profess to live by faith. Yet on all hands we find the prevailing world state of consciousness, which is the unenlightened material mass consciousness, reflected in those who are professed followers of Truth. How is it that such a state of affairs exists, when no such ideas are to be found in Truth? How is it that people who ought to be exclaiming with joy: "O, What a glorious thing is Truth, and how wonderful God is!" are saying: "What a terrible state the world is in: what fearful things are happening, and how dreadful it all is?" Why are they thinking and speaking in this way, when they know all the time that the elementary law of right thinking is to think in terms of Truth, and from the standpoint of Reality, Heaven and Perfection? Why are they saying: "Isn't life dreadful?" instead of "Isn't life wonderful?" Why are they thinking and speaking in terms of human and material limitation, instead of as those who are enjoying "the liberty of the Sons of God?" Why is faith so weak, if not altogether non-existent? The reasons may be many, but one I know, and that is, the soul is not nourished with the bread of Heaven. The soul cannot receive its necessary nourishment if it is fed on clever books

merely conveying man's ideas about God, and on newspapers and talks by intellectual but quite spiritually unenlightened people. The soul can be fed only by quiet meditation upon the Divine Word. If a small portion of Scripture is meditated upon each day until a sense of reality comes and one is consciously established in the Eternal, then the mind can live in Truth, and thinking can be maintained in the "Isn't life wonderful" attitude, instead of the "Isn't life dreadful" attitude. One who is established in Truth, and whose soul is nourished by Heavenly food gratefully declares, "My cup runneth over" while the starved soul cries: "What fresh horror is going to happen next?" The man of faith exclaims in the face of world depression and national disasters, "Thou preparest a table before me, in the presence of mine enemies". He forever declares triumphantly the Truth which is unseen - the Truth that has power to demonstrate and vindicate Itself, because it is the Reality.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

"Consider the lilies, how they grow". (Luke xii, 27)

In our early innocence, when we are at the beginning of the new life, we pray "Lord, increase our faith," and then expect it to arrive all at once, complete and readymade, just as though we had ordered a suit of clothes through the mail. We think then that it is a quality, or power, that can be given us by God, without any work or training on our part. We imagine that all that is necessary for us to do is to pray to the Lord to increase our faith, or to give us a large faith; and then as a result we shall suddenly become men and women of great faith. A larger experience of life dispels this misunderstanding. It is then seen that to pray in this way is equivalent to an office boy asking to be made Managing Director of the firm that employs him. It is possible for an office boy to become head of his firm - indeed, there is nothing to prevent him from doing so if he has the right stuff in him - but he must first become the best office boy that ever was, and the best junior clerk, and the best managing clerk, and many other things, before he is allowed to reach the goal of his ambition. In other words, he has to work his way through and up, learning all the time, aspiring all the time, until at last he is recognized as the most able and best-fitted for the position of managing head. It is the same with the new life of the Spirit: we have to work our way through, patiently, step by step. We have to aspire and experiment. We have to embark upon many a daring adventure, learning the whole while, until at last we reach a stage of freedom and actual knowing.

When we meet a man or woman of large faith, we meet a man or woman of large experience. Their faith has not come to them in a night, like the growth of a mushroom, but it has developed through many ventures in faith, and through many tests and experiences.

The beginner says: " Lord, increase my faith" and is disappointed either because a large ready-made faith is not given to him, or because faith is not produced in him by magical means. He is probably disappointed even more when an experience is given him which reveals the fact that he has very little faith at all. He may say: "I could get on all right in the spiritual life, if it were not for this trying experience, or if I had a larger faith; but as it is, life is too difficult for me." But the experience of which he complains, and which shows up his lack of faith, is the very best thing possible to develop his faith, if he would but meet it in the right way. We are all aware that it is not only useless, but actually hurtful to pray for an easier life. We know that the wise thing to do is to pray for greater

strength. We can have greater strength only to the extent that we exercise a greater faith. We can exercise a greater faith only as we willingly enter greater experiences. If we play for safety, trying always to avoid experiences that test and extend our powers, we may be compelled to meet experiences of a far more painful and irksome nature than those we have refused to accept. Indeed, the experiences which we avoid or refuse, would not prove painful at all if they were met willingly and cooperatively.

Life does not want us to suffer, but insists upon our learning certain lessons; and through these to attain to a certain stage of development. What Life desires is to lead us to our highest joy, and so, if we co-operate with life then we find that the path to freedom is a joyous and harmonious one.

Life, itself, provides us with the experiences which are necessary for our highest unfoldment and the development of our faith. We make our lives difficult and painful through a settled habit of trying to avoid the experiences (which are really opportunities to attain to a higher state of faith), which we are privileged to meet. I have said that if we were to pray: "Lord increase our faith", the result would be, not the appearance of ready-made faith, but an experience through which we could develop and strengthen such faith as we already may possess. This law of life applies to us all, no matter what our circumstances may be. It does not apply merely to men like Muller and others who have created and conducted great philanthropic or religious organization. All who have been the instruments through which such works have been carried on, have found and proved that "when the Lord guides, the Lord provides". God is quite capable, not only of raising up men to start and carry on such works, but also of putting it in the hearts of His people to support them. The law applies, however, not only to such efforts as these, but to all of us, no matter what kind of life it may be that we are called upon to live. No matter how hum-drum our life may be, nor how humble and shut-in our circumstances, the same law applies equally to us all. It is just as possible for a business executive or employee, or a tradesman, or artisan, or a woman whose chief interests are in her home and family, to live a life of faith, as it was for George Muller or Jacob Beilhart, to do so. Whatever we are, wherever we are, and no matter how we may be placed, we are all faced with problems; also we are all given opportunities of choosing either a path that requires faith to tread, or a path of cowardice and safety first. The former path leads upwards, and is difficult: the latter path is one of ease (as far as spiritual effort and aspiration are concerned) and spiritual sloth, and leads downwards to extinction of the spiritual life. The former, although not easy, leads upwards to liberty and freedom, whereas the latter leads down to greater difficulty, serfdom and

enslavement. It has been said, cynically, by someone, that the best way to overcome temptation is to give in to it. This means that those who take the High Road are subjected to much opposition and temptation, So long as they persist in pursuing the High Road, they are subjected to opposition and temptation until they overcome and reach a quieter stage on the great journey. Those, however, who give in to the temptation to abandon the Quest, at once are left alone. But this is a false peace, due to the fact that those who give in become captives and imprisoned souls. The best way to develop faith, so I have discovered through experience, is to set oneself an ideal of attainment and to strive after it. It has been said that getting on in life is simply a state of mind. If we examine this statement we find that it is very true. The man who "gets on" in life always has the thought (backed by determination) of "making good" of rising, of winning and progressing. The average individual when his day's work is finished thinks no more of it, and either idles his time away, or goes pleasure seeking, or indulges in a hobby, or engages in some altruistic service. None of these things advances him in life, materially.

The man, however, who has the "getting on" habit of mind has all his mental energies and powers focused on his one objective, viz. rising in life, He never wastes a minute, every thought and action being directed towards the one end that he has in view. If he carries this to excess, he finds out later that he has paid too big a price for his success, and that he has become a slave to the thing that he has created. Nevertheless, his progress and rise in life through industry, application and concentration involving the sacrifice of ease, pleasure, leisure, and most of the finer and better things of life - prove that "getting on" is simply a state of mind, His state of mind and focusing of mind powers attract to him the opportunities which, when seized and made use of, lead to progress and achievement.

Advancement in the New Life is also due to a state of mind. While the average person's powers are scattered and frittered away uselessly, the one who is filled with a Heavenly ambition focuses all his powers upon the goal of his ambition, and nothing can satisfy him except advancement in knowledge of God, together with an increasing understanding of the Divine mysteries. Such advancement, unlike worldly success, does not enslave or satiate, but leads to ever expanding freedom and liberty, and to increasing powers of appreciation of Heavenly joys.

The two qualities that we have to develop more than any others are love and faith. These are the marks of the Heavenly man: a love that embraces all, desiring only to give and not to receive, and faith that holds on to God and the Invisible, in spite of the sternest tests and trials. Being love itself in all our thoughts and actions leads us to happiness and life. We love for

the sake of loving, just as the sun shines upon all, for the sake of giving out its energy and not in order to receive back something in exchange. But, although this is our motive, yet we cannot escape being blessed; for love is life and hate is death "and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God".

And one who cultivates the life of faith is brought into a state of liberty. But he must be willing to be tested and tried. But such tests are only in order to help him into a state of liberty. In learning a trade, or to play a game of skill, one must do difficult things, and keep on doing difficult things until they become easy. Such difficulties help us to become proficient, having reached which we enjoy to the full the satisfaction and benefits that proficiency brings. We must always remember that life is friendly and that all its experiences are endeavours to help us on our journey to higher and better things, and greater joys and felicities. If we think otherwise, then we will meet our experiences in the wrong way, so that we prevent them from leading us to our Highest good. Indeed, we meet them in such a way as to make them into sources of needless suffering. If, however, we meet them in the right way, with friendliness and co-operation, circumstances may be difficult for a time, but if we are faithful and hang on, then "joy cometh in the morning".

The life of faith is not an easy one, yet it leads to liberty. A competitor in a race is tested almost to breaking point. Again and again he feels that he cannot stay the course and that he must retire; yet he still keeps on, although he has passed what he thought was the limit of his endurance many times over, And so, because he will not give in, he wins the race. It is the same with the cultivation of faith. We are subjected to experiences so trying that we feel that we cannot continue, or that our fortitude must give way. But if we continue to the end, determined to see the thing out, no matter what the cost may be, we enter into liberty and joy such as cannot be described. The would-be man of faith, while being initiated, may be worried and greatly puzzled and troubled; but when he has attained he enjoys a settled peace, such as is entirely unknown by the ordinary individual.

Some readers may think that they do not want to become men and women of faith. They want to have an easy, uneventful life, full of peace and enjoyment, and do not desire any "experiences". If there are any such readers they must be told that such a thing is impossible. They want to reap where they have not sown, and gather where they have not sowed. They want to enjoy Heaven before becoming fit to enter such a state. They shrink from attempting to live a life of faith because they think it is a dreary, unpleasant business. But, actually, it is the only life of joy: it is the only path to peace: it is the only way to a heavenly state: it is

the only life worth living. On the other hand, the life of ease so desired is a life only fit for a cow. There is no interest in it, there are no adventures in it, and therefore it is an insipid life fit only for dumb, driven cattle. Trying to make life easy and safe really increases and perpetuates suffering and care. The life of faith, on the other hand, is the only path to liberation and complete freedom. It is the way of adventure, of joy, of peace, of mastery and overcoming.

There are those who teach that it is not necessary to pass through experiences, but that the Kingdom is a finished Kingdom, and that one can enter it now. They will tell you that it is simply a state of consciousness and that one can therefore enter it now if one is ready to do so, or if one 'demands' the rights of a child of God.

It is quite true that the Kingdom of God is a finished Kingdom, but it is equally true that we have to be prepared and made ready to enter it. It is also quite true that it is a state of consciousness into which we can enter. But this state of consciousness is really a state of actual knowing that is the result of experience. At first we have to walk by faith, but each experience reveals God to us more clearly until we reach a state of such knowing and certainty, that the things which we once believed and held on to by faith, are known to be realities, and the divinely normal state. We may then be known as men and women of great faith, but actually we are those who have passed through the faith stage, to a state of pure knowing, in which there is perfect liberty and freedom.

After each experience we can say: "I now know God better, I know now better than ever before that my life is not restricted in the way that people's lives seem to be restricted, but that I am free to the extent that I rely entirely upon God".

And so we go on, until only God remains.