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A Journal of Affirmation

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No. 9

THE GREATER SERVICE.

(A Prayer.)

(This prayer should be of special interest to readers of NOW on account of the evidence it expresses of our relationship to Infinite mind. The gifted Author, who lives in Australia, claims, and claims rightly, that to be IN THE SERVICE OF THE INFINITE is just about the one thing that matters in this life.)

OH POWER UNSEEN by eyes that men call seeing
Yet ever present to the inner sight
Create and make in every one of us
Desire that shall turn darkness into light.
Bring home to all who seek A PRESENT HEAVEN
A knowledge of the spirit over all
Which rules supreme from childhood up to manhood
Whatever part we play or great or small.

Send WISDOM with the laurels of a victor
HUMILITY wherever we may win
STRENGTH to combat what sometimes seems a failure
Till KNOWLEDGE of the truth comes from within.
Make all the wars we ever may engage in
Dependent on an everlasting grace
Which shall be exercised throughout the ages
Until we reach the great abiding place.

Bring well within the range of speaking distance
Those loved ones who have gone the PILOT'S ROAD,
Spread wide the knowledge of a great existence
AND REST—For those who travel with a load.
Send back in colour to thy broken children
The message of the rainbow and the sun,
The golden lining that is only hidden
Until we ACT THE WORDS, "Thy Kingdom Come".

Make smooth the path for all thy ardent servants
Where stones and stumbling blocks have been their lot,
Who carry truth into the darkest corners
The message of "WHAT IS" and 'WHAT IS NOT'.
Accept our heartfelt thanks for all the goodness
Bestowed on those who join the growing band—
Who know that if not here in the hereafter
And knowing can say—in deeds—we Understand.

—Philip O'Bryen-Howe.

LESSONS IN PSYCHOMETRY.

VIII.

I have tried in these lessons to impress you with the sacredness of this study. Provided you have conscientiously practiced you have been brought beyond the fear of death, and have realized the *real* life of the Soul. You are beginning to live in the finer vibrations; realizing yourself as Spirit *now*, which is the height of unfoldment while in the present bodily environment. You have now only to continue unfoldment along this plane to bring the physical life into complete subjection to the Spiritual. You are so to live from the subjective side, naturally, that not even your most intimate friends will notice anything peculiar about you. You must grow so intuitive that you perceive instantly what is true, and what to do. You must at all times be self-possessed and live in the faith of the All Good.

You should instinctively act from sensations that come from finer forces; never question why in regard to your conduct, but let the results answer. You KNOW you are right. The Soul makes no mistakes. Through this practice you should find health and happiness. This is the result of Psychometric development. What millions are brought to through the change and development of death, you have become already. The veil Paul saw through "darkly" has been lifted. You live the immortal life now. You know as you are known to the unfolded spirits.

This is the mission of Psychometry. All the seers have prophesied lies in the development of this faculty. Our definition has contained all this in the words, "finer vibrations," and in the words, "not recognized by the five senses." I have enabled you to enter into this realization, not by mere assertion, but through unfoldment. You can sense your friend's thought or love-vibration, no matter where that friend is, be he in the lower or higher vibrations. In this you have conquered death. There is no higher step than this so far as the body is concerned. You are now to unfold on this plane just

as you have unfolded from the cradle to the present. You are spiritually reborn. You will now so live that your every act is from the side of the Higher Vibrations. The fault of the past has been that those who desired this unfoldment withdrew from the world; isolated themselves; gave up every interest in the life of the senses. Jesus, who is our best example, did not so. He entered into the world's joy and sorrow; attended marriage and burial; taught and healed. "I am in the world, but not of it," he said. This is all now made possible to you. To isolate yourself is weakness; is limitation; and is to delay the mastery. You are to live all the more in the world and to be more social than ever. The lesson of protection has taught you how to do this. Sensitives who never go into crowds become so sensitive that they grow away from friends; close all avenues to social intercourse and so are deteriorating, losing power! This is not mastery, but slavery! It is defeat and not victory. The world is to be lifted, till ALL shall know that Soul is master. This can come to only one at a time. When ALL do know, we have millenium. Since you see, hear, feel, and live in the real life unfettered by the body. you have found that millenium. The joy of being is increased by this unfoldment; the joy of social intercourse, and the possibilities of growth are also multiplied.

Every moment we may consciously apply Suggestion and Affirmation to the direction of our life. Every moment we are acted upon by spiritual forces. We live in the spiritual universe. We are constantly the companions of the immortals both in and out of the body. We are immortal *now!*

In order to win the victory there is another obstacle that you must overcome. You must not be touched by, must not care for, praise. It is even more injurious to your spiritual unfoldment for you to have any feeling of elation when praised than to cringe before blame. It shows a littleness of soul to care for praise of others when we do a thing we feel is right. Our own opinion

is the only one we should care for. To rely upon that of others closes the fount of wisdom in ourselves. It is the old enemy, Authority, which has stultified millions of souls. Fear of Authority, care and respect for Authority will never allow you to enter the Holy-of-holies within the Soul. "Absolve yourself to yourself," says Emerson, "and you shall have the suffrage of the world!" The moment that you care not for either praise or blame then the world cares for you and your thought, for then you have truth clear and undefiled from the original source.

Thus you learn to live above the selfish (which is the littleness and narrowness of the life of the masses,) and enter into that life which is spiritual. Each dropping off of personal and physical desires but adds to your consciousness of spiritual possessions and spiritual power.

Learn to deal with the higher vibrations. You can do this in but one way, and that is by becoming passive to your sensations and interpreting them in the silence. The door to the soul is open to every sincere seeker. Knock with a pure heart and it will be opened unto you. You are merely doing intelligently what every right minded person, painter, poet, orator, writer or inventor—in short, everyone who has ever added to the world's stock of good things—have done instinctively. They did not always live on the heights and maintain health and happiness, but you, by the intelligent use of your powers in concentration, may live on the higher plane with health and happiness as your constant companions; and with them prosperity is sure to come. For you are developing that spiritual power which will, at all times, lead you to the infinite source of supply.

I would feel that I had wrought with you to little purpose if the ideal born in you was not above the financial, the mercenary life. If you have sought psychic powers for private ends or spiritual gifts to use for money, it would prove destructive of your highest good. This is a perversion that brings heavy penalties.

Material supply is necessary, but always make it subordinate to the spiritual. This is the admonition for you:

"Seek *first* the kingdom of spirit. Obey your highest inspiration and all things necessary to your happiness shall be added unto you." Analyze this in the light of the teachings of Jesus. "Kingdom is within you." Kingdom means power. A king is the incarnation of earthly power. All power is then within you. "And its righteousness" (rightness), is obedience to the laws of Power; lie thus, and all things, which are the results of this right use shall be yours. In all your unfoldment you have been learning only this, that you possess infinite possibilities; that infinite Power lies latent within Supply.

In all your thought you are to work from the Spirit. Affirmations. And fearless in the love of truth you are to live now as Spirit.

"LET your light shine" as shines the light of sun. Do not think of doing good, let it do itself. Speak when you have the word; act when you feel; living as Spirit all you need to say or do will intuitively come to you. "Freely have you received, freely give." Give what? Truth and Love. In your radiations all are blessed. I wish you to practice your psychometry till second nature to you. The "New Birth" gives you this as your second nature. Recognize that you are again a child; this time born of the spirit, and through this recognition, you will unfold along all these lines.

There can be no realization of things spiritual until you become sensitive to them. As a child on the objective plane learns to walk, to read, to choose the good, and to avoid the evil, so must each one learn to choose his actions on the subjective plane of life. You will sometimes hear it said that there are great moral dangers connected with psychic development. That is true of course, for normal dangers beset us in every walk, on every plane of life. But there is ample protection for you close at hand. And it is very simple. To be right, think right. To do right, think right. never to do wrong is never to think wrong. Love the truth. Love the good. Then you may unfold in safety.

In the love of truth commit your conduct and happiness to the forces of the soul.

Never lose control over your sense of right and wrong. In the psychic world thought and feeling are the only realities. That we think makes the conditions in which we live. Thought is force. It lies in strata, or, as we sometimes say, in octaves. We can choose in which octaves we will live. By clinging to the right, by loving the good, there is protection for us everywhere. We can live in the midst of hell when love of truth and goodness is our shield. That is all the protection we need. Bring every question to the bar of reason and common sense.

Although by training your psychometric powers you may develop a marvelous skill in reading the hearts of others you must remember that there are in every heart deep recess that should be veiled to all other eyes. Every soul has its hidden, inner chamber, into which you should never attempt to enter. Reverently stop at the door; seek to go no further. Every soul has its innermost secrets, which should be sacred to you. If you should discover any of them guard them in the utmost secrecy. Any attempt to obtain a knowledge of such secrets—for base or selfish purposes and any attempt to make an improper or iniquitous use of your powers, will bring disaster upon you. In all my experience I have known but a very few cases of such wrong-doing and they invariably ended in the loss of all psychometric power. In all such matters you should be the soul of honor. Hold every soul in reverence and never prostitute your powers to a base end; use them only to bless..

HENRY HARRISON BROWN.

CONCENTRATION.

There have been many books written on this all important subject and I suppose many more will be printed and given to the public. So many people are laboring under the delusion that in some manner they have lost this power of mind, that these particular books are necessary and are doing a world of good among a certain class of people.

Why is it that so many otherwise normal men and women are laboring under this suggestion of not being able to control their thought processes? They are successful in business and the ordinary affairs of life—yet when it comes to using thought for the conscious direction of the inner mind—they at once affirm and accept the suggestion that is everywhere so common, “I cannot concentrate.”

I have yet to see the man or woman who has lost the power of concentration. It is true that I have seen and talked with many who are living every day of their lives under a suggestion of delusion, and are continually affirming to their sub-conscious selves that they lack this power. But when the mental condition of this class of person is analyzed it is to be clearly seen that, rather than having lost their power, it is the meaning of the power that is misunderstood.

In these various books that are teaching the secret of concentration, we read much of the need of the development of concentration by the individual. While it is true that demonstration is impossible without this faculty, to the writer it seems the argument is always presented in the wrong light. The idea is presented always from the standpoint that the individual must develop the power. To the writer it seems that the individual must *recognize* the faculty *within* himself. Just as the inner powers of the sub-conscious mind slumber within the individual unrecognized, so the power or faculty of concentration sleeps within the individual from the lack of conscious use.

We *all* concentrate to a marvelous degree, but the trouble is *few* of us concentrate in the proper manner. We do not concentrate along the lines of power, simply because we do not think along positive lines. All concentration as developed in the average man is negative. In other words, the concentration of an individual is governed by his belief in himself and nature. This may seem rather obscure, but I think it can be made very plain.

The average person who becomes a New Thought student always complains that he cannot concentrate. He always insists that it is impossible for him to hold a thought in the mind for more than a moment or two. This is no doubt true. We all find it hard to hold a thought for a length of time to the exclusion of all else. I doubt if there is any one who can hold a thought two minutes at a time to the exclusion of all else, unless he is in the suggestive state—nor is it needful that one have this degree of control. It is not a natural condition.

I know a young man who is a bookkeeper and he claims to be lacking in concentration; yet he works in a very noisy office, in fact he works among rushing men and women who make a great deal of noise all the day. While at work this condition does not disturb him at all, yet he says: "I'm lacking in the power of concentration." The truth is that he has the power to a remarkable degree.

We concentrate that we may give ourselves "suggestions"; in other words, "concentration" in New Thought means consciously telling the sub-conscious what to do.

Therefore, it is faith in one's self that determines the power of one's concentration. It is not the ability to hold to a desired thought for a great length of time—it is the power to speak to the sub-consciousness in faith, believing, knowing, that the power within will respond. Belief and faith in the Power of the Inner Self—that is the secret.

Concentration or Thought is *not* power. The Power is the Sub-Conscious Self, and it is the Inner Power that does the work. The office of thought is directive. Therefore, do not worry about your failure to hold to any statement for any great length of time. If you will closely examine your thought life, you will plainly see that you do concentrate greatly, but it is mostly from the idea of "I Can't." You respond to that thought perfectly. When you have developed faith in yourself as Power, then you will respond to concentration from the ideal: "I Can." This means faith in yourself.

Concentration, therefore, does not need to be developed, but Faith in the Divine Self must be. I am an unfolding soul. My unfolding simply means that I, as a conscious evolving self, am coming into the realization of myself as Power. This is the true exercise for the development of Faith.

Speak to the inner self, and expect it to respond. If you have real faith in your power (that is, if you believe and are not lying to yourself), the subconscious mind will do the work.

SAM E. FOULDS.

—○—

THE SECRET PLACE.

He who himself and God would know
 Into the Silence let him go,
 And, lifting off pall after pall,
 Reach to the inmost depth of all.

How small, in that uplifted hour,
 Temptation's lure and passion's power!
 How weak the foe that made him fall;
 How strong the soul to conquer all!

A mighty wind of nobler will
 Sends through his soul its quick'ning thrill
 No more creature of the clod,
 He knows himself a child of God!

—James Martineau.

WHO ARE THE BLACK MAGICIANS?

The present meaning given to the word "magic" is an excellent illustration of the constant change in meaning which words undergo.

Originally the term was used to signify "priest-craft," or spiritual wisdom. And this included, as the chief result of wisdom, communication with the invisible world of spirit.

Gradually we find the different nations gave to the word various meanings, according to their conception of wisdom as applied to spiritual matters. Just as we in this age understand quite different things from the word "God."

To some the word carries the impression of a supernaturally large man, with a long white beard, and great strength of physique. To others, God means merely the outward manifestation of nature while to others the word conveys an understanding of life in all its phases, and to others it means a realization of all-love and life.

(Doubtless, we will some time reach so perfect a comprehension of LIFE that words will no longer be necessary. We will know without the tiresome necessity of conveying impressions with words, but for the present we can only comprehend as much as the word means to us.)

And so the word "Magic," like the word "God," and many other words, has come to have various meanings, according to the comprehension of individuals and finally of nations. But originally, according to the best authorities, the word signified the vocation and the knowledge of a priest.

And as we know, in ancient times, chemistry, philosophy and all that we now associate with the arts and sciences were confined closely to the office of the priesthood.

The ancient Egyptian priests unquestionably possessed a knowledge of chemistry that was undreamt of by the people of those days.

Thus, through keeping the people in ignorance, these priests acquired a tremendous power over the people.

All natural philosophy, and particularly astronomy (the movements of the planets) were considered a part of the priest-knowledge or "magic," in the ancient meaning of the word.

And it is small wonder that these so-called wise men were considered to be in direct communication with the supreme ruler, or God.

Naturally enough, they were enabled to give out the impression that they had the gift of prophecy, inasmuch as they kept their knowledge of material philosophy, chemistry, astronomy and that sort of thing from the world.

You can readily understand, if Professor and Madame Curie for example, had claimed supernatural power, and that God had given them out of his own physical right hand the property known as radium, even in this day there would have been many to believe them.

As a matter of fact our daily press is filled with advertisements of persons (generally in New York) who are members of the "Magi," conveying the self-same impression that was given out in Ancient Egypt by those whose profession and material advancement depended upon their deceiving the multitude.

After the invasion of Egypt and the partial destruction of the Alexandrian temples, we find that the word "magic" and "magician" began to partake of its modern meaning, which, up to within a very few years, included a knowledge of occult science, communication with supernatural beings, and what we now consider the phenomena of hypnotism. And to show you that we are not yet very far away from the superstitious fear and cowardice of the ancient multitude, we find the word "magic", in its mediaeval sense, applied to much of the phenomena of the subconscious mind today, by those who are too prejudiced or too ignorant to study its cause. And thus we see that now, as in mediaeval times, whatever the average mind finds incomprehensible is ascribed

to magic, or the influence of supernaturalism.

Among the knowledge that was confined to the priesthood was that of prediction, mental influence, even at a distance, and all that we now know to be a part of the knowledge of human nature.

Besides this, the commonest knowledge of chemistry, now known to every school child of ten years or younger, was kept secret, as belonging to the supernatural knowledge possible only to the priests—the magi. Naturally as the leaven of education and understanding percolated through the dense ignorance of the laity, some of the knowledge of the priesthood spread through the masses, and the priests could no longer claim the exclusive possession of so-called “magical” powers.

It was then that the term “Black” magic was invented. And since the priests could not make clear the fact that their knowledge was entirely of natural origin, without betraying their former methods, they were forced to the expediency of claiming that those not priests, who possessed a knowledge of chemistry and natural science, derived their information from demons, instead of from angels.

Thus, the terms “white” magic and “black” magic became familiar. White magic stood for knowledge supposed to come from angels or realms of light. While the powers of darkness were said to be enlisted by those possessing the self-same knowledge, but who were not members of the priesthood.

The original and the higher description of magic (according to an authority on its history) is that “Man may become, by the assistance and co-operation of spiritual powers, and the capacities of his higher, divine origin, capable of a higher sphere of activity, as well without as within himself, which gives him dominion over his own and over surrounding nature.”

Now, this idea of “magic” is not at all the one held at the present time, because we no longer look upon the word as applicable to spiritual wisdom.

The average twentieth century mind considers “mag-

ic" as the art of deception. The tricks of the prestidigitator, and the deceptive powers of one trained to amuse by his celerity of motion, is the meaning the word conveys to the majority.

We have heard innocent children repeat the most profane language, in total innocence of any evil meaning in the words. And, therefore, there was no evil meaning in them.

Words, ceremonies, incantations, and all things that are merely outward, have no real place, then, in the acquisition of psychical powers.

They are but the symbols of what the individual desires. They express, as imperfectly as all words express—his motives. But in this, as in everything, it is the motive that counts.

Thus, for example, two men may possess exactly the same talents. One uses his for the uplifting of the world, while the other does nothing that makes the world better for his having lived.

The one uses his power (which is the Universal power) to construct. The other obstructs.

One acts in compliance with the law of harmony, and the other opposes it, creating discord.

One is using "white" magic, and the other is using "black" magic, just as absolutely as though they prefaced their every act with ancient ceremonies and the utterance of certain incantations (which after all were merely certain words, uttered with a definite meaning).

It is a fact that in all ages of the world's history, as far back as hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus, the wise men of those times perceived that which was nearly lost sight of during the past two centuries, and which we are just now again becoming conscious of.

That is, that the outer, or mortal, is merely the covering of the real, which is the invisible.

The purpose of all priestly offices (which as I remarked at the beginning was the original meaning of magic) has been to get into communication with the in-

visible source of this external life—to fathom the Absolute.

The history of these efforts forms the entire fabric of religion. The religion has varied only according to the conception of those who essayed this office.

We know that in Catholicism, for example, the office of the priest is to become a mediator between God and man.

He is supposed to have more direct communication with the Invisible, than has the layman. And insofar as he does really possess this interior power, he *is* a true priest; but being merely called so does not make him a true priest.

This is exactly the same idea that was held at the time when the Egyptian priests, who were called magicians, were supposed to be in direct communication with invisible sources.

The difference lies wholly in the names, and in the interpretation given by others.

For example, many a priest who believes himself heard by various saints and his prayers answered accordingly, would be shocked to find himself accused of practising black magic, and yet he may so accuse one who claims to have communication with his own father or brother or another, invisible yet real—entity. Let us trust each other in this world. We are all just human beings — whether we are called “this or that or the other” is of small moment.

What are we?—that is the question. •

* * *

There is of course more that could be said on this subject of “black magic.” It is indeed a fact that there are persons who seek to use the invisible powers (mental vibrations); to influence others to do wrong.

We know that “absent treatment” is used effectively to cure the sick. We know that persons may be reached and influenced against their will. We know power may be used to construct, and it may be used also to destroy.

But we also know this: If any power be used to de-

stroy, that same power inevitably destroys the one so using it.

Evil, or the destructive use of power, does what?

It destroys itself. It is only the constructive, the unselfish—the Love vibrations that can endure.

“They who use the sword shall perish by the sword”—this is not only a prophecy, but it is a law of the Cosmos.

But, some one will say, in the meantime, before the power has destroyed the destroyers, may not innocent victims be sacrificed?

Yes, that is true, unless a person has cast out fear and selfishness.

Fear is the great enemy—the arch-enemy.

If we fear “evil,” or “black magic,” or “malicious magnetism,” or “hypnotism,” or any other name given to the invisible forces, we open the door to them.

If we have absolute trust and confidence in our relationship to the All-Good of the universe, no black magic can harm us. And it is not enough that we have faith in some phenomenal, external All-Good power. We must have faith in the all-good of all persons—we must trust the Inner Man in ALL men. We must love our neighbor as ourselves, because our neighbor IS our self — we are all units in this one great Whole.

There is a great lesson in a play that had a run in New York—(all good plays are New Thought plays these days) called “The Miracle Man.”

It is the story of a gang of thieves and crooks, who had heard of an old man in an obscure town in Maine, who was said to perform miracles of cure.

They didn't believe in him, of course, but they decided to trade upon the stories of the cures he had wrought—they sought to enlist the old man in their scheme to make millions on what they thought was a “fake reputation.” And, to make a long story short, the old man's faith and trust in his fellowmen was so great that he believed that these men really wanted to help the world and he allowed them to use him for their confidence

game. The result was that the entire gang of crooks became cured of their desire to commit crime.

One of the great comforting and encouraging truths in life is the one that one act of kindness outweighs many acts of unkindness.

One thought of Love dissolves many thoughts of hate.

One grain of faith overcomes many tons of doubt.

In short, the True and the Good outweigh, a hundred-fold, the untrue and the destructive.

Hold to faith. If there be "black magic" in the world, then the only way to rid ourselves of it is to outweigh it in Courage and Faith and Love.

We only give destructive force more power by admitting it as power.

I would have faith though Justice were denied me,
Though all my hopes seem sunk in deepest gloom;
Have I not seen from frozen earth's dark bosom
The tall green grasses rise? The fairest flowers bloom?

I would have love, though loved ones all forsake me,
Though naught but bitter pain my loving precepts bring.
Have I not known from our mold of Sorrow—
The strong pure soul awake? The spirit-form take wing?

DR. ALEX J. McIVOR TYNDALL.

AFTER-THOUGHT.

Oh Life! without thy checkered scene
Of right and wrong, of weal and woe
Success and failure, could a ground
For magnanimity be found;
For faith, 'mid ruined hopes, serene?
Or whence could virtue flow?

Pain entered through a ghastly breach—
Nor while sin lasts must effort cease;
Heaven upon earth's an empty boast;
But, for the bowers of Eden lost,
Mercy has placed within our reach
A portion of God's peace. —*Wordsworth.*

MENTAL CONCENTRATION.

The one prudence in life is concentration.

—Emerson.

Turning to my dictionary I learn that the word Concentrate is derived from the Latin *con* & *centrare*, meaning; *to* and *center*, and the complete definition of the term is given as, "to bring to a common center" or "to unite more closely."

Concentration, then, should be defined as the act of bringing nearer together, or gathering to a common center that which previously existed in a diffused or scattered condition. This I accept as a correct definition upon which to base this lesson.

A few examples of concentration in operation will start us on our way:

The commander of an army concentrates his forces for a "telling blow" at a certain point of the enemy's entrenchments.

The musical director concentrates all the voices of his chorus upon a single note.

The writer concentrates many ideas in one book.

The painter concentrates many different shades of color in his landscape-painting.

The teacher concentrates knowledge for his student.

The metaphysical healer concentrates life and health in his patient.

The carpenter concentrates men and materials at the place where he is to build a house.

The spectator at the theatre concentrates his attention upon the play being staged.

The fighter "gathers himself together" for a final blow at his antagonist.

"He pulled his scattered wits together" is a common saying.

Each blow of the blacksmith's hammer upon the anvil means just so much concentrated energy in action.

The grape growing upon the sunny slope of the vineyard, is full of concentrated sunshine; and wine is the concentrated essence of many grapes.

Breathing is a process of concentration; it is the process of concentrating oxygen.

The concentration of nutritive elements takes place during the process of digestion and assimilation of food.

We concentrate energy for the performance of our tasks. One task may require the concentration of but little power, as the sewing of a button on a garment, another, may require the concentration of much power, as the cutting down of a tree. Difference obtains only in the amount of power concentrated; the principle by which the power is centralized is the same.

Centralizing physical force, focusing the sun's rays in the burning-glass, convening of bodies of men for concentrated action, consolidating the scattered elements of attention, collecting thought forms relating to some particular idea, centering intelligence in the individual consciousness is all accomplished under the operation of the same principle, i. e., *concentration*, the bringing to a common center.

I might go on giving example after example, illustration upon illustration of this principle in operation, for man is a natural concentrator. He is a concentrator of power and intelligence; he himself is power and intelligence in concentrated form.

Energy and wisdom pervades without limit the entire cosmos, and man may concentrate it for his use as he wills, *according to his unfoldment in intelligence*.

So much for concentration in general, the discussion of which we will leave for the present that we may devote our entire attention to that particular form of the concentrative principle, known as MENTAL CONCENTRATION.

As MENTAL concentration precedes all outward manifestation of the principle, the conscious control of it is of first importance; and in order to achieve this control it is necessary to know just what mental concentration is.

Concentration, generally speaking, being the act of bringing together or uniting closely at a common cen-

ter, something existing in a state of diffusion; MENTAL concentration may be defined as the gathering together at a common center MENTAL POWERS, the uniting of Mind Faculties at a definite point for a definite purpose.

To give your *individual* attention to anything means that you have brought together all the elements of this one mental power and made them one piece with the object of your attention. This is mental concentration.

Recollection is a phase of mental concentration. Remembrance is also a phase of it.

In recollection, you collect past events and bring them to a center in your consciousness. In remembering, you re-member the scattered parts of an incident, joining them together in a WHOLE piece again.

You may centralize all the directive power of your will upon the accomplishment of a purpose.

All your ability to reason may be brought to bear upon a single given subject.

Your entire attention and interest may be centered upon a particular object to the exclusion of everything else.

When an individual devotes himself to a special purpose, he enters at once into a state of mental concentration.

Concentration and consecration are very nearly synonymous, and that individual lives a consecrated life whose powers of mind and body are concentrated in sacred service.

It is said that Aristotle, the great philosopher of antiquity, once avowed that he owed his vast acquirements more to his having command over his mind—to his ability to hold steadily to a given object—than to any natural superiority of intellect.

Patient, concentrated thought was the power to which the great Newton ascribed his success in his notable discoveries.

Goethe's most important element of success is shown in his motto, "Wherever thou art, be all there." What is that but mental concentration?

It is the compression of air that gives its power to drive the drill into the rock. Compression means uniting closely, drawing or pressing together. It is concentrating a lot of oxygen in a small space to give it the force of expansion.

The condensation of steam gives it the power to drive the great Ocean Greyhound across the turbulent sea.

Mental force in diffusion is thin and quite powerless; on the other hand, the concentration of thought powers enables the mind to accomplish the splendid achievements that it does.

When one shall concentrate in an hour the "energies of a day" he shall have at his command for sixty minutes a force equal to the expended energy of twenty-four hours; and who shall say that he may not concentrate *in a moment* the same amount of force, and thus enable him to perform his tasks with speed and ease as yet unimagined?

Many a student of the new thought fails in his efforts to concentrate his mental force in the desired direction of health, happiness, and, prosperity because of a lack of understanding of the true meaning of concentration. Instead of a clear-cut image, a clean-lined mental picture of mental concentration in its true and proper light, standing out in the mirror of his consciousness, he has but a vague hazy notion, an indistinct idea, perhaps, of what the process really consists. If he understood thoroughly that "concentrating upon Health," meant the centering in consciousness ideas pertaining to health alone; the uniting of all his mental faculties, attention, will, reason, memory, insight, understanding, in the bringing together in consciousness ideas of health and healing, he would begin to realize something of what mental concentration really signifies.

Many, I think, have been led to believe that mental concentration is only accomplished through strenuous effort and laborious mental action, so that in a very brief period of time, this true, pleasure-giving, solid-satisfying, natural mental process assumes a strained bur-

densome appearance which is entirely foreign to the principle.

Mental concentration is NATURAL!

The child absorbed in its play is an example of its naturalness. Does the child make any strenuous effort to become absorbed? No.

All natural principles and propensities may be cultivated and extended by the intelligent consciousness and may be used for the accomplishment of conscious purpose.

There is no strenuous, laborious mental effort necessary to the taking advantage of the operation of a natural principle of mind such as is mental concentration. That which appears to render laborious effort necessary is the result of an inadequate understanding of the process involved.

If you will study the child-mind, you may perceive that it must of necessity concentrate upon that which most strongly engages its attention, whether it will or not; such is the uncontrolled or undirected operation of the ever-active principle of concentration. But this power may be controlled and directed, and the Mind or Soul REALIZING its possession of the concentrative power can say what shall engage its attention, according to the measure of its unfolded intelligence.

To intelligently and consciously marshal one's mental forces and faculties and guide them in any direction it may be desirable is a wonderful attainment—an attainment that becomes absolutely necessary to everyone who desires to realize a conscious controlling power in his or her life-activities.

Study to understand the PRINCIPLE of concentration, and USE it. USE IT! Let the good, and the true, and the wholesome, and the beautiful engage your whole-hearted attention. Think on *these* things and do not think of those things that produce misery. Health is much more interesting and far pleasanter to contemplate than disease. Give your attention to health. Happiness has misery "beat a mile"—think on happiness.

Prosperity and abundance are most engaging subjects with which to fascinate the mind.

A perfectly healthy individual is one whose entire mental force is completely concentrated upon perfect health. The **WHOLE** attention is given to **HEALTH**.

Think, **CONCENTRATE** upon these things for they belong to that indomitable spirit of creation which you are, and intending your thought towards any phase of that spirit, you draw it into manifestation.

WILLIAM MORRIS NICHOLS.

GEMS FROM MARDEN.

The world wants: Men whose word is their bond.

Men who put character above wealth.

Men who are larger than their vocations.

Men who will not lose their individuality in a crowd.

Men who will make no compromise with wrong.

Men who are willing to sacrifice private interests for public good.

Men who will not say they do it "because everybody else does it."

Men who will not have one brand of honesty for business purposes and another for private life.

Clergymen who can hear a louder call than that of public applause, a larger salary, or a fashionable church.

Statesmen who cannot be intimidated or bought, who will not pack caucuses, pull wires, or be influenced in their policy by personal motives.

Merchants who will not offer for sale "English woolens" manufactured in American mills, or "Irish linens" made in New York.

Lawyers who will not persuade clients to bring suits merely to squeeze fees out of them, when they know very well that there is no chance of winning.

Physicians who will not pretend to know the nature of a disease when they do not, or experiment on patients with drugs with which they are not familiar.

Young men and women who can stand erect and independent while others bow and fawn and cringe for place and power.

Men who are not ashamed or afraid to stand for the truth when it is unpopular, who can say "No" with emphasis, although all the rest of the world says "Yes."

Men and women everywhere who will do unto others as they would others would do unto them.

FUNDAMENTALS OF SALESMANSHIP.**PART 4.**

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Tapping Unsuspected Reservoirs of Power.

The foregoing articles of this series may perhaps have sounded a bit familiar to you, even trite. You may have heard similar ideas thundered at you by professional orators who were telling you how to make a success in life.

But you and I are reasoning beings. We are not satisfied with taking the statements of an orator. We want to find out the reason why.

Let us see what William James has to say on this subject.

"Every one knows what it is to start a piece of work, either intellectual or muscular, feeling stale—or cold, as an Adirondack guide once put it up to me. And everybody knows what it is to "warm up" to his job. The process of warming up gets particularly striking in the phenomenon known as 'second wind.' On usual occasions we make a practice of stopping an occupation as soon as we meet the first effective layer (so to call it) of fatigue. We have then walked, or worked "enough", so we desist. That amount of fatigue is an efficacious obstruction on this side of which our usual life is cast.

"But if an unusual necessity forces us to press onward, a surprising thing occurs. The fatigue gets worse up to a certain critical point, when gradually or suddenly it passes away, and we are fresher than before. We have evidently tapped a level of new energy, masked until then by the fatigue-obstacle usually obeyed.

There may be layer after layer of this experience, a third and fourth wind" may supervene.

"Mental activity shows the phenomenon as well as physical, and in exceptional cases we may find, beyond the very extremity of fatigue—distress, amounts of ease and power that we never dreamed ourselves to own—sources of strength habitually not taxed at all, because habitually we never push through the obstruction, never pass those early critical points.

"It is evident that our organism has stored-up reserves of energy that are ordinarily not called upon: deeper and deeper strata of combustible or explosible material, discontinuously arranged, but ready for use by any one who probes so deep, and repairing themselves by rest as well as do the superficial strata.

'Most of us continue living unnecessarily near our surface.

"Of course there are limits: the trees don't grow into the sky.

But the plain fact remains that men the world over possess amount of resources which only very exceptional individuals push to their extreme use."

William James describes very interestingly a general condition. In each one of us there are reservoirs of power at various levels—and the farther down you go the bigger is the reservoir which you tap.

Most of us drift along aimlessly on the surface of things, never realizing that there is anything below the top reservoir.

It is only when we run bang up against some serious obstacle, that we begin to go down deeper into ourselves, and it is then that we tap the second and third reservoirs, and maybe the fourth and fifth.

A man was telling me the history of his fight for success. He started his first series of adventures with a nest egg of \$1500.

During the first few months of his venture, he certainly tried very hard. As he expressed it, "I worked like a dog."

But he wasn't making a success, and he kept eating into his nest egg.

This strain on his resources continued until one day he found himself with 15c in his pocket—absolutely "up against it!"

From that time his success started—and he became a whale of a success, too.

You see, this "being up against it" had forced him to dig down into his lower reservoir of power—and he had **FOUND HIMSELF.**

It isn't necessary for everybody to be "up against it" as bad as this man was, although this story will give you an inkling as to why so many of the big successes in life come from the ranks of the poor.

But perhaps you may ask, how is it that some men that are born with a silver spoon in the mouth, yet manage to make a success in spite of this very serious handicap?

I will tell you. The reason is, that these men made their ideals so big and so almost unattainable, that the difficulty of achieving their ideal is in itself a challenge

to their whole nature. This challenge serves the purpose of forcing them to dig down inside themselves, whereby they tap the lower and larger reservoirs of power.

What made Admiral Peary go into the great white North looking for a theoretical pole? He didn't have to go. He tried many times and failed.

Why did Cyrus Field keep on for over ten years in his attempt to lay an Atlantic Cable when most people thought he was crazy?

Why should the Wright Brothers have stuck to their experiments on airplanes, when even their closest friends tapped their foreheads and smiled when the boys passed by?

The reason that these men succeeded is because every failure was like a slap in the face, spurring them to greater determination to achieve their ideal. After every challenge the whole of the man's being would clench its fists and cry out, "By God, I *will* do it."

DETERMINATION is one of the foundation-stones necessary in overcoming handicaps. But NOT the kind of determination that is keen today and dull tomorrow; not the kind that gets weary and wants to stop work for the sake of playing.

Washington had determination. He was on the job every day—was ready early every morning. During that long, hard winter at Valley Forge, when the Continental Army was poorly fed, and when many of the soldiers were barefooted, and NONE had been paid, Washington didn't give up. He had not only his OWN handicaps to think about, but those of thousands of men.

Washington was rich; he could have wintered in comfort at Mount Vernon, but if his men were to win, HE HAD TO BE WITH THEM AND LIVE THE WAY THEY LIVED!

RESPECT FOR TIME is another big, important element in overcoming handicaps. What truly *great* man has ever been willing to waste time? With comforts at his command, he has worked day and night—thought—fought, MASTERED HIMSELF at every turn in the

road.

You may remember the story of Corporal Holmes, in the *American Magazine*. The following quotation is almost enough to make us wish that we, too, could have the same experience. He says:

"The one thing that the war did for me, more than anything else, was the constant thought of death. There is nothing in the world like that, to make a man take a square look at himself.

"This week may be the last you have to live. Sometimes it is 'this day', or 'this hour'; even this very minute.' You get so that you live with that thought all the time. And under all the surface laughter and grumbling is a desperate wish to square yourself with life.

"Even now that I have come out of the war, I find that I haven't lost that thought of death. I don't believe a day goes by that it doesn't come to me. Probably it has become a habit of mind. At any rate, I keep right on with it.

"It isn't a morbid feeling. It is just that I came to realize that life is only a passing thing, and whatever one wants to make out of it must be made right now."

But it doesn't do to be in *too much* of a hurry. Many a prominent life has been ruined by the attempt to achieve SUCCESS in a jiffy. The rare cases that do succeed in a jiffy, are often *undone* in a jiffy.

If to-day's record can be beaten tomorrow, then go out and beat it. If to-morrow's record is wonderful, don't stop there! If you have learned something useful today, learn something more useful tomorrow.

Have you ever seen on the screen, the planting of a seed, the growth of the plant and the budding and blossoming of the flower—all in a few minutes? Do you know how these pictures were taken? The motion camera was set on its tripod in a hothouse, and focused on a box of earth. A few pictures were taken of the actual planting of the seed—and from that time on, ONCE EACH FOUR HOURS, *one* picture was taken. There are sixteen pictures to a foot of film. In two and a half days, ONE foot of film was exposed! that is patience—but it shows what *development* really means!

The child who grows up where you can see it every

day, doesn't seem to have learned very much in any one day—but the sum-total of its education and development may finally make that child a LEADER OF MEN!

There is no handicap that besets you that is so great that you can not master it. But that mastery is not gained all at once, any more than a wheat crop is grown in a day. The masterpiece is not simply "dashed off." It is planned and executed carefully and thoroughly.

In every line of human effort, there is ONE BEST—one champion. Strangely enough—or naturally enough, would perhaps be better! Many of the champions or stars began life with the least promise.

It was not always the brilliant boy in school who gave the best account of himself. Sometimes it was the "near-sighted" backward fellow, who had to put his nose into his text book to see the type, and who appreciated what it meant to REMEMBER what he read, and to put it into PRACTICE!

When Benj. Disraeli made his first speech in the House of Commons, he was so severely ridiculed that he had to stop abruptly and sit down—but not before he made the prophetic declaration that the time would come when the House would hear him. Later he became the Earl of Beaconsfield, Prime Minister of England.

The salesman who has handicaps—in himself or in his territory, owes a certain debt to HIMSELF in mastering those impediments.

From the moment your conception of life is development, getting rid of the handicaps will be just as natural a process as pulling weeds out of a garden. It is cultivation, and nothing can be cultivated until the harmful influences are removed.

What would life be without obstacles? It would be like a book or play without a plot.

The story of the film that runs along smoothly, delineating a humdrum existence, is not one that interests us. It is the play or story in which the hero is constantly overcoming obstacles that grips us, that makes

us hold our breath, even though we know that we are not looking on reality. We sympathize with him, strive with him, until the last obstacle is overcome.

Only when there are handicaps to OVERCOME, is zest added to the story.

The most lonesome folk are those who say that their lifework is done—who sink back to “live on velvet!”

Browning says:

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

AUSTIN BREED.

SERVICE.

Fret not that the day is gone
And thy task is still undone.
'Twas not thine, it seems at all:
Near to thee it chanced to fall,
Close enough to stir thy brain,
And to vex thy heart in vain.
Somewhere, in a nook forlorn,
Yesterday a babe was born:
He shall do thy waiting task;
All thy questions he shall ask,
And the answers will be given,
Whispered lightly out of heaven.
His shall be no stumbling feet,
Falling where they should be fleet;
He shall hold no broken clue;
Friends unto him shall be true;
Men shall love him; falsehood’s aim
Shall not shatter his good name.
Day shall nerve his arm with light,
Slumber soothe him all the night;
Summer’s peace and winter’s storm
Help him all his will perform.
'Tis enough of joy for thee
His high service to foresee.

—Edward Rowland Sill.

FUNDAMENTALS.

In order to thoroughly understand any of the phases of the science of right living HERE and NOW, it is always necessary to view the subject in its relation to the principle underlying the whole science. So in our meditations let us try to eliminate from consciousness for the time being all ideas concerning the origin of mankind, all notions concerning our mission in life, and our destiny, that have been gained through the study of sacred books, including the Bible and all ideas concerning these things which may have been gathered from the different interpretations of scripture and other religious literature by scholars, preachers and others; and let us place ourselves in imagination in a position where we are seekers after Truth, but where we alone must determine what is and what is not Truth and make our lives conform to our own judgments. Of course it is quite difficult to do this, but it is only by doing it that we can arrive at a correct understanding of Truth and all that it means—and all that is worth while in life is only attained by wholesome effort.

Assuming the position I have just described, we become as little children whose minds are free from preconceived notions and prejudices, and able to give unbiased thought to whatever subject may present itself.

Desire to fathom the whys and wherefores of life is an inherent quality of all people, and the attitude assumed toward this desire determines the degree of unfoldment of the individual. Up to the last few hundred years the race as a whole has been content to follow the interpretations of sacred and mysterious writings by leaders and teachers whom they have been taught to reverence and view as authority, with the result that progress in these matters of such great importance to mankind has been very slow. As long as people delegate their thinking on these things which mean so much to their own welfare to others whose ideas are molded

by their ancestry it is easy to see that but little progress it possible. It is for this reason that we are counseling the elimination as far as possible of preconceived ideas concerning life, its mission and destiny, and why I have asked you to assume the attitude of an unprejudiced seeker after Truth.

Having assumed this attitude let us note the impressions that come to us. As we perceived the various phenomena of nature through the channel of the senses, the light and heat of the sun, the movement of the wind and waves, the growth of vegetation and animal life, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes and all the other marvels of the universe, our first impression is one of POWER back of all that we perceive—that an infinite power gave birth to all that we perceive—and that man himself, as a phenomenon of nature, is a child of infinite power.

As we view the orderliness attendant upon all the phenomena of nature, our second impression is one of WISDOM, infinite wisdom back of all phenomena, including mankind, and that man is a child of infinite wisdom. Man, then, stands forth, along with all other phenomena of the universe as a child of Infinite Power and Infinite Wisdom.

Now infinity of power and intelligence necessarily presupposes but One power and One intelligence, for if there were more than one neither could be infinite. So the logic of our reasoning that back of all things in the universe there is but One Infinite Power and Intelligence is perfectly sound.

The next impression is the result of our answer to the question, "Is it possible for Infinite Power and Intelligence to create or bring into being aught but that which is good and beautiful and true?" Surely not, for to do so it would be antagonizing itself, and it is unthinkable that All-power and All-intelligence could or would make war upon itself.

Hence, our impressions have led us to this great affirmation: There is but One Power and Intelligence

in the universe and that Power and Intelligence is All-good.

Applying the law of reproduction, which we observe in all life about us, that like produces like, man, as a child of All-power All-intelligence, is a replica of All-power and All-intelligence and his relation to his parent is the same as that between a little child and his parent. The child has within himself potentially all that is necessary for him to unfold and express all that his parent expresses. So man possesses within himself All power and All-intelligence, and it is his privilege to unfold this power and intelligence into expression and so become master of his every desire.

The fundamental principle underlying this philosophy, then, is that there is but One Power and Intelligence in the universe, that it is All-good, that man is this One-power and Intelligence, and is All-good. Man is controlled in all that he does by his convictions of truth, by what he believes to be true. Having been taught that that he was a poor weak worm of the dust, that while there was a power for good, there was also a power for evil, and that the power for evil was more persistent than the power for good, and having believed these things to be truth, his life has been controlled by them, and his eyes have been blinded to the ever present good, and beautiful, and true, and evil and wickedness have been dominant factors in his life. Belief in anything makes it a truth to the one who believes, and even though the thing itself be false, its effect upon the believer is the same as though it were truth. .

It is important, then, that we insist upon a reason for what we believe to be true, and this reason must always be in its relation to the universe and the fundamental principle of life, and not merely in its relation to how it effects the individual at the time.

So affirm the existence of but one power and intelligence, and that it is All-good, until you feel the Truth of it, until you believe it as a firm conviction. Insist that evil appearances are due to old erroneous beliefs

that you have built up, and crowd them out by affirmations of Good. Only in this way will you eventually triumph over adversity and the whole world become to you a world of peace, and joy, and happiness.

Charles P. Tiley.

THE ART OF CREATION.

Partly through a natural reaction, and partly through the influx of Eastern ideas, there has been a great swing of the pendulum, and a disposition to posit the mental world as nearer the basis of existence, and to look upon material phenomena rather as the outcome and expression of the mental . . . In observing our thoughts and actions and bodily forms come into existence, we seem to come upon something which we may call a law of Nature, just as much as gravitation or any other law—the law, namely, that within ourselves there is a continual movement outwards, from feeling towards thought, and then to action; from the inner to the outer; from the vague to the definite; from the emotional to the practical; from the world of dreams to the world of actual things and what we call reality. We may fairly conclude that the same progress may be witnessed both in our waking thoughts and in our dreams—namely, a continual ebullition and birth going on within us, and an evolution out of the Mind stuff of forms which are the express on and image of underlying feeling; that these forms, at first vague and undetermined in outline, rapidly gather definition and clearness and materiality; and press forward towards expression in the outer world. And we may fairly ask whether we are not here within our own minds witnessing what is really taking place everywhere and at all times—in other persons as well as ourselves, and in the great Life which underlies and is the visible universe. You may say that there is no evidence that man ever produces a particle of matter directly out of himself; and I will admit that this is so. But there is plenty of evidence that he produces shapes and forms, and if he produces shapes and forms that is all we need; for what matter is in the abstract no one has the least experience or knowledge. All we know is that the things we see are shapes and forms of what we call matter. And it (as is possible and indeed probable) matter is of the same stuff as mind—only seen and envisaged from the opposite side—then the shapes and forms of the actual world are the shapes and forms of Mind, thus projected for us mutually to witness and to understand.—*Edward Carpenter.*

OPTIMISM AND PESSIMISM.

"Smiling is nothing but twisting your face; moving is nothing but changing your base—what's the use?"

One is an optimist in the degree that he discerns things as they are rather than as they seem. He judges from the standard of reality and not of appearance. He realizes the unity of Being that underlies the duality of existence. He uses his inner vision to illumine his outer realization of the unity and beneficence of Being, in the superficial while optimism is substantial. The former is conscious of lack while the latter realizes supply.

The optimist may be an idealist, but he is certainly not a visionary. He has a sense of right relations and proportions, possesses faith and maintains poise, and is conscious that there is light even when darkness surrounds him.

The pessimist senses only the outside or circumference of things, regards the world of appearance as permanent rather than fleeting, and is conspicuously lacking in healthy imagination and humor. Optimism is the consciousness of one's creative ability and mastery.

Permanent optimism finds its basis in the spiritual understanding of the oneness and goodness of God, in senses.

Shutting one's eyes to appearances will not promote optimism, nor will ignoring that which presses for recognition. Neither denial nor avoidance are truth agencies, nor factors of optimism.

The pessimist is world practical in that he lacks ideality and partakes of the density of the material world of which he is conscious. "What's the use?" is his self-addressed conundrum and he finds no satisfactory answer to his question.

"Why try?" moans the pessimist. "Why not try?" chirps the optimist. "I am sure to fail," wails the pessimist. "I am bound to succeed," proclaims the optimist. It's "the same old hard luck" to the pessimist, and "a new day and a new life" to the optimist.

Both live in the same world, but the optimist looks at it through spectacles with rainbow tints, while the pessimist uses smoked glass, which indeed seems to be allied to eclipses of one sort or another.

The optimist recognizes difficulties but realizes that he is the master of circumstances, accepts burdens but makes light of them, encounters obstacles but converts them into opportunities, looks beneath the distorted mask of appearance and finds its real friendliness.

The pessimist acknowledges himself the slave of circumstances and environment, and the victim of heredity; and he magnifies the forces arrayed against him even while he depreciates his own powers of resistance.

Pessimism is a disease; it is an evidence of inner discord and the product of a distorted consciousness. It finds life a constant misfit. It discovers that round pegs are always in square holes, and that principles that are otherwise universal have the strange disposition of making personal exceptions to its particular detriment.

The optimist is admittedly a dreamer, but he dreams pleasant visions, which are real to him. If he is self-deceived in this he is unaware of it, and his dreams give him health and happiness. If he lives and dies an optimist, his dreams constitute his entire life, which has been a joy and benediction to others as well as to himself.

And who other than the optimists are dreamers? The poets and philosophers, the scientists and inventors, the artists and authors and all who have conspicuous genius or talent. And who shall say that life itself is not a dream?

Even the pessimist is a dreamer, only his dream is a veritable nightmare. Yes, and the hobby he rides but deepens his gloom, casts shadows on others, and deprives him of the power to make his life harmonious or useful.

Pessimism is insanity in one or another of its phases. Health and harmony and optimism are aspects of sanity, while pessimism betokens a diseased mind, one that does not maintain an even balance.

This may not show forth in outward violence, and so may not be directly dangerous to others physically; but its influence is more subtle and dangerous, and its virus is poisonous and contagious.

Optimism is also contagious, and at the same time is more powerful! As the light of truth consumes the darkness of error, so does a smile cancel a frown, a laugh neutralize a scowl, health redeem disease, and life conquer death. Optimism is positive and constructive, and it overcomes the negative and destructive tendencies of pessimism.

If pessimism dominated the world, disease, death and destruction would prevail, and suicide would be the highest goal of humanity. But mankind has ever realized more happiness than misery, more health than disease, more life than death, more ground for optimism than for pessimism. And in this realization the race has persisted, developed, thrived and flourished.

The optimist realizes that he lives in a harmonious universe, which responds to him in kind. It sends back to him what he gives to it. It answers smile with smile and frown with frown, with untiring and unerring exactness.

After all, the pessimist is an occasional optimist, even if only by way of comparison. He may close his eyes to the light, but he indulges in comparative shades of darkness. He could hardly endure a pall of black at all times without losing his balance completely.

The dyed-in-the-wool pessimist may be blinded by the light of joy and health if it chance to shine through his darkness, and it may disturb and inconvenience him. But no one may remain blind permanently; the eternal good and the law of progress do not permit it; and there is that which impels the human as well as the animal and the plant, to seek the light and the sunshine.

The optimist does not deny the fact of comparative darkness but he sees through it to its inner meaning and significance, he pierces the seeming gloom to the real.

effulgence and exposes to view the silver linings of his friendly clouds.

Some pessimists see straight occasionally, exactly as some optimists will at times see crooked. And there are transition stages between the two planes, where the processes of conversion are worked out; but the contrast between the pessimist and the optimist are true to type and is definite and pronounced. The pessimist darkens all his joy and the optimist lightens all his sorrow.

The optimist recognizes fully the imperfections and crudities that surround him, he is conscious of the immaturity of mankind and the inharmonies of civilized life. That is why he is an optimist; because he realizes that these present conditions evidence a vast improvement over those of the past, while the future gives promise of even a far greater advance.

The optimist recognizes the Universe as a perfect harmony, each Soul unfolding gradually to a deeper realization of its own unity with the eternal harmony, and expressing this realization in its mental consciousness and physical activities. Consciousness of outer harmony attests the realizations of inner peace and poise and this evinces a joy of living with which optimism is in eternal alliance.

Each of us accepts the philosophy of life that caters to his weakness, measures the outlines of his limitations or suggests the boundaries of his ideals. Selfishness and egotism are allied to death, disease and pessimism; while altruism and egoism find their counterparts in life, health and optimism. As life and health dominate the consciousness, the darkness of pessimism is dissipated, and one comes into the open sunshine of confirmed and abiding optimism.

EUGENE DEL MAR.

FROM MSS. OF LETTERS TO MY PATIENTS.

No. 20. Longevity.

I caution you again against holding thoughts of age. I do not like your frequent allusions to your years. I agree that, when grey hairs come to predominate, when vision becomes seriously dimmed, when the mirror reflects haunting images, it is impossible to keep entirely free from such thoughts. It is the holding of these thoughts that I caution you against.

One is fortunate if he has considerate friends who withhold unpleasant comments on the years which are counting up against him. One's own children, whose love cannot be questioned, and who would not willingly bring pain to the hearts of their parents, are often among the chiefest offenders. In their immature thoughtlessness they give suggestions of the approach of the period when father or mother must be "laid on the shelf." In fact, as soon as one passes fifty years, children begin to express in suggestive terms and acts the ideas of age with which parents themselves have begun to struggle.

There is reason enough in all this. We who have gone beyond the mid-period of life can vividly recall how old people of forty and fifty seemed to us. At twenty we think old age comes at forty; at forty we have deferred it to sixty; at sixty, it is set on to eighty; and at eighty those who feel young push it on to ninety or a hundred.

If one is well, he finds that he is ever young.

But you are interested to know how you can defer what are called the infirmities of age. Longevity is the most interesting problem to people who have crossed what the young regard as the dead-line of fifty years.

You enclose me a clipping of the butter-milk cure for the incipient signs of old age. Metchnikoff felt sure he had hit upon a great preventive of old age in his "sour milk." He believed that the chief agent in senile decay was the continuous auto-intoxication generated in the large intestine, and that self-poisoning could be controlled by free use of lactic acid bacilli cultures. He was

not the first to think that the physical fountain of youth had been discovered, and he will not be the last to meet disappointment. Such a secret does not exist. There is nothing anywhere in nature to encourage the hope.

We should not lose sight of the fact that the only hope of long life lies in preserved health; and in the same connection we should observe that thus far prevention of disease has been sought mainly along the channels of materialism, where it will never be found in largest measure. I do not question that much can be accomplished by applying physical laws to the problem. Much has already been done. What is more, a few individuals have gone deeper than this, and farther; but with them they have carried too little ballast. They have struck the right trail, but have lost their balance through overmuch and ill-directed enthusiasm. Reacting from materialistic bondage, they have taken one-sided views, and have followed mental and spiritual ideas after the manner of impractical idealists.

It is clear enough to me that the problem of longevity needs to be studied with scientific accuracy, with liberality of thought, and with an expectant spirit. The centers need more careful exploration. I have become convinced the origin of all disorder, both mental and physical, is in mind. This is not a suitable place to discuss the subject. I have done so elsewhere. ("The Psychic Solution of the Problem of Cure.") Let me assure you that, by thinking health thoughts, by refusing to entertain suggestions of the ill-health, weakness, and inefficiency commonly associated with advanced years, and by expressing in word and act a faith in the guiding and preserving power of the Larger Self, which is only an inlet of the Universal Mind, you will best combat all the destructive tendencies which environ you, and arrive in health and strength at a ripe old age. Put no confidence whatever in any of the so-called specifics which may be recommended by no matter whom, for they will certainly prove disappointing. Keep the right mental outlook, obey established sanitary laws, and the days of your life will be many and agreeable.

No. 21. Psychic "Readings."

I shall discourage your visits to psychics. I have had a wide experience with people of that class, and advise one with "nerves" to avoid them. The verity of much puzzling phenomena cannot be denied. I have witnessed many things that I am unable to explain on the basis of known laws. I love to speculate with regard to such phenomena. But *you* are in no state of mind or body to follow up such things.

The medium you visited made some interesting predictions. They may or may not prove true. The probability is that they will not. At any rate you should not attach much weight to them.

I have seen people commit their guidance to "spirits" who are supposed to advise them through chosen mediums. They evoke my pity. The advice they receive is often good, but the general effect on them is most unwholesome. The advice received through mediums of character is much like that given by a wise friend. To accept it for what it is worth is right in either case. But it is always injurious to one's mental and moral character to *tie* to an authority—to substitute somebody-else's opinions for your own. Assuming that spirits really do make the communications, which I do not admit, it is reasonable to suppose that they are quite as fallible as we. One ought always to act from one's own center. After gathering sufficient data to warrant an opinion it is up to him to decide for himself. That is the only safe course.

As to the question of foreknowledge, I believe that not even the Great Mind is able to penetrate far into the future. The conclusion of things is not open to any prescient eye.

It is possible for us subconsciously to see approaching events at varying distances, much as we see approaching objects with our eyes. Should we see a great fire approaching a certain building, the fire-fighters being plainly worsted, we could say with some confidence that the building would soon be burned. But the event could not

be predicted with absolute certainty, since a shift in the wind, the arrival of unexpected aid, or some other occurrence could easily change the course of the flames and make one a false prophet. Subconsciously one may be able to make deductions with a degree of certainty from established premises, and such deductions may reach our consciousness through the medium of a sensitive; but ability to scan the future is quite another thing, and I do not believe that it lies within the power of spirit, either in the flesh or out of it.

SHELDON LEAVITT, M. D.

THE ANSWER.

I pressed the button at my neighbor's door;
 But when I heard no sound, turned and stood
 Irresolute. If I had moved a bell,
 I must have heard it. Should I rap, or go?
 But in a moment more my neighbor came.
 "The bell is far, and very small," he said.
 "You may not catch it, for the walls between;
 But rest assured, each time you push the knob,
 We cannot choose but hear the bell inside."
 And what they told me of my neighbor's bell
 Has cheered me when I knocked and some hard heart
 And caught no answer. Now and then
 Poured my soul out in a hot appeal
 And had no sign from lip, or hand, or eye,
 That he I would have served had even heard,
 And I have sighed and turned away; and then
 My neighbor's word came back: "We cannot choose
 But hear inside."

And after many days
 I have had answer to a word I spoke
 In ears that seemed as deaf as dead man's ears.

—*Christian Home.*

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