

STEPPING STONES

OR
HELPS ALONG THE BY-WAYS
OF NEW THOUGHT

*I held it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.*

—Tennyson



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DEDICATION

The little essays contained in this book are dedicated to the many sincere men and women who have found inspiration in that Science—the most human of all sciences—which is commonly called “New Thought.” It is hoped that they will recognize therein the outlines at least of the philosophy and the wisdom underlying this grand movement for the betterment and emancipation of all mankind. While these little preachments do but feebly epitomize the teachings of the great expounders of New Thought, it is the wish of the author that they may serve as steps to further exploration in this field of endeavor, the gates to which were never closed.

In the preparation of these thoughts the author acknowledges with gratitude the benefit she has derived from the lectures of Mary Etheridge Chapin, a pioneer in the exposition of New Thought, and who first inspired these pages.

LOUISE GREY.

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STEPPING STONES

I. CONCENTRATION

To achieve, one must concentrate. With concentration one can accomplish almost anything desired. Without concentration one drifts with the tide that continually rushes back and forth, arriving—where?

A person who has the ability of concentrating always possesses the admirable attribute of patience. One may be patient, but lack the power of concentration, but concentration always beckons Patience to her side, and together these two control the situation.

To concentrate one must direct the full light of intelligence on the subject in mind, obliterating all other thoughts.

One may not be gifted by any great amount of mentality, yet by acquiring the habit of concentrating on any special theme, studying it thoroughly, giving one's whole attention to the work—no matter what it may be—that person will succeed.

The majority think first in this direction, then in that, not keeping the mind firmly poised for any length of time. This is the reason of so many failures. Persons scatter their thoughts idly, changing the current.

The mind must be held in control. It will unconsciously obey if one makes it a practice. All

great thinkers have understood the value of concentration. They would not have been great without this knowledge, for even if one is born with natural brightness, unless that person is master of his own mind, that same mind will soon be his destruction, the sparks flying unheeded, instead of sending out a steady glow.

Few think deeply or long enough on any subject to really know what they desire, or to have a purpose. Where will one arrive if one has no point in view?

It is not logical to expect results from nothing. Thoughts have substance. They will attract the object they are directed toward. One can will to do a thing and do it. Schiller said: "Talent can do what it pleases, genius only what it must." But few are limited by being blessed with this heaven-born gift.

Most lives are storm tossed and then drift out. They do not steer their craft. If they only concentrated with determination, and then sailed straight ahead, never losing sight of their distant haven, rough though the voyage might be, they would arrive safely in the port of their desire.

With concentration one can develop brain power, and the subconscious or inner mind will also respond. Thoughts, ideas and impressions which one had no conception of possessing, will suddenly come to life, inspiring one to do his best. He will achieve, where, before concentrating, failure was the only response.

If one has not enough imagination to conceive

an aim in life, then concentrate on the little things of the moment, giving one's whole thought to each as they come. They will grow and be interesting merely from the mind dwelling on them, and one will be happier in the doing. The brain will also be working positively instead of negatively, and some day that person will be rewarded by reaching a place of consciousness where work in all its forms will be a joy instead of drudgery.

We are all placed in this world for some reason. Let us look upon ourselves as the hand work of God, concentrate on this truth and, lo, the way will be open. We will see ourselves as we really are and our purpose will be revealed.

II. THE GOOD

"I know not where lies Eden-land
I only know 'tis like unto
God's Kingdom, ever right at hand
Ever right here in reach of you,
Put forth thy hand, or great or small,
In storm or sun, by sea or wood,
And say, as God hath said of all,
Behold it all is very good.
I know not where this Eden-land,
I only say receive the dove;
I say put forth thy hand."

So sang Joaquin Miller, one of America's greatest poets. A brilliant spiritual personality, he well understood the significance of the "here and now," the truth that all is good. We are in its midst, and it is ever seeking its own. Verily it is our birth-right and the person who looks with distrust on what the world has to offer him, sees with a distorted vision and listens to the message with an unthinking mind.

All is good, all is beautiful. Everything has its use. There is nothing that is not important, a part of this marvelous whole. But we combine elements that are unharmonious and discord results, whereas alone or with a relative part it would have been a perfect unit. Mary E. T. Chapin aptly depicts this thought when she tells us that one understanding the laws of music can always bring forth melodious sounds from a piano, but another strikes the keys and all that issues is a frightful din. The instrument is good—in perfect tune, but one must know how to manipulate it.

This is the fundamental principle. We should strike the keys of our existence concordantly, comprehending cause and effect. Then our lives would not be the cracked, broken things so many piteously are.

Persons indulge their appetites. Ill health ensues. They abuse their bodies, causing their minds to become affected. They think heathenish thoughts, consequently setting their magnets in the wrong direction, and attracting all tortious, discolored objects and events. When too late they loudly abuse their Maker, Who put them into the world at their birth God-like beings, so powerful that they have been able to choose to make or mar their days.

Life is a school, but few of us ever attempt to learn the principle, or know that such a principle exists. The most wonderful teacher the world has ever known, the Nazarene, taught this science, but His most faithful followers misunderstood and misconstrued His meaning. Remembering Christ's words to the multitude, can we doubt that it is we who twist our own environment?

“And when He had called all the people unto Him, He said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand. There is nothing from without a man that, entering into him, can defile him, but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.”

How many have listened comprehendingly? How many persons have tried to apply this com-

mand to their own affairs—the things that have come to them? We often look with contempt on what is ours and begrudgingly long for our neighbor's; whereas, if we had wisdom to look beneath the surface, we would find that what that person has, his health, his happiness, his worldly possessions, come from the use that he has made of himself and his surroundings. We might have thrown away the very things he has nurtured and transformed into treasures. It is the stretching forth the hand that counts—the effort to bear our good to us, and when we have it, to grasp it—to zealously guard it—bringing all beauty to bear upon it, using it constructively, not destructively, else the reflection we cast will change its hue. See how the sun shining on the ocean will cause the ripples to dance with very joy, the waves changing color with every dilation, brilliantly opaque. A cloud passes on the heavens and the sea instantly becomes dull, leaden, horrible in its mysterious solemnity. One shrinks before it instinctively, while a moment before the impulse to thrust oneself into its iridescent splendor seemed almost irresistible. Such is life. Banish hate, selfishness and discontent, Radiate love, purity and truth, and suddenly a pearl of great price will lay in your uplifted palm. It is the stretching forth the hand.

III. DUTY

The word "duty" possesses a mistaken importance. It should be eliminated from our lives, and in its place the word "love" inserted. It is not our duty to do for others unless we can forget self in the action. If we give begrudgingly, the meaning is lost and we hurt the receiver and ourselves.

To love all humanity, to see it in all its frailty, and still condone, to have discernment and yet go forward in forgiveness, is the right principle of doing for our fellow creatures—not to mistake what is right by lending a hand with our fingers tightly clinched, fearing another may take from us that which we hold precious.

To those who view the act, we apparently fulfil it in all its perfection, but the one for whom the deed is intended, alone feels the withholding and instinctively draws back. Duty is so cold a thing that all who come within its direct radius are chilled by its egotistical blast. The messenger of love carries his gift on high. He wears it in his crown, but Duty pushes it before him, stumbling over the attempt.

We are so constituted that universal tenderness seems to the majority the greatest obstacle in the way of spiritual progress. Many fear if they take their moments to view the lives of others they will lose their foundations, some one secretly thrusting

them off their allotted spot, but if we have not the courage to lift our glances, how shall we ever know? It is by comparison that we comprehend the best from the worst. We must have experience ourselves or by witnessing another's experiment. The consciousness of love should be all that is necessary to teach us to be kind, but this lustrous light fails to shine in the multitude. It flickers dimly and then thoughtlessly goes out. We generally have to be aroused to start the flame. So it is that we must go forward in darkness, falling over others and ourselves before we can feel the pain of destructive living. There is space and plenty for all if we do not crowd. Often when one considers he is doing his duty, he is only conferring on another his right, but spoiling that other's possession by his contemptible attitude of mind.

Duty and love never blend. Love dwells so high above, that in stooping, it completely overthrows duty. Duty can only glance at love, but perceives not its radiance. So they abide apart unrecognized each by the other, and love remains unsmirched.

The ignorance of youth hears the call of duty strongly, because youth is narrow, cold and impressionable, compared to the maturity of the increasing years. It has never felt, therefore it cannot sense the heartaches and the wrongs. It goes blindly forward led by duty. As time multiplies, one realizes what an unprofitable way he has taken and how pitilessly uncompromising he has been in his journeying. When this enlightenment comes,

he is aware of the pettiness of all beginning, and understands that when we know the least we believe most in ourselves.

As we lose faith in our judgment, so for a time it shatters our confidence in all else. Then slowly the proof comes, that as we were so far astray in what we considered truth and untruth, therefore, hope must exist for all.

Wrong is not far distant from right; merely it is an incorrect position. The reflection is but dimly seen, shadowy and unworthy, but change it slightly and it radiates sublime beauty. The light cast upon it was not properly placed. We received an erroneous impression. So we should not judge others by their futile attempt in living out their day. We all stand under different sunbeams, but the dome of heaven shelters all alike. Train our hearts and minds to be kind, to love the multitude, and duty can easily be forgotten and the neglect never felt. Many believe that by loving, they must bestow personal affection, but that is only possible to hold for our dearest. Universal love is different. It is a bond of peace, a union wherein all men realize that they are of one kin, all traveling toward an unknown country, by separate pathways, but with the same hope.

This fellowship should make us more lenient of the stumbling feet—the weary lives. We should look into the souls of men, not merely see the outer shell, which is so forgivably fragile, so easily affected. Release duty from its bonds and open our arms to unfettered love, then into our midst

there will come a joy that indeed passes all understanding. It is what the Master so mercifully bequeathed us, the legacy we have so ruthlessly forgotten. Peace!

IV. VIBRATIONS

Happiness is largely an attitude of mind. Conditions play a minor part. One may have every blessing showered upon him, be in the midst of what is apparently a joyous environment, and still be a most miserable person.

Again, if one is in the right vibration, having happiness within, that one will appreciate to the minutest degree all things, and remodel disturbing conditions into those of perfection.

It is entirely how the individual looks at the situation, and the way he treats it. Any one can change his outlook on life, also his temperament, if he realizes his power of doing so. First, acknowledging that such a power exists, then practicing continually, so that he may have the strength and ability to link himself to the vibrations of happiness, health and success and remain in that upliftment.

The whole atmosphere which surrounds us, in which we breathe and live, is filled with many kinds of vibrations. We can be in tune with any we please if we but turn our thoughts in their direction.

All the world is thinking sorrow, disease and limitation. Therefore, it is easier to pulsate with the multitude, but most disastrous to one's peace of mind, health and prosperity. When we join the pessimists all the load of their doubts and

troubles unconsciously come in waves and we carry the trials of others as well as our own.

Often we wonder why such a feeling of sadness oppresses us, when apparently there is nothing really to cause such despondency. It is because we are in the wrong current and what we have attracted will soon answer, bringing its burdens.

We believe it was premonition which caused our depression, whereas it was simply the law of relationship. If one trains his mind to think happiness continually (and this can be done by perseverance), very quickly that person will find his surroundings changed for the better. Conditions he believed hopeless will suddenly confront him in shapes so beautiful that they will seem miraculous. It is just living on the proper plane.

Henri Bergson says that "joy is the signal of the triumph of life." Truly, happiness is our right, if we control; and if we do not possess it we may know we have not used our powers correctly, or lived constructively.

The air is charged with many other wondrous elements besides electricity. Life-giving substances which, though unseen, can be strongly felt. Humanity is a magnet. We are all dynamos through which the currents run. We can attract one vibration as easily as another if we put our minds in direct connection. Thought and the faith in will power can accomplish almost any undertaking and bring to us our desires. But to have complete mastery of our brains we must have reached such a pinnacle that the obstacle of

materialism cannot reach us with its projecting destructibility, which crowds out all spirituality.

We must acknowledge our divinity, know that we are children of God, inheritors of all good, and strive to live continually in this truth, not allowing our souls to remain earth bound by petty indulgences, abuses and limitations. We must direct our thoughts upward, cleansing our mind, inspiring our spirit. Christ promised that the pure in heart should see God, which, properly translated, means "all good."

It is our ignorance which promotes error. We are all trying to find our happiness, but we grope in darkness, searching for it on the ground. If we lift our eyes we will perceive the glory and its radiance will pierce our blindness. We will see, feel and know that we are powerful beings, one with all good, all happiness, all health, that we have but pulled the chain asunder, in our persistency to keep our feet on earth, never dreaming that if we soared a little we would be in the midst of waves and forces that would heal, protect, provide. Let our thoughts ascend and all good will descend on us. It is all so simple that one doubts its practicability. The complex appeals to most persons. They like to tangle themselves in obscure problems, thinking that what is not understandable must therefore be desirable, simply because it cannot be fathomed. We should not bind ourselves with such ideas. We were put into this world to use our forces and to control them. We walk but we do so unthinkingly, not realizing the

brain has telegraphed the message which our feet have answered.

Our hands move but we seldom question who guides them. We do not begin to comprehend our powers. We are marvelous beings, so wonderful that we can control our whole body, and almost every condition in life. We can be conquerors in every sense.

Perchance we have idled away our hours and the day is far spent. Let us not be discouraged, but cheerfully buckle on our armor of thought transference and forcefully answer the trumpet call before the sun sets.

V. LOVE

It is love that moves the universe. Without this divine caress, all humanity would remain still. There would not be the urge for progress. We should endure in a permanent state of savagery. Love is the foundation from which springs the desire for education. We develop ourselves not so much for our own advancement, but to throb the hearts of those whose love is in our keeping.

Love! the tenderest possession of mankind, a thing so fragile and yet so strong, which sways the centuries. It is a power never wasted. It may fall from sight today and still tomorrow remain unseen, but in time this gift so generously bestowed will return, clothed perhaps in raiments unlike the covering we enwrapped it in, but, at the heart, the same—enlarged, ennobled by its dreamless sleep.

Men slight this token. They regard it lightly until it lays at their feet, a weary idol. They do not acknowledge it when it walks beside or leads the way. They accept it as a usual companion and only when they stumble upon it—a broken desire—do they comprehend that all power was there until neglect wounded. But even so it has fulfilled its mission, for the spirit that has once gazed on love crushed or in perfection, cannot but perceive its majesty. To have looked upon it, even if one has not felt its heart beats,

gives one a glimpse of life's mystery. We can then watch understandingly the many striving to reach their Gethsemane, only at the final elevation to lie bruised and bleeding, but with eyes illumined, and lips smiling at life's pilgrimage.

Countless are the disguises which are con-founded for this one of perfection. Ambition drapes herself in gorgeous attire, and pushes on, but as it marches its finery falls and trips up the hurrying feet. Clinking gold oversteps it but quickly finds that with all its worldly wealth it cannot pay. Slowly learning creeps upon them, but the brain grows weary with its burden and seeks to rest. It is then that love takes all into its waiting arms and at its magic touch the gates of heaven reveal their wonders. All is so easily explained by this divinity.

It is through love alone that we realize the existence of God, for without God no such unseen power could possess us, and, although many a traveler may start out on his journey disbelieving, no one ever reached his night's end without reverencing this supreme force. Without it we could not find our way. It is the only light that pierces the fog. One needs not sight. The heart treads the earth, and guides us into everlasting life. And it is at the passing of the years that we want love most. Hope clings to us while spring is in our midst, but at the advance of age, hope flits away, leaving naught but desolation in its wake. But love once coming ever stays. If, for a time, death covers it with its sombre

robe, the memory of what it was lifts the pall and gives us back our treasure unhurt by the weight of its gruesome covering. Memory makes possible fidelity. It is the step between the vision and the beholding. Without it our hearts would be too barren to nurture love. Nothing is so quickly wounded as this marvelous host—nothing so forgiving. It is because of this benevolence that mankind handles it so roughly and leaves it covered with such numerous scars.

To have love in one's life and do it justice (and it is always there although unfelt, for it is the pulse of being), one should be constantly aware of its presence, but not governed completely by its might. It is the center of all, but other elements should be brought to bear upon it, to have it radiate in all its completion. It should always reflect wisdom and honor, for love without both of these is like the wind upon the desert, there is nothing to prevent its fury. Instead of refreshing, it lays in waste the very earth, sweeping even the sands to destruction. It is but the semblance of love if it is not clasped by wisdom and honor. Better to flee from its mockery than to witness the disillusion of what we believed was true and lovely and to feel that which we confided in has torn from us all our finer fibre, so that when love stands recognized we are not worthy to hold it in our incompleteness.

A higher power gave love into our keeping, knowing well that the happiest life has many a trial and it is Love alone that can allay all. It is

our most sacred trust. We should not bow down to it but lift it ever in our arms above earth's contamination, proud to bear this most precious burden, and, though we may sometimes tire, our hearts will rejoice that this gift has remained unsullied—fit to lay at the feet of God.

VI. OUR DEBT

As our joys and possessions increase so do our obligations. The accumulation of this world's goods and favors are given us merely as a loan, in the confidence that we are deserving of the benefit, but if we selfishly hide their beauty, not allowing others to imbibe joy from their presence, then surely the time will arrive, when our gifts will hold no pleasure for us. Our very illiberality will have destroyed their transient glory. We will have wasted them in our eagerness to keep intact what was too large for our natures. They will remain in our midst but simply as obstacles, interfering with our stepping forward by their sodden weight. Amid the mystery of a garden, flowers bloom, but to preserve their continuance one must pluck the blossoms off today, else tomorrow they will have gone to seed and the bushes stand barren. Insomuch does nature teach us the truth that we too, should scatter what is beautiful in our lives so that others can partake of the good. Then it will return to us with greater force.

If we share not our pleasures our capacity for enjoyment will slowly die. We will probably remain in the same environment, but physically or spiritually we will be unable to respond. Ennui and sickness will steal upon us; for it is through our thoughts and acts that we affect our

bodies, and they become diseased or benefited. And in our giving we must be most careful not to feel our bounteousness, for if we bestow in this manner, it is as destructive as withholding.

It is far more of a favor to receive graciously than to confer. Few men are big enough personalities for their possessions. The wonder is not that we have so little, but that we have so much. It would be foolish to give away what perhaps we have had a hard battle to attain, or what has flown to us, seeking its own, but we should not hold it up to view for others to gaze upon in envy, but pass it ever on and on. We can fondle what is ours tenderly, but we must not clutch it to our hearts, killing the joy of possession, in our desire to safely secure its worth. A gift is a detriment if it dwarfs our souls. Better to feel the need of beauty and joy than to disabuse their existence. For there is hope for us if we realize their lack in our lives, and by striving we will secure these priceless treasures, but to have and then not appreciate, our natures being too petty to behold the good, is a condition unworthy of our relations with mankind. For we must all acknowledge this universal kinship to perfect our lives.

It is useless to think we can live to ourselves alone. If we do endeavor to endure in this wise we will be rudely awakened to the truth, the truth that we are all bound together, and he who denies his brother his rights is not worthy of his parentage—the one supreme Father. Truly

if one has no worldly possessions to share he is not bereft, for he has happiness to take with him where'er he goes.

One commits a sin when he trails sorrow after him, and it will always be a drag if man shows his willingness to travel on pulling destruction in the same direction. Happiness is ever ready to beam if we hold our faces up to receive and, as we feel its warmth and cheer, we should teach others that one can attract that which he longs for and works to gain; that which is but sleeping within us all.

One should smile even if the heart is heavy. It will not only inspire, but it transforms quickly the conditions. Persons should count their joys instead of continually weighing their troubles. They would always find the balance rested securely with happiness. We should send forth everlasting thanks and so try to perpetuate cheer and gladness. It is a debt we owe humanity that we reflect joy when we clasp the hand of a comrade, so that he, too, will be thrilled and encouraged. It is by giving our best that the best comes to us. All that is highest search for those who dwell on the loftiest plane. They are attracted by their kind. We should discover our place in this vast universe and, once finding, ever remain secure, knowing well, that it is according to our soul's inspiration that material benefits will respond.

But we must first find the elevation before we can get our perspective. The being who

has determined his direction waits not for results. He journeys quickly, and, as he progresses, the way is opened and suddenly he perceives that he has without fatigue reached the mountain top and the valley lies below.

VII. MYSTERY

The two greatest mysteries in this world, the two most vital factors of our being, are life and death. What is our attitude toward them? Generally speaking, we scoff at one and fear the other. We hold one as lightly as thistle down. The thought of the other we entirely neglect. What foolish beings we are, born into the midst of the first, but mistaking its significance, frightened at the mention of the second, the continuation of self. Why not recognize each in its proper sphere, understand that the life here is merely a sojourn, where one is given perfect freedom to do his best or his worst, and the so-called death is not the end of our existence, but a passing to something higher—if we are fitted for the elevation, to something lower if we have not used our powers correctly—back into the kindergarten as it were, to learn the lessons over again. For we can well believe that a divine providence will not chide us harshly for our blindness in a world where so much is hidden—where, only by groping, do we come into the light.

Many have not the initiative to go forward into what seems so mysterious. They simply accept, allowing themselves to be led by stronger personalities. Such persons never advance, but have all to learn. The same page in the book

of life always lies open before them, but conquering that lesson, it will never have to be repeated. One will not be called upon to face the same situation if that riddle has once been solved. One thus goes on to another problem and so progresses. We are never asked to retrace our steps in any direction, or have we the power to go back to a neglected opportunity. Once refuse our own, it is ours no longer, and one does wrong to waste time in lasting repentance over his yesterdays, forgetting today in the indulgence, causing one to dwell continually on self.

Make reparation if possible and then press forward. Self pity, what is more demoralizing, more belittling to our better nature? We should unclasp the clinging fingers of remorse lest they soil our garments, dragging us backward, preventing us from carrying something worth while—and we stand empty-handed!

The majority act as if their days on this globe were endless, quarreling over possessions and when the more subtle and stronger does grasp what he considers will bring him happiness, it generally turns to mere dross.

The real treasures are overlooked. Our capacity to enjoy is seldom cultivated, and this feeling can be taught to grow as naturally as the hideous in our natures can by habit be enlarged. Feel joy and joy will surround you. Look in the shady places continually, and your eyes will blink at the sun, be blinded by the brilliancy of its rays,

and your lids will remain closed until the clouds gather again. Then once more you will view life's sombreness, believing the former glory never existed, because you did not perceive it. We are given a wonderful opportunity to expand, to enlarge our souls, but pettiness is the more prevalent. We instinctively know the wrong we are doing ourselves by the inner voice, called conscience. We all possess it, only in some it has, by neglect, become so insignificant that the call is too feeble to resound and find the echo in our daily lives. We have smothered the inspiration, killed the best in us—not by violent measures, for the greater numbers are mediocre in their erroneous living—but by allowing self to be always uppermost. It gradually crowds out all the finer qualities.

No one wishes to harm himself. It is always to bring himself good that he commits the bad, thinking the act will benefit him. We cannot cover our ground except step by step. Even in running, the action is the same, only quickened. We have the exact number of lengths to go.

No one can hope to reach his goal at one bound. Some go faster than others, but it is the identical surface we all have to cover, and it is by keeping our destination in view that we reach happiness—not by pushing others off the path.

The tainted inheritance, the poor environment will all be balanced by a just weigher, and it is those who have come into this world and found it most roseate, who will have the more to account

for, the highest price to pay if their scrolls are blotted. . . .

But how pitifully small a conception of the Divinity when one fears for any of his actions! Compassion was the chief characteristic of the Master who was sent to herald His Maker—our Maker. Life is the more wonderful of the two mysteries—our link with this same Divinity.

The awakening from our first slumber—birth! We are indeed spiritual beings, but unfortunately we hide the spark by the material—the groveling in the common clay. Life is paradoxical, it is by forgetting the ego that we receive our greatest good, our lasting joys. Only they who understand the meaning of “He that shall lose his life, shall surely find it”— they only have solved the problem of today, tomorrow, Eternity!

VIII. ON OUR WAY

If we come in constant contact with the ridicule of an unthinking mind, our highest ideals, our loftiest aspirations will be ruthlessly torn from us and laid in fragments at our feet. It is truly only the fool that can destroy. The wise man knows but one process, that of continually building. There is no limit to his horizon. To him the stars are always beckoning with their projecting beams. He understands the truth—that whatever comes into existence is born to everlasting life.

Our dreams may never be realized by us, but some day, to some fellow creatures, whatever we have formed in our inmost souls, will creep into their midst and be to them what we had hoped. Although we perpetuated, perhaps we were not ready to receive. Another may have been found more deserving of the benefit. We do not always mount in our daily living as high as our thoughts. We must be true to ourselves in deeds as well, to have those same ideals stay with us after we have created them. We must not be discouraged, but strive ever for the highest, for if only for a short space we have dwelt with the Gods, our abode will always partake of a semblance of their beauty and the fragrance of their purity cling to our senses.

Day by day we meet with poor humanity to whom the material appeals. They mistake the light that is made by man for the glory of the firmament. Those are the ones to whom we must

stop in passing, to wish God-speed and then hasten, or else, if we linger, we cannot help but feel the mockery and the illusion. Sadness will sink into our hearts and the load will cause all our inspiration to fall to their level. Before we comprehend the destruction, our spirit will be broken. We will not have the inclination to climb and we will forever reside in the valley. What we have been before will remain only in our memory—a broken promise.

We cannot continue on our journey unless we are unhampered, or our companions are keeping in line, not obstructing the way. We have to reach the summit before we can hope to lean down and help other fellow-travelers. If we foolishly mistake our strength while ascending and stretch out our hands, we will fall back into the gulf, pulling weaker ones with us. So it behooves us to struggle, not only for ourselves, but that we can quickly reach the place where we feel and know we are secure.

Into our lives often come the ones that are despised by men, those that have turned their thoughts in the wrong direction, also those who were not wilful, but unfortunate. Many, many, are they whom we will chance to meet who are labeled "lost," but mistake not. If we keep ever an unbiased mind, and universal sympathy, we will leave their presence bearing the flash of the jewel that is imbedded in every human creature's breast.

We have but to be receptive and kind, and those

lonely ones will unbare their inmost treasures. For with every person with whom we speak, we can carry away something that will be of value, for all hold closely within gems, which the eye of the unjust cannot perceive. There is no one thoroughly guiltless or thoroughly bad. There is much good in all, but the majority are envious, not so much of another's material holdings as of the things that are truly ours in mind and spirit, knowing full well that worldly goods may quickly fade, but the gold within cannot tarnish or be stolen. It is ours forever and priceless.

Begrudging another's good is the most deplorable attitude. The kingdom of heaven is open to all mankind, and all who have arrived at any given place, have borne a heavy load and often lain down in hopelessness and questioning.

It is not the falling that matters, it is the energy and nobleness of lifting one's self up that counts. The act betokens victory. So often men despair just before they come to the turning of the road. A little more faith, a little more bravery and a few paces on they would have discerned the visions. It is generally the eventful moment when the spirit grows faint. It is the test. One must keep on, even if he is compelled to cry aloud for help, and believing the call will always be answered.

If we would have perpetual youth, we must keep forever close to us our ideals. When they leave us, the body has nothing to respond to, and in silence droops. If life has become commonplace and dull, we must seek the companionship of those

who hold their banners high. Then our spirit will in shame look up to read the inscriptions, and in time the letters will have a meaning for us too. They will form themselves in our hearts and minds, until we will speak through them.

We cannot be too careful in our selection of those with whom very often we so carelessly spend our hours, for although no one can take from us what is really our own, they can, by contempt, cheapen the possessions in our eyes, so that we allow them to lie dormant—forgotten. Then they, who for us have ruined all the beauty of the day and wonder of the night, will steal away, they having taken nothing from us to ennoble, but leaving behind a useless thing, who hangs suspended twixt heaven and earth, with broken wings.

IX. THE BOND

In some far distant time when we all have become sages, I believe one of the most important things we shall have learned is this, that husbands and wives should have a common working interest. I do not mean that they shall both build up a business together—be that as it may—simply that it is not enough to have love—love for each other, love for their children, but they must both like one thing outside their family ties that will tax their mentality—some subject or purpose they will have to ponder over, something that causes them to grow together in the same direction of thought.

When Robert Browning penned the lines, "Grow old along with me, the best is yet to be," he had in his mind the picture of Elizabeth Barrett and himself going hand and hand along the road of poetry, beauty and hard work. And the coming years were to hold the best for them because they would be useful years, years full of inspiration.

It is not the hours crowded with mere pleasure that cement hearts together. The brain must also respond to brain—congenial flashes of intelligence to mark the waystones, for nothing so quickly drifts from our memory as pleasure hours. One appreciates the joys of the moment, the days when one is unhampered, happy, but in looking back over the past, the most vivid impressions are

the vital events, the things that really made for something in our lives.

Pleasures weary. One becomes tired when working, but it is much more substantial. Therefore it holds, and if it is the chosen pursuit, it always enthralls. The big significant expression of self must be a mutual interest to hold husband and wife in the same groove, else the way will gradually widen, and the gulf will separate the affections. They must work out the same problems as one mind.

It is the things we work hardest for we prize, and keep secure. The things that fly to us, as quickly spread their wings and go, for we allow them to. We unconsciously think little of their value. The persons who are congenial to us in trivial pleasures are not the ones we seek as friends. They are jovial companions to pass merry hours with, and then drift out. Those who linger in our hearts are they with whom we associate deeper moments, absorbing themselves in the subject or event. Men and women who are followers of pleasure simply, as a distraction, are always trifling natures who never find the delight they are seeking. It is too illusive. It deludes them as the mist. They are enveloped in it, but seemingly it is always just beyond.

When we have to really dwell on a matter, to create it as it were, it is our own. It remains with us forever.

To hold the affections of those we cherish, one must give more than one's heart. Nothing grows

so tedious as love alone. It binds by its obligations until its fetters hang heavily. The mind must also be attracted, roused, so that the weight is lifted and the possessor loses consciousness of the mighty gift in the joy of possession.

So husbands and wives would do well to round their lives, circumvolving as one, seeing with the same eyes and mind, not relying on the impulse of the heart alone.

Love is divine, but it must be tempered with wisdom, or we destroy by the giving. Love can prove as destructive as hate, if it is not governed by its master-mind.

Brain cells can be enlarged and grow quickly by the appreciation and response of a devoted companion. It is the urge that impels one to do his or her best, knowing that some one has confidence that the best exists—gives it being.

Man and wife who have elected to spend their years together should try to unravel the same skein. By so doing their hands will always mingle and their hearts be entwined.

X. HARMONY

There is a lack of harmony in most lives that attracts all that is discordant—hence unhappiness and failure. Man is the most inharmonious creature in the universe in consequence of his wrong thinking and destructive living. So conditions take from their producer a distorted shape. Nature, the true expression of the infinite, is created in perfection, and is always in tune. The planets above and the tides below all work in unison. Nature can be relied on positively because it is not only the utterance of the Deity but it testifies to a scientific basis. But mankind is not satisfied to be led, he must control and his attempts are often futile from his lack of knowledge of the principle of life. Apart from the spiritual, and still closely blending, is the law of attraction. As we send forth so do we receive in response. If we continually dwell on sickness and ill luck the result will be in keeping with our thoughts. Our bodies will partake of our despondency. We will be sad and weary before we have set out on our day. We will not only attempt to conquer the present hours, but we will crowd into our lives the problems of the future, for worry, the great destroyer of humanity, will in our weakness draw us into its erroneous vastness of despair.

We were intended to echo the voice of God. Instead we resound in shrieks of strife and dis-

heartenment. How can we expect good results from such childishness? We should work always eagerly, and according to our best judgment, but we should take time to stop and listen to the divine silence which indicates so clearly the way. If we had the courage to drift and be engulfed in the infinite we would always reach safe waters. Sometimes the whirlpools would entrap us, but if we rested quietly we would ultimately come to a tranquil sea. It is the distrust that disorganizes—the hurry and the impatience. Often we ponder over the lives that live righteously and still the sable mantle of misfortune constantly falls between them and the realization of joy. But it is not enough that they follow the dictates of goodness, they must hold the thought of beauty, and purity, else inharmony will result from expressing along one line and inwardly concentrating in the wrong direction.

The events that make for suffering will be an answer to the true life, the soul, not in reply to the commonplace experiences that enthrall for the moment. Our thoughts and our doings must be alike, to create a combined state of perfection.

We are surrounded by persons and conditions that are very trying. No one is entirely free from such environment. But we can overcome this irritation by our outlook, by enlarging our vision. Back of our dislike of people we should firmly impress the belief that we are all sons and daughters of God, all imbued with the divine spark,

which we can clearly see if we take the leisure to inspect. We should endeavor to idealize the personality of our brethren, thinking only of their better qualities, and, gradually, by the extension of our soulfulness we will transmit the idea to all, especially the ones in view, so that in time those persons will expand and strive to be what we have conveyed to them by our suggestions of mind.

Our generosity will crowd from our natures all petty feelings and although we may never come to care in our hearts for these individuals we will learn to tolerate them in patient kindness.

When conditions arise that trouble us, we should not anticipate the wreckage of tomorrow but do our best with the situation in the present hour—not submitting in humbleness but bravely combating it with cheerfulness and hope and, receiving in this spirit, will entirely change the inharmoniousness into an experience that will be uplifting and benefiting to our growth. If we would behold the golden vision we have so tenderly dreamed, we must live always to the fullest and the highest. Then we can safely slumber, truly expecting that which we have longed for will be fulfilled because it will be a fitting sequel to our best.

When humanity becomes really humane, thrusting all ignoble acts from life, all ugliness of thought, then only will we be in tune with nature and the universe. We will then have struck the mightiest key, which will vibrate harmony.

XI. SENTIMENT

The age of romance is past, and with it has departed most of the beauty of poetic feeling. We are now living in a marvelous period of scientific discovery and our natures partake of the commonplace grind of machinery and breathless expenditure of time. Man is ashamed of showing his finer feelings, and so, by disuse, they sink into a dreamlessness that is difficult to awaken. The compelling force of strength and gain whirls one into destructive depths where thoughtfulness hardly exists, the action is so swift and endless. The leisure wherein he paused to contemplate beauty is gone. Tenderness no longer soothes. Gentleness is frowned upon as a weakness in character. One must express all the elements of hardness, to be considered powerful. The pity is not so much that the art of poetry, and romanticism no longer holds sway, but that the significance of what it portended should be forgotten, its loveliness torn from its enclosed wrappings, to be killed by its rough exposure.

It is the minute qualities, the threads of life that stand the test. They bind the affection more securely than weightier strands. It is the finer fiber that works its way to the heart, knitting together the very tissues of this fragile organism.

An occurrence or event, to prove of lasting

memory, must either have hatred or sentiment in its composition, and resentment will fade from our vision sooner than the pulsating of our being, the quickening of our senses. It is merely that one is not as lasting because it came upon us in destruction, while the other has the foundation of the heart.

With the obliteration of simplicity, has flown sweetness and curtesy. It is no longer considered proper to show respect to our elders—or for men to be chivalrous to women. These outward manifestations are deemed trifling and superfluous. Time is too precious to bestow consideration on those less fortunate than ourselves. The watchword is “rush”—but where does it lead? To ruination for most of us, demolishing our inner life, and when that is effected, all our outer existence is contaminated. It is simply a matter of a short while before we go down over the cliffs. Truly we should nurture sentiment, for it arouses the soul to beauty, sweetness and loyalty, and, possessing these qualities, will not deter us from progressing, but on the contrary will be an incentive to lead us on, for as we travel, echoing voices will cheer us, drowning the clamor of the hurrying multitude, and, if for us they sound an emotion, our way will be clearer for arousing sentiments that preserve the sacredness of our every day life that gives us a glimmer that brightens the dull monotony of existence. As the seductive pleasure of a flower is in its fragrance, so is romance inspiring and

beautifying in a world which is necessarily prosaic.

Sentiment protects the heart from growing old. It quickens the heart beats of association, so that memory is enlivened by its soothing cadence. Sentiment is all that is gentle, sweet and ennobling. It is the foundation of love—love which we are all seeking and which, without sentiment, hungers and dies!

In the quaint old seaport town of Gloucester, once a year, on the 9th of August, the inhabitants who have lost their dear ones at sea, assemble on the banks of the harbor and in memory of their dead, cast flowers into the silent waters which carry the tribute whither—none can tell, but truly this message of loyalty, the significance of this beautiful sentiment must find a response—and if not, the symbol is not lost, for all who are touched by the magic of love, add much to the betterment of the world.

XII. TIME

If we realized the solemnity of the moments we would not waste our precious time in glancing back over the years, or uselessly endeavor to peer into the unknown. We are all taken into account. There is a motive for our being. We are not placed in a tempestuous world and then forgotten, but we are allowed the privilege of working out our own development, and, unless seemingly unguided, we would remain passive and not press forward in the maze. The ground over which we have trod, whether barren or luxurious, should prove to us the wisdom of increasing our vigor, but if we continually dwell on what we have left behind, or stand listening for the call of the future, we will lose the purpose of the present.

Today is our problem. If we do not grasp it hastily it will become lost to us forever, and the incoming years will be unprofitable. The memory that is dear to us we should hold close to our hearts, for with its gentle fingers it traces a sacred meaning, but dwelling on the unsubstantial the things regrettable, the opportunities squandered, tends to hold us back from the beauty and usefulness of the moment. We cannot help but fall over the stepping stones if we are always looking backward at our yesterdays. Far better to concentrate on the here and now, to give all our

energies to the events at hand. Then our work will be accomplished without the straining of our delicate nerve force.

To have a mind which is scattering thoughts causes us to lose control of our powers, and the result partakes of our weakness and the varied emotions. The persons who have succeeded in this world have gathered all their inspirations together, moulding them as a whole. The answer to their labor has been a finished production, well rounded, in perfect symphony. It is possible to all, but it needs subtle thought and concentration. Most minds are wind-blown, changeful ever. Today is not appreciated. Man is always going to execute wonders on a portentous tomorrow. The hours at hand are overcrowded with the pressure of wasteful indulgences, which we can control when we learn to economize our moments—those priceless moments in which man seldom does his best. His intentions are full of well meaning, but his actions partake not of the bigness of his personality.

The soul should respond to the brain, and the brain to the soul. Instead, heart and brain are generally counted the principal factors—intelligence and feeling. The soul of man is the wisdom of his being, his guiding star. All elements combine in this radiation. It shines ever for those who wait with uplifted eyes—those who live in the present, grasping the opportunities that stand with outstretched hands, feeling the happiness that rushes in with the moments,

not relying on the joys which are recorded for the morrow.

If we are wise we will strive always to be happy, for there is no wisdom in a man who continually remains in the darkness. We should think happiness, believe in it and so attract it. We need not seek what is our right, simply acknowledge it, and it will remain ever in our midst. But those who forget all else for this allurements crush all the spirit of joy by their impatience. They trample on the very pulse of happiness in their eagerness to find the heart of their desire.

Happiness will not be ours unless we help it to endure, and, to do this, one must live in the highest sense, throb with the moment, accept the here and now in all its intensity. Then it is that happiness will smile in confidence. We must give our best to receive a like return. The science of life is simply the law of correspondence, so easy to fulfill if we but live in the immediate.

Continue to dwell in the past and today will glide by with downcast glance. If we give no welcome to our present guest and seek only the future, tomorrow will quickly turn to those who will greet it enthusiastically when it arrives. And so nothing will be ours, and our poor mistaken lives will drift and toss about until we will lose all recognition of the joy and usefulness of possession. To the one who finds today sad and empty there will be no significance in the morrow. It will never rightly be his until he has

claimed today. And if we can have no future what is to be our destiny?

We must all cling to our ideals, for unless we can extract the wonder and loveliness from today, we will retain no dreams that refresh us on our awakening—that draw every moment to its depths, and hold the past, present and future in a silken web.

XIII. FAITH

“Then touched He their eyes, saying, ‘according to your faith be it unto you.’” It does not take the philosophy of a sage to comprehend these lines, but it does take the wisdom of one possessing divine consciousness to feel and know that Jesus accomplished this miracle, by simply placing his fingers on the eyes of the blind men, and their sight was restored to them.

The Master understood how pitifully few held this faith when He said to those men whom He had saved from the horror of darkness: “See that no man know it.” But it is recorded that in their delight “they spread aloud his fame in all the country.”

We read of these marvelous acts as if they were old legends. We sense their beauty, but how many of us believe? How often do we hear the foolish utterance, “Miracles do not happen today,” and yet if we can trust that they once were performed why should they cease? Indeed, if that were so life would be at an end. Is not our very existence proof of the mystery? That so few do accept this truth is the reason that they remain at such a low ebb, but when the God consciousness fills the mind one is restored to his proper sphere. He feels perfectly positive that he is linked with Divinity, and, being so, fear, worry and sickness depart for those who eagerly await destruction.

This consciousness is very difficult to keep within our hearts and thoughts. First one must study logically the teachings of the Christ. With such learning will come belief and then the hardest task is to hold continually the truth. It should be practiced unfailing until one not only knows but feels the ethereal embrace, the shelter of His protection.

The grave mistake persons make in life is that they do not call upon this inner power until a great need comes upon them, until they have resorted to all the physical and mental powers of man. Why should we slight the one wondrous power, when we are always exercising the spark from the flame. We are the hand work of God, no one can disclaim his heritage. Our idea of what this creator is may differ. Some call it nature, but nature is but the tracing of the whole, the impression of the personality of the Highest. The soul of man is the illusive breath of the Father and the many who endeavor to smother it, succeed only in ruining their mortal frame. The idea of a distant God is what baffles the many, in their striving to reach the consciousness of His being. But a friend is no less ours because he dwells in a foreign city. The mere fact that we cannot behold him and feel the touch of his hands often causes his reality to be the more strongly felt in our midst than his actual presence, for our longing intensifies and enlarges the personality of the man.

Of our creator we do not think profoundly. We regard Him as a passing acquaintance. Do those

whom we so esteem ever count for much in our lives? When we gaze on the works of Michel Angelo do we doubt that his brain created his wonders, and in our admiration do we forget that it was his hands that executed their perfection?

We are constantly reminded of the Deity but we deliberately thrust Him from our minds and hearts, merely because we are ashamed of our attitude toward Him. If we wrong another we, in our frailty, soon come to believe that person has wronged us. So we place all the blame of our misfortunes on a higher power when it is we, ourselves, who design our lives. But as God is only responsible for our beginning, it is He alone who will be able to complete the poor tottering structure we have labored to erect. He only can sustain us in peaceful endurance, and it is through possessing this consciousness that we are able to enjoy this divine gift He has given us—the gift of this earthly life—and when we do feel this elation of blissful confidence, then too comes the security of life immortal, and we will with tender pity look at the persons who live in blindness, and try to bring light to their eyes even as is recorded of our Father.

XIV. WORRY

We should all try to release ourselves from the gigantic clutch of the worry habit. It is a curious fact that Americans have allowed this demon to grasp them tighter than has any other nationality. It is the constant rush of our daily lives which causes the nerves to be on a continual tension, destroying our courage and crushing our will.

We were not put into this world to be tormented by doubts and fears, but to fulfill our purpose, and we shall surely know what that purpose is if we "go forever forward, and in going listen." But we are crippled and maimed when consumed by worry, and are dragged back, our feet losing their hold in the quick sands. We are ever on dangerous ground, but our perception is so limited that we only see what is on a level. We are blind to the pitfall below and the glory above.

All our anticipated burdens come from a lack of faith. If we truly believed in the strength and helpfulness of a Divinity, worry would entirely disappear.

To attain this state of confidence one must have a pure mind and heart, and feel their at-one-ment with a higher power. When the Master stooped in the streets of Jerusalem and lifted up the little child, saying, "unless ye become as one of these ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," He means to symbolize the significance of purity and

unswerving trustfulness the little one feels for its parent or guardian. We must strive always for this consciousness. It is very hard to get and hold in these days of complex living. We must live simply to think constructively. If we were but like the wise men of the East, keeping our eyes on the star that shines o'er Bethlehem, instead of continually searching for the delusive mess of pottage, we would see the vision and the material things of this world would become stolid. We do not take the time to catch the gleam. We rush, after what? The will of the wisp! We believe we have something, and, behold, our hearts and minds are barren, except from worry, that fills our whole existence.

We worry about the things that are past helping, and the things that never happen, until our health is broken and the physician pronounces our condition nervous prostration.

We do not use our powers in the right way. By always doubting we create the very things we dread. We give them life and they spring forth and claim us as their own. Many are still-born, never coming into being, living only in our distorted mind, but causing us as much trouble as if they were really alive and battling us with their forces.

Let us think on the things of today. Conquer them, and then hopefully wait for the morrow, confident that only those things we attract, those that really belong to us, will ever come and when those things do appear they will carry

in their arms a staff for us to lean on. In the words of Phillips Brooks, let us turn to "Our Burden Bearer."

The little sharp vexations
And the briars that catch and fret,
Why not take them all to the Helper
Who has never failed us yet?
Tell Him about the heartache,
And tell Him the longings, too;
Tell Him the baffled purpose
When we scarce know what to do.
Then leaving all our weakness
With the One divinely strong,
Forget that we bore the burden
And carry away the song.

XV. PROPORTION

The majority of persons have a mistaken sense of proportion. Few understand the value of the so-called "little things," misconstruing the really little for the big and vice versa. It is not the millionaire who gives thousands to charity who is doing a big thing. That is simply his privilege, for one must deprive one's self to be generous. It is the poor person who shares his or her loaf with a poorer who is giving sumptuously, small though the gift may be.

Words are called little things, but it is the criticism or praise that starts our beings into action, and tragedy or glory ensues. Will Carleton, the poet, beautifully expressed the significance of "words" when he wrote:

Boys flying kites
Haul in their white winged birds;
You cannot do that way when
You're flying words.
"Be careful of fire" is good advice we know,
"Be careful of words" is ten times doubly so.
Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead,
But God himself cannot kill them when they're said.

Often the foolish laugh of an unthinking mind will cause a brave soul to falter by the way, and the journey never to be finished. It is seldom we are given the opportunity of saving those we love from death, but we can all help our loved ones live their lives, and it is the here and now that counts.

The smile, the pressure of the hand, a tender kiss, the cheerful word, a thoughtful act—"little things" you say, but it is the small that gives birth to the big, and that makes it as large as the result.

Many a divorce could be prevented if the couple understood the value of little things. A cheery good-bye in the morning would give courage to many a weary toiler. The happy vision would remain with him through the busy hours and he would hurry back to his home if he felt confident his welcome would be a loving, and not a nagging one. How few persons ever get a welcome! How many husbands will find their wives at home waiting for them on their return from work? They face bare walls, and then comes a time when their idea of coziness and pleasure is anywhere but the so-called home. If they were but sure that their coming really meant something to somebody (and the only way of showing is by the attitude of welcome) few would go astray. If they positively felt that another cared they would respond almost unconsciously. When I speak of women, I do not mean to imply that they are any more in fault than men, but there is a deluded idea that men take the initiative. It is not true. Women are the creators. To them comes naturally the mothering. Every good woman has the maternal instinct strongly implanted in her breast, and every man, worthy of his manhood, is still the boy at heart.

One is reminded of the lines,

“Men are only boys grown tall,
Hearts don't change much after all.”

Get understanding. Know how to cherish love, and practice how every day by doing the seemingly small things. Make a man or a woman feel his or her responsibility in love above all other possessions. Teach them by giving little attentions what these things mean to you, and you will surely receive them in return, forming the links that strengthen the bond.

All error starts from the ignorance of ignoring the little things, and they are always the foundation of all unhappiness, all tragedy.

Few fall down precipices, but many stumble over the uneven path, because they do not mind their steps. Watch out for the pebbles. They bruise and cut more quickly than a large boulder. They work under—unseen, unfelt—and behold a bleeding scar!

XVI. FULFILLMENT

The reason of so much discontent and unhappiness in those who have reached the so-called years of discretion is because, in their former days, they have not been taught to rely on themselves or been schooled in the proper way of development.

Principally among the wealthier persons does one see this unfortunate attitude of mind. They are generally dependent on others for entertainment, and if this is not forthcoming, they are at once despondent and restless in their selfish egotism. These persons are not to blame, but are objects of profound pity, for there is nothing sadder than a being made in the likeness of God, and still not conscious of all the marvelous attributes of his nature. Many of his powers lying dormant, he has not been aroused to the fascination of thinking, or to the realization of the force of the will. He merely exists on the temporal things of life, and knows not the meaning of the mystery. We should always be aware of our powers, but to fully understand their strength, we must put them to use so they may expand and grow.

Children are given what is called an education, but it is simply a smattering in many instances, a superficial glance at the surface of the truth. The fundamental knowledge of exercising what

is latent in us, knowing the principles, the science of life, is left until one discovers for himself, and to many this enlightenment never arrives. He remains a person who, to all appearances is perfectly normal, but unless one is aware of his possibilities and has put his powers to the test, he is not living in the right sense. He has not arrived at the place where he comprehends the joys of labor or understands that it is only through the highest fulfillment of self that one derives pleasure and amusement.

If we were taught in our childhood that we are all masterful, and that by seeking to do our best in all things, we could find out for what we were truly fitted, then talents would fearlessly bound forth. We should be instructed in the value of thought, and everyone should be given time wherein to know himself and his intentions. In this way concentration would be cultivated. It is this floating in mid-air that is demoralizing. We must go to the bottom of things, to know the depths of nature and life's meaning, and to comprehend others as well as ourselves.

A child should, above all, be made to realize the dignity of work and to look with scorn on the person who does not add his expression in some decisive form to the world's good. It need not necessarily be an outward art that is pleasing to behold, for we are not all capable of creating the beautiful but we can all seek to obtain something that is useful.

If we cannot do that which we would wish to

perform, we must not be discouraged, but thankfully construct that for which we are best fitted. It is the knowing of what use we are that is important, far more than the work which we execute, for it betokens a knowledge of oneself and in the doing we mature into a being of larger personality. The developing of one faculty is strengthening to all our faculties for it tends to quicken the brain, and thus we obtain an insight into all our powers, which gives us the confidence to use them to the best advantage.

An active person may be lonely, but it is not the desolation that is aroused by restlessness and these persons never crave the crowd for companionship. They seek only those whose friendship is dear. In every way they are superior to the tossed about, useless humanity that must be constantly dazzled, constantly amused, to forget self and who only find gratification in trifles. It is lamentable the large number of persons who are always striving to forget when it is only by remembering that we can serve. The years of life on this globe are very short for accomplishment unless one puts to good use his powers. We were all meant to be a part of the glorious whole, let us see to it that we fill our allotted place.

XVII. PERSONALITY

To develop personality, one must bring all one's unseen forces into action, else one remains a colorless automaton.

Having personality is being so alive that we radiate a something that is felt by everyone with whom we come in contact.

Whether our force is lasting or pleasing, rests with us entirely. When we stimulate the growth of our mind, heart and will by cultivation, we can cause these mighty powers to expand in either direction, good or bad. It is entirely our choice. We choose what we will become. We are free agents, only paying the debt after the "I am" is what we have made it, and it is too late to consider the price.

Napoleon brought all his forces to bear on gain. Self was uppermost in that wonderful mind. He swept all before him by concentrating on this power, but he sacrificed all the rest of his being, as well as crushing all other persons who opposed him.

The same power that conquered, fell back with terrific force on himself. His personality lives today, but history does not record him as the victor he should have been, simply because his forces were directed in the wrong way.

To have our personality really tell, so that it is a gain to us, and to others as well, one must

cultivate one's will, heart and mind on the greatest good. Then it will be felt not only when we are in the midst of this world, but after our spirit has passed. The trail of light will still illumine. Jesus was the best example of this truth. He was the biggest personality that ever lived, and after two thousand years His forces still throb and vibrate stronger today than when He was in the flesh. Think of leaving such an impression on the world—a personality that fills all space; for one may not believe Him to have been divine. To many, He is simply a man who trod the earth, yet to these His personality is as powerfully felt. It can never die, for He fired all things into life as He passed.

We neglect our powers. They are dormant. Some never feel their existence. They live entirely by instinct, which is the lowest form of animal life.

Man was given a brain to reason with, a heart to feel and a will to control, but if we do not use these gifts or possessions, they become paralyzed.

To be simply impelled by instinct is to lose all mastery of self. It is less destructive to put all one's forces in the wrong direction, for then one is alive enough to hear the call of truth should it fall on his ears, but sleeping stills all sound. It is never too late to press forward and unfold.

Many a personality has been created after years of unexpression, sufficiently awakened to feel the urge, and the wish will be father to the thought. Concentrate for good on all your

forces and they will respond and develop, for radiating a personality is simply directing the life vibration to focus strongly on our manifold powers within, quickening them to more abundant life.

XVIII. RESTLESSNESS

We are now living in a most restless period, an age so overcharged with animation that we do not stop long enough to consider our destination. We have nothing in view, only an endless variety of action, a thoughtlessness of self in our endeavor to keep occupied. We overestimate the non-essentials, waste our precious moments on things of such lightness that they flutter away in air, leaving no reason for ever existing, sink into vapor and depart.

It is right and necessary that we should all have diversions—essential to one's health and peace of mind—but they should be of substance. No matter how small the act it must bear weight—a thing that will cause us to think, to grow in the direction that makes for improvement. Instead we drift restlessly up and down on the waves of time, simply catching for a second the spray of life's immensity. It drips from our fingers, our hands not even having secured the bubble.

Most lives are shortened by restless desire, whereas the wise know the value of the moments. They realize that to really live and endure, mind must work in unison with body. And to keep the attention of the brain pleasures are obliged to have depth, otherwise they cannot hold. One soon grows weary, and hastens on to an-

other's trifle. If we departed from the unimportant and became interested in the requisite nothing would be wasted—time or life's meaning. We would be as well entertained and still accomplish, and our restlessness would be lost in the intensity and absorption of concentration.

From conventions come the purposeless things of the world. Conventionalities are useless, being born of the age and place. Purity and kindness are the deathless beacons of light, clearing the by-ways and the hedges, and all who follow in their wake may be very confident that truth is leading instead of the inflection of the immediate hour. To the soul that soars the petty usages and customs are but the lightening changes of an impatient whimster, calling for frivolity with all the ardor of a benighted pilgrim seeking the foundation of eternity. Restlessness is caused by being unsubstantial. The fleeting pleasures quickly destroy all spiritual sense, for only the things that can be sighted appeal. The brilliancy, which continually blinds by its power but does not penetrate, is a light having no warmth of the steadfast flame. The fevered life, one excited by confusion, possesses no poise—no concentration of thought, no purpose in view.

The inconsistency of a fickle mind deters one from ever reaching a given point. Restlessness and selfishness generally keep closely abreast. One cultivates the other in sympathetic egotism. Restlessness betokens a soul hemmed in by a

limited expanse, bound entirely in self, causing uneasiness by inhabiting so small a space. A calm, lofty man is free. There is no effort in the impersonality of being. He realizes the vastness of creation and knows that he is the principal power in it, when he is one with the supreme, but useless without this connection.

Restlessness and divinity cannot be linked, for one always remains intact, while the other pulls and twists. Restlessness comes from a spiritual lack in our natures, the unfulfillment of self.

The importance and solemnity of tranquillity are voiced in the following verse by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, which we would do well to dwell upon until its meaning sinks into our inmost hearts and we, too, comprehend the carol of the birds and God's gigantic control over all His great and small:

“ The little birds sang east,
And the little birds sang west,
And I smiled to think God's greatness
Flowed around our incompleteness,
Round our restlessness His rest. ”

XIX. TRIALS

Trials are tests, not troubles. Troubles are calamities for which there is no remedy, (if truly such a condition exists)—things that leave a crack in one's heart which can never be repaired. Trials are given to us to test our natures, to train us to think, to work to master. Trials and troubles are being continually confounded. Few persons are called upon to suffer trouble, but all have trials thrust upon them, and it is right and just that we should carry burdens, else our shoulders would become weakened by inertia.

Trials come to us to promote our progress. Lacking them, our feet would always remain still. We can never reach the summit unless we climb, and the more distant the height the more perpendicular the way. Although our wills have been thwarted—our heart's desires drifted beyond us—few would give up their hours of trial—those hours in which our tears have burnt and their impress has left their scar.

In those very experiences we have been taught what life means, and we have come in touch with the great throbbing universe.

There is a dignity in suffering, which enlarges and cleanses the soul, which calls to all humanity in tenderness and love. Man in his moments of trial, presses forward in his eagerness to be one with his brothers, to strengthen the bulwarks of

protection, so that misfortune will be prevented from thrusting itself against the multitude.

Nothing draws hearts so tightly together as the conviction that another has known the same woe, and can therefore feel by understanding. For experience should teach us to sense a comrade's desolation and to hold out sheltering arms. Sympathy is a divine touch which tends to heal the wound without unnecessary delay. Its soft fingers add balm to the torn surface, and one becomes soothed miraculously.

To meet a courageous soul who has been through the briery path, while our path has been strewn with roses, makes one feel his unworthiness, as if a higher power had overlooked us in our trifling insignificance. If experience teaches a man nothing of the great mysteries—if his heart beats remain unquickened by another's trouble, he is indeed a pitiful part of humanity. Over and over again will he find the same burdens lying in his way, and not until he has strengthened his arms to carry away the obstacle can he ever pass on unhampered.

We must take what comes to us cheerfully, for only our own, that which is needed to complete the whole, will ever find its response. If it is something which our soul is above it can never attach itself to us. We must ever go forward with an open mind, hoping for enlightenment. What yesterday was seemingly correct, is today but a shadow of the truth. We must change in order to grow. There would be no flower if the seed

did not expand in its dark bed of earth, but it ever presses upward, bravely throwing back the encumbrance, until the tiny blossom feels God's breath and opens out to its sweetness and warmth, knowing it has fulfilled its destiny. So we should take our trials, convinced that after the long hours God's benediction will lull us to peaceful slumber, and on to our final glorious day.

If our faith were but strong enough we could easily understand why trials were sent to us, and eagerly accept them, believing that in so doing we would be soon able to lay them down. It is in the spirit of receiving which quickly changes the situation. Life is wonderfully fascinating in its mysterious agitation on this ever-quickenning sphere. One cannot expect or wish to remain in the same condition. We must have experiences to really live. Experiences often turn to trials, but by our powers of will and thought we can change the weight of the burdens which fall upon us into a shield of knowledge and hence to truth, which symbolizes beauty.

Unless we can stand face to face with truth and not be ashamed, we can well believe we are not possessed of it. One must feel and know it in all its purity, have dwelt with it confidently on its highest sphere. But to attain this attitude untruth must be as familiar to us as its opposite. It is not necessary to have enfolded what is unlovely in our arms to test it, but we must have saluted it in passing and realized from its answer its unsounding depths.

Without trials we could have no imagination and it is this flight of mind which carries one into another's very heart, and we feel their pain. A lack of vision causes us to be unsympathetic, if not unkind. All things bear each on the other, just as we are responsible to all men for our actions. If we stumble, we trip up our comrades. The fall is not alone ours. We send forth a destructive thought and it travels from our mind to the next, and so on, until finally it leaps forth into substance a monstrosity. One of the most severe trials, one of the greatest tests of courage, is to stand by bravely and watch our loved ones suffer. We can feel the extent of one's own agony, but we cannot conceive the length and depths of another's. We see the struggle but we cannot fathom the strain. Therefore all our love and fear goes out for them, for we can only watch with tied hands. But this trial is also a gain, for through the measure of our unselfish distress we acknowledge the divinity of love, and we catch a gleam of heaven's blue.

XX. KINSHIP

I fear we are all a little too far sighted in this particular, that we often look over the heads of our loved ones, and bestow our glances on those who stand at a distance, not caring for our attention, and for whom we simply tolerate merely for the sake of popularity. So do we overlook the duties that are nearest, deeming them insignificant by contact, and straining our vision to behold responsibilities which lie beyond our reach.

The unknown always possesses a fascination for restless minded persons, and the usual becomes monotonous. We think of those close to us as definitely secure, because we can see them with our eyes, while in numerous cases they really dwell apart in spirit, because we have neglected to protect the love that bound, its silken fetters becoming loosened until they drag around our feet. We hear much of living one's own life—"that we owe this to ourselves"—but no one can continually live his own particular desires without trampling on the goodness and patience of those with whom he is closely connected. One action depends on another, so persons are responsible each to the other. Before we can contemplate the future or realize the position we hold in our family and in this world, we must develop our character so that we can see life disinterestedly

and wisely. Then it is time to decide what is best for others and ourselves. Our nature will then unfold to us the importance of self; it will teach us that selfishness differs widely from the purpose of holding to what is right, and that love should contain far more than loyalty and the endeavor for peace. We must certainly consider those with whom we are linked by affection and blood, but we must show consideration in the right way, and the developing of our nature will guide us unfailingly; but unless we have reached such a growth, we will do manifold harm by useless indulgences. Nothing is truer than the old maxim, "familiarity breeds contempt," but we have ourselves to blame for this usual outcome of the family life. We must respect ourselves, and by doing so we will act and maintain such an attitude that all with whom we come in contact cannot help but admire our dignified bearing and treat us as they so commonly treat the strangers at the gate,—with courtesy and forbearance, not with contemptuous casualty, and slighting regard. It entirely rests with one's self. The pinnacle stands ready for all to climb, and after we have reached the laborious height, we will rest securely and much more comfortably than residing in the valley overlooked and tossed about amid the multitude. It is easier in the beginning to remain in lassitude, but we soon become bruised by others stamping upon ours wishes, and the lack of esteem in which we are contemplated. It is the common-place kin-

ship which causes the many to shower their attentions on mere acquaintances and spend their precious moments with those for whom their hearts do not respond, but their vanity is touched by the politeness with which they are treated, and in their society they feel that they are really of some importance, simply by the courtesy extended.

It is the first lesson we all should learn in life's progress that we must control ourselves before we can hope for others to regard us in the light that we would wish. It is a matter of character building which too often we leave to the years to teach, when by a little forethought the way would lie smoothly before us. It is the secret of all antagonism and quarreling. We are not sure enough of our footing. We are too vacillating in our opinions of the right and wrong. Therefore we do not stand erect with worthy dignity, but grovel on the ground to be stepped upon and pushed aside, by those who should help us to arise. But it is useless to expect a helping hand, we must bestir ourselves and climb. Then when we can say to our inmost soul, "well done," we will suddenly find that the world is an echo, and we will have the respect and affection of all, because it is our just reward.