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In the Desert a Highway.

In the Desert a Highway

By
Richard Whitwell

*" Comfort ye, comfort ye. . . .
" Prepare ye the way make straight in
the desert a highway for our God."*

ISAIAH XL.

*O, thou art fuller and sweeter,
the more deeply we drink of thee;
And thy fulness only waiteth
on our capacity.*

BROTHER JAMES.

H. T. HAMBLIN

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All the chapters, save the last three, in this little volume, were contributed, as articles, to the *Science of Thought Review*. The passages, in italics, which preface the chapters, and give, in a measure, the keynote of the same, are taken, in every instance but one, from my book, "The Cloud and the Fire." The exception is the chapter entitled "The Beloved One," the initial passage of which is taken from the "Gold of Dawn." The last three little chapters were contributed to *Brotherhood*.

The *cloud* by day, and the *fire* by night, recall the Bible story of the journey through the wilderness, with its deep spiritual significance; hence the title, "In the Desert a Highway," which also is the heading of one of the chapters. The issue of that journey—our journey likewise—is the biggest thing of all

R. W.

Foreword

Richard Whitwell belongs to the true order of spiritual mystics. For years I have studied his writings with ever increasing interest. My first acquaintance with his books was when his *Life of Francis of Assisi* came to me as a gift of God out of the great unknown. On reading it, I thought of the splendid statement of Walt Whitman, "Only themselves can understand themselves or the like of themselves." I then realised that we had in Mr. Whitwell a writer akin to St. Francis. Yet he has this larger vision, namely, the mystic understanding combined with the scientific spirit. I thought then, and I think now that with one such God must be well pleased.

There next came to me "The Cloud and the Fire," revealing the poet soul, and the mild understanding heart. Other works have followed, each showing new aspects of creative genius, making the truth so attractive that one is constrained to say:

"And ah for a man to arise in me
That the man I am may cease to be!"

Now, at length, comes this present little work, "In the Desert a Highway," his latest word to the souls of men. I think indeed that even if it contained nothing else than the chapters under this same title, and "Lift up your hearts," it would be beyond price. But each lesson is a gem. Note well the richness of quotation from men of every age and creed. Again I say that Richard Whitwell belongs to the true order of mystics. For he is with them, not as an eavesdropper, or as a pickpocket snatching nuggets for cheap settings, but as comrade and brother. He gives to them even more than he receives

from them. His quotations catch an added charm as they pass through the light of his genius. He seems, by his setting, to reveal the inner splendour of each author whom he quotes. Such grace of spirit is rare in any age, and especially rare in this age of jazz, big business, and loud advertising.

Here, as ever,—in the midst of all these things—comes the still small Voice, calling our minds to the deep things of God, and firing our hearts to high adventure, and endless enlargement.

HENRY VICTOR MORGAN.

Tacoma, Washington, U.S.A.

May, 1929.

Religion is simply the pure expression of Life itself. It draws everything unto itself, in an absorption of joy and interest. By it everything is accepted, and, in it, translated. That which enters through the door of sadness passes out through the door of Love. All things indeed find acceptance and new meaning.

Here, then, is our sure prescription of the Way of Prosperity, the Path of Success. Go step by step; accept the guidance of your circumstance ever as the leading of His Providence, and take God's hand. An apparent thwarting of thy good may prove to be the shadow of a greater good.

*"I give you the end of a golden string;
Only wind it into a ball,
It will lead you in at Heaven's gate,
Built in Jerusalem's wall."*

—BLAKE.

—From "*The Fellowship of the Kingdom*," page 79.

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In The Desert a Highway.

The Vision and The Message.

" Praise awakens in me.

*I stand still, and great thanksgiving flows
through all my being, because of that which
is,—Now !*

As heaven dawns, and I am free,—Now !

*And the angels' song I hear,—in me I hear :
' Glory to God in the highest, and on earth
peace and good-will.'*

*In the morning God is all and in the evening
God is all, and throughout the day the Truth
divine !*

• • • •

*' To KNOW and BE KNOWN OF God ' : this is the
eternal human quest."*

THE message is man's recovery of Life's *presentness*, and of that which truly *is*. It clarifies and defines our human quest and its meaning, which in his heart of hearts man ever feels toward. When it reveals then he remembers : something awakes in him, an irresistible certitude, and he knows that it is so.

In the Desert a Highway.

*" Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
Are yet a master-light of all our seeing ! "*

—WORDSWORTH.

The quest, then, and its meaning, what is it? Primarily, it is man's search for truth. Why? It is because he is conscious of its necessity. The pressure of the unreal, with its false reactions, creates in him the demand to be *himself*. Life is curiously shy and imitative, and would be everything else before it makes effort to be *itself*. The soul first shows as its reflection before it truly enters on the scene. The outward responds to the inward, truth to truth, untruth to untruth; or perhaps we may better state it, real to real, unreal to unreal. Till the soul awakes, man's life is in the outward. Then for him, Life is like unto a series of mirrors, and experience touches him, indefinite, inchoate, as clouds floating past. This is the illusion, and he is as one that dreams, till *he* indeed (not the false ego which ever confuses soul and sense), awake, and Life in all its depths responds in Joy to him, direct to his directness, immediate to his presentness, original to his originality.

*" Each man is in his spectre's power
Until the arrival of that hour,
When his humanity awake,
And cast his spectre into the Lake."*

—BLAKE.

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Experience truly begins for man, with the first dim functioning of the soul, born, we might say, amid the darkness. Its gathering purpose is that he may at length hear and see and feel and touch or respond to the bigness of Life, with gladsome, self-giving answer to those true words and true meanings that approach him as with divine invitation from everywhere. Then he himself is true, giving action and utterance to his own true word and its true meaning.

*"Voices from the unseen, calling, calling,
'Will you not enter into your true life now,
All that is ever possible is possible now,
All that the heart may desire is awaiting you now.'"*

—"THE GOLD OF DAWN."

By the rightness in ourselves, our own simple truth in action, we touch words to their rightful meaning. "Our truth calls forth truth as it touches." When, with wholesome and determined effort, we begin to express that which we truly are, our own quality, from the point just where we are, with right thought, right word, right action, we begin to get somewhere.

When the original thought passes its threshold into action, it bears an alchemical potency. It possesses what William Law defines as the truly magical power, utterly different from the so-called "magical," with its spread of illusion. It carries a challenge, or conveys illumination; it drives through the morass of loose thought and experience.

It is man's igniting of a fire in himself, which when it

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blazes up, self consuming, will mount into vision and wonder and glory.

We realize the futility of the empty word, in which no purpose is, nor motive behind. We progress through the purification of our motive. But it is ever the motive that determines the path. It may be an *ignis fatuus* from the fires of illusion, it may be the white flame enkindled at the altar of truth. If we take care of our motives our thoughts will take care of themselves. They will come of their own, like flocks of birds. "Where the body is, there the eagles assemble together."

Our highest, best, and truest motive is the treasure of the heart, to be held as sacred, as a priest may tend the holy fire, as a mother cares for her first-born child. By it we will exercise power over our thought and control it. By it will we rise above that which we had imagined ourselves to be. It is a magic staff. By it the feet may climb and not be weary, and the soul ascend to its own true vision.

Then praise will awaken, then will thanksgiving flow, and heaven spread as a dawning light. Then will man rejoice for that which is, has been, and still will be. All things abide, and hold, and order reigns, by reason of one PRESENT CONSCIOUSNESS. Deep in his heart man hears the angels' song, the melody that pulses through when God is felt.

"God smiles as he has always smiled:
Ere suns and moons could wax and wane,
Ere stars were thunder-girt, or piled
The heavens, God thought on me his child."

—BROWNING.

The Vision and the Message. 13

What then is the soul? It is that in man which feels affinity to the larger Life. "What would a man give in exchange for his soul?" It is the *man* himself, the real life. Would it then be true to say, "thou hast a soul!"? Surely not, for that is illusion, and belongs to man's outward journey, when he identifies himself with the material. Then is it not a hopeful, or, shall we say, a pragmatic belief?

But when the soul turns round (which is conversion) and commences its return journey, great revealments are awaiting. First there is the seeking, but after that the finding. New meanings of transcendent value await man's coming, and these are woven into a heavenly vesture, his wedding garment. He enters into realizations of present significance expressed by *is* and *here* and *now*. And amazingly, as with sudden light, there flashes upon his consciousness the answer to that question, "has man a soul?" The word drives home with full meaning: "Man is a soul!" You, yourself, O man, in truth, are soul. Man as a spiritual being enters into God's spiritual world, which is native to the soul. And by spiritual we mean *real*.

This, in richest recognition, is the goal of man's striving. It is his liberating discovery, his landing, after days of stress amid the elements, upon the shores of a new continent. It is different, but also better than what he could have imagined. It holds implications that he wots not of—of life in fulness, and of what is synonymous to it, of joy, of service, and of self-surrender.

For the first time man may be said truly to *live*, knowing infinity behind and infinity before, and a circumstance

rich as heaven, for it is heaven. In its aliveness, its thrill of contact with the Real, the inner thought outflowing as a spring of living water, the soul in its own truth joins in the Song pulsing from the Life divine, amid every sphere, in its eternal movement, ascending from glory unto glory.

Man's discovery then, is that of the soul—the *real*, at once, of his own life and of the greater Life—of himself, of God. For the soul stript of its garmenting is *light*. And it is the look of God, or thought of God—and this also is its identity.

This is the quest, and to be true in a world of truth the meaning of the quest—to step out of the unreal into the Real, to *know* that Reality, and to be *known* of That.

And that man is child of That !

And that the discovery awaits, not in some mere future time, but at our doors, *now* in the very present.

Our experiences touched by truth tend to this issue.

When thought becomes woven into experience we quickly get away from the static, the conventional; arise out of the little ruts and niches of comfort and content, restful and satisfying to the apathetic spirit, so that it is disinclined to move, and is fain to say, "this is very good," till the goad is felt. In our lethargy we resent the approach of Life—for it sometimes comes as an apparent deprivation—as Jove of Olympus was content in the pigsty, from which it was only the de-hypnotization of pain that woke him, astonished, to his real estate.

Even so man awakens to *his* real estate, and then he ventures forth, by faith. For the Way of Life is trod by

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faith, and not by sight; by interior perception, and not by outward reason or calculation.

The big things of the soul are a hidden knowledge, an interior transaction. It is the birth, in pain, of our inmost and sacred truth. The child will prove our vindication in its own good time.

Our truth within makes contact with truth without, till Love within makes contact with Love without, when the soul will find its accord in the Life universal.

And it is to the glory of God !

*“ In all eternity no tone can be so sweet,
As where man’s heart with God in unison doth beat.
Ah, would thy heart but be a manger for the birth,
God would once more become a Christ on earth.”*

—FRA ANGELUS.

Oh then, what worship, what intimacy, what communion, through our thought and action ! Life rises to rapture and adoration in the whole because of its fulfilment in the detail. The experience before us becomes rich and blessed in our recognition of His Presence, by virtue of our love and truth glowing within. The moment’s labour will enshrine that moment’s praise, offered unto Him who is Invisible.

In the immediate thing goes forth our trustful word, our message, our prayer.

Our heart-truth pulses through.

Our work becomes a transaction within the sacred place, and receives the blessing of the Lord. We give of ourselves in the thing that we do. Our *virtue*, that which

God loves in us (not our virtuousness)—that which is *essential* and unique in us goes forth as a fragrance, as a healing energy, which, augmented by the Great Love, to which it is our offering or vehicle, as the loaves in the hands of Christ, becomes a power of blessing through our whole environment.

Hitherto there had been one missing factor—the one essential element—because of which sorrow dogs the path of experience, and at all points man touches illusion. The circle is without its centre. And everywhere is—mutability, and what Omar calls “a Magic Shadow-show,” in which “we Phantom Figures come and go.” But it is the earth that spins with dizzying whirl—and incidentally our earth—while the heavens are constant.

But now the stone that the builders rejected has become the headstone once again. The missing factor is again in its rightful place. The *living thing* is present. There is the interior support, without which every earth-raised structure must pass as a dream of the night.

If God be in the thing that we do, how more wonderful!

The breathing of the Spirit amid the common action! The pencil of the divine Artist, the chisel of the divine Craftsman, amid the simple thing. Because of our truth, His Truth! Something felt, and passing through—no less than His benison, His approval!

Need we then to go afield to do His Will? Need we moan for that which is beyond our reach to justify our life, to fulfil our heart's desire?—forgetful that the Centre is with us, and that the Spirit energizes within our praiseful recognition of His Presence. All is *here*, all is *present*, and the immediate enfolds within its compass the Whole.

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The whole of Life indeed is at that *centre*, and it is Immanuel.

Then may one say, " God is my strength ! "

Where then is drudgery ? It is lifted away. This vision and recognition, which is the light of heaven, throws its radiance on common things.

What then is the quest ? It is not merely that we may find, but that we may become. It is that we may touch the hand of God, who is the unseen yet deciding factor in all our affairs.

Drop then, O man, the mean desire, the low self-motive, and affiliate thyself to that richer Life, that IT may *live* and *rejoice* in thee.

*Does the fish soar to find the ocean,
The eagle plunge to find the air—
That we ask of the stars in motion
If they have rumour of thee there ?*

*Not where the wheeling systems darken,
And our benumbed conceiving soars !—
The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.*

*The angels keep their ancient places;—
Turn but a stone, and start a wing !
'Tis ye, 'tis your estrangéd faces,
That miss the many-splendoured thing.*

—FRANCIS THOMPSON.

As in Contrast

"To be alive is to be AWAKE, sensitively conscious of the real amid the seeming.

Death is the not-knowing, the not-understanding, the unresponsiveness, the obstruction of the human mind—Ignorance and all the branchings of its working out.

There is truly no other death than the crucifixion of this life divine amid human experience and material thought and symbol—as experience and imaginings not direct, but reflected, or a reversion of the Real, as a dream within a dream,—

Being other and opposite to the holy Love-consciousness, all-fulfilling, touching all things into beauty and rhythm, and which in Itself is the fount of all beauty, sweetness, wisdom—all-conscious Mind, all-feeling Heart . . . Our Father-Mother."

OUR thought soars above the clouds to the Blue beyond, and we claim affinity there. The clouds are transitory: they come and go, but the Blue, the eternal of Space, is constant. Physically, we know it as the Ether, "the blue ethereal sky." We look into its infinite prospect, and

it conveys the feeling of an encompassing Providence, and of a heaven yet to be.

*"I say to thee, do thou repeat
To the first man thou mayest meet
In lane, highway or open street—
That he and we and all men move
Under a canopy of love
As broad as the blue sky above."*

—RICHARD C. TRENCH.

But we know that the Ether not merely encompasses, but also interpenetrates all that is. Our eyes rest as we gaze into its fathomless depths. Yet far as it seems, deep beyond deep, science teaches that it is all pervading, and that we are also *in it*. It is indeed our vital life (we might perhaps use the word, *vitalism*) more intimate than the air we breathe. It is the sensitive covering of life's *hidden principle*.

Our little barque, the Earth, in the protection of her solar Mother (with her little planetary fleet) sails the great ocean of Ether, down the broad current of the Milky Way. The Ether is an all-pervading quality. The word *substance* also has been used. This recalls the word *substantia*, in the writings of Boehme and earlier mystics, applied to the divine Principle itself. "In Him we live and move and have our Being." Of the Ether, as nature-substance, if such an expression is true, it is true in more wonderful-wise of that to which it corresponds, which is spirit, Divine-Nature, Deity.

Nature teaches man in parables. If he but grasped the richer meaning and implication of that which he sees or

experiences, how joyous would he be ! How he would turn away from the errancy of false thought, and with glowing spirit run towards Him who will surely meet him half-way, the divine Lover who yet awaits him at the cross-roads.

“ All my illusions will burn into illumination of joy, and all my desires ripen into fruits of love ” (Tagore).

The encompassing Ether is indeed the outer expression, parallel, and correspondent of the deepest Fact of all. The heavens *declare* the glory of God. The physical bespeaks the spiritual. The Blue which we see in that rest of vision, the heaven that we scan in the distance giving rest to our spirit, is not merely there, it is *here*: it is not merely distant, it is present. For as the ether, heaven encompasses, and as the ether, it interpenetrates our being ; it also is the vital breath of our spirit. We will ever have its distant view because it is also with us, the medium through which we see. Height beyond height, deep below deep, it unfolds the infinite riches of His Love.

“ *This day before dawn I ascended a hill and looked at the crowded heaven,*

And I said to my spirit, ‘ When we become the enfolders of those orbs, and the pleasure and knowledge of every thing in them, shall we be filled and satisfied then ? ’

And my spirit said, ‘ No, we but level that lift to pass and continue beyond.’ ” —WALT WHITMAN.

As the ether, even so is Spirit (which, conditional or

spatial, is *heaven* in realization). Though not apparent, not visible, not tangible, it is yet the reality without which we could not be. We have to grow into the knowledge and understanding of what we are and where we are, till we discover at length our true nature and our true circumstance, that we *are* spiritual beings, and that encompassing us is the spiritual world.

*"The riddle of the world is understood
Only by him who feels that God is good."*

—WHITTIER.

"Now are we the children of God," wrote the apostle. Now may we know the fellowship of His Love.

As our deeper experience finds its ample correspondence, so our outward and more immediate lessons and testings find their parallel in the stress of the elements, in wind and cloud and storm, and the under-shadow. They come, they go, nor do our experiences linger. The cloud is rifted, the blue at length shines through. The perception of truth dispels the illusion. Spite of the warring elements beneath the lower firmament, the Love of God, the divine Providence, constant remains. When the human heart is at strife within itself, and is engulfed in darkness, or when the circumstance seems black as night, and no way out, "even there" might we say with the Psalmist "shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Beyond the tempest there is the peace of God. Amid every experience there is that, the discovery of which fulfils and ends it. One is with us, who is the meaning, who holds the answering word, the know-

ledge of whose Presence brings light where darkness was. The soul is like unto the little fishing boat tossed on the raging waters. But there is One asleep in the hold, who awakens at the cry of our human necessity. At His word the illusion breaks, the elements are stilled.

*“ The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
With blessings on your head.”*

—COWPER.

Our experience is no mere fortuitous, haphazard thing. Wrought out of ignorance or apostasy if we will, it yet tends to divinest issues and fullest meanings. But all is meaningless till the soul lends its own meaning to it, the purpose indeed being a self discovery.

“ There’s a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will ”

Time itself is as the swift passing of a cloud over the face of eternity.

The clouds obstruct the light. Though on the upper side waves of vapour dance and surge in the sparkling rays, on the under-side they hang heavy and forbidding that only a grey twilight passes through. The dark opaque earth is mirrored there, and is reflected back upon itself, and in that shadow all is chilled; the rain sobs, the wind howls, the sea moans in utterance of woe. The soul here detects its own condition.

Our own sad reflection is indeed cast back from the heavens that we see. “ Man makes God in his own image ” is a modern variant of the Psalmist’s word,

“unto the pure wilt thou show thyself pure, and unto the froward wilt thou show thyself froward.” It is one aspect of the greater truth expressed by the apostle, “When we are like Him we shall see Him as He is.”

The deeper waters of our life flow in a cosmic experience. But as they pulse through the gates of consciousness the deeper perception is lost, when they rise to a personal issue and experience.

The affections catch influences even before the thoughts arise. Such feelings should be taken as indications for us to make still closer hold upon the Real, and for the soul to become quiet and fearless and at ease. The thing we might perhaps have feared will not happen, but will pass by innocuous, or arrive with new and happier aspect.

There are occasions when the heart sinks with strong impression of some approaching calamity. Then is opportunity for the soul to prove itself, and not be dispossessed of its right by such pressure of feeling. These are times for us to gird ourselves and go forward.

*“Man is his own star, and the soul that can
Render an honest and a perfect man
Commands all life, all influence, all fate ;
Nothing for him falls early, or too late.”*

Knowing the truth, we are called to express it in our daily lives and social experience, holding strenuously to its implications till outwardly they are realized.

We may lift up our present experience, and by means of it, with heart and mind and strength touch the Ineffable : in the performance of the simple thing making

our sacrifice. By this instant worship of the spirit, this perception of divine meaning through the material, by this holding to the real in despite of what may seem, refusing to let go ("I will not let thee go, except thou bless me"), there will be in very surety a down-pouring of heavenly Love, blessing the circumstance and all who have part therein.

Man's life is in no wise separate, but intertwined with larger things, and the cosmic makes its transaction with the personal. No man lives unto himself alone. His contribution to Life, realized through truth and love (his rightness) and in no other way, is of more than local significance. There is ever the inter-action of the greater life, an inter-flowing from deeper springs beyond. By the wise and right meeting of the personal experience we are contributing to the solution of the greater problem. Experience comes to the soul in this way, that the soul may meet it on its own ground. In such continuous transaction, through faith and love, we may fulfil a perpetual ministry. Instead of dreading we will welcome the guest that comes, the unknown event knocking at our door. We may at this moment step from the shadowed realm into the Life more serene.

"The world's life is only an appearance, a sensuous image of the pure spiritual life and the whole world of sense; only a picture swimming before our present knowing faculty like a dream, and having no reality in itself. For if we should see things and ourselves as they are, we should see ourselves in a world of spiritual natures,

with which our entire real relation neither began at birth nor ends with the body's death " (Emanuel Kant).

Oh that we might, self-forgetful, draw nigh to the great Heart of all, and with our spirit touched with divine compassion perceive the real and true in whomsoever we meet !

Prayer is our wrestle to adjust our vision to God's. The higher our thought of our brother the better is he.

When we realize that we are now in our rightful place, our circumstance will begin to respond to that truth. If only we recognized this, that we are walking now amid spiritual facts !

We are in God's world, but blindly we walk amid the shadow, our ears are deaf, our understanding dim. If from our consciousness the veil of dead matter lifted, then would we realize where we are, the Vision Beautiful would meet our eyes, the Holy Grail would touch us, and One reveal !

" The kingdom of heaven is within you, and whoever shall know himself shall find it. Strive therefore to know yourselves, and ye shall be aware that ye are the sons of the Almighty Father, and ye shall know that ye are in the City of God, and ye are the City " (New Sayings of Jesus from Oxyrhynchus).

Are we not upon the Open Road (having stepped out from the cabined little haunts of the selfhood) with the fresh sweet morning air breathing upon our hearts as upon our faces? We cannot but be glad, working each day with the heartiness that is inspired by faith and love.

We recall the wonderful truths.

In the Desert a Highway.

Not merely in the distance, in some far-off clime, but at the present moment we are in our Father's house.

The Life of God is our life now, even though we are unaware of it. And we are now, in our true consciousness, spiritual beings in the spiritual world. Matter is not dead, but a gloriously living vital thing. If it refracts the light, it yet reveals the glory.

*The splendid sun no splendour can display
Till on gross things he dash his broken ray,
From cloud and tree and flower re-tossed in prismatic
spray.*

*Did not obstruction's vessel hem it in,
Force were not force, 'twould spill itself in vain;
We know the Titan by his champéd chain.*

• • * * *

*God's Fair were guessed scarce but for opposite sin;
Yea, and His Mercy, I do think it well,
Is flashed back from the brazen gates of hell.*

—FRANCIS THOMPSON.

The Wonder that is at Our Doors. 27

The Wonder that is at our Doors

“ The Song of Redemption thrills through the wide Universe : it echoes at thy doors ! Tremendous is the message, wondrous the good news, that God IS, and that Love interprets all; and that Forgiveness, the stream of holy equipoise, maintains Life’s balance eternally. Be glad, O soul, in the choric joy of all ! The Universe breaks forth into a mighty hymn of praise ! ”

THE movement of Life is the ever urgent endeavour to utter the one word, God ! Ultimately it will come, spontaneously, as a great paean of praise, bursting through, when time, as we know it, will be indrawn into eternity. Time presses on to its full and clear articulation of the Name of God. And then its work is done. The Joy of Life will be complete.

We know that this is true, prophetically so, because it stands true in individual experience. In the end God will be all in all, in living terms. For God is *Life*, and without His Word, His *expressing*, there is no reality. “ Without Him was not anything made which hath been made.” That which is yet to be, in time, is *now*, in truth and presentness, else it could never be. Nought can happen, or declare itself, in truth, other than that which *is*. The Future holds nought that is not, here and now, truly, in

the very present. "Faith," wrote the apostle, "is the *substance* of things hoped for ! " : faith, that interior and spiritual attraction, or principle, that is at once our hold upon God, and God's hold upon us. God is the great Reality, Truth for man at all times. The Future is lit up in the glow of the Present, wherein is the wondrous Fact of all the ages, the discovery of which is made possible now to individual experience.

Jesus proclaimed this truth in his epochal message, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." It is here, at hand, for man to enter in, the Fact accomplished now.

*O, fairer than the fairest scene,
O, higher than the highest joy,
O, sweeter than the sweetest sound,
Is Love, so great, for ever here !
O, deeper than the deepest woe,
O, surer than the surest troth,
O, stronger than the strongest foe,
Is Love, so wonderful, so near !*

—J. L. M. BAIN.

God is all in all, and God is Light. Where is the difference between time and eternity? God's Light is shaded. A shadow hovers over time, a heavy cloud, if we will. With its passing, time will end. Its half-light, its compromise of light and darkness, marks the field of experience.

It has closed upon life's *presentness*, and the result is the shadowed light of an inverted and separative consciousness.

The Wonder that is at Our Doors. 29

The mind of man cannot fathom the meaning, but the heart may apprehend it, leaping unto a great belief. It is Love. And so it will show, when the cloud we so much dread will prove to be "big with mercy."

Evil is the long shadow of the past stretching into the present, like a hand of wrath demanding its own.

In the twilight of his reflected consciousness, as it were a sleep condition, Life itself being separated, man gazes into a phantasmal world. And it is by its very nature (psychic and reflective) potently creative of all manner of illusion, partaking of the very appearance of reality to the mind within its compass—creations of fear but also of hope, of doom but also of promise. The soul draws in upon itself in very loneliness, finds itself at war with life, raises its defences, functions in a world of good and evil.

We can but express the thing that we see, inferring from truth in little to truth in great, for that Life is of one texture throughout. But the meaning goes deeper than we know, plumbing unknown depths.

We each have our part in the drama of a world's salvation.

Here is the wonder, that Love descends into man's separateness, bidding him arise and enter into his rightful inheritance. Therefore Love holds the meaning, more wonderful than can be known. "O the marvel," cried Francis, "that our Lord hath deigned to step down into this world of ours."

"Our pains," wrote Mother Julian, "shall be turned to worship and profit by virtue of His passion; that we perceive that we suffer not alone, but with Him, and see Him to be our ground, and that we see His pains and His

noughting passeth so far all that we may suffer, that it may not be fully thought.

"But I was troubled, 'How could all be well, for the great harm that is come by sin to the creature?'

'Our good Lord answered: 'I may, I can, I will, and I shall make all-thing well; and thou shalt see that all manner of thing shall be well! . . . At the last end thou shalt verily see it in fulness of joy.

"That which is impossible to thee is not impossible to Me; I will save my word in all-thing, and I shall make all things well.

"For this is the great Deed that our Lord shall do, in which Deed He shall save His word and He shall make all well that is not well."

"Wouldst thou learn thy Lord's meaning in this thing? Learn it well: Love was His meaning. Who showed it thee? Love. Wherefore showed it He? For Love. Hold thee therein and thou shalt learn and know more in the same. But thou shalt never know nor learn therein other thing without end. Thus was I learned that Love was our Lord's meaning."

Oh to think, after all, that the best is also the truest, that the highest we can imagine is the most real, and to know that "nought can separate us from the Love of God," for that truly there is no separation, and that whatsoever meets us in the way of experience, which at first may tend that way, will in the end have the very reverse effect, will indeed bring about the soul's utter surrender to that Love, yea, fling us into those arms divine with a gratitude that makes us become the very thing itself, when

The Wonder that is at Our Doors. 31

the soul will be 'knit to God,' in very texture interwoven and inseparable.

The purpose of experience is that man may consciously enter into the life of God, and know with the *tasting* of the spirit that in Him "we live and move and have our being." As our moments become God-filled, the spirit, which is the breath of Heaven, touches us caressingly with its sweetness and its strength. And the great Peace is ours, which brings stillness to the understanding.

*"O sweet the evening breeze that blows from yonder hill
of mossy braes,*

*And sweet the song that freshly flows, in Fender's rill
adown always.*

*But sweet, sweeter far the morning breeze that blows
from God's own holy Mount,*

*And sweet, sweeter far the song that breathes from
Love's own never-failing Fount."*

—J. L. M. BAIN.

Around us are the everlasting arms. The great Love fails us never. The meaning of experience is the birth of the child of God. Bitter is the cup that is given to us, but it turns to sweetness, for it spells deliverance from a fictitious existence, and our emancipation unto the reality, which is our life in God. And then will He give us, with His own hand, to partake of the cup of Life itself, which will be ours amid the daily experience. How great the joy then as we perceive all things transfigured, and praising God with their own divine meaning.

*" Sweet is the wine of the joy of Heaven,
Strong is the wine of the joy of God !
O, Thou great Joy ! "*

—J. L. M. BAIN.

In the Fourth Gospel, in reference to the deepest spiritual experience, Jesus uses the expression, " that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full " (or that your joy or blessedness may be fulfilled). It implies a full divine transaction in the personal life, which is released thereby from its limits. And, by inference, it is true, and more marvellously, of our corporate earth experience, of man in his solidarity, so that we may affirm that Heaven speaks to earth, Divine nature to human and terrestrial nature, in these same terms, that " My Joy may be in you," that earth's blessedness may be fulfilled.

As it happens in the small, so shall it transpire in the great, as in the atom, so in the cosmos, as in the human soul, so in life's corporate experience. The old prophet is aglow with the conception of such a time, when there will be a *living peace* upon the earth.

" In that day will I make a covenant with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground : and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle of the earth, and I will make my people to lie down safely.

" And it shall come to pass in that day, I will speak, saith the Lord; I will speak to the heavens, and they shall speak to the earth; and the earth shall speak to the corn, and the wine and the oil; and they shall speak to

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Jezreel (which word bears the significant meaning, ' God soweth,' implying that the ear of the earth-soul awakens to the voice of God).

" And I will say to them which were not my people, Thou *art* my people; and they shall say, *Thou art* my God." (Hosea ii, 18-23.)

The full experience cannot be while one dissonant note remains. Yet in the reality all things are in their rightful place; each soul has its own unique rightness in the providence of God. Were there a break at any point Heaven could not be.

After the night there comes the day. Even so God's Day is sure, the Coming of His Presence which will flood the world. It is the opening of our eyes to the perception of *that which is*. But all things tend ultimately to this, for that God is " mid-point " in every experience, to use the expression of the old English mystic, Lady Julian of Norwich, who in her vision continues :

" I saw truly that God doeth all-thing, be it never so little. And I saw truly that nothing is done by hap nor by adventure, but all things by the foreseeing wisdom of God : if it be hap or adventure in the sight of man, our blindness and our unforesight is the cause. . . .

" Wherefore me behoveth needs to grant that all-thing that is done, it is well done; for our Lord God doeth all. For in this vision the working of creatures was not shewed, but the working of our Lord God in the creature; for He is the Mid-point of all thing, and all He doeth. And I was certain He doeth no sin. And here I saw verily that sin is no deed (reality) : for in all this was not sin shewed.

" They (His works) are full good ; and all His doings

are easy and sweet, and to great ease bringing the soul that is turned from the beholding of the blind deeming of man unto the fair, sweet deeming of our Lord God. . . . I saw full surely that He changeth never His Purpose in no manner of thing, nor never shall, without end. For there was no thing unknown to Him in His rightful ordinance from without beginning. And therefore all-thing was set in order before anything was made, or it should stand without end, and no manner of thing shall fail of that point. For He made all things in fulness, of goodness, and therefore the blessed Trinity is ever full pleased in all His works.

“ And all this He shewed full blissfully, signifying thus : ‘ See ! I am God : see, I am in all being : see, I do all thing : see, I never lift mine hands off my works, nor ever shall, without end : see, I lead all-thing to the end I ordained it from without beginning, by the same Might, Wisdom and Love whereby I made it. How should anything be amiss ? ’ ”

It is our separation from God that has led to the disordered world we know, just as when light separates and darkness enters in. By our self-willing and self-thinking we raise walls and barriers, but both Life and Light require an open medium for their free expression.

Coming back from his wandering in search of the ideal burning within him, man returns to his own rightful circumstance. In the work before him he finds the joy of life. Hitherto it may have been unpalatable, for he may have felt as “ a square peg in a round hole.” But there is now this difference, that his eyes are open. He has the alchemical solvent that turns base metal into pure

The Wonder that is at Our Doors. 35

gold. And now he would not have it otherwise, for in the common things he catches meaning bigger than ever he had imagined. A Presence moves amid it all; where there was emptiness there is now fulness, there is intercourse with heavenly things. His spirit is present in the thing that he does, the work that is right at hand, in a self-abandon unto the great Love. His work becomes creative, in a living sense.

“ Could I see what lies around me as God sees it, I should learn

That its outward life is nothing, that its inward life is God.”

—EDMOND HOLMES.

When man begins to live with his spirit his life will no longer be divided; thought and feeling will blend in one, there will be no congestion. Life is the surge of the greater Life through the soul, in swift and eager flow. But it demands an uplifted consciousness through the pure service of self-surrender. Life comes to us with purpose to unfold the hidden meaning of Good. But it works out ill till we are alive to its significance. And here springs the meaning of mediatorial service, and the great opportunity of helping one another. But our best way of service is to cease to think of life in material terms but rather in spiritual, that man is now, in deed and truth, a spiritual being amid a world of spiritual reality. Hold to it; make a daily sacrament of the material and outward to achieve it! “ Bind thy sacrifice with cords

even unto the horns of the altar." The deeper the experience, the more wondrous His Truth will show.

*"Nay, Thou art fuller and sweeter,
The more deeply we drink of Thee,
And Thy fulness only waiteth
On our capacity."*

—J. L. M. BAIN.

When the day dawns, and into its splendour the shadows disappear, all life revives. The very air is vibrant and awake, and as the sunlight pours down, it is all shining with dancing little particles of light. The very presence of the life of "our brother the Sun" is in its outpouring.

Even so the very Life of God is present wherever there is the passage of His Love. Life may seem to stand apart, but everywhere there are interior openings unto the real. To know that God is "mid-point" of all that is and "mid-point" in everything: His Presence in our midst with emancipating power! His hand presses gently through man's experience to touch his blinded eyes with healing, that they may open to perceive the world of glory at our doors.

*"Then the cloud-rift broadens, spanning earth that's
under,*

*Wide our world displays its worth, man's strife and
strife's success:*

*All the good and beauty, wonder crowning wonder,
Till my heart and soul applaud perfection, nothing less."*

—BROWNING.

The Breath of the Spirit

*“ The breath of the one Spirit is Life;
Nor is there any life apart from that Life.
Every appearance other than that is a
similitude without substance—a reflection or
shadow, and not the reality. And thy life is
either a reflection or the truth ; and if not the
one then it is the other.
The One is infolded in the All, and all is
encompassed in the One.
All life is enclosed by that which is higher
than itself. And thy life encloses that which
is lower than itself. And salvation proceeds
from the higher to the lower.”*

THERE is a *living* breath, and it is the Life of the Ages. Fragrant and fresh as the breath of morning and of spring-time, it is the interior respiration of all that lives. It is the spiritual influx essential to the efflux of form. According to the breath, so is the form.

The breath stands contrary to that which we have called *thingness*, as life is contrary to death.

God breathed, and man became a *living* soul. We want more of that breath, and yet more, and ever more. “ Breathe on me, breath of God; fill me with life anew,” runs a well-known hymn.

The Breath of the Spirit is everywhere. It is the life-pulse of all that *is*. It is a *present* breath. By its influx and reception, its conscious indrawing, there is a quickening of the life-centres in man. There awakens the recognition and growing perception of the Presence of God, whereby man is truly man.

The breath is the life.

The Spirit breathed upon the waters : out of chaos rose the cosmos.

*“ Hesperus, with the host of Heaven, came,
And lo ! creation widened in Man’s view.”*

—BLANCO WHITE.

The Spirit breathes upon the waters : from the chaos of the soul springs the cosmos that is Man.

“ What is man, that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou visitest him ? ”

This is the visitation, when God breathes in man, and His own child comes forth, perceptive of the glory of being, the marvel of creation, the beauty and love divine. With swift response he comes, with word of praise, of joy, of love, answer of simplicity and truth.

Where would all the splendour be, if man had not the eyes to see ? There is no creation, truly, apart from Man ! Of all that is, the meaning is in man, Man in the highest, supremest degree, Who also is the Word, or expression of Love divine ! “ Without Him was not anything made that hath been made ! ”

Though we may not know what the breath is, we know what it does. It maintains the life, it is the life.

The Breath of the Spirit.

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“ O, Power of God, thou hast breathed thy breath into my soul.

O, Body of God, thou hast given thy strength unto my flesh.

O, Life of God, thou hast made me alive.”

—J. L. M. BAIN.

From the Latin we receive the word, spirit; from the Greek the word, pneuma ; with meaning of wind, or air, or breath ; partaking of fuller meaning as the Breath of God or Breath of Life, the Holy Breath or Holy Spirit; and also as the human *spirit*, and even as the *soul*. Through it we catch the implicit recognition that the breath is the life. There is the permeating breath, from the pulsing of the great Heart of All. Likewise, we might add, it is the breath of the central life that we know in ourselves which permeates our thoughts and our actions. And the nature and quality of the same is determined by the pulsing of our spirit, whether it be as from the true, or some fictitious centre.

“ The just and lawful sovereignty over men’s understanding, by force of truth rightly interpreted, is that which approacheth nearest to the similitude of the divine rule.”
(BACON.)

There are three breaths : the outer breath, which is of the body; the vital breath, or *prana*, to use the Hindu word holding this and even fuller meaning, which we might define as the *live* breath of the soul; the interior breath, which is of the spirit, and is creative. “ Many are called, but few chosen ” : it has only been the few, down the ages, who have been sensitive and open to this

spiritual inbreathing. It is they "who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." Few in the past there have been, but to-day have we not reason to believe that many are being made ready through deep experience to receive the great outpouring when it comes, to be baptised in the pleroma of God's Love, with spirits *alive*, with senses quickened, with eyes and ears and hearts, in rapture, awakening to Life made new.

*" Ah ! from the soul itself must issue forth
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
Enveloping the earth—
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element ! "*

—COLERIDGE.

" The wind bloweth where it listeth. Thou hearest the sound thereof, but thou canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth." It cometh from the unknown and passeth into the unknown. So is it with every one born of the Spirit. The outward understanding cannot fathom it. There is nothing outward and tangible in that operation; it is a *breathing*—but there is a difference, that all things are made new.

Truly this is in man essentially, and it has to awaken in him as from his own centre.

As the golden ray incorporates and mirrors the glory of the sun, so the Spirit in man incorporates and mirrors the glory of the Lord. The Centre is everywhere central, and it is through and amid our own experience that we may

find it. The purpose in our daily testing is that we may find this centre, that light therethrough may be released to illuminate our experience. So does the simple transaction of our daily life, the fulfilling of the duty that is right at hand, become a trysting with the Invisible. By our holding to the Real, with a hold that will not let it go, our consciousness so upraised, the hidden glory will break through, its light be refracted upon our circumstance, visible to those who have eyes to see. A clear word will sound, for those who have ears to hear, and it may be a wistful, haunting melody coming from another world, as it were Khrishna's flute, or it may be as a trumpet note, with challenge in it. But to the clear spirit it is the song of praise, and it cannot be other, man's praise before the Throne, through every chord that life presents.

*"Religion's all or nothing; it's no mere smile
O' contentment, sigh of aspiration, sir—
No quality o' the finelier tempered clay
Like its whiteness or its likeness; rather, stuff
O' the very stuff, life of life, and self of self."*

—BROWNING.

"God is Spirit," the Great Breath; not the outer breath, but the inner essential breath that is Life itself; and they who worship Him must do so in spirit and in truth. In spirit, that is, in the very breath of their life. That is the instant worship we may fulfil, the momentary transaction of the *livingness* that we are, in the passage of Love, as it circulates through stars and through souls.

In the Desert a Highway.

*"There's not the smallest orb that thou behold'st
But in its motion like an angel sings.*

* * * * *

Such beauty is in immortal souls."

The Breath of God, in its freshness and its fragrance, breathes through all that is. The little flower, nestling unselfconscious on its bed of green, has a beauty and fragrance all its own. Man's life is praise before the Throne. It is fragrant and beautiful in God's sight, and he is called to become that which he truly is. "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect," that is, reflect and express in your own life the One Life that is perfect everywhere. And this is man's truth, ever becoming more true, in perception and action, a poise of spirit, an interior breathing, God's breathing in him.

*"I looked beyond the world for truth and beauty :
Sought, found and did my duty."*

—BROWNING.

This spiritual breathing is probably what the apostle meant when he wrote beseeching his listeners to pray without ceasing. This interior breathing is man's most interior communion. Prayer is a breathing, which indeed the word *aspiration* indicates. It is the utterance of the sincere spirit. The desire of the heart is borne upon that breathing. The outward perplexity passes unto the solvent of its own interior meaning and purpose. There is, if we will, a hidden transaction, an interflowing of the inner and the outer, a drawing of the outward unto its rightful mean-

ing, a change or readjustment to, or re-polarization towards a spiritual rightness. And here is one unfailing answer to prayer, that it brings an approach nearer to God. Prayer is a breathing, and life a circulation purified by the breath. Every experience is assimilable, and has its part therein. Prayer also is our safety-valve of release, and oh, when life is difficult and experience tense, what a difference it may make !

*Oh what peace we often forfeit,
Oh what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer.*

The Breath, the full breath in man, is the evidence of the Kingdom of Heaven within. Its inspiration, or *afflatus*, is direct and true and present. This is man's partaking of the spiritual bread and wine, even as in the efflux or reciprocal outbreath there is the self-giving or offering of the very elements of his own essential being.

Man feeds on his own *proprium*, Boehme would say. The food that he needs depends upon *where* he is, the way of life in which he most truly functions. As the physical requires the physical, and the psychic the food of its own realm, as the spiritual needs its own spiritual or essential food. And this, as we have found, is the deep breath, and from it begins the process of regeneration, the great renewal or awakening of the *truth* of God in man. And from it there is the renewal of all the elements of man's nature, with healing unto the mind and unto the body.

In the Desert a Highway.

“ O, *Divine Essence*, I have drunk of thy sweetness.

O, *Holy Substance*, I have eaten of thy good.

O, *Bread of undying Life*, thy health is in me.

O, *Wine of the Strength of God*, thy joy is mine.

O, *Life-stream of the Holy One*, thou hast passed within
my bosom.”

—J. L. M. BAIN.

Man cannot remain satisfied with the husks of mere appearances, but must seek a *right* nutriment, or perish by reason of the hunger which at length he will feel. Continual disillusion will drive him at length to what is fundamental and bedrock. The seeming loses its apparent substance the moment it is touched, and dissolves away.

“ *The One remains, the many change and pass.*”

The God vision is redemptive. Before that Presence the mists will disappear. Man will arise victor amid his circumstance when he realizes that everything is of God and speaks of Him. “ Day unto day uttereth that speech, and night unto night showeth (discloses) that knowledge. There is no speech or language where that voice is not heard.”

When man is utterly simple, his word will be utterly true, and then he will not be subject to influences, but will be able to use his mind as an instrument for good. The breath of the Spirit will touch his thought and bless it.

From the breath steals the fragrance; from the breath springs the song. The image of the harp with seven strings bespeaks our human life, when touched by the Spirit. Then indeed will man forth-breathe the mystic utterance of Love.

*“Thou hast made me alive in the inward parts,
And thou art recreating my flesh every hour;
Night and day thou art nourishing this form by thy
living Breath.”*
—J. L. M. BAIN.

Oh to feel the Breath within the breath !

How close is the living Breath, how near is God !

Oh that by the divine gift of imagination we might reconcile or adjust ourselves to that which is, only more deeply so, and in the midst of adverse appearances be quiet and confident, knowing that were the full meaning ours we would have cause to rejoice, therefore exercising faith, being responsive to that true word repeated in us. This requires no force of will, but the quiet concentration of belief, the mental and spiritual resting in the greater Will which works only good. Our peace will be the response of the deep Breath therein. We should bear the proud spirit of the child of God when the clouds are darkest.

*“Thou of all consolers best;
Thou the soul’s delightful guest;
Dost refreshing peace bestow.”*

Lift up your Hearts

*“Awake into the divine significance of thy life.
Arise unto thy being’s truth.
Immortal Life enfolds thee, loves thee, yea,
broods o’er the cradle of thy being.
Thou didst think thyself the child of nature,
doomed to servitude and to death.
Thou wast aware of death and not of life.
Thy sad existence was the grave of Being.
But now is Life risen for thee !
How wrapt wert thou in ignorance, knowing
only a separate good, and condemning thy
brother !
Now dost thou recognise but one Life, the
All-Good, and lovest thy brother.
And thy soul sings in the knowledge that
there is no death.”*

THE whole wonderful thing is present, if man but knew. And therefore he may be glad, and be at peace; therefore he may be quiet in that rich consciousness, having the perception of the deeper thing in the midst of every outward happening. There is a quiet knowledge in simplicity. Let him do what he can, meeting the immediate issue, fulfilling, with vision, that which lies before. Then when the storms are loosened he may say with the Psalmist, “I will lay me down and rest, for it is the Lord which maketh me to dwell in safety.”

The Spirit of God is not agitated. It has its springing

in the Stillness, which is the Great Peace, and there is no uncertainty there. The Stillness or Quietude is the pure *livingness*, sovereign in itself, the God-consciousness that maintains order and balance everywhere, and is essential in all that is.

The Spirit breathes within, and the living principle is present there, and the divine Law operative. That which is of God cannot be affected or diminished by outward events, though amid the illusion we may question, we may tremble thinking that all is lost, and in some moment of despair imagine that the gospel of the Love of God to man is being shattered on the rocks of unbelief. Oh believe that, amid all, His Purpose works, silent, irresistibly!

*“ God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform ;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.”*

—COWPER.

Man will emerge from his distraction to discover that Life is good, that Goodness and Truth look down upon him from above, and that all is well. He sees that things which seemed meaningless, and apart from the soul were indeed so, lead ultimately to a clear issue, the emancipation of his spirit. It is a breaking through, sometimes a crashing through, from a nightmare of illusion. The whole world responds to such joy. The stars dance in the heavens. All life has its part in the birth of a soul. God has come to earth again.

The light was there all the time, yes, and the glory,

but it was not realised. "The light shone amid the darkness, but the darkness apprehended it not."

God has never left the world that He has made. And to those who have made the discovery has He imparted the right to become sons and daughters of God.

After darkness, light: it is the destined order. After the night, Day! The clouds of darkness seem to amass in their thickest before the dawn. Marvellous the background of contrast for the glory of the sunrise! In the soul, after the dark hour, there is likewise the ecstasy of dawning. And with humanity may it not be even so? After death, there is Life; after sleep, the awakening! Beyond the illusion, the Reality! Beyond the self-hood (with its separation), the Christ-consciousness! After the dark night, a divine release! And all is in the unfolding of perception, the opening of the eye of vision. "We are led to believe a lie," wrote William Blake, "when we see with, not through, the eye."

At length we will perceive the world as God made it, as God sees it.

"When God made the World, He made the Heavens, and the Heaven of Heavens, and the Angels, and the Celestial Powers. These also are parts of the World; so are also all those infinite and eternal treasures that are to abide for ever. Neither are these, some here, and some there, but all everywhere, and at once to be enjoyed. The WORLD is unknown, till the Value and Glory of it is seen: till the Beauty and Serviceableness of its parts is considered. When you enter into it, it is an illimited field of variety and beauty, where you may lose yourself in the multitude of wonders and delights. But it is a happy

loss to lose oneself, and to find God in exchange, which we then do when we see Him in His Gifts, and adore His Glory."

"You can never enjoy the world aright, till the Sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens, and crowned with the stars; and perceive yourself to be the sole heir of the whole world, and more than so, because men are in it who are every one sole heirs as well as you. Till you can sing and rejoice and delight in God, as misers do in gold, and kings in sceptres, you never enjoy the world."

"This is a lesson long enough, which you may be all your life in learning, and to all eternity in practising. *Be sensible of your wants, that you may be sensible of your treasures.*"

—THOMAS TRAHERNE.

"What is it that you wish?" said Jesus to the blind man. "Lord," he answered, "that I may receive my sight!"

Our times are in His hands!

And oh, wonderful, that this should be the word of an old yet new message now being unfolded, to the amazement of those who have hearts to discern!

"In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord.

"And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt" (ISAIAH xix, 19).

It seems more than likely that the prophet here refers to the pyramid of Gizeh, generally known as "The Great

Pyramid," doubtless the greatest monument of the ancient world; and if what is declared by certain investigators from Professor Piazzzi Smyth onwards may be borne out and substantiated, in the marvellous wisdom of the detail of its structure, it may truly be spoken of as a bible in stone, and, as the prophet has it, "an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt"—and the word "Egypt" need not be regarded merely geographically, but, in a mystical sense, the world as it is *to-day*.

It affirms, in words of stone, the working of the divine principle amid outward things and human experience. It enforces the standard of truth amid the actual. It is primarily mystic, and not apocalyptic. That is, it is only incidentally apocalyptic. The message is not there. The message is of God and His Glory, of the power of God working in the lives of men, and that *our times are in His Hands*.

It teaches us that the great *fact* of life, the one thing so often left out of account, though it is ignored, is not displaced thereby. "Behold I stand at the door, and knock!" In the due time the *Fact* will declare, though it be uninvited. The fire we play with spreads beyond our control. The causes we set in motion speed to their issue, with reaction of good or ill, within the one Law of the great encompassing Life. A Day will come that cannot be put off, when the balance sheet must be brought up, and the accounts cleared. A word will surely arise from the heart of Life whose touch will scorch that which is evil, but cleanse that which is good. It will be an alembic in which the dross is separated from the pure gold. All things come up before the bar of MAN. After that, there

will be no *pros* and *cons* to be argued, for all will be said. And unto this same judgment will our civilization come. But how poor it may seem when told in terms of truth ! What prayers and tears have gone forth as witness against it !

“ For the stone which the builders rejected must become the headstone.”

In this wise the message is apocalyptic, for evil has an end : it harbours in itself the seed of its own destruction. It is incidental in the great experience, and is permitted for the unfolding of a loftier purpose, the glory of God, the dawning of Light in the soul and in humanity, and it is the Love of God.

*“ These things shall be / a loftier race
Than e’er the world hath known shall rise
With flame of freedom in their souls
And light of knowledge in their eyes.
Nation with nation, land with land,
Unarmed shall live as comrades free;
In every heart and brain shall throb
The pulse of one fraternity.
There shall be no more sin, no shame,
Though pain and passion may not die :
For man shall be at one with God
In bonds of firm necessity.”*

—J. A. SYMONDS.

“ This is the dream of my heart,” wrote Brother James,
“ this is the vision of my love.”

“ A fair and tender form, I see thee as thou art in the

mind of the Eternal. O form of wondrous delicacy and of great beauty, form upbuilt by the indwelling divinity, created by the Spirit of Life, fashioned by the wisdom of the master-mind of the universe, form beautified by the Godhood in thee, dignified by the divine glory that permeates thee, how fair thou art to the vision of my love!

"Yea, lofty art thou in the spiritual degree. On thy head I see the glory of the highest wisdom, in thy heart I scent the sweetness of the rose of the divine love. In all thy members I can see the type of angelhood. Thy right hand is apt to learn, and thy left hand is skilful to perform all the uses of good. Thy feet are swift to run in the service of thy brother. Thy whole body lives in the divine impulse. It is quickened by the will to bless; and this is thine abiding will."

All tends unto this end, the purpose of God. And the main significance of that ancient word, writ in stone, is mystic and occult, the latter only truly understood by reference to the former. It is the principle working in terms of *life* and of *experience*. Purpose works through all to its predetermined end, for the beginning and the end are one. We are told that all things work together for good to the lover of God. Even so, in the wider cosmic field, all things work together for God. The soul may dwell in peace in the knowledge that God *is*. The Spirit, outward flowing through the vales of experience, to the confines thereof, makes its return in love, in the human form divine.

The mystic process, figuratively written, is timeless, though its impress is in time. The soul's progress is represented, with projection into the cosmic, and the one is

typical of the other. The end is the experience of God, the incoming of His Presence, and this applies individually and corporately. What then is prefigured is of truth, not, in the outward degree, of experience, though the latter naturally follows from the crises of the former. That there should be outward reactions to spiritual crises is inevitable, but the nature of such reactions cannot be determined, except approximately by reference to what has gone before. And yet this need not necessarily be so, for an incalculable factor may enter in, which is the Love of God, finding its fulcrum in the life and experience of those in whom the New Birth has taken place, those who look unto God and perceive the working of His love and power in and through all that is, spite of that which seems. In them is the quiet stillness and the waiting, and they will behold the working of the wonder of His Love. As the light spreading through the darkness from the east to the west in the dawn of Day, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.

The soul of humanity will emerge at length into the Presence Chamber of the King, meaning the immediate recognition of God, at length the dominating factor in consciousness, though hitherto left out of account, and, through ignorance, ignored. And the *sine qua non* is an utter humility as regards the self-hood or the separative life, by which alone man may become a little child, and so enter the heaven of Love. And this finds utterance in stone in the preceding narrow passage wherein a man would have to pass through on his hands and knees. The pointing then is not necessarily to tribulation, but rather to the spiritual experience, however it may hap—and there

is always a better way—but this is sure, that there must be a breach in the fortifications of the ego—and it may be a collapse through fear, or a surrender through Love.

“ Who may abide the day of His coming, or who shall stand when He appear?

“ The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple.

“ But unto those who fear My Name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings.

“ Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” (Words from the prophet Malachi.)

Therefore a Fellowship is arising, which is of the Kingdom. Every day there is a closer linking among those who are of good will, a drawing together in ways that have hitherto not seemed possible. There will be felt the presence of Love divine in a corporate experience, and interchange in ways of helpfulness of all that which is good. May it not be a nucleus of what may prove a vehicle of the holy Love in a time of greatest need?

There are indeed seeds sown which would eventuate in disaster, were it not for another growth germinating and fructifying in goodness, which may mitigate such disaster, and over-rule it to higher ends. This true growth is primary, while the other is secondary, though it appear so monstrous that it usurp the first place.

Jesus spake a parable of the kingdom of heaven, how a man sowed good seed in a field, and an enemy came at night, and sowed darnel. And when he told his master what had happened, his master answered, “ Let them both

grow till the time of reaping, and then you may sift the wheat from the tares."

Therefore is it permissible to say to those of good will, "Lift up your hearts, for your redemption draweth nigh!"

The message calls us to the truth that is hid in ourselves, our awareness of God, by reason of which nought—neither principalities or powers, that which has been or that which may be, or life in its similitude, or death—can hinder or separate us from the Love of God, which we enter through the Christ-consciousness, which is the door of our self-naughting, of our sonship in God. So man may step into freedom, conscious of that divine Love searching through his experience.

When He comes His foothold must be in our individual experience. He seeks to achieve a definiteness in our lives. Our purpose is to win His heaven in that point of Being which is our soul, to transact our daily experience in the presentness of His Love, imparting, in the will of blessing, of that which we are, in the immediate action, giving of our real self, our whole self, our best self, in the thing that we are now doing, moment by moment, so serving, so worshipping, so enjoying. The light is all the sweeter, the vision more glorious, the darker the back-ground upon which it breaks.

*"To-day the sun struck to my Spirit's depths,
To-day is crowned with light, with light is shod,
To-day I saw her, and she smiled to me,
To-day I believe in God!"*

In the Desert a Highway

" Shall we not then give up all that is false in us, the false valuations and standards, the myriad little illusions of separateness, the absurd little thoughts of antagonism, when all the time we are truly bound by indissoluble bonds of good, in Life, in Love ?

A wind of moaning blows from the east to the far west, and the desolation of great agony breaks through the turbid waters of human nature, rising with a cry unto heaven : where compassion is.

Love descends from heaven and walks on earth.

' O comfort ye, comfort ye my people.'

Know ye the Lord He is gracious : a boundless infinite good, eternal benediction.

The Love of God is a living light :

The dark of evil may not abide therein.

Our essential being is even so : hence evil gives rise in us to pain that sears and burns.

To KNOW the truth is to be free.

' Come ye now unto the waters of healing.' "

THE testing of the Spirit is here. It is no arm-chair belief; nor is it witnessed in the mental questioning or acceptance of what has been, or what may be. It is in the region of the heart. We may be intensely interested in religion, or

have nailed our minds to certain dogmas or doctrines, and have it not. It is not so much in the correct thinking of the brain as in the right feeling of the heart. Our mind may soar on wings of speculation touching the origin of things, of the mystery of life and of death, or of the geniture of the soul, and its ascent through many spheres to its ultimate home and union, and yet that desideratum may not be ours. But on the other hand we may have great mental perplexity, and yet have that experience, which, deeper than words may express, is the aliveness of God in the soul. It finds its satisfaction in simplicity. Therefore Jesus said :—

“ I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.” (Luke x, 21.)

It is to be found in *truth*, truth working through the mind and the heart. By truth we mean of course our own truth, our own *rightness*. And the significance is here, that it is *present*, and to be wrestled for here and now. Truth, which is of the spirit, ever seeks a practical outlet. It is definite, and in this is the token of the true mysticism, in contrast to the quasi-mysticism which rests and is satisfied amid the indefinite and the abstract. Mysticism, rightfully understood, is the vision of Truth in the context of present experience; it is the vital recognition of the eternal amid the transitory and the seeming.

“ *There is small chance of Truth at the goal where there is not a child-like humility at the starting-point.*”

—COLERIDGE.

The word "sincere," the root-meaning of which probably is "without wax or veneer," has an interesting and suggestive origin, which carries us back to the ancient Roman world, when the vendors of the little household gods, in a manner not unfamiliar in our own age, would sometimes hide the cracks or other faults with a covering of wax, that they might be unobserved. Therefore the wise householder at length would say that she would receive one only that was *sine cera*, or without wax.

And so it has come to mean that we should be ourselves, without make-believe or veneer. It implies a singleness of spirit, our personal truth behind our utterance and our action.

Therefore sincerity leads us unto the greater Truth, when its own deeper perception awakens. Without sincerity there can be no real progress at all, nor can there be that surrender which is man's yielding to God, when Love Divine gives of Itself to him. At this point there is a spiritual recognition or interior knowing that One has passed this way before, and planted the Standard of the Kingdom of Heaven on this earth of ours, for us to rally there. It demands our self-surrender where that standard is, and it happens to be just where we are.

It is set in the midst of our earth, central to our unit life, our communal life, our national life, and the greater life of humanity, as it is central also in the great cosmos.

"O Lord and Master of us all !

Whate'er our name or sign,

We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,

We test our lives by Thine."

—WHITTIER.

It is no mere witness to a name, but the carrying out the work that He began. Love is the witness, which is the passion of God in the soul: Love that seeketh not its own.

Man could not enter into Life were it not the very nature of Love to give of itself fully and freely without reservation.

Love has personal interest in the whole of life, and is urgent to win beauty and joy wherever she treads, to see her own reflection there. For life is a mirror, ultimately to reproduce the values of heaven on earth. They are here, waiting to be revealed, truth's hidden radium uncovered.

*“ ’Twould ring the bells of Heaven
The wildest peal for years,
If Parson lost his senses
And people came to theirs,
And he and they together
Knelt down with angry prayers
For tamed and shaggy tigers,
And dancing dogs and bears,
And wretched, blind pit ponies,
And little hunted hares.”*

—RALPH HODGSON.

The battle-ground is present, and the arena is here. It is a warring of spirit with flesh, with principalities and powers that meet us in concrete terms and with concrete names. And yet it is of the real with the unreal. It is in this manner that Life emphasizes its resistance, and in the guise of the dark angel thwarts man's aspiration,

till he comes at length to his own, and he discovers Love's purpose in his life.

*"Awake ! O sleeper of the Land of Shadows, awake !
expand !*

*I am in you, and you in Me, mutual in Love Divine ;
Fibres of love from man to man thro' Albion's
land."*

—WILLIAM BLAKE.

Life, which opens to us in thought or vision, leads us into experience, and meets us in contact there, in what William Blake calls " the minute particular " or point of definiteness. God works with pencil and compass to make life definite. By the process of life, thought tends ever to its own expression. Our dreams are not ours till they are actualized. If we would have direct contact with Life we must meet it at the point where it touches us, and meet it rightly.

It is in the order of Life's perfectness that all things tend to a single point, and essential power gathers there. Here is the mystery of the infinite, that divine Love and Power is present at every point of being as if it were there alone. The Whole focalizes the point with penetrating meaning. As the universal order is implicit in the atom, so a greater spiritual purpose is implicit in our human experience. In other words, we are solving the greater problem by our winning of truth in the matter that is before us. A full meaning is nestling, as it were hidden, in the midst of his experience, for man to win.

*" If God . . . giveth not Himself
Eternally for man, man could not exist ; for Man is Love
As God is Love : every kindness to another is a little
death
In the Divine Image ; nor can man exist but by Brother-
hood."*

—WILLIAM BLAKE.

The point of definiteness, in a present experience, opens to its rightful centre, its hidden truth, but man, shunning the issue, afraid of its deeper meaning, turns aside to that which is indirect and second-hand. His life is tossed between the impulse of his fear and his desire. He flies the thing he seeks, until the circle of his outer experience is complete.

*" Halts by me that footfall :
Is my gloom, after all,
Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly ?
' Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,
I am He whom thou seekest !
Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me ! ' "*

We have to come back to *where we are* before we find. There is no revealment except just where we are, and in the degree to which Life has become *present* to us. It must needs come through the channel of our own truth, and in the place of our own experience. We may search the heavens, scan the far horizons, or turn with longing eyes to America or to India expecting it, but we will never find it so : for, as Jesus said, " The kingdom of Heaven

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is within you." Were it to come outwardly it would avail not, nor could we recognize it, unless first our inward eye is open to perceive.

Our perception is limited by our consciousness. But if our experience is true, and we wrestle with it; yes, and will not rest, nor be satisfied until it is greatly true, and rings true from centre to circumference, not merely to the outward but to our inward testing, the gates of an inner revealment will open, for here is the place of the joining of the waters where man wrestles with the angel of his spirit.

In our immediate experience we may touch the Divine Immediate, when the greatest thing may happen : the day-break of the soul. The dark night is severed by a shaft of golden light. There is a place of power, and of healing, to be found in that which is nighest at hand. It may be a Jordan water, a Siloam pool, a Jabbok ford. The tincture is to be found in the herb that is most common, wrote Boehme.

It is indeed the pressing unto true values, the unfolding vision of That which is forever about us, and meeting us in all our ways.

" Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. . . .

" And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel : for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked *him*, and said, Tell *me*, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore

is it *that* thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there."

It is by our essential truth that we prepare the way of His Coming, the way of His strength.

"Prepare in the desert," sang the great poet-prophet, "a highway for our God." It is man's privilege to make ready the path, to pioneer through the country of experience, amid untrodden ways by aspiration and effort bringing life to control, till He cometh with fulfilling word.

It is through the entry of lives made ready that He cometh, to make conquest in a larger field.

"The Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

And the Gentiles shall come to thy light.

* * * * *

Lift up thine eyes . . . and see."

Herein we may realize the fuller meaning of our experience, even as it is met in truth, for then it ceases to be separative, and, in its own degree, the hidden Purpose expresses.

This Purpose is implicit in each child of earth, and in its fulness is His Coming. We are in it, and concerned in it, and it concerns us. What its meaning and nature is, we have to find out: it is no mere external thing touching us from without. It takes in not merely our human life, but the whole of life, drawing unto itself all being in a sweet awakening. As the incoming ocean presses into the creeks and inlets of the land, so the Great Love is rising, to press into and flood our human hearts.

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*" We ! what do we see ? each a space
Of some few yards before his face ;
Does that the whole wide plan explain ?
Ah, yet consider it again ! "*

—ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH.

" There are," wrote Brother James, " times of clear-seeing, feeling or perceiving of holy Truth ; and we know when these times are. They can only be when all is quiet in the soul, and when the voice of God alone speaks there."

Man's function, with meaning fuller than he knows, may well be typified by John the Baptist, the way-preparer, even as he rises through experience to the growing recognition of the One. The lamp is prepared for the light, and man for the divine illumination.

*" No narrow heart is a shrine of the Lord Divine,
He, who is Love, saith ALL, not a part must be mine;
Thou whose large heart all with tender love embraceth,
Thou in that heart doth shelter Him who all createth."*

—JACOPONE DA TODI.

It is man's evolutionary conquest, and it is primarily in himself, by reason of that same hidden power working within.

*" Whoso wickedness seeks, may even in masses obtain it
Easily. Smooth is the way, and short, for nigh is her
dwelling.*

*Virtue, Heaven has ordained, shall be reached by the
sweat of the forehead."*

—HESIOD.

Let but the light shine, and the shadows pass.

It is because the nations know not freedom that they fight for it, as if it were a matter of external possessing. And, indeed, man can never, by carnal weapons, enforce truth and establish the eternal verities. The conspiracy of the outward can never disturb a truth divinely established. The moment the clouds sever, the light will break forth more clearly than before.

Light does not take to itself weapons of shadow to dispel the shadows. It manifests itself, and they are not. So is it with freedom. Let Freedom but show *itself*, and at that moment the power of the adversary ceases. It is because the nations are not free that they plunge in war.

Freedom is of the spirit, and the true warfare is spiritual, and victory is achieved, first within, then without.

Were Britain free she would arise with vision, and her sons and daughters would go forth with energy and adventure, and emancipate all the sons and daughters of the earth.

Seeing man immortal and of eternal destiny, the causes of war would vanish, the deep solemnity would quaver, and end in the laughter of a little child. From the Church this truer vision might come were she a little child!

The passion of Life strives for the fulfilment of this in man, that he drop the outer attachments, clings, bondages, and as a little child, empty of all, run into the arms Divine.

" Oh it is night, but the trees laugh in ecstasy in the motion of the cool-breathing wind. In the dark of my soul methinks I hear thy word low-whispering unto me,

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and I laugh by reason of the joy with which thou fillest me. I know that all is well, for mine eyes have caught the first faint golden sign of a radiant Dawn."

—"THE GOLD OF DAWN."

*"Give me my scallop-shell of quiet,
My staff of faith to walk upon
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,
My bottle of salvation.
My gown of glory, hope's true gage;
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage."*

—SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

"Him who is not detained by mortal adhesions, who walks in this world yet not of it,

Taking part in everything with equal mind, with free limbs and senses unentangled—

Giving all, accepting all, using all, enjoying all, asking nothing, shocked at nothing—

*Whom love follows everywhere, but he follows not it—
Him all creatures worship, all men and women bless."*

—EDW. CARPENTER.

The Way of His Strength

*“ Be not too narrow in conception, dwelling
upon the detail to the exclusion of the whole;
But acquire a clear perspective that gathers
in thy brother with thyself,
For Love doth make thee one with every soul :
Thy brother’s good and ill thy very own ! . . .
Thy brother then whom thou meetest :
Touch him not with a reservation of what has
been or what might be,
Nor pass him lightly by with a mind pre-
occupied,
With a light despatch, intent upon the some-
thing else,
Thine own blindness proving,
Indicating that truly thou seest him not, nor
dost hear the Word within his word :
But with courage and with love, meet thou
him face to face, for Love hath eyes that see,
Communing with the shining One within thy
brother ! ”*

LET us affirm, first of all, that God is omnipotent and omnipresent : in other words, that He is All in All; in all, through all, and over all. Therefore is He also the LIFE, the POWER, and the VICTORY. GOD IS, and therefore truly all is said.

Secondly, let it be truly understood that our life is in

God. "Be thou found in me, O my God," prayed St. Francis. God is in man, waiting to be found. God is in man, even as man, *in his truth*, is in God. In Him we live and move and have our being—in His LIFE, in HIS BEATIFIC LIFE. In BEATIFIC LIFE, then, we live and move and have our being. As the current in the Ocean, so man's life in the Life divine.

The argument is unavoidable, but do we love our brother?

Does the *life*, this reality, outflow from our own hidden springs? Or is our life drawn and rent in mental conflict, making perpetual separation?

Does the Trinity of Being, inseparable and equal, declare and make known itself in man: man, who is God's little universe or cosmos? Is LIFE illuminant in him, looking unto, and revealing God; looking into, and revealing the soul; looking toward, and revealing our brother?

There is a break upon the Truth. For as, mentally, man stands separate, the mind reflects, as a mirror, and in its measure, inverts the TRUTH. "We see through a glass darkly," said the apostle. Were he not separate, he would, like unto a burning-glass, focalize the TRUTH, and God would be revealed, as William Blake expresses it, "in the particular."

But though his mind stands separate from the TRUTH, man's heart feels towards it, for its innermost beat is there. And truly enough the ancient mystic wrote that the heart of man is restless till it finds its rest in God. The heart-beat is a pulse of pain because of that separation. And it is the same, only more so, of the world-soul. There is the surge of pain down the ages, the waves

dashing upon the shore, a longing and an anguish, a broken aspiration, the thwarted effort.

And it is because the heart affirms that which the mind denies, that war arises in our human sphere. Man is at odds within himself, and in the world-soul the same civil war has a larger projection.

Nor can man overcome merely through experience, for experience tends ever to repeat itself, even as life recapitulates itself through all the degrees of being. The seed brings forth fruit, and the fruit produces seed according to its own nature. And thus we have the circle of recurrence, from good only good resulting, and evil unto evil with its bitter reacting. The wheel would pursue its way unendingly were it not for the cry of the heart, and in consequence, a rending of experience, and the awakening of faith.

The cry of the heart is for That which it ever feels towards, and without which it could not have life at all; its Truth, its God. And this is its attainment, its happiness, its realizing of the Kingdom on earth. "To know and be known of God": this is the Life of the Ages. Therefore man's longing for a Saviour, who, through the medium of human experience, would reveal this blessed thing.

It is not merely a human, but a planetary need, for man's aberration embraces the planet, in that he is the soul of the planet.

"He came in weakness": this we read, implying the sowing of the seed of the Kingdom, the fruit of which is the realizing of the Life Divine. The seed was the Truth, bearing with it the mandate of the Divine, which can

never return void, though darkness gather round unto seemingly greater darkness. The seed falls into the ground and dies to itself thereby, releasing the hidden Life, which springs forth and unfolds, bringing forth fruit after its kind; reproducing itself, till at length "the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."

"He comes in strength ! " As the one thought implied the sowing of the seed, this infers the gathering of the harvest, the incoming, inflowing planetary realization, when the time is ripe and the conditions are ready for this spiritual reception. And this, in truth, is the recognition and discovery—in consciousness—of that which *is*, and has been all the time. The very Earth will awaken as from a long sleep, and the spirit of Love will surge through all her frame. "In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert . . . and the ransomed of the Lord shall return . . . with songs, . . . and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

And this is the knowledge, the discovery of which spells *redemption*, that the DOOR is open wide.

Man will make the amazing realization that the Kingdom of Heaven is *HERE*, and that God is *PRESENT*. And even as *NOW*, so it has been, and so it will be. As it was in the *BEGINNING*, it is now, and ever shall be. The world of His creation is maintained in the presentness of His Love. When the gates of consciousness uplift the great waters will flood in.

We speak of His Coming as if it were from another world to our world. In one sense it is so, but only because of man's closed perceptions. But truly it is the emergence of *THAT WHICH IS through THAT WHICH SEEMS*.

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It is preceded by dynamic changes, illustrative of a restless spirit, becoming desperate through calamity and collapse, as man awakens to his need, demanding **THAT**, and, at length, only **THAT**. Swiftly the prayer will bring the answer, and man will *know the truth*, and his spirit will relax. And he will be as a little child, with the angels around him. And their song will be the echo of his joy.

But in the interval is a great agony, for that the unreal has to pass before the Real can be. That which takes place without is but a representation of what is happening and will happen, yea, of what must happen within the soul, unless the word of the Master-Builder is heeded, that we build wisely and well. For a testing duly comes, and that which is insecure will crumble before it. And there is one foundation well and truly laid.

There will be a collapse of false foundations that the **REAL FOUNDATION** may be uncovered. And this must needs be. The great tribulation is here : where the false is regarded as the true, and it is shattered, and there seems to be nothing left. It is where life rests on a false security which collapses.

Thus according to man's perceptions will be the reaction.

But to the Lover, what will it be? Will it not be as the coming of the Beloved? Will it not come as a fulfilment, in beatific vision, when the waters will pulse toward the Centre with ecstasy?

When man sees these things taking place around, let him take heed to his own ground, where the issue is for him. Life does not progress through general reform, but by individual conquest and attainment. The strength behind all reform is in man's spiritual awakening. The

pioneers lead the way, for they have faced difficulties beforehand, and wrestled with principalities and powers; and they prepare the path for the many to journey through. Theirs to "strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees, and to say to them that are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, fear not.'"

When we think of God as our Father, can we not rest secure in His providential and parental care, for that He knoweth our needs even before we can give expression to them? Are we, like little children, able to be care-free, because of that *knowing* which does not even question? "What parent is there, if his child ask for bread, will give him a stone?" A failure would violate something that is fundamental in the child. And will not our heavenly Father much more provide?

We pass out of His direct ministry when we turn to outward things for support, and, in our action, worship the symbol, as if the source of power and good were there. And, within the unreal, we build our little separate structures. And God becomes an abstraction. There is no stone in the building that belongs to Him. We are lost to the sense of His presentness.

But this cannot always be, for what has beginning must also have an end.

God agonizes to emerge out of an abstraction into the definiteness of a present experience, not merely in the individual but in the general life of man. He seeks to make His foothold, and He will.

And the experience comes, at the right time, for every one to go through. But blessed is the one who has heard, who has felt, who has sought it, of his own. It is the

bringing of Truth, nay, of Life itself, to its issue, within the incidence of a personal experience.

If we say, "God is our utter good, and God is all," can we realize it with *all* our heart, and gently, wisely, yet decisively remove our external proppings, resting in that consciousness; be quiet and still, though the whole world seems to slip from under our feet?

His coming is the inescapable recognition of that which *is*. He descends through the heaven of our human aspiration, and His definiteness will be His manifested Presence on the earth, in that which will be taking place. The support of Truth when it reveals will be in hearts and lives made ready; otherwise nought could stand. And because the meaning is good and not evil, for that God loves His creation, the way in which His Hand will declare itself will duly appear.

That which is good will flow to its own Centre, and the very resistance of evil will tend to bring this about. A blending and a fusion will take place, a more blessed consciousness transpire, and the Lord of Love reveal in a corporate vehicle. It will be as one all radiant within, When this happens, as happen it must, even as foreshadowed, the perfect Love will be manifest, the Word of Power spoken, and before that Word, in its very utterance, the tempestuous waters will be subdued and stilled.

But now the word is urgent that we prepare ourselves for that which comes, that we may win God, or shall we say our own *truth*, in and through our present experience.

Do we ever think of pain in our individual life as incident to, and precursive of, His coming? It is the re-

action through man of That which is *central* in him, to maintain and be Itself. The hidden Life, or essentiality, or, as we have called it, the living Fact, must in the deeps ever maintain its poise. its rightful polarity, its nicety and exquisiteness of balance, central amid infinite environs of Love and Life. This reality presses through to embrace our human experience. Nor can the soul find rest until it kneel and yield before this central Fact.

Would we seek those states in which the Life expresses : health, beauty, richness? Better strive for the living thing itself, as we do which all else will duly come. It is the potency of all there is. It is the kingdom we are enjoined to win, expressing this *alive* Truth in the life around, in the thing that we do, that it may work in and through us as an energizing leaven.

We are called to a closer fellowship, that Love may have its supreme chance in the life of man. It is that we may more radically practise the thing we believe.

He comes with freedom, and He calls us to His side.

It is a call for sacrifice, it is a call for service; it is a call for us to see life as with the eyes of God, that Love may outflow, and His Word of utter good become our word, our *truth* finding expression in and through us.

Our look into Truth, which is realization, must correspond and balance with our look into Life, which is service.

*“ Out of the shadows of night
The World rolls into light ;
It is daybreak everywhere.”*

LONGFELLOW.

Rejoice and Be Glad

*“ Over all and in all and through all is one Life,
 a vivid pulsing life ;
 Eternal life traversing everything ;
 Purity of Life, purity of Love,
 All filling, all controlling, all fulfilling.
 Nor is any LIFE apart from That ;
 And thy life, O man, is not distinct from
 That, nor separate.
 In so far as thou truly livest, that Life abides,
 doth live, in thee.
 It is LIFE, in all and through all,
 Touching all, yea, touching all so intimately ;
 An intimate Presence of Love,
 An intimate Presence of Truth ;
 It holds thee, it enfolds thee.
 It is behind thy good, it flows into all thy
 actions ;
 River of music, fragrant melody.
 O to know the good will that sleeps in every
 living thing :
 That is highest bliss ! ”*

THE universe is tuned to gladness, not to sorrow. The quality of life has a present virtue in it, when channelled through the vehicle of joy. Sorrow takes a step back to

contemplate Life's Mystery, dropping as it were on one knee, but Joy a step forward, arms uplifted in praise. The deepest note is Joy.

"There is," wrote William Law, "no state of mind so holy, so excellent, and so truly perfect, as that of thankfulness to God. . . . For it is certain that whatever seeming calamity happens to you, if you thank and praise God for it, you turn it into a blessing. Could you therefore work miracles you could do no more for yourself than by this thankful spirit."

"The fear of the Lord is honour, and glory, and gladness, and a crown of rejoicing," adds the writer of Ecclesiasticus.

In the beginning, God created . . . and Wisdom was the artificer. The work was well and truly done, and God saw that it was very good. He regarded it with joy, creation responding, . . . even so we read,

*"When the morning stars sang together,
And all the sons of God shouted for joy."*

How could it be otherwise if Wisdom and Love wrought together, and God realized it as GOOD?

But for man to understand, a time-setting is given for that which is timeless: for God works beyond time. He sustains all, filling all, yet is not held by that which He sustains.

If that which God created was good, then it was perfect: this the necessity of thought, for that God is perfect. Therefore it stands without its contrary, as is essential to the pragmatic good of time and space limitation. "God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all." His creation

is absolute as in contrast to that which is relative. His *light* is germinal to beauty as it is to truth; it is the livingness within the seed. It is creative potency that works through simple faith, revealing Itself, whereby the flower is beautiful, whereby man is true, whereby beauty and glory and harmony flood through all that is.

Faith is the letting through of *that which is*, and it declares.

"Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness. . . . The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing." (Psalm lxx, 11-13.)

Though depicted in terms of time, God's creation is eternal, child of His own Being, and is ever in His Light. It is the divinely static, and yet dynamic, ever unfolding expression of His Love, His Truth, His beauty, His Perfection realized. It may interpenetrate time limitations, but it is not subject unto them. "The Light shineth in the darkness, but the darkness apprehendeth it not." The Earth of His Joy swings free from the moorings of time.

When we consider that God *Is*, ever *Is*, we cannot think of divine creation as having been, but that it also *Is*. The fulness of His Being freely outpours now, as in æons past. His Nature is one rich Spontaneity, a perpetual divine Self-giving, whereby His Life is all-sustaining, and is immanent everywhere, and all that *Is* doth stand in His integrity. This is the abandon of Love, its divine necessity, even as also revealed by our Lord upon the Cross of time; self-surrender being the principle of Life's recovery and renewal.

Not in the past, but ever in the PRESENT works the

Creative Power, in its wonder and beauty and mystery. The Song of Joy which the patriarch heard still thrills through all that is. Time is but a moment in eternity. The reverberation of the angel song, with its refrain "Peace on earth, goodwill," has not yet died away. Time waxes old as a garment, but eternity remains fresh and young. "I come that ye may have life," said Jesus, "life more abundant."

Life is renewed in the spirit, and man finds freedom. He looks upon the world with awakened eyes, and sees Life sweet and fresh as at the beginning.

Surely infinite joys are before, infinite realizations : surely man has cause to shout his praise !

"The heavens declare the glory of God." They look down with love-lit eyes, for they dwell in BEATITUDE. When we lift our eyes to the heavens, and gaze upon the Milky Way, do we pause in wonder at the fact that our little earth has its place therein? And even so the earth of God's creation is in the Heaven of His consciousness.

When we look on the glory and beauty of the Universe, perceive the stars and their systems swift-speeding in their joy on their infinite course, and around us, on our earth, the loveliness of mountain and valley, of hill and river, of field and forest, of the little flower, of the common herb, and of crystal, of all things that have life, of bird-song, and wind-song, and of the great sea, do we think of That, without which it could not be? Nor the greater loveliness of the inner life, of mind and of spirit?

Do we indeed consider That, which is all-sustaining, with its application in power and presentness, yet from which Interior Principle man has inwardly receded?

The Kingdom, in the thought and message of Jesus, is this original, true, yet ever present God creation.

All life, in its finest degree, is sensitively in accord with, and responsive to, the Word that is most central of all. The Breath of the Word, upon the diverse chords of Being, awakens Joy, and creation appears, in praise and beauty everywhere.

"Oh! I could sing such glories about you. You have not known what you are; you have slumbered upon yourself all your life." (Walt Whitman.)

"Beloved," wrote the apostle, "now are we the sons of God."

The sons of God recognize God's creation, and rejoice in it. It is characteristic of them that they are glad. Remembrance awakes, and praise is renewed, for *that which is* breaks upon that which seems.

*"O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive."*

—WORDSWORTH.

The immediate sense of God's Presence is an influx of joy.

As man's sonship is realized, his perception is restored. Creative activity revives in him. The weight of oppression passes from his heart. Joy and gladness are his birth-right. "In Isaac (gladness) shall thy seed be called."

The word of Jesus, as a golden thread, leads us to where He dwelt, to that same recognition, understanding, and quiet resting; yea, also to that Joy which is divine.

In the Desert a Highway.

*" There in our inmost being we may win
The joyful vision of the heavenly wise—
To see the beauty in each other's eyes."*

—A.E.

Oh to maintain such thought that apprehends the invisible Highest, which yet is divinely true in face of all appearances, and realized is the Kingdom of Heaven. What denying of the self-hood, what standing firm when all that seems solid and immovable topples down !

Our purpose in being here is not to do things into the Future but to fulfil something in the very Present : that we may be in so close touch with the Present that our whole life is quickened to the recognition of all true and real values.

Our *richness* is to know that the Presence of Love is central in our circumstance and amid all our affairs.

Our very food is spiritually assimilable through the thought that receives it, the suggestion which encompasses it. Oh the value of gratitude, of praise and of thanks !

Springtide and harvest express the gratitude and joy of earth.

" Will not the time come," writes J. Tyssul Davis, " when the religious man will be known by the gay face he puckers, rather than the long face he pulls ; by his exceeding happiness, by the holy harmony which his coming makes on thee ? When the sense of God will make him dance like David before the ark of the covenant, and he will know not only the grace, the charm, the sweetness of the Lord, but his mirth, his melody and his marvellous joy."

Rejoice and Be Glad.

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*" A merry heart goes all the day,
A sad tires in a mile-a."*

In the realm of man's diverted consciousness, through separation, sorrow has come to birth, the yearning, the passion of the spirit to recover its lost estate. Yet out of anguish, in the end, springs joy, for it is the joy of return.

*" They that sow in tears shall reap in joy,
He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious
seed,
Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing
his sheaves with him."*

There is within us an inward light whereby we see, and it determines not the thing that we see, as it stands in the, to us, outward light, but *how we see it*. There is a true seeing, and it is by that Love-light within, which tranquilizes the temperament, and, by its own virtue, gathers into itself all the colours arising therefrom. We see why it is inadvisable to criticize or condemn, for such is through the reflective light in the personal consciousness, such feelings arising being indicative where tendencies lie, and what in ourselves to avoid. But Love does not criticize, does not condemn, for Love's vision discloses not what seems, but what truly is. Truly are we cared for, as a child is cared for, by the Great Love that faileth never. Love divine is keeping vigil, through long dark hours, with us, even though we do not recognise, even though we do not understand.

In the Desert a Highway.

"Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing; Thou hast loosed my sack-cloth, and girded me with gladness. . . . O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto Thee for ever."

As it hath been, so it *is* ; as it was in the Beginning, it is *Now*; supreme and universal Joy.

When life awakens; when the earth, its crisis past, is quiet and still in itself, its heart atune and responsive to the universal rhythm, then will man cry out in praise, "I am God's child!" Then, when his hearing is unsealed, the joy-shout of the sons of God will be heard once more. It is the same great rapture, for the pause of forgetfulness is but an instant in Divine-consciousness. The music of all being will flow into his soul: "Come, ye blessed ; enter into the Joy of the Lord."

To be ourselves is to give ourselves. Then will we rise in consciousness until we look upon the beautiful One, as it were face to face : for, "when we are like Him we shall see Him as He is." The dense mist of material things will sever before our opening faculties. We will comprehend divine meanings in all that we see and experience. With awakened vision will we discern the beauty of the Word which Jesus saw, and seeing became.

*"Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was
wasted ;*

*If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters
returning*

*Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them
full of refreshment. . . .*

Therefore accomplish thy labour of love, till the heart is made God-like, Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered more worthy of heaven." —LONGFELLOW.

The sons of God are His dear craftsmen, for the Spirit works creatively in them. They have found their place, and work. They sing at their labour; they are merry.

The Universe moves in an abandon of Love, in an endless dance of Joy. Every atom reveals that same rapture, that same abandon, that same outpouring. And what of man, the microcosm? All being tends to its Centre, and its self-emptying expression is its praise before the Throne. A dance is no true thing, till it becomes an abandon, in which self-consciousness is lost. And is not prayer at its highest such a jubilation, praise greater than can be uttered?

*" Take Joy home
And make a place in thy great heart for her,
And give her time to grow, and cherish her ;
Then will she come, and oft will sing to thee
When thou art working in the furrows—ay,
Or weeding in the sacred hour of dawn.
. . . It is a comely fashion to be glad ;
Joy is the grace we say to God."*

—JEAN INGELow.

Giving and Receiving

“Grasp not, but give and give, that which thou hast, that which thou art, and thyself forget. Life works, Life loves through thee. Hold nought as thine own, and nought is withheld from thee.

And the spirit of Freedom will flow in thy veins, and thou wilt feel life brighten every way, and open out on every side. Thou wilt be conscious of a caressing touch, and the kiss of Life upon thy heart and lips, and the breath of being as a May morning.

Then loving words, creative words will speak through thee, and souls will see and marvel, for in thee God speaketh. And in the divine dialogue, of which thou art the intermediary, Life answers to Life, Love answers to Love, Truth answers to Truth, the outward unto the inward.”

“INFLUX is conditioned by efflux,” wrote Emanuel Swedenborg, conveying a scientific definiteness to the law expressed in those intimate words of Jesus, that we are so slow to understand: “Give, and it shall be *given* to you, *good measure . . . running over.*” He realized it as the conditioning law of being, not merely working in one way, but working in every way. It is the principle of growth

and of unfoldment. Jesus, speaking into the soul of man, gives the matter a practical issue. Here is life's golden key : " Give," he says, " and it shall be given unto you."

According to our *giving*, its strength and its quality, will be Life's response. " With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

We can give in part measure, or we can give in full measure, and the result, upon the level of our acting, will be a return part measure or full measure accordingly, yet with increase. It will however be not as we direct, but as life directs.

But our measure depends upon where we are, and what we are ; the thing that we seek, the *spirit* of our life ; not upon that which seems, but upon that which *is*. •

As we express, so life, that is the life that we touch, tends to express through us, with bigger potential. Our thoughts contact a deeper thought, which journeys through unto a larger issue. The fulcrum of our action is in our *being*: where we are, *truly*, depends upon what we are.

And our advance *in life* depends upon our giving. It is the index of the good measure . . . running over. God's return is in terms of life, and not in things. Its resultant is in consciousness.

With what measure we mete, whether evil or good, by the working of the great law, the same is correspondingly measured to us again.

The thing that we measure is in return for that which we receive; it may be in accordance with the natural law of sowing and reaping, " an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," that is good for good, evil for evil; or it may be that blessed return of forgiveness and positive good for

evil rendered. The great law revolves with due return to us for the thing that we measure. A vicious circle is pursued till we arise, from our slumber in the natural law, to the conscious awakening perception of Truth, through forgiveness.

The moment we forgive, life relaxes through all its bounds.

That moment becomes an initiation into the life of the Spirit. It is the beginning of man's enfranchisement into the freedom of the universe. It is the passage unto sonship. And that implies freedom. The servant measures strictly, the son gives freely. It is the awakening of the perception of the child of God. It sees life sweet and beautiful. It looks into good, and ever unto a greater good.

"Blessed is he . . . whose delight is in the law of the Lord ; in which law doth he meditate day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, which bringeth forth its fruit in its season."

There is a telling little anecdote in the gospel of St. Matthew. It relates how a tax collector came to Peter, enquiring whether his master paid the tribute levy. To this question Peter answered, "yes," and came to inform Jesus. But ere he spoke, Jesus anticipating his thought : "What thinkest thou, Simon," he said, "of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, then are the children free."

The child of God is given such freedom, because of his central loyalty to Life itself. He is not bound to lesser loyalties, though he may, in wisdom, obey the same, if

they run not counter to the greater service. But he may act within the freedom of this higher enfranchisement, and he will find that it works. For he is enfolded in protection ; he will do the thing that is right, and fear not.

The Life of God is operative in him. A deeper consciousness works through all his ways. He lives and breathes within that Love-sphere wherein all things are gifted, and he yields himself to its law. As the *life* may be known amid its contrary, so the law may operate amid *its* contrary. The causative law at its highest, which is the law of Life, may overcome the causative law at its lowest, which is the law of sin and death.

It is freedom, and a modern writer adds, equality, for man's over-weening ego has no part therein. The last shall be first and the first last. He that is greatest shall be the servant of all. " I can do nothing of myself," said Jesus, " it is the Father in me that doeth the works." In this consciousness God is all in all, and there is no separation. The eye only sees the vision of His Beauty; the ear only hears the melody of His Word.

The ground of this consciousness is humility, its self-surrender is complete, its vision is that of the One, informing all that is. It is the *knowing* that only God *is*, Moreover it is the knowing that only Good is, and that it is working through the sweet ministration of that consciousness. Its touching is that of Christ, as when he walked the green fields of Galilee. It conveys "the final Signature, that seals all things as holy, and reveals One world of two, long fallen apart ; the Heavens and the Human Heart."

" To know God is Life eternal. There must therefore some exceeding great thing be always attained in the

knowledge of Him. To know God is to know Goodness. It is to see the beauty of infinite Love : to see it attended with almighty Power and eternal Wisdom ; and using both those in the magnifying of its object. It is to see the King of Heaven and Earth take infinite delight in *giving*." (Thomas Traherne.)

One cannot *give*, until he has that wherewith to give. The servant can but measure, according to his trust ; but the child of God has access to his Father's good. To Him is it said, " Freely ye have received, freely give." He lives under a new law. No longer is he bound to the wheel of life, of cause and effect, of good and evil. He is free to come and go. His way is a pure giving and receiving.

The message of the great Love, in its passion and its power, is that man may awaken to the knowledge of God, and that he, himself, is child of that Love. And the first step of the way is through forgiveness, and the next is in forgiveness becoming operative, with instant power and effect, under the new law. The essential motive is here, that *true life* is ever giving of itself. Man follows as God leads. Nay, more, his life becomes a channel through which the providence of God expresses. But his dwelling and abiding in that higher realm depends on his obedience to the instant law of forgiveness. Let him make a closure here, and Love is stayed. But let the door of forgiveness be open, and he will find a heavenly good, yea, a heavenly aid, right at hand. It is the left hand of which Love is the right. The two are complementary and inseparate. The one has the human imprint, the other the divine. The immediate experience is solved through the relaxation which forgiveness brings. For the door is thrust ajar for

Love to enter. By our instant forgiveness we close the page of the past, and look into the Present. The hand of Love takes our hand. The immediacy of Life is ours ; and Life's immediacy is the very Presence of God.

How may we meet life's demands? It is to go one better than life demands. " Love your enemies," said Jesus, " do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee ; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again." In other words, do over and above the thing that is asked, with an eager acceptance, that Love may win the victory. If your brother ask you to go with him one mile, go with him twain.

" Judge not and ye shall not be judged ; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned ; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven ; give, and it shall be given unto you ; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom."

Whatever is due, render thou more than is due. Thereby you face the adversary, and he has no answer to give. It is in this way, through the operation of the law of forgiveness, that we end our debt to the old regime. By it we are qualified to enter the new, where is a pure giving and receiving.

Give what is required, but go one better. It is a working proposition for just where we are. The present circumstance, the immediate situation, gives scope for it. It is

a power inherently to impress the circumstance, to raise *in truth* the position, to enable a definite advance in life's journey. The result is over and above what we have reason to expect. But it is no selfish bait. Were we to give in order to receive, the giving would be lifeless, and in truth, fall dead. For then the chief, the living ingredient would be absent. It would be as the unhallowed charity which does not bless, but wounds and angers, and had better never be. But true charity is delicate, is sensitive, is unobtrusive. The outer symbol is but a casket for the inner richer gift. Such giving indeed is all alive from the heart.

What then is the over and above thing that we give? It is the giving of oneself. Thereby in the immediate issue we may fulfil life's immediate demand.

The child of God abides in a pure consciousness, in recognition of divinity, God and only God. He exercises unceasing forgiveness for it is his nature. His answer to life is Love. Moreover his own essential being is implicit in that answer. And why is he able to do this? Because he knows there is nothing to forgive. He gives love for Love. He gives himself, and the immeasurable return is, God!

"In Christ, or in the consciousness of the indwelling Divine Spirit, we know that every man and woman is our father and mother, brother and sister; that nothing is our own, but all is God's, because all is God.

"And because we know this, we give—as we work—without thought or hope of return, because God flows through us to others. Our giving is our only safety-valve. Abundance is often a snare to those who know not God,

the indwelling One, who is Love. But the abundance which is manifested from within outward is only the material clothing of perfect Love, and cannot ever bring selfishness. 'The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it.' " (Emily Cady.)

*" Whichever way the wind doth blow,
Some heart is glad to have it so;
Then blow it east, or blow it west,
The wind that blows, that wind is best."*

" The first condition of success is secured in getting ourselves right."

*" I feel the earth move sunward,
I join the great march onward,
And take, by faith, by living,
My freehold of thanksgiving."*

—WHITTIER.

The Gesture of Christ

*"The spirit seeketh return to the waters whence
it came,
Out of false conceptions unto truth,
Infinite Love sounding in our ears,
Yearning of many waters,
Intimately calling !
The old anchorages give way, the old bondages
are broken,
And the soul is borne into the Sea of Life !
Oh, we await the incoming of that Love,
Our mind open to the Heavenly Mind, all-
beautiful,
That willest all our good,
That fillest all our silences !
Life rises wonderful before our eyes : and
marvelling
We worship, and we rest."*

OUR Lord threw out this word to those perhaps not able or not willing to respond to his more near and intimate teaching : " Make to yourselves friends (or friendship) by means of the mammon of unrighteousness."

If the meaning be asked, its kernel is surely this ; the wise gifting and disbursement of material wealth and riches beyond our simple and legitimate needs.

The expression, "mammon of unrighteousness" throws a vivid light upon the thought of Jesus in these matters. It was to him the symbol of man's separation and isolation from God. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." It is only as we raise the anchor of our security from our possessions and place it in God that we will recover the real sense of His *presentness*. Faith holds us to the substance of which the outward is the shadow. "Children, how hard it is for them that *trust* in riches to enter into the Kingdom of God."

In all things Jesus fell back upon God, and his constant need was met, for that he *believed* greatly, and therefore gave of *himself* greatly. Wherefore the Power behind became his potency, and Love became his might. "The Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works." Thus he taught his disciples. To that inner context the outward necessity was a *care-free* life, made possible through freedom from possessions.

"One came to him, and said, 'Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.' And he answered (not without a measure of indignation), 'Man, who made me an arbiter of possessions?' And he said to those around him, 'Take heed, and beware of covetousness, for man's life does *not consist* in the abundance of things which he possesses.'"

The desire to possess, to amass, to accumulate; the withdrawal and separation of part of the common wealth for a personal good or security; man's severance in consciousness from the inner fount and principle; the lapsing into outward things; these had proved to be the source

of all misery. Jesus came to teach its contrary, even unto complete self-surrender, as the source of all true happiness, and abundance (the abounding life).

Give, and it shall be given ; yea, the very utmost for the highest and the best.

This "mammon of unrighteousness," tainted at its very source, as it may have seemed to him, in that it involved separation, and, in a manner, the denial of God, may yet be turned to fruitful purpose. And therefore (and may we not feel its special pointing to our present age?) he unfolded his teaching on stewardship, without the application of which the Kingdom of Heaven on earth can never come. It is the relinquishing of our selfish grasp upon things. It is the emotion of a bigger consciousness, the looking-out with the eyes of Christ, the perception of our fellow in the near light of brotherhood. It is the awakening, penetrating, almost stabbing recognition that what we have is no longer our own, has never really been, though we have lived as if it were.

The practice of this, which is a further reach in our application of the Presence of God, means maybe an initial sadness, but following, an emancipation of joy.

What we have is not our own ; but also, that which we are is not our own. This we realize in the degree that our life swings free from the bias of self-will to its true polarity of "not my will but Thine be done." "Do you not know," cried the Apostle, "that your body is a Sanctuary, for the Holy Spirit . . . and you are not your own?"

*" So all the time I thought myself homeless, forlorn
and weary,
Missing my joy, I walked the earth, myself God's
sanctuary."*

—FATHER FABER.

The Kingdom of Heaven is the state of perfect giving and perfect receiving.

There is nothing which we have that is our own, spiritual, mental, physical, circumstantial—but all is God's ; nay, truly, all is God. That which we think we are, in our separate consciousness, is, praise God, an unreality. He only is the true occupier of the house which we are ; He is the *living fire* of the Temple that we become. Then our selfhood has ceased to be separate, and become God's servitor. Our life becomes a vehicle, responsive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

It is good to become quiet and at perfect rest concerning to-morrow, and with regard to the future, and to abide, seeing something of the wonder and the great meaning, in the Present just where we are. We centralise *truth* then and there in our whole circumstance.

As we hold our circumstance open, relaxed and free, the spirit of good works therein as a pure leaven. For the most part our circumstance is held so tightly that there is and can be no divine benison. When we say, " this is mine " we doom ourselves to labour all our days. But accomplishing our part, by taking down the barricades, so that the winds of heaven blow freely through, it tends to become one with God's Providence, wholly good. And in the doing, the Truth is established in us that it is so.

Why is the Church emptying itself? Simply for the reason that it is not true, that it has no message, that it gives no lead, that it undertakes no crusade, that it is *lukewarm* in the things that matter. Therefore when a great issue arises it is largely ignored, for that it has no vision ; and blind to the implications, it identifies itself with the majority, instead of leading in the better way. We refer, of course, to the Church as a whole ; not that there has not ever been, within its borders, the witness of the two or three—its saving grace down the ages. Oh, if it were what it might be, would not the people flock in, enamoured as by the very *presence* of Christ ! It would cease to be doctrinal, and would become the *living* Church. Nay, the time is surely coming when it will be as if Christ were again walking upon the earth ; when the poor and suffering will run into her arms ; when, out of her self-abandon, all the more because of what has been, her lips will frame, with urgency of invitation, afresh and direct, out of her own heart, these words of love divine ; “ Come unto Me all ye that labour, and ye that are over-borne with toil and suffering, and ye will find rest and refreshment.”

She will impart to them the word that she has recovered, and they will go forth ‘ with gladness and with singing,’ with new ardour and enthusiasm, finding meaning of *life itself* in the thing that they do.

It means the release of joy in work.

For work becomes worship. It is done unto God, every moment of it ; it is not done for rewards. God is the reward ; *That* which is *life*, and *life more abundant*. And the Hand of God down-reaches, and we find a daily blessedness. We cease to work for rewards. Faith, then,

has its opportunity to begin its wondrous work. The possessive shadow shifts, and there is light, and we look into light. Our mind expands ; divine imagination awakens, and in and out of the thing that we do our life becomes creative in a manner we had never known.

Oh that the Church would empty its coffers into the hands of the poor and needy, and renew its gladsome life. Oh that it would shake off its other-world solemnity, and issue forth with joy, charging the very present with God's name. Oh that it would become militant, yes, almost delirious with the sense of the Presence, and simply not accept even one thing that is a blot upon, and a shame to, religion.

Christ has been brought into disrepute by the " meek and money-making Christian."

But the true Christian in business seeks not his own ; his eyes are ever beyond the personal issue ; in all his dealing he is *watchful* for the Kingdom ; he transposes the code of immoral commercialism, which is to buy in the cheapest, and sell in the dearest market ; his rich desire is to serve, and to give best measure. His joy is in the action, not in the result. Nevertheless his good draws nigh, for there is a blessing in the thing that he does.

The wise man of business turns the tables on his competitors by blessing them.

" Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

We give rightly, not when directed by a narrow wisdom, but by direct impulse, with the blessing of God behind it. By this exercise of stewardship, ever becoming more

sensitive, life is enhanced through expanding ways of love and faith.

This is the simplest lesson ; but there is an inner store of good, of wealth indeed, gifted to us in stewardship, and it is mostly unused. There is a wondrous power vested in us, which we may call *simple* faith, whereby this inner reserve unfolds into expression. It is guided and directed by our very *simplest* thought, if we can only achieve that. It is at our service. It is our inalienable right. In this we are called to be "babes."

Shall we not say then, "I will think simply, utterly simply (which also is singly), and *know* that the power of God is energizing through my thought." We have but to be stable, and maintain the quiet good thought, without effort. Our good is drawn nigh with a sure magnetism, rejoicing in another's good.

"When we live in gentleness and love," wrote Boehme, "we overcome the world in Christ."

There was a poor woman who said, "How can I love my brother, and be a Christian?" It was a curious saying, but the cut was here, that she was all too conscious of the vested interests which the Christians that she knew, Sunday-religious people, stood for, and how these interests worked injuriously to the poor. And these people she knew to be high-lights in the local churches.

If money is required to support the institution, and the influence of money accordingly enters in, with its conservative tendency and support of vested interests, surely the answer is that the Church of God truly is no institution, and that it is not meant to be an institution?

Nay, it should be an energy, a Movement, free and

open, living its full life in the *present*, its feet steady on the solid ground, its face lit with its own pure light ; one in its being with all that is good, with all that is true, with all that is beautiful ; having the Life in itself, itself its own vindication.

As man's perceptions open, he becomes increasingly aware of That which was in the beginning. He hears the great Music, he responds to the divine wireless of the Spirit. So in the Truth there is Joy, for it is a *Present* consciousness.

" It denotes that the Lord, who disposes all things, gives me in spiritual and worldly matters all that I need, whenever like a child I cast my care upon Him." (Swedenborg.)

" Think you," wrote Oliver Cromwell, " that He who led His chosen people through the wilderness will fail you now? Has He deserted His people and cast off His heritage? I tell you nay. When the deeps are broken up then doth He make bare His arm, and you are never so much in the presence of Almighty God as when the foundations are shaken, and when the heavens seem to be falling, and the pillars of the earth to be removed. . . . Though the mountains be removed and the strong pillars of the earth do shake, thou shalt be kept in perfect peace in the hollow of the hand of Almighty God."

" He who would valiant be

'Gainst all disaster,

Let him in constancy

Follow the Master." —JOHN BUNYAN.

As Love is the issue, Love should therefore be our action, Love at the core of the little, as of the great thing that we do.

The Beloved One.

“ The Present is the only time for us. The Future is not our prime concern, nor yet the Past, but oh, what a hold have they upon our consciousness ! Betwixt the two we dream through our little day. Eliminate memories and anticipations, and what is left ? Let them pass, and with them all fear. They gather, a mist, about Thy form, that we may not see Thee, Beautiful ! Let them pass ! Behold, Thou art here, O radiant One, for the Present is Thine. The veil withdrawn, we meet Thy loving gaze, and now we touch Thy garment’s hem, and in the music of Thy Presence we are healed.”

TRUE thought tends not to abstraction, but to definiteness. By virtue of its own necessity it rises beyond the earth-bound mists unto true perception, which is the thought of God itself. And that is supremely definite. The witness of this is the beauty and wonder of the infinitely little even as of the infinitely great.

But there is that in man which seeks to evade the definite and the true, because it gets so near to himself. It makes an approach so close to the inner citadel that he does not like it. It gives him much discomfort. Nevertheless, though he may take refuge in abstract

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thought, and cling to the thought of God as abstract Principle, it is a position in which he could not ultimately remain. There would be danger of man becoming the same in miniature, to the loss of his own identity. Whereas it is *identity* that Life is ever questing for.

Through the soul, God will at length see Himself, as with His own eyes. Here is the wonder of being, that God is infinitely personal. An infinite care, concern, and regard draws nigh to, yea, encompasses every point of being. Nought is there in Life outside the range of that Wisdom and that Love.

The fine point of that Consciousness traces the beauty of the little flower, perfects the wing of the butterfly, and the delicate formation of the snow-flake. Its definiteness expresses in the rapture of our little English song-bird, those sweet, clear pellucid notes, each so distinct, so pure : in the strain of skylark, blackbird, nightingale, every little tone-poet of our countryside ; yea, also in the song of praise, the melody which breaks through the human heart, and rises to the heavenly precincts.

“ Out of three sounds ” there springs, “ not a fourth sound, but a star.”

Utter clarity of conception unto the infinitesimal ; therefore, at every point, creative beauty !

In answer, life's response, life's utter praise.

Somehow, intuitively felt in the human heart, and in nature's heart, an answering Goodness that is right at hand.

At every moment there is available immediate Good to meet immediate need.

Infinite perfection would be less than Itself, did it not

come to its point of definiteness. And at every point It declares Itself in Its own likeness. In the soul, articulated from that Divinity, the same word speaks, "thou art My beloved."

"Lo, I come," cried the Psalmist,

*In the volume of the book it is written of me, I
delight to do thy will, O my God ; yea, thy law
is within my heart."*

And again,

*"The vehicles of God are twenty thousand, even thousands
of thousands :*

*And the Lord is in the midst, even as in Sinai, the holy
place."*

Religion, too, requires its point of definiteness in time. Erase that connection, and it is a beautiful abstraction, even as a nebula in the heavens, without a central nucleus for creative activity.

Everywhere, in all, through all, is Life, in *presentness*. Nigh to every soul is It present, in its Wholeness. The wholeness is everywhere, even as at a single point, and expresses perfectly in a little thing. It is in infinite manifestation, yet in exquisite differentiation. It is behind the soul, its sweetness waiting to reveal, in consciousness. "Thy will be done": a perfect working, a perfect fulfilment.

"Be ye perfect," said Jesus, "even as your Father in Heaven is perfect."

Is not Life wonderful, then, that what is truest in God and truest in man is of the same nature ; that man, in

his own feature, is yet to reveal the supreme Beauty in its human counterpart, for that "in His own image created He him." There is then a demand for the surrender, in man, of that localised fictitious thing, that false "ego" (which has in and of itself no reality, yet masquerades as such), in order that the greater Life, which is life indeed, may live and abide in him.

"Certainly Christianity stands for the deeply fruitful fact, conviction, practice and achievement—Incarnation, in the widest and most varied, as well as in the most precise and deepest, sense of the word. For Christianity surely is not merely a doctrine—however true—of certain laws and principles of the spiritual life, with vivid pictures of apparently historical scenes and personages, not one of which need have any factual, happened reality. But precisely the central conviction and doctrine of Christianity is the real prevenience and condescension of the real God—is the penetration of spirit into sense, of the spaceless into space, of the eternal into time, of God into man." (Baron Friedrich von Hugel.)

Even as man, from just where he is, turns to God, that is, tends to the *reality*, so becoming spiritually true, all Life will tend toward him in blessing. And it will minister in the way that is most needful. Then may he look up with eyes of love, and say, "My Father" (meaning also Mother, too), and hear Life's whisper breathing in his spirit, with strangely intimate voice, "My child!" He will then meet what haps, with joy and gladness, and with an encompassing rich suggestion of faith. As he so feels, in that way are his senses open, and from the wide

universe there flows that which this faith asks for. "Ask, and ye shall receive," said Jesus.

Man is seeking his own true life ; but when he truly knows, when he truly finds, lo, it is God looking through, it is the light of God shining. In the end man knows God and God only, in all and through all.

Through self-surrender is it known, in the immediate experience, losing oneself, in the separate life, just there, and finding the more worth while. Beyond this local consciousness a fuller life, and love and truth revealing ! At such a moment a presentness is touched, is felt, is known, and this is absolvent of that which has been, and has led up to this. The touch is cleansing and wholesome to man's spirit, and with healing ; there is a pulsing of the timeless in it ; yea, the very peace of God.

Even as we live truly the virtue of our soul goes into the thing that we do. Just as in prayer, when we pray truly, the virtue of our soul goes forth in that prayer. And even so when we ask for blessing on our brother, or on our sister. If we see God, whom we love, in our brother, by that recognition would not our relationship be blessed ? Only kindness would go forth, only praise, unto our God, unto our brother ; unto our God, Who is the life, in wonder, in our brother.

"I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth . . . my soul shall make her boast in the Lord."

Every moment may be well used. Nor can we say that it is well used, except we let thoughts of love, joy and peace possess us. "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted." The Master deals with the magic of

forgiveness. Shall I not remit the sin in my brother who has offended against me, even unto the erasure of the cause thereof?

The inner life grows by the outer "letting go," and yet, conversely, by the expansion of the inward the outer is enhanced.

If we could see clearly, would not many of our troubles vanish away as mists of the night. In all and through all is the one Life; in all and through all works the one Spirit. If we could but see clearly would we not discern everywhere, and in every soul, the operation of that Spirit? Then, to our open vision, would not Life reveal in its simplicity and in its loveliness? As man sees, so he acts. Let the Light shine in him; by that same action evil will pass away, even as a dark shadow passes. When he sees the earth to be full of the glory of the Lord, nought will there be to hurt or to destroy therein.

Here is an extract from an old letter of four hundred years ago, by one, Fra Giovanni, contemporary to Savonarola. It is written to a Florentine Countess, and is dated Christmas Eve, 1513. Yet it is timeless in its appeal.

"Contessina, forgive an old man's babble. But I am your friend, and my love for you goes deep. There is nothing I can give you which you have not got; but there is much, very much, that, while I cannot give it, you can take. No heaven can come to us unless our hearts find rest in it to-day. Take heaven! No peace lies in the future which is not hidden in this present little instant. Take peace!

"The gloom of the world is but a shadow. Behind it, yet within our reach, is joy. There is radiance and glory

in the darkness, could we but see ; and to see, we have only to look.

“ Contessina, I beseech you to look.

“ Life is so generous a giver, but we, judging its gifts by their covering, cast them away as ugly or heavy or hard. Remove the covering, and you will find beneath it a living splendour, woven of love, by wisdom, with power. Welcome it, grasp it, and you touch the Angel’s hand that brings it to you. Everything we call a trial, a sorrow, or a duty : believe me, that Angel’s hand is there, and the wonder of an over-shadowing Presence. Our joys, too ; be not content with them as joys. They, too, conceal diviner gifts.

“ Life is so full of meaning and of purpose, so full of beauty—beneath its covering—that you will find earth but cloaks your heaven. Courage, then, to claim it : that is all !

“ But courage you have ; and the knowledge that we are pilgrims together, wending through unknown country, home.”

We sit behind ourselves, are present to life’s experience merely in our bodies, with meagre perception of the brain and the senses. The informing spirit is behind. Oh but when It touches, with immediacy, the vehicle, the eyes become alight, the whole being alert, the expression shining. The purpose of life is that it become the vehicle of Spirit’s intercourse, that It may pulse through, be Itself in us : man’s life being thus enhanced, or becoming, as Jesus said, “ more abundant.”

Do not identify yourself, too utterly, with that which you see in the glass ; that is also a shadow, it is not you.

Neither identify yourself with the thought-pictures that

others hold, whatever they may be. They are also reflected images ; they are not *you*. " Beware," also said Jesus, " when all men think well of you." Be careful not to add your own signature thereto.

What am I? In a separate sense, just nothing at all. But if I turn to God, does He not see His own likeness and image, and rejoice in His own child?

Wonderful is the *truth*, when we are ready for it ; when that which is false in us, the ego-centric consciousness, is lost in God's unfolding vision, whereby we see truly, with clear perception, Life in its balance, its grace, its sweetness, its beauty, its music, its wholeness. The eye of singleness has opened, and in its purity of gaze we see God in all life, and in our brother. We see the Beloved, and the Beloved is nigh.

Ah, if we could but see our brethren in that Light, would our communication be on the surface, the mere touching of the outward, and maybe its resentful dismissal? Nay, would not the soul be visible as a very fountain of delight, in which the active Love, which is the Spirit of God, circulates? Would not strange contact be made, new understanding arise, which would dissolve the shadow which impinges from without? Would we not see, in and through our fellow, the beloved One who wins our heart?

If we but knew the wondrous rich meaning of Life, about us, and in us, would not our hearts leap with joy? Would we not find strength and inspiration therein to meet our circumstance, however difficult it may seem to be, with the joy of conquest?

We do not think of God in any theological or academic way, but rather as vital, dynamic, real truth of being. Yet God is also infinite Personalness, caring divinely for the least of His creation : a caringness which cannot but have definite and particular application toward the little thing even as toward the greater. Where faith looks up, Love reaches down.

As the soul becomes self-emptied, so there is a rising therein of the very water of Life. The supremely lovely reveals : the beautiful, the true, the best ; behind the appearance, in man, in one another, in the Life around !

*“ Direct, control, suggest this day
All I design, or do, or say ;
That all my powers, with all their might,
In Thy sole glory may unite.”*

—BISHOP KEN.

The Rhythm of the Universe.

"There is only one Life, and Love ; thy true consciousness, which, in its pure simplicity, is Heaven within.

In that soul-ease nature enters into freedom, and rejoices, with ecstasy of life in thee, as in the choric spring-time, when song and fragrance usher in the day. That which nature's eyes, aspiringly, may see, thy soul may know, and nature through thy soul . . . Thy heart-forgiveness draws a mighty music from the soul of things, which gathers o'er thy way. Thou art indeed of the great Harmony ; at thy heart's core indrawing the great breath—Peace, Joy, Love ; within thee pulsing the deep pulse of all."

THERE is one divine Order of being, wherein from centre to circumference, all is harmony. The stars of heaven have their place therein, and likewise the inorganic world (once so called) as now seen through the microscope. The little atom separates into electrons flying at planetary speed. Star and atom pulse with the one energy, and from infinitely great to infinitely small there is one motion as of one Will ; a tireless energy, an unending movement, a vast universal Harmony.

Yet it is no mechanical thing, but ever fresh and lovely,

In the Desert a Highway.

for it is the instrument of Life itself, and the manifestation thereof.

From infinitely great to infinitely small there is one order, one Harmony, and it is recapitulated in its minutest part.

"The heavens declare the glory of God."

"The trees and the hills," the Psalmist cries, "clap their hands."

Man looks up and marvels, and feels in himself a kindred spirit. But as he looks around at his own creations, human life with its intertwining circumstance, and the shadow of the past upon the present, discord instead of harmony, and his experience of good and evil, he is saddened and loses faith. Nevertheless is he child of that Order; *truly* he belongs to that Harmony. And there is that in him which can never rest till it comes about.

And the purpose of his life is this; the recovery of what once was, and has been lost; the restoration of the divine image in him; the recapitulation of the harmony of the spiritual world in his conscious life. When he finds It in himself he will find it everywhere else.

The treasure, the understanding, the recognition, has been lost to him, for he has strayed in his experience, out of *life*, out of harmony. Yet the evidence of the same is over-head, and beneath his feet, and he is encompassed by the "everlasting arms." The witness is likewise within him, even though he know it not. The soul's betrothal ring is lost, till he find which, nought can answer him in truth.

But when the Truth reveals will he not see, will he not hear, will he not remember?

"We needs must love the Highest when we see it."

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And the highest, in its spiritual and human counterpart, walked the earth, that man seeing might remember, and remembering return.

Though as from one point it irradiates, to that revealing there is neither time or place, but every time and every place may be its occasion. Even as the poet, inspired, sang, knowing there is no localization to that revealing :

*“ And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England’s mountains green ?
And was the holy Lamb of God
In England’s pleasant pastures seen ?
I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England’s green and pleasant land ! ”*

It is *in* you, my brother, and *in* you, my sister ! Yes, truly it is in and through you now that this lovely universe is waiting to reveal. As the universal Order recapitulates in the atom, so the divine and spiritual Order is to recapitulate in you. In you the perception and reception of Spirit, which is the fountain of Harmony ; “ the living waters ! ” The Soul of the Universe to be reproduced in you, even in the same manner, by the same Principle !

If that is to be, you yourself must capitulate, or surrender ; you must give yourself up unto that spiritual Order, that it may be actively *Itself* in you.

Oh, that in all our ways we could let the bigger than ourselves speak ! We speak from ourselves and out of ourselves, instead of allowing the Bigger thing to utter *Itself*

In the Desert a Highway.

in us and through us. This should be simple as simple, though it seems difficult because we are out of tune.

The greater Life, the Resource to which we may at all times have access, is ever about us, but while the lesser nature functions, each little part, in a separate way, as from itself, in its own willing, this Greater stands undiscerned. It is there as an urge of unrest, and how can it be otherwise? When all the parts *act* and *will* separately, what is it but chaos and misdirection everywhere?

There could be no melody did not the notes surrender to the order of the same. The melody is one, though the *ensemble* is composed of many parts. And so, in the divine Order, the *ensemble* is One, though the parts are many. The member must surrender its separate life if the One Spirit is to express therein and therethrough. It is the *real* life of the part. "The Spirit knoweth the things of God." The soul becomes cognisant of, and responsive to, the bigger Life.

*"We walk blindfolded in a world of light—
We could touch hands with angels if we would."*

As we tend thereto, there will be a pulsing of the Larger Life within, and an interior respiration.

One quiet rhythmic beat there is, indeed, right through creation. It is the evidence at all points of the central Life; it pulses from the great Heart itself. It registers deeper than time. Nought is there, having *life*, but it is felt therein. Because of it, there is the look of faith which manifests in beauty and harmony. I knelt down to a little flower, and I felt it was there; and in that pulsing I saw

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and felt that utter trust, as in wonder, as in surprise, expressing in its adoring loveliness.

By reason of this heart-beat that is everywhere the stars keep their places and harmony prevails through all that is. Every sphere thereby makes its right accord.

Herein is faith, its significance and meaning, *the interior evidence of God*. It is the sure and certain *knowing* of the Bigger Thing in which it is incorporate. It becomes self-evident ; there is no question about it at all.

Man's awakening is the recovery of this pulse within him, which ever beats in tune with the Infinite.

Hitherto his life had been encompassed by his own limited willing and thinking. Now he is aware of a greater Resource, a Life with which his life is affiliating, as of a lesser into a greater, a willing and thinking deeper than his own, and yet more truly his own.

It is the " kingdom " that is at hand, abiding admittance, if man but open the door of *his* willing and *his* thinking. To think truly is good, but the motive must be there likewise. Man's soul is a little kingdom, and the King stands at the gates, waiting the surrender to his tutelage, of the estate of his vassal.

Let man but make his surrender ; then in his inward nature there will be the beginning of a metamorphosis, which will be so radical that he, in the words of the apostle, will become " a new creature." As the flower from the seed, as the butterfly from the chrysalis, so, it is affirmed, it will be with man. It is not merely that something has access in him which before had no place ; it is not merely that something has command in him which before had no voice. He himself will be different, though

as a child treading new ground, functioning in a new element, he may make many mistakes. He will see life differently. A light will be shed from within which will alter all that is seen without. Something is withdrawn ; is it a veil from the heart, is it a film from the eyes? There is the feeling and desire of surrender to Life; to give oneself, to lose oneself in a service bigger than can be formulated by the lips, and a vision that is not separative, but as an ingathering, blessing all that it looks upon.

“ Thou canst not behold Me with thy two eyes ; I have given thee an eye divine.” —UPANISHADS.

And the opportunity of Service will show itself at our doors. Do we know indeed that the Universal stands behind the particular, and knocks at our door through the experience that is nearest to us?

To the new life everything will be as it is, with a difference. The thing that we know, the thing that we do, remains, but is transfigured. It will be the same, yet not the same. The commonplace will be no longer so ; it will become a heavenly ritual. Tiredness will pass, for monotony ceases—and joy enters in, with strength to will and to do.

That life is as it is, in its main aspects, is, doubtless, because we like it best. That it fails at so many points, and runs into tangles of difficulty and misery, does not alter its general bearing. The miseries we would put by, the joys we would retain. The Kingdom of Heaven is the life we love, plus that something more which is the *pure* enjoyment of it. It is not removed from the present ; it is the present, only more so. Therefore we are not called

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upon to forego that which makes glad the heart, but are invited to a fuller, richer, happier enjoyment of the same. All those things that are normal, they belong thereto, and are enhanced thereby. The home and the economy of the home has its place therein, and is made blessed. No longer to be avoided, for Love has entered—and charity, it becomes a centre of infinite attraction, of manifold interests. All who pass the threshold and enter find solace there, and *home* indeed. For a certain Spirit is present.

Schools will have their place therein, and the teaching of children, but it will be purposive to the highest issues, and to a more gracious citizenship. Because the Spirit is there.

Business too will have its place, but with this difference, that it will not be pursued for selfish ends, but with the spirit of service restored, and its activity increased a hundred-fold.

Athletics and sports, music and the drama, the arts and crafts, every field of human interest ; each will have its place, and flourish greater than before, because inspired by loftier ideals, not as reaching to some distant future, but tending to and enforcing present truth, the central blessedness.

In all and through all the great Vocation, inviting every soul ! In all and through all the corporate life expressing itself in beautiful harmony !

It is no less wonderful for the little thing than for the great to be enfolded in Divine Love ; it is as marvellous that the pulse of the Universe is in the atom as in the star ; it is as blessed that the heart-beat of the Spirit of Life may be felt in man as in every angelic being ; it is no more and

no less so. It means that divine Love is nigh to everything that lives ; it means that Life is upheld eternally.

Fail this pulse and life would fail, and there would be a lapse into the void. So we are told that Lucifer fell when he sought to do his own will. And so man fell, and yet has been upheld, for that Salvation has come into his house. But having separated himself he has passed into conditions that are painful until he comes back to where he was.

The good, the best, the perfect, the wonderful is *present* for him, and he knows it not. Yet when he knows, and knowing responds, will not life be to him as if there had been the passing over it of a wand ?

When he feels and responds to the pulse within him which beats in rhythm with the universe ; yes, that central pulsation which is child of that spiritual heaven which nestles in the Heart of God ; then will he feel and know he is at Home, and the most wondrous Fact of life around him and within him. Then will the sweet Order of being, life's true harmony, evolve from him, quietly, imperceptibly, till it reaches through and gathers in his whole circumstance.

The quiet rhythmic pulse of the Universe is felt in man as the great Peace, which Jesus called the " Peace of God which passeth understanding."

*" What else is wisdom ! What of man's endeavour,
Or God's high grace so lovely and so great ?
To stand from fear set free, to breathe and wait ;
To hold a hand uplifted over hate ;
And shall not loveliness be loved for ever ? "*

—EURIPIDES.

God is Everywhere.

*" Be ye open to the infilling life of God,
Till Love through all thy being flow,
Reaching through thy every part, pressing
through thy every way,
Till thou arisest as with new identity !*

* * * * *

*If thou art quiet and wilt but listen, thou
mayst hear the glad sound of many waters,
Far from which entangled we strain and
strain,
Till nigh at length we come, and in the
immediacy of experience our problems solve !"*

How passing strange it is that we should look on One, and yet know it not ! How curious that the creative Light by which we see, we dismiss as if it were not at all ! The one supreme Factor, without which we could not be, is passed by unheeded. And yet, beside that one Reality, all else is incidental. Apart or separate from it, all valid meaning is lost.

Our eyes are holden, as the Bible states; our hearts are locked. With our minds absorbed in lesser thoughts, the big meanings register not. They remain as distant mountain peaks ; they touch us not in *presentness*.

" There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God."

In the Desert a Highway.

It flows very close to where we are, and its sound is "God is with us." It brings refreshment to our doors. It fails not, and cannot fail, for ever and ever.

It flows through all things in its sweetness and strength, draws everything that has life to Itself in little tributaries everywhere. It is the circulation of that Life which is *Itself* for ever and ever. It interpenetrates all that *is*, as inherent light, as inherent truth, as inherent love, in beauty, in joy, in rapture, flooding all time and space. Unceasingly it flows ; not at one time, in one place merely, but at all times, in every place. And it is available for man *now* to drink thereof and be refreshed, to bathe therein and be renewed.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters ; and he that hath no money, come now buy and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

It is the *good* Life, circulating through all things. It means the omnipresence of Heaven *now*. That man may awaken to this *reality* is the purpose of his experience ; that with open perception he may become one with *That*, finding it to be the inner context of his own true life.

Between the look of the soul and the One is the film of illusion, an obscuration, whereon is enacted the experience of time. But man is no mere looker-on ; he is in it and of it. It is woven from himself, and the thread is his thought. Not unlike is it to the little caterpillar enwrapt in its cocoon, the thread of which, tighter and tighter drawn, is spun from its own body. And the deeper meaning is the same, the awakening of a hidden radiance that is his own true life, truly a winged life, a joy supreme.

For this inner truth, this holy thing in man, is quiescent, is asleep. If then, but its stirring prove so wonderful, what its full awakening?

Man, making contact with That (which is the process of *faith*), will experience a great release, and *believe*, that is, he will *know* the Life. For a word of liberation has come to him, a door has been thrust open for him to enter in. Then may his eyes look upon Beauty itself, his ears unseal to the joy of the ages. New meaning floods the world that he has known, and it is *heaven*; he has stepped, he has soared out of his narrow limits, out of the selfhood, into a wider world, into Blessedness. What was jagged, partial, incomplete, by reason of a new interior content, shows no longer so. A wholeness is working through, a wholeness which is the life of God, at every point of being.

Its coming is new life on earth, the new Society, the Fellowship of the Ages revealed, the fellowship of the Kingdom now, love between man and man, and recognition—and reconciliation. Oh will not Joy be manifest, Love be emancipate, hands stretched in charity, feet swift in service, God's Name declared the wide earth through, in blessing and in power ! What a renaissance everywhere—and our own very nation made alive to its own glad inner content, with the result, a quickened democracy, a happy people.

*"I dreamed in a dream I saw a City invincible to the attacks of the whole of the rest of the earth,
I dreamed that was the new city of Friends."*

Within the little compass of a moment man by his thought may enter into prison, or by his thought pass

through an open door. Everyone may exercise the power of thought, yet not everyone may control it. We have to be free from it, that is above it, before we can rightly control it. And this is a spiritual gift ; a perception, a right knowledge, a heart that is at leisure from itself—an interior freedom.

And truly we are called to this awakening, for the hidden man of the heart to arise, " be as ye *truly* are ! " And from the hills there comes the invitation, " Return, ye children of men ! " And the word sounds afresh to-day : Be ye awake unto *that which truly is !*

The most wonderful thing in the world is pressing into our human experience—something better than has been before. It is the age-long message, freshly told, " Behold the Kingdom of Heaven is *at hand*."

But this pressure from within implies also a pressing outwards, unto elimination, of that which is other than itself. And this has been called the treading of the winepress of our God.

It is the dawning light which brings the shadows into visibility. But as the sun rises to meridian they dwarf and pass. And when it is overhead there is no shadow at all. The optical illusion ceases at that point.

There is a point where the illusion or obscuration of evil ceases, and our confusion passes ; it is when God, the Sun of divine Love, is at meridian in our soul. It is when God has become our supremest good, without an other. When our spirit turns to Him, our true Centre, in worship, in all our ways, its beneficent light is shed through all our world. **This is our true polarity.**

God is Everywhere.

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And the meaning is that the obscuration, the apparent thing, has no reality of itself, and it is only by virtue of what is good—the very light—that it takes body and form. And the cause is focal. We have lost our central Vision.

To it we must fain return by the path of surrender, through the cross of denial of the thing that we see, by the truth that we know. Is it an upward climb to a purer vision? Then will every step bring its own reward.

“ We ascend Thy ways that be in our heart, and sing a song of degrees ; we glow inwardly with thy fire, with thy good fire, and we go, because we go upwards to the peace of Jerusalem ” (St. Augustine).

But for ever and ever, encompassing us, is the living *reality*, seeking at every point its rightful central place. It is heaven all around, Life seen in its right light, its true focus. We may direct our every step there, by surrender. We may win heaven in the thing that we do, in the very experience before us, by pressing the Cross unto our heart, the cross that denies the contrary appearance by affirming the hidden good meaning there—this quest of the kingdom of love amid the ordinary and commonplace, amid the actual, amid the apparently dead routine. Oh, if we realized what is truly *present*, the hidden potential within the very incident, whatever it may be (without which, indeed, it could not truly register in consciousness), would we not turn to That—the *essential factor*, yea, God’s very Presence—in immediacy of worship ; drawing close unto us that which is nearest of all, in perception of the Kingdom, whereto our thought, our will, our action tends, yea, at that instant of surrender knowing and rejoicing in the life of the Ages.

In the Desert a Highway.

*"In all eternity no tone can be so sweet
As when man's heart with God in unison doth beat."*

The action of the *selfhood* is the stepping out from, that of the cross the stepping into the world divine.

O brother, when insuperable difficulties arise, rejoice and be exceeding glad, because if you will have it so, and have strength—the strength in weakness—it is your (and God's) opportunity. For central, as a very potency, is the most blessed *factor* of all. It is that which we so easily dismiss, *the fact of God in experience*. If at that instant we have faith and grace to stand still, and realizing our own inadequacy, just let that *strength* work through! If we can but be quiet in ourselves and stand back, believing and therefore rejoicing, will we not witness the richness of His grace, the wonder of His Love? Love is above and around and watchful as with myriad eyes, abiding the opportunity which we at length, in faith, provide.

When once God rests in our human consciousness, when once that quiet poise is found, all is well, and all good tends towards us.

*" 'Tis the front toward life that matters most—
The tone, the point of view,
The constancy that in defeat
Remains untouched and true."*

"God loves all mankind alike," wrote Paracelsus, "but not all men love God with the same kind of love. Each of God's children have the same inheritance, but one squanders while another preserves it. That which God has made equal is made unequal by the actions of men. Each

man taking his cross upon himself finds therein his reward. Every misfortune is a fortune, because divine goodness gives to everyone that which he most needs for his future development ; the suffering begins only when discontent, the result of the non-recognition of eternal law, steps in. The greater the obstacle to combat the greater will be the victory."

Life is prosaic because we move amid the great wonder and mystery God un-conscious. But oh, if we were of God conscious, and quickened by the word of truth which springs from everywhere ! If it comes not in the action, then surely it will meet us in the reaction ; if it touch us not directly, then surely it will find us indirectly. When once dawns this Vision the old ways will no longer suffice. For this perception amid contrary things is the word of God to us of a land and an inheritance.

We may go in and out as we did, we may tread the same daily round, but it is different. We see differently. We do not accept things as they seem to be. They are the same, yet not the same. According to the light with which we see is the difference. What is sombre in the shadow, in the glow of light is illumined. No longer do we see things merely in their narrow limits, and local setting. We catch a new significance. What was *hidden* is revealed. An *inwardness*, the inner meaning breaking through is apparent to us. There is a spiritual background that is Beautiful, a richer encompassment we cannot get away from. In this creative Light by which we see, all things appear as they *truly* are, good and true and perfect. By our true perception we do a radical work, inviting, inducing that *which* is out of that which seems. It is our

recognition of that divine inward content whenever we look on anything in its outer similitude.

This is no contented acceptance of things as they are ; it is a growing impossibility of seeing them as they are not. For life is not true until we ourselves are true, and wholly and utterly true. Nor can we know truth until our perceptions register the truth sincerely : nor can we know a loving universe until our heart is aflame with compassion and with love.

*“ For Love doth make thee one with every soul :
Thy brother’s good and ill thy very own ! ”*

If at all times we saw—God, amid the thing that we do, in the one whom we meet, how different life would be, how alive with meaning and interest, how electric in its very touching?

All life is radio-active in its truth.

What is God? God is that Oneness, Singleness, Integrity yes, *personalness*, which is the truth of all that lives. God is Life, which is *itself* everywhere, and everywhere *Itself*. It is fresh and young at all times. Ages come and ages go, but Its feature is perennial youth.

We have to make one step, but one rightward turn, into That, knowing then that we *are* That, that It is our life, and there is no other.

God is that Fountain-source which man may dip into and be renewed. As man functions from his own truth (that is, through sincerity, which also implies self *surrender*) he dips from that great Resource.

“ He that is kind to all that lives is blest by heaven and loved by man.”

The whole Universe is filled with God. It is baptized daily by His Presence. As Light, all-filling, so is that Presence everywhere. It is That on which all life falls back and is sustained, unto which it succumbs during the deep hours of sleep, and is refreshed and strengthened.

“ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

*“ Be Thou my pilgrim staff throughout the lands,
Thy love in all my thoughts, Thy likeness in my face ;
May I heart-warm to others and they heart-warm to me,
For love of the love of Thee.”*

—OLD GAELIC RUNE.

Gold and Frankincense.

*“ To KNOW Life, Past and Future must fall
away : it is the Great Silence filled with God.
All Life joys in thy life when thine own words
cease.*

*God’s creative word is drowned by the clamour
in thy mind.*

Be still and hear.

*To make a great noise may seem great to the
ignorant :*

*But to God it is as a foolish child stumbling
over the alphabet.*

*From thyself be still ; shut the door to thy
thought’s intrusion ; keep self without ; surely
thou art loved.*

To KNOW and to be KNOWN.

To LOVE and to be LOVED.

*The mysteries of life will unfold before thee.
Peace will possess thy soul.”*

‘ Do you not see, O brother, the star of wonder in our firmament, whose light, even as we look, searches where’er it touches? How strangely bright it is, a moving light : in its shining the neighbouring stars grow dim. Do you see the sevenfold sign it bears, auguring so much for man, even as foretold? Has it not meaning for each one of us, in that it comes within our consciousness, touching on the sphere that is the soul? ’

“ It is the herald of the Lord of Life ! Come, let us follow where the vision leads ! ”

The kingly Ones, the Magi of the East, thread their eternal way. One is the Lord of Wisdom, bearing gold ; one, Devotion's Priest and Lord, with frankincense, whose fragrance is as prayer ; and one, not least, who the hard road has trod, Lord of Experience, his gift amid sorrow sought, the cleansing myrrh ; each following by faith.

These the three paths by which all souls arrive !

Far in Life's day-dawn shone the effulgent light, and ever down the ages it doth move, and ever it standeth over the House of Bread, the which is Bethlehem, a little mid-point in our earth, where indeed the passing moment stays, and Truth reveals in *presentness*.

Forth from the darkness come the pioneers, vigilant for truth, tracing the way made by the kingly Ones.

The many follow in their wake, each with his own wrought gift. And from heart to heart whispers the invitation.

“ Come, oh come ye, to Bethlehem.”

“ The Magi,” so it is written, “ came to Zion City, enquiring, ‘ Where is He that is born King of the chosen ? ’ and they were told, ‘ In Bethlehem of Judah,’ even as foreshown :

*“ And thou, O Bethlehem,
Art in nowise least,
For out of thee cometh the leader
To shepherd my people.”*

There were those “ keeping their flocks by night,” who heard celestial voices, revealing to them that “ this day

In the Desert a Highway.

*Is born, in David's city, the Saviour,
Christ the Lord ! "*

And as they gazed the curtains of time were withdrawn, and with quickened perception they saw the heavenly Host praising God, and they heard the eternal cadence,

*" Glory to God in the highest, and on earth,
Peace and Goodwill ! "*

And this is the interior Good, that were it not, all else would fail.

The shepherds said to one another : " Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us." And they came in haste, and in the lowliest place they found that which they sought ; in one of the stalls or little caves, belonging to the khan or hostelry, and wherein the animals were housed. Here was simplicity and adoration ; a mother, with the least little thing, a tiny babe, new-born, encompassed in its swaddling-cloth, and cosily laid on the straw of the " manger " or shallow trough ; a man, with gentle face, attending to their needs.

That which is may be different from that which seems. But the shepherds saw into the wonderful thing which God had brought to pass, and they worshipped there. And they returned with praise, on their lips, and in their hearts.

A humble scene, and yet God's Truth revealed.

Nature herself was worshipping there. Is not hers the travail for the child of God ?

'Twas but a little centre-point of light, from whence the compass of the Word of God makes its redemptive curve, all earth to win.

'Tis that humility, at its uttermost, which gives to God the praise for every thing achieved ; knowing that God is all, the One pure Life, purely expressing. Like to the stars, those flowers of Love, which speed, all-heedful to His Word.

This living Word beats through all that is ; pursues the bounds of space ; interpenetrates the manifest :

*“ God of God,
Light of Light
Begotten, not created :
‘ O come, let us adore Him.’ ”*

Nought is adorable but the Splendour that is God.

And man as he reveals the same !

Where such humility is purely found (not in similitude, but in truth), God shines purely through !

The Magi brought their gifts, and laid them at the young child's feet.

One uttered low, “ His name is Wonderful ; of the increase of His government there shall be no end ! ”

Into man's consciousness pulses the throbbing of a deep assent.

The living springs flow into the valley of Life ;

“ Ho ! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters ; and he that hath no money, come buy and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not ? ”

The message of Love flashes from land to land, and its words are written everywhere. Its golden script is found, for man to treasure, according to his vision. By it will

he enter his pathway of the Quest ; in the wake of the Magi catch the moving sign, the pointing of the star that goes before.

Many are made glad, and follow on !

They come from far ! Out from the dim lands His people come ; yea, they still are coming, seeking the cradle of the little child.

One by one the seers catch the light, and swiftly journey. Many enquire of them, " Whither the way ? " and they answer in their own tongue, " To Bethlehem ! "

*" For we have seen his star in the east
and are come to worship him."*

Each ray became a living word, and so the scriptures grew, that are found in every place. And in no place is He without a witness.

All the wonder is brought near and present through the power of His Love. The One interprets the many, and the many answer the One. The deep desire of every soul flows unto this revelation. Out from the past all comes into the Present.

One saw it as the morning glory over Himalay :

*" Look to this Day," he cried,
" For it is Life, the very Life of Life ! "*

And one, sage Laotze, from the far-distant east. From his own hill he came, and near to the shepherds knelt.

" He is not seen," he wrote, " he is not heard, nor understood, nor can be understood, and yet he is interpreter of all, and without whom nought could be."

"The kingdom, like a river, becomes great by being lowly ; it is thereby the centre to which all the world tends."

One from ancient Persia saw the star, and taking its symbol of the living flame, spelt it by the name of purity.

"O Holy One," he prayed, "the stars, and the sun, the messenger of day, rotate for thy glory. . . . Who is beside Thee, by whom moons wax and wane. Dear to all hearts is he whom lowliness exalts."

And from the great heart of India, these noble words :

"He whose mind and life are free from deceit has a dwelling in the hearts of all men. Is it asked, 'What is truth?' It is the speaking of words that are without the least degree of evil to others. Purity of body comes by water ; purity of mind by truthfulness. Unseen He sees, unheard He hears, unthought of he thinks, unknown He knows. None other than He is the Seer, none other than He is the Hearer, none other than He is the Thinker ; none other than He is the Knower ; He is the Self, the Inner Ruler, Immortal."

*"Enter the Path ! there spring the healing streams
Quenching all thirst ! there bloom the immortal flowers
Carpeting all the way with joy !"*

But in one place there fell its central splendour :

"The word is very nigh to thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."

Lo, in the elder time ere history began, one knew in answer to her prayer, that man whose foot was bruised would crush the head of evil.

There were those of old to whom the promise came, who by faith drew nigh to Bethlehem. For them shone the star of Hope, when dark waters overwhelmed and all seemed lost.

Surely the Light shines back through all the ages, and into the far future searches down. 'Tis the glow of the Present through the rift of time.

Full in the face of one it shone, whereby he knew that he must follow it, leaving his ancient home for the promised Land. In his name the sacred aspirate found its resting-place. He felt the living breath ; he found his Lord.

One in his dream beheld the sign, as 'twere a ladder joining earth and heaven.

But one there was with heart aflame, to whom the holy Name became revealed. He, following by faith led forth an host; yea, still doth lead, through sea and wilderness, unto the border of the Promised Land.

A comely youth there was tending sheep, and the vision came to him of the Shepherd of souls, whereof he sang :

*“ The Lord is my shepherd,
He leadeth me beside the waters of comfort.”*

The prophets of the land each saw the Light, and gave their urgent call :

“ Come, oh come ye to Bethlehem ! ”

It was the word within the word spoken by these watchers of the night.

“ If with all your hearts ye truly seek Him, ye shall ever surely find Him.”

*“ He hath showed thee, O man, what is good,
And what doth the Lord require of thee,
But to do justly, and to love mercy,
And to walk humbly with thy God ? ”*

All cry their message to the peoples, and the faithful rise and follow :

“ O come, let us adore Him ! ”

Such is the word within each faithful word, however quaint it seem, however strange the tongue. And from myriad hearts springs the refrain :

“ For we have seen His star in the East, and are come to worship Him.”

And still men see and catch the light, while time moves on in its great pilgrimage.

Once more are souls aflame !

From the Orient comes this heartening word :

“ O Son of Existence ! thy Paradise is My Love ; thy Heaven is My Nearness ; therefore enter thou, and tarry not ! . . . If thou lovest Me turn away from thyself ; if My Will thou seekest, regard not thine own, that thou mayst die in Me and I live in thee. The traveller who attains will breathe the fragrance of the True One : he will discern a brilliant Day-spring ! Every atom and object will direct him to the Beloved. He will distinguish truth from falsehood as the sun from shadows.”

And from the Occident these :

*“ Each is not for its own sake,
I say the whole earth and all the stars of the sky
are for religion's sake ! ”*

*" There is no character nor life worthy the name
without religion,*

Nor land nor man or woman without religion ! "

O brother, O sister, the place is *here*, the time is *now*,
and *you* are called. The Star shines clear within ; the
Magi still do tread their mystic path. Gather your
treasures, follow in their wake. Oh do not pause until
you find whereon the Light doth rest.

Have you the gifts which it is meet to bring?

Have you the rightness, gold that is free from dross,
which means indeed a spirit all sincere?

Have you the gift of prayer, the fragrant incense of a
pure devotion?

And last and greatest, that rich and deep humility, born
of experience ; the holy myrrh, culled in sorrow and in
secrecy, the bitter cleansing herb that sweetens life?

These are the three great gifts !

The New Country.

*“ Wonderful beyond all knowing
Is the glory of the earth ;
Precious gift of Love’s bestowing ;
Yet more wonderful man’s birth.”*

‘ SAY not this life and the other life,” said a great French mystic ; “ there is but one Life.” And the same word is the authentic message of every God-inspired teacher. For all is Here. There is no past or future in the Life Divine. The Beginning, that is the swift and eager outpouring of the Divine Nature, is now no less than in æons past. When the skein of time runs out, man will find himself not at the end, but at the beginning. It is the casting-off of old garments, and the putting-on of the vesture of ageless youth. Man’s richest experience is not in time, but in the beyond-time. Creative Love is an eternal ecstasy.

“ In the beginning, God ! ” the Old Testament affirms, to which the New Testament adds the sequence, “ In the beginning was the Word, the Logos ” ; and it was with God, that is, inseparate from Him; and therefore that it was God. For thought, or better, Imagination, is coincident with consciousness. It is thought in action, in expansion, in vision. And this, in its purity, we cannot conceive of as other than Perfect Man, even as, in miniature if we will, it is implicit in every human heart.

And this Word, uttered at the Beginning, is still being uttered, and for ever being uttered.

In the Greatness, MAN (can our spirits rise to this conception?) as the Logos, is the hand of Power, the mind of Wisdom, the heart of Love. In Him and through Him is released the Divine Splendour, which—inflowing into the darkness of all the sub-human degrees of life, which we call nature, out of which humanity is awakening—ends the travail of the ages.

The aspiration, the anguish, of nature, is fulfilled, is healed and ended, in the wonder-birth of Love-made-manifest, in which Nature and God, the natural and the supra-natural, are re-united, or drawn together in oneness. This is the ultimate solvent and remedy of every antagonism. And it is through man that Nature will re-assume her radiant divine image. Then indeed will be literally fulfilled the prophecy of the seer, of the time when the very beasts that rovin will be led, harmless, by the hand of a little child, even as the dark emotions in the human breast may be transformed by the power of Love.

Nature of herself cannot attain, but Nature through Man can and will attain. Man himself is of the natural order till he receives the chrism of a higher order. It is not that the higher is absent, but that it is hidden and unrevealed.

It is because of the inherent God-nature (closed and hidden though it is), that in everything there is a striving after a higher, a dumb yearning towards something that is better, wherein is nature's agony. And this is the urge behind evolution, and the ascending ladder of life.

The greatest unrest, but at the same time the most rapid

ascent, is in man himself. He is almost feverishly conscious of disharmony, as a gripping nightmare from which he cannot quite free himself.

The slumberer is stirring nigh to wakefulness.

Our human consciousness abides not on the spiritual plane, but rather is borne on the restless sea of the continually changing forms and images of the psychic or reflective world, taking coherence only from the light of his seeing. Man thus is without direction, till spiritual light breaks upon his vision.

According to the degree of our wakefulness, which also is the divine awareness in us, do we arise out of time-conditions into the experience which transcends time. This is the entrance (or, as some call it, initiation) into that sphere of consciousness, in which we know Truth as very present, finding rest after long striving. It is at this point that we know that the heaven which we have longed for is with us, and we are able to say, "Behold, now are we the children of God."

Man's outer cognition is, in many respects, the reversal of the spiritual. And yet, amid all human experience, there is the breathing from within, of the word of God. Man's ears have but to be unstopped for the authentic voice to be heard.

There is no one, probably, without some inner vision of a more blessed state than that in which he dwells. It is the witness of the inner harmony, without which life, even in the outermost, could not be, even though "this muddy vesture of decay" closes it in, preventing our hearing.

"They desired a better country, that is a heavenly,"

runs the Scripture word. As the poet sings, "It is built to music." As the Master affirmed, "The Kingdom is at hand," is present even now.

*" Go humbly . . . it has hailed and snowed—
With voices low and lanterns lit;
So very simple is the road
That we may stray from it.
The world grows terrible and white,
And blinding white the breaking day;
We walk bewildered in the light,
For something is too large for sight,
And something much too plain to say."*
—G. K. CHESTERTON.

The Two Worlds.

*“ Earth will feel with many thrills
Freedom’s feet upon her hills :
She will know the mighty strain
Of the sons of God again.”*

THERE is a great teaching being unfolded to-day, here a little and there a little, which in full recognition and acceptance will lead on to an experience perfectly rich and golden. It is the recovery of what is sometimes called “ the Ancient Wisdom,” once universal and perfect as a vesture without seam throughout, having origin in those far back æons when the earth was the pure mirror of the heaven-world, and a heavenly experience reflected in the earthly.

But darkness ensued and a terror ; and it was torn in fragments, which became hidden words.

Man came to interpret, and the full meaning was found. Man himself was the meaning.

He came to make or mar. The key of destiny was his to find. The separation in himself reflects the separation of earth and heaven ; but the synthesis he achieves draws them together again.

The rediscovery of this knowledge is of immense importance, for it implies the synthesis of life and religion. All life is One, and Religion is man’s adoring recognition of that Oneness. The individual finds his rightful place within that Whole, and The Whole expresses through the

individual—a knowledge that awakens praise and love, man's richest contribution to life. By this he finds increasing adaptation to use the instrument that is at hand. Original thought is his, to transform into power. This tapping of the fundamental discloses a radio-activity hidden in such thought. It is direct in its efficacy and no merely second-hand tool.

Man's subjective confusion has as its outcome objective chaos. The Babel of his thought-world has led to Pandemonium in his circumstance.

No two persons, generally speaking, mean quite the same in their expression, though the words they use may be identical. At one time, ere the illusion gathered about humanity, it was not so. Then the word clearly sprang from the thought; there was no break or severance, though now it is even as the severance 'twixt soul and body.

Man has fallen into the blind maze of an apparently secondary causation, and is lost amid its manifold reactions. He has lost the Word amid a covering of words, as he has lost the soul amid the body. The soul and the Word both abide his finding.

Man's spiritual chaos could have but one result. Out of itself would spring its own destruction, as a great consuming fire to melt the thought and fuse the experience. Out of chaos greater chaos till darkness is overwhelming; and then, also of necessity—day-dawn within the soul, and the rending of the illusion.

Jesus had direct experience, and used words accordingly. His thought and His word were both fundamental.

The use of fundamental thought invites the Present

The Two Worlds.

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Tense into our midst, for it has its true functioning in a timeless state. Man knows that a world of truth is about him, tremendous beyond all thought. Fundamental thought opens portals unto corresponding emotions, and the treasure of faith in its divine potential.

There occurs a retouching in human experience, as positive and negative, and twist inner and outer, and instantly man's life is illumined. He begins to reflect a perfect world that is only brokenly revealed to the senses. He knows then that the ideal is not to be built up, but to be realised, not to be intellectually conceived but to be spiritually apprehended.

Here is vision of the wonder-shores of a new world, reached through the adventure of the spirit. In this human experience man may know the Present, which is deeper than time. He becomes aware of a Paradisal world hidden through the ages.

His first far-off vision was through hope restored ; but it becomes very present through the clear-seeing of faith.

Thus he dwells in two worlds, the world that Faith declares to be the Real, and the world that is void of faith and without vision, and is called matter-of-fact and concrete, though it collapses at the testing. Here then are two worlds overlapping yet separate and having no cognisance of each other.

A spirit adverse to man's welfare rules the one and encompasses it with arms of distrust and suspicion, of criticism and antagonism, but Love divine envelops and broods over the other.

In the one we cognise the Illusion as it were the real, and it becomes the ground of our transitory experience,

inasmuch as without ourselves we stand apart from our true life.

In the other we come close to all that lives.

Is there then some individual action which may establish the unity of the individual and the larger life? If so, the chief purpose of man's life is to bring this about ; and his real life is achieved through such perpetual action.

The new way is not the denial of what has been. It is its amazing fulfilment.

“ No day is commonplace if we had only eyes to see its splendour. There is no duty that comes to our hand but brings to us the possibility of kingly service; there is nothing possible of a human soul greater than simple faithfulness.”

Leaving not the Other Undone.

*" Ah, that everyone might see
In divine simplicity,
If they would as brethren meet,
Heaven opens at their feet !*

" It is indeed right that you should do this thing, and yet not leave the other undone."

In man's perfect development, the inward and outward should balance and harmonise. In the process Cæsar has his place, requiring recognition. But in the end he lays his treasure at the feet of the Lord. Good then would it be if our spiritual development advanced evenly and centrally, absorbing equally, yet truly, the good of that which is above, and of that which is below. It is a sad and somewhat humiliating thought that so much of our apparent growth is due to a rebound, a reaction, a swing to an opposite extreme from an erstwhile position. It is often at the expense of something else that is good. The soul is often so partial and whimsical that a recognition on the one hand is a denial on the other. Duties unfulfilled are left undone as if the new position condones a negligence of the old. In the early expansion of spirit there is sometimes an expectancy to be served rather than to serve, even in that place where the Master washed His disciples' feet. The ardour of a new enthusiasm does, however, not remit a single duty.

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We fall into the sin that Blake was so vexed about, of "confusing states with individuals." Not so Abram, who (as related in olden story) while he forsook a state or condition no longer possible, yet took with him his household and his human duties. It is in the little thing, so easily neglected, that the purest deed of religion is done. How often there is some little act of courtesy omitted, some word of kindness overlooked; or an overstress of some particular action or service to the detriment or neglect of lowlier duties, forgetful that life is of one texture throughout.

By stepping into the new life we do not sever old relationships; rather we transvalue, or, shall we say, retranslate them.

There are those to whom we would in no wise impute insincerity, who act as if the new experience sundered the cable of a multitude of obligations. It does not, however, cancel a single obligation the soul has contracted; rather, it gives the power to meet them in a new spirit. It is not that there is then only one thing worth doing, and that all the rest must fall into their places as best they may. But all should be illumined as with a new light, which nowhere shines more radiantly than in the daily round and in the common task. Thus was it that Brother Lawrence carried the tincture of his vision into his kitchen-craft.

First self-denial; secondly a glad communion. It was with true insight into these things that St. Francis checked a brother absorbed in contemplative prayer in order that he should first attend the bounden duty at his hand.

If we have vision, let us not neglect our obligations.

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Rather let it work in lowly deeds. Our overlooking of these important little details of kindness and of love, is as the dropping of threads which will have to be retraced and gathered up. The novice in spiritual things may be an extremist ; the master or teacher never ! The latter has a kindly eye, a ready word, an open countenance to all, gives of his leisure to all, finding God's meaning everywhere.

THE END.

*Let thy duty be as the breath of the mountain
within the valley.*

*Descend from the hill-tops every morning, the
glow and strength of sunrise upon thy face.*

Nourish thy soul with vision from the heights.

Thou art thyself the message thou must give.

*Where the eagle finds her home, let thine
aspiration rest.*

—“THE CLOUD AND THE FIRE.”

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