

with the dictates of the understanding has it power beyond its own volition—only then has its free volition any result. Canute *willed* to command the sea, but his understanding was not a party to the command. He did not *know how*, and therefore not in terror, but in contempt, the mighty ocean licked his boots. But when the understanding gives its assent, then no matter how difficult the task, “where there’s a *will* there’s a way.”

If the seat of man’s power be his understanding, then the term *liberty* need not be applied beyond man’s understanding. Again we ask, that which a man knows how to do—to think or to cause motion in—what can prevent? The limit of man’s understanding is the limit of his liberty. The boundary of man’s knowledge is the “thus far shalt thou go and no farther” of his *power*.

Dynamite may be *force*, but “knowledge is *power*.” The doctor who tends you in your illness charges five dollars for his medicine and his trouble, and twenty dollars for his *know how*. You may dispute the right of his understanding to claim so large a fee, but you will find it just, for “the court awards it, and the law doth give it.” Let a man’s understanding know how to triumph over the difficulties belonging to the mysteries of a case, or presented by its environments, and what can restrain the *freedom* of his *will* or the liberty of his action. A man may know how to make a brilliant scientific experiment, and at the same time be wanting the necessary apparatus, but that is no limit to his power. He can get the apparatus. Only when he does not know how to get or to make that apparatus is there a limit to his power, and that at once resolves itself into the old fact—a limit to his understanding. Looking back through the years, we fancy we see Newton in his laboratory. He seeks the explanation of certain phenomena, the truth of certain theories. He has the physical ability to sit there day after day and night after night at the toil. But with that ability alone, there may he sit and toil till a Methuselah could live and die, or a patriarchal Rip Van Winkle awake from his long sleep, and his