

They are a unit. In one sense thought is prior to the expression and yet both are coincident and incorporate. The incarnation of the thought is the only sure guarantee we have of its birth. It must be externalized or manifested, and thus placed beyond the limit of mere possibility. The thought flashes out like the lightning from the cloud, but unlike the flash the form is permanent. The words live because the thought lives, and the thought lives because the words live, hence words are the symbols of heart-thoughts, or as Confucius says, "words are the voice of the heart," and so "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

We here speak of the words as the natural vestment of the thought—ideas bodied forth—of the living connection between words and thoughts, because it is our purpose to emphasize the study of words. It is a subject upon which it would be difficult to lay too much stress. We begin life with words; they are the gateway to all that is sound and felicitous in expression; the means by which we gain the mastery over things. Words have been appropriately called *the fortresses of thought*. By them the mental treasures of each generation are secured. Age adds to the stock of age, and thus thought is ever perpetual and aggressive. Otherwise "each generation would have to begin over again, and barbarism would become triumphant. Words are the title deeds of the inheritance of each child of man. It is by dwelling on beautiful language that we reach the beauty of the *reality*, the thought. By this road alone we enter into the temple of the Beautiful."

The study of words, then, is no trivial thing—nay, a deep insight into their meanings is an indispensable condition of sound and broad scholarship. In more than one sense we are judged by our words. Not of Peter alone, but of all men can it be said, "Thy speech betrayeth thee." They reveal character because they disclose modes of thought and conditions of feeling. Nor was ever the purpose of language to veil or conceal thought. Those who attempt this are sure, somewhere and sometime, to be caught in the coils of their own words. "By thy words thou art justified, and by thy words thou art condemned." What revelation of soul is made by utterance! A unclean soul can no more breathe pure, healthful words of its own than a pestilential district can exhale untainted air. The purest utterances come from the purest minds. I often think of the words of Him who spake as never man spake—of their significance and depth—of the pure and infinite spirit from which they rose. I think of them as messengers of mercy and love, as heralds of wrath