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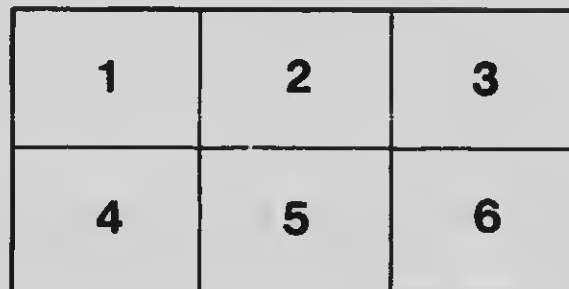
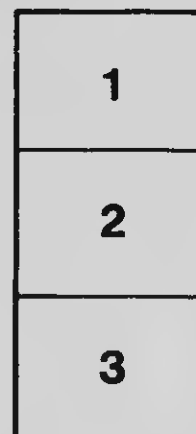
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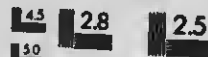
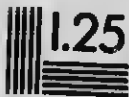
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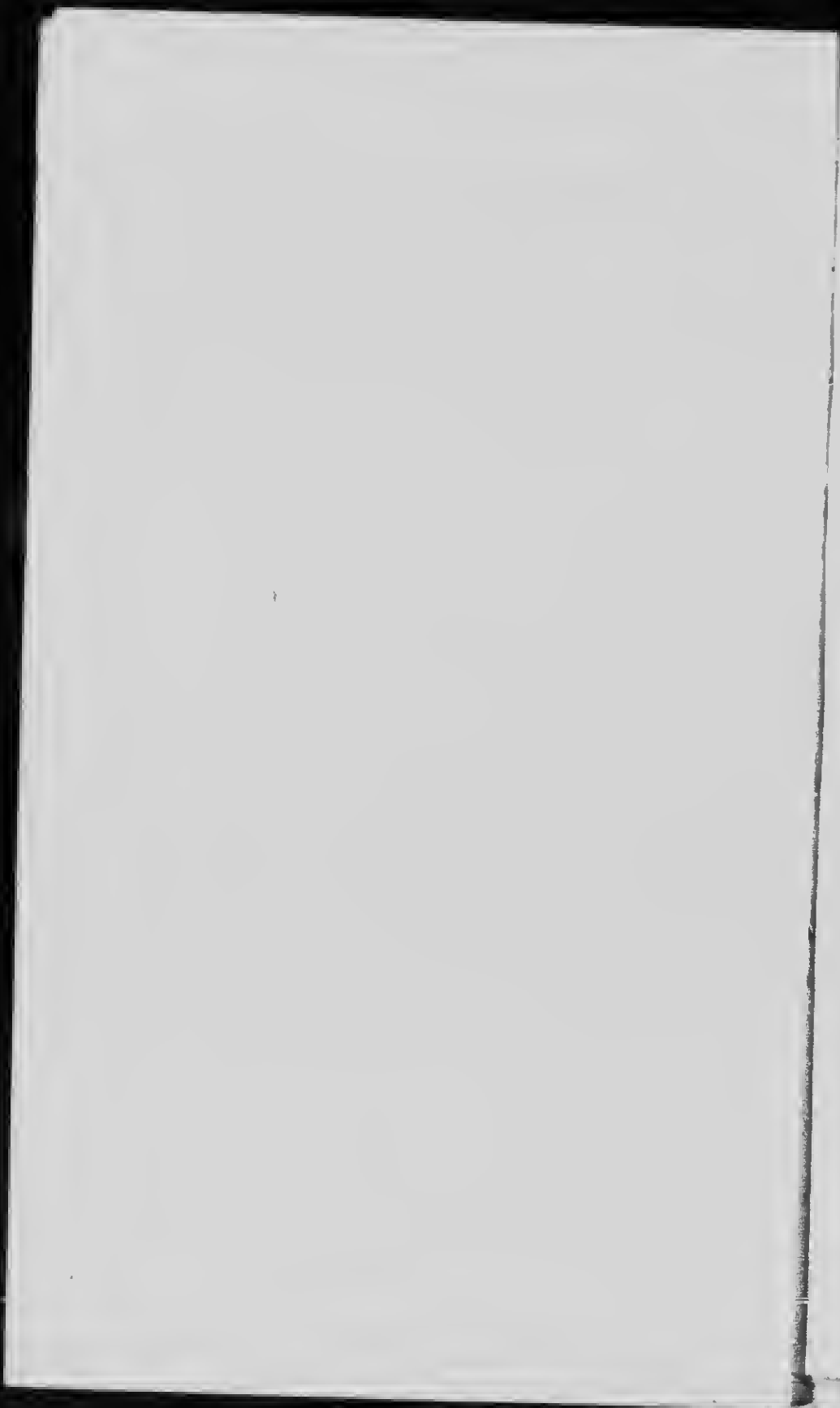
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To the

Right Honourable

Sir Wilfrid Laurier, K. C. M. C.

with the author's kind regards and

best wishes.

Oct. 1906



The Orbit of Life



The Orbit of Life

Studies in Human Experience

By

WILLIAM T. HERRIDGE, D. D.

*Minister of St. Andrew's Church,
Ottawa, Canada*



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To my Wife

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Perspective

“ Briefly, therefore, where the soul hath the full measure and complement of happiness; where the boundless appetite of that spirit remains completely satisfied that it can neither desire addition nor alteration; that, I think, is truly heaven: and this can only be in the enjoyment of that essence, whose infinite goodness is able to terminate the desires of itself, and the insatiable wishes of ours. Wherever God will thus manifest Himself, there is heaven, though within the circle of the sensible world.”

—SIR THOMAS BROWNE: *Religio Medici*.

Perspective

IF a thick mist hangs over the sea, and the fog-horn is sounding from the invisible headland, the world may seem a small place, and the circle of its activities distinctly limited. But when the sun at last has driven away the shadows, and the eye roams over a wide expanse of earth and ocean and sky; when the distant horizon, while it confines our vision, suggests the thought of the ships ploughing their trackless path, and of other lands beyond, and of men and women there doing their work or their play, then the world comes to look like an almost illimitable realm, and the spot on which we stand only a tiny speck in the vast creation.

In order to keep the cozy, home feeling, one must be satisfied with moderate dimensions. It is not the most spacious rooms in any house that are the favourite resting-

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places. We have to draw the curtains and shut the door if we would remain at ease. The first glance from the window, especially if the prospect be extended, fills us with the desire to be outside, fanned by the breezes, warmed in the sunshine, or even battling with the storm. There seems so much to know and feel and do. The sense of the bigness of things urges us onward, and a passion for itinerancy is stirred within us. The song of the road swells into a lofty strain, and we begin to feel that the time-boundaries are too narrow for the stretch of human endeavour.

And yet it would be a poor way to prepare for the greater sequel of earth's story if we failed to appreciate aright the various chapters which lead up to it.

"No, no! The energy of life may be
Kept on after the grave, hut not begun;
And he who flagg'd not in the earthly strife,
From strength to strength advancing—only he,
His soul well-knit, and all his battles won,
Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life."

Perspective

A reasonable measure of contentment with immediate surroundings is no foe to the aspiration which desires something more. If we take a deliberate survey of things, counting all life's pleasures and yet not ignoring any of its pains ; if we observe the steady movement of those laws which bring a sure reward to wise thought and noble action ; and still more, if we become conscious of a brooding love that by its merciful penalties not less than by its fine incentives would fain round out our character—in face of all this, any sane verdict must be that the light of earth is sweet, and that only a morbid nature would desire to shut it out. We do not need to have a telescope always at hand, however useful such an instrument may be sometimes. He who feels no interest in the waving corn-fields, "the innumerable laughter of the sea," the rush of the mountain-torrent, the shadows of the forest, the bird-songs at dawn, the busy hive of human toilers in the many-peopled

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town, the mingled tragedy and comedy which make up the world-drama, is equally unfit for earth or heaven. Though it be only for a season, yet even here we are the guests of God, and should try to make ourselves thoroughly deserving of His gracious hospitality.

One may do the present grave injustice by an excessive regard for the future. Some hymn-books, especially those intended for the use of children, have too many hymns about the world to come. There may be times, perhaps, when we are disposed to sing them with some enthusiasm; but they often have more than a touch of artificiality and insincerity. A healthy lad cannot be persuaded that he ought to make haste and die. And the full-grown man, if he has any good work to do, wants to have a chance to do it. Thomas Moore once wrote these lines :—

“ The world is all a fleeting show
For man's illusion given,

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Perspective

The smiles of joy, the tears of woe,
 Deceitful shine, deceitful flow,
 There's nothing true but heaven."

Now, apart from the fact that such words contain a libel on one province of the universe, they are not necessarily the expression of real piety. The poet's sentiments in regard to the future world did not prevent him from taking a good deal of pleasure out of this present world, and depicting its "illusion" with considerable power and fervour in *Lalla Rookh*. And the trouble does not lie in being pleased with earth, but in being pleased too cheaply and easily. George Eliot says of the author of *Night Thoughts* that "his secular man believes in cambric bands and silk stockings as characteristic attire for 'an ornament of religion and virtue'; hopes courtiers will never forget to copy Sir Robert Walpole; and writes begging letters to the King's mistress. His spiritual man recognizes no motives more

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familiar than Golgotha and 'the skies'; it walks in graveyards, or it soars among the stars." This is a curious combination of worldliness and other-worldliness which soon destroys the best type of both. For there is a right way of being "worldly"; and until one finds it out, he can never do his work well, nor lay it down with cheerful acquiescence. Under the strain of loss and trial, we may fall for a time into an unnatural mood which is not to be judged too severely; yet even then, grief is best hallowed, not by indifference to things around us, but by enriching earth's scenes with the best treasures of memory, and with more vital concern for the joys and sorrows of others.

At the same time, human vision is always overleaping the boundaries of sense, and catching some glimpse of

"Holy mysteries
Just on the outside of man's dream."

Perspective

Though Utopia means "No-Place," every one has his Utopia. The soul is prophetic of greater things to follow. It is more to the purpose to impress men that they are immortal than that they are mortal. No one seriously denies the palpable fact that we cannot stay here forever. But what we may deny, or at least forget, is not so much the transiency of the body as the permanence of the soul. And though, just at present, we are in the midst of excellent materials for the building up of character, many earnest thinkers have felt that before life is perfected, evil must vanish from its programme, and our complete enfranchisement be won. Such a forecaste is not to be explained as the coinage of a selfish brain. It gathers strength from the depth and dignity of our spiritual being.

But in order to bring about this issue, the highest tasks will not bear postponement. Heaven is a state as well as a

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place. We shall scarcely go to heaven when we die unless, in some measure, it has already come to us while we are yet alive. The most powerful leaders in every age in the march of human progress may be said to anticipate the future, because they act in the present as though the future, in a very real sense, was involved in it. To flash new light upon old subjects, to break the thralldom of effete superstitions, to plant the standard of truth a little nearer the unattained heights of the ideal—this is what the world needs most even when it seems least to want it. The men of lofty thought and large purpose are those whose names will remain when the brief stir over some narrow egotist has evaporated, and his memory has passed into oblivion. Our earthly tasks are delivered from all that is mean and sordid only in so far as they are viewed in the light of our whole moral nature, our splendid outlook, our immortal

Perspective

destiny. One of the marks of the artist-mind is to have a due sense of perspective, and an appreciation of relative values. We degrade life if we put the emphasis in the wrong place. Behind the shifting phenomena of daily experience is the mighty presence of God. Behind the play of material forces are those unchanging verities which govern all things. Behind our pleasures and our pains is the ineradicable essence that makes the man. The intimations of immortality which seem to be lodged in our nature are reënforced by every effort towards moral achievement. And therefore, though this realm does not mean less, the after-realm has to mean more.

"A man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for?"

That is the sphere of perfect consummation; and all that precedes it, the manifold service, the varied discipline, the rich sug-

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gestiveness of this fine old world, if we use them rightly, not only prepare us to reap the best rewards of the present, but prepare us also, when the proper time comes, to step out of our lodging-house, and enter upon the still more abundant and fruitful tasks of home.

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Appreciation

"A patient sympathy, a kindly fellow-feeling for the narrow intelligence necessarily induced by narrow circumstances—a narrowness which, in some degrees, seems to be inevitable, and is perhaps more serviceable than most things to the wise conduct of life—this, though quick and half-bred minds may despise it, seems to be a necessary constituent in the composition of manifold genius."

—WALTER BAGEHOT: *Literary Studies*.

"Je prend tout doucement les hommes comme ils sont,
J'accoutume mon âme à souffrir ce qu'ils font ;
Et je crois qu'à la cour, de même qu'à la ville,
Mon flegme est philosophe autant que votre bile."

—MOLIÈRE: *Le Misanthrope*.

Appreciation

MR. LOWELL, in an address on Democracy, quotes a saying of Theodore Parker that "Democracy meant not 'I'm as good as you are,' but 'You're as good as I am,'" and adds that this is "a conception which, could it be made actual and practical, would easily solve all the riddles that the old Sphinx of political and social economy who sits by the roadside has been proposing to mankind from the beginning." This may be regarded, perhaps, as too sanguine a judgment on the effect of the applied aphorism; but, at all events, some advantage is gained by the survey of life from a standpoint which is not dominantly personal. Whether the other man is bracketed equal or unequal—and if men were all equal they would cease to be men—there will be

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a much better chance of understanding him and meeting his needs than as though the fragment called "I" were made the pivot of the universe.

It is a fine thing to unite a well-rounded, thoughtful experience, accustomed to attack hard problems and to discharge difficult tasks with the juvenile freshness which finds perpetual charm in the world's many-sided phenomena. There is no danger then of falling into the tedium of a dull monotony, for even the commonplaces of human intercourse will bring some new suggestiveness, and the underlying fascination of life keep emerging into clearer view, so that the worn face is transfigured, and the dull eyes shine with a strange lustre, and the weary, humdrum, disenchanted folk show some traces of having also dwelt in Arcadia.

It makes all the difference what kind of a mood is cultivated in the study of those around us. As a rule, the deeper we pene-

Appreciation

trate into human nature, provided there is a spirit of sympathetic interest in our research, the more winsome and hopeful it will seem in every way.

“Earth was not earth before her sons appeared,
Nor Beauty Beauty ere young Love was born.”

No doubt there may be some unpleasant discoveries of meanness that has tried to hide behind the mask of respectability, and obstinate malice which refuses to be appeased, and lying slander whose snake-like twistings baffle detection, and coarse lusts which, though often tricked out in specious disguise, work their hideous ruin. If one were to look exclusively on the dark background of life's picture, any panegyric on mankind might well seem a mocking irony.

Some who claim to know the world have reached an attitude of almost universal distrust in regard to it. But instead of knowing it too well, the truth is

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that they do not know it well enough. They may have seen its worst side; but have they seen its best, the flashes of pure wit, the earnest grasp of intellectual realities, the rich depths of moral insight, the patient waiting for hope deferred, the quiet self-sacrifice which sounds no trumpet before it, the gallant struggle against odds that seem overwhelming, the kindly word and the helpful deed which pierce through shuttered windows like a ray of light from heaven? The Realist cannot fairly be said to earn that name if he is content to wallow in muddy waters when, higher up, the stream runs pure.

It is a common habit to undervalue what is near and to rhapsodize over what is far away. "Distant pastures look green." Viewed in perspective, there is no opportunity to examine with minute care the patches of dry grass or the clumps of prickly thistles. But illusions seem impossible with regard to the ground we are

Appreciation

treading every day. Its defects, at least, will be easily discovered, even though some of its merits escape notice. Who thinks of hunting for jewels in the beaten thoroughfares, or idealizing the life at our doors? And, as a consequence, its brighter hemisphere often falls into eclipse through the intervening of the opaque body of preconceived opinion. Our heroes and heroines are nearly all a long way off, or they pay us only a hurried visit on the dramatic stage or in the chapters of some novel; while, perhaps, the people we run against on the street stir no imagination at all.

This is especially so when we are observing "the average man." Indeed, it is quite possible to be as skeptical about his very existence as Betsey Prig was in regard to Mrs. Harris, when at a memorable tea-party she said, "I don't believe there's no sich person"; though if we looked in the mirror, most of us would see him. It

The Orbit of Life

is true that no two human beings are alike in everything. Differences in gifts grow out of that individuality which even the multiplication of machines cannot wholly destroy, and seem to prove that there is some place in the world for each one, and some specific work to do. And yet, large numbers of people share pretty much the same views on a variety of subjects, and are not conspicuous for outstanding features of any kind. This preponderance of mediocrity tends to make it unpicturesque, and to deprive it of fascinating power. To the casual observer, at least, "the average man" looks like one of a row of houses and has nothing distinctive in his pattern that challenges attention. He is neither Dives nor Lazarus, neither a genius nor a dolt; neither of the salt of the earth, nor yet an outcast from reputable assemblages; neither big enough to excite wonder, nor small enough to excite pity. If he receives no kicks, he receives no ha'pence. He

Appreciation

seems so hopelessly conventional that those in search of objects upon which enthusiasm can be lavished are often inclined to pass him by.

The kings of men cannot be ignored, and ought not to be. Even the imperfect appreciation of those who have raised themselves above the multitude in thought and action is educational, and the whole tone of life would soon degenerate without it. The profound teacher, the ardent patriot, the tuneful poet deservedly find many to admire them; and after their praises have been sung by the great world, their native hamlet is also stirred to a tardy delight which finds expression, perhaps, in a posthumous monument.

Nor is it difficult to inspire some interest in the tag-ends of the social fabric. Extremes converge in a festival for those out at elbows. From one point of view, the event might make a paragraph in the columns of a fashionable newspaper, for well-

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groomed men and daintily-dressed women are there to fill the mouths of the hungry. East End and West End are met together ; Aristocracy and Democracy have kissed each other. So far from being left alone, "the horny-handed son of toil" has at times such an extraordinary collection of friends that he is liable to be confused, and scarcely knows from which ones he had better pray to be delivered.

No generous mind would wish to discourage any sincere desire to help the poor and unfortunate. Though the task of the modern Good Samaritan has become extremely complicated in many cases, and calls for a sound intelligence as well as a sympathetic heart in order to serve and yet not demoralize the man who has fallen among thieves, it is a hopeful sign that a growing number recognize the responsibility, and strive to meet it in a broad, human way without assuming airs of ostentation or of patronage. But why

Appreciation

should the man who has a whole coat on his back and a few dollars in his pocket fail to be taken just as seriously? He may be more like ourselves; but he, too, has his joys and sorrows, his needs and longings, his sacred memories, and, perhaps, his "august anticipations of a dim splendour ever on before." He will not startle us by his brilliant gifts, nor make us weep because of his lack of bread and butter. Yet, though his work seems unheroic, may he not have something of the hero-spirit in him? Why should not the artist paint his picture, and the poet weave his fortunes into verse, and the lover of his kind include him in the circle of a wide-sweeping philanthropy? It would be absurd to confine the nobler charities of life to those above or beneath us, and to treat our comrades in a half-flippant and superficial spirit except when some crisis of trial seemed almost to necessitate a more profound view of them.

The Orbit of Life

In the opening paragraph of *Heroes and Hero-Worship* Carlyle says, "As I take it, the history of what man has accomplished in this world is at bottom the history of the Great Men who have worked here." But while the historic Muse connects certain names with remarkable military triumphs, or with a revival of learning, or with a moral reformation that turns things upside down, such herculean achievements as these have been made possible to the single arm only when its strength was recruited by loyal followers who leave behind no materials for a biography. There were present the gigantic figures that seem to fill the stage, "and others" who did not think it an impertinence to help the helpers as much as they could. Epoch-making deeds are not for every day ; but every day the routine of the world's work goes on, and is being done in a large measure by an anonymous multitude. It means more to human progress that the mediocre man

Appreciation

should be the whole of himself rather than the pale fragment of some greater personality.

When little Alice told her adventures in Wonderland to her older sister, "she sat on with closed eyes, and half believed herself in Wonderland, though she knew she had only to open them again and everything would change to dull reality." But there is a Wonderland always about us which we shall see when our eyes are open wide enough, a romance of the familiar that ought to stir both brain and heart. And though the glowing vision which throws over ordinary scenes a spell of perpetual enchantment may be regarded, in its highest form, as the exclusive gift of genius, every one must try to cultivate some of this power, or else the poetry of life will soon vanish, and even its prose become of the flattest order. True appreciation is not a mere intellectual talent but a spiritual grace, and the utmost cleverness does not produce it apart from the revealing insight

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of sympathy. An ounce of practical beneficence to some one near at hand is worth more, to the giver as well as the receiver, than a pound of vague, theoretic sentiment towards those who are far away. Poor Peepy Jellaby, recording the progress of his fall down-stairs by ominous raps, discredits the maternal anxiety for the natives of Borrioboola-Gha on the left bank of the Niger. If the edges of love are frayed by usage among accustomed scenes, is it probable that any great interest will be felt in the woes of the Antipodes?

There may be no undiscovered prophets dwelling beside us, no "mute, inglorious Milton," no embryonic heroes destined for world-wide renown. But are there not some, at least, whom we have never quite understood, to whom we have done scant justice, whose faithful toil we have accepted as a matter of course, but whose slightest fault, perhaps, has been visited with pitiless condemnation? Sometimes the day comes

Appreciation

when we feel this. Under Death's smoothing touch, defects are forgotten, and all the patient, unselfish ministry comes back to remembrance with a pathetic vividness, till our heart aches with a vain regret, and our eyes are filled with unavailing tears.

To look into the interior of a single human soul and learn something of its intrinsic value is the first step towards solving the vast problem of the world's need, and reading the secret of that Divine compassion which, through the ages, seems to keep an unwearied optimism in spite of everything. A good deal of despair springs out of nothing else than pure loneliness. There are stern-faced, sad-eyed men and women walking our streets every day who might be likened to a noble organ locked up, and a little out of tune; and they wait for some one who knows how to coax forth the silent music. And though at times this desire may assume morbid or even self-debasing forms—a tyranny of the

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weak which is almost as much to be resented as the tyranny of the strong—yet it must never be thought that the contents of any life are exhausted until more or less distinct traces appear upon it of that original charm which marks God's handiwork. In spite of many faults, there is always some attraction about the real self, and social intercourse is a poor thing if it does not help to develop it. No one will ever show what he is or what he can be if hemmed in by constant disparagement; for souls are like sensitive plants that close up quickly in an uncongenial atmosphere. But it is a chivalrous ambition to revive their hope, to bring out their strength and loveliness, to expand the wings of Psyche that she may soar above earth's dust and turmoil. And this task begins, not in some distant region, but among those whom, though we think we know them best of all, may yet possess an unexplored remainder, full of fine surprises, rich in varied treasure.

Contrary Winds

“After long storms and tempests overblown,
The sun at last his joyous face doth clear:
So when as fortune all her spite has shown,
Some blissful hours at last must needs appear,
Else should afflicted wights oftimes despeire.”

—SPENSER: *The Fairie Queene.*

Contrary Winds

THE most significant things, even about Nature, are those which we do not see at all. We look into the face of the world's varied beauty, and our eye rejoices in the white flower, the ruddy fruit, the deep blue of the waters, the mingled gold and gray of the autumn woods. But the highest Nature-study is found in the life behind these, the primal cause of all phenomena; and life itself eludes complete examination. Its lovely, many-coloured robe trails over the whole earth, but a veil hides its countenance from view.

We hear the wind whistling down the chimney, or murmuring through the pines, or sighing by the seashore, or raging in some dreadful hurricane. But we cannot see the wind. It is the emblem of those

The Orbit of Life

mysterious and potent forces which continually play upon human life. The old Greeks turned the winds into divinities, and Hebrew thought pictured "the prince of the power of the air." It seemed as though the soft breeze must have a kindly heart, and Boreas a frigid one, and the rough east wind some demon in it. Our nature is too large to be controlled simply by what we can touch and handle. It needs also the spirit forces which come from far, and awe us by their majesty. Better a contrary wind than none at all; and the wind is sure to be contrary sometimes, no matter in what direction we are going. So wide is the sea of life, that while in some parts of it fair weather may prevail as a general rule, yet even in the sunniest latitudes sudden storms arise, and seem the more violent in contrast with the smooth sailing which has preceded them. Envy would be much less common than it now is if we were able to read every page

Contrary Winds

of the log-book locked away in the chart-house of the soul. Almost anything may happen when a vessel once gets outside the sheltered harbour.

No life has ever developed into the largest proportions without some contrary winds beating upon it. . If our chief concern here were to have "a good time"; if selfishness were man's crowning excellence instead of his most hideous deformity; if there were no fine tasks to achieve, no lofty truths to be made known, no vital sympathy to be expended upon the need of others, then it might do to have the wind always at our back. But who would wish to escape the discipline by which his moral nature gains its elevation for the sake of keeping a luxurious indolence?

"Who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being?"

In the thick of stress and peril the heroism of the soul is matured. Then it is that we are trained in patience, fired with energy,

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roused to beneficent deeds towards those who, perhaps, are lashed helpless to the mast, while we are free to fight the storm. Though we may not like it, the rebuff of a contrary wind is often the best thing that could happen to us. Heaven would be an uninteresting realm, and, in some respects, a dangerous one if we were not educated for it by means of trials which bring out nobility of character. Only after the frictions of time is it safe to promise a frictionless eternity.

And yet, the contrary wind may often be accentuated by a contrary spirit in ourselves. Any sailor prefers a favouring breeze; but if he is of the right sort, he will yoke adverse forces to his resolute will, and make what headway he can even against the storm. There is no virtue bound up of necessity in the hardships of life. All depends upon the way in which we view them. We may manufacture an east wind out of almost anything and revel

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in a luxury of gratuitous wretchedness, yet be further from truly noble living than those upon whom the sun seems to shine all the time. The very same circumstances affect different persons in wholly different ways. While this man delights in a difficult task, and keys up his nature to the utmost requirements of the situation, that man folds his hands in absolute despair. Some patiently endure the fret of sickness, and learn the rich lessons which it brings; others keep chafing against it, and resume customary duties neither wiser nor better for the interruption of them. There are those who, after the blow which has shattered their hopes and well nigh broken their heart, still find that a sweet, consoling peace creeps in like sunshine through the thick darkness of grief; and there are those who curse a cruel fate, and discern no large and kindly master-hand at work amid the tangled threads of human history.

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We shall not have much wind of any kind until we launch out into the deep. The narrow, apathetic, unadventurous life escapes a good deal of buffeting. But if its pains are lessened, so also are its pleasures. It is a stranger to the rich moral discipline that is perfected through suffering, and to the fresh hope that may be awakened under the magic touch of human fellowship. The splendid exhilaration of noble work in the world never visits it at all; and if, by closing the blinds in the soul's dwelling-house, it does not see the ominous clouds, neither does it see the rainbow behind them. The waves may be said to pay the mariner a compliment when they enter into a rough duel with him. A weakling would be no opponent, but only a victim. Strong trials are reserved for strong men, and the more their violence is concentrated, the more they bring forth the hidden treasures of bravery and resourcefulness. We must

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not underestimate the possible powers of our own nature, still less that patient, Divine care which, in spite of life's perplexities, is at the heart of the world. Those who most impress us with their fortitude in the midst of trial, and their ability to serve others in a really inspiring way, would be the first to acknowledge that a great Presence behind themselves, yet somehow working in them, is the secret of their strength and hopefulness. At first sight we may hesitate to couple the thought of care with God, and may even feel a sense of loneliness because of our very reverence for Him. It might well seem that if the anxious care that so often rends us asunder only found a larger illustration in the bosom of the Eternal, then, though we assumed His desire to help us, we could never expect to find any permanent release from our doubt and pain and sin. But the "care" of God is of a different quality from much of

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ours. He cares for us with a care implying constant and tender solicitude, yet tranquil and serene in the infinite light which sees all things, and the infinite love which does all things well. And thus His care becomes the destroyer of our care when they intermingle; and so far from lowering our conception of Him, reveals in the most beautiful form the wondrous wealth of His Fatherhood. For while our care is like the angry wind that lashes the ocean into tempestuous fury, and sends its crested billows in swift assault upon the shore, His care is like the brooding dove which, at the beginning, moved over the face of the chaotic waters; or like the unruffled Voice which, when the surf was tossing high on Galilee, quelled the mariners' fear as it cried, "Peace, be still!"

Love's Thoroughfare

"In strange and unlooked-for ways the mission of sacrifice and love fulfils itself, and living in the full light of its influence, we can never realize the blessing we have derived, the changed aspect of the race we have inherited, from the cross of Christ."

—J. H. SHORHOUSE: *The Little Schoolmaster Mark.*

"Sure maybe ye've heard the red-breast
Singin' his lone on a thorn,
Mindin' himself o' the dear days lost,
Brave wid his heart forlorn.
The time is in dark November,
And no spring hopes has he:
'Remember,' be sings, 'Remember!'
Ay, *thon's* the wee bird for me."

—MOIRA O'NEILL: *Songs of the Glens of Antrim.*

Love's Thoroughfare

A CERTAIN capacity for loving is innate in every one, and no matter how obscured or perverted, it will never be wholly destroyed unless man is dehumanized. We are so made that we must have some objects round which thought and feeling are intertwined; and nobody is to be envied who tries to cultivate that apathetic indifference which reduces such a desire to a minimum. Yet it is well to know when to let our hearts have free play. A great deal of the pathos and tragedy of life is occasioned by inconsiderate haste in the exercise of the emotions. Unsuspecting natures of the impulsively generous order are apt to be prodigal of their confidence, and scarcely realize that they are like lambs in the midst of wolves until the wolves have devoured them. Love is too precious a

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thing to be thrown about promiscuously. It must go with reason and conscience if its service is not to become abortive. However much one may wish to reveal his whole self, under certain circumstances restraint is almost forced upon him. No doubt it is our own fault in many cases that we do not love our fellows as we should ; but sometimes it is their fault that the love which is ready to be bestowed, knocks at their door in vain. Though love tries to be impartial, it has to seem partial on account of different attitudes in the recipients of it.

And yet, if our interest is confined only to those whose similarity of tastes promises a congenial response, it will be extremely circumscribed. Large numbers of people will then be quite outside the pale of our sympathetic regard, and we in turn shall be outside theirs. A man may have a passion for the most thoughtful literature ; but many show no leaning towards tough in-

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tellectual exercise, and would no more understand his raptures over some masterpiece than they would understand a strange language. Or he may be thrilled by the immortal productions of the uncrowned kings of harmony ; but good work is being done in the world by some who while not averse, perhaps, to the catchy air of a comic opera, would be bored by a Fugue of Bach or an Oratorio of Handel or a Symphony of Beethoven, and inclined to meet his fervour with an incredulous sneer. Life is so many-sided, and has such a variety of realms in which to move, that even with the best intentions and the largest powers, we can hope to explore only a few of them. And though the laws which determine the measure of friendliness between human souls are by no means easy to analyze, if we admit no other law than that of "elective affinity," and shut out every one who is not included under it, we may reach in the end the disdain of the Roman poet who

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said, "I loathe the common herd, and keep them at a distance."

Of course, those who share our enthusiasms, and agree with our general conceptions of what is meant by living will naturally appeal to us more than those who do not. While the Christian religion teaches us to love all men, including our foes, it does not make its doctrine impossible of practice by expecting love to be parcelled out everywhere in equal quantities. Even Jesus had His favourites, the chosen Three among the Twelve ; and that quiet home at Bethany was the one place where He could rest at ease. There are some scenes in which His soul is half hidden, simply because it has to be ; but the significant fact is that His love for those nearest to Him in thought and feeling did not seem to impair His love for those who were dull and unappreciative and openly hostile, though He could not always show the full radiance of it. His patience with

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the disciples' stupid blunders was most wonderful, and His last prayer was for the implacable mob which had hounded Him on to Calvary. There is ample reason for cultivating those special intimacies which are a mutual stimulus ; but at the same time we should do what we can to keep the way open for wholesome and kindly relationships in every quarter, that even enemies may have the chance, at least, to become friends, and icebergs to be melted in the Gulf Stream of the heart. It is suggestive to observe how persons are often drawn together, in spite of the absence of common interests, by some mysterious bond which is far deeper. We may learn from mistakes in the display of feeling ; but we shall never be made wise by callousness. If the best that is in us does not seem to be wanted, still it is the best ; and it is hard to imagine any circumstances under which one can be absolutely sure that it has spent its strength for nought.

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We are sometimes half afraid of love, because we have not quite learned its essential sacredness. Though love is not blind, the human race has been so blind to love that a long course of training was required before it so much as began to apprehend the great motive force which comes from Him who, as Goldsmith beautifully expressed it, "loved us into being." Such love as the old paganism had, was, for the most part, only a phase of selfishness, and often degenerated into brutal lust. And even among those nobler spirits who refused to drift into the general current of pollution, love had become almost a hopeless affair, and after a series of disenchantments, a school of cynicism arose which boasted that it cared for no one. The world had yet to understand that love is neither a narrow passion which centres in self alone, nor a vain expenditure lavished upon others. There cannot be too much love, provided it is love indeed, and not its danger-

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ous travesty. The poet-painter, William Blake, hears two voices from the clod and the pebble. The one sings,

“ Love seeketh not itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care,
But for another gives its ease,
And builds a heaven in hell's despair.”

The other sings,

“ Love seeketh only self to please,
To bind another to its delight,
Joys in another's loss of ease,
And builds a hell in heaven's despite.”

No one who consults the noblest instincts of his own nature can doubt for a moment from which side the true voice comes. Love must have a high ethical quality as well as a strong passion if it is to be at once the greatest thing in the world and the best. Only then can it afford to let itself go without injuring its own sensitive fabric or the object upon which it rests. As we come to discern what love really means, to prefix the adjective “immoral”

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to it will seem to involve a contradiction in terms.

Titian's well-known painting, "Sacred and Profane Love," in the Borghese Gallery at Rome, admirable as it is from an artistic standpoint, has been thought by some to place in opposition the loves of earth and heaven, as though the former were of coarser material. At all events, a false asceticism often falls into this mistake in its reaction against a far more false licentiousness. Sidney Lanier, that pure and chivalrous soul, to whom all love was sacred, whether human or Divine, strikes a more healthful note in the poem *In Absence*:—

"Let no man say, 'He at his lady's feet
Lays worship which to heaven alone belongs;
Yea, swings the incense which for God is meet
In flippant censers of light lover's songs.'
Who says it, knows not God, nor love, nor thee,
For love is large as is yon heavenly dome;
In love's great blue, each passion is full free
To fly his favourite flight and build his home."

Such a doctrine can only be misunderstood

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by those who forget that, while love in one sense is free as the birds, yet like all other really free things, it is bound by the chain of a noble necessity. There is no idle dalliance in its tone, no trace of successive effervescences induced by mere selfishness. Chloe and Phyllis and all the rest of the attractive band of nymphs are not the chief subjects of its lyric. So far from being a thing of caprice, it is rooted in unchanging principles. It can turn from heaven to earth and not be ashamed. Its mode of display is governed by a wise discernment which seeks to give each his due and to defraud no one. And yet it will not consent to sacrifice its character to a cheap reputation for geniality. Though not easily provoked, it is not easily satisfied. The only fear which perfect love is not intended to cast out is the wholesome fear of anything that would desecrate or outrage it. Love is baffled until it sees its image reflected in the face of the world,

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and with the true artist-feeling it aspires to realize the consummate loveliness which perpetually haunts its dreams.

There is a fine sanity about love. It makes no effort to describe its circumference until it has first found a centre. It does not forget the nearer tasks of daily life in the glamour of some expansive scheme of benevolence. And because it keeps inviolate the sanctities of home and of close friendship, it is all the better prepared to minister to others, to woo each one apart, as though, for the moment, no one else required its aid; and having studied the particular case, to say the word or do the deed that is most appropriate. For while all are not equally lovable, nor equally inclined to be loved, if we penetrate beneath the surface of those hard incrustations accumulated, perhaps, through years of suffering or disappointment or the world's neglect and scorn, something will be found upon which love can fasten, or

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rather into which love can enter like a leaven until it permeates the whole being. Love is hard to kill. Even with torn hands it will strive to remove the hindrances to beneficent contact with every child of man ; and if it fails at last in its humble, reverent service, there is nothing else that can take up its burden and finish the work which is given it to do.

And though we are in the twentieth century of the Christian era, Love still cries out for a fuller and sweeter illustration. Earth waits, like a captive maiden, with head uplifted, and straining, eager eyes, on the watch, not simply for a lover's coming, but for the coming of Love itself to break the bonds of her imprisonment. When we learn to show more true love to one another, it will be easier for all men to believe in the love of God. The panegyrics over the marvels of our time often tend to lay too much stress upon the material side of things.

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"We throw out acclamations of self-thinking, self-admiring,
With, at every mile run faster, 'Oh, the wondrous, wondrous age!'

Little thinking if we work our *souls* as nobly as our iron,
Or if angels will commend us at the goal of pilgrimage."

In the midst of social and commercial rivalries, minor differences among men are apt to receive greater emphasis than their fundamental likenesses; and in many cases, love is held in abeyance as more or less out of place, or else given only a meagre and perfunctory exercise. But, however much we may be helped or hindered in other ways, it is love alone which will weave out of the most ordinary stuff a robe of matchless beauty. Love is the great magician. It unites the prophet's insight and breadth of vision with the power of the practical reformer who leads mankind step by step out of the lower walks of progress towards the higher ones. Too holy in its essence and too serious in its purpose to minimize the work of evil, it dares to face the sternest facts of experi-

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ence ; and still believing that good is destined to be the triumphant principle in the universe, it chants its psalm of glorious expectation when all other voices are burdened with melancholy, or hushed in the silence of unconquerable despair.

Self-Mastery

"Every man's Nemean lion lies in wait for him somewhere. The slothful man says, there is a lion in the path. He says well. The quiet *unslothful* man says the same, and knows it too. But they differ in their farther reading of the text. The slothful man says, I shall be slain, and the *unslothful*, IT shall be."

—RUSKIN: *The Queen of the Air.*

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IF one is alive, there will be much in him which needs control, and yet is not going to submit without a struggle. It takes a practiced hand to manage a pair of high-spirited horses so that they will not run away; and he would be a phenomenal charioteer who could drive wild beasts *tandem* and keep them under the rein together. This is the kind of task which ardent natures have to face. As compared with some primitive peoples, we have lost in frankness and gained in outward decorum, because we hide objectionable eccentricities from public view. But the human heart is still a curious menagerie. Though the animals may be pretty well tamed in the cage of civilization, it does not follow that their rougher instincts are destroyed. A good many

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different selves often seem to be included in the self. How shall we bind them into a real unity?

"When shall we lay
The ghost of the brute that is walking and haunting us yet
and be free?"

This is the great problem of life.

The "temperance" crusade, therefore, cannot be sectional. It must be pushed with equal fervour into every province of our being, or no one can tell when a mutiny may ruin everything. There are tragic instances of those whose brilliant intellect has left the world fragments of glowing thought and imagination, but whose light has been quenched before its time by an irresolute will or a corrupt heart. Many men of shrewdness and prevision who, in spite of difficulties, carry their plans to a prosperous issue, are lamentably weak in dealing with themselves. No doubt "talent uniformly sinks with character," and the best that might

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have been is never accomplished at all; yet it is possible for a man to attain considerable success in what he does, and fail in what he is, winning applause for his enterprises, and at the same time knowing that he is beaten and disgraced in his inmost soul.

We all have our "off" days when it is hard to work, hard to think, and harder still to be good. Virtue seems to chafe at times against the magnificent monotony, and to clamour for a short vacation. None can escape, either *ex officio* or otherwise, from the friction of some kind of trial that will test the strength of manhood. Moral excellence is an achievement, not an accident. It will not come by lazily wishing for it, nor by a vain attempt to prolong the period of unconscious innocence. To be perfectly aware of the antagonism between right and wrong; to feel, it may be, a fierce, mad impulse towards the wrong, and yet to keep to the right—that is virtue.

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And such a triumph will be gained only by the unflagging exercise of a well-trained and athletic resolution. Many tendencies of our own nature oppose the troublesome effort, and many of the world's maxims laugh it to scorn. The conduct of life is no easy thing. Sometimes unpleasant surprises check our equanimity, and the goal seems like a vanishing Will-o'-the-Wisp that mocks the adventurous pursuer.

"We do not see it where it is
At the beginning of the race;
As we proceed it shifts its place,
And where we looked for crowns to fall,
We find the tug's to come, that's all."

It is conceivable that we might have been placed in a world where life's programme could be worked out with the exact precision of machinery. But in that case we should soon degenerate into moral imbeciles. Sharp alternatives constantly necessitate a self-revealing choice, and as the domino drops, others, too, find

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out what manner of persons we are. "Heredity" and "environment" are favourite words on the modern tongue, and a good service is rendered by those who examine their far-reaching influence. "There are faces," says George Eliot in *Adam Bede*, "which nature charges with a meaning and pathos not belonging to the single human soul that flutters beneath them, but speaking the joys and sorrows of foregone generations." When we think of the awful handicaps under which some labour all through their life, we may well ask how far, under similar circumstances, we should have differed even from the worst of them.

And yet, the belief remains that, no matter how hard the fight may be, moral obligation is inseparable from personality. Every man is conscious of at least a measure of freedom which makes him something more than the resultant of the forces that play upon him, and in a very

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real sense the architect of his own fortune.
Few will be disposed to sing the careless
song,

" We have drunken of Lethe at last, we have aten of
Lotus;
What hurts it us here that sorrows are born and
die?
We have said to the dream that caressed and the dread
that smote us,
' Good-night and Good-bye.' "

We feel that earth is not the place for an
inglorious, fatalistic ease, whatever its
helps or hindrances, and that the award
is a fair one which gives the crown of life
to him that overcometh.

In the process of moral training, pro-
hibitives of the right sort will have an
educational value. While nothing can ren-
der superfluous the vigilance of personal
discipline, if the State is at no pains to re-
move needless obstacles out of the way of
wholesome living, it does not escape re-
sponsibility. And yet, since legislative
enactments would be a dead letter if they

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had no support from public opinion, it is, after all, the writing on the soul's statute-book which counts most. There are some, perhaps, who will keep to the highroad for awhile simply because of signboards warning against trespass. But though they may be frightened by such things, they are not ennobled. The repressive method has been tried over and over again, and at most, it has produced only a colourless virtue, wanting alike in courage and in sympathy. The lower "Don't" from without is insufficient unless followed by a higher "Do" from within. When Ulysses' vessel neared the island of the Sirens he had himself tied to the mast lest he should go after them. But Orpheus found a sufficient escape even from the wish to heed their seductive voices in the sweeter music of his own lyre.

The true philosophy of life is intensely positive, and the denials it imposes are always for the sake of something better. It

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encourages hobbies, and is not so much afraid of enthusiasms as of the lack of them. Passionate youth says, "I want to see life," and the answer should be, "See life by all means, only be certain that it is life, and not its hideous caricature." The errant souls that roam through darksome places need but some pure kiss of love to change their abode and wake them into new vitality. Human nature abhors a vacuum, and will try to fill it in some way. The final purpose of moral discipline is to build up such a strong, clean character that, while rejecting what is, in its very essence, a foe to self-realization, we are able to make everything which properly belongs to us a servitor of righteousness. As quaint George Herbert puts it,

"Correct thy passion's spite,
Then may the beasts draw thee to happy light."

Most men are sensible of internal conflict, and do not feel by any means sure

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always in regard to the issue. But unless one accepts the yoke of self-control of his own accord, and finds in bearing it the true secret of liberty, in the first crisis of trial the impulse will be to throw it off altogether. We shall never become virtuous by cultivating the fear of living. He who is not good in the world has no reason to think that he will be made good by going out of it. When Paul said that he "kept exercising himself" to have a conscience void of offense, the word he used is the one from which we derive "asceticism." But he was far from employing it in its present sense. To his thought, the moral gymnastic has to be practiced in life's great arena, and is not intended to lead to a lugubrious "goody-goodyism" or a Pecksnifian saintliness. It is militant, virile, the healthy and normal preparation of the soldier who expects to be in the forefront of the battle, not the artifice of the timid soul who runs away from it to some quiet haven

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where the clash of the combatants is heard no more.

Character must have sufficient sturdiness to endure the rough time-breezes, because it stands deep-rooted instead of depending on external props of any kind. The Son of Man went about freely among men. He lived their life ; He rejoiced in their joys ; He shared their sorrows ; He came into sympathetic contact with every phase of earthly experience. He was great enough to be in the world and yet not to be moved by its wild follies, its false ambitions, its ugly sins. And the disciples who will best serve Him are not those to whom caution is the queen of all the virtues, and who think it enough to tie up their own hands and the hands of others lest freedom should be abused ; but men with a warm love and an overmastering earnestness, who can be temperate among the intemperate, and pure among publicans and sinners ; men who thoroughly appreciate living, yet

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who would be prepared, if need be, to lay down their lives rather than be false to their conscience and their God.

Though Sinai and its Decalogue may be wanting, almost every people will try to devise something like it for themselves. It has been felt from the earliest times and among the least enlightened races that right and wrong are not to be heaped together in indiscriminate confusion, and that some effort should be made to prevent human nature from running about *en deshabelle*. The various codes of ethics which are the outgrowth of the centuries, whatever their defects, bear witness to the strength and permanence of this conviction. The Greek and Roman moralists wrote very pretty sayings about self-control, and not only commended it to others, but, to do them justice, endeavoured in many cases to practice it themselves. But it was dull work even at the best, and we need not wonder that it sometimes ended

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in despair and suicide. One feels the immeasurable distance, for example, between the *Encheiridion* of Epictetus, though adopted as a religious work by the early Church, and the Sermon on the Mount. In spite of his limitations, there is something in the Puritan which is not found in the Stoic. The Galilean Teacher expands the whole boundary of life, and presents at once new principles of action and new motives for illustrating them. He shows that morality is not a thing of shreds and patches, a tiresome allegiance to rules and shibboleths dictated by a selfish desire for our own safety, but the child-spirit seeking its fulfillment in the most unstudied way when it moves in the orbit of glad obedience to the Father whose kindly touch is on all His works, and who bids us push out poorer aims by sharing the passion of His service for mankind. This is the secret of Jesus ; and when any one has learned it, he can afford to express his

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nature, and yet be governed by that fine restraint which keeps him evermore joyously and half-unconsciously submissive to the perfect law of liberty.

In the Midst of the Years

"That man who does not believe that each day contains an earlier, more sacred, and auroral hour than he has yet profaned, has despaired of life, and is pursuing a descending and darkening way."

—THOREAU: *Walden*.

"I hear great steps that through the shade
Draw nigher still and nigher,
And voices call like that which hade
The prophet come up higher."

—J. R. LOWELL: *An Interview with Miles Standish*.

In the Midst of the Years

THE opening chapters of a nation's annals usually have some romance about them, and the singer tunes his harp to strains of brave adventure and noble sacrifice. But after a few generations, when an assured place has been found in the theatre of the world, and government established and laws made, unless memorable events help to maintain the splendid patriotism of earlier times, the nation often jogs on through a period of unheroic routine, and possesses the equivocal happiness of having no history that is worth recording.

So, too, the career of the individual begins with the stir of action, and has about it the excitement of frequent surprises. There is plenty to do, and almost everything to hope for. It is good to be alive,

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and a wide realm of fruitful enterprise seems to lie between us and the going down of the sun. A young man whose nature has not been corrupted by vicious training not only takes a bright view of his future possibilities, but is disposed to cultivate some elevation of tone in face of them. He may not yet have learned the secret of true self-respect, but he would think it inartistic

“To be a jarring and dissonant thing
Amid the general dance and minstrelsy.”

The illusions of youth, if one chooses to call them such, are often far nearer the mark than the disenchantments of a jaded maturity. If life be like a voyage, we are all more or less sanguine and cheerful at the outset of it. And towards the end, however much rough weather has been encountered on the open sea, past discomforts are forgotten in the near prospect of land and the welcome harbour-lights.

In the Midst of the Years

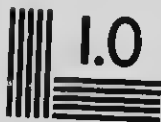
Youth has its unquenchable ardours, and old age its fond memories and dim anticipations. But it is in mid-ocean that the nausea is apt to come, when nothing can be seen but the gray sky and the heaving billow; when the wintry blast whistles overhead and the storm bursts forth; or, what is even more trying, perhaps, when a monotonous calm reigns everywhere, and each day is just like all the others. Rapid transit, at almost any cost, then seems the chief thing to be desired, no matter what may happen upon the farther shore.

No doubt "the daily round, the common task" deserve all the praise that moralists have bestowed upon them. Life is maintained by regular breathing, not by spasms of feverish agitation. If we grow tired of the reiterated appeals of Duty, "Stern daughter of the voice of God," it will be only a mischievous stimulus that we get elsewhere. Now and then, there are red-letter days of notable work or glorious in-



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

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The Orbit of Life

sight or unlooked-for recompense, days which tower aloft like glittering mountain-peaks above the level plain. But in the case of most men, great days are rare. And unless we feel an interest in the uneventful ones, and find a pleasure in the gifts they bring, life is sure to be vexed with so much discontent and *ennui* as to raise the serious question whether it is worth going on with at all.

The thirst for novelty is natural enough, and many a heart has been broken for want of knowing how to quench it. Novelty cannot be purchased by changing our skies. It comes unsought by means of that gradual self-development which all the time imparts fresh significance to everything around us. Eager natures do not take kindly to a treadmill; and the man with a growing soul need not fear that, under any circumstances, he will become the victim of such a bondage. Even the most ordinary duties preserve some at-

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tractiveness if we are at all conscious of the power to make each day a new creation.

Of course, as time runs on, we shall inevitably lose some things. We cannot keep youth always, with its optimism of inexperience. The psalm of life, which opened in sprightly measure, falls after awhile into blank verse, full of the roll of rich, strong music, or else largely meaningless. Some earlier hopes are unlikely to be realized, and sorrows that were not anticipated throw their dark shadow across our pathway. And if no gains appear to compensate for the losses, we may be inclined some day to laugh with bitter irony at the visions that once haunted us, and to exchange them for "facts and figures" as more suitable to a sedateness which looks for little more. It is when we have been forced to abandon certain crude ideas, and have not yet found an assured place in our mind for better ones that the temptation

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comes to give up what seems a vain striving, and resign ourselves to boredom. How many hundreds of times we have gone to office or factory or church, observing the same rules, performing the same kind of service, taking it for granted, perhaps, that while all this is proper enough and necessary in many ways, it would be absurd to expect any fresh delight or inspiration in it. And so failure visits us in the midst of the years, or, what is just as bad, a deadly staleness. We seem to be disillusioned. The fire of the soul is cooled, the rapture gone, the bright light faded away. We have dropped from "the glory and the dream," and it suffices us now to be respectable!

This is the prosaic course of not a few careers that were once described as "full of promise." They have lost the capital which, if wisely invested, would have gone on increasing—a grip of truth, a broad view of things, a resolute will, a

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pure and sympathetic heart. Petty concerns swallow up their energy, and make their souls Lilliputian. They present the pathetic spectacle of self-imposed deterioration, not through any horrible misdoing, but simply because they have not resisted the forces hostile to human progress. We cannot help it that the days of earth are growing fewer; but the fault is ours if they are growing poorer. It makes little difference under what lucky star a man was born if he has stopped living. The amount of youthfulness left in us cannot be settled by the calendar. He who still thinks profoundly and feels sincerely and lives unselfishly does not need to trouble much about the flight of time, for he is being carried along with it towards better Edens than any he leaves behind. The zest of life will always be retained if we do not cheapen ourselves. It must never be supposed that the vital current has to grow thinner, and that its brightest sparkle

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comes from days that are no more. Rivers deepen as they near the sea unless the sands have choked their waters.

Personal character and nothing else ultimately determines how life shall look to us. The quality of the microcosm is the all-important thing.

"Fixed on the enormous galaxy,
Deeper and older seemed his eye;
And matched his suffering sublime
The taciturnity of time."

One may still hold his head erect through poverty or toil or pain, and triumph over them, but it is impossible to do so if the soul itself has been materialized. That is what makes a man old even though no gray hairs are upon him. The revival of life comes from within and tends to the constant production of healthy moral tissue. Why should we be always praying the same prayers, fighting the same enemies, confessing with easy nonchalance that we are the same "miserable sinners"?

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When we feel that we have still a long way to go before we reach perfection, we shall scarcely be content to "mark time." And unless the higher side of our nature has become hermetically sealed, it can never be said that nothing more remains for us to do or be, and that all further effort is futile.

Watts' picture of Hope as a drooping woman, seated on the apex of the globe, clasping in her hand a lyre every string of which is broken save one, seems to contradict the general idea, and presents a puzzle to many. But the artist's curious symbolism suggests, at least, this truth, that Hope, so far from being the exclusive monopoly of youth, in its highest and most enduring form is the last result of well-tested manhood, a winter-blooming plant in the garden of the soul. "Experience worketh hope" when experience has gone deep enough. Others may think they have discovered our limit of attainment, and

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ceased to feel any further interest ; but we need not try to appraise our full value until we have taken into account the marvelous encouragement to noblest living that comes from the vision of an all-patient and all-pitiful love. Dorothea, the heroine of *Middlemarch* opened up a wide vista when she said "that by desiring what is perfectly good, even when we don't quite know what it is, and cannot do what we would, we are part of the Divine power against evil, widening the skirts of light, and making the struggle with darkness narrower." The possibility of such an alliance may well take the lassitude out of any one, and teach him that the most serviceable revelations are written in the regular text-books and amid the scenes of each passing day. It is not meant that we should be always walking through meadows of asphodel, or lying at ease on the slopes of the Delectable Mountains. Our main road is across the level prairie. But we have everything of

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importance there that we can find anywhere, the varied education of events, the grand imperatives of duty, the shout of our brothers' triumph or the murmur of their pain, the stimulus of human friendship, and above all —

“ Hush, I pray you !
What if this friend happen to be—God ? ”

The Triumph of Joy

“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: *Dominion*.

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INSTEAD of dealing with joy in a half-apologetic way, as some severe moralists have been inclined to do, it would be more to the purpose to show what joy really means, and in what direction life should move in order to be sure of it. For no matter how foolish the method of search sometimes, the world goes pleasure-hunting in spite of admonition, and until human nature is entirely changed will in all likelihood continue to do so. Far more than mere variety, joy is the spice of life, and spreads such a healthy contagion among all who come within its range of influence that to a great many people it will seem better to be beside oneself with joy than a pattern of rationality without it. Whether we understand him or not, Mark Tapley is certain of a welcome almost anywhere.

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There are those, perhaps, who might resent his company, as Martin Chuzzlewit was inclined to do in his morbid moods. If one has closed his own shutters, he scarcely wishes to see others open theirs towards the sunshine, or to hear them singing when the rain beats down through the gathering night. Some people seem to have a kind of genius for being miserable. They take a microscopic view of their troubles which increases them a hundred fold, and post dark-eyed watchers along the walls of their habitation to frighten the fairies away. They feel a sort of joy in joylessness, and in many cases expect to be regarded as more interesting because of the deep gloom that enshrouds them. In some quarters, melancholy has become a cult. The professional pessimist is one of the products of the times.

Of course, it is not possible to ignore the wide contrasts which exist in human circumstances. Any one can be joyous

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when things go well ; but we are all apt to view certain tracts of life as consigned to irremediable sadness. When a man is sick or in trouble, every generous mind will make some excuse for him even if he does display a measure of depression and irritability. It would be cruel to try to force stoicism upon a bruised and wounded heart. And yet it is a matter of constant observation that the amount of real joy in any career is not determined by the apparent incentives to it. Dirges have come from the bright palace, and lyric sweetness from the black prison-house. No philosophy can render us altogether careless of surroundings, but it is a poor philosophy which settles our estate by nothing else.

Making full allowance, then, for varieties of temperament and worldly fortune, that which best deserves the name of joy must go deeper than these, and have some permanence about it. A hearty laugh is as good as a tonic, whether it be the laughter

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of children over their play, or the laughter of full-grown men who have not quite left all their innocence behind them. But joy is more than mirth, and cannot always be gauged by the amount of visible expression. One may go grinning through the world, and yet not know what real joy means. There are hours when careless merriment would jar upon us, and the commonplaces of pity stir up the ancient rage of Job in presence of his blundering comforters. But that deep joy which is the witness of the soul's vitality may still abide, strong in the faith which no care can stifle, and no disaster overwhelm, because it sees even through its tears some rays of sunshine, and feels the undergirding of great arms of love.

Christian art has been inclined to deal too much in sombre colours, and its thought has often lingered too persistently before the empty tomb. The saint of the New Testament is not like Simeon Stylites, a

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man of pale countenance, and numbed energy, and isolated disdain of things terrestrial. It is true that he was familiar with hardship and peril, and that he could not tell at what hour he might be prisoned in a dark cell of the Tullianum or condemned to a death in the amphitheatre. But in spite of this, he seems full of buoyant energy. And though, apart altogether from the personal hazard, his religion reveals elements of pathos in human existence which had been largely unregarded before, and will not explain away earth's deepest needs, nor forget them in the lust of selfishness, yet it refuses to join with some other faiths in the irrational glorification of pain. Jesus began His miracles at a wedding-feast, and honestly accepted what was agreeable, unless it would hinder Him in the accomplishment of the work He had to do. He often appears in dark places, but always as the Cloud-Dispeller. And though He is

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called the Man of Sorrows, it was joy and not sorrow which has made His name immortal.

No one can be thought more pious because he is disagreeable. Neither God nor man is gratified by a rueful countenance. The Highlander who, when he saw men and women on the Sabbath walking along the streets of Edinburgh, and smiling as they went, exclaimed, "What an awfu' sicht!" fell into the mistake of supposing that it is not possible to keep both conscience and vivacity. If one does not seem reasonably content in doing what is right, he will not gain disciples by groaning over it. Good people should be attractive, even though attractive people are not always good. A well-rounded nature will not look upon joy as an optional matter. The highest kind of virtue is marked by cheerfulness; and though we are yet a long way from that goal, when human life is perfected, inclination and

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duty will end their conflict, and we shall most want to do just what we ought to do.

True joy, then, is an essentially moral attainment. Resting upon a principle, and not upon any caprice of mood or circumstance, nothing from without can either create or destroy it. Its root is faith in a wise and loving God, and its flower is pure and unselfish character. We can scarcely construct alone the fabric of human happiness. Some doubt and fear must always attend our imperfect understanding of things, and our limited power to control them. Even Nature has its hurricanes as well as its calm sunsets, and "red in tooth and claw with ravin" shrieks against a creed of hope, or at least finds some sad voice thus to interpret its outcry. And the storm-spirit broods, too, at times, over the plains of life till the eye tires of waiting for peace to return once more. But blind chance is not the ruler of the world. In spite of all the misery which

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evil breeds in its fever-swamps, and often sends across into the clearer regions beyond, "through the ages one increasing purpose runs," and nothing can ever prevent its final consummation. Earth's groan and travail are but the minor interlude. Joy is the C Major of life's music, and the only question is whether our voice shall help to swell the harmony.

It might be supposed that joy and sorrow are mutually exclusive of each other, but no one will think so who has had much experience of either. Some ghosts of sad remembrance are liable to obtrude themselves even upon life's banquet-scenes; and the germ of immortal joy often lies coiled up in embryo at the very heart of the keenest trial, and, at length, by the force of its own inherent vitality, bursts through every bond that would try to fetter it. The "divine discontent" of noble spirits contains also the rich delight of constant aspiration. "Be our joy three parts pain,"

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it is the pain which is transient, and the joy which never vanishes. Though the mere shallow pursuit of joy is futile, it hastens to meet those who are ready for it, and helps them on their journey from the rugged north, across the mountains, to the fields of vernal bloom. The large-souled man illustrates in his nature the paradox of a solemn joyousness. He cannot be satisfied with a mere ephemeral joy, nor a joy which has no care for others. He knows at times the solitude of anxious thought, and feels the burden of earth's mysteries. Yet he is moving ever onward under an increasing light amid voices that are full of inspiration.

In Defense of Xanthippe

Bernick. "And we—we have a long earnest day of work before us; I most of all. But let it come; gather close around me, you true and faithful women. I have learned this in these days: it is you women who are the pillars of society."

Lena. "Then you have learned a poor wisdom, brother-in-law. (*Lays her hand firmly upon his shoulder.*) No, no; the spirits of Truth and Freedom—these are the Pillars of Society."

—HENRIK IBSEN: *The Pillars of Society.*

"And so these twain, upon the skirts of Time,
Sit side by side, full summ'd in all their powers,
Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,
Self-reverent each, and reverencing each,
Distinct in individualities,
But like each other e'en as those who love."

—TENNYSON: *The Princess.*

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THE wife of Socrates has acquired such a bad reputation that the stoutest champion of woman's rights would be thought quixotic by most people if he essayed, at this late hour, to take up arms on her behalf. It is generally agreed to accept Xanthippe, without further question, as the embodiment of shrewishness, and many a quiet joke has been made over the trials of the illustrious teacher who was unfortunate enough to be tied to such a vixen. Yet it seems only fair to look at both sides of the matter before passing a final verdict either upon her personally, or upon that unwelcome sisterhood of termagants of which she is the almost unchallenged prototype. Whatever were the faults of Xanthippe, it is not

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likely that they have been diminished by so much confident talk about them. Socrates himself ought to be a more reliable witness than any one else; and though not given to compliment, in a dialogue with his son Lamprocles, recorded in the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon, he admits her domestic virtues. The evidence concerning her daily mode of life is slender; but we know that, when her husband was condemned to drink the hemlock, she showed a solicitous affection, and was greatly distressed at the prospect of his death.

Masculine expectancy often runs high in regard to "the gentler sex," and when disappointed is soon stirred to a considerable show of indignation. There may be in all this, perhaps, an indirect tribute to the sense of woman's worth, and the wondrously benignant influence possible to her. But sufficient weight is not always given to the conditions under which the best that is in her is likely to be brought

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out. Woman's more sensitive organism renders her peculiarly liable to the frustration of her true instincts, and her legitimate powers of earthly ministry. No one will ever understand her if he does not think it worth while to take some pains to do so. She is very apt to turn only the unilluminated disc of her soul to the gaze of selfishness or idle curiosity, and like a delicate plant, put forth no lovely blossoms in an atmosphere of nipping frost. However noble the range of self-sacrifice in any nature, it emerges bruised and disfigured when it fails to meet with some measure of genuine appreciation.

Though the whole world must needs admire the philosophic insight of Socrates, from a conjugal point of view he is by no means beyond criticism. He is willing to admit the most suitable women to culture in music and gymnastic, in the interests of the Guards of an ideal Republic; but at the same time he adds that in all offices, a

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woman is inferior to a man. Even if this were true, it is irritating to have it said so abruptly. Occupied as Socrates is in tracing the superstructure of the State, he thinks too little of the Home which is its foundation, and marriage seems a mere episode too trifling to suggest to his mind any duties of mutual affection and helpfulness. While he speculates, Xanthippe is obliged to live as best she can. And when she goes to him in his last hours with a real womanly grief in her heart, he sits with his friends, developing that marvellous argument on the immortality of the soul which the *Phædo* records, and having given some brief directions, calmly requests that she and the children be sent away. And they take their departure without one word of comfort from him.

It is almost certain that Xanthippe did not fully appreciate her husband's great mental endowments. Like the simple wife in *In Memoriam*,

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“ Her faith is fixt and cannot move,
She darkly feels him great and wise,
She dwells on him with faithful eyes,
‘ I cannot understand : I love.’ ”

Even the imperturbable Socrates may have been a little ruffled by the lack of ardent discipleship at his own hearth-stone, and the mild regard he showed for the genius of Aspasia is explicable naturally enough without any imputation on his moral character. In his book on *The Intellectual Life*, Mr. Hamerton says that “ for an intellectual man only two courses are open ; either he ought to marry some simple, dutiful woman who will bear him children, and see to the household matters, and love him in a trustful spirit without jealousy of his occupations ; or else, on the other hand, he ought to marry some highly intelligent lady, able to carry her education far beyond school experiences, and willing to become his companion in the arduous paths of intellectual labour.” But women:

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are not shut up to either extreme of profound scholarship or completely barren dullness. A certain sort of talent, no doubt, is indispensable to remove friction from continuous intercourse, but it is not so much a talent for common knowledge as for that common sympathy which helps towards knowledge. And if the use of this talent fails to be encouraged, first of all, among those who are nearest, it may well seem the safest thing, in order to avoid the risk of tragic consequences, to bury it in the earth.

A woman's heart, hungering for the bread of love, will scarcely be satisfied with the stone of speculation, however highly polished it may be. Xanthippe's infirmities of temper, in all likelihood, were aggravated, if not created, by a void of tenderness. It is hard to imagine Socrates paying homage even to the most noble of the opposite sex. How absurd, for example, it would sound to put into his

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mouth such sentiments as those which Sir Philip Sidney expresses:—

“O fair, O sweet,
When I do look on thee
In whom all joys so well agree
Heart and soul do sing in me.”

Of course, Xanthippe was not Stella. And besides, there is a wide difference of temperament between the ill-favoured Greek philosopher even in his pre-marital moods, and the romantic young courtier who wrote *Arcadia*. The one might possibly mean more than he said, and the other say more than he meant. But if any man lets his domestic emotions grow so cold that he never shows them, he will suffer for it in some way sooner or later, no matter how brilliant his intellect or attractive his personality. A sonnet to Xanthippe seems quite out of place; but there is no conclusive reason for thinking that she would have taken it amiss. Even the most tuneful instrument may become the centre of awful noises when the player

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does not know his business ; and the wider the range of subtle sound, the greater the peril of producing such unskilled effects as Mrs. Browning describes,

“ Fine sleights of hand
And unimagined fingering, shuffling off
The hearer's soul through hurricanes of notes
To a noisy Tophet.”

And there is nothing, perhaps, which will more surely produce discordant results in a woman's nature than the careless indifference which cannot be at the trouble of trying to interpret it. If she is treated as a mere toy, or as constitutionally incapable of sharing the highest thoughts and aspirations, in a few cases she may clamour loudly for her rights, but, as a rule, she is too sad for anything but a silence broken now and then by the irrepressible ebullitions of wounded self-respect. Her whole being is thus chrown into an unnatural turmoil ; and even though she does come to illustrate our

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worst picture of Xanthippe, the whole blame for such degeneration cannot be fairly laid at her door.

We are in no special danger nowadays of falling into benumbed conjugality through excess of high mental labour. Socrates was an outstanding figure even amid "the glorious citizen life" of Athens. For the most part, too, we have accepted ideas of the place of woman which the best thought of ancient times seldom reached at all. Yet it is not to be put down to the mere fussiness of nervous moralists that some warning voices are heard against the tendency to disintegrate the home, to lower its value, to destroy its sacredness. Whatever changes take place in the structure of social life, the home must always remain as the basis of it. Does not history prove that the welfare of the State is bound up with its purity and permanence? From the inspiration which it brings will come a large part of the strength to perform life's tasks,

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to endure its trials, to surmount its difficulties, to reap its best rewards. But if the bruises of ruder contacts are to find a healing there, the husband must do his part to secure this happy consummation. No true woman desires to be "emancipated" in any unseemly way. But she does desire, and with perfect right, freedom to move in the sphere of her proper activities, neither hindered by prejudice, nor paralyzed by neglect. It would be a sad outlook for the nation if familiarity bred contempt, and the household gods were no longer worshipped in the keen struggle for place or fortune.

The proverbial uncertainty of woman is not always easy to explain, especially in view of the constant element which often underlies it all. But there is no ineradicable defect obliging her, in any case, to study the art of vituperation. When she is goaded into it, no one else can be more conscious of the injury than she is herself. If women were angels, he would

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be a bold man who aspired to the honour of living with them. "It is better," says Robert Louis Stevenson, "to face the fact, and know, when you marry, that you take into your life a creature of equal, if of unlike frailties, whose weak human heart beats no more tunefully than yours." And yet, though woman is not an ethereal essence to which everything save perfection is impossible, if she is wanting in humility of faith and strength of service, if her life has no serious purpose, but is only a thing of mean and trivial aims, of wasted hours and idle expectations; if the garment of purity, woven of the light and shedding its transfiguring radiance around, is torn asunder or exchanged for a robe of venom, it means much that the eclipse of true womanhood should throw a shadow of darkness everywhere. But it is hard to keep ideals inviolate when rough hands are busied in the task of spoliation. There is a reciprocal influence in the standards

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which the sexes set up for themselves ; and if the knight expects his lady to buckle on his armour well, he must be *sans peur et sans reproche*. Nor will she who is prepared for some kind of useful work in the world, and keenly sensitive to all that is true and beautiful whether in literature or art or human action and character be incapacitated for adorning the home, if it should become the chief place of her duties, because she has already refused a career of fruitless ease or superficial frivolity. So far from the mental and emotional sides of our nature being developed in inverse proportion, love must be intelligent, and intelligence must be loving before either can reach its fullest exercise. The groves of the Academy are not far away from the garden of earth's Paradise ; and though neither the realm of thought nor feeling is without its thorns, if Eve only have a fair chance, she will be found well qualified, as a rule, to walk through both.

The Shut Door

"It seems to me sometimes—I know it is a partial representation—as if life were a conflict between the inner force of the spirit, which lies in its faith in the unseen—and the outer force of the world, which lies in the pressure of everything it has to show us. The material, operating upon our senses, is always asserting its existence; and if our inner life is not equally vigorous, we shall be moved, urged, what is called actuated, from without, whereas all our activity ought to be from within."

—GEORGE MACDONALD: *Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood.*

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IF we look back to the beginnings of human history, we shall see how the human race was cradled in the profound thought of its wise and great ones. Those Eastern sages sat, day after day, reading the book of the sky, and striving to comprehend the mysteries of life. Amid the clash of events in which giant empires had their rise and fall, they felt that if the riddle of mankind was ever to be answered satisfactorily, the answer must come from beyond this world. Such repose as theirs, though it might seem like doing nothing, was itself an intense form of mental action, and the best preparation for visible action when the right time came. Out of their earnest reverie dim hopes were shaping ; and as soon as the lesser lights paled before the superior radiance of heaven's mir-

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acle, the Magi followed the Star of Bethlehem.

Our present tendency is to replace quiescent Orientalism by nervous Occidentalism. We are apt to be impatient of any calls to reflection, the more so as we often seem to find more sorrow than joy flowing out of it. The vastness of the field of knowledge becomes a pain and a bewilderment; and though a few things may be as easy as a sum in arithmetic, when we move on a little farther, we are brought face to face with algebraic problems and their dreadful unknown quantities. A general rout of the army of illusion is sure to bring some discomfort which the cowardice of indolence will try to escape if it can. In some quarters it would be counted *bourgeois* to take life seriously.

Now, of course, a policy of silence in regard to the most important matters by no means proves that they are ignored. The man whose career is swayed by a high

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moral purpose does not go around advertising the fact. Even those who seem most frivolous in social intercourse have another side to their nature that is often shy of being discovered. The mind's heavy artillery is not to be dragged into action at an inopportune moment, nor our heart carried on our sleeve for daws to peck at. It is not what we talk about most, but what we feel most that influences the quality of character. And though the rush of affairs, as we rush along with them, ought to teach us, by enforced experiment, a good deal about the art of living, if we would use even that kind of *éducation* to the best advantage, we must have some quiet hours besides in which we can brood with concentrated earnestness over the whole vast subject. Incessant doing is a foe to being. It threatens to make us vulgar, and

" Disenchanted of respect
By the new world's new fiend, Publicity,
Whose testing thumb leaves everywhere its smutch."

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Reverent thought is often the prelude to purer manhood. More than once in the world's history, a *Renaissance* has been accompanied by a Reformation. In order to fulfill the highest ends of existence, three things at least are requisite, a firm grasp of truth, a clear conception of duty, and a sincere resolve to walk in the road up which truth and duty lead us. The ocean of the infinite laps upon the shores of the finite, and

"Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither."

But if one does not take the trouble to exercise that noble rationality which searches into the depths of things, though he may have no innate viciousness, the mere slumber of thought is sure to degrade him. The will of God cannot be done on earth until we feel the lovely awe of His presence in the midst of it. As soon as the door is

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shut against the clamorous appeals of self-interest or passion, against the shallow babblings of the market-place, against the scornful cynicism which laughs at any other creed than the utilitarian, fresh light begins to break in upon us. Perhaps it shows itself first of all in a flood of hallowed memories, when half-obliterated scenes of the past come back to view, and we seem to see the loved ones of long ago, and listen once more to their counsels and their prayers. Our idea of conduct broadens under the spell of recollection. Some of the motives which were so powerful amid the turmoil of life's thoroughfares no longer look worth much,

“ While just this or that poor impulse
Which for once had play unstified
Seems the sole work of a lifetime
That away the rest have trifled.”

And as the spirit wakens to a fuller consciousness of its responsibilities, and discerns how easily it may be blunted in

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its perceptions, shorn of its wings of strength, driven like a sobbing exile into the desert, a new hope and fear spring up in presence of the larger issues of life, and it will be strange indeed if meditation does not end, half-unconsciously perhaps, in humble cry to God.

Almost anything is possible after one has entered the inner sanctuary of his being and learned the rich, strong lessons which can only be taught him there. So far from the habit of reflection leading to a paralysis of practical activities, it is the one thing needful to impart to them greater effectiveness. And that is always to be desired, for no one can claim to have reached his utmost development unless he is prepared for human fellowship. But if we would make the most of our time with others, we must have some time with ourselves. That man will be a poor associate for any one else who can never endure his own company. Amid earth's doubts and

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cares and sorrows, he who keeps in his soul "the vision splendid" is sure to find plenty of work to do, and will know best how to do it. To have wrestled alone with his better angel in the darkness of the midnight clothes a man with strength when he goes forth to the tasks of the morning. The world is on the watch for such inspirers, and they are bound to take the lead anywhere.

It is universally true that a character nurtured in secret must needs be, in some form or other, rewarded openly. The tremendous force of the blow struck by the Japanese in their crucial struggle with Russia is not explained by the reckless valour of the moment. For centuries they had been trained in a loyal patriotism, a reverence for the illustrious dead, and a belief that the gods would help them to achieve the fulfillment of their cherished purposes. Their triumph was the last public scene in a long and hidden drama

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of quiet preparation and brooding reverie. The old Greeks saw that every notable act must have notable thinking behind it, when they tabled that Minerva sprang forth fully armed from the head of Jove. Great poems, great works of art, great reforms, great philosophies are the product of a fruitful quietude. The men who compel events into the channel of their resolute will, were, in most cases, matured by a preliminary education of seeming idleness. Every one knows them at last because for awhile they had the patience and courage to be unknown.

Repose of the right sort is one of the most urgent needs of the time. It is not to be viewed as a luxury for the few or a solace for the eccentric, but as a constituent of every life which aspires to be truly noble and good. We are often in a fever of excitement, and create a small hurricane of dust in our rapid flight hither and thither. But we should do more if

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we tried to do less, and what was lost in volume would be amply made up in quality. The reason why so many streams of well-intentioned effort are dissipated in a delta of choking sands is because they are not fed from the perennial spring of thought. The whole of life would be enriched by more frequent excursions into the Silent Land.

Frédéric Amiel says of our western civilization that much of it "means devouring, incessant activity. They must win gold, predominance, power; they must crush rivals, subdue nature. . . . They bustle at the circumference of existence because they cannot penetrate to its centre. They are restless, eager, positive, because they are superficial. To what purpose all this stir, noise, greed, struggle? It is all a mere being stunned and deafened!" This is a heavy indictment; and even if we do not challenge the competency of a mystic to bear wit-

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ness, we shall at least try to break the force of his criticism by pointing out that the initial movements among any people in a new world are bound to assume a severely practical form. Where fortune can only be won by prosaic toil, commercial standards of value are apt to become dominant and when a matter is presented before the average citizen, he is less inclined to ask, "What will it teach me?" than "How much is it worth?" And yet, a nation in its industrious youth is far more likely to be sane than if it should afterwards fall under the sway of effeminate ease and luxury. If the task of self-culture is postponed till all other tasks are done, it may never be commenced at all. The annals of the world prove that great history-builders require to have a fine calibre both of brain and heart, since the full significance of the material can only be grasped in the overshadowing presence

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of the spiritual. Man is not a mere machine for making money or anything else external to him, and therefore, if thought is drowned in a maelstrom of fussiness, he will soon lose his hold upon that which he seems to have. The more strenuous the labour, the greater the necessity for that kind of rest whose main office it is to make labour more virile and more beneficent. "Where there is no vision, the people perish." And though it may be given to only a comparative few to fill their solitude with a hierarchy of ideas which ensure them immortal renown, and by the sheer force of their intrinsic merit, assert their influence in course of time through every stratum of society, to no one is denied the privilege, if he will, of looking into the grave, sweet face of truth, and so keeping in the inner chamber of the soul certain august thoughts which shall shed their light over the road of daily activity, and

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restore to earth something of the old loveliness of the lost Paradise where the Lord God walked among the trees of the garden in the cool of the day.

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"No face: only the sight
Of a sweepy garment, vast and white,
With a hem that I could recognize."

—BROWNING: *Christmas Eve*.

"La distance, quand on est sûr de l'amour, est si peu de chose."

—HENRY BORDEAUX: *La Peur de Vivre*.

"For, whenas each thing bad thou has entombed,
And, last of all, thy greedy self consumed,
Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss
With an individual kiss."

—MILTON: *On Time*.

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(An Easter Study)

WHEN the Risen Christ appeared to Mary Magdalene, the fourth Gospel tells us that she supposed Him to be the gardener. He had been buried in a garden, and the flowers were blooming and the birds singing and the whole world full of life as He lay there in the new sepulchre. But Mary was not yet prepared to conceive it possible that He might be alive too. So far from being glad because the stone was removed and the tomb-house emptied of its Tenant, these things only filled her mind with alarm and misgiving. When the bright guardians of the place said, "Woman, why weepest thou?" she answered, "Because they have taken away my Lord." And as she turned back, another voice said,

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"Woman, why weepest thou?" It was only the gardener, she thought; and if he knew anything about the matter, surely he would not be cruel enough to conceal it. "If thou hast borne Him hence," she cried, "tell me where thou hast laid Him." And then again she hears the voice which now seemed more intimate and penetrating as it called her by name. She could not understand, but she is obliged to believe. Through the channels of sound, her heart is set trembling with a strange delight almost painful in its intensity. Only two words make the dialogue; but they are enough. "Mary!" "Master!" and her tears are dried.

In one way, Mary's mistake was not so serious after all. We do not know what sort of a man Joseph of Arimathea had chosen to look after his trees and plants; but we can imagine that he was of kindly disposition, and, perhaps, an unconfessed follower of the Nazarene. However that

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may be, Mary had indeed met the Gardener who tends all the flowers, big and little, ugly and beautiful in the great world-garden, opening the soil to God's sunshine, rooting out the noxious weed, pruning the shoots when they require it, watching with solicitous care the early buds of promise, rejoicing in the ripened fruit, and when the withered stem falls to the ground, closing it up in mother-earth if haply it may obtain a better resurrection.

And though Mary was not in the right mood for observing with exactness, she could scarcely have mistaken Jesus for the gardener if His body had not seemed distinctly human. Though refined of the grosser qualities of matter, and untrammelled by its hampering limitations, it was more than a mere nebulous phantom. It had a definite form, unlike that of the mortal body in some respects perhaps, yet sufficiently like it to be recognizable when the mists of disappointment were cleared

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away. It presented a tangible basis of remembrance, an image round which love's garlands might safely twine; and the soul that shone through it and transfigured it with a spiritual radiance, helped to make the disciple sure that she had once more found her Lord.

No doubt one may think too much of the body, but it is quite possible to think too little of it. We need feel no special obligation to apologize for the way God created us. A spirit all by itself might be not only cold and lonesome, but narrowed in its range of energy. The very nature of the finite seems to call for some kind of concrete manifestation; and though the body we now have is clearly not adapted for eternal uses, a higher order of body may be. This is how a great Apostle seems to reason when he says, "If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body." To some, indeed, "a spiritual body" may sound contradictory. But it

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does not follow that the complete banishment of the corporeal will ensure the emergence of the spiritual. We are on the road to the spiritual when we begin to learn the noblest truths which the material has to teach us. There are enough bad ghosts in the world to disprove the ancient heresy that matter is the primary seat of evil. Infinite wisdom as well as infinite love lies behind the swirl of atoms, and destines natural processes to be part of the great evolutionary movement towards the final triumph of that which is good. And yet, a child must understand that life does not depend upon the transmission of matter, but rather involves the getting rid of it in a lower form that it may reappear in a higher. If identity were lost in the change, resurrection would become meaningless. But identity is retained by virtue of a vital principle that underlies matter and has the mastery over it. The goal to which the Resurrection of Jesus points the way is

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the gradual glorifying of the body until it is made perfectly obedient to the spirit which weaves such a garment as new conditions necessitate.

Some of the Church Fathers maintained a literal rising of the earthly body. And though in thoughtless moments we still use forms of expression which seem to encourage this half-pagan belief, it has been destroyed by an overwhelming mass of evidence. Science demonstrates that such a thing is contrary to all analogies. Reason says that the idea is worthless, unless we hold that the body is the man. The New Testament gives no warrant whatever for it. And, perhaps, even sentiment might make many of us hesitate to keep through eternity a *physique* which, however well it has served us here, is scarcely up to the ideal. Matter must needs be in perpetual flux, and when once buried, it can never reappear unchanged.

Of course, we know that it is not simply

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the outward form of our friends that inspires affection. Love which is only physical ought to take another name, just as some of the heathen deities did when they went to hell. Eros must be pure before he can win Psyche for his bride. Whatever may be the full meaning of those mysterious words, "Touch me not," with which Christ checked the impulse of His gladdened follower, they seem to suggest that the truest comradeship is a union of souls which laughs at distance, because, in some ways at least, it gains a victory over it. Religion itself would be a chimera if we were not able to love the invisible. And yet, while the heart's warmth is not determined by mere juxtaposition, it must be admitted that bodily presence means a great deal. That would be a colourless affection which thinks nothing of the tread of the footstep, the touch of the hand, the glance of the eye, the many little personal ways which, though others might scarcely

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notice them, in love's sight become so dear and sacred. For the body is a means of revelation. The style of house inclines us to conjecture something of the immortal dweller inhabiting it. Down the avenues of sense, we try to catch some glimpses, however vague and shadowy, of the vistas of the spirit; and when we have found our deepest selves, then are we nearest to finding God.

But, since appearance is often the very opposite of reality, we are liable to be deceived in our first superficial vision. The body may hide as many characteristics as it reveals. And therefore, resurrection seems to demand a body that shall not only be free from disease and corruption, from weariness and pain, but from which the accidental and incomplete shall be left out, so that it perfectly reflects the pure passion of the life within. Christ views resurrection not as a mere physical process, but rather as a moral achievement, and His

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own Resurrection is the most unique and memorable instance of it. If any one proposes to make a successful assault upon the belief of Christendom, he must not be content simply to storm the outposts of historical testimony, nor maintain a guerilla warfare of scientific nescience. He must attack the very citadel and stronghold which is Christ's own character. The mere fact that He rose adds nothing to His greatness, but simply makes His greatness manifest. It would have been a miracle if His own inherent vital force had not burst every fetter which sought to confine it. The threescore years and ten are more than enough for narrow and sordid living, and an ageless eternity would only embarrass those who were not in some measure prepared for it. But the lofty aspiration, the unfulfilled desire, the broken service may be safely carried forward into the hereafter; and they necessitate an organism in which the soul shall be able to

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continue its splendid tasks under the best conditions, what is now, at times, an irksome conflict being exchanged for a glorious harmony.

It seems hard to understand how any one who believes in heaven at all could ever have supposed that the companionships of earth will have no place there; that love will go moaning in vain through all eternity, or, what is even worse, die out in the ashes of complete forgetfulness. Every true affection is kindled at a Divine fire, and is not likely to be extinguished when its full warmth is all around. On the contrary, what was real before, and not artificial, will surely be still more real, and the heart will exult in new-found sympathies. Here, in the midst of our imperfect insight, we do not always know who would most inspire us, or be most inspired by us. But when the "body of humiliation" gives place to that luminous robe through which the spirit shines, shall we not be far more

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alert to detect every mark of individuality, and find that no barriers of prejudice, no cruel misunderstandings, no narrow jealousy, no divided interests darken the intercourse of the future, or prevent it from running in the channels which God and Nature intended for it?

Our limited knowledge of the after-realm ought to check too confident assertion in regard to it. But this, at least, we must feel to be true, that the Father puts no clean longings in our breast only to visit them at last with the bitter irony of extinction. The antics of a false "spiritualism" need not blind us to the magnificent possibilities involved in the soul's enthronement to its place of rightful preëminence. While what is mortal in our nature will be left behind, what is immortal will abide. Robert Browning was in no sensuous mood when he wrote *Evelyn Hope*. Is it absurd to think that heaven will adjust all previous relationships, each in a fitting way, and at

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the same time bring some that were only foreshadowed here to an ideal completion?

"The waters know their own, and draw
The brook that springs from yonder height ;
So flows the good, with equal law,
Unto the soul of pure delight.

"The stars come nightly to the sky,
The tidal wave unto the sea ;
Nor time, nor space, nor deep, nor high
Can keep my own away from me."

We are prone to lay too much emphasis upon the episode called Death. No doubt it marks a boundary of vision, and puts an end to the familiar setting of things. But it destroys no truth. It shakes nothing that is permanent. If life was there before, life will be there after. It is an introduction rather than a *finale*, and prepares the way for perfecting the equation between surroundings and character. Even in its powers of severance it is distinctly limited. The brave and true of every age are the world's perpetual inheritance. The more we have loved our dear ones, the less

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are they lost altogether. Their memory and influence remain. The subtle persuasion that they are still alive cannot be got rid of; and possibly, if we had keener vision, we might catch a glimpse now and then of the spiritual body, as Christ's first disciples did, and thus, in some hour of deep gloom, perhaps, be able to anticipate the time when we shall see them without a veil between.

