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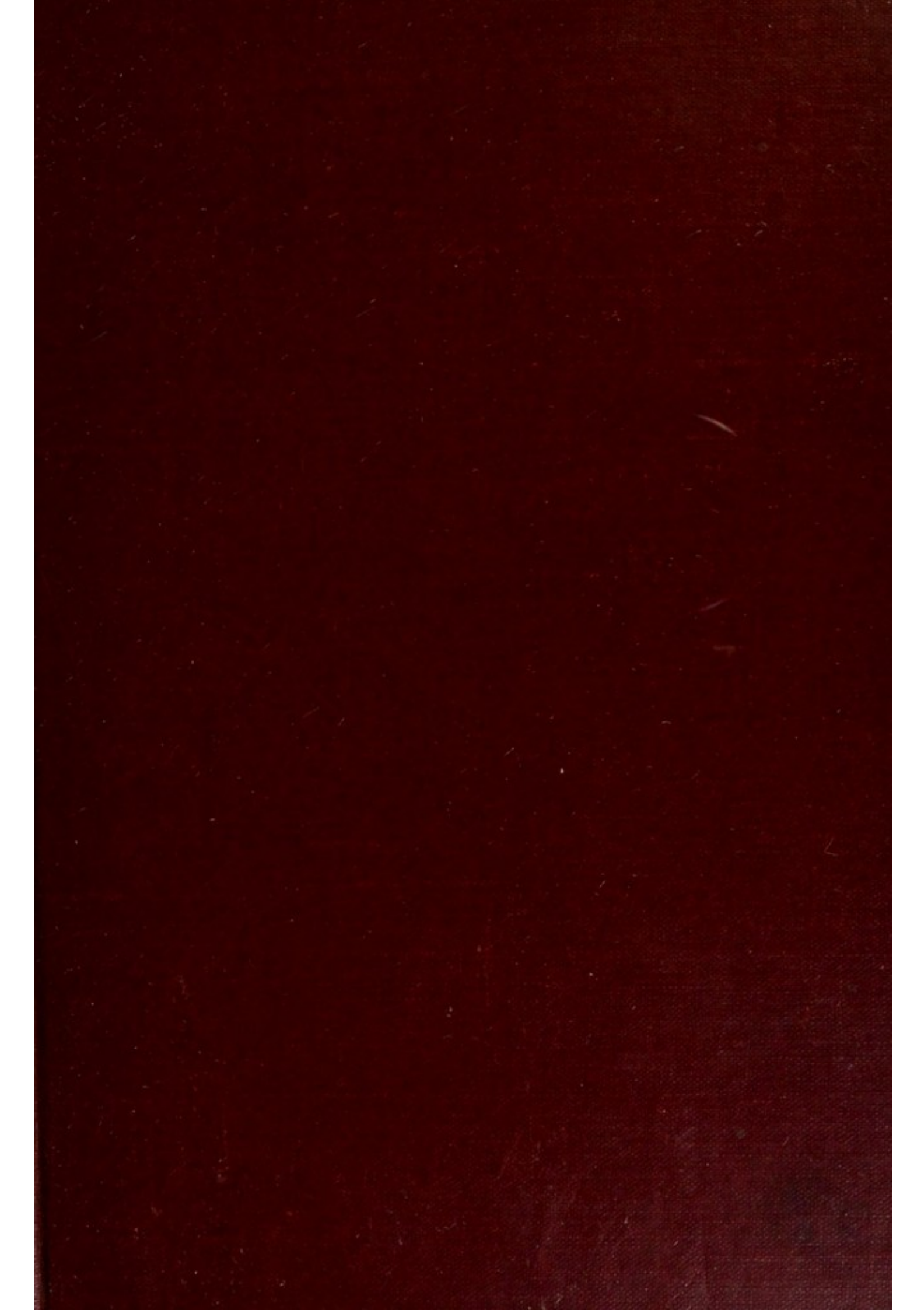
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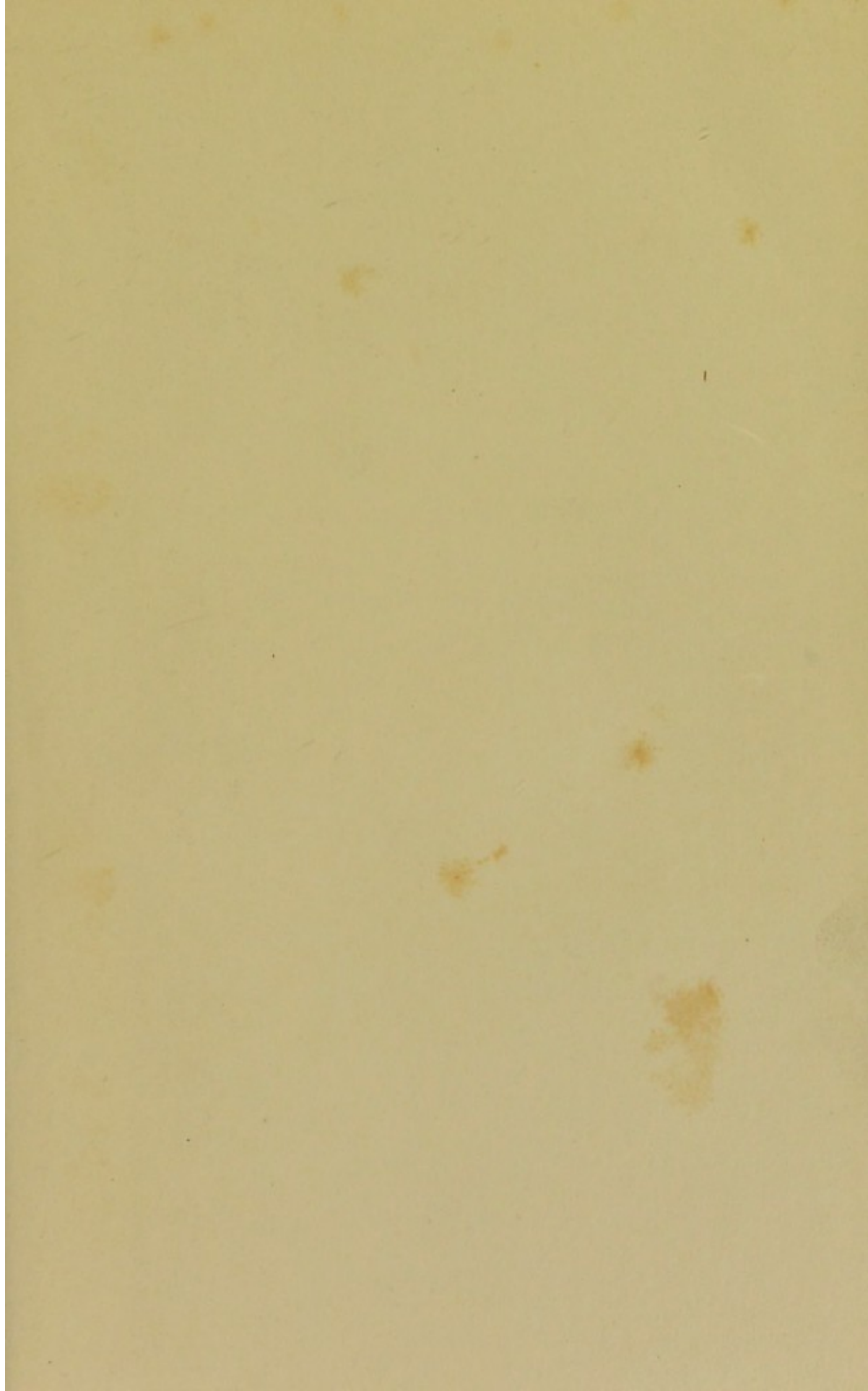
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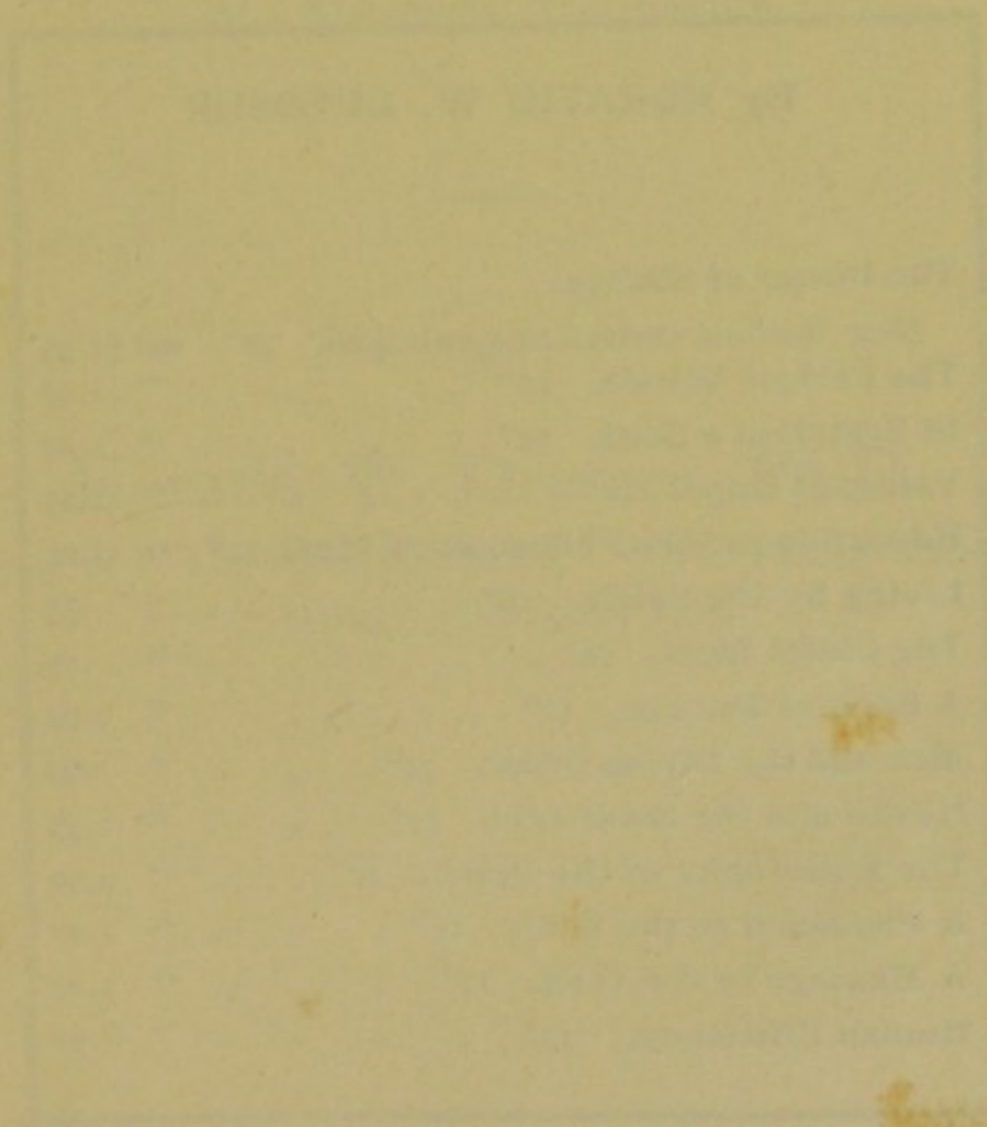












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# Human Efficiency

A Psychological Study  
of Modern Problems

By

Horatio W. Dresser, Ph.D.

Author of "The Power of Silence," "The Perfect Whole,"  
"Living by the Spirit," etc.

G. P. Putnam's Sons  
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## PREFACE

THIS study of human nature has been written with the conviction that every man desires fulness of life, hence is willing to undertake any investigation which promises to put him in surer command of his resources. It endeavours to disclose various lines of development in such a way as to arouse enthusiasm for one of the most fascinating subjects that ever engage human attention—the study of the human mind. In so doing no attempt is made to persuade the reader that there is one, and only one road to success, one theory or principle of interpretation. The purpose of the book is rather to aid each reader to investigate for himself, and advance from the point already attained. Hence while the book is offered as a contribution to the science of human nature, it is first of all practical.

At the beginning, and more or less throughout the volume, the discussion is connected with a recent movement of great promise. Hence while the purpose of the succeeding chapters is not to discuss industrial efficiency, the first chapter refers to the new science of business, the promises it



affords, the problems to which it gives rise. With the distinction between industrial and other types of efficiency the discussion enlarges to the scope of essentially human interests, in contrast with those of a class, or the demands of the mere "time-planner." From this point on through several chapters the book might be called a treatise on applied psychology, with special reference to mental co-ordination, economy in the use of nervous force, efficiency of will, and other attainments that make for practical success. The concluding chapters are devoted to applied ethics, always with a view to individual efficiency.

The point of view does not call for the usual sharp distinctions between practical life and the sciences. Indeed, the book was written in part to pass beyond these distinctions and make clear the relationship of psychology and ethics to life. It thus takes exception to treatises which while admirable pieces of science bear no relation for the plain man to his daily interests. The writings of Professor Wm. James are deemed an exception, hence in these pages abundant use is made of the psychological teachings of our greatest author in this field.

It is plain that the movement in behalf of efficiency, now attracting widespread attention, affords points of connection between science and life not hitherto noted. For it begins in a neutral field,



not far from the arena in which the issues between capital and labour are just now being fought out, adjoining the territory which socialism claims but not identified with it, contiguous to the entrancing region which we call "success," and related to the domains of education and moral reform. A man can be persuaded to be more efficient who cannot be persuaded of anything else. For, to repeat, what we want is life in its fulness, something which shall touch the whole man, enabling us to employ our capacities to the full. Once interested in putting all our powers into one thing in such a way as to bring satisfaction, possibilities without limit will be opened before us. While, then, increased efficiency at first glance appears to mean an attempt to get the utmost from our organism each working day, it soon proves to involve higher considerations. To say this is not to ignore the fact that economic demands are imperative. Nor is it to accept the present social order as the best. But the man who endeavours to become more efficient in a comprehensive sense of the word will find himself tracing human miseries and disabilities further back, until compelled to face the elements in his own life that must be changed. He will turn, for example, to his own impulsiveness as a cause of trouble, to his fault-finding or rebellious spirit, his unreasoning attitude, the inner conflict between old forces and new ideals. Such



interests will naturally lead to a study of the springs of human action, the sources of power, the mental attainments which enable a man to employ his energies effectively. Hence the present volume is not alone devoted to either physical or mental efficiency, but traces mental co-ordination and the control of the brain to their foundations, carrying the two interests side by side.

The general point of view is that in addition to the talents which enable a man to become a good artisan, manager, teacher, manual or brain-worker, there are activities which prompt us to achieve the type, transmute disposition into character, and to work for ideals. This leads to a plea in behalf of the many incentives that stir the human breast, the varied sorts of work men engage in, and the diverse modes of pursuing ideal ends. Hence the contention that we should live and let live receives new force. Psychologically, this is supported by a new study of the will, tending to restore the will to its proper place in contrast with recent interest in suggestion and the subconscious. Ethically speaking, this emphasis on the conscious individual leads to the ideal of self-realisation. At this point the doctrine of the book is closely allied with the teachings of the ethical idealists. My hope is that this book will show those who are persuaded of this ethical ideal how and where to begin to realise the self.



This book does not call for previous acquaintance with works on psychology and ethics. The foot-notes indicate some of the most important references for further study. By the aid of these one may make this volume a text-book in either psychology or ethics. But the first suggestion is that each reader begin with the study of life, then seek the principles needed to explain life. For the forces that make for efficiency must be found by actual use. He who does not carry on a study of life while he reads will miss the methods which in the hands of humanists like Professor James have led to such fruitful results. The same is true of any one who, taking up this book by chance, may hope to discover the formula for success. I have avoided the use of italics, capitalised words, and sub-heads, because the general discussion along the way is as important as any brief statement could be; and because there is no formula or secret of success that can be stated in a sentence. Attention and work are the secrets, so far as one can indicate them in advance. But attention calls for the study of details, and work requires careful application. Hence the first consideration is an analytical reflectiveness which begins at the beginning and leads on and on. Efficiency indeed is not so much a question of time and compactness as of thought, together with the right use of the resources at hand.



Some readers will hold that no study of human efficiency can be complete without an analysis of religious efficiency. This subject has been omitted for the most part for various reasons. The last five chapters are incidentally a discussion of the limitations of human powers, hence imply a theory of man's religious nature. Strictly speaking, the question of moral efficiency, considered in the last chapter, underlies and includes the religious problem. The present study is prevailingly psychological, and it is impossible to consider religious matters in a satisfactory manner without passing beyond even the implied philosophy of efficiency which at many points in the investigation grows out of and leads beyond the psychological inquiry. Finally, I have omitted the question of religious efficiency because in another volume, *The Philosophy of the Spirit*, I have analysed man's spiritual nature at length. The purpose of the present discussion is to direct attention to practical results. He who through a study of psychological principles makes himself more efficient in the field in which he happens to be engaged, should be able to turn to the religious field and labour more effectively. What is now needed in the religious world is practical service in matters close at hand. Of theories of efficiency in a doctrinal sense we already have enough.

The technical student of psychology will object



that this is not a scientific treatise, and will plead for a structural analysis of mental life in which nothing is said about practical values. But we already have books in abundance of that type. When the last word has been said about the human mind as a collection of elements and processes, there still remains the real mental life of which each of us is aware, the desires that stir us, the emotions that quicken, the thoughts that uplift, and the will that accomplishes. In this book I have tried to describe the mind in such a way that every reader, whatever his type or vocation, shall be able to identify it, thereby learning more about his own life, finding new clues to success, new incentives to action. Hence it is my hope that many will make immediate use of the principles here under discussion, if not in their own inner conduct, at least in educational work for the benefit of workers young and old who are unable as yet to study or grasp these matters for themselves. I have for the most part passed by the question of the economic advantages which will presumably follow, since these are more obvious, and because in recent works on industrial efficiency, and in the popular magazines, the financial values have been steadily emphasised.

H. W. D.

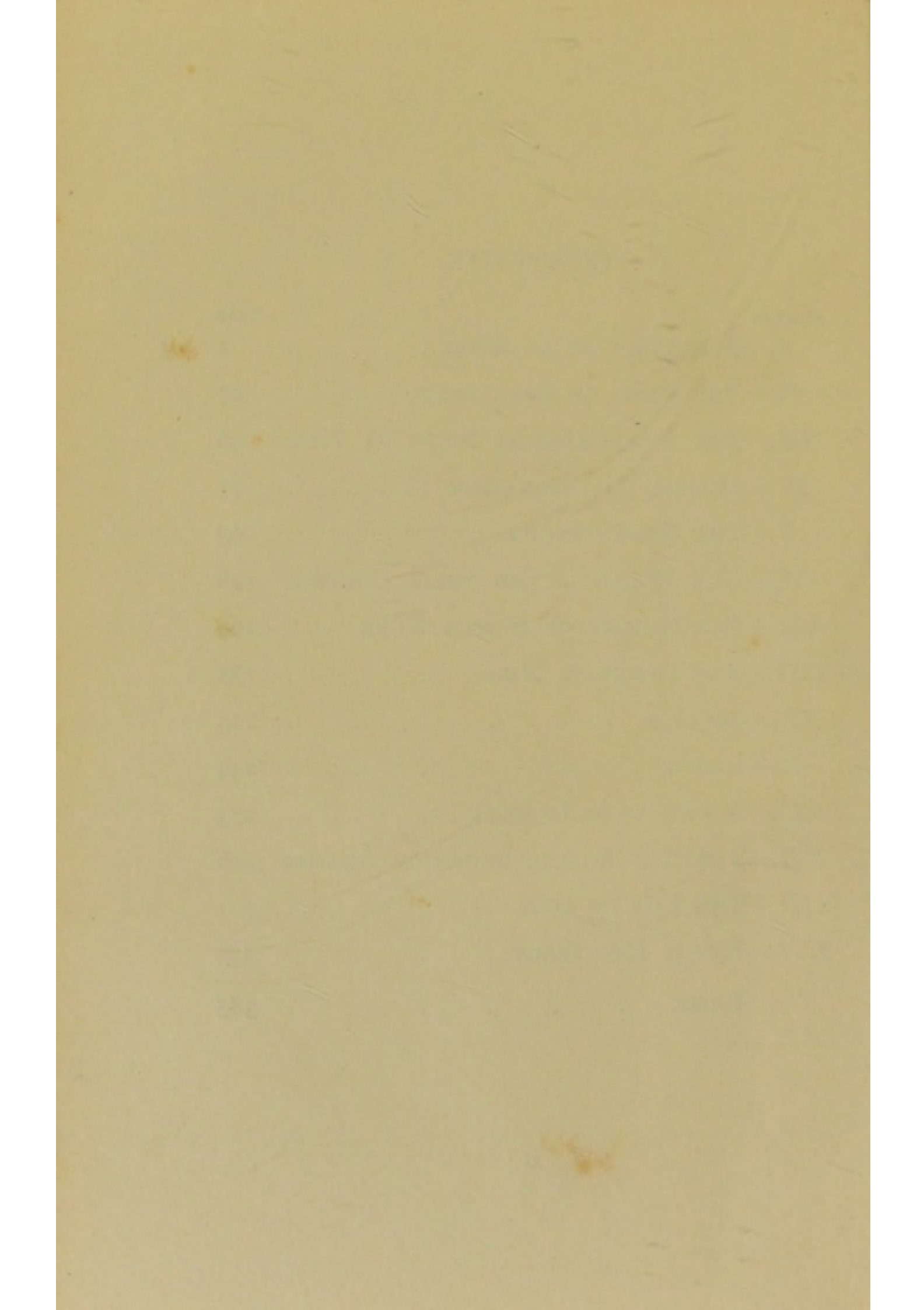
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# HUMAN EFFICIENCY

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## CHAPTER I

### EFFICIENCY AS AN IDEAL

EFFICIENCY is becoming the great word in modern life. We are passing out of the period of careless and wasteful use of resources, in this great land of promise, and entering a period of conservation and scientific management. We are dividing and subdividing human labour that we may place each man where he can work best. Specialisation is being carried to a point never before dreamed of even by devotees of Utopian schemes. The age of organisation has come as the logical result of an age in which the central idea was evolution, for we had to learn nature's law of production before we could begin economically to use nature's resources. Having enjoyed many of the benefits of a rich period of development in the world of scientific invention and discovery, we are now proceeding to use our



resources so as to take full advantage of the new machinery thus put within our power. The ensuing age is very far from being purely mechanical, but is more truly the age of a new form of idealism. Efficiency is not the standard for engineers merely, for the man of affairs, or the expert in governmental matters; it can be extended throughout the lines of human endeavour. It is well to consider some of the achievements already in process, that we may realise the scope of efficiency as an ideal.

At first thought, efficiency appears to be the effort to get out of a machine or person as many foot-pounds of energy as possible in the shortest time. For example, it was formerly customary to use a locomotive at less frequent intervals, spend a considerable amount of money in repairs, and keep the locomotive in use for many years. Nowadays, on the great railroads, an engine is used very steadily on longer hauls, is not left idle in the roundhouse until the same engineer takes it forth again; but is kept in service while in good condition to be forthwith cast aside in favour of a new locomotive of the latest type when it is more economical to do this than to spend money in repairs. A similar tendency obtains in the human world in so far as the untrained are displaced by the skilful, and when men who are approaching middle life are set aside in favour of the young. The principle of efficiency may indeed become a tool



in the hands of the soul-less corporation. The strife for efficiency is in a measure the struggle of the fittest or strongest to survive. Thus the modern tendency has its pathetic side. It is well to consider this side very carefully and ask what should be done to counteract it. The new movement is, however, far larger than this. Our interest is to determine how far the idea of efficiency can be carried at its best.

On the whole, the movement in behalf of efficiency means an intelligent effort to provide for individual work under conditions more favourable for all concerned. Hence in the organisations and lines of business in which the idea has been most fully carried out, co-operation has been secured. Without co-operation from first to last, from lowest to highest, little headway can be made. It therefore becomes a matter of scientific necessity to provide for the welfare of each employee. When it is a question of the best work each can do, work that is performed in the best manner, attention must be given to any number of conditions that would otherwise be neglected. Accordingly, more heed is paid to sanitary conditions, to recreation grounds or roof-gardens, appropriate holidays, the use of social centres of various sorts, conferences for furthering mutual interests, also to the number of hours and the conditions under which each employee can work to greatest advantage.



Hence it may come about that while the locomotive, for instance, is pressed into more frequent service for a greater number of hours than under former conditions, the expert engineer may work a shorter time in order that he may spend his intensely active hours more efficiently. The principle is complex, and much thought is required to apply it to the various industries and vocations, but it is far-reaching and holds promise of solution of any number of problems that have hitherto baffled the wits of men.

The new science of business has brought about radical changes in all these respects. While it is not the purpose of these pages to regard efficiency as a commercial principle, we may well approach the larger question by noting some of these changes. The change in brief is from "system" in the old sense of the word to "science," based on the principle set forth by Frederick W. Taylor that there is but one efficient way to do a thing, a way that may be resolved into elemental principles with special regard to the activity in question. According to the old method, the mechanic arts were to a large extent handed down from generation to generation, and acquired in a more or less haphazard manner. The machinery and tools were not always adapted to the purposes for which they were employed, and comparatively little attention was given to securing a large output with an



economical expenditure of time. Under the new order of things, recognition is given to the fact that each kind of work has laws of its own which should be taken into account and kept free from confusion with the best methods of doing other kinds of work. It also means recognition of the fact that there are average workmen and first-class workmen, manual labourers and brain-workers and need for closer co-operation between these. Heretofore, the work of those who plan and those who execute has not been kept sufficiently distinct, nor have there been a sufficient number of functional foremen and instructors to carry out the ideas of those who plan and manage. In the large establishments, where the new method has been scientifically applied, there are not only heads of departments but time-planners whose province it is to develop schedules according to the type of work, the degree of skill, differences in cerebral capacity, in physical strength and nerve-power. Each workman is assigned a task for the day according to his training and his powers, and with a view to adequacy in the use of the resources or machinery at hand. Efficiency as thus elaborately sought means decrease in the cost of production under better conditions, saving of time under careful supervision, increase of output, better workmen attracted by higher wages, and the standardisation of materials and equipment.



Otherwise stated, the modern idea of efficiency involves saving of time, energy, and money, in production and distribution. It means closer connection between departments, hence more unity in the system as a whole. It calls for experts at every important point, and has room for expert service in every department. The system has not been introduced without opposition, and long experimentation, as Mr. Taylor and others have shown in recent periodical literature. But such is the history of every idea of real value.

The objection to such a system is that it seems to be one more scheme for the benefit of the capitalist. Under its use the manual labourer would appear to be an instrument whose energies are to be employed to the full while they last. To drive oneself to accomplish as much as possible in a given length of time, with a time-schedule ever before the eye, would apparently be to draw upon one's reserves to the limit, presently to be as useless as the locomotive that once drew the fastest express but now is not even serviceable on the leisurely schedule of the milk-train. These objections are serious enough, and the problem of the right use of our energies is one that must be considered in a separate chapter, but everything depends upon one's understanding of the system and the extent to which the principle is carried.

The term "efficiency" is in the largest sense a



synonym for the art of life, for adaptation to nature. As a higher animal, a part of nature, man is efficient if able to protect himself, to provide sustenance and shelter, and maintain his strength. As a social being, he attains the standard if not merely able to provide for his family but so to adjust himself to economic conditions in a world where competition is intense as to minister to the manifold interests of human nature in its wondrous variety. The husband must be efficient as a wage-earner and in a hundred other ways, the wife as mother in respects that tax her affection, intelligence, ingenuity, and strength in full measure. Thus the idea extends into the whole of life and the economic adjustment becomes intense in proportion as the wants of a family increase. The test questions turn about the relation between efficiency in a commercial sense and efficiency as applied to the physical, moral, and spiritual welfare of society at large.

A merely commercial idea of efficiency would have regard for economy in the cost of production and distribution, so that there might be increase in dividends. But experience may show that commercial efficiency is furthered by conditions under which the workman also benefits through increased skill, higher wages, and better conditions. Industrial and commercial efficiency belong together, and logically lead to consideration of higher types



of success. The workman or boss cannot be made even a more successful cog in the machine without becoming very much more. The idea of efficiency once clearly grasped must lead to consideration of every factor that enters into human life. It must moderate the sternness of the soul-less corporation, if such exist. In the end it must make men and women more human, not less so, or fail in its purpose.

Efficiency as a commercial program seems to be for the benefit of the large producer or the great department stores and institutions. Hence the day of individual betterment and detailed social welfare appears to be farther off than ever. But this is a misunderstanding of the idea. The modern idea is indeed a product of the great industries. In the large enterprise there is room for elaborate organisation, and this is the field in which to try out the science. In the smaller business many tasks must be assigned to each employee and foreman. In the home the housewife must be skilled in any number of arts, and it is difficult to separate planning from execution in such a way as to secure freedom for each person to contribute the best that can be given. Yet division of labour and efficiency are not identical. The ideal is to make each person more efficient, whatever his work or capacity, and whatever the facilities at his disposal. It is never a mere question of mechani-



cal equipment and external co-operation. Efficiency means not only economy of time and energy but advancement in many other directions, as we shall presently see more clearly. In so far as it becomes a mental and moral ideal, including the conservation of human energy, it may be realised in the world of moral conduct even when the physical conditions are not what they might be. Hence there is no reason for limiting the idea to the large industries. The more relentlessly the idea is developed in the commercial world, the greater will be the reasons for extending the principle of mental and moral efficiency into all departments of life.

Looking at the matter from the point of view of the individual, the first need is that each man shall find something that he can do and do well, thereby gaining the power required for advancement. He may then make a study of the conditions most likely to secure progress. The man who becomes a skilled workman or manager does not necessarily begin in the occupation in which he eventually achieves success, but he puts his energies in motion and then uses his powers of initiative. For every man must learn the art of work, acquiring the power to apply himself, to be thorough, to hold out. This means concentration on the task at hand with a view to cutting down the waste, observation to see wherein the work can be im-



proved, what conditions should be changed, what alterations should be made in the machinery and in executive management. The artisan may have no opportunity to make changes or introduce improvements, for his ideas may not be wanted. But he can think. He can learn the art of adaptation, patiently biding his time. He can acquire control, and store away knowledge. If he takes the long look ahead, watching to see whither trade is tending, what changes are imminent, in what place to locate, he will be in a position to strike out and reveal his talent or genius. What he needs above all is initiative, creative ideas, definite plans of action to which he can give himself in full vigour. While he may not be wanted as an expert workman he may indeed be eagerly sought for as a planner or executive manager. Thus mental application to a purely manual task may lead the way through mere routine to intellectual efficiency. Efficiency as an individual ideal is without limits.

Some of the most expert men and women in the world gained their preliminary training in remote fields. Success in an undertaking does not necessarily mean long preparation in that type of work. The man who watches his opportunity is able to seize upon certain directive ideas, learn an important method, then carry over into the new occupation the power and the ideas which he has acquired elsewhere. The occasion that "makes the man"



is an event that summons into full activity the best habits, forces, and ideas which various experiences have produced. Co-ordination of powers is oftentimes of more consequence than specific skill. Granted a certain command of the resources that constitute a live individual, the other requisites may be quickly acquired. Thus a good teacher will turn to a new subject and begin successful instruction in it by reading a few lessons ahead of the class, or a wide-awake young man in need of employment will consult works of reference in a library and secure a position over the heads of men who have had experience in that field. The development of the modern idea in scientific form will enable an increasing number to grasp and apply the principles although they may not have been trained in a scientific establishment.

A common mode of regarding the question of successful work is in the light of the training required to fulfil the duties of the chosen vocation. Hence many young people wait until they have found a congenial occupation before they begin to become efficient. Or, efficiency is identified with manual skill and there the matter is supposed to end. But it is a mistake to postpone the day of preparation, or wait for the right leaders. The greatest time-planner in the world could not create efficiency. Increased efficiency at one point calls for efficiency at all points. The way to learn



this and to prove it is to begin with the individual, that is, with yourself. One can hardly consider the matter in full seriousness without gaining a new view of the whole of life. For this question, we insist, is not limited to economic conditions and tendencies. Nor is it a mere question of environment. There may of course be factors at work which make it difficult even for the most skilled labourer to find a place worthy of his powers. It is not alone the soul-less corporation that makes this difficult, but unfortunate restrictions placed on skilled performance by the labour unions which tend to bring down the average, hence to discourage efficiency. Nevertheless, there is always room for the growth of inner efficiency, for the development of the individual through acquisition of the power that creates occasions. Our inquiry begins in earnest when we learn how we are actually using our energies to-day.

A teacher of ethics, dissatisfied with the usual results of class-room instruction, once asked a hundred young men and women to take careful note for a week of the way they lived, their modes of work, methods of thought, manner of resting, taking pleasure, and the like. He did not preach to them or propound a moral doctrine, but merely asked them to observe. The results were gratifying in the extreme. The thought required to make these discoveries revealed manifold directions in



which improvements could be made. Better methods of study, wiser modes of living, and higher ideals followed in due time as matters of course. Such results prove that the self-consciousness demanded for purposes of observation is worth while. They show, in fact, that without taking careful thought to learn how we now live and work, we can hardly expect to work and live in any better way. Sometimes, as a wise man has remarked, "nothing succeeds like failure."

In due course, there will doubtless be vocational and other experts who will carry these matters farther back through wise advice given to the young in plastic periods. Education for efficiency will then become the standard. But first we must educate our experts. The expert who shall show us how to find ourselves, summon ideals into actuality, and point out the best we can do, must have a firm grasp of fundamental principles, must begin with himself. For, plainly, something more is required than knowledge of the various vocations and professions under the changing conditions of our time, supplemented by a working scheme of the four types of human character by which people are judged. Something more than disinterested desire to serve humanity is also required, namely, insight, coupled with a wide range of sympathies. There must be a method by which to learn through skilful conversations



and the study of written reports, what manner of man the youth in question is tending to become. Again, the vocational expert may well make use of every aid, such as acute observation of facial characteristics, general appearance, handwriting, hints gathered from mannerisms, deportment, modes of speech, and from inferences based on general impressions. Yet back of all this lies the necessity for a science of human nature fundamental alike to the vocations, the professions, and to life. Hence we have to do with precisely the same need which faces the individual who takes all these matters into his own hands. Efficiency is not merely a vocational idea but pertains to the whole of life. It is a human question.

Until our attention is called to the deeper considerations, we are apt to think of efficiency as wholly external, well exemplified by the carpenter who knows how to mold and fit boards because he has been trained to use appropriate tools in methodical fashion. Industrial efficiency at large appears to be no less external. This is of course why the whole question apparently revolves about the idea of making a livelihood, or attaining commercial success. The transition is easy to a merely materialistic theory of economics or social reform. To hold such a view would be to give vocational advice accordingly, thereby aiding every one to find his place in the hard-and-fast world of business.



Not even in the commercial world, however, does such a view obtain exclusively. The problem of efficiency becomes a moral one for every employer and for every worker who endeavours to do his best, what is right. No thoughtful man is likely to be satisfied unless endeavouring to make himself more efficient, and this interest very quickly leads out of the commercial and the external into the moral world. Self-knowledge and the control of energy enable men in all the walks of life to become more efficient. The better equipped a man is mentally the more successfully he will work at any task, however objective. Hence the deeper questions are, What is intellectual efficiency? What is really worth while? For educational and moral principles must also be subjected to efficiency as the new test—efficiency not in a sordid sense of the term, but in the largest humanitarian sense.

We do not need to spend much time observing the ways and wiles of men in legislative halls to discover that there is an enormous waste of energy. The complete and genuine introduction of business methods into the senate and the house, as in the case of government by commission, would doubtless result in remarkable improvements. Likewise in the schools and in the churches, in the management of public institutions, there is room for great improvement. We need not fear lest the



encroachment of the scientific theory of business shall mean the greater triumph of materialism, or even of commercialism; for it is essentially a question of increased efficiency in general, and efficiency means in the end more room for higher interests.

In a sense, we seriously begin to live for the first time when we undertake to make ourselves thoroughly efficient. The ideals of efficiency appeal to a man even when education, moral suasion, and religion have failed. The saying that "nothing succeeds like success" arouses a response from every sort of man. Efficiency is another word for success in this practical age of ours. It begins in all seriousness with the more central problem, What is within man's power? For the radical defect of many principles and methods in education, in religion, in commercial life, is that they spring from theoretical considerations, whereas success means adaptation to the actual forces and conditions which confront men and women in the real world.

If the day of the time-planner is at hand, the day of the one who shall teach us to understand, control, master, skilfully use, and wisely conserve our energies must follow. So long as the time-planner shall rule, the question of efficiency will indeed be essentially external; but when the centre of interest shifts to the energies that must be



mastered before one can intelligently save time, the whole matter becomes an individual one. As such it underlies all human work, is of vital importance for every human being.

In a former age it might still have been maintained that the question of the control of our energies is an external one, that we acquire the art by physical exercise, through out-of-door sports and through skill in manual vocations. But in the light of the profounder knowledge of our day we now realise that more depends upon character, and the sort of doctrine or standard to which a man is subject. It is difficult for some even now to see that this is the case, hence it is necessary to be most explicit in the insistence upon psychological considerations.

Yet one does not need to look far even in the commercial world to find reason to believe that psychology is in many respects the most important science. It is now widely acknowledged, for instance, that a great deal depends upon the impression produced by advertisements, hence more attention is given to the preparation of advertisements by experts. In fact, more than half the success of many ventures depends upon the manner of presentation to the public. Again, the art of salesmanship depends in part on the methods employed to persuade the human mind. Every executive leader must know how to approach



those who work under and with him. Back of every undertaking in the world of affairs there are principles that make for success, hence the psychology of success naturally becomes an interest in itself. To make the science explicit is to prepare the way for a further development of the art of success.

It is significant that Mr. Taylor declares that "the chief and essential feature of scientific management is the change in the mental attitude of both employer and employees toward their common work."<sup>1</sup> Hence persuasion must take the lead, supported by the long series of object lessons which prove to each man the advantages to be gained through hearty co-operation in carrying out the idea of efficiency. Furthermore, time is required to make the demonstration complete, a few men must be persuaded, then larger numbers, until whole social groups respond. The idea grows enormously in import when it is seen that efficiency involves the substitution of science for "rule of thumb" methods all along the line, the development of harmony in place of discords, the substitution of co-operation as a working idea in place of individualism, and the development of resources in such a manner as to add to the welfare of all concerned. This means far more thought given to every factor and every branch of work

<sup>1</sup> *American Magazine*, May, 1911.



than formerly. It means that questions such as that of just compensation, and what constitutes a fair day's work, will be objects for scientific investigation, no longer wrangled over in discordant fashion. More than anything else, Mr. Taylor believes, will be the gain accomplished through "the close, intimate co-operation, the personal conduct established" between the two sides in the labouring world; for it is difficult for those "whose interests are the same, and who work side by side in accomplishing the same object . . . to keep up a quarrel." The change comes about not merely because the workman has grown in industrial efficiency, but because he has "acquired a friendly mental attitude towards his employers, and his whole working conditions, whereas before a considerable part of his time was spent in criticism, suspicious watchfulness, and sometimes in open warfare. This direct gain to all of those working under the system is without doubt the most important single element in the whole problem."<sup>1</sup>

The importance of these changes begins to dawn upon our consciousness when we realise that the whole sphere of interest has shifted to the human world, and to the world of mind. This means that a profounder study of human character

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* See also Mr. Taylor's recently published volume, *The Principles of Scientific Management*, New York, 1911.



becomes imperative, and with it a study of all the influences that effect human life. We can no longer leave these factors to "rule of thumb" methods but must be as scientific in our study of mental attitudes and influences as in the investigation of the conditions that make for industrial efficiency. The scientific study of the mind and character of men has long been in process, to be sure, but now it is becoming possible to establish the connection as never before between the intellectual sciences and the industrial arts. Whatever the occupation, environment, or social position of workman, manager, or any other man or woman, the subject of mental efficiency forthwith becomes a subject of great importance.

In accordance with these tendencies, the capitalist must as surely become aware of reformatory influences as the labouring man. The time should come when the severe, relentless, cruel types shall cease to be. Instead, we should have more heads of industries of the type already in existence in many quarters, that of the kindly disposed capitalist who has the welfare of each of his workers at heart, who confers with them, and affords full opportunity for the expression of ideas from all quarters; whose ideal is not merely to develop a successful commercial enterprise in the face of fierce competition, but to be all that is best as a human being, a genuine man. For no man is



really efficient if a mere machine for money-making any more than a manual worker can be deemed successful if a mere cog in the great industrial engine. Hence the time must come when co-operation in the largest sense shall not only bring labour and capital closely together, but when it shall introduce radical changes in the very life and system of the commercial world. The beginning of all this is in the realm of the idea.

The psychology of efficiency must win its way as industrial efficiency has been fought for. But the battle can be won by making the utmost of tendencies already in operation. One branch of the subject readily leads to another, and to all the rest, when we once grasp the idea. If, for example, there be a "psychology of dressmaking" as some allege, there must be a psychology of fashions in general, hence of conventional life, including the power and distributive influence of the contagious idea, the law of imitation, the subserviency of the many to the few. New light is being thrown on all the undertakings of men by this growing interest in mental laws and processes. The psychology of religion, for example, is one of the newer branches of this modern tree of knowledge, highly important because in a measure fundamental even to modern criticism itself. The result is profounder knowledge of the ways in which the mind operates in the development of its beliefs, their emotional



accompaniments, and other associates. Thus to know what a man believes, or is likely to believe, in so far as you may wish to influence him, you must know how his mind works. Moreover, there are many popular beliefs in our day, all more or less psychological in type, involving new hopes, sometimes confusions of ideas, and reaching into every pathway of human endeavour; and the only way to deal with these intelligently is through knowledge of genuinely scientific psychology.

For example, there are people in our day who have gone so far over into the mental world, in their reaction against materialism, that it seems no longer necessary to take physical and economic conditions into account. For them everything depends upon the idea, and they see such potency in mental attitudes that they believe these alone will work physical and economic changes by direct impact. The result is a new series of illusions in favour of a supposed royal road to wealth and success of all sorts, a new attempt to shirk responsibility, and to wait in theoretical idleness for everything to be made right. It is hardly necessary to say that such a belief is even more removed from adaptation to natural law than belief in material forces as fundamentally decisive. For if we begin with material factors we can indeed work upward into the life of the idea, while to begin with the idea is to prepare for a downfall in order that we



may first reckon with natural facts. The psychology of efficiency must be founded both in the idea and in the thing.

It would of course be possible to overestimate the function of psychology, since it is not the most fundamental science, and must be completed by ethics and other branches of philosophy. Nevertheless, for practical purposes it is most useful, and it may be employed without prejudice in favour of any particular economic, religious, or sectarian scheme. Psychology is in truth as general as efficiency itself, and the disciple of external or economic reform has as much reason to master and employ it as the apostle of the spiritual life. In fact, it is so good an intermediary as a merely descriptive science, that the more one knows about it the less need there is for knowledge of the special beliefs to which men are subject. For if a mental master, one is to a large extent master of all the arts, able to take the shortest course to any end which one wishes to attain. Psychology is thus in a sense even more important than education as commonly regarded, since in addition to the usual accomplishments it adds the more crucial one of insight into the processes by which educated and uneducated alike ply their several vocations.

The relationship between the types of efficiency may be made clear by classifying some as quantita-



tive, others as qualitative. The typical devotee of commercialism is interested in making as much money as he can, and the corporation is merely a more effective means of attaining this end. Naturally the business man welcomes the new science of business, and makes the utmost of the idea of industrial efficiency. In fact, he would like to see this idea carried out in every department of life, and if he could have his way he would modify all the schools and colleges so that every boy and girl should be trained for efficiency from the start. The result would be that time-schedules would be introduced even into the college class-room, and no subjects would be taught save those which plainly tend to increase the commercial efficiency of men. So far the standard is merely quantitative, and if this standard could triumph we should live in a strictly mechanical world.

We need not look far to discover that everything of real value is qualitative, hence that the only justification of mechanical efficiency lies in its contributory power. To insist on the time-factor in every undertaking, to endeavour to get the utmost out of every man during every waking hour, would be to surrender the ideals of human existence. On the other hand, the moment even the crudest manual labourer, or the most grasping capitalist, begins to do his best as a man he departs from the quantitative standard. Hence one may



live in the ideal world although habitually adapted to the mundane order, one may be moral although holding a subordinate position, and working a great number of hours. There are any number of undertakings that cannot be carried on upon the basis of a time-schedule, since it is thought that counts, not things; values, not money; character, not material success. Many educational subjects are of this type, also all institutions which like the universities and churches have the æsthetic, cultural, and religious interests of man to teach, to develop, and conserve.

Now, psychology admirably serves as a connecting science between the quantitative and qualitative because it relates to the powers which men employ in both fields. To be the most successful artisan, manager, or capitalist, a man must consider the problem of the nature, training, wise use, and conservation of his energies; for he must be a man of skill, control, initiative, intellectual efficiency. But no man can thus regard his inner powers without raising the question of values, what is right, what is worth while. He may indeed retreat into the quantitative world, closing the door upon the ideal. But to those of us who will to be human beings the relationship of the quantitative to the qualitative is the crucial one. Human efficiency begins with the transition into the qualitative. Time is a consideration of value only



so far as it serves ends that are worth while. Even in the business world men originally started to provide for the production and distribution of life's necessities, to contribute a worthy share to the world's work; and if the commercial interest as such has in a measure become triumphant in our time we must see to it that it is only for a time. To be a human being, a person, contributing something to human character and thought, is the end that really justifies the use of quantitative means.



## CHAPTER II

### THE BASIS OF EFFICIENCY

STRICTLY speaking, our study of efficiency should begin with an investigation of life in general. For much depends on the scope of our thought. If not devoted to a religious view which emphasises the supernatural and has regard for the future life, we may be disciples of a modern theory of social reform. Hence the first considerations would naturally pertain to society as a whole, lest we tend to slight one class in favour of another or insist on a narrowly defined social program. But for present purposes we may assume sufficient knowledge of nature, of human life and society, also belief in the rightful place of natural existence as opposed to a supernatural interpretation. Whatever we believe, each must adapt himself to this natural world, must bear relations with the economic order, and find his place. This is fortunately true even of the least practical of the idealists. Hence it is primarily a question of the present use of resources and mental powers.



Before we consider the elements of mental and moral efficiency, it is important to have before us an idea of the efficient life at large. To state the need thus is to be reminded of the enormous differences which have come in with civilisation. Once the efficient life was the warrior's, and we have not yet wholly passed out of the period of dominance of martial passions and brute strength. But more and more we depend on brain-power, hence the efficient life consists in the maintenance of bodily health under conditions that do not readily foster it. In place of the standards of human success that once obtained, so great a degree of specialisation has entered into life that the question of efficiency differs according to the occupation and the adaptations essential to the preservation of health. But even when there are special conditions favourable, for example, to teaching as a profession, there are underlying principles which every right-minded person must consider. Hence the efficient life pertains not merely to health, and to professional relationships; it includes domestic relationships, those that relate a man to society through conventionality and friendship, intellectual relationships, moral obligations, and religious ties. Moreover, individuals differ in heredity, in disposition, education, and environmental conditions of many sorts. The best way to regard the matter would appear to



be, not to turn at once to the principles that relate to a given vocation, but frankly to acknowledge what human nature is, then consider how the ideal man would adapt himself to the conditions of life at large.

For the basis of efficiency is recognition of everything that enters into life. Hence it must be studied dispassionately, by looking beneath prejudices, beyond partisanship, but also beyond selfishness. The efficient man cannot afford to ignore any factor either within or without himself, for it is his privilege to succeed where his predecessors have failed. His starting-point is not doctrinal but scientific. He is not thinking of the manual labourer alone, nor of the capitalist, not even of one of the sexes. His standpoint is human. Therefore, beginning as an individual, he must valiantly look to himself, making light of nothing, realising that it is a question not of deficiency, but of opportunity. We need to know what manner of men we are, then consider what manner of men we can become. The art of adaptation may begin at any point whatsoever in the social scale. We have already made headway if, free from envy, we are content to be the men and women we find ourselves to be, not in a merely realistic sense, but ideally speaking.

The efficient man is not seeking to make the world over. He is not trying to make other men



like himself. He accepts the world, believes in his fellows, depends on natural law, and faithfully engages in his work day by day. Inspired by self-reliance, he does indeed hope to transform his life in some measure, improve his character, and take more satisfaction in real living. But he is content above all to realise his type, willing to live and let live. In so far as he expects to contribute to the reformation of human society, it is through fidelity to the work which his hands find to do. Well aware that people cannot be made over, that they are seldom persuaded of anything by argument, he knows that his power lies in example, not in precept. Thus at the outset he conserves his energy by refraining from coerciveness and officious propagandism.

This self-restraint implies knowledge of the principle of evolution. He has already advanced a stage on his way who has learned once for all that nothing comes about save by moderate degrees, although there may be rapid fruitions after months or years of preparation. He has advanced further still who knows that no man ever acquires anything except through experience. This means the casting aside of many misconceptions, prejudices, and fears. It means steady concentration on the work at hand. For one is not then endeavouring to acquire secret powers. One knows in truth that there are no royal roads. Therefore



one endeavours to advance cumulatively. The result is freedom to work and live, without the distresses and doubts that harass many minds.

Whatever our heredity, we begin life fairly near the animal level, with impulses and instincts to contend with, emotions that struggle for possession, habits that frequently master us; and a body in which all these tendencies reside. Hence we all start life in about the same manner, namely, as responsive beings possessing a fair amount of human capital. As creatures of habit the entire conservatism of human nature speaks through us, and whatever headway we make must be made against opposition. This means contest with the forces, inertias, and passions of the flesh, on the one hand; while, on the other, we face the influences that keep men in the long-established vocations and professions, the prevailing economic and religious creeds, the limited pathways of traditional education. As creatures of self-will, we shirk responsibility and wait for opportunities which we might create, we ride over our fellows, and push competitors to the wall in the mad race for success. Only so far as we realise the egotisms of human nature yet see beyond them, are we likely to make sure headway in transforming character.

Time was when we would have condemned ourselves for our sin, for the possession of laziness, irascibility, and sensuality. But the efficient man



takes himself in all respects as he is, so far as resources and elements are concerned, knowing that the first need is wise use of the forces at hand, whatever they may have been called in the past. As a wise man recently put it, "there has been preaching enough, we have been told without limit what we ought to do; what we now need is practical help from some one who has learned how to do what he ought." Transmutation of energy is the modern ideal. It is a question of the nature and training of the will, the nature of ideals, the art of concentration, and the laws of evolution of human character. To look at the matter in this light is to be able to develop a program without paralysing self-condemnation or benumbing self-disparagement. That is, we first look at life in mental terms, leaving ultimate issues for future occasions. To begin to do what we ought is to consider how to utilise every power that is in us so that it shall serve all the other parts. In the light of this standard, self-condemnation is waste of energy. So is discouragement, regret, jealousy, bitterness.

But if we begin life as creatures of impulse and habit, we also begin with certain activities which send us forth to accomplishment. The significant consideration is not what we came from, not the forces that tend to draw us back or hold us down, but the life which ever rises with fresh zeal and



newness of heart. Hence mere analysis of the factors and conditions which have made us what we are is of slight avail in comparison with the indomitable spirit that uses them. The man who becomes efficient is the one who starts his organism in motion, who keeps in motion, learns by doing, and acquires his knowledge of the highway to success by actively thinking along the road that leads into it.

The first stage of reflection naturally pertains to our desires. That is, we find ourselves pursuing certain ends because of native promptings or aptitudes, and almost before we ask what we can do best we discover that we are already doing it in part. But art leads to science, and after a time we realise that the eligible desires should be co-ordinated because they tend to further our end, while other ideas should be permitted to run out because they tend to defeat our purpose. Thus the one who wills to be a teacher turns from tendencies which would make a commercial man of him and concentrates on chosen subjects which he is prepared to teach. He selects people of a certain age to instruct because best adapted to them. As the years pass he gives increasing attention to a branch of his subject in which he hopes to excel. His ideal as a teacher enables him to select between avocations, opportunities for rest, recreation or pleasure, and so to shape his life as to add to its



efficiency year by year. In this way there is a gradual shifting of interest from mere desires and tendencies to ideals. Thus efficiency takes its clue from the drawing power of the ideal, the co-ordinating influence of a standard.

The starting-point is in the self-reliant discovery that each of us has a right to be, each can do a work in the world, and the world is large enough to need our individual contributions to art and science. Rightly stated, this ideal includes everybody, whatever his heritage or talent, whatever his education or calling. For the humblest man on earth can apply his powers of thought to the conditions in which he is placed, observe what is about him, and begin to learn its tendencies and laws. Education is wider than environment, more inclusive than any institution or system of training. Education at its best springs from the use a man makes of his powers of thought, supplemented by the opportunities afforded by his environment and experience. If it were primarily dependent on heredity or native talent, or chiefly a question of institutional training, we should have far more educated men than society now possesses.

Very much depends, therefore, on knowledge of the disposition or temperament with which we begin life, supplemented by knowledge acquired through experience or education, but far more on the will or character which uses these agencies



as means to ends. Character should, as a recent writer says, be "carefully distinguished from *disposition*, for which it is often mistaken. Disposition or temperament is the individual constitution which comes to one through inheritance. It is the racial-ancestral-parental bequest to the individual. It is his capital or insolvency, as the case may be. He may weld it into character; but as yet it is not . . . character."<sup>1</sup>

Successful mental life begins with the selection of means that promise well for the expression and development of character, within or without the institutions, the usual vocations and professions. For it involves initiative and a measure of independence, hence is free to choose one of several roads, adopting original methods, departing from custom or making full use of it, as the case may be. It puts an objective before the mind, a goal to be won. The mere ideal, steadily and persistently pursued, is a sufficient incentive at times. At other times, downright effort to overcome the obstacle directly in the way is demanded. Thus the youth who long dreams of becoming a legislator, physician, artist, or author, may reach a point as a young man when he must break with the entire family tradition. Another crisis may come when the intellectual life has done its best for him, and everything depends upon his passion

<sup>1</sup> Buckham, *Personality and the Christian Ideal*.



for the ideal, the ardent loyalty which takes exception to the measured pace of custom and creates a new way.

Efficiency is not then a product of one side of our nature, but is the whole mind in productive exercise. One acquires it through the discovery of native capacities, such as executive ability or creative imagination; through latent capacities brought out incidentally to meet an emergency or to fill another's place, through promotion, the sudden acceptance of responsibility; as well as through education in the usual sense of the term, training, self-knowledge, and discipline. We become efficient not only by learning to do one thing well, by developing all our powers so as to use them to best advantage through economy of energy, but by keeping at our work when enticing interests draw the mind into side-issues. Thus while native tendencies or talents may point the way and show what one can best do, the will may more and more take command, narrowing the field for purposes of concentration or loyalty, mayhap suddenly shifting to an allied occupation.

Thorough knowledge of the self would show what phases of mental life are native, such as instincts, impulses, passions, habits, aptitudes; what are acquired through discrimination, the selection of incentives, the unifying powers of the will, through analytical or constructive thought;



and what ones are due to experience through contact with the world and various types of men. The logical result would be a criterion showing to what extent the intellectual life should be allowed to take the lead without unduly interfering with the spontaneities, how far custom may be followed without sacrificing independence, originality, and freedom. For efficiency is a balance between native and acquired characteristics. It is nothing if not acquired, and yet the training by which it is gained should never be permitted to extend so far that the joys of life shall be overcome.

Since efficiency has a physical and nervous basis, many of us first become aware of its opportunities through the control we possess over the body through skill in physical exercise. We also realise its benefits through that state of bodily well-being which leaves us free to work, yet insures rest, the wise use of nervous force and adaptation to the conditions which nature imposes.<sup>1</sup> But bodily control implies a parallel development on the mental side. Hence the freedom from nervousness, the control at the centre which is in large part the secret of bodily efficiency, finds its counterpart in poise, absence of fear, freedom from anxiety and all other mental states that tend to

<sup>1</sup> Among many recent treatises that bear on these matters one of the best is *The Efficient Life*, by Dr. L. H. Gulick; New York, Doubleday, Page & Co., 1909.



scatter the thoughts. In the efficient mind all decisions are emphatically made and promptly acted upon; there is wise use of habits through possession of an inner order or system which is superior to them; and increasing control through self-knowledge, constancy, firmness, and the other qualities, which express the constructive will. There is also room for perspectives, side-lights, and the repose which comes through the possession of an avocation supplementing the vocation. There is method, yet freedom to depart from it.

Does this enumeration involve so much that only the master mind can realise the ideal? Efficiency is in a measure a synonym for mastership, yet it is no less truly an ideal for the man of average capacity. The man or woman with fewer interests and less capacity than the person with pronounced talents sometimes becomes efficient more quickly. The humblest calling is dignified by the manner of its fulfilment. Efficiency is not necessarily many-sided, but the efficient life is one that is contributory to the general good, a life in which, whatever the specific task, there is growth furthered by productive self-knowledge, a life characterised by purpose, inspired by an ideal, consecrated by earnest endeavour.

The difficulties we encounter in the endeavour to apply this standard to all the vocations and



professions are doubtless due to lingering traditions which separate manual from mental and spiritual work. In accordance with the ideals of modern life, we are assuming in the present study that physical work when well done implies spiritual qualities, and that the true spiritual leader is able to work by the sweat of his brow. The fully awake human being faces practically the same situation, with somewhat the same needs, temptations, and opportunities. Hence in every well regulated life there is inner unity or co-ordination, selection and concentration amidst a multitude of promising interests, a sound mind in a sound body; there is power to express sentiment and affection or to withhold it, power to be very personal, intimate, or to be remote, dispassionate, judicial. In such a life the sympathies are regulated yet kept thoroughly alive, childlikeness is preserved and habit is employed without employing. In its higher reaches this inner control preserves a balance between spirit and form. Ideas, and reasons, are given place, but room is reserved for the deeper receptivity, for self-abandonment, the free expression of thought and feeling, the carrying power of consecrated obedience. There is regard for good form, yet room for originality, a balance between training and life. The efficient man, without talking too much, believes in himself without taking himself too seriously, is willing



to be narrow that he may realise "the glory of the imperfect."<sup>1</sup>

Consider what a change would come over the world if we were to unite in order to realise the ideals of human efficiency by granting to each the right to do his best work under the best conditions. The engineers of the fastest express trains between New York and Chicago run their locomotives but three hours in a day, then rest an entire day before starting out on another of the intensely exacting runs into which they must throw their whole energy for the time being. The close concentration and exhaustion of nervous force required for such a performance compels these skilled men to take this long rest in order to keep up to the mark. It is matter of wisdom on the part of their employers to grant them a day of absolute change, during which they may sleep, play with their children, or do whatever they like. For these men this work becomes an art, hence a means for realising the self. The greater the degree of efficiency the more reason for granting to workers of every sort the conditions under which they can work best. Give every man and woman this opportunity and you shall have a moral society. This attainment seems out of the question for many of us because of the necessity we are under to earn a

<sup>1</sup> See Professor Palmer's inspiring essay under this title in *The Teacher*, Boston, 1908.



livelihood at anything that offers, amidst high prices, grasping corporations, the dishonesty of the world, the temptation to get ahead at any cost, the slight regard paid to ideal interests, and the unjust distribution of resources. Yet these conditions are oftentimes precisely those that enable a man to stand erect and show what is in him.

In a sense it matters little what our occupation is, when we begin to achieve this end. Of course every one would prefer to adopt an occupation to his liking. But the majority of us must gradually win the right to do what we prefer. Meanwhile, what is more important than to do whatever is nearest as well as it can be done, or at least as well as we can do it? Surely there is a relationship between what we are and what we are doing, some reason why we are placed exactly as we are.

In the first place, to make an art of the commonplace occupation in which we may be engaged is to begin to economise physical energy and mental power. Ordinarily a vast deal of energy is wasted in vain discontent, or the attempt to find another kind of work before we are prepared for it. To reduce a prosaic occupation to an art, one must put much thought into it, become absorbed in careful attention to details. The chances are that this devotion to details will yield such valuable results that the work will proceed more easily, the worker will be happier, and hence a still higher



standard will become possible. To give thought to one's work, to compare the skilful with the unskilled labourer, is presently to learn that in unskilled labour the physical exertion is greater, because the head does not save the feet and hands. Observe the average shiftless maid-servant, for example, and note the multitude of superfluous movements of the hands which she makes, and the number of extra steps she takes, instead of co-ordinating her movements about the house. Or, note the people who work and live nervously, and trace these diffusions of energy to their source, considering in what mode of life they would be overcome.

There is undoubtedly an intimate correspondence between the type of occupation in which one is engaged and the personal development of the one who is engaged in it. Hence the point at which to advance is in the inner life. The man who has not made an art of his work has probably made little headway in the mastery of his own powers. To accept an uncongenial occupation and do the work well is often the most direct road to the best that is desired in life. There is nothing, not even the seemingly trivial work of building fires, or washing dishes, that may not be made part of the art of life. It may require but little thought to learn to build fires skilfully, or wash dishes with the least expenditure of energy, but every phase of



work that is brought into line means so much power added. Behind the task is the person who makes of it a means to the ideal, the attainment of mastership. Strictly speaking, no one should care to advance until he masters the work that lies at hand in such a manner that to change will not be to evade an opportunity for growth of character. If one hopes to delegate routine-work to others in the course of time, let him earn the right to direct others by learning how to do well all phases of the work that lie between his present stage and that of leadership.

It has been said that genius is the power of taking infinite pains. However that may be, a man may be a genius in any occupation for which he is fitted. The genius makes the utmost use of each little item, sees all there is in a thing. One of the best ways to quicken this love of work in others is to put such thought and zeal into one's vocation that others, seeing one's joy, shall be inspired thus to work, too. "To fill the hour,—that is happiness," says Emerson. It therefore matters more what we bring to the hour's occupation than what the particular work happens to be. A man is happiest when doing his special work, but the work itself never wholly determines his state of mind. The work goes off easily and is done well, or it lags, according to the conditions which make for or impair human efficiency.



It is practically impossible to state this ideal without passing over from the prudential realm into the moral world. It is a matter of economy both to be prudent and to be moral. The well-organised, proficient life, whatever the calling, whatever the type of person, is the basis of the moral life at its best. To be wholly moral one must be efficient, and no one can become really efficient without being moral. Moral productivity grows out of efficiency just as prudence in the care of the organism leads out of the life of the single individual into the life of duty. The transition is also seen in many other ways. For example, one must maintain a high standard yet remember that people are where they are; one must observe special conditions in order to attain chosen ends, taking the laws of evolution into full account. No one can formulate and undertake to carry out the ideal of efficiency as a social principle without considering the rights and powers of the other persons with whom one may be associated. The conditions that foster the efficient life in my own case are likely to be required, allowing for variations, by others. Hence if I have truly found myself, become rightly proficient, I am likely to understand the conditions which favour efficiency in general. Thus efficiency becomes the corrective of various forms of negative zeal. When efficiency becomes moral it is positive, constructive, and it



may assimilate the virtues of the zealots who have tried to be moral before becoming efficient. If I know my powers and employ them effectively I am little likely to goad myself to insistent performance, and if I have found peace in my own selfhood I shall be apt to inspire it in others. Engaged in full vigour in the process of self-realisation, I shall not be likely to spend much energy in wrong self-sacrifice. These questions will be considered more at length in a later chapter.



## CHAPTER III

### THE PSYCHOLOGICAL POINT OF VIEW

HAVING regarded the nature of efficiency in general, we now turn to the more specific consideration of the mental conditions and powers which foster the efficient life. We shall assume that the importance of physical health and exercise is recognised as a basis, and also that the training acquired through the usual sources of education is a necessary element. Every one has a measure of acquaintance with the physical, economic, and other external conditions of life. We all possess in some degree a doctrine or creed which pertains to the life within. We begin to fail at the point where, for those who think for themselves, the transition is made from training or education, economic creed or religion in general to the study of our powers as mental beings. However extensive our knowledge, therefore, it is important to begin by direct observation the study of the mental activities that underlie every undertaking.



At first thought, no argument would appear to be needed to show why we should study the human mind. It was long ago said and accepted that "in the world there is nothing great but man, and in man there is nothing great but mind." Yet the average man has made little advancement in the study of his own mind. One would suppose that as all accomplishments are partly mental, and since man is nothing if not practical, the utmost attention would be given to the study of the mind with a view to increasing its efficiency. On the other hand, it is a law of human experience that the most important attainments come late if not last. Moreover, there are other reasons why the study of the mind has been neglected, as we shall presently see.

There is nothing more bewildering to the average reader who seeks to apply what he reads than to pick his way through the ordinary psychology with the hope of learning useful principles. The descriptions of mental life are often singularly lacking in reference to facts as the plain man knows them. When science lags so far behind, it is not strange that the rest of the world is ignorant. To be sure, psychologists have begun to realise this deficiency and are seeking to overcome it. Psychology was once merely speculative and undertook to explain mental life by assuming the existence of various qualities which no one ever



experienced, and the existence of a soul divided into independent faculties or powers. The empirical psychology of to-day is an attempt to supply the deficiency by describing mental processes and functions in experimentally verifiable terms. As a result nearly all treatises on the human mind published more than thirty years ago are out of date, and are now merely of historical value.

Yet unless one already possesses a clue one would be sorely puzzled by many treatises issued since the reign of physiological psychology. Psychology is popularly supposed to be the science of the soul, yet the soul is now seldom mentioned, and this originally speculative science has become one of the special sciences, with its own laws, its list of elements, and its precise methods of observation. One reads about quantity and quality, intensity and duration, and the whole aim of this science when structurally regarded, is to approximate the quantitative standards so valuable in other fields. Some of the most technically precise works seem further removed from the mind, as you and I appear to know it, than the speculative psychology of old.

If we start with popular and wholly uncritical views of the mind, we make as little headway, for ordinarily no line of distinction is drawn between consciousness and the physical organism. Some-



times we hear people speak as if the mind controlled or at least influenced the body, but more frequently mental life is vaguely referred to as if it were simply awareness of what is taking place in the body, together with sensations which arise from external sources; for instance, sensations of warmth and cold, of sound, and light. As if in confession that this is a faulty view we hear them also referring to the mind as if this term were synonymous with "intellect," and had nothing to do with sensations and the will. Again, they refer to the will in connection with statements about character, and a lament is expressed that it is difficult to arouse this "faculty" into successful exercise. Instances are sometimes cited to prove that the will controls the organism, but the problem then is to reconcile this notion with the other one, as often quoted, namely, that the mind is a prisoner in the brain, dependent on processes of nutrition and blood-supply. We scarcely think of pain except when ill, and then merely because our attention is drawn to a certain locality within the organism. We do not analyse pleasure, for we are eager to enjoy it while it lasts. Our emotions sweep through the mind so rapidly that we know little about them, to say nothing of controlling them. Commonly we make no distinction between sensations, pleasures, pains, or emotions, but uncritically class them all as "feelings."



Hence we hear people say, "I feel," with reference to every experience in life, even when it is properly a question of inference, argument, and belief. The relationship between instinct, desire, and will, is no less vague. The popular classification under the heads of feeling, thought, and will, introduces a measure of order. Yet there remain items and powers which cannot be grouped under these heads. For it is supposed that there are higher powers known as conscience, the moral sense, or a "God-sense," and man is said to be "a spirit" with reference to religious experience and the possibility of survival after death. One hears much about deficiencies in powers of concentration from people who complain that they are "unable to apply" their minds, as if the mind were somehow different from the self that endeavours to use it. We hear, too, about "self-control," as if a higher self could grasp and control a lower. Finally, the possibility that we have a hidden or "subconscious mind" working by different processes complicates these popular ideas beyond hope.

To turn from this wealth of popular conceptions to a psychological doctrine which begins by describing the life of the organism is not to deny anything real, but to build on an unassailable foundation with the acknowledgment that we are born in entire dependence on the body. Although this psychology has not yet mounted



as high as it might, it gives us the right direction in which to look for growth, with its insistence on the fact that we start as creatures of impulse, habit, and earthly emotions, beginning as children to make distinctions in mental processes which at first are vaguely apprehended as one. That is to say, we acquire interests of our own, and learn to exert our wills, hence take an active part in mental evolution amidst states and tendencies which are intimately related with the brain. To begin to think clearly about the mind is to regard it as having evolved, as now evolving side by side with the processes that constitute the life of the bodily organism. Thus our thought is introduced to the conception that the individual is psychophysical. A human being psychologically regarded is a being with two aspects, one mental, the other physical, neither one of which can be accounted for apart from the other. If this conception of the mind appear to be unfortunate, if unpleasant in view of all that we have hoped, at any rate progress towards a higher view is possible only by beginning here.

Moreover, encouragement is found in the fact that there is room for divergence of opinion even within the psychological field. There are psychologists who start with a theory of sensational elements, and undertake to build the structure of mind afresh in conceptual language, language so



remote that you and I would scarcely recognise the subject under consideration. These scholars usually make short work of every practical belief, and say almost nothing about subconsciousness. But others, following the lead of the greatest descriptive psychologist, still refer to "the stream of thought" as actually experienced, pointing out that the mind is knowable through what it accomplishes.<sup>1</sup> Following the lead of the latter, we may boldly enter the lists, with as good right to arrive at conclusions as those whose interests are purely theoretical. Professor James is often quoted in connection with many popular beliefs, and yet there is undoubtedly no surer cure-all for everything that savours of unsound mental doctrines than the great two-volume work in which our master psychologist so steadily insists upon habit, on association, and the dependence of the mind upon the brain.

We plunge, then, into the midst of mental life as each of us finds it by closing the eyes and giving heed to the stream of thought. For the time being, we lay aside our higher interests so that we may become more familiar with the actual processes that are leading us from moment to moment into a future which we hope in part to regulate. We need not for the present employ the term "soul," or even consider in what sense all phases

<sup>1</sup> See James, *Psychology*, vol. i., chapter ix.



of mental life may be said to belong to one self. We are now concerned with the mind as actually made known through experience, swept by emotions, a prisoner of ideas. No one ever feels or beholds the self, and no one controls the self. What we truly mean by the self only careful thinking can tell us after we have considered the data out of which man rears his sentiments and thoughts into a comprehensive idea of the soul. To attain "self-control" is to understand and direct the psychophysical energies which play upon the inner centre. It is solely a question of processes at first, the processes which we awaken into, and which relate us to the far past, to all that is around us here and now. In actual process of evolution we do not yet apprehend ourselves as unitary souls, but as creatures of lower and higher desires, moods, emotions, volitions, and ideas. We may indeed will to be consistent selves but we have advanced very far in knowledge of mental life if we have so far sounded human duality as to know in ideal terms what it means to be self-consistent.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The reader who is unacquainted with psychological description will find a very readable account of the phases of mental life here briefly referred to in Professor James's *Psychology*, Briefer Course; New York, Henry Holt & Co. See especially the chapters on Habit, The Will, The Stream of Thought. Another excellent volume with which to begin the study is Miss Calkins's *A First Book in Psychology*; New York, Macmillan & Co., 1910. In Professor Royce's *Outline of Psychology*, introductory chap-



Nor need we have aught to do with the old-time notion that the mind is divided into sections or compartments, not even in the case of conscience, or what we call "the heart." The same mind functions in all phases of mental life, and what we mean when we employ such terms as "will" or "thought" is that various mental phases are uppermost at different times while others are more or less quiescent. It is a study of processes not of faculties that is about to engage us. By a "process" is meant a change from point to point as in a stream in which there is constant mutation due to varying conditions and the appearance of different activities. Underlying every mental process there is a change in the physical portion of the organism. Consciousness is acute awareness of the events that are taking place within the mental stream, as an emotion wells to the surface, as a thought flits across, as a volition gives new meaning or direction, or as one quietly observes the play of the stream in general. We all possess this marvellous stream, we may all observe, reflect, and learn. That is the uniqueness, the wonder of it all. If my description, made common property, is verifiable by you when you once again pause to observe and reflect, it may be of value. But the

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ters, the reader is introduced to a type of psychological description which makes the intimate relationship of the mind to the brain very clear.



real mind is just this steady play and interplay as the stream sweeps down the course of time. The description of any special phase such as will or desire is merely a mode of reference, not the mind itself. When we bring order into our thought it by no means follows that order has been attained in the given stream. The stream as presented is a rich mass of impressions whose wealth is so great, whose possibilities so multiform that we can scarcely blame those who have tried but thus far in vain to do justice to its scope.

The stream of consciousness, that is, the passing sensations, feelings, emotions, volitions, and thoughts, as directly perceived is psychical; while psychology is the science which undertakes to describe and explain the processes and functions of mind. We directly apprehend, for example, sensations of warmth and of colour, and the psychical states which we thus become aware of are the real objects of consciousness, made known to each in his own mental world. In off-hand fashion we say that we "touch" a hot stove or "see" a red book, just as we speak of the sun as if it revolved around the earth. But when we are careful to discriminate between the facts and the scientific description of them we admit that what we feel is always a mental process, never a physical thing. Physiology describes for us the structure of the organism and explains the way in which heated



objects affect the skin, or the way etheric vibrations affect the rods and cones of the eye so that through the optic nerve and the brain certain impressions are conveyed and aroused, in correspondence with which we have perceptions of colour. Psychology steps in at this point and endeavours to tell what portions of our experience of heat or colour pertain to the things outside, what to the mechanism of the body, and what elements are mental. Furthermore, psychology goes back as far as possible, tracing the causes and conditions which make it possible for us to perceive heat and colour. We do not of course experience a psychological state, no one ever felt a "psychological moment"; what we feel is the perception and the reaction which a stimulus evokes, that is, the *psychical* moment.

In popular speech we sometimes refer to a person as a psychic or "sensitive," meaning one who has visions, sees spirits, or otherwise apprehends occult phenomena. Such references imply a survival of the former notion that there are special faculties through which unusual experiences are conveyed. They also involve an attempt to reckon with abnormal experiences before we have thought clearly about the normal. In contrast with this view I am pointing out that every possible mental event as actually perceived is psychical, hence that every one is psychical and sensitive. To be sensi-



tive is to be capable of receiving impressions from whatever source. This means in the first instance that we receive impressions through the five well-known senses, and the other senses through which we feel heat and cold, experience pressure-sensations, and the like. If in addition there are less familiar phenomena apparently involving lucidity, telepathy, and participation in higher levels of activity, these occult excitations are superimposed on the ordinary levels of activity, and we should hardly expect to understand the less known apart from the well-known. To say this is not by any means to make light of higher experiences but to point out that we can hardly interpret such experiences correctly until we have made sure of the facts in question. For obviously there is a great difference between a fact or psychical impression, and a principle brought forward to account for the fact or impression. It is well known that the so-called psychic or sensitive is usually one who is either in ill-health or is onesided in development. It would appear reasonable, then, to approach the study of so-called psychical experiences equipped with sure knowledge of normal mental life; and since all mental experiences are psychical we see plainly that we are concerned with problems of the human mind as a whole.

To be normal, let us say, means to experience sensations of warmth and cold, pangs of hunger,



feelings of satisfaction, desires pertaining to physical welfare and survival, together with thoughts that make us essentially human and wish to be more than mere animals. To have sure knowledge of normal processes is to be able to attribute them in some measure to their various sources so that in contrast we may know what is within our power and what ends are worth while. If, for example, I am hungry after a forenoon's work with saw and axe in the forest, it is wholly normal that there should be destruction of tissue, hence need for food, together with nature's warning made known through the pangs of hunger. The sensation of hunger is not like the bodily waste, I do not "feel" my exhausted tissues or my empty stomach; what I perceive is an increasing desire for food, well known through long association. All this is part of the organism whereby nature has enabled me to survive. Habits long ago acquired come into play and prompt me to secure food, I take thought and bestir myself to obtain my dinner. When my hunger begins to be appeased the pangs of desire subside, and my thoughts are free to seek other channels.

To say that my patience, my thoughts, in fact my whole state of mind, is considerably affected by the experience of hunger, and that I shall be a more agreeable person after my dinner is well under way, is simply to state matters of common-sense.



The customs of the world are founded on adaptation to the psychophysical individual, and ordinarily we pay little regard to the fact that the moods of people vary with the condition of their stomachs. Assuming that we must first give both our friends and our enemies something attractive to eat before we try to accomplish our ends with them, we quietly do this, then proceed with the affairs at hand.

Now why should we not as easily apply this acquaintance with human nature all along the line even to the highest spiritual state that ever inspired a prophet? It is the foundation fact about us, and we may as well acknowledge it.

I do not say that a man's disposition is determined by the food he eats, or that the state of liver, brain, or nerves shows what kind of spiritual belief he will adopt. What I am saying is that mind and body move along together, that there is minute correspondence between them, whatever else must be said about the probable influence of the one over the other. There are bodily processes that lead to a state of depletion, and other processes that bring renewal of tissues. These and all other organic and allied processes go on relentlessly, whatever else takes place. If we would alter a physical condition with reference to which we are aware of hunger, we must do something physical. We might indeed inhibit the sensation of hunger



by absorbing our consciousness in other ends, but this would not in the least degree change the physical situation. Whatever I believe or think about my food may indeed alter my state of mind, so that a once palatable article of food may become distasteful, but this change is mental and will remain so unless I change my physical conduct by partaking of another kind of food. The qualities of food are physical, the qualities of thought are mental. A man's dyspepsia is one thing, his mental disposition another. Likewise throughout life there is an endless series of conditions and events by which we are environed, such as climate, changes in the weather, effects wrought in the physical organism by liquids and solids, by orderly and disorderly functional activities; and on the other hand another endless series of responses, moods, conflicts, volitions, temperamental attitudes, and thoughts.

If we keep close to the earth, noting that mind and body move together, we ought to be able to proceed from the known to the unknown. The psychophysical individual is like an animal in the presence of a given environment, and you will find him reacting in the first place because of instincts which arouse in him a desire to survive. To be well adapted for survival in this natural world is in the first instance to be normal, and the least variation from the standard on either the



mental or the physical side means a variation on the other side. Whatever a man is physically and mentally enters into whatever he does, whatever he feels. Hence to interpret his experiences you must take into account all that he is, ignoring nothing for shame or for any other reason. The more we know about the darkest and hardest facts the more likely are we to be in a position to throw light on the highest. Man is a creature of impulse, habit, and emotion, with now and then a thought, occasionally an idea, and with once in a while evidences that he is a character possessing will and the power to reason. If we regard him as an evolving animal in the first instance, we are little likely to fall into misconceptions concerning him.

The process of thought which usually takes place in the average mind is somewhat like this. An idea occurs, suggested by a preceding idea or experience, and this idea leads to another by an associative process resembling the groping about from tree to tree of an explorer in a forest. Most people think as they read—from one word to another, from sentence to sentence, from page to page, from the last page to the next book, with scarcely a pause for thought. It is seldom that such a mind compels ideas to come, pushing through first impressions to sure command of fact and valid inference. Usually our thought is driven forward



in a never-ceasing stream of impressions, feelings, and ideas. A cross-section would doubtless reveal an incongruous assemblage.

This description is not meant to be disparaging. Some of the best results develop out of a vague associative process, and it is remarkable what order is occasionally called from chaos by an absorbing idea. If we consciously followed the growth of all our convictions they might not be half so genuine. Even the best-trained minds seldom think in explicit propositions, inferences, and syllogisms with no premises missing, and extremely few have ever tried to do this. We gain insights and yield to them, make bold dashes and daring leaps, leaving the gaps to be filled at some future time, or we endeavour to make them good by faith. If we think at all it is in general terms, and ordinarily we are content if an idea appears to be true for practical purposes.

While we are indeed prisoners of associative processes swept along in a stream of feelings, we also carry with us the conviction that these incoherent processes belong together and constitute a single life. Underneath the ever-changing surface with its infinite wealth, there is surely and persistently a current making in one general direction. We awaken into the events of a new day to find this vital current presenting other phases, mayhap presenting aspects which involve actual progress



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on our part. This vital current has flowed unceasingly ever since the first moment of mental life, ever striving, adapting itself to new situations, revealing various tendencies. All our sensations, emotions, desires, feelings, volitions, and thoughts are related to this vital current. In so far as we know this we may learn what it means to be an individual, and may proceed to put ideals of consistency before us. To know it and how to adapt ourselves to it is to begin in earnestness to gain inner control, to know the self, and to rise through conflicting phases of the self into beings of power.

For note that when you close your eyes to the external world, when you introspect with the important discovery that mental life is a complex stream involving all that you are, you have totally departed from the old-time view of faculties and powers. When you regard this stream with reference to its relationship with the outside world you find it yielding a series of impressions of light and shade, heat and cold, of colour, sound, weight, and pressure, of odours, and so on; and this is sensation, that is, perception. When you give special heed to one of these perceptions, such as a sensation of warmth, you realise that the field of observation has narrowed, and here you have attention in exercise. Now, if you concentrate still more closely you inevitably exclude more and



more from your acute awareness of the passing stream. You note perhaps that the perception of warmth has increased so that you call it "heat," find it hot, hence painful. Here you have "feeling" in the technical sense, the feeling of pain associated with the sensational process. Disliking the pain, you are aware that a reactive process prompted by desire has sprung up within the stream. Taking thought, you decide to move your organism away from the heated surface in contact with the skin, and you accordingly make the requisite effort, forthwith experiencing the desired result. In this process, we have "thought" in exercise, "desire" eventuating in choice or selection, "will" not only in the sense of selective attention but in the more active sense of "effort." All this is still within the same stream. While you are attending to the process of perception, other phases of the stream of activity are less prominently in your consciousness, although still present. To attend is also to will, but when you make effort to withdraw the organism from the heated object the will is seen in more active form. You are all the while observing, and to observe is to think, but if you turn from the sensational process as perceived to an analysis of it, the empirical element subsides, and you draw more and more on your knowledge of principles. Thus process after process is brought to the surface and analysed, function after function



is revealed. The elements of consciousness in various combinations constitute the processes, and the functions are the several ends for which the mind exists. What we mean by the "self" is a conceptual interpretation of these processes and functions with reference to character, the meanings and purposes which we identify with the being we will to become. The stream is a vital one making towards ends, the self we also ideally construct in terms of life, as a being who pursues ends. Our first need is to know whence our being comes, as this living process goes on, with its incentives of instinct, impulse, and desire; our second is to restate the life we thus discover in the higher forms of idea and will, character and purpose.

One of the most important features of this discovery of the stream of consciousness is the fact that the current or activity is central, while thought although a part of the stream is a later development and is not fundamental unless made so through persistent processes of education or reflection. I emphasise this fact because it is wholly contrary to the theoretical view of the human mind which once prevailed, absolutely in conflict with any number of modern beliefs in regard to the power of suggestion.

Let us return to the references to the normally hungry man. We found him taking thought because of the appearance of pangs of hunger in



his stream of consciousness. Thought, finding its data supplied, is essentially a process of examining the facts of experience in order to learn from them and see what to do. Thought enables us to analyse, to adapt our conduct to the presentations of experience. It is not at first an initiating or originating power. Even when it later arrives at new conclusions, this arrival is due to the contributions of experience at the beginning and all along the way. To become aware of hunger is one fact, to reflect upon it is another; for one might become quiet enough to inhibit a rising tide of impatience, one might become so absorbed in conversation with a friend as to forget to eat, and so on. You can think of a thousand alternatives in contrast with the one which you proceed to act upon. Thought is infinitely rich. This is at once our joy and our sorrow, for while it supplies endless channels of interest to keep us from ennui it also reveals so many side-issues of theory that we become creatures of dogma, creed, and doctrinal disputation.

Emerson reminds us that "the step from knowing to doing is rarely taken," and we well know the difference between good intentions and the persistent effort which overcomes inertia and succeeds. Plainly the experience of effort is more intimately connected with the flesh, with our lassitude and laziness, than with our good resolutions; for when



we settle down to continuous effort we are able to break new channels through and establish habits, whereas our thoughts, however good, may pass by like the idle wind. When we make downright effort we are made painfully aware that we are still psychophysical individuals, not intellectual creatures in a fanciful region where to think is to be.

Now, thought has its power and it is not to be underestimated. Some day we hope to be reasoning creatures, carefully reflecting before we act, and we hope to overcome any number of adverse conditions. But plainly we must first learn what forces will change the conditions. Knowledge is power in the sense that it shows us where to begin. But the question remains, How shall we overcome the inertia and what is it in us that enables us to conquer? We do indeed tend to act upon the conclusions at which we arrive, but let us not overlook the fact that most of us are in the groping process of arriving at conclusions. We see as in a glass darkly. If we saw face to face we should no doubt act at once and achieve at once. But taking ourselves as we are we must admit the radical difference between theory and practice.

A thought becomes effective only in case it engage attention sufficiently to become an end of action for the will, or for some instinctive action permitted to rule the stream of conscious-



ness. The hint or suggestion which takes effect in one mind will have no influence whatever on another, since the decisive power rests not with the thought but with will or character. If I pass by a liquor-saloon when some one invites me to step within and take a drink it is because there is no point of connection between that suggestion and my character. Other suggestions have points of contact but I do not accept them. Others I yield to because I am weak, while still others engage my attention because they appear to be of value. It is not creditable that suggestion has power over us. There is no particular reason for seeking to cultivate responsiveness to suggestion. Sad indeed is it if we need to be hypnotised to gain a little good sense. Ideally at least we are supposed to be a law unto ourselves. That is creditable to me into which I put myself.

The function of thought is seen at its best in the processes of scientific inquiry through which we progressively understand human life. Such reflection shows us that life is essentially a process of law and order, that is, that we are all under conditions which we did not impose. Psychology makes known the same system with respect to the inner life. All that we have undertaken in the foregoing is to indicate some of the conditions and state some of the laws actually found in the complex process which we have called "a stream." These



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conditions, laws, and processes are given to us, they are the same for all, and this universality is of more consequence than anything particular or private. It is this universality which reason reveals, while the tendency of other functions of our nature is more personal, particular. Hence it is through reason at last that we begin to see the way out of our subserviency into freedom through wise adaptation.

Two main points we have tried to make clear, first, that the mental stream is the psychical half of a process of life. The other half is found in the brain and nervous system, together with the organic and functional life attached thereto. Every mental change is accompanied by some sort of cerebral and nervous change pertaining to the life of the body, although the physical process or event may not be at all like the mental event with which it is associated. The second point is that the psychical stream is the richly complex process which contains all that was formerly attributed to feeling, thought, will, emotion, pleasure and pain, conscience, intuition, and the like. It is now a question of processes and functions, no longer of faculties and separate powers. If we know how these mental processes normally take place we should be able to make allowances for deflections from the general tendency towards rationality. This means the discovery of psychical



facts as actually presented, and if we know the facts we shall be able to make short work of the inferences. Indeed, we now know what a fact is, it is an impression produced on the sensitive surface of the passing stream of consciousness. From the fact, if we really analyse it correctly, we should be able to infer what its physical basis is, say a hot stove, or a red book. Into the impression there inevitably enters the mentality which we contribute to it, so that a sensation becomes a perception. From the discovery that every fact is a co-operative result of the sort just now indicated, we may infer that our participation in its production is likely to be affected by the entire condition of the physical organism at the time. Hence we repeat with new meaning the well-known saying that "a sound mind in a sound body" is one of the surest tests.



## CHAPTER IV

### MENTAL CO-ORDINATION

IT is related of an inventor who had nearly perfected a new machine that, in order to add the one part necessary to complete his machine, he shut himself in his room for twenty-four hours and steadily concentrated upon his invention until he had discovered the missing factor. He had previously worked out the conception of the machine in entirety, but a certain part had slipped from his memory, and it was this on which he concentrated for twenty-four hours until he recovered it. A similar incident in the life of a great thinker also illustrates the marvellous power of concentration possessed by the human mind. Socrates is reported to have stood for twenty-four consecutive hours absorbed in thought. Undoubtedly by thus giving his mind resolutely to a single line of reflection until he reached the end, Socrates either supplied a missing factor in an argument or gained fundamental insight into a moral principle never before clear. Few of us know by actual experience what can be accomplished by steadily



applying the mind in a direction fraught with interest. To some of us success comes too easily, hence we never learn what can be accomplished by resolute concentration.

Efficient concentration always involves the active and steady pursuit of an idea, or group of ideas, in which one takes special interest. Some have supposed it to involve a relaxation or openness of mind in which the mind merely dwells on a goal, as in the case of meditation practised in accordance with spiritual interests. Doubtless there should be intervals in which the attention is permitted to turn for a time to other interests, that the mind may have opportunity to work by less active processes, merely brooding over the subject of chief interest. Concentration is not attained by a single act of will in which thought becomes active in a given direction as if mechanically established there, but through repeated acts of attention. Nevertheless, concentration proceeds at its best through consecutive thinking, in contrast with a mere dwelling upon the chosen interest. Most of us are well aware what vagueness is, what it means to let go, or emotionally to contemplate; what we need to discover is the nature and value of downright thought in which the mind gathers to itself all its powers in response to an interest which fills the horizon.

Persistent concentration is effective in two



respects. It enables us to follow a given clue until the main point is gained, or to pay attention to a single object until we have discovered every detail which sustained attention can find. The latter process is well illustrated by an incident related of a student who began the more thorough work of his life under the guidance of Agassiz. This student was given the head of a fish and told to report what he had discovered by looking at it. After a time he returned with a description which the great scientist characterised as a fair beginning. Sent back to his task again, the student believed he had discerned every detail that could be seen, but was merely told that he had noted a few more points. A third and fourth period of observation ensued, at the end of which Agassiz's comment was that most of the important details had now been noted, hence that there was a basis for real knowledge of the fish's head. The incident suggests that trained powers of attention are essentials without which we can scarcely know a thing at all. It is the province of the specialist in any field to see a thousand and one details which the rest of us overlook. The beginning is found in minute knowledge of one thing.

The acquisition of power sufficient to attain such knowledge is often taken to be a merely intellectual matter. In the present investigation we shall see more and more clearly that control is



partly a question of the organisation and wise use of energy, and hence of mastery of the brain. Co-ordination, in other words, is psychophysical. That man has great powers of concentration who also has great command over his body. Desire to excel, absorbing interest in a given pursuit is likely to give us sufficient incentive to train our intellectual powers so that we may concentrate in earnest. What we are most likely to neglect is the physical basis which enables us to regulate and use our nervous forces to advantage. Again, we fail to analyse the influences, conditions, and tendencies most likely to interfere with the effort to gain central control. Before we consider the larger question of the control of nervous energy, it is well to turn to this the subtler side of the question, the regulation of the mental activities which offer interference, when we seek to realise ideals.

It is the nature of consciousness, we have seen, to be efficacious, to pursue ends, selecting them according to the prevailing interests of the individual. Thus sensation is accompanied by instincts that lead us to preserve ourselves, even to fight if need be. Our ideas tend to express themselves in action, and some of these always pertain in the normal man to his physical welfare and to the imperative conditions of natural life. The will in turn is the mind in executive exercise, marshalling, determining, pushing through. Again,



conscience is the mind judging in accordance with a standard that tends to insure the triumph of the right. Religion, if devoutly believed in, supplies still another incentive which leads the mind to pursue ends. The whole mental life may be summarised in terms of the strivings which tend to preserve the individual, to bring practical success, further the accepted social interest, provide for free self-expression and development, and lead the way to moral self-realisation.

But if our preferences constituted the only efficacious factors of mental life, the history of success would be brief indeed. The most important consideration is found in the fact that precisely because the mind is selective and tends to realise a purpose it also rejects right and left, inhibits, and endeavours to eliminate. Unless we restrain and inhibit we make no headway at all. But to restrain means to deal with the energy thus checked and to inhibit means to be prepared to fight. Hence one needs to know as much as possible about the conflicting forces that endeavour to defeat all our efforts to attain system, order, and control. For increased efficiency means more effort to master and govern the activities of mind and body whose energies must be transmuted if co-ordination shall become a habit.

A definite clue is found in the description of mental life given in the preceding chapter. There



is a vital current running through the stream of thought. Whenever we look within to note what is taking place we find ourselves paying attention, noting likenesses and differences, associating one object with another, and selecting desires, emotions, or ideas amidst a mass of feelings directly presented to us. We did not start life with "will" as we now know it. The beginnings of this vital current, with its strivings, are found far back in the stirrings of instinct, the conflict of impulses and emotions in which hereditary traits emerge. Later a mental disposition appears, and we gradually discover the self. We find ourselves reaching out to attain even before we know what we want. We find physical desires involving interest in all that pertains to the appetites and leading forward to the life of struggle, perhaps in later life to love of warfare not merely with the gun but in the realm of trade, or the field of controversy. Again, the desire to drink may appear, and any number of conflicting or subsidiary desires. Some of these may coincide with character, others may evoke little opposition. But the main point is that consciousness in the efficacious sense understood when we use the term "will," with its determination to master, eliminate, and to marshall, is an efficaciousness that supervenes upon this vital current or complex life of the desires. This point is often overlooked, because of the tradition that



character is ready-made, that the will is elemental, and only need be aroused or asserted.

To awaken into self-consciousness with a will to attain a certain end is to find our mental life already replete with memory-images and associations which, in connection with our habits, passions, and instincts, tend to determine what manner of man we shall be. Since so much depends upon retentiveness and association, it is plain that to make headway we must adopt the same principles by which this bundle of habits, instincts, and desires, which we call the self has come to be what it is. For, as we shall see more clearly in a subsequent chapter, the will is not an independent power which can break in anywhere, but it begins its efforts simply by paying attention. Hence no small part of the mastery of our conflicting desires consists in the art of observing them in detail to note their tendencies, as we might observe the manœuvres of an enemy.

"I will study and prepare myself and then, some day, my chance will come," said Lincoln. The same law of success holds in the inner world. We keep ideals in mind, move along steadily from day to day, and in due course see where to strike in with victorious activity. When we discover that the stomach is surfeited, the organism over-taxed, the nervous system tense or exhausted, we know that it is necessary to observe certain con-



ditions in order to regain a normal state. The extension of the same rational method shows that we must allow time for mental adjustment and assimilation. The stronger the instincts, habits, and passions, the more far-reaching must be the method of development by which we bring the ideal into power. The important point is that when the balance is established in favour of the ideal through intellectual co-ordination we have power to conquer desires which might otherwise appear insuperable.

It is plain that there are more desires active within us than can possibly attain fruition in a life-time. We cannot fall back on the traditional belief that some of these are too strong, hence we must sacrifice our ideals. We refuse to enslave the so-called weaker sex in behalf of our physical necessities. Mere gratification is out of the question. Nor can we with the Buddhist "kill out desire," since the very effort to do this implies a desire which shall be strong enough to conquer the others. The only way for a true man is to face his desires, know them, enlist their energies, and press on. Hence the importance of knowing that the will is essentially a later power arriving on the field of action in time to take a hand. As slight as our power of inhibition may be, it can take advantage of every bit of wisdom which experience may reveal.



The first characteristic of desire is its restlessness or striving, its insistent demand for expression, with its subtle endeavour to occupy the entire field of consciousness. The second is its tendency to run on into infinity, its insatiability. A desire is an indefinite potentiality essentially unstable, imperative, tending to enslave. A desire is never curbed unless from another source, although it may indeed in a measure be checked by another desire on its own level. Hence the man who knows his desires may proceed to outwit some of them by giving freedom to others to hold the field. It thus becomes a question of survival of the strongest. Or, a man will maintain his physical organism in prime condition through physical exercise, regularity in sleeping, eating, and bathing, that the whole life of desire may be elevated to a purer level. This gives him an opportunity to moderate his desires at closer range.

A more direct way to outwit our desires is found, however, when we realise that we may regard them not merely in the light of the instincts, wants, and appetites amidst which they are found emerging, but from the view-point of what they lead to. A creative desire may be extremely general, but if directed into a productive channel so that its possessor begins to invent machinery, compose music, develop an executive plan of some sort, the desire may then be regarded as an ideal. To



discover a field of interest is forthwith to concentrate in that direction, hence to become absorbed in the ideal in such a way that it becomes a standard possessing inhibitory power. The man who wills to give play to his inventive genius also realises that this means giving up many activities in which he might otherwise engage. Naturally he clings to those desires which tend to further his work, welding them into a whole. He must keep his body, especially his brain, in good condition, for otherwise the mental life will be impeded. Hence to the degree that love of work fills his soul he eliminates the desires that lead to excess, endeavouring to express their immoderate energy in the ideal direction. His purpose is thereby strengthened so that it works automatically, as it were, and almost without thought he refrains from indulgences and side-issues, pleasures and types of recreation that tend to defeat his purpose. For when the will-to-conquer is the prevailing interest, the imagination, then the emotions, and the whole conscious life are brought into play. The balance of power is with the upward tendency, character strengthens itself by the powers of the ideal, which in turn lifts the conduct into greater consistency and strength.

The same principle is seen in the case of a person of artistic temperament, with all that this temperament involves. If gifted with an unusual voice,



for example, the ideal of devotion to music becomes the prevailing motive; and all desires and emotions are valued according as they tend or do not tend to keep the singer in prime condition. The desires are estimated by what they lead to, and those that are favourable are brought together. This co-ordination gives the strength to resist temptation, for instance, the temptation to over-eat or to indulge in kinds of food and other things that interfere with bodily welfare. Everything depends upon the power of the standard, supported by the personality of the artist.

When we turn from the desires to the emotions we find a somewhat different state of affairs. Desires, we have seen, arise amidst the instincts and appetites, and are best understood by what they lead to. Hence the secret of their control lies in the acceptance of an incentive sufficient to afford an inhibitory standard. But an emotion is an experience that plays round or accompanies other mental states, adding to or detracting from them. When my desire for a thing becomes so intense, for example, that I become angry with people who interfere, or enthusiastic over my prospects, I have an emotion in regard to it. No one can help having desires, but it is possible to be largely devoid of emotions. The desires must be developed, organised, or conquered by drawing their life elsewhere; while many



of the emotions may be eliminated altogether by cultivating poise, calmness, and inner control. An emotion is essentially my personal feeling with respect to a thing, my most intimate reaction, and if I develop in such a manner as to be less personal, with fewer prejudices, less ignorance, I am likely to be less emotional. That is to say, the emotional life decreases with the growth of intellectual power, although a refining life of noble sentiments and affections may take its place, just as the longing to serve may take the place of selfish desires.

The emotions vary from the level of merely sensuous attraction up to the plane of the highest sentiment or affection that inspires the consecrated soul. Like the desires, the initial characteristic of the emotions is that they never know when to stop. Hence everything depends upon the possession of a standard by which to discriminate. If a man is selfish nothing in him is so selfish as his emotions. Likewise a woman when intensely selfish is emotionally outreaching, grasping. On the other hand, when unselfish nothing in a person is so outgoing, expressive, and noble as the emotional life. It is not then so much a question of the purpose of life as of the quality of the person in various stages of development.

If desires wear and tear us, the emotions work still more havoc. In a single hour an emotion of



anger, jealousy, or hatred may exhaust the energies that should have sufficed for a day. Not very much wisdom is required to show that in the life which is to become progressively efficient most of the emotions must be eliminated. For the moment we may confine our inquiry to those that obviously are worth while. Enthusiasm is of course eligible, since if distributed, along the line of the days, weeks, and years, it keeps the mind alive and spontaneous. Loyalty for a public cause, for an institution, for an ideal, includes enthusiasm and surpasses it. Love, in turn, when directed towards the ideal and inclusive of people as well as of purposes, surpasses even loyalty itself. Thus in terms of love, well understood and related with all that is most worth while, we may summarise all that is eligible in the emotional life.

Does this mean that there is no rightful place for the passions that stir, leading to righteous indignation and a zealous plea for justice? There is room for every atom of energy that ever stirs the human breast. But it is a question of effectiveness. Many of our desires, and most of our emotions, scatter our powers and lead to no result save to leave us either exhausted or at best merely free from the passion because we have expressed it. Always there is a possibility that this energy may be organised. Emotions are eligible if they accomplish a worthy end. But if merely explosive



or impulsive it is doubtful whether they bring any return. Hence it becomes a question of goals to be won. It is the end that should justify the means, not the mere origin, or the bare fact of existence. Therefore the crucial question is, In what manner can I best express my zeal?

The desires and emotions well in hand, one may advance still further in mental co-ordination by aid of the imagination. Since the mind is dependent on memory-images and their associates, no small part of the process of overcoming the desires and emotions consists in substituting a group of ideal pictures or mental images in place of those on which the lower desires and emotions thrive. Like the emotions, our imagination takes its clue from the prevailing tone of the mental life. If the life be sensuous, nothing will increase this sensuality in a mind of a responsive type more rapidly than the imagery on which the desires are permitted to feed. On the contrary, it is through the imagination that desire becomes creative and attains higher levels. Likewise an emotion, say of fear or jealousy, increases in power until it sweeps through and controls the mind, chiefly because the imagination is called into play and allowed to enlarge upon a slight suggestion. To possess power to check or to give rein to the imagination is indeed to have command over both desires and emotions. Hence the importance of keeping the imagination



alive yet directing it towards the ideal can hardly be overstated.

We are apt to disparage the imagination because through its agency we create all that is unreal, all our fancies, superstitions, and many of our fears.<sup>1</sup> But it is important to remember that the imagination is merely a servant of the intelligence and the will. Hence if we sink in the scale it is for many other reasons, while we rise because of the ideals which the imagination in part creates. The essential is to enlist the imagination so that through its marvellous power we may know reality the better, conceiving of it in detail, making our scientific conceptions clear and vivid.

The chief principle is the power the mind possesses to call up desirable associations, create in imagination the condition which one wishes to attain. There is no direction in which this power of suggestion cannot be exercised.<sup>2</sup> It serves the man of science, of affairs, as well as the maker of character, the artist, and the poet. It is particularly important for all who are trying to overcome unfortunate habits, unruly desires, and disturbing emotions; for by the aid of the right imagery one

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Practice of Self-Culture*, by Hugh Black, Corlis Co., Buffalo.

<sup>2</sup> For an accurate account of suggestion, see discussions of this subject in *Religion and Medicine*, by Elwood Worcester; and *Psychotherapy*, by Hugo Münsterberg, New York, Moffatt, Yard & Co.



can set forces at work which will conquer the states or conditions which need to be outwitted. One may, for instance, put oneself in imagination in a more efficient state of mind, in contrast with the forebodings, nervous states, and influences which tend to intrude on a given occasion. One can make the mental picture very definite by calling up the surroundings in question, the people whom one is likely to meet, and trying to feel in anticipation the calmness, poise, and freedom required to meet the situation wisely. The ideal picture will have the best effect if dismissed in quiet confidence to do its work, with the realisation that it possesses actual power over the deeper processes of the mind, commonly called subconscious.

The suggestion which thus gives shape to the mental imagery is an activity sent forth in the desired direction. A suggestion thus takes effect only so far as it is not inhibited by opposing ideas, or is not in conflict with character. For suggestion has no magic power of its own, either to control the physical organism or the so-called subconscious mind. The suggestion is not itself the efficiency, but the efficiency lies in character, or in the organism. The associates of a mental picture count for as much as the picture, or the affirmation through which we will that it shall be realised. These associates may or may not be desires and habits that tend to further the purpose in view. Very



much depends, therefore, on the previous co-ordination of desires, the choice and elimination of emotions, as above described.

There are two ways in which this suggestional process becomes effective. We may directly work to remove strains, relieve tensions, eliminate fear, overcome inhibitions; or we may put the attention directly upon the goal, picturing it in ideal terms, declaring that it shall be won. The ideal may be enforced through silent contemplation, expectant attention, by yearning in its direction, realising in imagination what it implies, declaring that we shall attain it, and fixating it through intellectual reflection; or by declaring that it is true now, is the greater power, is already establishing a new centre of equilibrium within one's life. The objection to this affirmation of the ideal as true now is that it readily leads in the unthinking mind to the denial of its opposite. If overdone, this in turn means the ignoring of the facts of daily existence until finally an essentially mental method, adopted for mere purposes of convenience, is reared into a metaphysical doctrine of a superficial type.

It is much more reasonable to classify suggestion as a device, not a rational method, but a device employed to attain certain ends, and carried to the extent of denial of its opposite only when the mind is not strong enough to face the enemy. Thus



stated it is nothing more than the common-sense determination *to know no such word as fail*. Thus to give oneself to the desired idea need not be to deny anything. It is simply the valiant acceptance of an idea that leads to action, that breaks through the line in the given direction. For it is not necessary to deny anything if assured that we have given ourselves to the ideal, which we forthwith set out to make our own through work. The secret lies not in what is excluded, nor in the mere object of attention, but in the persistently applied attention through which we set our energies free. What reliance may also be put upon subconscious after-effects we shall consider in the next chapter.

The central characteristic of the human mind, we are learning more conclusively, is found neither in the original promptings or motives nor in the fruitions of suggestion, but in the purpose or ideal. The mind at its best is essentially purposive, has an aim, and attains ends; and the various methods employed are secondary to the life that employs. That is, mind is not a mere succession of sensations, feelings, emotions, desires, images, ideas, and volitions. If this were so, it could never be a question of the selection and co-ordination of desires, or the elimination of emotions. Hence we must give up the effort to account for ourselves in merely causal terms, as if mere processes could explain all that we are. The moment I begin to



give heed to certain contents of consciousness in such a way as to understand them, selecting those that support my intention, rejecting those that are unfavourable, I enter the stream of thought with another and greater power. Hence the vital current becomes significant in the light of what I put into it, what I propose to call forth from it.

We well know when we look at the matter in a comprehensive manner that there are conditions which we cannot eliminate by suggestion but only through sheer analysis. Consequently, it is when we survey the whole field, noting every point and every quality, that we really become masters of the situation. For the mind is in full power only when facing an environment or series of circumstances close at hand. Suggestion may serve as a reminder or way of working back to the centre. We may sometimes find it necessary to bring favourable emotions into play, as when men go forth to war or engage in any undertaking that demands courage. Favouring associations are always a help in times of wavering attention. But when the last word has been said in behalf of these subsidiary processes, the inspiring truth remains that when we philosophically grasp the whole situation with valiant will we are most in power.

It is needless to dwell on the evasions, delays, and procrastinations by which we fail to rise into



full power. Suffice it that we can learn to meet the issues, and all the issues promptly, squarely, and fully; and that only when thus fully awake is the mind truly efficient. Granted the courageous study of the whole situation, in which nothing is ignored through prejudice, denied on theory, or arbitrarily put aside, we may well make it the starting-point for fresh suggestions, ideal pictures, and wise emotions. But it is through conscious purpose with its selective power and its rational processes that mastery is attained.

Hence the successful man is one who studies the whole situation to which he must adapt himself, making allowances for the slightest possibilities of error if a man of science, for all the factors that might bring failure if a man of affairs, and thus on through the professions and vocations. He has both an ideal outlook or hypothesis, a plan to be tried, and a working faith or method of practical adjustment by which to keep in motion, or meet the contingencies of the passing hour. He understands and makes use of processes, but does not allow himself to become submerged by them, or in any way a prisoner within the means employed to attain his end. Endeavouring to become master of an art or science, a type of business, or the functions of an official in some institution, he becomes master of many arts by mastering the chosen one. For the lines of creative mastery tend



to converge as mental evolution proceeds, and one learns that the principles of success in one undertaking are in a measure the principles of success in all.

The man of most distinctive ability is likely to possess all the desires, passions, and temptations that others possess, and some of these in larger measure. The difference lies not alone in the cerebral capacity, in the mental training, physical health, or even the moral character. It consists in part in the steady, and persistent, the detailed and valiant application of attention which is called to the service of the purpose which inspires the man.

A man's purpose gives him a standard by which to measure the opportunities that are open to him and to select those that are most directly contributory. Thus he may, for example, evaluate the various pleasures, choosing some because in line, discarding others because like the emotions and desires they run to excess. In the same manner he can assess the luxuries, deciding what ones are really what they are reputed to be, what are more truly necessities in his case. Thus in time he can develop an ideal of happiness regarded as inclusive of the wiser pleasures, by taking the nature and function of pain into account, and endeavouring to live a uniform life. The higher and the more intelligent his purpose, the more likely he is to live a simple



life, in the best sense of the term. With the dominance of his purpose will grow a freedom from moods, restlessness, impatience, and discontent; and more and more he will become a man of character.

Some one has said that concentration is a form of courage. Doubtless this is true, for it requires courage to hold to a purpose, to bring together all the lines that tend to converge in the direction of one's purpose, and to keep steadily at work amidst numberless distractions. The best work in the world is sometimes done by those who have the greatest number of intervening circumstances to overcome. The stronger the purpose the more willing one is to master obstacles. Meanwhile, there are compensatory pleasures. One of the greatest of these is just this bringing together of contributory lines of activity through mental co-ordination, the pleasure of working with well-trained associates, and engaging in executive work in which the powers of the individual are enlisted to the full. There is a zest in bringing matters to a head on time, when time is short, and at the last moment. Then if ever the marvellous power of the human mind is seen, a power in which habit, association, memory, intellectual vigour, and the will are seen in the most active exercise. Quick decisions then follow in rapid succession, insights involving years of experience and training are



brought into play, supplemented by quick reminders of things almost forgotten until the last moment. Surely, the true nature of the mind is here more clearly seen than in the mere leisureliness or the bare simplicity for which its fullest powers have sometimes been mistaken. The mind's quickest co-ordinations are very often its best.

The point of our discussion is that for every man who wills to become highly efficient there is a way to acquire inner control to master habits, wasteful emotions, troublesome moods, and all other adverse mental states. The power of control is of course not mental alone, but also moral, and it may be strengthened by religion. But the mechanism is psychological, the basis of moral power in actual exercise is intellectual co-ordination, and it is through the will that the ideal becomes efficient. Hence the intelligent man begins at the point where he really can succeed, namely, by taking himself in hand just where he is now living and working, considering what needs to be changed, what powers will secure the change, and the crucial point at which to strike in.

Although we have dwelt chiefly on the control of the mental dispositions which must be brought into line, it is well to remember one of the main points of the preceding chapter, namely that mind and brain move along together. The basis of



mental co-ordination is control of the brain. Hence it is necessary to train the organism through skilled performance. Ordinarily, mental and physical training are acquired together, as in the case of the painter who while mastering the intellectual principles of his art is training his eye, acquiring manual skill, and a hundred incidental lines of efficiency. But it is well for the devotee of industrial efficiency to remind himself of the mental half of his manual skill, and for the intellectual worker to make sure that his mental training is made complete on the physical side. The meeting-point for all types of efficiency is the brain. Therefore for every man of us the right training of the brain is of supreme importance.<sup>1</sup> It is of little avail to think, to make right suggestions, create ideal pictures, or even to discipline the emotions and desires, unless we also do something with our brains, hence with the organism, to carry the ideal into execution. Failure to do this accounts for most of the theoretical, that is, the inefficient people of the world. Man is an active being, his organism was made for action, his brain is an instrument for action, and success lies in carrying the wisdom of the mental world into realisation in the external world.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Arnold Bennett, *The Human Machine*, New York, Geo. H. Doran Co., 1911. See also Professor James's chapter on Habit, *Psychology*, vol. i.



## CHAPTER V

### THE SUBCONSCIOUS

OUR study of the human mind has steadily emphasised the fact that only in a very gradual way does man become conscious, that is, in the active sense known as "will." Long before the character begins definitely to be formed, reflex or automatic actions have occupied the field. Then there are spontaneous movements of many sorts, such as those of the child at play, semi-reflex actions, responses to external stimuli, and instinctive motor-reactions by which the individual becomes self-protective; for example, when the eye closes suddenly if an object is brought near, or when we withdraw the whole organism from impending danger. Later still, when experiences have been stored away in such wise as to cause reactions involving temperament, there are responses due to memory-images without deliberate volition, just as the child retreats even at the sight of a hot stove after its hand has been burned and associations between the pain and the stove have been established. Experiences thus



build themselves up without limit, and it is with profound reason that man is called "a creature of habit." Volition or will in the conscious sense of the term supervenes upon these reflex and instinctive reactions, beginning its functions when the self is able to pay attention, to inhibit instinctive responses, and in a measure take command of the organism. Hence follow the selections, choices, and co-ordinations which we have considered in the preceding chapter. More strictly, even the self is in some respects a product of the directive acts of attention which in due course become possible.

Will presupposes the automatic and other activities to which it gives form. Whereas mere self-preservation was the end implied in instinct, the will seeks a higher form of expression, that is, its goal is self-fulfilment. Hence criticism of the impulses leads to the subordination of some, the elevation of others. Mere choice leads to active decisions in favour of the purposes in view, adaptation of means to ends, and intellectual pursuits which take the place of less developed modes of self-expression. Thus the way is prepared for moral synthesis, for consistency, integration. This is clearly seen in the case of a virtue such as temperance, an attainment so far removed from the instincts that it involves not merely selection between impulses but control of most of them, abstinence from pleasures that disturb the health



of the organism, discipline through the overcoming of impatience and other disturbing tendencies, and co-ordination of the virtues. The temperate man not only controls his brain and through that the organism, he not only acquires intellectual concentration and system, but is moderate even in the expression of virtues such as self-sacrifice.

Now, there is a theory that, inasmuch as so many of these mental activities lie below the level of consciousness as we ordinarily know it, therefore the reflex-movements, spontaneous responses, and instinctive reactions are directed by a "subconscious mind." Further than this, it is claimed that our intellectual processes are largely subconscious, hence that even in the case of volition it is "suggestion," not conscious thought, that is the decisive factor. That is to say, many activities that are obviously physiological, such as the reflex-processes of the heart and lungs, are theoretically raised to the level of mind, while mind in the higher sense of volition and thought is dragged down to the level of instinct. The tendency of this doctrine is to efface the distinctions which psychologists have drawn between the involuntary and the voluntary, to neglect the will almost altogether, and assign the first place to "suggestion." The conclusion is that since the mind is amenable to suggestion, success in any undertaking means power to influence or win over another's mind; and to render



one's own mind more and more subject, through receptivity or meditation, to suggestions of the right sort. It follows that efficiency is subconscious, hence we have been mistaken in our efforts to advance through intellectual co-ordination.

It is worth while to deviate from the main line of our investigation long enough to examine this hypothesis, not only because it is widely held in our day, hence must be reckoned with, but because it contains a truth of very great value. Human knowledge advances through temporary emphasis on one factor at the expense of others, and we may well take this fact as matter of course. Every age needs its general term by which to solve the problems that are left over, its limbo to which insistent mysteries may be consigned. Hence the magic word is now "subconscious," with its wonder-working equivalents. The vasty deep beneath this mystic sign is indeed spacious, with room for everything that was once classified under the head of "unconscious cerebration," on the one hand; and for the noblest religious treasures, on the other. Out of its abysses the spirits of the mighty dead are summoned. It is appealed to by the unlettered as well as by the scientific. Some indeed will confidently assure you that the subconscious does not exist, but others maintain that under the guise of "the subliminal self" it is the centre and source of countless ac-



tivities never before supposed to have a common home. It is referred to more and more by writers who undertake to explain religion in psychological terms, and it bids fair to usurp the place formerly occupied by the theory of divine revelation.<sup>1</sup> There are those who assure us that the subconscious is a distinct or subjective mind, functioning by laws of its own, while others speak familiarly of the subconscious as if it were another personality. In fact, the subconscious region is the supposed place of concealment of multiple personalities, and there is no end to the phenomena which may rise from it either spontaneously or by the aid of hypnotism. So broad is the term that it is virtually an "x" both in scientific and popular thought.

Amidst this diversity of opinion concerning a matter said to be within the possibility of experiment by all, can we find a central clue? Undoubtedly, and I shall at once state my thesis, one which would be perfectly obvious if we had not assigned too much power to the subconscious. There is but one mind, and this is the stream of processes which we know as perceptions, emotions, volitions, and ideas; and this mind is intimately associated with the physical organism. In so far as we may rightfully speak of the subconscious, we must take our clues from what we know about consciousness

<sup>1</sup> See a criticism of this view by the Bishop of Ossory in the *Hibbert Journal*, January, 1911.



and the character of the individual. All that we know about the deeper levels of the stream of thought is learned by inference from our active consciousness. Hence the more knowledge we have of conscious processes the better prepared we shall be to understand the subconscious. We are likely to employ the latter term less instead of more frequently as our knowledge increases.

It is chiefly because of our ignorance of the profound relationship of the mind to the brain that we place so much stress on the subconscious. It is our ignorance of the laws of consciousness exhibited in reasoning that has led to the assumption that there is a subjective mind that reasons differently. Again, we have resorted to the hypothesis that the subconscious mind is the soul because our ideas are so vague concerning the meaning of this eulogistic term. The subconscious is not a realm of mysterious powers that accomplish wonders through suggestion without effort on our part, but it is like a shadow copying the absurd as well as the intelligible shapes which our consciousness casts upon it.

Now, this is indeed disappointing to some, and these propositions need proof, but the result will be that we shall be put in surer possession of our minds. I had a pupil once whose remarks were illuminating in this connection. Having faithfully tried to persuade her that despite her increasing



grey hairs the proper way for her to begin the study of philosophy was at the beginning, I was met by this scornful rejoinder, "Well, I do my thinking subconsciously." This meant, being interpreted that she never did any thinking. For she had an uncommonly incoherent mind, and never permitted her interlocutor or even herself to finish a paragraph. Oftentimes more than two ideas were contending for mastery in a single sentence. Never having trained her mental powers in any fashion, she could not of course count on any subconscious after-effects of any value. For the associates of a given idea when recalled by us are those formed when we consciously gave heed to it. The greater the incoherence and incredulity of our conscious life, the greater the corresponding vices that haunt our subconsciousness. Increase the virtues of your conscious selfhood and you will not be greatly troubled by subliminal tell-tales.

Before inquiring into processes which may rightfully be called subconscious, it is well to remember that the once familiar hypothesis of unconscious cerebration is by no means out of date.<sup>1</sup> Take the question of habit, for example. We readily assume that habit is mental. Yet careful reflection shows that while we do indeed

<sup>1</sup> See *Mental Physiology*, W. B. Carpenter, chapter xiii., for a discussion of this subject.



have habits of thinking and willing, while character itself is in part an accumulation of habits, nevertheless habits are chiefly cerebral and demand a physiological explanation. A German physiologist has said that we learn to skate in summer and to swim in winter. It is long before the half-spent motions of the organism produce their total effects upon us, and many motions go on incessantly. It is a matter of parsimony in scientific explanation to account for as many results as we can by referring them to these processes of the brain. When we start out on a fortunate day finding that we can ride a bicycle, after various attempts and clumsy failures in the days that have gone, this simply means that the organism has acquired the habit. Likewise with many other consequences. We may have initiated the action consciously, as the boy emulates his elders and tries to whistle; but when the result ensues it does not follow that a hidden mental process has accompanied and directed the new activity. We all know what it is to get our brains into a whirl such that consciousness cannot intervene. The more carefully trained the brain is through consecutive and systematic work, the more we may depend on it to exhibit the measured consequences of orderly activity. When we discover how much the association of cerebral events and conditions can accomplish for us it is time to speak of subconsciousness.



Association of objects counts for so much that it is only occasionally that we are in any measure free from it. Consciousness is ordinarily the accompaniment of the processes of the brain which proceed through habit and association. This is in large part what we mean by saying that the organism is psychophysical. It would complicate the matter at this point to hold that there is a third something between brain and mind. Consequently we have no reason to expect that a hidden power will accomplish ends which are not already in operation in mind or brain. On the other hand, to say that subconsciousness is a phase of the mind as we know it is to find that the term has meaning.

At the present moment in the case of the reader there is before the mind an active field of consciousness at the centre of which is the idea "subconscious" which he is engaged in analysing. Around this centre and fading away into the margin are allied ideas, and a more or less distinct awareness of the flux of perceptions related to the objects round about and to the processes of the organism. Ideas rise and fall out of the stream of thought engaging interest for the time, then subsiding. This interchange is going on all the while. If we examine this process closely we shall become aware that there are various ways in which we carry it on. We may, for example, select a leading idea and actively proceed to develop it, looking



up data in books of reference, asking questions of the competent, and applying ourselves as we might to a problem in algebra. Or, we may take a subject under advisement as a clergyman broods over the topic of his next sermon all through the week. If we are not trained in introspection, we are likely to hold that the finished product which makes itself known on a propitious day is a gift of the subconscious mind. We are likely to make this assumption if the discourse thus produced appears to exceed in value those which we have prepared by the actively conscious method. But careful examination would enable us to trace every statement to its source in ideas gathered here and there, and gradually associated. The mind is marvellously quick, and while we are actively engaged elsewhere we may seize upon an idea, gain a hint, reflect on it an instant, scarcely aware that we have thought. The fact that we have interests, that we pursue ideals to realise them, that we are bent upon accomplishing ends, is sufficient to account for these side-lights of gathering knowledge. The significant fact is that we instantly associate that new and sudden flash with side-lights that have gone before. When in due course we again make conscious effort we are able to bring into a completed whole the fragments which we have incidentally gathered and associated.

If open-minded, reflective, we are likely to do a



great deal of this half-conscious gathering of ideas. Hence we may to a degree depend on them, we may solve some of our problems in this way, thereby attaining certain of our ends more easily. But these are simply phases of consciousness. These less-conscious processes would be revealed to an acute sub-attentiveness. They are really not below the threshold of thought. The more one studies them the less need one has for any term such as "intuition" which assumes that our knowledge is acquired by a process less conscious than that of inductive reasoning. If we would correct the less-conscious processes we must set apart a portion of our active consciousness to watch over them sub-attentively. Then we shall be able to advance by improving our conduct. This is the true road to success, not the supposed royal road through suggestion so greatly heralded abroad in our day. All real growth in character and rationality is from the less to the more conscious. When a line of activity is under our eyes we may discover what the difficulty is and remedy it.

We assume that we are decidedly conscious beings, starting at a definite point with the acceptance of a financial, economic, social, or religious creed, and squaring all our views by its principles. As matter of fact, we are immersed in the impulses, emotions, ideas, and volitions which constitute our mental life; and few know what it is to have their



heads wholly above water. In terms of the well-known figure, we do not see the wood for the trees. Some of us are able to maintain a general direction, while others have not yet learned the points of the compass. Occasionally we emerge into a clearing and make good resolutions, but forthwith plunge into the forest to grope amidst enticing objects that render us unmindful of our purpose. Spectres of our dead selves arise when we would be upright and moral. In business and vocational matters we maintain a steady pace for many successive hours, but habit draws us aside when the time for relaxation ensues. Since this is what it is to be conscious there is less reason than we thought to claim the aid of the subconscious.

To be sure, there are partly hidden clues which still serve us better than any that we plainly see. Here, for example, is an instance from real life recently told me. A business man who knew himself well decided to give up smoking and wine-drinking, for he realised that these habits interfered with his spiritual progress. He knew that he could accomplish little by direct attack, therefore he simply waited, keeping his good intention in mind, expecting a favourable juncture. Finally, one day when some one offered him a cigar it occurred to him without thinking about the matter at all, to remark rather casually that he thought he would not smoke that day. That incident



proved to be the turning-point, and when he was next offered a glass of wine, a week or two later, he as easily declined and from that time on did not drink liquor of any sort. Meanwhile, of course, he had been keeping his good intention before him, making use of all the knowledge he had gained concerning the human mind. He knew that there is "a tide in the affairs of men," and had resolved to take the current when it served. Thus he accomplished easily what he could scarcely have gained through a struggle. But of course the victory was largely won by the time he quietly made his confident resolution. At a further stage of development this man might be so far conscious as to make the change coincident with the resolution. The significant feature of this man's experience is that as a conscious being he had already reached the point where he more strongly desired to cease drinking and smoking than to smoke and drink. The attention which he bestowed on his resolution gave it such active power that it worked within his mind. It was then a case of the survival of the fittest. This man's efficiency was conscious, not subconscious.

Our conscious part is to attend, give heed to the desired object, making our resolutions as definite and concrete as possible by the aid of the imagination. For example as, previously noted, if inclined to be nervous and self-conscious in a certain social



situation I may create in imagination a picture of myself in precisely that situation, meeting the experience as I should like to meet it. The same method may be applied to character, to any phase of mental life which we wish to change in which there are conditions to be overcome which require time or a flank movement on our part. For the ideal picture will help us to act in the way proposed. The mental picture or thought while not the sole factor is an aid to the activity which we wish to regulate. It is not necessary to assume the existence of a hidden power which functions in a different manner in response to suggestion.

It is no doubt true that the mind possesses powers of assimilation and co-ordination, as well as of receptivity, of which we are not aware. Hence we may learn to observe periods of rest and change with excellent results, we may give freer play to spontaneity, awaiting occasions and natural fruitions. Thus our periods of upliftment may begin at less conscious moments when for various reasons our minds are more open. Such a period ensues, for example, during the drowsy moments before we sleep or very early in the morning when we are scarcely awake. In the still hours of the night, after the excitements of the day have passed, and the physical organism is less active, it is sometimes possible to become more profoundly reflective. The same is true in the early morning



before the life of the senses intervenes. We then bring our thoughts into clearer relief, receiving what we pray for in more conscious fashion. Such a time may indeed bring us into more intimate communion with God; we may be far more open and free. But this does not prove either the existence of higher faculties or that the subconscious mind is the means of communication between God and man, as some allege. It does not seem possible that those who hold this view could seriously have examined it. It makes us out to be strange creatures, as if God could find access to us only on the sly. Let us rather say that in our most highly conscious moments, in our moral decisions, our acts of service and worship, the divine Father is nearest. God is reason, truth, and to know Him we must be acutely aware of the right and the true. If we cannot find Him in our experiences of struggle, suffering, transition, and triumph, we cannot find Him anywhere.

To say this is not to ignore the fact that there is an inner centre or "the spirit" in man, more responsive than the external process in which we are pursuing self-conscious ends. But the fact of its existence, together with the conditions known as childlikeness and purity of heart, is a discovery which we make by contrasting conscious processes. If we then proceed to make more of the heart, it is by inhibiting other tendencies, readapting our



conscious life. The instant of communion of human and divine is if you please subconscious, or rather unconscious, but so is any point of contact in our experience. We are limited to the tendencies, stimulations, and incentives which rise above the level of union into the sphere of sentiment and will.

When we are most absorbed in an experience which enlists all our activity we are least aware of processes, hence we are thinking neither of faculties nor of the precise approach of the power that inspires. Later we may infer from what has taken place the factors which made its occurrence possible. This indeed is the only ground of inference we have, since the stream of consciousness ever flows on, giving us no opportunities to inspect it as perceived precisely as we are perceiving it. Strictly speaking it is not a question of conscious and subconscious but of the mediate and the immediate. Here there is a real distinction, for we all know by experience the difference between critical thought in which we pass from item to item explaining facts by means of principles; and the exceedingly rapid process by which we directly apprehend ideas through intuition. In the more immediate processes there are fewer obstacles, and we like to believe that naught stands between the heart and God. If the immediate presence of God be a fact, it follows that the nature of the soul



is such as to make this contiguity possible. But even here the immediacy which we attribute to our nature is devoid of meaning except through the thinking and the conduct by which we render it explicit. Moreover, if God be contiguous to one side of our nature is He not contiguous to all? Why then should we call the soul subconscious?

It is Hudson, with his much heralded *Law of Psychic Phenomena*, who has given popularity to a supposed distinction between the subjective mind and the objective. It is said that the subjective mind does not start with facts and proceed inductively like the objective mind. From this conclusion it is an easy leap to the proposition that the subjective mind really is the soul. But where does this leave us poor mortals who reason, who hold that inductive science is steadily conquering the world? Shall we say that to depart from subjectivity is to withdraw from God? As matter of fact all we need is the above distinction within consciousness between the immediate and the mediate, together with knowledge of mental evolution.

We begin life on the level of instinct and emotion, and after a time become great believers in intuition. To the end we must reverence the leadership of woman, of the spirit or heart in us, for we can hardly expect to know as much as we "feel"—to use the vague term which sometimes means so



much. Nevertheless, our life, if we are really growing, is a progress from intuitively perceived wholes to explicitly known particulars. The intuition of to-day becomes the concretely analysable knowledge of next year. The "eternal feminine" which ever draws us on is the ideal element which we steadily approach and assimilate only to find that it has moved forward to inspire us to greater attainment. The change is from the implicit to the explicit, from whole to part, the immediate to the mediate. The objective is another form of the same matter dealt with by a more deliberate process. The soul is neither objective nor subjective but is the underlying being or self in which these processes of will and thought inhere.

If you believe your soul is subjective and works by a hidden process you are likely to give up analysis and constructive thinking, hence you will drop back in the mental scale. Instead of intellectual alertness you will cultivate vague receptivity, expecting to attract in completed form ideas and types of energy of a greatly superior sort. Accordingly, you will put off the day of union between reason and the heart, going in fruitless pursuit of a new duality. Once persuaded of this view of mental life it will seem perfectly reasonable to disparage intellectuality in favour of mental processes in which the mind yields too much, is unduly and vaguely receptive.



Meanwhile, if the soul should indeed speak from its subjective depths would it not say, "Have I been so long with thee and dost thou not know me, O heart, O reason? Knowest thou not that love and intellect are the same, one in essence, in being, a child of the living God? Why wilt thou, O consciousness, run in search of strange gods?"

Hard indeed for the vaguely theoretical is the fall to the stern fact that we have advanced no further than our actual conduct out here in the daylight makes plain. Ideas gain force and gather into efficient groups through the will, that is, through dominance of interest. The mere fact that one entertains a belief, or holds a thought, of itself signifies little. Hence one might cast a thousand shadowy thoughts into the dimness behind one's active ideas, yet find them offset by stronger acts of will or more fundamental habits. It is what is wrought into the structure that avails, and this means first of all a matter of will and habit. To make my new idea efficient I must actively and persistently do something on which I may depend.

A conscious incentive, on the other hand, may have real efficacy. If I cease to think of myself as dual, if I break down artificial distinctions between subjective and objective, and rely upon directly conscious effort, I can indeed make head-



way, guided by an inspiring idea. But it is a question of ever-increasing consciousness, not of the imprisoning self-centred sort, but of the life of reason. Hence there is every reason to be confident, strong, believing in success, hoping for the best, since it is the affirmative attitude that triumphs, not the weak attitude of resignation. Such belief should go without saying, and it is not necessary to make the principles of success objects of special concern. What we are really supposed to be eager for is success itself, hence the more we concentrate on the end the better.

Is there no meaning, then, in Mr. Meyers's suggestive hypothesis of the subliminal self? Certainly, but this is a different hypothesis arrived at in connection with an endeavour to explain hidden psychic phenomena. Here is an instance in point. A friend one day called at a house to see some one who lived on the second floor and when half-way up the stairs unexpectedly received this impression, "You have lost your watch, and if you go out to the sidewalk at once you will find it before any one picks it up." This impression, immediately verified by my friend, came as if spoken in the ear by an onlooker. A spiritualist would at once say that a spirit noticing the fall of the watch told my friend. A devotee of purely physiological explanations would doubtless say that the organism was somehow impressed



by the event and conveyed this intelligence to consciousness as soon as opportunity occurred, just as we are able to recall faces or objects in a shop window after we have passed by and have merely the visual memories to depend on. Psychologically it should not seem at all strange that we address ourselves when receiving such information as came to my friend, for we often converse with ourselves, and descend with severe invectives on our lower nature. Whether or not an attendant spirit actually whispers words of warning, the significant feature of the experience is that an up-rush from a lower level makes us aware of experiences through which we have just passed and to which we were not paying attention. We infer the larger capacity of the mind from these its deliverances. In the same way we find ourselves responding to instinct, and on occasion pain or fear may give information concerning the state of the organism in such a way as to show that on the physical level, also, we receive impressions of importance. In the case of these promptings in regard to physical welfare we know from wisely analysed experience that everything depends on the explanation which we attach to the given impression.

No doubt the hypothesis of the subliminal phase of our selfhood is extremely workable in wise hands. The theory that our selfhood is deeper



or larger than the field of awareness of the conscious moment affords a highly satisfactory way of describing and explaining the common element in many spiritual experiences. This hypothesis throws light on mysticism, for example, and on all beliefs that start with the premise that the soul is in immediate relation with a higher order of being. What we know is not the actual contact of the self with higher forms of reality but the report that is made when the experience which ensues quickens us in some fashion, or reveals new insights. It is convenient to have a theory concerning the interior relationships which make such contact possible. No doubt we should cherish the belief that we are near heaven through these contacts, as well as in our moral triumphs, when we serve, and when we valiantly reason. But even granted that angels minister unto us through these interior channels, the first consideration will be the principle which enables us to discern angelic presences and to know their wisdom by its fruits, in contrast with lesser spirits and their utterances. To possess such a principle would be to know many things uncommonly well. That is, the clue would be found in consciousness, not in subconsciousness.

If one should attribute superior powers to the subliminal portion of one's being but have no standard by which to judge the products of this



hidden activity, one might easily open the door to all sorts of inner experiences, developing new forms of fear and bondage. But see plainly that the conscious attitude is the decisive factor and you at once realise that you have naught to fear. For you will not be open subliminally to any influence which you would not consciously welcome, your character will be the decisive power. If indeed you find yourself in any way open to undesirable visions, presences, or utterances, your resource will be to deal directly with consciousness, namely, by becoming more sane, making sure that you have a sound mind in a healthy body. It would be unfortunate to entertain any belief regarding your subliminal life which appears to put it beyond your power or make out that it is superior.

Our investigation is steadily proving that we know nothing whatever in regard to what lies below the threshold of consciousness except so far as activities emerge into consciousness. Thus strictly confined to experience, we may well undertake to know experience to the foundation. If we continue to believe in higher sources of impressions than our physical senses the probability is that we will be more and more concerned with the rational forms in which enlightened consciousness recasts the information thus received. In the case of conscience, for example, we well know



what a transformation has taken place in our thought since the days of childhood. Once conscience was an authoritative voice heard within, then a feeling in regard to the right, later a moral sense through which we could by earnest effort discern the right, later still an experience which checked us when about to do wrong but one that was extremely difficult to obtain when we wished to know what was right. Now in our rational days conscience is wholly intellectual, a mode of reflection by which we weigh alternatives, seek to make a moral choice, but which still leaves us sufficiently in the dark so that an act of faith is required. We put far more emphasis upon knowledge of the world than upon any sentiment which we may arouse. To be conscientious is to be rational, self-consistent, and this implies an ideal of self-realisation which did not by any means come through feeling or even by way of intuition. In a similar manner we are all the time advancing into more explicit types of consciousness. We esteem the ability to meet new situations, or react on new data, above the ability to retain uncritical receptivity. This growth is in perfect keeping with an open-mindedness which on occasion may equal that of the child. In the same way we may continue to be responsive to those insensibly gathering convictions through which experience teaches us the lessons of life,



just as we yield to the deepening affections which mean more to us as life advances. If deeply interested in the great issues of life we are likely to maintain a sort of inner reflectiveness which goes on almost without interruption whenever we are awake. This process of meditation is the only one really worth while, for it yields ideas, it advances from hour to hour. At any time we may expect important fruitions from this philosophic reaction, and we should not be surprised if we sometimes find ourselves writing or speaking in combinations of ideas that seem wholly new, even though we utter propositions which we never consciously acquired. These are not miraculous products, they need not come from an objective source. Say rather that they express the best activity of the self, less conscious in the case of most of us, but capable of becoming analysably conscious in the case of those who acutely know their own processes.

Our investigation has shown us how to classify the facts in question in such a way as to avoid sundering the mind into compartments. It would be difficult to know where to stop if we should adopt the hypothesis that there is more than one mind. For why should we stop with the subconscious mind? Why not with as good reason contend that we have a superconscious mind, a mind that communes with heavenly realities?



Then, too, we would have as many minds as the diversities of character reveal, a mind of the spirit and a mind of the flesh, a Dr. Jekyll and a Mr. Hyde. Far more intelligible is the theory that in our moods and contrasted states of character we are only displaying a part of our nature; that in the case of those who wander off and forget who they were, assuming another name, we have instances of split-off phases of consciousness. The moral is, not to make the most of our moods and split-off mentalities, but to unify the better into a consistent character, and permit the less desirable to die through lack of attention. Unification is a conscious process, not a subconscious, it is an act of will, not of surrender.

Strictly speaking, that which has not yet entered consciousness is unconscious. Hence our inquiry leaves room for the unconscious processes, especially of the brain, which go on even while we sleep and through which habits such as swimming and bicycle-riding become parts of our organism. When we awaken in the morning and find problems solved, written out on paper, but with no recollection on our part that we arose in the night to write the solution, we may infer what has taken place by what we thus find as a result. In the same way we know that we search through the memory for hours in quest of a lost name, and then find it suddenly rising into the field of consciousness.



We are all the time experiencing the benefits of the activities which we set in motion sometime before. There was motion or consciousness at the beginning. There is a fruition with consciousness at the end. The missing factors we make good by descriptive inferences.

Starting with the level of the involuntary processes of the body, we rise to that of unconscious cerebration, to the less-conscious, the more-conscious, and the self-conscious. Descending, we find that the idea which has elicited attention becomes a less-conscious direction of mind, then produces subconscious after-effects. The subconscious is not a separate mind, working by other laws, but is an after-effect which carries out the interests of consciousness; co-ordinates, reshapes, then displays its results when the activity in question again rises into consciousness. The subliminal is not a distinct self, but is a less-conscious phase of a single selfhood, too copious to be wholly displayed at one time. Our most direct clue is found, not in dependence on the subconscious as if it were king, but in emphasis on the play of thought which centres about a selected idea. I may indeed rely upon my subconsciousness to outwit habits and traits of character that are undesirable, but only in case I have already willed to separate these from the person I choose to be. Thus our conclusions support all methods that



have really proved efficacious by centring the interest upon the stream of thought. The significant feature of the relationship between the various levels and tendencies of consciousness is found rather in the sources and the goals than in the mere fact of being underneath or above. Consciousness, we have learned, is exceedingly complex, and really to be conscious in an active sense is an attainment. Let us review the important considerations.

In this mental stream are contained all the processes and functions which in former days were attributed to faculties and powers. Thus we learn what we are through what we find ourselves doing. To-day you start out with new resolutions anticipating a day of calmness during which nothing shall disturb your composure or render you impatient. But suddenly brought face to face with a new situation you are greatly disturbed, and almost before you are aware you find yourself giving voice to impatience, vexed, and disconcerted. Presently you regain composure and experience chagrin that you did not maintain your good resolution. By inference you know that the phase of your inner life which you call your lower nature was stronger than you thought, hence your efforts must be redoubled if the ideal shall triumph. The whole of life is such an emergence into consciousness of tendencies within the self until at last we have been touched on all sides. If you are wise you



will not call this hateful mood yourself, but will deem it a half-spent phase of the being you once were. You wish to create yourself anew in wiser fashion so that the ideals of to-day shall constitute the habitual self of to-morrow. Thus you endeavour to outwit your own consciousness by giving your activity more resolutely to the ideal, refusing to own these miserable moods and emotions through which you betray fear, anger, jealousy, resentment, and the like. Really to know yourself is to know what tendencies are likely to emerge in the presence of any possible situation, the worst phase of selfishness you are likely to display, the meanest sentiment, the most absurd fancy or fear, the shallowest intellectual reaction. To know this is to be primed, in part at least, to meet and to check all these undesirable elements of your selfhood. That is, you endeavour to trace the stream back to its source.

This, however, is only one half the process. For if you would withdraw the forces of life from one channel you must build another, outwitting your unruliness by transmutation. It is matter of great encouragement to know that the attitude of mind which we calmly and confidently adopt to-day, while reflectively dwelling upon an ideal, will bring consequences in the days that succeed. That is, we may place great reliance on the brooding reflectiveness of which I have spoken, depend-



ing on the fact that the idea which we make part and parcel of ourselves will work within us even though we are not steadily thinking about it. Furthermore, we have seen that our mental life reveals favourable junctures, opportunities for taking the current when it serves. These spontaneous developments are as likely to put favouring currents within our grasp as any process which we consciously command.

May we not also believe that this stream of life unceasingly coursing through us flows in part from the divinest source, that it contains promptings from the divine mind and heart? For surely we have experiences when, instead of being immersed in the stream we are lifted above it, breaking free into the boundless atmosphere that rests upon us, reaching skyward. Carefully qualifying here as in the case of all that lies below the level of rational consciousness, we may well find value in the type of thought sometimes known as cosmic consciousness or mystic enlightenment. Our world-view need not be so diffused as to embrace the entire cosmos, nor need our super-consciousness lead to the ecstasy or trance of the Orientals. It is rather a question of moderate enlightenment, of a beatific vision dispersed along the line of philosophic assimilation. For who cares to entertain a vision which leaves us no whit farther on save that we possess a beautiful memory?



Is this tampering with the secrets of life, do you say, and should we yield ourselves in reverent ecstasy? One is more inclined to say that the whole matter is one of control. For the spiritualist medium, possessing weak powers of inhibition, the subliminal world is of course exceedingly capacious. With the growth of intelligence scepticism inevitably enters, hence the realm of the occult grows ever smaller. The development of individuality as inevitably narrows the field of our overconsciousness. All that was real is still with us, we have lost nothing. But the supernatural has ceased to exist, the mysterious has faded from view. Instead, we have just the plain human self in its integrity, facing the familiar landscape of daily life. The same stream of sensations, emotions, feelings, volitions, and ideas, courses through us, but how different it appears!

By saying that the whole matter is essentially one of control I mean that we may have more control of our brains, and our mental powers in general. A well-ordered brain, trained in directions that are worth while, such as skilled performance on a musical instrument, in public speaking, in the economical use of energy, means on the physical side freedom from any number of annoyances, misconceptions, and hindrances. It means the subsiding of sensuous processes, of most of the emotions, all ecstasy and impatience. It means



that more activities have been given over to well-acquired habits. Hence the active consciousness is more free to yield itself to reflective participation in life that is worth while.

It is no discredit, therefore, that we are chiefly concerned with daily interests in this natural world. Here within us, as we enter the activities of the new day, is this marvellous stream which we call consciousness with its vital current ever carrying us on, and this is the great possession. Whenever we know not what to do we may pause in expectant reflectiveness, giving our excitements opportunity to subside, letting our nervous frictions cease, resting from the process of fearing and striving. There is always something in process that really is significant, some aspiration that has not lost force, some purpose that is achieving fulfilment. We may at least move forward with this process, waiting to see whither it leads. Here, in deepest truth, is one of the great secrets of life: we become, we achieve, by giving this growing self opportunity to become complete amidst the activities which are steadily developing it. Life itself is a developing power, even if we seldom think. It will do more for us if we take our clues from its tendencies and laws rather than from any theory or interest of our own. We are dealing with life, not with rigid forms, hence we have discarded the artificial distinctions which separate



objective and subjective, lower and higher, the self above and below the threshold. Bundles of tendencies we surely are, creatures of habit and emotion, as different at times as if another person had gained control, so that multiple personality and insanity are simply exaggerations of states which we have all known in a measure. But the rational way to think is with reference to the consistent, ideal self we will to become, the self which life is ready to develop in us. When we have discarded the last notion of mere fixity, when we have pulled down the last fence of aristocratic exclusiveness and given up all crystallised beliefs, we shall find ourselves in an attitude to enter into the full joys of life. Life is a stream changing from moment to moment even while we think and feel. What is real and true is real and true now, for you and me. If it give back to us all that we have passed through, so that we cannot escape the reactions of our own folly, it also effaces, uplifts, and transforms, each moment offering new opportunities to be loving, to be considerate, and to be wise.



## CHAPTER VI

### OUR ENERGIES AND THEIR CONTROL

WE are now in a position to consider a subject of vital import which has been in sight from the first, the nature and conservation of our energies. The principle of efficiency, we have seen, tends to assume quantitative forms at first, through the dominance of commercial standards, and because of the use of methods involving the economical use of time. This tendency, carried to the extreme, would make of every man a machine for the production of the greatest amount of good work in the shortest time. To permit this tendency to rule would involve the surrender of the higher interests of human life, and man would cease to be human. Education in the larger sense, for example, would be impossible, since the aim would be to turn even the little child's energies into use from the first year, to permit no part of its life to lie fallow, to put it through all the disciplines as early as possible, and to introduce schedules of efficiency at every point. The result would be even in a single generation the



submergence of the life of play, the imprisonment of spontaneity, and the eventual crushing of the freer life of the soul. Hence we must sound these matters to the end to know what is reasonable.

Efficiency as we have regarded it in the preceding pages implies the best use of all our powers so far as may be consistent with the steady pursuit of one interest, vocation, or profession, to which we give ourselves for the sake of being genuinely practical, human. The end is self-realisation, the contribution of our share to the world's work, to the arts or the sciences. Hence self-coerciveness should no more rule than the coercion of authority. The right to live, to express, is inalienable, sacred. The human organism is an instrument for the realisation of this moral ideal. Mind and body move along together. Therefore we cannot expect to make satisfactory headway unless we take them both into full account. Control at the centre, mental efficiency, is the ideal and the means whereby moral efficiency may be secured.

He who realises the full significance of this standard has already solved the problem of the right use of energy. But most of us need to consider the question in detail. We are either likely to err by making too much of the mind without adequate development of the body, or by ignoring the mind under the assumption that it is merely a question of physical vitality. The problem is



the more serious in our time because of attempts in various quarters to make the utmost of the law of hidden reserves, hence to draw upon the supplies of energy to the full. Our best approach to the subject is in terms of a recent discussion which raises the issues afresh.

In a widely read article by Professor James on "The Energies of Men," in the *American Magazine*, attention is called to the fact that there are various levels of energy, and times when the amount of energy available is greater, while at other times one appears to be cut off from the sources. Closely connected with these fluctuations of energy are the inhibitions which check our energy in many ways. We are restrained, for example, by literality and decorum, and so hedged in that we are unable to attain fulness of self-expression. It is plain that there are reservoirs of energy not habitually tapped. That these hidden reserves exist we know from the fact that at times we gain our "second wind," hence we are able to press on and work even after becoming decidedly fatigued. Again, we accomplish a great deal under excitement, or unusual circumstances. The inference is that if we possessed spontaneity or self-abandonment we might frequently draw on our hidden resources.

One would naturally infer that instead of yielding to fatigue and nervous exhaustion one should break into the hidden reserves, putting



forth more activity instead of less, depending on increase of work rather than on the usual methods of rest and recuperation. It then becomes a question of ways and means. Let us, however, examine the matter carefully, for there is danger that those who do not understand the laws and conditions in question may overdraw their supply of energy by getting their second wind when rest is imperative. It by no means follows that, because some have done an exceptional amount of work during excitement, therefore every one may safely do likewise. Those who effectively draw on their reserves doubtless have excellent reserves of nervous and physical energy on which to draw. But there are people who have no resources. It is precisely because many people have drawn on their reserves without limit that they now find themselves nervous wrecks. Hence to advise without careful qualification would be serious.

Take the case of a young woman who was nervously depleted after several years of excessive work in the musical profession, who had become so nervous that she could not sleep, and was haunted by the idea that she would never be able to sleep again. In obvious need of rest and deeper knowledge of her powers, she was urged to press on, but was first given a drug to produce sleep. The effect of the drug was to deaden her sensibilities, hence to remove her a



stage farther from awareness of her real physical and nervous condition. A little wisdom would have shown that she should have been brought, after a period of complete rest, into acquaintance with her actual resources. She had no reserves on which to draw, and was most unwise in the use of the little energy remaining after years of gradual exhaustion. To stimulate her sensibilities would have been to make the mistake so many fall into when, weak and exhausted, they drink strong coffee, and apparently possess more energy than before. Any one who wishes to try this experiment will learn that in due time nature exacts full penalty. Sooner or later we must know precisely what amount of energy nature has put into our hands at a given time, all illusions due to over-stimulation having been overcome.

It requires little knowledge to show that each must take these matters into his own hands. If I have been in the habit of taking long walks into the country, I may well take advantage of my "second wind" and walk five, ten, even fifteen miles after I am weary; since my organism, well trained in that sort of exercise, may not be brought into full activity until I have passed beyond the initial fatigue. The next day I may be aware of no ill-effects, and in a few days may be able to repeat the performance. So in many kinds of



work in which people regularly engage it may be possible to continue day after day turning off an exceptional amount of work without any undesirable result. This should be true of all whose powers are trained to work systematically especially those who are happy in their work. The normal individual ought to be able to labour a goodly number of hours without being made unpleasantly conscious of his organism.

Yet as matters stand normal individuals are not numerous. The majority are compelled to give attention to the state of the body. Such prudence may, however, be a means to a higher end. The better we know the organism the wiser we should be concerning the use of the energy at hand. If we keep close to nature we ought to have abundant evidence of nature's guidance. To-day, for example, I may go into my study expecting to write as usual but instead find myself turning to the book-shelves and idly browsing. By the instinctive actions which thus reveal themselves I learn that the organism is not in full vigour and requires a lighter form of work. I could by sheer force of will go to my desk and write, but my writing would be of an inferior sort, and I should pay a high price for the product. Another day I awaken with zest and everything I touch turns to gold. An examination of my organism would show that it is in prime condition, hence nature does not check



my activities at any point. Do I draw on hidden reserves on such a day? No, I merely use the ordinary supply of vitality, out in the daylight of normal activity.

Likewise in regard to education, everything depends on our knowledge of the factors which affect the whole individual. It needs no argument to show that there is enormous waste of power in education as ordinarily pursued, indeed human life as a whole is characterised by waste and extravagance. Hence to secure wiser and better developed teachers who shall be splendid examples of what they teach we must begin farther back with the question of energy as a human problem. It is possible by responding to every question a child asks, by giving its young mind no opportunity to lie fallow, and by encouraging curiosity at every point, to put the child rapidly through the usual processes of education. But unless due attention be given to each of nature's demands for rest, change, play, and the spontaneous life in general, it is easy to coerce, hence to ruin the child.

Our first point is that nature is the safest guide, hence what is needed is profounder knowledge of nature's powers and their wise use. Whatever energy I possess and may safely use is relatively near the surface; its presence, character, and amount are indicated by nature's promptings,



prohibitions, and warnings, by signs which every one should be able to read who really understands his body. If able to do a great amount of brain-work and drive ahead of my fellows, I must already have a brain of large capacity and power. On merely general principles no one can safely draw upon energies that are not plainly apparent. What is desirable is a state of mind and body which can be steadily maintained through mutual adjustment between physical forces and mental powers.

That there is enormous waste of energy in the human organism is a fact to be considered by itself before we set out in quest of hidden reserves. Only by more advantageously employing the energy at hand can we expect to conserve and organise that which is wasted. Ordinarily there is power enough, and we need not endeavour to rise to a higher level of energy. The men and women round about us who are distancing us because of their efficiency are patient workers who long ago settled down to mastery, who make good use of their gifts according to their capacity, depending on habits of interior control, that is, on the normal powers of man.

Our first promising discovery is likely to relate to the nervous system, since it is right use of nervous energy which underlies mental efficiency. Without doubt the nervous system is capable of far more work than we usually get from it. As Dr.



F. S. Lee has recently said, the nervous system is not the frail, delicate thing easily put out of gear, that we at times believe it to be. It is capable of enormous demands on its powers and of enormous resistance. It is the last system to succumb in many diseases and in such a dire condition as starvation. It would seem to be only highly advantageous to the organism that its nervous system should be able to resist the oncoming of fatigue, with all the direful consequences that might follow its advent. Hence the second stage of working power may well be the more efficient stage, and those who know how to make rightful use of it may in part owe their superior achievements to it. On the other hand, those who habitually energise below their maximum may be victims of inferior habits.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, whatever the real or apparent power of the nervous system, it is primarily a question of the individual who makes full use of his powers, or habitually behaves below his highest point of activity, as the case may be. To make good use of our powers we must engage in a work which we believe worth while. Granted an inspiring ideal which calls the best from the self, the question is, Where shall one begin in the effort to master the energies of the organism and employ them to advantage?

Whatever the degree of development, the start-

<sup>1</sup> *Popular Science Monthly*, Feb., 1910.



ing-point is with the fact that we ordinarily possess sufficient vitality to carry us successfully through the day, and that if this be inadequate it is because there is waste of energy in our habits of work, in the way we eat, sleep, take recreation and exercise. Shall we first increase the supply of energy by lying fallow, waiting for power to come where-with to control what is already in exercise? This may be necessary if we are nervously exhausted, but under other conditions it would be like waiting to become unselfish before we begin to do good in the world. The use of energy is learned through action, for actual use ought to show wherein we may wisely accelerate our speed, increase emphasis, or slacken our pace and lessen the intensity. We may infer from the fact that we have enjoyed a restful sleep that there was appropriate responsiveness to nature, whereas to awaken fatigued is to learn that nervous tension has gone before. Again, we learn by catching ourselves in the act of rushing, by slackening speed then and there, moderately and advantageously using the energy which otherwise would have run riot. A new joy comes into life with the growth of equanimity, and with this joy an impetus towards still more fruitful action. Success really comes through concentration on a single mode of activity at a time, since a merely general advance counts for little. To master one habit, preferably the one involved in the most



wasteful form of activity, is to acquire power that can be brought into play in other directions.

Every one is supposed to know that if we work while we work, and rest while we rest, making an art of it, we enjoy the most beneficial results. If we have serious problems in mind, we know how important it is to dismiss them when we lie down for the night, while we eat, and when we take our daily exercise. If we would think to advantage we know the value of quiet solitude, corrected by subsequent contact with our fellows. By living in the present in contrast with the anxiously anticipated future, or the regretted past, we gain many of the advantages of concentration. We know, too, the importance of observing regular times and seasons for work, rest, and recreation, including the summer in the country and the occasional year's change in the form of work. To observe the regularity that aids without enslaving, every one finds it necessary to cut off social engagements here and there, keep good hours, and find a form of exercise that really brings refreshment.

In contrast with the well-ordered life, it is interesting to note what strenuous exertions are put forth by some people to have what is called "a good time." Observe the average family, for instance, on its way to and from a day's excursion into the country by boat or rail, and note all the preparations that are required, the hardships that



are encountered in crowds, waiting for cars, standing in line—to say nothing of the supposed joys of the actual picnic—and you will realise that it is not a question of saving energy with these people, for they probably spend more than usual. If any benefit comes from these laborious trips to the country, it is due to change not to what is called rest. The same is true of most of our entertainments and amusements, particularly those that wear upon the emotions, or keep us out late at night.

In the case of the inner activities that exhaust and annoy us, for instance, impatience, it is of little avail to tamper with external modes of conduct, if no change has been made at the centre. Begin rather by considering the constituents of patience. See what changes should come about in your bodily and nervous systems. Note that when you sleep well, keep good hours, it is easier for you to be patient. More important still, start several stages farther back by beginning to be more tolerant of your fellows; be willing to let others take their own pace; adapt yourself to various sorts of inconveniences when travelling; see the amusing side of different kinds of beds and the like. Once embarked in such an investigation, you will not only save a deal of energy from day to day—energy usually spent in complaint and expressions of annoyance—but will be surprised to find how well adapted the world is to such a person as yourself.



In every well-ordered life there is a saving grace of some sort.

I once sat near a speaker who was addressing an open-air gathering in the summer-time, and I noticed that during forty-five minutes he did not once change the position of his feet, did not raise his arms to gesticulate, and did not raise his voice. As one would expect, this speaker chose his words with great care, permitted no sentence to escape from his lips that was not well ordered, in entire keeping with his thought. One saw that here was a man of wide information, who knew a fact from a theory, and who used his powers to capital advantage. Now we might not always prefer so deliberate and precise a speaker, so accustomed are we to impassioned utterance, but we would like to see every speaker thus able to think and speak deliberately.

If able to command sufficient repose to analyse a subject carefully, discerning its parts, arranging them in order, singling out essential points and formulating laws, you have already made several attainments in this direction. Such control implies the ability to adopt a point of view and follow it logically to its conclusions, and this implies command of the brain. It also involves the mechanism that secures external order and system, insures confidence, and enables one to strike out and reach a goal. But this efficiency is the fruition



of continued effort in a clearly defined direction and is never the result of mere growth at random.

It is not the quietude which we are born with that avails, not that of mere silence, or an attitude assumed for the occasion. Nor is it a question of adjustment to a higher level of energy attained through momentary receptivity or prayer. To hold still for a time, to be calm at the centre, is to adopt a means to the end, but the desideratum is a state of composure that has become habitual. This end is not attained through meditation alone, but through repeated effort and victory in actual work in the world. The silent pauses between hours of activity are necessary, and without them we could hardly observe the play of energies sufficiently to discover the frictions, tensions, and emotional excesses. But to penetrate behind the disturbed centres to the inmost causes is to become acquainted with laws and acquire a knowledge that gives strength and stability. He who has faced his nervousness and his frictions must later face his selfishness, and there are nervous activities within us that can neither be stilled nor checked but must be lifted up and put to wiser use.

Some people show in a few minutes' conversation why they have become neurasthenics. That is, they speak with enormous waste of energy, using their powers like the person who does three days' work in one and then rests for three days to



recover from the excess. To catch oneself in the act of forging ahead is to realise what a whirlwind of excitement is ordinarily taking place within, what tensions, frictions, and strains still remain to be overcome. One can hardly learn precisely what is taking place without at the same time seeing what should be done. Catching oneself in the act, one is able to trace effects to causes. Hence one sees at what point the organism must be cared for in a wiser way, just where the centres of nervous activity must be overcome. But all this calls for more self-knowledge and composure as the basis for control of the organism. This in turn demands a simpler life, with more time for reflection. Thus the inquiry ever leads back to the same point.

Since the results are perfect expressions of the causes, one ought to be able to judge so accurately by the signs as to know when one is reaching the limit of energy, when to push on and work. At one time it may be wise to follow lines of least resistance, to take the easy course; but on occasion our course unmistakably lies straight through the greatest obstacle. Certain of our new resolves must be acted on immediately, otherwise we lose the benefit of the new impetus; yet there are ideals which we must steadily hold before the mind for years, since the time for their realisation is not within our power to decide.



One must learn from experience when to move with the incoming tide, when it is best to wait, or be aggressive. A part of every successful life consists in watching the trend of events to see when to join in. The more wisely observant and reflective the more likely we are to spare ourselves the enormous expenditures of energy of those who struggle against the tide, the more frequently we may discover favourable occasions. Thus, taking our clues from nature's ebbings and flowings, we may let our heads save our heels in many a new way, steadily exercising finer powers of interior control. We may already have learned to conserve our forces by eating pure and simple food, making the appropriate changes in diet at wise junctures, but now we may be able to advance by eating more moderately or by depending on a smaller quantity. Thus there may be gradual evolution through the acquisition of wise habits, while these in turn make it possible to give one's consciousness more fully to matters that require active thought.

We hardly need to remind ourselves that energy is saved in a well-ordered household or office, where closets, desks, and shelves are in order, and each person knows precisely where the utensils are to be found which pertain to his organic service. It is always possible to introduce improvements even where an admirable system prevails, especially since the system itself may in time become a



hindrance. External order at its best means control and system within a brain that more and more effectively serves a well-ordered mind. Possibilities open before us without limit when the subject really engages our attention. The crucial question is, Have we found a central clue? Are we making changes in food, methods of work, exercise, and the like, at random or with a definite principle in mind?

Nature moves forward in measured rhythms and cycles, and the wise man learns to accord his conduct with nature, acquiring the rhythms which pertain to his type of work, his temperament, and the conditions under which he lives. He does not try to change but to build on nature, letting art grow out of life. Nor does he undertake to change his disposition or acquire control except where his knowledge shows such control or change to be feasible. He is not primarily a reformer, and is not seeking to make others like himself; he sees the importance of taking the world as it really is, meanwhile contributing his quota of life and knowledge.

Just as a man may learn from the promptings of his physical nature when to push forward, when not, so he may learn from the spontaneous play of the mind. The usual habit of thought is to employ the brain to the full in downright thinking, and oftentimes this is the best way. But capital



results sometimes come from observing the gradual growth of ideas, taking the clues for active thought from the spontaneous fruitions of ideas that have matured in their own time. Experience produces intellectual deposits in us that surpass many of our self-conscious attainments. Out from the recesses of the mind come ideas that have gathered in new groupings round a central conception. The illuminating clues that suddenly flash into consciousness may save us far more time and strength in the long run than the mere economy of physical and nervous energy. The significant consideration in such a case is not the hidden mental process but the fruition or idea which affords a clue for action.

If by brooding over a plan I am intuitively able to discern the right clue, I shall then be able to step forth into the arena of action prepared to succeed at every turn. The best way to save energy may be to avoid using it until I know whither to proceed, since it may be better to experiment in the world of thought than in the sphere of action. When I discern the clue emerging from my deeper selfhood into the clear light of consciousness I may open wide the gates of the will, abandoning myself to action without much thought of the way in which I am using my energies.

In other words, much power is wasted in anticipation, in the effort to work ourselves into enthusi-



astic self-expression and loyalty before a sufficient incentive has come. This is like trying to love on general principles, because we think we ought. Again, it is like the effort to quiet our doubts, whereas the only way to be rid of a doubt is to see it through. It is well to give the spontaneous processes full opportunity to produce fruitions. Our deepest convictions develop by a law of their own. Love comes in its fulness when there is some one to call it out. Time settles many things which no exertion on our part can hasten. He truly saves energy who takes the course that life takes, biding his time, ready to respond to the best that the hour offers.

It is plainly of more consequence to know what interests and incentives satisfactorily set our energies free than to observe our movements in order to know when to slacken speed. Enthusiasm, for example, frees our powers and carries us far on the road to accomplishment, yet unless counterbalanced it quickly peters out or runs into emotional excess. What one desires is enthusiasm guided by and aiding a purpose, and continuing along the line of action. Nothing enables us to employ our energies to better advantage than work to which we can give hearty support, making as little as possible of its imperfections and dwelling on the ideal for which it stands. On the other hand, nothing wastes our energy more quickly than



misplaced, superficial, and disturbing emotions. Anger, fear, hatred, jealousy, for example, exhaust the energy with amazing rapidity. The same is true of ecstasy in all its forms, and of any excitement that is intimately related to nervous activities and greatly heightened sensibilities. The avoidance of emotional excess is one of the secrets of success in the right use of energies. Those who seek their second wind on enthusiasm will pay a high price for the sudden spurt. This is true despite the other truth on which Emerson and others have insisted, that nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.

The real problem with many of us, as Professor James points out, is the removal of repressions and inhibitions. If I possess a purpose in life I should be able to yield my powers to the full in accordance with my vocation, hence find freedom through exercise. This is the positive method, whereas to examine my nature with a view to the discovery of all tensions and repressions would be an endless undertaking, involving much unpleasant self-consciousness. If subject to dogmas, habits that impede free action, personalities that enslave, I must indeed examine myself. But if subject to repressions dating back to childhood I am most likely to become free by giving expression to the element of play, to activities which tend to overcome habits of over-seriousness. If reticent,



secretive, or distrustful, the resource is once more free self-expression. To open wide the gates for a time will be to discover in due course how to utilise the energy thus set free. Strictly speaking, we have always used the power in question, for inhibition requires energy; but the structure was rigid and energy was lost in impeded endeavour to be free while under restraint on every side.

Life is in general a progressive quest for more satisfactory forms of expression. The forces that are within us inevitably spend their activities in some fashion. Our part is to aid in providing channels that correspond with our interior growth, taking our clues in part from the restlessness which appears in new forms as time goes on. Half the problem is to know what the difficulty is, why we are dissatisfied. The life that is stirring within us will reveal its own needs if we observe it at the point of inward striving, and once more yield ourselves to the spontaneous play. The prompting of the moment, or the compelling idea, is often far more serviceable as a clue than the consciously chosen plan. If I write to-day, for example, on the subject that fills my mind I shall probably write better than on the topic I settled upon last night and sought to give myself so fully to this morning. That is to say, the creative life within me seeks channels of its own, and indicates when it is ready to produce in a given direction. Conse-



quently, I take my clue once more from nature. To go counter to my inner prompting would be to exercise my will against an economical energising of my being. Wisdom in the use of energy implies in this case full co-operation. On the physical side, there is less friction, more harmonious action, less fatigue, a better state generally.

There is one situation, however, in which people seldom realise their own need, that is, when they have weighed alternatives so long that they have lost the power of initiative. To study inner states when one is in such a condition might be to become more and more enveloped in self-conscious considerations. What some of us need is a mental upheaval sufficient to upset nicely-balanced arguments and plunge us into a definite line of action. There are occasions when by a sheer act of will we must break through the line of self-consciousness and do something courageous that will bring about a vigorous reaction. Conscience not only makes cowards of us but represses energy which should be in free play. Simply to put ourselves in motion in some direction is the great need of the extremely conscientious. When the repressed energies are once more in exercise it will be time to consider what use to make of them.

If there be a time when it is justifiable to influence another it is when the "New England conscience" has brought about a deadened condition.



There is more hope for the sinner than for the victim of this benumbing introspection. In another sense this is sin, sin against life, that marvellous power which demands far more than mere seriousness from us. The more seriously we tend to take ourselves and our inner states the more reason for an off-setting life of play and new ventures. Really to know and possess a quality is to be able to lay it aside. In those who have great powers of self-control and obedience, you will also find great powers of relaxation and abandonment. The great saint could have been the great sinner.

When all has been said that need be said to those who require rest and recuperative change it is probably true of most of us, whether ill or healthy, that we need more incentives, more outlets for our energy. This is true at any rate in so far as we are uneasy, self-centred, dissatisfied. Hence to be put to work is the best medicine in a great number of cases, put to work at tasks that compel us to make exertion for ourselves, or make us objective, outgoing. To wait in receptivity might be to wait for months or years. What is imperative is an incentive which will enable us to throw off the weight of depression or habit, transcend the dull present, ride over obstacles, assume responsibility once more.

If we watch ourselves long at a time we are likely to become enveloped in processes instead



of concentrating on ends. It is not a question of negative considerations, of what we do not know, but of what can be accomplished. Hence one needs to look squarely at one's total situation in life acknowledging whatever is rampant yet by no means neglecting the ideal element. No mere drifting down the stream of time suffices at this point. No secret knowledge of inner springs of action will carry us through. It is rather a question of work and increased efficiency acquired through work, of the more important social adjustments, the problems of self-will; and the courageous ventures that involve willingness to meet any consequences for the sake of the right and the true.

At this point our inquiry becomes essentially moral. Character avails above the energy or the way it is employed. One would like to know how to quicken in men the moral fire that sets them in motion, brings them more profoundly to judgment. Given the moral impetus a way through the mazes of self-consciousness would be found, the energies would be brought into unity, and good deeds would follow. What is needed is the vitalising idea. If by some secret process one could discover hidden reservoirs of moral power within the selfhood of man, we might indeed work wonders.

A step towards the solution of this deeper problem is found when we understand the relationship between idea and energy. By the term "energy"



one means nervous and physical force. The important characteristic of such force is that it is exhausted by use, the notable instance being that of the exhaustion caused by such emotions as anger, or the insidious depletion resulting from anxiety and nervous intensity. The problem is not merely that of inhibiting the interior frictions that exhaust our forces, but the development and maintenance of conditions which shall render such wear and tear impossible. The economy of energy implies the existence of power capable of acquiring control. Hence the deeper question is, What is the self with its moral and spiritual life, its powers of inhibition and concentration, and what are the resources at its command?

When we pass from the level of physical and nervous forces to that of the intellectual life do we still find that energy is exhausted? Certainly, in so far as an idea has a psychophysical basis, takes expression through the will and influences conduct. In the processes of calm reflection there may be the least expenditure of energy. Hence the prevalence of states of calmly reflective activity is likely to lead to the development of a centre of inward repose, and this in turn may become a basis for further control. It is not of course a question of avoiding all expenditure of energy, for, as we have seen, there is ordinarily a sufficient amount to carry us successfully through the day.



But the question of efficiency in the use of energy has now become one of choice of efficient interior states.

Another question must be answered before we proceed. Is an idea in the form of an affirmation dynamic in character? Is it possible by diligent reiteration to establish a formula in the mind so that it will attract favourable conditions and bring about physiological changes? Many believe so, hence they turn their whole attention to the fixation of appropriate thoughts, with the view of acquiring power. The assumption is that when the right combination of thoughts is discovered energies will be set free that will do the work, through the co-operation of the subconscious mind.

Our study of subconsciousness led us to the conclusion that the decisive factors are not below but above the threshold of consciousness, as in the case of the man who cared more to give up than to retain the habits of smoking and drinking. It is the will that is dynamic, aided by imagination and idea. Consciously acquired control of energy through wise use of the will is the vital consideration. For it is only now and then that an idea, out of the multitude that course through the mind, leads to active accomplishment. Our thoughts are often like pictures seen on a wall or in a book. If a picture sets us on fire, the reason is found in the response of the will, in the absence of inhibitory



lines of conduct. Not all ideas are motor-ideas, but what we desire, love, will to attain, may well become the goal of quickly resulting action. The adoption of a favourable idea does not absolve us from the necessity of work, any more than the acceptance of a creed makes a man a Christian.

Yet the idea is a necessary factor and in many instances the starting-point. Reflect until you discover an idea that appeals to you and the subsequent activities may be easy indeed. The decisive consideration is, What leads us to issue the fiat or command? For love is the man, and when man sees an idea that appeals to his heart he will act on it with avidity.

Investigation shows that our volitional activities are much nearer the processes that find expression in the body than are the processes of thought, hence we should expect to find that the amount of energy employed is greater. It is well known that acts of will involve effort, and that hesitancy of will is exhausting. He who has made up his mind is in a position to act with effect. Hence we arrive at the conclusion that the wisest use of our energies is likely to result from a life regulated by reason. Here indeed is a power which while differing from bodily energy is of the nature of a higher level of activity. The moral therefore is, train your powers through systematic study of real life, through the acquisition of knowledge which



shows what is worth while; acquire facts and master the laws of nature; meet life philosophically that you may really meet it to advantage. Whatever powers of control we possess may then be brought into exercise.

Are we able as finite beings to break through the inertia of our selfhood and rouse the will to action? Whence come the highest incentives that ever actuate men and women? To answer these questions we must consider the deeper problem more or less in sight throughout our discussion, What are our powers ultimately? Whence comes the life by which we gain control over physical, nervous, and mental powers, ascending from the level of mere energy to that of inward peace and spiritual composure? Surely we cannot expect to solve our problem without taking into account the deepening and quickening experiences which transform us from creatures of distrust and worriment into beings of faith and hope, conferring on us the priceless gifts of the Spirit. The whole situation changes when we view it in this light.

Starting at the highest conceivable centre of the cosmos, it is reasonable to assume that the divine life is without friction, or misspent energy. Knowledge of human suffering there may be, also sympathy, love of a constant type, proceeding forth in creative efficiency. If the creative power, going forth in progressive expression, encounters



no obstacle, it undoubtedly moves onward without exhaustion. We think of the peace "which passeth all understanding" as descending into us so as to allay fear and other inner disturbances. Such obstacles as the divine peace encounters on our part we seek to remove by attaining ideal responsiveness. Perfect accordance with the divine will would be a union without friction, including obedience, the acceptance of responsibility, and the simplification of life so that the customary incentives would be reduced to the leadings and insights which this union would arouse. Consider what a world of tribulations and annoyances would cease to exist, how greatly human conduct would be changed.

No doubt the real secret of a life that stands out above others is found here, in responsiveness to the divine will, in fidelity to the call of genius, however we may phrase the matter. If unable to detect the initial leadings and responses, we are at least aware of the soul's endeavours to be true to these promptings, the struggles that ensue in the effort to bring all interior powers into line, the contests with the flesh, the temptations of the world. We do not begrudge the effort spent in training the powers of mind and heart to bring them into adaptation. Every soul passes through moral and spiritual conflicts, but the power to meet them is commonly admitted to come from a higher source



than one to which the term "energy" rightfully applies. These are, if you please, non-spatial conflicts, they take place in the "intelligible world," extending through the soul's life-time here, yet pertaining more to the eternal values than to the realm of hours and years.

Exhaustion of energy obviously begins when, encountering the conditions of natural existence, we seek to realise the visions of the soul. One would fain spend days at a time in creative labour but the imperatives of natural existence intervene. One would like to work "without pay and without price," but it is necessary in this mundane realm to seek dollars and cents. Thus the ideal is in sharp contrast with the natural, as sharp as in the ancient days when Plato made his classic description. To be dedicated to an ideal is to give constant thought to the besetting conditions which limit our tasks. The joy of it is found in the abounding life that accompanies the ideal consciousness. Not to be measured in terms of foot-pounds, or with reference to the specific energies of the nervous system, this life wells into operation with absorbing might. While under its sway no man can give heed to its processes but only to its results and the goals it has in view. The more obediently and joyfully a man yields himself to its rhythms the less he cares for the ordinary round of social events with its whirling excitements, its restless pursuit



of something new, its wearying endeavours to fill the hour and fight off ennui. Hence the ideal life appears to be one in which there is a large measure of repose at the centre, a repose inspired by secure possession of the eternal values.

To trace all the results of inward repose would be to find its power gradually extending into the secondary activities of life, lessening the friction, hence increasing the general efficiency. The serene centre would then be the basis of the greatest work achieved by the individual, for the real might of the self is spiritual, and only with the power that does not wear out can one conquer the energy which is exhausted by use. It is economy of energy to employ spiritual power when we can, to think from the centre outward, moving with the highest prompting we find there.

When does friction begin? When we encounter our lower selfhood, meet the opposition of the flesh and the inertia of the will. How shall we encounter this resistance more effectively than by gaining the knowledge for which I am here pleading, especially by increasing the spiritual consciousness which sets us free? One word of power at this crucial centre possesses incalculable influence over us. The rest of life is a training and preparation for this. It is not necessary to seek secret springs of energy if we have found the source of power. None of the matters under consideration in our inquiry



can be settled without thus tracing them to the fountain-head, considering them in the light of our attitude with respect to moral and spiritual ideals. However far off the moral ideal may appear to be, we may at least cultivate the attitude most likely to draw into our souls the sweet peace of the Spirit, the divine fire that stirs our hearts to effective service.<sup>1</sup>

It is indeed true that ordinarily we fail to use our energies to advantage, but the prime reason is found not in mere waste of force, as serious as that may be, but in imperfect adaptation to the powers that conquer. We have found that the two lines of development which lead most directly to the goal are psychological and spiritual. We need to grow in knowledge of life through systematic training of our energies and powers, and we need to grow in the consciousness which becomes dynamic through moral and religious incentives. Man's part is to organise his energies, co-ordinate his powers, become efficient, productive, creative. The more deeply consecrated the less thought will he be compelled to give to mere processes; for the very nature of moral efficiency is to make a man strong, prudent, capable of putting in strokes that tell, conservative of his energies in the best sense yet lavish of them when worthy occasions call them forth.

<sup>1</sup> I have tried to make this attitude clear in various earlier volumes, especially *The Power of Silence*, and *Living by the Spirit*.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE NATURE OF HUMAN WORK

THE scope of efficiency has steadily widened as our investigation has proceeded. At first it appeared to be an essentially quantitative principle, relating to manual, industrial, and commercial matters solely. Yet from the first we saw that it involved co-operation between the manual labourer, the foreman, the teacher; and all who plan, manage, or take the lead, therefore co-operation between head and hand. Even the question of industrial efficiency ran over into the inner life, hence was seen to involve mental, moral, and other issues of a qualitative sort. Efficiency regarded as the art of adaptation to the economic conditions of the day implies the art of life, adaptation to nature, and the conditions in general which pertain to human efficiency. Industrial efficiency cannot be regarded as a mere question of time, together with the economies of production and distribution which grow out of it, but must include the economy of nervous and physical energy. If the "rule of the thumb" can no longer be followed



in the mechanic arts, surely it cannot be in the world of physical powers and mental activities.

Furthermore, we have been led to take account of differences in cerebral capacity, in the skill or training which separates a first-class workman from an average labourer, in physical strength, in nerve-power, and the variations which the vocations introduce into these factors. There is a tendency, we have seen, to keep the work of execution distinct from that of planning, yet a tendency to draw all kinds of work more closely together, since the same scientific principles can be applied to all that belongs within the world of affairs. Back of all types of work is the desire to attain human satisfaction. The broad-minded disciple of efficiency wishes to live and let live, to achieve the type. Hence for him there is an ideal of mental co-ordination which involves choice between the desires, emotions, ideas, and other mental tendencies which characterise the world within. The ideal is, to get in motion in a desirable direction, by enlisting the imagination, through the right use of subconsciousness, and by progressive thinking; and then to adapt one's conduct from time to time according to changing conditions. A man's vocation or daily work is thus part of his life as a whole. His life may indeed be shaped by his work. But we are assuming that every man is doing his best to understand and meet the larger issues of life of



which his work is merely a part. Many economic and other theories are founded on interpretations of human work. Our plea is that the nature of work should be seen apart from the doctrine by which it is ordinarily condemned or praised, unheard.

In very many quarters work has long been in such serious disrepute that a new champion renders himself open to attack at the very mention of the word. Aside from the primal curse, it has been burdened with stigmas heaped upon it by the aristocrat, and identified with everything from which man sought to escape. The rich have been deemed fortunate because free from it, while the poor have pictured the heaven that would be theirs could they cease to labour. Meanwhile, the poets have sung of the dignity of labour, and the essayists have bidden men work with a will that they might reap all moral benefits. It is time to regard the matter in more psychological terms, and in the light of all the considerations which we have urged in the foregoing chapters.

Certain characteristics of work are so obvious as to require only a mere reference. Necessity makes it a master, and habit renders it an end in itself. To get a piece of work done, a man will sacrifice even his health, mayhap his family, and become a mere machine. Yet to concentrate on a piece of work until it is finished is under normal conditions



the glory of man. Any number of conditions conspire to put us out of sight of its real values long before it can become a joy, just as people who have always dwelt in the slums are deprived of the pleasures of life in the country which they have never seen. So many wage-earners know it only as a grind that he who bespeaks its beauties and delights is quickly scorned, as if he could never have anything reasonable to say. Others are steadily nagged that they may work more, or bribed that the utmost may be gained from their toil. When a man works because he loves his occupation, few onlookers catch his spirit, and he is supposed to be misguided. Yet there are those who are born with such a love of work that this zest could alone give them happiness under almost any conditions. Officious observers intervene and mar what might have been a good piece of work, because the theorist forsooth thinks he knows better than the toiler how the work should be done. Nevertheless, it is not necessarily the child of tradition who knows how to work best, since a scientifically trained person may enter the lists and outdistance those who have learned by doing. Work is so often identified with manual labour, that a larger view is practically impossible. Hence some of the noblest workers of the world are disparaged. Meanwhile, they work incessantly who really stir the world.



To understand work one must begin with the nature of man. The primal curse is of course a myth. Work is founded in the nature of things, and all life's joys and blessings belong with it. It was not work but idleness that was cursed, together with mere self-assertion. The moral cosmos is grounded in work, and without work there is neither growth nor attainment. Work is necessary because nothing genuine is fostered except through contrast, opposition, and the occasion that makes the man. Man is essentially an active being, and through self-activity he attains the keenest satisfaction. From infancy upwards he reaches out in ambitious self-expression, ever striving to overcome obstacles and to create. If he lapse into inactivity it is because he departs from his normal selfhood, seriously misled. Every man was created to add his quota to the world, and to win by his own exertions that which suffices to keep him in existence. If he shirks he must pay a large penalty, and be deprived of manifold blessings. This is as true of the self-centred and the neurasthenic as of those whom everybody classifies as degenerate.

Many people have the notion that it is what a man is born with that makes life worth while. Hence they lay stress on inherited fortunes, on intellectual and spiritual gifts; hence they celebrate innocence, untested intuition, whatever is elemental or vaguely universal. But to him alone who



overcometh is more given. What I am born with may soon slip from my fingers unless I do something to deserve it and render it secure. Appreciation is a product of toil, and to evaluate I must make a thing my own. Riches may be heaped upon me, but I really possess only what I have won. No one can make me a gift out of relation to my character, no one can really coerce me, whatever appearances may say. What becomes mine I react upon and assimilate by degrees.

It is natural to man to go forth into productivity in response to a creative instinct. This self-activity once in exercise, there is opportunity to observe it to see whither it is tending and thereby discover its implied ideal. Mere activity, that is, the mere expression of elemental power counts for little. But a man must express his powers before he can select and organise them. One may put life into the most trivial expression and transfigure it by the nobility of his motive. The man who seeks pleasure or happiness as an end in itself inevitably fails, but the worker who puts himself into his occupation finds that happiness is beneficently added. If there be pent-up life within me I should not expect to be at peace until I find a satisfactory channel for its expression. Half the misery of certain classes of people is due to uneasiness which demands release through work. Nature refuses not only to give us something for



nothing but to let us pay half-price. But what joy ensues when a man gives himself in full zest to the work which his hands find to do!

Discover an end that is worth pursuing in life, such as truth, beauty, goodness, let love for humanity fill your heart, and you will find it almost impossible to keep from working, scarcely aware that what you are doing is work. The most joyous worker is he who has a purpose in life, and work falls into its rightful place when there is an adequate end in view. Work as a fragmentary being upon fragments and you should not expect to experience the satisfactions of labour. But relate the present activity with the world's work and you shall be lifted into a region of contagious joy. Hence work to be its best requires an ideal environment which lifts me out of the servile present. Granted this, it is of secondary consequence what branch of my work I am just now engaged in. The moment's task well done will lead to a better. Thus work done in an ideal spirit is gloriously cumulative.

Work as such of course never demeans any one. The person who deems himself too delectable to engage in the common tasks is unworthy of the fruits of human toil. Work levels class-distinctions and welds humanity into a democratic whole. Few joys are greater than that of doing things in consort with our fellows—in doing things that need



to be done. Hence a part of the art of work consists in securing a group to perform it with a will. Those who work hard when they play might well turn about and introduce team play into what they call hard work. In play we are thinking of other ends. The work that becomes burdensome is permitted to be so because we descend to the level of mere routine.

Work in itself is seldom an injury. Its burdens are due to other causes—to unequal social conditions, undue emphasis on money, to the encroachments of luxury, and to the false aristocracies of the world. As much energy is required to keep from work as to labour. The energy spent in supposed amusements and wearisome vacations would more than carry us through what lies before us, and without pain or undue weariness. It is wrong to credit work with the emotional and other excesses, with the worriments, anxieties, fears, and frictions that arise elsewhere. Let me keep in prime condition for my work, and let me fulfil my vocation, and you shall not hear me moan. Moreover, the way in which I work is an important consideration. If I concentrate upon the task at hand and conserve my energies I shall be little likely to succumb to fatigue. Only the short-sighted undertake constantly to drive the organism at full pressure. Let me moderate my pace and work rhythmically and presently you will find me distancing my fellows.



He works well who keeps within his powers, avoiding inner friction and enlarging his sphere of activity when the skill with which he labours warrants the increase.

Different kinds of work demand different conditions and methods, and it would be futile to search for a single type. The efficient worker in any field learns how to fulfil his function to advantage, and if you would know his secrets you must acquire them by actual service, never depending on external imitation or judgment. For example, the successful farmer, master of numerous arts, learns how to manage a farm so as to adapt his activities to various needs, amidst circumstances that require sudden changes according to the weather and the demand for his products. The soprano knows how to care for herself that she may preserve her voice at its best, maintaining a high level of artistic productivity. The clergyman discovers what sort of recreation, physical exercise, or vacation is needed to sustain his professional life, without taking himself too seriously. The writer knows how to live and study so that he may collect ideas, give them opportunity to develop, and respond to the promptings of genius. Likewise with all others who are masters in their field. Some of these may be working hardest when apparently most idle, since real work for them begins in the life of reflection. Generally speaking, a man knows



how man's work should be done, while a woman understands woman's work, but there is also human work which all may understand by doing. Experiment leads the way in every sphere, but thought may follow and explain secrets to the competent, while science may modify in radical degree. Strictly speaking, brain-work is initial and fundamental, for always there are inertias to overcome, obstacles to be removed, or new paths to be worn. Whether or not a man be successful will depend in the first instance upon the use he makes of his head. They advance in the world who use their brains, that is, control them, and there never will be any dangerous rival.

It follows that no economic or sociological view is sound unless it take account of this pluralism of types and methods of work. The brain-worker as such has his rights, the manual labourer his, and it were vain either to regulate the compensation by the amount of time consumed or with reference to the merely visible product. The economic system must be as rich as human nature with its varied interests. As matters now stand the head-worker is as likely to be defrauded as the manual labourer. If any man is burdened by the thought of unjust distribution let him remember that all work primarily consists in understanding, controlling, and wisely using the brain. He who is master of his brain can make his way in the world.



The basis of successful work is mental co-ordination and cerebral training.

Recognition of the fact that each type of work has laws of its own does not, however, show that the given worker is the one who can best formulate its laws and methods. To know how work has been well done in a general sort of way, it is indeed necessary to be with and observe those who like the farmer or housewife are actually doing it. But the master of scientific principles may then proceed to develop a plan which involves wiser expenditure of time and energy. For in the division of labour science and art are often widely separated, and some men are prevented by cerebral and other limitations from understanding the science of their own work until the specialist has taught it to them. Others are incapable of grasping the science even then, although they can be taught how to do a piece of work on scientific principles by the aid of a detailed schedule. It is important, however, to remember that the various types of labour were developed in the first place by those who acquired the art through actual service.

Nor is the one who understands a given type of work, or manual labour in general, necessarily the one best competent to propound a theory of work, leading to an economic doctrine. Since efficiency is both quantitative and qualitative, it is impossible to state the laws of work without



viewing both manual work and brain-work from within, from the point of view of both servant and owner, producer and merchant, labourer and capitalist. One's sympathies are always with the oppressed, yet one cannot overlook the fact that each side of a case has its laws. The burdens which a head-worker or a manual labourer struggle under may not by any means be those of the mere work of his type, for what he needs may be the right to work both with his head and with his hands.

Strictly speaking the genuine worker uses both head and hand, and never permits himself to become a creature of either. Even when the hardest work is done with the head, manual labour or out-of-door exercise rightfully supplements the activity of the brain. He who would be sane must keep grounded in one of the homely occupations that closely relate a man to the earth, just as he must have an avocation whatever the type of his professional life. Then his theories should grow out of his multiform practice. To undertake to reform the world by insisting that all work shall be industrial would be arbitrary and vain in the extreme. Without a vision the people perish, and we must have the fine arts, the sciences, and the life of worship.

Work is most instructive when effectively performed with directly practical or ideal ends in view, not for the sake of giving an object-lesson.



For example, the farmer can best further the growth of character by developing his farm as successfully as possible, doing his own work well, and thereby aiding his associates to fulfil their part efficiently. A farm must be conducted as a farm, under the conditions which nature imposes, directed by the man who has learned to know and work with nature. If a moral must be appended let it be inspired by the work itself, and by encouraging the farmer to speak as nature has taught him. Some of the most fruitful conversations in the world spring up amidst participants in toil. But when there is work to be done, or the crops will not be harvested in time, you should adapt your talk to the situation. Work compels us to be practical, hence it is one of the gods in disguise who hold us close to the life that is worth while.

By the same law a book must be allowed to grow, a picture to approach completion, a sermon to take form. When you see an artist browsing, or a thinker ruminating, do not break in by giving him something to do with his hands. The worker must take the current when it serves, and you should know when to pass by in reverent silence. Each worker knows what is sacred to his peculiar task. The secrets of creation are locked up in the sphere of work, and he alone shall learn them who is faithful to his genius.

A piece of work, then, has a life of its own, and



he knows what the spirit of work is who permits himself to follow this life in full receptivity and responsiveness. Fortunate is the man who can so organise his life that each day shall find him doing the productive work that calls to him from out that day. He may then put aside as less important whatever is not germane to the day, eliminating from his life that which in the long run does not further his work. Yet each man needs also to do something each day because it must be done to keep the domestic economy in motion.

To work is also to pray, as we were long ago told, and he who works well need not pray much. We too frequently pray for those things for which we would rather not work. Work is an expression of strength, and the more steadily we pursue our ends the less likely we are to turn aside to utter a self-conscious prayer. He worships God best who most steadily pursues an ideal end. The man who is devoted to his work is little likely to need a religion that is sundered from work.

"My Father worketh hitherto and I work." He who must be about his Father's business has little time for aught else. He is sometimes assailed for working incessantly, or because he does not attend the functions of polite society; but this complaint always comes from those who have not yet found a sacred task. To do anything well is to devote one's life to it. That is, there are perennial



interests which are worthy of the utmost that is in us. These we discover after a time and we select one of them according to our genius. The rest that goes to make up life may be adjusted around this central interest. When you find a man thus consecrated, aid him by every means in your power. If you do not like the way in which the world's work is done, do your own work in such a way as to show what genuine devotion means. It is sheer waste of energy to complain because you must work, or because the economic conditions are so very bad. Do something worth while as well as you can and talk less.

Nature works by imperceptible changes, steadily moving towards her ends. Her powers are acquired cumulatively. Thus in all fields the successful worker moves silently towards his goal, some day awakening to the consciousness that he is arriving. Time hardly exists for the man who loves his work, for he is thinking of that which now ought to be done, which cries for expression. Thus if we learn from nature we live chiefly in the present, although gazing towards the flying goal which draws us ever on. To make a spurt is ordinarily speaking to lose time and strength. Real work means the overcoming of difficulties that stand directly in our path. It is irksome to most people to take pains, hence they seek time and labour-saving devices in directions where sheer concentra-



tion on details and persistence are called for. But the more thoroughness a man puts into his work the greater will be his reward. The inertia felt by those who do not take pains is often due to the pressure of unorganised energy imprisoned within. They suppose that more time for rest is needed. But the moral is, transmute this energy into performance by finding work to do that enlists the activities to the full. It is work, not rest, that is the salvation of the soul. Rest is a means, not an end.

The efficient worker, then, is one who ever puts more and more thought into his work that he may take the far look ahead, adapt his hours to the task before him, husband his forces, and make use of the responsive powers of the organism. He is willing to make effort, that is, to concentrate without limit, his reward being the discovery of more favourable modes of expression of his powers. He knows when it is wise to rest, when by an act of will to push forward, or depend upon his second wind. He is sure to work enough to find full outlet for his powers, thereby avoiding the ennui of those who are nervous or self-centred. Thus for him work is a panacea as well as a means of livelihood and a joy. Absorbed in his work, he is spared many of the tribulations that beset the idle, the neurasthenic, and the selfish. Thus dedicated he is also likely to be more genuinely religious than those



who make of religion a self-conscious possession. His work, in brief, expresses individuality, and to be an individual is to find life wholly worth while.

These principles are all very well for those who have time and money to carry them out, the critic will say, but what of the men and women who must labour incessantly under adverse conditions? There is indeed a difference between work in the ideal sense and mere labour or drudgery. It is difficult for any one to rise above routine. It is hard to persuade those who are merely "busy" that there is a better way and a best way. But there are times between, opportunities for thought even in the busiest life. Those who lack the capacity to think for themselves or to develop better methods of work can be assisted by those who are able to think. There is no life of mere routine that cannot be bettered. It is neither a question of time nor of money, primarily speaking, but of thought. Thought does not occupy space and does not require time taken away from other matters, but may be added to the busiest hour, and it can transcend the dullest routine.

There are indeed kinds of work that require time and leisure, otherwise such work cannot be done at all. For example, the genuine artist cannot paint a picture in a hurry, but must be free from nervousness, able to command various favourable



conditions. There will be days when he cannot work, times when a slight occurrence will throw him out of mood for the day. Likewise in the case of the writer there are essential conditions, although the author can overcome more annoyances than the artist. But when a writer or scholar is thinking out a subject scientifically he must be able in large measure to control his circumstances. To teach a subject scientifically one must have time and freedom. The same is true of many kinds of executive and legislative work, together with the work of the professions. It would be folly to introduce time-schedules into such work, insisting that the carefully prepared plan to fill the entire day shall be carried out to the letter. It is purely a question of quality. Time is a servant, not a master.

Nevertheless, there are kinds of work that are especially adapted to schedules. Hence the problem is one of efficiency within the conditions imposed by the world of affairs and the great industries. The housewife must perform a large proportion of her duties on time, and plan parts of her day very carefully; yet always with reservations in favour of types of work that require leisure. The farmer must be ready to change his work at short notice, and he may not know at night-time what he is likely to do on the following day. But for most of us both the tasks and the hours are assigned.



Hence it is a question of wise use of energy within the assigned conditions.

Undoubtedly no condition is so complex as that presented by the home. Hence we may well consider it more at length. Can scientific management be applied to the home? Would it be possible to make a study of all housewifely activities and draw up a schedule so as to save time, materials, and money? At first thought the undertaking seems wholly impossible, since the housewife must do forty things in a day and, knowing from long experience how everything should be done, she is likely to resent a plan which seems intended to get more work out of her. Yet the housewife who believes she has learned the best way would admit that she acquired the art slowly and that there is still room for improvement. Granted that she must do forty things in a day, jumping from one to another, here is a problem pertaining to a special kind of work. Granted that she is busy from the time she gets up until she goes to bed late at night, it is nevertheless a question how this sort of work can best be done. No one would expect to solve the problem in a moment. Perhaps in due time it will be solved by those who live near enough to one another to co-operate by putting more kinds of work out of the home. With the central heating-plant, the central laundry, the source of power for running the vacuum cleaner,



and other modern inventions, there will be more opportunities within the home for the essentially human interests. Meanwhile, it is a question of the best use of the resources at hand. Surely, no scientific student of these problems would wish to get more out of the housewife, but would see her less fatigued and happier at the close of the day, with more accomplished. The statement seems absurd. But so did the promises first held out to artisans who by dint of much persuasion were led to try the new methods developed by "time-planners" and others who had studied the work in question. The woman who has the intellectual capacity to think the matter out and try the new methods will be the one to help the others. Such a woman knows that when there are many things to be done much depends on keeping one's head, letting the head save feet and hands, and co-ordinating the various activities about the house so as to avoid covering the same ground many times. If by taking these matters under consideration she is able to be a little more patient, less nervous, more contented, there will be something gained. A calm interior will thus become the starting-point for better planning.

To save energy rather than time should then be the first object. With this in view more attention should be given to the arrangement of utensils, the storage of supplies, and the adjustment of different



branches of work. If utensils are arranged according to the frequency with which they are used, and if they are readily accessible, the chances are that some can be dispensed with, while for others improved inventions will be substituted. The thoughtful housewife may object at first to the vacuum cleaner or the fireless cooker, for fidelity to the good old ways is strong. But a trial leads to reconsideration, and the steady introduction of improvements means a saving in energy, and eventually a saving of time. Some of these are expensive at first, but are economical in the end. The substitution of the dry-mop and the dustless duster for the old-fashioned feather duster did not simply mean a cleaner house.

The alert mother enlists the services of children and others in the house when they are passing empty-handed and can easily carry needed articles to another room. She teaches even the youngest children to bear some part in the housework, for their sakes as well as for her own. She saves the time of the father, and also accommodates herself to his work, by posting a list of repairs and other necessary services which he can attend to whenever it is most convenient for him during the day or the week. When buying supplies she purchases by the wholesale if this be desirable, hence she saves annoyance. But she depends on purchases made day by day in cases where this is more convenient.



If she orders by telephone she first investigates that she may know of whom to order, hence she may dismiss still further details from her mind. On principle she breaks from her work a little while each day, even if she can go no farther than a room seldom used or into the garden.

On the housewife the atmosphere of the home chiefly depends, and the responsibility is indeed serious. She is subject to change without notice, whatever she may have on hand, and is supposed to retain her sweetness, hold her patience, and maintain good cheer whatever happens. Yet she is the person who is able to do this. It is not a situation to shrink from but one to meet with composure and faith. What the housewife needs is not only the wisdom which her own work gives her but the incentives that can be gained by learning the principles on which others work. The art of housework implies an art of life, hence a science, and a scale of values or standard by which to test the relative worth of things and activities within the home. The woman who is worn out with over-scrupulous attention to one thing may well consider whether she is neglecting what is most important. The duties that must be performed on time naturally regulate to a large extent the household activities, while other activities may be interspersed at odd moments with little thought of time. There are other duties that can be grouped



in such a way as to save time, energy, and patience. The maintenance of a contented spirit bespeaking inner control calls forth a harmonious spirit from others. One who carries a consciousness of the connectedness of everything in the home is able to spare herself at many points. The difficulty with some who seem unable to improve their conditions is that they have no method, but merely do one thing by itself, then turn to another that happens to be at hand.

The woman who thinks is able to add any number of interests to the central one, namely, being a good wife and mother. Thus she is not actually doing forty things in a day but just one thing with many branches, each one of which is contributory. She who is at unity with herself will manifest this harmony in whatever she does. If peace prevails at the centre it will be revealed in the face and the responses it enlists. It is never the mere work or the multiplicity of things to be done that most rapidly exhausts the energies at hand; it is the way the work is done, the sort of life that prevails at the centre. Efficiency is not merely a question of capacity and training. Where there is love and interest there is a way. Some of the most efficient housewives in the world are those who have developed what powers they have in fullest degree without complaint because they have no other powers.



If these principles can be applied in the home, surely they may be put to use in all phases of human work. The main points for every worker at the outset are briefly as follows: (1) an attitude of willingness both to work and to learn, an open-mindedness or responsiveness; (2) adaptation to the conditions imposed, the methods in vogue, the schedules employed; (3) concentration on the work at hand, that it may be well done, with economy of motions with rhythmic rather than spasmodic activities; (4) preservation of a calm interior, freedom from nervousness and a sense of hurry, a reposeful state of mind corresponding to the regularity of motion required for the given task; and (5) the play of thought or imagination which enables the mind to rise above mere routine and physical fatigue, give heed to the higher values of life, and reflect upon the conditions within and without that make for improvement.

For the man who is able to adjust his time as he likes the problem of work is as truly a moral one as for the manual labourer who does what he is told and when told. Apparently nothing could be more delightful than to be able to work or not as the spirit moves. But the conditions that must be met and conquered are far more numerous for the supposed man of leisure. He is really free who has earned the right by conquering himself and his inner circumstances. Everything depends upon



the possession of a purpose of sufficient strength to call the powers at command into co-ordination. The man with a standard will persistently work to attain the standard whether his time be at his command or not. To have a scale of values revealing an end that is worth while is to be superior to time and to many other conditions, intent on realising the ideal.

In other words, the mere conditions of work are never decisive in any sphere. The chief factor is the workman. For each class, type, temperament, vocation, or profession, there is an art. He who loves his work will find a way to do it well. He who thinks can master the art which his specialism implies. For every labourer, however oppressed, there are the relaxations and compensations of the mental world. Of very great importance for every one is the discovery that a rebellious attitude, inner friction, a spirit of driving haste, exhausts the energies far more rapidly than the merely physical exertion. He labours well who works rhythmically with a contented mind. The economic problems that remain to be solved can best be considered on other occasions, when the distress they cause shall not mar the hours of labour.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE EFFICIENT WILL

“ALL the world is a little queer save thee and me,” said the felicitous Quaker, “and sometimes even thee is a little queer.” Again, we hear it said that all men are more or less insane. Perhaps this explains why so few have seriously undertaken to examine all the conditions that make for sanity. Every specialist is said to be insane concerning his specialism. To make sanity a subject of direct study might be to render a person open to still more serious charges. Sanity at any rate pertains to the whole of life, whereas most of us are narrow, one-sided, often wilfully loyal. Is it possible to be wholly sane yet do our work in the world? It would seem so, if we can attain the right adjustment between the individual and society, between the particular and the universal. That is, sanity would appear to be largely a question of the will; for although to be sane is to be rational, nevertheless the actual adjustment of the will to the forces that play upon the organism is the real test. Therefore it is important to under-



take a more thorough inquiry into the nature of the will.

A friend whose sister was moderately insane made a tour of institutions in which the demented were cared for, and in the hospital which had the largest percentage of cures she was told by the physician in charge that he traced insanity in many cases to a will that had never been controlled. That is, the condition dated to childhood, to the time when the child should be taught to obey. In order to teach obedience this wise physician deprived his patients of various comforts and articles of food until they should learn to respect, not his will, but the unwritten laws of the institution. He then proceeded to build on this initial structure of obediences. My friend's sister was of the self-assertive type, so was my friend, and she knew that this conclusion in regard to the untrained will was perfectly just, how be it there had been a special cause for her sister's illness. This is indeed a painful discovery to make late in life.<sup>1</sup>

If there were more wisdom, instead of trying to break our wills, or giving us up as too difficult and allowing us to be disobedient, our parents would begin by studying and mastering the will in themselves, for we acknowledge that no one can command who has not learned to obey. The

<sup>1</sup> Some of the causes of insanity are forcibly stated by Mr. Homer Folks, in the *American Review of Reviews*, May, 1911.



foundation of obedience is knowledge and acceptance of natural law. One learns to obey, not people, but the universe, the moral law. The universe speaks through instinct, through pain, remorse, doubt, desire, a thousand mental and physical reactions through which we are brought in contact with real life. If I learn the lesson through actual conduct I shall be able to give others the benefit of my experience. Hence it should be possible to aid the will in childhood to evolve into obedience and usefulness. For the will, striving through all the experiences of life, is the power that eventually enables us to attain. The difficulty usually is that our knowledge of the successive conditions does not equal the power that struggles and strives.

As we have before noted, the will makes its appearance as the central activity in the stream of consciousness, intimately allied with desire, receiving incentives from instinct, guided by the heart, and assuming progressive forms through our aspirations or ideals and the achievements of the intellect. At once a source of misery and of strength, the whole history of human character is involved in its actions and reactions. We are most likely to understand it by considering certain of its simpler phases, and then as we turn to its more complex life by taking care not to separate its contests and victories from the moral issues



in which the heart of human experience is involved. In some people, for example, the problem of the will is inseparably allied with an exceedingly sensitive temperament. On the surface this appears to be a question of weakness of will. Then there are those who are temperamentally positive, hence of strong will. The one appears to make too little of the will while the other makes too much. Yet self-assertion plays its part in both types. Then there is the question of the obstinate will, the problem of freedom, and of moral regeneration.

Looking first at the will on the side of its unruliness, we are constrained to acknowledge that, whether sensitive or strenuous, obstinate or weak, there is in us all a fairly large element of inertia bound up with this lump of clay. Most of us like to be waited on, and if we can command the resources we are not only pleased that others should serve us, but we intend to command as long as possible. When ill we are content to have the utmost made of our aches and pains, unless experience has taught us more than common wisdom. The wits of physicians and ministers of all schools are taxed to the utmost in the endeavour to arouse the selfish will. The problem of the arousing of the will is indeed the problem of human life.

Note, however, what happens in the homes of the poor where "necessity is the mother of inven-



tion," where the will must find a way to overcome fleshly inertia. Again, we have all heard instances of remarkable changes when, to save their own life or the life of another, it was necessary for people to rise from a bed of illness, rapidly dress, and drag a trunk out of a burning building, or exercise uncommon strength in a daring rescue. A yellow-fever patient in a southern hospital is reported to have overheard the attendant physician asking the nurse if he had given orders regarding the disposition of his body. Forthwith, this supposably dying man summoned the nurse to say with much emphasis that he was not through with his body yet, but would take care of it himself. Thus to be aroused in earnestness of will was to turn the tide of activity in favour of life at the critical juncture. Again, it was a woman of eighty who had a severe fall and was informed by the physician that she must lie still in bed six weeks before she could walk. This sterling New Englander at once replied, "Well, I won't." Inside of three weeks she was up and walking, ready to take a railway journey of ninety miles, and without subsequent ill-effects. I knew this woman well and her whole history was a record of similar triumphs. She was not rash, although sometimes called "headstrong." Married very young, she reared a family of five strong-minded children, did the housework until she was seventy-five, and in



every way exemplified the victorious will. When her time came to die at the age of eighty-eight, the decision to go appeared to be largely her own. At least, those who were with her said that she seemed to "hurry herself out of this life" because it was no longer possible for her to be in the household that was most congenial. However this may be, it is plain that the will in such a case has a deeply impressive history. Of such quality were those hardy ancestors of ours who reared the first homes on the shores of New England.

Such instances suggest the sober thought that we do not half exercise our volitional powers. Usually in the cases of extreme illness sometimes reported, when life appears to be hanging by a thread, the will to go would probably be followed by death, like the snapping of a cord. But we ordinarily hear about the will to remain, and the subsequent readjustment. The will to die may have prevailed in thousands of instances of which we know nothing. Possibly the will has power approaching that of the gospel statement in regard to taking up life and laying it down. If we were more calm, with more power over all the emotions, we might be able greatly to increase the scope of the will.

What happens when the will triumphs, as in the case of the elderly woman who rose from her bed the first day nature would permit? Evidently,



there was little inertia in this life of uncommon usefulness and power. It hardly need be said that she was a progressive, alert woman who always acted promptly, and who thus habitually brought her full powers into play. On occasion, it was but natural that she should have power to banish any ordinary illness, and in more serious instances to enter into full co-operation with nature.

In case of the sudden impetus to save life, or the shock produced by the physician who arouses an indulgent invalid into self-helpfulness, the impetus breaks through and overcomes the inertia, establishing a new centre of equilibrium. "Nothing venture, nothing have," is an old saying that applies here. If, when in doubt, oppressed by conflicting alternatives we put ourselves in motion, we are usually able to make a start, and thus gain sufficient headway to go on to success. If unwilling to make the initial effort, or if no favouring incident absorb the attention, we remain practically the same, mayhap inert for years. Yet, if we possessed more understanding of these matters, we might be able to rouse ourselves into activity even when the favouring incident is lacking. As rational beings, the will to act should follow the acceptance of the truth or the feeling that we ought.

What we call the "obstinate will" is as much in evidence here as the triumphant will. I knew



another elderly woman who was heard to confess when past threescore, conservative to the last degree, wrinkled, unhappy save when eating or when conversing with an old-time friend, that after her marriage she resolved that her husband never should manage her. This resolution, firmly held to throughout her married life, was made because she overheard her husband assure a friend that it was his intention to govern his wife. During the long life of tolerable affection and harmony that ensued she kept this determination with a persistency that was little softened by love, but which marked itself in her face and narrowed her life beyond measure. Her children were progressive, and indulged in any number of new ideas and methods against which she set her face with grim fidelity to the good old ways. The result was an increasing struggle which ceased only with her death, at the end of an earthly life shortened perhaps by ten years through this obstinate assertion of the will. It seems beyond human power in such cases to speak even the word of love which thrills the heart and enables the will to become constructive. There are people who, when their "minds are made up," as we say, never change, and we must approach with extreme care lest we make a false touch. They are not people of wide information, hence the lines of approach are exceedingly few. They possess the will but not



the enlightenment, the requisite strength of character yet not the means of growth. Hence habit accomplishes its most conservative work by encrusting them in a mass of crystallised opinions and convictions. Our general human attitude in regard to declining powers and old age makes it the more difficult to show that "it is never too late to mend."

Is it hard, do you say, that the second of these women should round out her days in wrinkled obstinacy simply because she rebelled in the beginning and then acquired the habit? Why not put the blame on the husband who loved her so little that he was bent on managing her, or on the parents who long before made so little of their child that at a marriageable age she had few intellectual resources? Stern in deepest truth is the law which thus spreads its power over a life-time. But look at the other picture, of the woman who faithfully met each opportunity, adapting her will to the promptings of nature, rising from her bed in triumphant exercise of the human spirit, working in cheerful service, strong in faith, progressive and free. For us who would triumph the way surely is clear.

No less instructive is the so-called weak will, a term that is sometimes misapplied, since what is lacking is not mental stamina but physical strength. In such a person's life there are usually interests



enough, but they have not been called into efficiency. Sometimes, there is an over-cautious desire to know precisely how a proposed undertaking will develop before a start is made, hence the favouring tide sweeps by unrecognised. Again, there is a mistaken idea of guidance, as if conscience or God were expected to tell precisely what we should do. This shirking of responsibility easily runs into the fatalistic assumption that there is but one course we can pursue, namely, the one we are driven into when an inner feeling impels us to act. Thus to surrender the prerogatives of the moral life is to grow weak at the point where we should be most strong. The corrective is found in the unmistakable fact that we stand in the face of alternatives, hence that even when we feel what we take to be an impulsion from God that relieves us of all responsibility we really make the alternative our own. The man who takes even the slight chances that offer and forges ahead, grows strong through successive acts of responsibility consciously chosen. By taking an alternative, or acting upon a resolution about as soon as made, he is able to co-ordinate his mental powers, hence grow in strength of will.

In relation to his family, the man with a so-called weak will is apt to assent too frequently, yield too much, hence even his affections become negative. When the individual who has long



yielded for the sake of harmony at last undertakes to be more assertive, the attempt is likely to be made in an unfortunate way, under the assumption that the will is a separate power to be independently affirmed. The result may be a second state worse than the first, when the weak will encounters a strong one which has long held sway.

Another way to put the matter is to say that the weak will has too many inhibitions. Hence the power that might be spent in action is devoted to checking alternatives that might plunge one into controversy or pain. The policy of delay weakens the will, in contrast with that strength of character which in other people enables a person to face the issues at once. Again, there is dread of the irrevocable, hence through irresoluteness and inability to make a provisional decision action is postponed until vacillation becomes a habit.<sup>1</sup> The will is also weakened through non-resistant receptivity, too great emphasis on silence, and negative self-sacrifice.

The resource is to look more deeply into the nature of the will. The weak-willed person is likely to prove as persistent and strong as any other when the habit of diffusiveness is overcome; but the persistency is expressed through gentleness, quiet confidence, the conviction that higher methods will triumph. This persistence in well-

<sup>1</sup> See James, *Psychology*, ii., 530.



doing may lead to a day when everything shall be plastic. For a person of this temper may learn easily and quietly the lesson which is so hard for the self-assertive individual, the lesson of obedience. The sensitivity which is a source of trouble during a long period of evolution in character may then be employed in the highest direction. The knowledge gained through quiet study will become more and more a power, analysis will clear the way where assertion could not, and the ways of wisdom will prevail. Thus in time the so-called weak will may prove unconquerable even in relation with the person who through autocratic assertiveness seemed to be master of the field. While the weak man is finding himself, building for the years, the strenuous one is preparing for his day of humiliation.

Thus in a measure the will is independent of temperament, and the real problem is one of use of will-power through wise co-ordination. The instances and types we have examined fail to confirm the popular notion that the will is an independent or separate power to be merely aroused or affirmed. Its assertion may lead to as much trouble as its diffusion through excessive restraint. It is more truly a power of adaptation that can be turned from apparent weakness or strength into real efficiency. Simply to attend, to observe details and combine them, is in a sense as truly to will as to



be obstinate. As co-ordinated knowledge increases there is less need for assertion, hence the will becomes more intelligent. Moral opportunities strengthen character so that simply to be devoted to an ideal is to grow. The will is also strengthened by persistent effort to think for oneself. To "invigorate the whole nature," as Carpenter points out, is to strengthen the will.<sup>1</sup> Hence there is every reason to regard the will in its relationship to the entire personality.

It is impossible to reduce all modes of expressing the will to a single type. Some people are naturally rebellious, cantankerous. Their way of taking life, by complaining and making objections at every turn, is fraught with misery for all concerned. Observe these when further along the pathway and you may find them breaking through the conservative line and making objection where objection is worth while, setting the world astir, and introducing reforms. In due course they become as adaptable as people of the other type, for love softens their wills, they become tolerant and charitable, and put their emotions to good use.

Representatives of the other type are usually long-suffering, while they are acquiring strength through endurance. Less conceited, they are not

<sup>1</sup> See *Mental Physiology*, p. 424; also, Jules Payot, *The Education of the Will*, Eng. trans., New York, Funk and Wagnalls, 1910.



heard of so soon, do not publish their merits abroad, and seldom push themselves forward. But when aroused they are often more quick to act than their self-assertive brothers. Fortune comes their way after a time and they are known as lucky people. Well for them if they realise that in the stillness of the will there is great power. Onlookers wonder how they are able to accomplish so much. One of the secrets is found in the fact that they wait for fruitions, using their energies effectively by steadily doing what is in their power, wasting no time over matters that cannot be changed.

Our volitions and beliefs are so intimately connected that we do not and cannot change our unfortunate attitudes of will while hampered by a doctrine such as pessimism, or weakened by invertebrate optimism. The will expresses the total mind as well as the whole character. A house divided against itself will find expression in a divided will. Men of varied types of character find opportunities for self-expression in numerous ways, all equally good. It is therefore futile to dogmatise. If the will needs to be restrained here, it needs to be called forth there. What arouses one man will have no effect on another.

In all men, however, the will is partly the power to make effort, although there is no independent "sense of effort." By sheer force of will for example, a man who is lacking in physical strength



may compel his organism to work when each hour of labour is painful. The second day the work may move off a bit more easily, while the second week there may be a fair degree of pleasure in the exercise. The third may find him stronger both in mind and body. The same persistence enables one to acquire a new occupation. In like manner people break through ruts and begin afresh amidst customs and beliefs that seem insuperable. On occasion one throws off fatigue in order to plunge in and help another who is more weary. On the whole, we like to think of the will as breaking its way in pioneer fashion, creating opportunities, saying "I can," while onlookers say, "You cannot." The limits of the will's triumph over circumstances have yet to be discovered. The inertia which sometimes nearly overwhelms us may well be regarded as a moral test for the will.

Nevertheless, merely to say, "I will," is sometimes insufficient. If we would really succeed we must choose between a spasmodic or impulsive expression of the will, and the endurance or resoluteness which considers the best means to the given end. For in reality, as we have noted in an earlier chapter, the will is not purely elemental. It supervenes on motions already in play through reflex actions and instincts, also on emotions that are habitual or are brought into action by the force of memory-images. Professor James points out that what



calls the will into play is not the inner push, "the consciousness of innervation," but the image or objective, the idea in which one's interest is absorbed. There is no doubt an anticipatory image, followed by the fiat that certain consequences shall become actual, but the idea of the desired end tends to become all-sufficient. Absence of any conflicting motive or motion is often the decisive consideration. "The immense majority of human decisions are decisions without effort."<sup>1</sup>

Always there are two or more sides to the case. The will, we have noted, functions every moment of conscious life; it is not a "faculty" that becomes quiescent when we are merely thinking, or while we are chiefly aware of the emotions and desires. The will is the man and the problem of its regeneration is the problem of the total salvation of the personality. The same person who on occasion triumphantly makes a road where no road led before, who valiantly faces opposition, or pleads for a lost cause, may in other connections be autocratic, domineering. Some people appear to believe the world is theirs to use as they will, at least they spend their time trying to act as if this were so. Well for the victim of this belief that experience compels us to acknowledge respects in which we are nothing and can do nothing.

It is well to look at this aspect of the case for a

<sup>1</sup> See James, *Psychology*, ii., 519-534.



moment. If at times the will can ride over circumstance, there are respects in which nothing in nature can be ignored. If with the radical individualist I undertake to be wholly independent of my fellows, I shall be compelled to learn the lesson of dependence at every turn. The theologians are usually ready to confirm this insignificance of the will, assuring us that all efficiency is vested in God, from whom comes not only the power but the grace that saves. Indeed, if we could believe a certain school of theologians, we should be compelled to say that the possession of even a slight will of our own is the prime trouble with us. Some appear eager to deprive us even of this, insisting that every knee shall bow in acknowledgment of authority. And if we do not then feel the force of our littleness, there is a school of moralists ready to show that the possession of freedom is by no means creditable, since real freedom consists, not in doing what we wish, but in complete obedience to the law of righteousness. To be free, we are further assured, is not to create the alternatives of our moral consciousness, for these are supplied by experience; what we are free to do is simply to drop back in the scale, ceasing for the time to be persons. Hence the highest spiritual example voices itself in the prayer, "Not my will but thine be done," and always qualifies any request by adding, "nevertheless, if it be thy



will." Then the poet, voicing the great mystery sings,

Our wills are ours, we know not how,  
Our wills are ours to make them thine.

The new psychology lowers the claims of the will as already indicated, by pointing out that the will is to a considerable extent merely a power to pay attention supervening upon activities already in motion, while the organism with its system of habits accomplishes the work. This is seen in physical modes of behaviour in which the will does nothing more than issue the mere fiat, or give heed to the goal to be attained. The will in itself is powerless to move even a muscle, to touch an organ or even a nerve. In this respect it is limited to local activity corresponding to the responses of the brain. When habits have been acquired the will does not even make sensible effort. In case of an unusually successful effort, as when a man rises from a bed of illness to save his life, or through sudden determination to live, we must presuppose favouring conditions splendidly taken advantage of at the most fortunate moment. Again, it may be that higher resources are drawn upon at the right instant. It is well to narrow matters to this fine point, since we need not then exhaust ourselves by straining against



insuperable odds or by drawing upon our reserves when the supply does not warrant the effort.

When we have faced completely around the horizon, we may stand erect once for all. We begin as children, self-assertive in high degree, but presently find wise ways to the ends which children cannot attain. Flattened to earth by sheer failures, we at length find it far from disappointing that we cannot rouse the will and move forth to victory in just our way. Experience gradually teaches us that all accomplishment is co-operative, involving the observance of essential conditions. But in the economy of nature it suffices that we possess power at the centre. To have the power to attend is enough to make one obstinate for a life-time, to insure optimism, or success, provided it be supported by a character that expresses itself in this direction. Narrowed to the limit, and driven into the secret recesses of its subjective stronghold, the will is still king.

It would be deadening to be thinking all the while of the theological truth that there is only one real power. Having accepted the truth in humble submissiveness, we ordinarily act as though we could accomplish anything in line with our desires. I must believe in myself to become even what the most sternly authoritative God would have me become. I am potentially a master, and hence I regard as means to my end whatever I encounter



by way of opposition, discouragement, adverse criticism, and defeat. In this sense the whole world exists for my education. My will is seen in what it does, not in what it cannot do.

The theologians who disparage the will to the extreme limit forget that they deem man capable of accepting the right creed, thinking out the true theology, and realising the ideals of righteousness. The will cannot be wholly denied with one breath and taken back with the next. To have power to be a person or to cease to be moral is enough. The will in itself is relatively dispassionate, like a ready servant. Human sinfulness cannot be attributed to the will alone. As an activity ready to carry out any prompting that is not inhibited, the will is capable of being regenerated if the personality is purified. The will shares, it does not own power. It may work together with God, in contrast with the assertiveness that causes friction. The consciousness that we may thus share lifts the soul, enlarging the sphere of interests and revealing incentives beyond measure. We appear to have been surrounded all the while by treasures which we sought without eyes to see them. The opportunities that are revealed under our gaze surpass even our fondest hopes.

Thus the victorious will is discovered through insight into the self as a whole. In sheer self-assertion the will counts for little. We lack power to



inhibit even a tooth-ache, to change a single hair white or black. To put ourselves in life's way is to find ourselves knocked about and trampled upon. That phase of the self which likes to be petted is vain indeed. We did not make ourselves, we did not choose our parents, nor can we scarcely will not to be. Yet every negation becomes positive when we turn about face. The weakest moment in the will's history may be the moment of transition into strength. In that moment we may most truly know the love of God since we find that we are not cast off despite our folly and our sin. That which I most eagerly wanted to be while vainly self-assertive I can indeed become, through unison with the immanent Life which all the while sought to make me this self of my profoundest desire.

The will in brief is that exercise of our nature which is capable of all varieties of response, from mere assent to the most heroic struggle, or the last victory over selfishness. Sometimes we merely give way when appetite insists, through sheer indulgence, lassitude, fatigue, and ennui. Again, we yield because of the persuasions of a friend. In calm moments we listen in reverent reflectiveness, realising that each thought registers a creative fiat. On occasion, we start forth in the full vigour of action like a Viking. Truly, we have great power, for when an idea strikes home, the die is cast in an instant, and the response begins. All we



need is knowledge to show when to make the venture.

Our discussion shows that concentration is part of the successful will, and concentration we know is acquired when we exercise our powers steadily in one direction. Hence the significance of the psychological discovery that each word of assent, each item, motive, or argument may have its effect. Will is the activity that maintains or is maintained by the given direction, the central interest or prevailing love, growing cumulatively. Love is not precisely the same as will, yet where the heart is gathered there concentration occurs. We are not fully persuaded until the heart changes, but with the change the new equilibrium of will ensues.

This centrality of the will is also seen in relation to beliefs and modes of reasoning. We are constrained to acknowledge that it is the will that underlies all dogmatism, all resistance to new ways of thinking. The "will to believe" mars as well as makes us. In the guise of loyalty to a friend, a cause, or an institution, this will is one of the noblest possessions, intimately allied with faith. Again, we voluntarily select certain interests or ideals in order to stand for something in the world. Thus it is that we attain unity, become consistent, moral, strong. But in other connections it is this will to believe that is our intellectual undoing.



Thus we set our private thought over against universal truth, progress, and freedom, inhibiting the powers of reason, conservatively holding to a narrow creed. Stronger in will than in the power to reason, many of us thereby impede our growth for years. Prejudice and emotion come to the support of the will, and friends of similar persuasion lend their ready influence. Finally fear adds its subtle power, through the suspicion that to yield to reason is to be lost.

Yet if willing to admit this rebellion of the will we make immediate headway, and with the dawning of a liberal spirit the day of conservatism begins to pass. Thus the intellectual victory of the will is much like the moral and spiritual triumph. The whole process of regeneration, let us say, is the acknowledgment of the order or law that is above us. We are truly strong when we think, act, accord our life with the universal; all our woe is due to the assertion of the private will as if it were independent or separate. There is a universal order which seeks to express itself through the body as health, through reason as sanity and truth, through conduct as righteousness. The meaning of suffering is that we shall attain health, the significance of error is that it may be overcome by truth, and the meaning of evil that it shall be overcome by good. The cosmos forces home these central lessons until we learn them, and the



uprightness of the will begins with their acceptance. The transmutation from lower to higher begins with the change at the centre whereby the direction of the will is made right.

This is not acceptance through resignation but through upliftment into freedom. Resignation would imply not only fatalism but subserviency to habit. Deeper insight into the will shows that habits may be acquired at any time by concentration upon ideals. Our dispositions are less stable than we think. The inner stream which we call consciousness ever presents new opportunities. Even conservatism must strengthen its habits or be overcome, and the obstinate will must continually have persons against whom to set its face. We can make steady headway by dwelling upon the desired end and letting other mental tendencies and habits die for want of new subject-matter. Very much depends upon the "I-can attitude." Hence persistent adjustment is the word.

The task of the day is already set, you complain, and life must be devoted to earning our living, and maintaining the forms of society; other men and women we would like to be but cannot. Yes, the present task is given but not our manner of taking it. The foregoing inquiry has shown that the will manifests its power little by little, sometimes by mere assent. If it gathers headway so as to pass a milestone this progress is made by almost insen-



sible advances. Interspersed between the moments and hours of the busiest day man ever lived it is possible to put moments of quietude and reflection which shall help to refashion us in ideal forms. We introspect in vain when we look for a mighty power to accomplish the great work suddenly. That is the vain desire of the shirking nature in us that wants to blame some one else and be free from responsibility. Look more carefully and you find an opening into the realm of accomplishment.

The will, we have seen, is not merely rebellious or co-operative but also inhibitory. At that wonderful little centre where alternatives arise there comes with the temptation the way of escape; with the sarcasm, prejudice, or bitterness, the power to check it. Inhibit an impulse, fear, or rebellious mood at the beginning, and you have great power over it. Acquire a sufficient number of inhibitions in favour of a moral standard and virtue becomes a habit. Obstinacy will yield to "this steady advance of the inhibitory power, self-assertion changes into constructivity through its influence, and the weak will becomes strong. Inhibition in turn becomes the basis of profounder control, and control at the centre means mastery throughout. The obstinate will is the one that steadily inhibits at the wrong point. The weak will needs to co-ordinate its inhibitions. The hesi-



tant will must learn to plunge in. A good resolution is worth while if you take the first opportunity to carry it into execution by checking the impulses, habits, emotions, or beliefs which impede by forcibly launching the new determination. What is needed is an approachable point, an opportunity for a flank movement.

Inhibition becomes progressively self-operative, as it were, in proportion as the general tone of the character improves and the ways become established in favour of the ideal. Thus we are led to state the case in more intellectual terms. It does not follow that enlightenment means immediate response in conduct, but on the whole the tendency of rational evolution is that way. The unruly will may be the trouble with us in the beginning, and it may be well for the moralists to emphasise the fact that "to err is human." But for the enlightened there is an esoteric doctrine. Wilfulness in all its forms is essentially wrong emphasis or disorder, and what is needed is a co-ordinating ideal which will bring consistency to the fore. There is no element of obstinacy or responsiveness that cannot be turned to account. With the development of order at the centre, there is less need of the inhibitory function of the will. Poise or balance takes the place of the former conflict between passions and emotions, reason prevails. Hence the growth of character becomes



less a matter of will and more one of enlightenment. The interferences of the will become less frequent, and the ideal becomes a steadily pursued purpose.

Thus instead of the ordinary conception of the will as an independent faculty or separate power to be exerted, as if it could stand apart and control the rest, or as if it alone were unruly, we have dwelt on various tendencies of character and phases of mental life. The will is not the first phase of mental life to appear, nor is it elemental. Supervening upon instincts, passions, emotions, and desires, it appears under the form of effort, assent, concentration, co-ordination, inhibition, interest, attention. It cannot be understood apart from the daily experiences which give it subject-matter and incentives, or apart from the character which it expresses. It is akin to desire at first, and manifests itself in unruliness or obstinacy, but under the guise of interest can be better understood in intellectual terms as human development goes on. He who would grow in power of will must not merely meet the opportunities that strengthen character, and increase the sense of responsibility but co-ordinate the desires that tend to favour the ideal or purpose, letting the others lapse through disuse. The most important conclusion at which we have arrived is the acceptance of Professor James's theory that it is the



idea or objective which calls the will into power. This leaves us free to concentrate on the central purpose or interest of life, and on the imagery which strengthens its hold upon us. We need not then give so much attention to primitive emotions, for the significant emotion is the prevailing love, the ruling passion. If this makes for order, fulness of life, service, we may give more thought to the deeds and ideas that develop it through successive acts of attention. If it be unregenerate, selfish, so that we pursue ends for personal gain, coerce and manage others, check ideas and methods that tend to secure freedom and progress, why then we know where to begin radical reform. We are collections of tendencies rather than a unit. The will is the greatest unifying power. What we need is a love or purpose that inspires consistency. Thus the efficient will is a ready servant of the character that has become stable, the heart that is serene, the mind that is composed.



## CHAPTER IX

### SUCCESS

A FEW years ago word was sent from Peking that it was the intention of the Chinese Empire to stamp out opium, root and branch. This endeavour to prohibit the use of the drug in a land of 400,000,000 inhabitants is equivalent, as one writer remarked, to the endeavour to stop the use of alcohol in five countries, each with a population equal to that of the United States. The significant feature of the plan as thus announced is its thoroughness. Without sentimentality, and without attempting more at a time than human nature can accomplish, the authorities decreed that ten years should be allowed for the change. Hence full allowances were made for the laws of habit, and the weaknesses of human nature; also for the property in invested interests, and the economic principle of supply and demand. The demand is attributed to the morbid craving of the smoker for his drug. The supply comes from the cultivation of the poppy from which the opium is extracted. Hence the first step is taken with the



decree that not an acre of new land in China shall be devoted to the cultivation of the poppy. All the soil under cultivation for this crop must be reduced one-tenth each year, under penalty of confiscation. That is to say, at the end of the ten-year limit not an acre of poppy-growing soil will be left in China. Meanwhile, through treaties and by other means the nations that deal in opium will be besought to stop the export of opium altogether within the ten years. The edict also forbids any one to begin the use of opium, and all who are addicted to the habit must be registered, only those registered being permitted to buy the drug. Persons over sixty years of age are not dealt with so severely, but all others must decrease the amount twenty per cent. annually. A further recognition of the laws of habit is shown by the command to physicians to distribute medicines serving as antidotes to the habit. Teachers, scholars, soldiers and sailors are required to abandon the habit in three months. Anti-opium societies are everywhere to be established to spread the propaganda.

Consider what reforms could be accomplished in the world if all people should begin by giving such thorough recognition to the enemy to be conquered, the conditions involved, the habits implied. If in China with its reverence for authority and custom such changes can be brought about, to be followed by other reforms no less radical, as the



newspapers from time to time inform us, why could we not expect any sort of reconstruction from the progressive peoples of the globe? It is this kind of preparation for success that the modern movement in behalf of efficiency calls for. We have had this standard in mind in pleading throughout this book for recognition of all the forces at work in the human organism that are likely to be in any way influential. The man who studies his resources in this fashion cannot fail or need not if he cares to win. It may be well to expect improvement from the first, rather than to set limits in view of all that must be conquered. Nevertheless, the majority of us waste a great amount of energy by rushing ahead before we know whither we are going or what road will take us there. He who knows the whole field can rest with the assurance of a general who understands the enemy he intends to conquer on the morrow through adroit moves at the right moment.

The present is becoming the age of the science of success, now that the day of mere precepts and fragmentary schemes is passing. If "nothing succeeds like success," we should be able to demonstrate that this promise applies to the whole of life. For we have grown weary of merely external success, at least many of us are weary, and we refuse any longer to identify success with the amassing of great wealth. It is time now to dwell



on the conditions that make for success as the fruition of the whole of life. This need not mean the neglect of practical considerations. It is understood that "the labourer is worthy of his hire." But it is equally clear that an enterprise is no less successful merely because it brings money. The luxuriously wealthy may still cherish the notion that money can purchase whatever life holds of value. Meanwhile, it is plain to any number of others that success is purchasable only in terms of wisdom, conduct, character. This implies the conviction that life exists for a certain purpose, that there are laws which secure success even though external and financial conditions be adverse.

In the foregoing chapters we have been considering the elements of efficiency from the point of view of mental principles. What remains is to bring together certain of these elements so as to show their bearing on success through character. The most important of these psychological considerations turn on the acceptance of qualitative as opposed to merely quantitative values. It is not the mere time we spend, the amount of work we do, but the attention we give to details, the concentration through which we bring many means to bear on one end, the incentive which enlists our energy in full measure. These values we have summarised more explicitly under the head of the



will. The efficient life is in brief the right use of the will, with all that this power implies, as the activity which co-ordinates, which lifts the desires, develops character, and ascends to the level of thought. What we need is more knowledge of the conditions under which this ascending effort of mental evolution meets the opportunities of life from day to day.

By the term "life" we mean the collection of instincts, feelings, and tendencies, which well into consciousness afresh each day. This "stream of tendency" is not like a listless river flowing so slowly that we cannot tell whither it is moving. Each day reveals not merely the habitual promptings which lead us to arise at about the same hour, to dress, eat the morning meal, and go about our tasks. It requires very little self-consciousness to show that we are aware of strivings, dissatisfactions, and aspirations. When the best has been said in favour of our theories and creeds, the impressive fact remains that life is richer than theory, teaches above creeds. Those of us who philosophise strive to bring our ideas up to the level of the fulness of life. But life like a flood overflows the bounds we set for it. Hence we need to make allowances, prepared to plunge in, not always knowing whither the current shall carry us.

Our situation in brief is probably this: Our habits, beliefs, customary reactions to environ-



ment and vocational conditions, show what we have been, what forces have operated to bring us where we are. We cannot rightfully complain that we are thus situated, for there has been perfect correspondence between what we were and what these forces brought to us. But this ever-welling stream of life which quickens restless longing within us also shows what we shall presently be, or what we may become if it find us responsive. Desire is not merely indeterminate potentiality, but in its higher phases is like the shadow that forecasts the coming event. Beneath the strivings that give us our pains, the emotions that exhaust our forces, and the conflicts that make us well-nigh discouraged, there is this steady flow of life towards the ideal. We never rightly judge ourselves when we regard the processes merely. Truly to see is to behold what we may presently become. Truly to respond is to take the new prompting which life reveals to-day and ride over the top of the wave.

Two points of adaptation are important if we would move with this incoming stream. We need a practical method of adjustment, and we need to carry on the life of reflection. Since "conduct is three-fourths of life," the first essential is responsiveness to the tendencies that send us forth to action, that keep us alive, expressive, spontaneous, free, and that make us open to brotherly love.



If I each day go forth in an attitude of joy and thanksgiving, eager to manifest more love, to be more considerate and gentle, I shall go far towards the attainment of fidelity to life. But, in the second place, it is also important to carry on a study of life as it passes, noting its laws, observing its comings and goings in the conduct of men. If I carry this additional consciousness, I shall all the while find incidents that throw light on life's pathway, and enable me to aid my fellowmen. Moreover, the life of thought is a resource which lifts us above material circumstance, above routine and all littleness.

One's morning thought is naturally retrospective in a measure, that the past may reveal its lessons, and that one may renew ideals in the light of past successes. Yet what is chiefly called for is an attitude of openness or receptivity, as if one for the moment had no idea whither life might lead during the day. This attitude of listening forth-with gives place to the more active consciousness which a new incentive reveals, or it leads to the prompting to rise with energy and set about the work of the day. The day that might have been one of depressing servitude to the tasks at hand, the problems that are not solved, the burdens which must be carried for others, or the people to whom one cannot easily adapt oneself, may be transfigured by a consciousness which turns every



hour to productive account. We are not yet in a respectable frame of mind if we rise to our duty as "the same old grind," declaring that "the game is not worth the candle." The resolve to make the day just a bit happier for some one may be enough to turn the tide.

To lead a successful life is thus to be intellectually and morally productive. The unsuccessful person is one who remains in bondage to inheritance, habit, environment, a prisoner of circumstance and processes. We are born to succeed, and we have the power to learn the meaning of failure. But it is possible to remain in subserviency to the processes of success for a very long time, not knowing that they are processes. Hence the importance of sounding all these matters.

"To him that hath shall be given," is doubtless the first principle. As reactive beings, conditioned for work, we must make effort, control the brain more successfully, co-ordinate our movements, master our thoughts, endeavour to advance a step in the face of forces that hold us back.

It is far easier simply to rise without thinking. Every failure, every moment of subserviency or defeat, is an opportunity to test the power we bear within us to respond, to arise and to create afresh. It is never failure itself that is the trouble with us, as a recent writer has said, "it is the effect that the failure has on us."



The successful man valiantly faces the present circumstances, the obstacle to be conquered, the trait in himself that must be overcome. Evasiveness is not mere weakness and procrastination, it is playing with the inevitable. He who succeeds acknowledges where he stands, knows what he can do in the light of what he has done, what is not in his power now, but also knows that he cannot afford to fail in the present undertaking. He does not assert his power in general, or try to conquer many things at once, but opens wide the gates of power in the direction in which he should succeed to-day. Thus the energy that might be checked if he dwelt on what he could not do is concentrated upon the opportunity of the hour.

The first essential is to set oneself in motion in a given direction. We have seen how this principle works in the case of the habit of swimming or skating, acquired long after the initial efforts were made; also in the case of the good resolution which is confidently made and as confidently dismissed to do its work. Once in motion in such a way that the beginnings of a habit are established, we tend to keep in motion unless impeded by stronger influences. Hence it is as necessary to know the possible inhibitions of our unregeneracy as to make wise effort at the right time. But it is no less important to know when to stop. As Carpenter



says, "When all the considerations which ought to be taken into account have been brought fully before the mind, it is far better to leave them to *arrange themselves*, by turning the conscious activity of the mind into some other direction, or by giving it complete repose."<sup>1</sup> It is part of the art of life to know when to stop pressing a matter, to avoid dwelling too long in one direction of mind. Time settles many matters which persistent thought could not solve. On the other hand, there are occasions when to push through by downright effort is the only wise course.

Our investigation has shown that in all mental processes there are less-conscious phases, and phases of mentality that are almost unconscious. Much of our thinking is a half-conscious brooding over ideas. Again, it is like firing at a mark, the idea aimed at being the central point of attention which calls forth the energies in that direction. The idea, at first a mere hint, strikes home, absorbs my attention, and presently I find myself thinking about that subject in full vigour, collecting under one head whatever I know about it, and arriving at new conclusions.

Half the art of mental life is expressible in terms of training, inhibition, control; the other half in terms of adaptation to the laws and conditions

<sup>1</sup> Carpenter quotes capital instances in support of this view, *Mental Phys.*, pp. 483, 533-4.



that make sure the desired end. If the desired incentive be not strong enough to carry the day, we may make it so by stratagem, as in the case of the man who overcame the habit of smoking and drinking by quietly resolving to do so when the right time should come. If the obstacle be outside of ourselves we must study the conditions, seeking lines of least or of successful resistance, "then strike while the iron is hot."

If willing to await occasions, the self-reliant man is no less free to seek advice from every quarter, since he does not over-estimate his own judgment. This implies the conclusion that any prompting, instinct, suggestion, clue, or message, may be regarded as "guidance." That is, it may be reacted upon and turned to account, becoming guidance for the one who assumes the responsibility of accepting it. Thus even a doubt may be deemed a guidance if by reflecting upon it one learns what not to do, while a temptation may serve as an additional incentive to success. The prohibitions and restraints of one's nature are thus either guidances that serve as reminders, or signs of conservatism yet to be conquered. "A word to the wise is sufficient." Some of the profoundest statements ever made appear to be merely passing remarks until their import is seen. The wise do not often advertise their knowledge, but express incidentally the convictions or insights of a life-



time. Likewise the deepest guidance of one's conscience may be so gently whispered that it offers no restraint at all. A revelation from heaven would be such only for him who should know the signs.

If you would emulate the wise in these matters, seek your own impressions first, think the thing out if you can; then when fairly in motion call forth the judgment of others by way of contrast and criticism. When you begin to seek light in the desired direction, send out your thought and note the response of conscience on your part, give scope to the imagination, let your mind play upon the plan for awhile; and then turn to something else for a number of hours. Meanwhile, your mind will have time to bring out of its depths whatever may tend to conflict with or support it. If temperamentally subjective, seek the company of people who are absorbed in doing objective things, or attend a social gathering in which the inner life counts for naught. If little given to introspection, seek those who are theoretical and subjective. In either case, give your mind time to collect the scattered impressions in the light of a sufficient perspective. The plan once considered and then dropped, but which forthwith forces itself on the attention, is likely to have meaning. In the case of vitally important matters, it is desirable to await a conviction so strong that one is



sure the course in question is the one above all others to be pursued. For example, in choosing a vocation, launching a new business enterprise, forming a partnership, or planning to co-operate with new associates. Some of us are temperamentally adapted to work with others, or with people of certain types, while others can best work independently. All these relationships can be tested in many ways besides sitting down to consider the bare facts with the hope that one can at once proceed to conclusions.

On the other hand, there are matters on which it is well not to deliberate too long. Some of the firmest friendships are formed quickly. Sometimes the man of affairs who makes the sudden venture is the one who finds the surest road to success. To test a plan by making a tentative beginning is often better than to test it in imagination. The first move may show that it is wrong or that it is right.

Another principle that makes for success may be briefly called enterprise. First get a thing in motion then follow it up. This is as necessary in the higher walks of life as in the world of trade. In the commercial world, persistent and skilful advertising associated with a name that takes, a trade-mark or picture that appears wherever the goods in question are mentioned, summarises the psychology of success. In the personal world



a man who fails to keep himself before the public in the right way may be as quickly forgotten as an article that is renamed, or is no longer advertised. In the educational world everything depends upon the frequent and thorough reviews which instil desired ideas in the pupil's mind. In the moral life everything depends on continued effort, vigilance, the gradual acquisition of power through unflinching persistence. The same law is no less true of religion, for even prayer and worship lose their power unless habitual, and the very name of God ceases to have influence for those who do not renew the associations that gave it efficiency. We know all this, when reminded, but we seldom realise that a principle of great consequence is implied.

In the biological world this is known as the law of use and disuse. Even our organs and functions grow weak unless steadily exercised. All evolutionary attainments are gradually made through persistence in a direction where habit counts or where it is a question of imitation. With the cessation of effort decline sets in, and the favourable variation or association is lost. Life never stands still. Likewise in the realm of conduct, of art and science, whatever is successful is steadily maintained. The great pianist who practises eight hours a day in order to keep up to the standard acquired through many years of work, well exemplifies the law. Psychologically speaking, this



is the law of attention. If you would grow in knowledge and command of a subject, give careful attention to its details, analysing and subdividing until you attain mastery. If you would overcome an undesirable tendency, do not pay heed to it, do not express it, but attend to the line of thought or conduct which you wish to substitute for it.

A man who could truly say of himself that he succeeded in everything he undertook, traced this mastery to a habit formed early in youth of observing everywhere he went. Deprived of many educational opportunities which others enjoy, he always kept his eyes open for details. When watching a freight-train, for example, his mind did not merely receive a general impression of browns; he noticed the numbers on the cars, the initials that indicated the names of the railways, thereby gaining data which led to knowledge of the great railroads of the country. In the city he observed the numbers as well as the signs on the street-cars, the location of fire-alarm boxes and fire-apparatus, and a thousand other details which the majority pass unnoticed. In due time the powers of attention thus fostered turned in other directions, always with the minuteness and thoroughness which this habit had enabled him to acquire. It hardly need be added that this man always kept his direction in a strange city as well



as in a forest, was always able to return where he had been before, seldom found it necessary to inquire the way, and as a habit investigated and thought for himself before questioning others. He also knew what he knew, what he merely believed, and where he stood in all respects. To that extent at least he realised one of the ideals of the educated man.

Observe the inefficient people you meet and you will find abundant illustration of the law of disuse. Here is a person, for instance, who for nearly thirty years has made indexes for deeds in a county court-house. Unable to do anything else because untrained, this person long ago mastered the vocation in question, but without providing an outlet for the energies not therein employed. Impulsive, emotional, she has little command over her thoughts, but describes her mind as "a mere brain with flitting ideas." She has power that would have made her efficient in several directions, and a love of knowledge which called for thorough intellectual training. The mental powers which might have been put to use now exhaust themselves in chaotic impulses and emotions which make their possessor a slave to fear. The moral in her case is, Begin early to cultivate your powers systematically, have an avocation, and see to it that abundant opportunities are provided for all your energy; otherwise the wear



and tear of nervous habit will throw the intellectual life out of use.

One frequently meets people who have reached middle life without even acquiring a vocation, although they possess good minds and are capable of highly efficient service. Sometimes this is due to the fact that necessity never compelled them to work for a livelihood, to do things "on time," or in any way break from the life of self-gratifying desire. Again, it is traceable in part to a negative goodness that has never been tested by the severer experiences of life. In the absence of these maturing experiences, such a one usually remains youthfully innocent. The temperamental interest calls for wide acquaintance with the world, for thorough knowledge made possible through excellent intellectual training. Undeveloped in these directions, such a person moves in a small sphere, lacking in initiatives, dependent on others, even when in the presence of desired objects which like prominently displayed signs escape inattentive eyes. Hence the intellectuality which might have been productive is centred upon the inner life, the preservation in minute detail of bodily welfare and all that pertains to the emotions. Such a person is usually obstinate, full of prejudices, and in later life is given to pettiness of various sorts. The moral in such cases is not merely intellectual, but points to the imperative necessity of



breaking free from self-complacent ease into a mode of life which tends to overcome subserviency to habit, to the senses and the brain. The man who though untutored in things intellectual has had varied experiences which foster manliness is far more advanced in actual development.

Such cases are typical of those who endeavour to be spiritual in a supernatural sense before they have even acquired the command over the body which life in this world ordinarily brings. Again, there are those who through lack of purpose have so little outlet for their energies that the power which would make them intellectually productive is spent in card-playing, in small talk, and nervous self-centredness. Others are inefficient because in their endeavour to be broad, tolerant, and sympathetic they do not hold firmly enough to any one creed to master it. There are also those who live too much with one sex, one family, one social group, or in one town. Deadly sameness is thus as detrimental as its opposite.

But it is not alone through the deficiencies of early training and limited relationships with the world that human energy plays mischief through disuse. Sometimes it is the person of decided ability and of good education who exemplifies the law. There is, for example, inordinate ambition due to pent-up energy and a perpetual striving to attain. Again, it is a subjective individual who is



open to many influences, who gives too much heed to advice, is too free and pliable. Or, it is an over-theoretical individual whose active life is inhibited by doctrinal analyses that are never ended. The saddest case is that of the woman whose affections are checked by absorption in the affairs of the commercial world.

The successful types of men and women are not by any means limited to those who are objectively enterprising. Here is one, for instance, who is calmly reflective even when in company. He does not care to talk much, but delights in bringing men and women of quality together that he may hear them converse on subjects that are worth while. He is a man of wide information and acquaintance, with many points of contact. Essentially of the judicial type, he is in every way as efficient as people of the impulsive sort. One of this type is likely to exemplify more of the elements of success than the person who is objectively aggressive. He begins as he can hold out, keeping steadily at his work day by day. When he rests he really rests, and if he spends a few weeks in the country selects the sort of recreation that is of genuine value. In short, he knows how to get full worth from the opportunities at hand.

The successful man not only rises above routine, but is able to turn supposedly disagreeable tasks to account. Here is one, for instance, who has



moved the household goods many times, and has learned to make the moving-time profitable. Regarding the activities of packing, moving, and settling as an avocation, he plans a little more carefully each time, endeavouring to develop a system, secure more order. He then turns to his regular work refreshed and with renewed incentives. The same is true of a man who has learned to distribute his vacations throughout the summer by rising an hour earlier, walking to his business, and devoting time en route to the study of scientific books. The change was not made through necessity, but because a mere vacation seemed profitless. In this way he has acquired a fund of information outside the world of affairs.

Another man, a hale and hearty Vermonter, attributes a large part of his success to the lifelong habit of walking in the country, not as a mere exercise but as a means of throwing off whatever illness he may have found himself falling into, also depressing and other mental states or moods that tended to interfere with his normal life. His one resource is to "walk it off."

If the successful man is one who takes the long look ahead, he is also one who for the most part lives in the present. When inclined to be disheartened, he cuts loose from the past as with a knife, and begins again. Thus to live is to realise that there is little reason in the immediate present



for distress, discouragement, or anxiety. For the downcast mood was probably due to an accumulation of fatigues and depressions, the cure for which is rest, or a complete change. If angry, to hold still in the present is to find that the occasion for the anger has passed. If anxious, one can decide upon a course that is wise, hence dismiss the tribulation for the time. If ill, one will naturally do in the present that which will secure a return to health in the near future.

It is interesting to find highly successful men summarising these matters in terms of their own experience. One of the ablest railroad men in the United States, about to retire from active work at sixty-five, declares that "There is no genius. It's hard work. The world belongs to the young man. I am going to retire because I want to live. A man must be possessed by his work and be able to manage it." This is apparently a confession that he himself did not wholly succeed in working and living too. Nevertheless, he avoided the extremes to which some go. There is a wealth of argument in his statement that "Thinking in bed killed Harriman. He worked all day and thought out his problems at night."<sup>1</sup>

Again, it is a man of unusual power who points the way for those who have energy but do not use

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from Mr. J. C. Stubbs, in *The World's Work*, June, 1911.



it to the full. In an address on efficiency in Chicago ex-President Roosevelt is quoted as saying:

It has always seemed to me in life there are two ways of achieving success, or for that matter, achieving what is commonly called greatness. One is to do that which can only be done by the man of exceptional and extraordinary abilities. Of course this means that only this one man can do it, and it is a very rare kind of success or greatness. The other is to do that which many men could do, but which, as a matter of fact, none of them actually does. This is the ordinary kind of success or greatness. Nobody but one of the world's rare geniuses could have written the Gettysburg speech, or the second inaugural, or met, as Lincoln met, the awful crisis of the Civil War. But most of us *can* do the ordinary things, which, however, most of us do *not* do. Any fairly hardy and healthy man can do what I have done in hunting and ranching if only he really wishes to, and will take the pains and trouble, and at the same time use common sense. Any one who chose could lead the kind of life I have led . . . and by "choosing," I of course mean choosing to exercise in advance the requisite industry, judgment, and foresight, none of them to any extraordinary degree. . . .<sup>1</sup>

To say all this is to acknowledge that the successful man is a person of character. Apparently this means the sad fact that people differ in capacity,

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *System*, June, 1911.



hence that success in marked degree is only for those who are born with great brain-power. But the foregoing discussions have led us to take a different view, and have brought us in sight of a number of principles which are of great consequence in the formation and strengthening of character. What we so often call character, that is, "the innate power" which because transmitted we take to be immutable, is not by any means single. Nor is it necessarily a fixed quantity. It would be more correct to say that we start life with an assemblage of traits and tendencies which we divide into two groups after a time, those that are undesirable, with which we refuse to identify the self, and those that we will to make more truly our own. We are apt to forget that it is not what is given us but what we work for that is of value. So-called character is regarded by the man who truly knows himself as the resistance offered by his lower nature or disposition, of value chiefly because it calls him forth in creative self-development. A man's disposition may indeed be desirable, but it becomes permanently identified with himself only in case he wills to make it so. The great writer who declared that he had been four different persons in the course of his long life, tacitly confessed that there had also been a fifth, namely, the one that knew and accepted parts of these in favour of the deeper selfhood which lived on.



It would be a strain upon the term to call our supposably innate character "subconscious." Unconscious it no doubt is in part, since we do not know what manner of men we are until experience calls our traits of character into expression. But some of these are merely physical tendencies, not in any sense subconscious until called into expression and first made conscious. Others imply the notion that we have wonderful powers on which we can rely when all else fails, as if great stores of wisdom were locked within our "infallible intuitions." This notion is dispelled with the criticism which we have passed on the whole idea of the subconscious. What remains can be more intelligently examined under other terms.

We were unable to accept the popular notion now widely prevalent that the self lies below the threshold of consciousness, for it is when the will is in full action that a man is most truly himself. He who sees the meaning of this conclusion realises the truth of our argument that character strictly speaking begins with the will's reactions upon experience in the light of instinctive and other habitual responses of the entire organism. Out of the various desires, emotions, memory-images, and impulses which well up within us we begin to select those that fulfil our purpose in life, hence we lay the foundations of character. This mental co-ordination is indeed partly determined by our



education, environment, and vocation. Yet the time comes when we either break with our past or accept it for the most part because it tends to fulfil our idea.

Every one of us is aware of divisions within the self, and these in extreme cases involve split-off consciousness which for the time is like another personality. But this does not prove that there are actually two or more men within us. The resource is to follow the principle outlined in our study of mental co-ordination, namely, elimination of undesirable phases of the self, and the welding of desirable tendencies into a single consistent character through steady concentration on a line of work that is worth while. In a sense we are all in process of becoming self-consistent. It is purpose, a work to do that enlists all our activities, which calls us into unity. People who have no purpose in life are mere collections of possibilities. It is an inspiration to realise that character is to a considerable degree what we create out of such a collection by meeting opposition, overcoming obstacles, mastering our disposition, steadily working towards the goal of our highest aspirations. For we need not be troubled by the unruliness which rises into expression to test our strength. Nor need we in any way identify what we will to be with the lower selfhood.

It might be contended that the person with a



weak will, like the victim of divided personality, really has no will at all. This may be true from the point of view of a noble standard of self-consistency. But to insist on this point would be to forget the important distinction on which we have insisted, that disposition is not the same as character. A man of yielding, receptive disposition does indeed appear to be without a will during the period of his life in which he is finding himself, meeting and learning the influences which affect him deeply. But his experimental years pass when he discovers an interest that enlists his powers. His receptivities are then dedicated to ideal influences, and the will-power that was formerly scattered and divided is concentrated.

A person of strenuous or tyrannical disposition is known in the world as one of strong character. But character in the true sense of the word begins when, as in the case of the weak-willed person, there has been regeneration. The alleged strength is partly due to the conflict between a pronounced disposition, and the moral influences of society which tend to overcome this strong self-will. Likewise in the case of the weak-willed person there is a conflict between an essentially pliable disposition and the forces that make for character. In both cases there are virtues and weaknesses in the disposition. The weak-willed person is ordinarily one who is more moderate in bringing to the surface



the powers that make for strength of character. But there may be as much tenacity, on occasion as great obstinacy, as the strong-willed person shows. For some people are temperamentally courageous, abounding in resistances, while others gradually acquire resistance, and courage. In the end the so-called weak man may be as strong as his opponent. Indeed, he may be more closely coordinated, since his gradual emergence into freedom through the discovery of a favouring line of action gives him sure command of his resources. Hence he acquires strength to meet harder situations.

Character in brief is constancy in the pursuit of a purpose, and involves self-reliance, fidelity, definiteness, self-consistency as a progressive ideal, obedience in the sense of acceptance of the law of the universe. It also implies a measure of independence, originality, and initiative. In marked cases it goes with profound insight, the power to think out the laws of things, to think for the age in which one lives.

No doubt every person of pronounced character is in a sense a severe critic. Yet there is a vast difference between the demand for perfection and the idealism that sees the wisdom of things in the making. Genuine large-mindedness goes with the acceptance of life and of people. Hence it is not so literal, has room for the imagination, as well



as for a sense of humour. It accordingly generates contentment in the best sense of the word. One who has attained it is not only charitable but is ready to overlook faults and have a "blind eye."

We may also learn to live in two worlds at a time, the world of our work and that of the imagination. Side by side with the weightiest burdens we may carry a poetic romantic region into which we may enter at will. He who is wise and free does not hesitate to remain in the childhood of the world in this respect, or even to people every-day life with creatures of his own. Moreover, the imagination may be employed in the construction of our plans and ideal schemes.

If you would grow in efficiency, associate as often as you can with people of marked efficiency. Listen to speakers of uncommon power whatever their theme, endeavouring to discover their sources of power. Hear the best music, visit the galleries where the best pictures may be seen, and associate when you can with people of marked executive power. Always seek the best and your own standard will rise. The principles of success are virtually the same in all the arts.

Our inquiry has shown precisely how to begin if we would secure greater efficiency. First we must study the way in which we work or live now, then consider how it can best be done on scientific principles. Having developed our schedule or



plan, we must put before the mind an incentive sufficient to enlist our energies, patiently training ourselves so far as need be. Since it is the objective that calls us into power, we may concentrate on that, forgetting about the processes of mind and body. Thus, having passed through the self-conscious period in which we have questioned nearly everything that is in our nature, we may again give over most of our activities to the control of habits, absorbing ourselves more and more in our work.

In our study of the will we saw that it is possible to make the effort required to overcome the inertias of our lower nature by *paying sufficient attention to the end to be attained*, since it is the drawing power of the ideal, not the prodding from behind, that secures volitional efficiency. The more we know about the resistances to be overcome and the lines of approach, the more directly we may concentrate on the goal. Since work consists in the first place in the victory over the inertia of the brain, we now know how to enlist the energies of the organism without spending our strength where it will be of no avail. It is this knowledge which gives real power.

The same principles show how to win our way with other people. First considering the nature of the individual to be met, the probable resistances, prejudices, and inertias, one naturally avoids



self-assertive methods, coerciveness, and dogmatism, by appealing to the other's interests, arousing the attention in such a way as to call reason into play. The intellect once persuaded, the heart touched, then the rest will follow. Here is the heart of the matter psychologically speaking. The secret of efficiency lies in the right appeal to the attention.

Here too is the turning-point in all self-improvement. The greatest victories are won at the crucial centre where through work energy is brought into action inspired by an ideal. For is it not here that pride is conquered and selfishness transmuted? Is it not here that hate is changed into love, passion into gentleness, unruliness into obedience?

The heart of efficiency, the secret of success, lies here. Efficiency has resolved itself into the victorious expression of the will in the presence of an adequate incentive, with the power of paying attention which overcomes the resistances of habit and disposition. We need no longer condemn ourselves or others. We need not falter or be discouraged. It is first a question of knowledge, then of quietly persistent effort. The victory won at the centre, the organism as a whole can be brought into full play. The victory gained in our own selfhood, we may lead others along the same road.

Is it merely a question then of the survival of



the wisest? Shall we do nothing for the unfit? That would be to advocate the other extreme. We are pleading for the right of the efficient to become more efficient and achieve the type. To raise the standard is to help every one. Success is impossible at best unless others are tenderly cared for. Love is the greatest success in the world. Brotherhood is the culmination. Hence our investigation once more leads beyond mere prudence and self-development to the heights of the moral ideal.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the four types of character, see McCunn's *The Making of Character*, New York, Macmillan. With reference to vocational guidance, see *Choosing a Vocation*, by Prof. F. Parsons; *Vocational Guidance*, by M. Bloomfield, Houghton, Mifflin and Co.



## CHAPTER X

### INSIGHT

WHAT is the choicest gift of the inner life? I do not say the greatest gift, for we agree that the greatest is love. But what attainment is most rare, most widely needed? My answer is, insight, the ability to discern the significant or essential in human life; to know a worthy or righteous man, a sound teacher, faithful worker, sincere leader; and the power to discern ideal tendencies in the conduct and character of men. Such insight is an ideal to be striven for as of priceless value. It is more an attainment than a gift for reasons which will presently appear. Hence it may be regarded in the light of tendencies now active within us, and with reference to our special interests. If awareness of our shortcomings compels us to disclaim any title to it, we may at least consider what conditions are within our control, under what modes of life the forces that make for insight are fostered.

That there is abundant need of insight becomes plain when we note in what a haphazard fashion



most men choose a vocation, advise others in regard to the vital issues of life, and blunder along amidst conflicting tendencies within their own natures. Ordinarily, it is instinct, impulse, habit, or emotion that rules, while the life of thought plays an intermittent part in the rear. In the foregoing chapters we have been showing that this haphazard life may give place to a well-ordered life through self-knowledge, control, co-ordination, right volition, and the growth of that philosophic reflectiveness for which we have argued as an essential to success. The cultivation of insight accordingly follows as matter of necessity if we are to carry the life of efficiency to the highest level. Here, again, we are concerned with an essentially human need, as imperative in the commercial leader as in the legislator, the teacher, the scholar, or the parent. Just as each vocation reveals principles that pertain to the mode of work in question, so experience generates its gifts and accumulates the wisdom peculiar to the specific task. Nevertheless, there are qualities which pertain to insight as a general power. Hence, as in our study of success, we may take certain principles for granted, assuming that each man knows what applies to his calling, and turn to the less familiar aspects of the question. We also assume a certain devotion to truth and righteousness without which it can hardly be a question of



insight at all. Mere experience may make us acquainted with the wiles of men and the "tricks of the trade"; it may also give us discretion, adaptability, and other prudential accomplishments. The real issues come in sight when we look beyond mere self-interest to the realm of ideals. Strictly speaking, this is a moral question, but we shall still find our way by keeping close to the lines of approach to the ethical ideal which psychological analyses disclose.

Some one has said that nothing is so dangerous as a half-truth. The difficulty is that not even the prophets of such doctrines know that they are half-truths, while the scholars who could expose and correct are engaged elsewhere. This is well seen in the case of beliefs which we examined in our study of subconsciousness: a half-truth accepted means false inferences all along the line. We are sure of our inferences only in case we as individuals possess sufficient knowledge of the human mind to know what processes are central. It is imperative, therefore, that each of us shall acquire a standard by which to discern the realities and truths from the appearances and errors with which they are commingled. This calls for criticism not only of the instincts and prejudices by which we are ordinarily influenced but of the supposably peculiar powers which we differentiate as "psychical" to the disparagement of reason.



We begin to make headway with the distinction already insisted upon between mere experience or expression and the principles by which we endeavour to interpret the experience under consideration. Of far more consequence than an experience which leaves us with a sense of mystery, as if by miracle we could read the human heart, or receive the secrets of heaven, is the possession of a first principle by which we may classify all our experiences according to their value in a system. For we may then distinguish between the first form of an experience, the channel through which it comes, and the thought through which we analyse and explain it; we may single out a first impression of human character and relate it to our general knowledge and our second thought; and we may rise above the conservatism of our vocation or creed to the level of disinterested insight.

Assuming, then, that insight may be acquired, we may proceed to consider its nature, its sources, and its fruits. This inquiry should enable us to pursue insight as an ideal. Looking first at the reasons why insight is not more widely sought, we note, in addition to man's subserviency to impulse, habit, and emotion, that there is widespread dependence on authority; an erroneous conception of feeling, intuition, and all that pertains to the immediate side of man's nature; also disparagement of intellectual processes such as analysis, judgment,



and reasoning. In so far as men are still creatures of impulse and habit, we must of course wait for a quickening experience to come before we can aid them to acquire insight. We ordinarily depend on authoritative leaders and creeds because of the assumption that makers of systems are so highly gifted as to belong to a distinct class. But when we discover that we have made use of our own powers for better or worse in making choice between leaders and creeds, we realise that all real advancement depends on the growth of the individual selfhood. If we have trusted ourselves sufficiently to select a teacher, a creed or church, we may well rely on our selfhood to the end. Furthermore, it is plain that all true authority is rational, universal; and that we are free from special leadership in so far as we discern principles which stand in their own right.

To throw off subservient acceptance of authority is, however, for many of us to enter into a new bondage through the belief that intuition is a gift or endowment superior to reason. This belief turns upon the assumption that original sentiments and experiences in general are of more worth than self-conscious acquisitions. The real enemy of spiritual enlightenment is the dogmatic assumption that the head is hostile to the heart. Firm in our desire to preserve the heart intact, we lapse into mere acceptance of emotion, impressions,



guidances, and intuitions, fearing to subject our inmost life to the scrutiny of the intellect. Thus the reasons for not acquiring insight resolve themselves into arguments against the cultivation of individual powers of thought.

Insight as I shall employ the term is illumined reason, a synthesis of intuition and other mental products with the finer processes of constructive thought. It begins in the life of feeling, hence we may look for its sources amidst such interests in psychical experiences as we find in our day. It advances from the level of mere impressions, presentiments, leadings, and guidances to that of intuition, conscience, the inner light. It becomes more intellectual in proportion as it becomes philosophical. It is allied with sympathy, with love, and the other benevolent affections, hence a man grows in insight through the development of the altruistic life. Insight is an attainment rather than an endowment because however gifted no one really possesses insight until his faith and his leadings have met the varied tests of experience and constructive thought. What is imperative is a clue to the ideal elements in the cosmos, in events, in men, in experiences that tend to become moral and spiritual. He who possesses insight has a hope, a power to uplift and lead unsurpassed even by those who have a great measure of elemental love.



Experience in general starts us on our way, gives us our incentives, stirrings, conflicts, dualities, finally our problems. At length ideals begin to stand out in contrast with the conservative side of our nature. To make genuine headway in attaining insight we need a theory of the human self which has overcome the old antithesis between the head and the heart. Psychology as we have already seen does not by any means confirm this popular antithesis. Even though in character one may be a Dr. Jekyll, and Mr. Hyde, the mind functions not through separate faculties but by means of processes. There is no organ or power in us which can produce an intuition or feeling as a die might produce a coin, granted the molten metal; nor is conscience an inner voice which can hear in secrecy as if reason were forbidden to be present. An emotion even when experienced in the presence of the most uplifting object in human life is a process into which the whole soul of the individual enters for the time being, and the emotion is of value just so far as the whole personality contributes to it. Into an intuition though apprehended by the noblest woman in the land there enters whatever is in the woman whose organism produces it, and its temper will vary with the tone of the personality. Conscience is a progressive quantity varying with the experience and thought of the one for whom it is at first a voice, in later



life a restraining sentiment, finally a process of rational reflection. The self that reasons is the same that has emotions, presentiments, and moral or religious experiences. With most of us mental consistency is still an ideal, but this does not alter the fact that our moods and mental states however fragmentary pertain to one mind. The terms "head" and "heart" are merely figurative expressions for phases of the same mental life.

To say this is not to ignore that fact that when a person is spontaneous and free greater illuminations may come. The consensus of those best equipped to judge is that there is virtue in genuine childlikeness of heart, in humility, and in intuitions that are allowed to reveal their pristine content; and there is no reason to gainsay this judgment. The term "heart," or "the spirit in man," has real meaning which no psychological analysis can take away. But to examine such terms is to find that the real contrast implied in them is not between the heart and the intellect but between inner and outer within the same personality. To be external in life, attached to worldly things, is to be external in emotion, judgment, character. To be quickened in spirit is to have the centre of interest transferred to the inner life. What we wish to eulogise is the inner centre which we would preserve untarnished and free. When that centre is found and known the intel-



lectual life will respond as readily as the emotional.

He who is afraid of the head is afraid of himself, while he who is unwilling to submit a creed to the tests of criticism has no sure hold of the realities represented by it. A self-centred man will employ his head to show that all men are selfish, and that therefore the only resource is to renounce the intellect in favour of the emotions. The implication is that the intellect is personal in an undesirable sense whereas, as one disciple of the emotions put it, "feelings are from God." But analysis shows that feelings are far more personal than aught else in the inner life, while mere reliance on emotions tends to increase self-centredness, whereas reason lifts man's consciousness to the level of the universal. The difficulty is in the man himself who divides head from heart. As long as we hold that emotions or feelings alone come from God we are likely to remain inactive, waiting for God to bestow a compulsory feeling upon us, generate an incentive from within. But if we have learned that God quickens us through the understanding as well as through the will and the emotions, we know that at each juncture there is something for us to do, alternatives to face, choices to be made. One who should wait for God to give him a feeling that is, act for him, might indeed wait for ever. The contention that only emotions are divine in origin is a purely intellectual conclusion reached



through imperfect analysis and hasty generalisation. The irony of the situation is that while one is apparently revering the emotions and discounting the intellect, one is indulging the intellect at the expense of the self. Moral insight begins with full acceptance of the inalienable fact of responsibility. However fragmentary we are, now tossed by passionate and fear-driven emotions, now slaves to instinct and impulse, with flashes of rationality between, it is incumbent on us to be upright, to be one, to be moral. The head and the heart are merely two among various phases of the inner life all of which are subject to the attitude a man maintains. It is a man's prevailing love that decides the case, and what he loves he will plead for. If a devotee of external things, mind and heart will make these seem worthy of every endeavour. If dedicated to a special theory of the subjective life, all the resources of the intellect will be brought to bear to prove a subjective life supreme.

Instead of beginning with an exclusive proposition, as if there were but one source of insight, it is more profitable to start with the assumption that everything in man may be a channel of guidance, from passion and instinct to the beatific vision. It then becomes a question of degrees of nearness to the divine, and of illuminating standards. For there are no walls between our powers.



We cannot wholly check our thoughts while giving ourselves to an altruistic emotion or the moral will. It is a question of emphasis among elements and dispositions always present. What is needed is not a line of distinction between head and heart, but knowledge of the difference between experience and the interpretation of experience. For so long as one confuses the two one is like a house divided against itself. Interpret we must, we can by no means avoid it. The real resource is to interpret in earnest, distinguishing between the sources of experience and the mind through which they come, the character that underlies the mind and the goals to which experiences lead. Mere origin counts for extremely little; values, worths, ideals, count for very much. The function of insight is to disclose what is worth while, and to show what forces secure it.

These distinctions become more plain when we analyse a term such as the "inner light" under which we symbolise certain of our spiritual powers. This term is not so philosophical as "insight," but marks a decided advance beyond the stage of emotionalism and all dependence on uncritically accepted impressions, sentiments, and instincts. As employed by the Friends and other believers in the indwelling Spirit, it does not stand for mere lucidity, clairvoyance, or any psychical power displayed under occult or uncanny conditions, but



implies a higher source of illumination through which divine guidances are revealed. Hence it is not a mere power of yielding to an influence, like mediumship, but one that implies aspiration to realise the self in highest measure. Receptivity to it involves discrimination between the various promptings of man's nature, the observance of certain conditions of silence, obedience, and willingness to follow. Its products are not mere recollections, or like an uprush from the subliminal region revealing new combinations of experiences and thoughts. All these may enter in and be transfigured, indeed the disciple of the inner light inevitably contributes whatever resources there may be on hand. The significant consideration is acceptance of a standard such that one looks for inspiration that is very high and uplifting. The experience of reciprocity therefore differs from the ecstasy of the mystics because it is temperate, restrained, and the emotional union between human and divine is not blurred by pantheistic complications. The inner light is not supernatural, aristocratic, the property of the elect; but is natural, democratic, universal, literally a centre of spiritual illumination to which any man at any time may take whatever experience or idea may arise in order that he may test it. In so far as divine it is the Christ in all men. In so far as human its activity implies temperament, a man's views of



human nature, human life, God, and the cosmos. It is akin to conscience, although not limited to essentially moral insights; believers in the inner light are ordinarily those who proclaim individual liberty of conscience. Its processes are similar to those which we usually describe as intellectual, but an intellectual process ordinarily proceeds by self-conscious stages, from fact or premise to conclusion; whereas the inner light is more allied to feeling and quick flashes of thought. Again, we distinguish a person in whom this light shines by the life that results, the sweet serenity, the beauty of countenance, the peace-loving ways, and other modes of conduct that manifest the quietude or poise which prevails within. Such life we well know neither implies the possession of a peculiar faculty nor an exclusive type of experience, but manifests itself in the character of one who responds in actual deeds of thought and will to the guidances or power revered as divine. What is all this if not a thoroughgoing admission that emotions, head, heart, all the tendencies that constitute the inner life enter into these illuminations and their fruits?

Now, the inner light may well be in some measure an endowment, such that everything depends upon the initial gleamings contrasted with the outer darkness of the senses, gleamings which in a responsive mind are permitted to grow. But the point is that the inner light is revealed through



growth, that the progressive function counts for more than the structure. Another important characteristic of its original estate is its power of survival even when the man in question is clouded by sensuous consciousness, apparently lost until a saviour comes who fans the mere spark once more into flame. What we are eager for is not the divine spark but the divine illumination which we believe will come when we let our light so shine that it shall fill manhood's mature life.

The same principles are discoverable when we analyse intuition. An intuitive person is commonly one who takes the lead when the facts and reasons are not as yet fully clear. Intuition appears in striking degree either in the case of those who are uncommonly pure and spontaneous or those who have great powers of self-abandonment. So far as consciously sought, an intuition is secured rather through interior listening than through inductive reasoning. Yet an intuition when verified displays the same content as a process of conscious thought. The intuitive element of our knowledge is akin to the faith which is the "substance of things hoped for." It connects our consciousness with the spiritually essential, the ideal goal; while the province of experience followed by reason is to test, hence to know and fully to possess. It is natural that an intuitive person should as life advances place more emphasis



on detailed knowledge and the reasons therefor.

We might say that the inner light is the efficiency while intuition is the product. The intuitive side of our nature as a whole is closely contiguous to its objects, so that when we discern an end or result intuitively we appear to be almost one with it. Out of this union comes the illuminating clue. There is every reason to revere the clue, allowing it to yield its full content, lead us as far as it can. Analysis and comparison rightfully begin when one has had the experience, reached the goal. Reason does not detract from, it adds to intuition. By insight one means the additional grasp of the situation which reason contributes through knowledge of law, interpretation of experience. The man of insight has reached the stage of wisdom. If we revered wisdom more and mere experience less, we should more steadily pursue insight as an ideal.

Another approach to the nature of insight is found when we compare various phases of the so-called spiritual life. Find a person who makes of the spiritual life a direct object of pursuit because of his subjective experiences and you will be apt to find one who is self-centred. We may indeed admire the earnestness of such a person, we may wish that all men displayed as much zeal. But what else do we say? That there will be no way to test the reality of the religious experiences



on which such a one places stress until the life of service begins. For reality is social, that is, is intelligible when scientifically interpreted, and the test of an unusual experience is its applicability to human needs. Hence we say, that if this man or woman who has been uplifted by a great spiritual emotion will come out of the subjective life, endeavour to meet people where they are, and undergo the contests which such associations bring, the contrasts will appear which show what is sound, and what is unsound in the subjective vision.

This seems like a hard saying, this statement that one who thus makes the spiritual a personal aim is self-centred. Yet we are all the while judging people by this standard in our modern time. Without being fully aware whither our thinking has led us we have become converted to the general principle that sociality is the test of everything real and true. Hence we withhold commendation until we know what the life is. If the life be outgoing, if it be able to withstand the test of little events and tribulations, we say, "Thus far well and good." But we are suspicious of that which a man keeps to himself because he esteems himself above others, because he deems his life peculiar, or regards it as a sign that he is saved.

The spirituality that is sane and is worthy of



adoption as evidence of genuine insight, is co-ordinated with the rest of life, leads towards balance, reason. Here is a man, for example, who is working at a congenial occupation for a moderate sum, and is placed in fairly comfortable, happy surroundings. He does not pray on stated occasions or in any respect make a display of the inner life. The life of devotion plays its quietly moderate part, when he serves others he is unobtrusive, and a large part of the time he is absorbed in the natural interests which lie at hand. He does not make a living out of his spirituality but permits the spiritual to be a spontaneous growth. Not unduly introspective, he yet devotes a portion of his time to solitary thought. With him the spiritual life is a crowning result bestowed because many other ends are pursued. Such a man possesses elements of insight which he can develop without first tearing down that he may rightly build.

We sometimes say of the scholar, and even of the social worker, that he "lacks vision." But does this mean that he is temperamentally limited so that insight cannot be his? Say rather of him and of any specialist that if he will study life philosophically he can grow in knowledge of first principles, and first principles inspire insight. Practical workers are oftentimes well-equipped in their particular fields, but have not yet considered



the relation of such work to universal ideals. The social worker may never have studied the ethical ideals which have inspired men through the ages, but may be seeking the immediate without asking whither the immediate good shall lead. In other words, the practical worker usually lives in details. What is needed is scope, and scope of thought comes through study, hence is attainable by all who are willing to think.

Dedication to the fine arts leads to insight when the love of beauty becomes a universal interest. So long as the artist is a mere painter, sculptor, or musician, feeling after values, depending on what he calls "taste," he remains local, like the social reformer who is a partisan. But when the love of beauty is lifted from the sensuous level to that of thought, and the kinship between the arts and the sciences is seen, then begins the dawning of insight. What discovery is more memorable in the entire range of æsthetic experiences and artistic productiveness than the vision of the unity of the true, the beautiful, and the good? Then the lover of fair forms and exquisite shadings is lifted out of the world of time into a region where he may readily pass to the truth-seeker's field and that of the disciple of righteousness, beholding what is essential, identifying it with his own ideals, although not himself a scholar or one who is quickened by zeal for souls. The insight of the artist



is always valued by lovers of the true and the good who are likewise children of the eternal, for all insight converges as we approach the universal.

Thus insight is partly empirical, drawing upon the resources of a man's calling, and partly transcendental. The artist who possesses it knows how to lead the way from the imperfect forms which the eye beholds into the realm of the eternally ideal in such a way as not to neglect the things of earth for those of heaven. Music enables us most readily of all the arts to make the transition. But it is apt to leave the majority of people in the realm of feeling, and only in the case of the few does it lead to creative thought.

Can it be said that large numbers of church members have attained the level of universal insight? It would seem not, since we find the world divided into multitudes of cults, and within each cult sectarian distinctions without limit. The accidents rather than the essentials are often counted as things of the Spirit, and we still find even the leaders maintaining that their church and theirs only is the door to salvation. But real salvation is to discern and possess the universal Spirit to which there are many approaches. He may be said to possess insight who beholds the reality symbolised by creeds, ceremonials, prayers, conversions, and theologies. He who possesses insight should be able to lead men into the univer-



sal, uplift them, reveal a vision. He will care little for doctrines or modes of worship, and institutions, but will employ these as means to the great end.

The greatest fruits of insight are discoverable in our relationship with individuals. He who can discern the heart, and call it forth into expression accomplishes more than any other. By such insight one does not mean neglect of the faults and adverse conditions by which a human soul is at present surrounded, one means understanding of all these and more, that remarkable power of love and sympathy coupled with the illuminating idea which clarifies the pathway of the soul. It is the difference between seeing all the parts in groups or in succession and seeing the whole. Hence it is not mere encouragement, optimism, charity, or judgment according to motives; it is an actual summoning of more or less dormant powers, a quickening into unity. It may call a person to judgment, so that he will be more aware of his failures than before, but only that through these the ideal may clearly stand forth. For insight is a power, it is creative. If like a lightning flash it is preceded by dark clouds, its light goes forth to reveal new possibilities, new beauties. Hence it inspires, thrills, transforming the dull prose of life into enticing poetry.

We have all seen those quiet, thoughtful people



who move among their associates as if less social. At times they seem under great restraint, absorbed, remote, and we wonder why they do not unbend and join with the rest. But see them at their true vocation and you realise what this remoteness means. With more charity, more sympathy, more love than you and I display, they associate with those whom we are inclined to despise and condemn as if we were made of finer substance. It is not so much what they say as their manner, the attitude of power which they carry, the purity which inspires purity, the frankness which calls out frankness in return. In the presence and when looking into the eyes of such a one, the sinner will be moved to confess, but that is not the point. The significant factor is the belief in oneself which such a man inspires when, looking through the deeds and present traits of character to the end, he expresses the tenderness or utters the summoning word that lifts the soul into command, opens the way for a new beginning.

What work in the world is more noble than this service in behalf of the ideal, a service which annihilates class-distinctions and makes all men akin? This is not "saving souls," it is not a work that springs from anxiety, but has passed far beyond such elementary motives. Its disciple is at peace within, convinced that there is freedom for all. He is calm in attitude and in conduct, makes no



display, and is not in haste to convert numbers. He shows by his attitude and his wisdom that he too has met temptation and the tribulations of inward growth. Hence his is not the voice of mere innocence, although he may have preserved himself unspotted from the world and may never have stooped to mean or self-seeking motives. One realises in his presence that he has command of higher powers, superior resources on which to draw. He refrains from mingling in many of the labours, amusements, and other activities of the world, not because he disdains these or dislikes those who are given over to them, but because he has found interests of such worth that if his fellow-men could but have the vision they would leave all and follow. It was said of one who had this remarkable power that while other men thought out systems of philosophy he "thought men," that is, saw what they could do as pioneers and inspired them to undertake their tasks. The Master, calling his twelve disciples as he meets them by the way, is the ideal exemplification of this summoning of those who are fitted to accomplish a certain work.

Would it be possible to give such a description of the fruits of insight were it not within our power to acquire it? Do we not let opportunities pass every day in which we might have believed in men, might have been loyal to the ideal for which they



are striving, might have loved, when we merely turned away or uttered dislike and condemnation? Is there one of us in whom consciousness of the ideal element is lacking?

I hope I have shown that insight is a growth, that it increases from more to more in those who lay bare their problems before the inner light, who make the fullest use of intuition, who are true to the inmost promptings of the heart. For it must then be clear that we are not in any way cut off from the sources or deprived of the fruits of insight. The sources, I have said, may on occasion be any quality or power that is in us, even instinct or the restless emotions. For it is the whole personality that receives, and the whole personality may contribute. Insight begins and works within the sphere of the promptings or leadings which ally us with the life that is at hand. But it mounts from the elemental into the self-conscious, the critical and reflective, and is enriched by contests, experience, and the strivings of the soul. It does not thrive long without love, hence it bears to the end an element of emotion, enthusiasm, or zeal, the quality of the heart which reaches forth with yearning, touches another soul with compassionate tenderness, and inspires considerateness at every turn. A man must keep close to humanity to grow into great insight, must know what is in men by being with them. Hence experience avails



more than mere gifts, and the more deeply a man has lived the greater will be his power.

But I hope I have shown that insight is much more than this. To be spiritual it must yield visions of the eternal, the transfiguring unity out of which arise the beautiful, the true, and the good. It is possible for any one to attain the level of insight who, consecrating himself either to art, to science, or righteousness, endeavours to pursue his eternal ideal to the end. Sometime there is likely to dawn in the consciousness of all who are faithful the realisation that they are working for the ends that endure, portraying, thinking about, and displaying in conduct the supernal essence which underlies all moral and spiritual endeavour.

It might be objected that we have placed too much stress upon growth or experience, and not enough on inheritance, capacity, gifts. But we have already cleared up these matters in our study of subconsciousness. Whatever capacity we may possess, whatever gift or genius, it begins to be a factor in our life when it is brought to the surface, when it becomes a factor in consciousness. We are in a sense potentially all that we ever become, but what concerns us is the expression, not the possibility. As merely potential, we are not yet teachers, leaders of men, artists, men of genius; it is "the occasion" that makes the man. There is no hidden reservoir of truth ready-made and



persuasively complete, no subconscious treasure-house in which all wisdom is stored. As great as our implicit treasures may be, we know nothing of them until experience calls them forth, supplies them with subject-matter, and makes them alive with meaning. As merely potential our native capacities and intuitive powers are forms merely, waiting to be filled. Truth is such when made concrete, practical. Genius is itself when at work.

It might also be objected that the fruitions attributed to gradually acquired insight are merely due to the recovery of "ancient remains," to the recollection of wisdom developed in a previous existence, or to the later development of ideas put into our subconscious minds by the angels. The adoption of any one of these hypotheses would leave us in precisely the same state as that already described. What I have to deal with is the fruition, the idea that is true for me to-day. If there be "ancient remains," I recover them as essences that find confirmation only so far as I work them out afresh, and there would seem to be little reason for assuming that there is aught more than a capacity or latent power born with us. We need not explain on the hypothesis of a previous incarnation what we can explain by experiences nearer at hand. If angels put ideas into our minds they become truths for us when worked out in the usual way as our own thoughts. It would seem more



probable that we are helped by a spiritual light that is turned upon us than by ideas put within us to work mysteriously. For we are creatures of will, of rationality, first of all, and we cannot accept or know an idea except as our own. Hence the seed-thought or guidance, whatever its source, conforms to the laws of ordinary processes of thought. Not until an idea wins our assent does it become a subconscious factor. The quick flashes of insight by which we survey a vast field of knowledge at a glance are higher in type than those that are eulogised as innate or subconscious. The ideal is to attain the level of universal insight.

To have insight in a universal sense is to have a philosophy, and of course one means idealism. For we have proved that insight becomes more intellectual as it advances. Our first insights are flashes, incentives, hopes that appear like rifts in the clouds then leave us to develop; the insight that abides is illumined reason, a third stage of mentality, higher than the immediacies of intuition, higher than the mere understanding. Hence by the term insight one means something more than the beatific vision, mystic enlightenment, or cosmic consciousness. For what we desire is to dwell in the land of promise, not alone to see it. We wish to understand, to comprehend, become masters, knowing the spiritual law and its uses, how to apply it and how to be free. So long as



I have merely had the vision, felt the ecstasy, or apprehended the cosmic moment in which I seem one with all being, I am likely to dwell on the experience as especially mine, making too much of the subjective elements. Here nearly all mystics remain, hence we see why one who makes a specialism of the spiritual life is essentially local, if not self-centred. Seership at its best is a means to an end. The ideal is to be a law unto oneself even in regard to the things of the Spirit.

An experience is not possessed until rationalised, a thing or event is not understood until known in detail. The beatific vision may indeed give the illumination without which the intellectual life were naught. But the goal of insight is to gain the universal, and the universalising function of the self is reason. For there are not merely reasons for things, but Reason itself, the Being in whose mind our own minds are founded. To discover that there is a central Reality whose reason is the order, whose will is the motive power of the cosmos—this is to possess an idealistic insight which we may turn in any direction and find that it explains.

The same insight that reveals the nature of the cosmos and gives the mind an idealistic principle which applies to all cases, is the insight that clarifies the minds and hearts of men. Truly to know a man is to know him as idealism cognises, as a child of the cosmos that endures. The heavenly



love which is touched with outgoing compassion is identical with the knowledge which discloses yet unifies and sees far beyond. This union of the life of sentiment with the life of thought is much more than optimism, for ordinarily optimism is still hoping, achieving, while this insight has actually arrived. The same order that gives unity to the divine Self and to the cosmos can bestow it upon the finite self. It may not express its wisdom in deeply impressive tones but may come forth in an incidental remark. It matters little how the power is transmitted if so be that it is handed on.

Spiritual insight, then, is an ideal attainment put within reach of all who gather the elements from the incidents of life and let them achieve fruition. Some of us regard a day as well spent if it bring one idea, one gleam of consciousness which unifies what it flashes upon. Mayhap you and I can adapt our lives so that each day shall bring both its insight and the means of applying it for the good of men. If we have lifted our consciousness to the heights and reckoned with such issues as this chapter suggests, we ought to be able to turn to the specific problems of human service equipped with knowledge which shows what is worth while. We should be able, for example, to give vocational advice, lead men into lines of reflection which will reveal them to themselves, and



call those with whom we become genuinely acquainted into power. For, once more, everything depends upon the standard, the goal. However deficient we may be in wisdom or experience, we inevitably judge by such wisdom as we have. Hence we may well observe the conditions which steadily lift us to higher levels of thought at the centre.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In *The Philosophy of the Spirit*, New York, 1908, I have discussed at length the theory of man's spiritual nature on which the above discussion is based. I have there shown that the empirical element in intuition is merely immediate, while the content or value, is mediate, that is, essentially intellectual. The evidence as there given depends on a study of the higher experiences of the moral and religious life.



## CHAPTER XI

### A LAW UNTO ONESELF

THE tendency of the preceding discussions has been to put more and more emphasis on the individual. We have dwelt on the co-ordinating powers of the self in contrast with the instincts and emotions which are commonly eulogised. We have rescued the self from the haziness in which popular beliefs immersed it by making so much of subconsciousness. Our study of the energies which constitute the powers of the genuinely active man also added to the conviction that the conscious individual skilfully using his forces is the centre of efficiency. Hence our interest turned to the victorious will, the principles of success, the growth of character as a self-made product, and the adjustments of the man who wisely takes his opportunities. Finally, our study of insight broke down more of the barriers by which people gifted with intuition have been set apart from their fellows and proved that all men may acquire the inner vision which shows what is worth while. Our whole study of efficiency shows that far more



depends on training and the summations of experience than has been thought. The climax came with the conclusion that even insight is surpassed by the construction of an idealism which may be developed out of its finest products.

Yet from the first we have been in sight of another principle. The intelligent man, we have pointed out, first asks, What are the conditions of life? What are my powers? How am I now living and working? What must I overcome in myself? Having asked these questions and made serious answer, he then proceeds through obedience to law, to nature, society, and the moral order, to organise his powers so as to gain the desired end. As much as he may make of himself it is with profound recognition of the fact that he is essentially a reactive social being, dependent at every turn.

Nevertheless, it will be well for us to take as seriously as we can the belief that a man can become a law unto himself. For we are apt to cherish the notion that entire freedom shall some day be ours, without having seriously tried to analyse this conception to consider what true emancipation means. We surely know already that it must be a question of interior conditions and self-knowledge, and we have overcome the idea that freedom means liberty to do anything we like, as well as the dogma that no alternatives are open to us. Hence



the inquiry cannot fail to throw light on the conditions of our moral selfhood.

Not to make the question too difficult, let us say that he is already in some sense a law unto himself who knows how to receive and act upon advice in such a way as to preserve individuality. Every one knows that advice is a subtle quantity, intermingled with political, financial, religious, or private considerations. Beset by conventions, and the mighty forces of conservatism, our first problem is to adjust ourselves to the imprisoning tendencies of our environment. Emerson assures us that society is a "conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members," and that "whoso would be a man must be a non-conformist." He is free who is able either to adopt or discard conventionality. For example, in language we may conform to the standards of rhetoric and endeavour to speak the purest English, yet also adopt an occasional phrase from colloquial speech for the sake of spontaneity.

If really free, we are able to throw off the modes of conduct and speech peculiar to our profession. To be human is to be more than an artisan, housekeeper, business man, or teacher, while dedicating a part of our activities to these vocations. Although a commonplace, it is necessary to reiterate the fact that to become mere creatures of our occupation, our creed, or prevailing habits, is ex-



ceedingly easy for most of us. We cannot fulfil even the secondary ideals of efficiency unless we cherish the determination to be human above all else. This is a matter that demands the most serious thought of every man and every woman, whether wage-earner, capitalist, manual labourer or brain-worker. It is the most vital issue in mental co-ordination, it is far more fundamental than the wise control of our energies, and it underlies the law of success as ordinarily understood. Indeed, it implies the central question which we have raised from time to time as our inquiry proceeded, What is worth while? Have we the power to labour, to serve, yet to achieve the high ends which ennoble the soul and make it a thing of dignity, of beauty, and of power?

For the woman, the determination to be human means, for example, the preservation of those qualities which we denominate "feminine," not when we praise ideals of chivalry of a bygone time, but when we revere the sister, the wife and mother as representatives of an eternal element of supreme worth. If the woman is unmarried and a wage-earner, this means intelligent adaptation to the conditions of society as they exist to-day so as to guard against numberless subtle temptations and ambitions. If married, it calls for an ideal of home-life which transcends and conquers any interest that tends to draw the wife away from the home



to the neglect of its obligations, its blessings, and its joys. If a mother, the ideal becomes of supreme importance, since the fulness of life is implied. But if understood, if the ideal of motherhood be supreme, other relationships can be adjusted to it in such a way as to add while never interfering. For example, there are relationships to society at large and near at hand, and to the world of affairs. If the mother is also a wage-earner this function is naturally a means of support to the domestic relationship at its best, hence it is not permitted to foster interest in business as such to the neglect of the tender emotions. If an artist, social leader, or reformer, these interests will naturally be subordinate to but ever inspired by the life of the home. That is, the true woman is not first a reformer, and then a woman; she is first a woman, then a devotee of a given line of reform tending to give greater freedom to women in a wise sense while also securing genuine equality between the sexes. Likewise she is first a homemaker, and then a painter, sculptor, or singer, never permitting the household to lapse into disorder under the pretence that beauty can be won in the world of art when lacking in the life. If the relationship be reversed, she either becomes a mere creature of her external interests and occupation, or domestic unhappiness results. Too frequently in our time these high standards are



sacrificed and the wife departs into new fields of interest supposably promising to make her free while really enslaving her.

For men the question is no less complex and serious. One can hardly make this statement without realising that so many interests in the commercial world, in club and professional life, are allowed to intrude that it is impossible to single out large numbers of men who are essentially human. It is human no doubt to err, and to be subservient to any number of faulty characteristics. In another sense of the word it is human to make one's business an end in itself. But the term "human" as employed in the present discussion involves the preservation of all that is manly in the higher sense. Numberless enticements enter a man's life that conflict with the best he finds himself capable of being as husband, father, friend. Without undertaking to define true manliness, or limiting that which is human one emphasises the importance of having a standard by which to estimate every factor in life. Thus a man's evenings, his recreations, vacations, and intellectual diversions will be affected by his prevailing love or purpose in life.

From another point of view, it is a question of being human in a sense which transcends the distinctions of sex while never running counter to the ideals of chastity, domestic life, manliness,



the eternal feminine. There is a respect in which a woman is more than a wife or mother, a man more than a husband or father. The truest love inspires a new relationship to the entire cosmos, gives a new freedom, and makes one a free spirit in the best sense. It is love above all that renews the individual and calls forth all that is spiritually human. Thereupon many secondary lines of freedom grow out of the central relationship. The free man not only remains a child at heart, but is at liberty to play as if still a child.

He is not ashamed to weep with those who are sorrowful, nor to sing with those who are for the first time tasting the greater joys of life. He lives his youthful days over again in contemplation of the vigorous activities around him. Thus he retains a sort of independence of space and time.

Again, we are free if not under allegiance to the give-and-take theory of social obligation. To make a genuine gift I should be thinking of the one whom I am able to serve, of the joy of giving as a general principle. One need not give on stated occasions, or even to the class of people from whom gifts have come. If I give with the expectation of receiving, or the hope of promoting my own welfare, I am a creature of mere convention. Real gifts spring from the self, and bear the stamp of individuality. What I can best give no one can duplicate. Nor can a man rob me of my



power or its issues. If a man be aware of his power to give and the duties it imposes, he is little likely to have time to meet the exactions of mere observers of good form.

There are many ways of showing freedom through speech. One may choose one's forms of greeting and address, one's own expressions of gratitude and affection. Among friends it is a pleasure to depart from precise modes of speech, and introduce words from other languages, make one's own word-combinations, diminutives, and coinages. To address the most intimate companion of the heart with "thee" and "thou" is to add new reverence and beauty to love's speech. A delightful spirit of play can be expressed through language, a spirit that ever seeks new forms of expression yet as steadily clings to phrases which the heart has made dear. So much depends upon a word, uttered by chance or with deliberation, that one may well consider how to preserve the finest, freest speech, letting the words ripen with the years, never departing from a gentle courtesy yet ready to break into untried forms. Mere license to say anything you like is not freedom, for true freedom never forgets the other party. The free man is frank, but his speech aspires towards an ideal.

Frankness invites frankness, and one of the joys of freedom is the power one has to invite other



souls into expression. Many a man and woman hungers for the companionship which perfect frankness offers, and the unburdening of the heart is a genuine need of human nature. Confession, too, has its place. The function of the "free spirit" is to set others free, and frankness is oftentimes the beginning. He who can unqualifiedly tell us precisely what he thinks is able to do us a great service. The right word has enormous power, speaks to the soul, and makes self-expression possible. Sincerity follows close upon frankness, and while it may not be the highest of the virtues it is essential to complete freedom and faithful service.

In business life this freedom is expressed in departure from mere self-interest and tradition, by giving "full measure, running over." True freedom enters the business realm with disinterestedness. The moral man of affairs realises that it is his privilege to serve, hence he keeps the welfare of associates and customers steadily in view, has the courage to permit humane interests to stand above sordidness.

In education he is a law unto himself who, either as student or teacher, is able to branch out in accordance with general principles, verify or change them in his own way. So long as one is subservient to a system, one is never a devotee of education at its best. The free devotee understands



the value of the standards preserved in the great institutions, and does his part to be true to the best that tradition offers from the classic past. Yet, in a new age and in the presence of fresh personalities, he adapts his methods and his thought to altered conditions, knowing that he must show his mastery if at all by explaining new phenomena, solving recent problems. He must rise above yet assimilate the spirit of his own institution, showing his loyalty to ideals yet unattained as surely as in behalf of the best that now is.

In friendship there is a capital opportunity for the maintenance of standards while preserving a spontaneity that sometimes surpasses all bounds. No one is more dependent at times than the friend, yet this dependence at its best is accompanied by a freedom that grows in accordance with ideals of individuality. Such relationships may indeed be far from free in certain stages of their development. But the ideal is perfect mutuality, the full self-expression of each, fostered by the most considerate love. Mutual adaptation with this high ideal in view is possible where there is understanding of the forbearance needed along the way.

Sometimes friends undertake to attain this end by making a hobby of freedom, cutting themselves from the world, glorying in their escape from obligation. The result is unfettered expression of every prompting and sentiment within the per-



sonality. But to make freedom an end in itself is to pass to the other extreme and incur new bondages of a peculiarly strenuous sort. Freedom is attained by pursuing a purpose that is ennobling. If I love my associates I need not guard every action for fear that I am not granting them liberty to be themselves. The way to receive freedom from others is to be free in spirit. It is more important to grant freedom than to seek it. Really to grant it is no small accomplishment, requiring a large-minded attitude. If I steadily grant it to my fellows they in turn will accord liberty to me. Freedom is not strictly speaking an end in itself but is one of the fruits of the efficient life.

The free man preserves a certain independence not only of what people say but of what they are likely to think. On occasion he is impelled to break from tradition and become a pioneer, well aware that his action will be condemned and that he will be misjudged. Convinced that his initiative is right, he is willing to cast in his fortunes with righteousness, and take whatever consequences may come. Again, his courage is seen in readiness to be inconsistent, if need be, whatever flaws may be found in his statements. For his loyalty is to truth, not to verbal consistency.

The free man need not, however, make radical departures from custom, cultivate peculiar ways and odd habits of dress, to prove his independence.



We are assuming that the one who is a law unto himself is a man of understanding, and one of the first principles he is likely to know is the law of evolution. Being wise he realises that to take the next step in improvement is better than to go apart and be peculiar. The greatest strength is shown in fidelity to high ideals amidst people who do not hold them, and who can be led only by persuading them to take the next step.

Our study of efficiency has shown that one of the hardest lessons in respect to our social relationships is to be willing to allow our fellows to live their life. Convinced that our creed in politics, in religion, in regard to life generally, is the true one, we foolishly try to impose it upon others. Again, we cherish a favourite plan for educational or social reform, and deem it our duty to go forth on proselyting missions. We forget Emerson's reminder that "Nature never rhymes her children," and that we should cease trying to make others like ourselves since "one's enough." Really to possess the spirit of freedom would be to recognise that as each man is an individual the best service one can be to him is to aid him to express himself. To adopt this attitude towards our fellows some of us are compelled to undergo a radical change, to overcome cocksureness and disagreeable self-assertion, to transmute all our domineering tendencies, overcome our conceits. This done, the



next task is to learn through faithful observation the real characteristics of our fellows, to discover whither they are tending and how we may effectively aid them. Surely, no man should expect to be a law unto himself unless willing to grant the same privilege to others. The stronger the character, the more pronounced our views, the more difficult for us to grant this privilege; for, highly endowed, capable of leadership, we readily assume that ours is the right way. The implied assumption is that we are uncommonly gifted, so fortunate as to possess original insight; others are privileged to be our disciples. But a true sign of greatness is recognition of others. The genuine leader knows that at best his life is an example, that others must develop in their way what he has seen as a pioneer. For the great man every soul in the universe counts as one, and is welcomed as a child of God. No class-privileges exist in the world of eternal values.

Are we then to sacrifice private convictions, zeal for special causes, eagerness to convert the world? Should we cease to concentrate upon a special interest? Surely not, but my zeal is best shown through concentrated endeavour to develop my convictions to the full, to live by them, hence to teach by example. When my development has reached a point where others take interest, I may well respond in heartiest fashion. I shall be most likely to aid those whose thought tends towards



my own. Granted an interested audience, or one that is willing to hear, I may well make my doctrine as persuasive as possible, putting my whole heart into my utterance. But if I really have the welfare of my fellows at heart, I shall not resort to the devices of the spectacular orator, but forcefully state my case in rational terms, leaving my hearers free to accept or discard. Only through appeal to reason can I expect to make normal converts, for if personal powers win people before their time there will inevitably be a reaction. My part as a public teacher is to state universal principles so clearly that each may make application for himself. If I stimulate my listener to make the subject his own, I thereby aid him to become a law unto himself.

These are particularly hard sayings with respect to religious matters, for there are many in the world so devoutly persuaded that they have the only true creed that it is a delicate matter to insist on the standards of universal reason. Yet one is unable to make an exception. The chief difficulty rests in the fact that the proselyters and highly confident people fail to realise that in the last analysis their appeal is to individual experience. Believing that they are humbly sustaining biblical and ecclesiastical authority, it seems plain that the personal equation is thrown wholly out of account. But press them for conclusive evidences



that their creed is the true one, and they fall back on inner experience, telling what the sacraments have meant to them, how much they have been comforted by the prayers, what upliftments they have enjoyed. Tacitly, these experiences are brought forward and put over against yours as the real grounds for faith, hence the appeal is as personal in the one case as in the other. The difference is that the proselyter in his uncritical acceptance has not gone so far in the process of becoming a law unto himself. He does not yet know that a truth becomes such for you or for me through individual verification, that without confirmatory experience the highest authority counts for naught. He who counsels you to make nothing of your own will, to set your intellect aside and simply believe, does not realise that he employs will and reason to confute you.

It is inevitable that each should accept and interpret religious matters for himself. The prime consideration is undoubtedly the heavenly order that is over all. But no one can expect to apprehend that order as it really is until aware of the personal equation. Like the prejudices and preconceptions that hinder the progress of science, private opinions in matters of religion are often a great hindrance. But religion is much more personal than science, and the positive consideration is the fact that each man in apprehending in



his own fashion also contributes his share. Religion if true is true for me and should aid me to understand my experience and live my life. I do not grasp the ideas of God, freedom, and immortality, until I reflectively develop them for myself. Nor do I understand the incarnation or the atonement until I see in what sense God is born within my soul.

Jesus always put the burden on the individual, counselling him to go and do likewise, to take up his cross and follow in the pathway of labour and service. Thus in the sphere of religion the individual necessarily stands at the centre. He it is who has erred, behaved himself in unseemly fashion, unduly self-assertive. He it is who must repent, turning from his selfishness to a life of obedience to the divine will. By living through the experience he knows its reality and significance. If well aware of what he has passed through, he understands that the process pertains to human nature, that he has made use of universal laws. Hence he knows that the significance of revelational authority is to bring men into awareness of the powers they already possess. He who begins to become a law unto himself by thus universalising the process is truly able to aid others.

To be a law unto oneself in religion means to discover original sources, turn directly to God, and find heaven. So many conventions, presup-



positions and beliefs stand in the way that one is well-nigh disheartened at times. Authority has so skilfully entrenched itself that almost every contingency has been anticipated. Ordinarily the only hope lies in the inner dissatisfactions of those who can no longer be contented with mere authority. When questions and doubts arise, the outsider may offer a word of cheer and promise. The process of emergence well under way, it seems strange indeed to the sometime slave of authority that men and women can so long be kept from the truth.

Rationally speaking, nothing seems more natural in the world than the direct relationship of each son of man to the heavenly Father. In actuality that relationship must ever be intimate and strong, or human beings could not subsist, but how many are the ways in which we deny Him! Possessing all the powers needed for awareness of the divine presence, we nevertheless stand aloof until some unwonted circumstance sets us partly free. What is required is an incentive sufficiently strong to enable us to gather the facts of inner experience and begin to search for their ground. Ordinarily one makes little headway in understanding religion until one acquires a philosophy of life.

At this point one is reminded of the question of genius versus orthodoxy so often discussed. The discerning man is able and willing to confess at



once that genius and orthodoxy are incompatible. But genius in the rationalistic sense is merely a forerunner of universal reason. He who thinks for himself has already begun to part company with the strictly orthodox. To be orthodox is to belong to the childhood of the world. Orthodoxy is no doubt a necessary stage for many, yet orthodoxy is no virtue. Really to be virtuous is to be true to individual conscience, hence the period of the reformation is inevitable. In so far as I possess talent, in so far as I am an individual, the rights of my genius are supreme, and I may well break free and begin creative work. The movement of humanity is not towards conformity but towards differentiation. Even when a man is still classified as orthodox it is necessary to specify what principles he stands for. The further a man emerges the more reason for stating what he individually believes. The time will come when each shall be known for what he is in his own right.

The man who is in earnest in the endeavour to become a law to himself is never a time-server, but already possesses intimations of immortality through knowledge of eternal values. He is in the world but not of it, although becoming more humane with the lapse of years. He is never a mere specialist in any field, but endeavours to know something about everything while seeking mastership in his chosen sphere. Consequently



he varies the form of his work, perhaps changes his habitat or country. On principle he takes a vacation from every relationship, even social and religious, that he may keep fresh, strong, pure. He not only visits foreign parts, attends other churches and social gatherings, but listens even to the heathen, endeavouring to find out why they are condemned as heathen.

Above all, to be a law unto oneself means to be a philosopher. This development is apt to begin with scientific reflection on the nature of things, but may be as well understood with reference to ethical principles. I am a law unto myself when I recognise, with Kant, that as a moral being I am a law-giver, I impose the moral law on myself. Inasmuch as a moral act is essentially my own act, I am independent and free. The law which I give myself is indeed the universal law under which all men have their being, yet it is real and true for me by virtue of my freedom. The moral law is over me, with its august supremacy, like that of the starry sky, hence I attribute it to a Being who is mightier than I. Moreover, when I do a moral deed I will that the law of my righteous conduct shall be universally observed. Still in the precincts of my selfhood this great law is made known. When I do right it is by my own freedom. My will to do right is wholly good in itself. I am not under compulsion, but am expressing the mandates of



my nature. Thus I am a law unto myself in the best sense of the word.

Yet in stating this we have already passed beyond the proposition that man can be a law unto himself. In truth, no man is sufficient unto himself. Consequently one turns from the bare forms of the Kantian ethic to the kingdom of social ends which Hegel and others have more fully developed. Once more I am reminded of my dependence. Virtue becomes fully itself when socially realised. Unless I go forth into the domain of controversies, problems, and social struggles, I shall be unable to keep or develop my subjective possessions. Fellowship with others will soften the rude outlines of my rigorous selfhood, relieve me of my peculiarities, render me fit for service. The tests of sanity are social. Subjectivity must complete itself through objectivity. It is the universal moral self that is a law.

The universe reproduces or mirrors itself in my consciousness and there is a sense in which my apprehension of it is unique. Unless I have met the dilemmas of self-consciousness I can hardly be said to be free in a philosophical sense. I must somehow have passed through a transition similar in intent to the Kantian criticisms of the nature of reason in order to enter the universal region of thought. For I must know how to make allowances for the equations of personality as a whole,



know in what sense the understanding "creates" its world. The subjective factors well in hand, I shall be in a position to consider the concepts of human experience in systematic order and proceed with constructive thought in all directions. He is philosophically free who is able to make these allowances, who is undisturbed by the sharp fires of criticism.

For in a profound sense what is real in the cosmos is real for all. Despite the fact that we know reality through the conditions of interior selfhood and its constructions, the fact of knowledge is not the primary consideration. Philosophy cannot complete its undertaking until it give back reality as it exists for all in the realm of conduct. The primary fact is that the world exists for all, that it possesses a nature such that we all apprehend essentially the same cosmos, despite the intervening conditions of human nature and the fluctuations of the personal life. The ideal is a completely scientific conception of the cosmos, conforming as far as possible to the canons of the natural sciences.

In one's philosophical growth it is inevitable that one should place less reliance on theoretical prepossessions, more on knowledge of fact and valid inductions therefrom. This transition is well seen in matters of religion. We begin with reliance on an authoritative system, and the factors of



individual experience seem to count for naught save as they give evidence of sin. In mere man there appears to be little hope; all depends on the divine grace. In due course we realise that the divine grace is a general principle, hence that something depends on the human responses and adjustments. Then it becomes a question of verification of religious truth, and little by little more emphasis is put on inner experience. In due time a new structure is reared on the experiences rejected during the years of allegiance to authority. We then realise that only through experience can we hope to find God or achieve heaven. Thus we begin to become masters of the situation and to relate our thought to the thought of the ages. To be independently philosophical is to be able to give a rational account of this process and its deliverances. Only those who give up the task as beyond human possibility drop back into the hands of authority. They become free who grasp the meaning of this process or transition.

Those who thus attain rational self-consciousness naturally ask, What can I add to the world's thought and thereby attain full self-expression? That is to say, the ideal of self-realisation emerges with new power. Hence I must know which one of the many gifts that spring from the same Spirit is mine. For I am little likely to attain fulness of being by proceeding at random. I can hardly



become master of my powers without realising that there is something especially within my power. Granted knowledge of that, there is nothing that should stand in the way, since the ideal that will most fully round my being into self-expression will also be most contributory to the welfare of my fellows.

There is a sense in which God and I exist alone together. Crises come in life when the soul, having listened to the best words of critics and friends, must take the matter in hand into the divine solitudes, assuming full responsibility for the decision, implicitly depending on the Father for the fulfilment of the promise thus sacredly made. For once again the greatest freedom is found through fullest dependence. When I realise that of myself I can do nothing, I am most completely a law unto myself. Into my being at such times a conviction comes which I am willing to put over against everything to the contrary that men may utter. At such times there appears to be no separateness between the Father's will or purpose for me and my own ideal. I will to do the work my Father has for me to do and in so willing I am free.

The possibility of being a complete individual is thus explained by the fact that my selfhood is made in the image and likeness of God. There is a point at which human and divine coincide or



correspond. What I can best do my Father wishes me to do, and the channel is open before me. It is His power that prepares the way, His wisdom that guides, His love that prompts. My selfhood is an organic part of His total purpose for humanity and harmonises with the rest so that what I do as a law unto myself does not deprive others of a similar possibility. Granted social knowledge of this organic relatedness in the divine selfhood, and the brotherhood of man would be here in earnest, the heavenly kingdom would have come.

The above principles contain the answer to objections that might be raised by theological and other critics to the effect that in pleading for individual efficiency we are overlooking the fact that there is but one Efficiency. It is understood as our first premise that God is supreme, the central reality and power; that all existence manifests His purposes, shares His life. But this understood, it is a question of human society and of the worth of each individual. The purpose implicit within each man is God's purpose, the guidances are from God, the incentives divine. But in each case there is the opportunity for rejection or response. Hence in each case there is a sense in which each makes himself what he is by meeting the opportunities which life affords.

By the above principles we also guard against the possible rejection of guidances or insights that



come more directly from the divine mind. For although we have concluded that all intuitions are mediated to us through the conditions of our own selfhood we do not by any means deny that God has direct access to us. What we point out is that when known by us the divine life takes form according to the conditions of our development. Hence there is every reason to study the subject with all seriousness that we may be able to make the true interpretation. There is a respect in which the judgment of each individual is somehow final for that individual. We all decide to make the venture, take the leading on faith. The fact that we become individually responsible does not exclude us from being recipients of the highest guidances. This possibility of direct openness to the divine love and wisdom will become clearer when we consider the two highest qualities in the human mind, love and the understanding.



## CHAPTER XII

### THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF REASON

THROUGHOUT our investigation we have turned more and more to the life of thought as the one unfailing resource. This tendency began with the recognition of qualitative distinctions, as opposed to the mere efficiency of the hand or of the world of time. On the physiological side, this involved an unpleasant limitation at first, since we were compelled not only to admit the differences in cerebral capacity which divide men into first-class and average workmen, but to acknowledge the dependence of the mind upon the brain. Moreover, we had to emphasise the fact that the majority of people are almost incurably creatures of instinct, passion, habit, and emotion. Nevertheless, we saw that for everybody, however constituted there are possibilities of self-knowledge, training, and mental co-ordination. We admitted the lowliness of human nature, its inertias and bondages, that we might be free to give full recognition to the powers that conquer. With the conclusion that the centre of power is out in the



daylight of consciousness, not concealed below the level of intellectuality, our inquiry assumed a hopeful turn which it has not lost. From that point on we placed increasing emphasis on knowledge, the power of control through genuine insight, supplemented by wise regulation of the energies thus brought into more intimate command. The chapter on work confirmed this emphasis by showing that all work in the best sense is due to mastery of the brain, hence of the power of thought which uses the brain as an instrument.

On first thought, the will might seem to be independent of the intellect, hence in alliance with the desires and emotions. This we acknowledged was indeed true originally, and remains true of those who do not pass beyond self-will. But the further we carried our study of the will the more intellectual the will became. For although many of the acts of attention by which the will is determined are external, sensuous, or otherwise enslaving, the will is called forth by higher objects as well, hence by ideas and therefore in the end by reason. The will that proves worthy of survival, worthy of freedom and of the moral life, is the rational will. In other words, reason is another and larger term for that mental activity which, known earlier as desire, mounts through the conflicts of the will and gradually attains strength as the basis of character. Accordingly, our inquiry



turned to the question of success through character, with the result that we placed still more emphasis on intellectual factors. Our analysis of insight overcame certain beliefs which might militate against full acceptance of the intellect, since uncritical faith in intuition implies a sort of rivalry in behalf of mere feelings and impressions. Insight, we saw, is really the intellect emerging into power. Hence while we did not deny any of the gifts of intuition we sought to pass beyond the stage of mere immediacy to that of real knowledge. Finally, we saw that a man does not begin to be a law unto himself until he turns to the original sources of life and power, and thinks for himself. The power of reason, in short, is that power whereby man overcomes the bondages of his finitude and rises to the level of the universal.

Reason is man taking thought concerning the nature of things and behaving as a son of God. While merely a creature of desire, he is bent on attaining his own will, and it is difficult to separate even the highest desires from merely personal motives. The emotions are personal to the last limit, even when love is attaining the level of unselfishness. The will is ordinarily the man in a decidedly limited sense. But reason is universal, signalises the fact that man has become disinterested, that he understands the laws of things, endeavours to adjust his conduct with the moral will



of the universe. Man as a moral individual is indeed moral reason giving the law unto himself, proving himself worthy of the will that is wholly good.

So many objections to the intellectual life are raised in all quarters that it is necessary to be most explicit, even at the risk of stating much that is perfectly obvious when our attention is called to it. Every now and then, when the victory of reason seems assured, some one will devise a new form of sensationalism, herald a fresh return to uncritical authority, or endeavour to show the futility of all human concepts by falling back on blind faith, or appealing to traditional arguments in favour of agnosticism. Thus the way of reason is hard, howbeit every opponent who takes arms against it is really preparing the way for the greater victory yet to be.

In so far as these objections imply the assumption that the intellect or reason is a faculty separate from the rest of mental life, as if arrayed against the heart, the feelings, and intuition, the simple and decisive answer is already clear from the preceding chapters. There is one mind consisting of various processes involving differences of emphasis. Hence the intellectual processes are as dependent as the instincts, desires, emotions, and the will on the subject-matter supplied by experience. The intellect has no separate or private



access to reality, hence no grounds for rival claims. It is simply a later phase of mentality within the same group of processes. It comes into view with the power of reflective choice, of sustained attention, and co-ordination with a view to attaining ends. The chief difference is that instead of taking experience merely as it comes, judging by the appearance, reason analyses, compares, brings into order, restates in terms of law, has the power to arrive at new results. Hence it is properly contrasted with feeling in so far as the mind through its power rises above the presented, looking before and after in search of meanings. The latest process to appear in the order of development, it is naturally most misunderstood, most hindered and thwarted in its development. The objections to its leadership are due to the vicissitudes of the individual in his long evolution into reason,

For example, it is sometimes said that the intellect is cold, abounds in pride and selfishness, hence is the weapon of disagreeable aristocrats. The answer is that everything depends on the man, his temperament, the sources of his experience, his type of thought. If cold, proud, selfish, these qualities are in the man, and will be expressed through everything he does. A man's intellect "stands in his light" only so far as his information is narrow, his intellect not broadly cultivated. That which is spiritual must indeed be spiritually



discerned, the province of the intellect being to study that which experience has revealed. But this is true in all departments of life. Not until you have the experience are you entitled to explain it. If you accept it on another's authority, that is because your general state of mind permits you to do so. To gainsay the intellect you must employ the intellect itself, since every possible proposition which human lips can utter is necessarily intellectual. Therefore it is merely a question of the one who is most enlightened, of the one who reasons best. Granted a change of heart, the intellectual life will then take its clue from the new enlightenment.

It is true some men have apparently discredited the intellect by undertaking to disprove various matters in advance of experience, or prove a doctrine for which they have had merely theoretical evidence. But few of us would make such an attempt if we paused to consider. We have been mistaken too many times to venture to assign the limits of possibility before we have had experience. It is plain that the only way in which we truly know is through experience. Hence the province of reason is to do its best with the results. On the other hand, a man is wholly justified in explaining so far as he can whatever new experience may come to him by reference to that which he already knows about the cosmos. A theory developed by



careful analysis of presented facts and compared with further experiences to see if idea and thing correspond, is very different from a theory invented but not confirmed.

The tacit assumption in the latter case is that the intellect is primary and can create truth out of its own substance. It would be far truer to hold that the will is primary, for we constantly find people who undertake to prove what they will to prove because of loyalty to creeds, institutions, leaders, and other persons whom they love. In the hands of the majority the intellect is in fact a mere instrument to establish what they will to establish, what they accept on faith. Experience is, however, prior to both the understanding and the will, and every one is dependent both in point of time and in regard to the relationship of mental processes. The fact that the power of reason is quickened in men later than the emotions and the will is surely a deeply significant fact. Some men there are whose noblest motive is to follow wherever truth may lead even though the truths of science conflict with the desires of their will.

A more serious objection is raised by those who apparently put a limit on human efficiency once for all by supporting the view that spiritual truth given through revelation is radically different from "merely natural truth" arrived at by means



of "merely human reason." It is characteristic of upholders of this view to collect a few instances of imperfection in human theory, such as the difficulties that beset Spencer and Huxley, then argue that these failures show the incompetency of human reason. These partisans never mention, if acquainted with, the greatest reasoners and system-makers of the world. To refer to the great systems would be in fact to spoil the contrast between these "weak attempts" and the "flawless structure" of divine revelation. It is tacitly admitted, however, that even revealed truth becomes true for man only so far as he employs his reason. Not even the most zealous partisan can deny this, because it is well known that believers in revelation do not agree, that texts and interpretations differ. When authorities differ, the only standard is reason. There must then be a criterion which like a mathematical statement is demonstrable apart from any particular mind or group of minds. But this is reason itself, a power which every human being can attain.

The so-called "unaided reason of man" is a myth. No one of us can know the simplest truth or reality apart from the relationship with our fellows which shows what is common, capable of withstanding tests. Reality is social, exists for men in a mutual world. Truth becomes ours in so far as we eliminate the preconceptions and emotions



that prevent us from apprehending it. Explain how the least enlightened of the philosophers comes into possession of his central idea and you will be able to explain the most inspired passage in scripture. For all truth comes by "revelation," if you please. There are not two kinds of knowledge, as if man's mind were to function imperfectly most of the time, then on occasion become a perfect means of expressing infallible truth. All reason is one. But there are degrees of enlightenment. Hence even revelation partakes of the conditions through which it is given.

The same is true of every one who falters in doubts and questionings between agnosticism and blind faith. To stop questioning seems to be the only course, hence every effort is made to quell the intellect. But the reasons for this situation will be found in the life of the individual who is in process of transition. If "a little learning is a dangerous thing," so is a little analysis, a little reasoning. The resource is, first, more information and experience, then thorough reasoning. He who really sounds his mind finds the difficulties in his own nature. For example, they may be due to a cantankerous or rebellious spirit, a heart that has never been touched, an obstinacy that has excluded knowledge and experience. On the other hand, a constructive clue or insight transforms the universe. It is not fair to judge



the intellect by its doubts and criticisms alone. Not until we pass beyond these do we understand them. The courage of the true man is seen in his willingness to encounter any objection for the sake of the truth.

Another objection to the intellect turns on the assumption that reason is purely formal, hence that intellectual people discard all statements that cannot be reduced to the correct processes of the syllogism. The ideal of reason is indeed to state all matters in demonstrably perfect form, and the effort to attain the completeness of statement of mathematics is always an incentive. Yet truth is larger than merely formal processes, hence the effort of the scholar is to state all matters in terms such that any man may verify, compare, or define, as the case may be, with the same results. Reason aims to be dispassionate, free alike from the "will to believe" and all other personal considerations. What cannot be stated in precise terms must be suggested in poetic, religious, or other terms. For reason must in any event be true to life, even though it be compelled to admit an element of irrationality. Until the latest conclusion has been reached by the last possible philosopher in the dying moment of the universe itself, it will be untimely to declare that reason has failed.

To reason is not merely to start with a formally



correct statement or premise, then proceed by means of a minor premise to a conclusion. To discover formal defects in an argument is not necessarily to confute it. Hence it means very little to point out that there are more considerations to be taken into account than a given philosopher has included in his argument. Formal processes are an aid, but they do not carry us to the end. Few devotees of philosophy would think of reducing their systems to mathematically exact formulas.

Reason is the human mind active at its best, drawing upon and sanely using all sources of information, preserving good sense, guided by insight. Reason takes account of and reacts upon everything that enters into human life. Its clues are not taken from its own nature alone, but rather from the types and laws of reality which experience reveals. Its dependence on its own nature is with the conviction that reason in man corresponds to reason in the cosmos, in the moral law, in the divine mind. Every one must make at least this assumption in order to proceed at all. We all with good reason maintain that what we have to deal with is one system, one universal order existing for all, cognisable by all. This world-system is in no way dependent upon your reason or mine. We hope to elevate our thought to the level of universal reason that we may know



the world as a systematic whole, not merely in fragmentary fashion. It involves only a minor assumption on our part, this belief that reason can apprehend the nature of things and interpret reality. For we did not give ourselves the power of reason. If made in "the image and likeness of God," it is at least natural to believe that we are endowed with rationality that is grounded in the divine reason itself.

The constructive reason in man is the highest activity of mental life. It is native to man in his best estate to endeavour to give a rationalised account of the reality of the cosmos. The basis of this endeavour is found in the fact that in man's self-consciousness the universe is represented, reproduced. Reflective man undertakes to restate the given wealth of experience in terms of law, order, system, beauty. This reflective reaction naturally begins with the visible order of things in the world of space and time. It is as natural that man should be eager in the course of time to interpret the highest presentations of his inner consciousness.

Otherwise stated, to reason about life is to employ a method, and the scientific method is by no means an invention of man. When dealing with a given field of interest it is natural to ask first of all, What are the facts, the actual experiences supposably open to all men under normal conditions?



The facts ascertained, it is no less natural to ask, What do they imply? What are the laws, tendencies, stages of change or growth? What are the goals or ultimate results? The third group of questions pertain to the principle of explanation, the hypothesis or theory called for to account for the facts. The cautious reasoner endeavours to let his explanation grow out of the facts, as one might infer in a charred forest that there has been a fire. To explain the facts in question, such as the markings on a ledge that indicate the ancient existence of an ice-age, is to state the causes that led to it. To interpret an experience, such as a moral deed, would be to show why it happened. The special sciences grow up around particular groups of facts, and involve the principles required by the occurrences within the given fields. Philosophy grows up in the same way, that is, as the largest undertaking of precisely the same sort—the endeavour to deal constructively with the facts and values of all the special sciences. The philosopher does not spin a system out of his head. His thought is not different from the thought of common-sense, save that it undertakes to overcome all misconceptions whatsoever and carry the process of good-sense as far as it can possibly be carried.

Thinkers note special stages in this development of a method of thought, and after a time the



stages of growth receive names. Thus the creation of a special science of reasoning by Aristotle was subsequent to the capital use of rational definition and method by Socrates and Plato. Socrates, the great pioneer of precise thinking, employed what appeared to be a roundabout method of reasoning, by confuting a man if possible, because he found that through the persistent employment of alternatives he could arrive at the greater truth. Consequently, Socrates withheld assent so long as he could prove a man's ignorance. The given theory as expounded by its advocate stood for one stage of thought, the Socratic criticism in quest of fundamental definitions marked a second stage. The third came into view when Plato and Aristotle discerned the idea or interpretative form which included the truth of the two preceding stages of thought. To see that all thinking naturally conforms to these stages is to have a dialectic method. He who has this insight will scarcely be content with any view of human life as first stated, but will insist that it be put through the dialectic of criticism. This need not be to mar any truth, however high its origin, or dispute the reality of any experience, however sacred. The dialectic process is meant to bring out the fuller reality and meaning. It differs from usual processes of thought precisely because it is critical and follows a method. To understand



the method is to see that no one could be satisfied with anything less.

The same sort of results reward our investigations when we inquire into the nature of proof. To be intellectual is supposably to demand proof which no one can give, and that is one reason why intellectual people are disparaged. But the true scholar is one who knows when proof may reasonably be expected. The attempt to prove the existence of God or the immortality of the soul may, for example, be given up as absurd. If God be the primary being without whom there could be no rational process at all, His existence is already implied in our first statement concerning Him. The most important considerations with which human thought deals are beyond proof, that is, they are immediate, whereas reason mediates, makes explicit the given.<sup>1</sup> I cannot prove that I exist or that you exist, but I can think about my experience and about yours in such a way as to imply our existence as selves. It would be futile for me to attempt to prove to you every statement I make. If I set forth principles which accord with your thought and apply in an explanatory way to your experience, you accept them precisely because they apply and are true in their own right, like the statement, two and two are four.

<sup>1</sup>I have analysed these matters at length in *The Philosophy of the Spirit*, chap. xi.



If you pass judgment upon an experience, singling out its elements and arriving at a conclusion, you inevitably make such inferences on the basis of your own intelligence. This is true even if you utter judgments in the name of authority, tacitly assuming that your own wit has had nothing whatever to do with the case. Strictly speaking, there is no proof of any proposition whatsoever except that made by the individual for himself, no verification other than that which you or I may make. Hence there is always a sense in which any idea you may hold is always your own idea even in case of the idea of God. You may hold that your idea corresponds with reality, but you make this assumption on your own authority. When your consciousness changes your idea may change, and you may have many gods in a lifetime. Your idea of God, Life, or the Absolute, is your own idea of the working principle of thought in accordance with which you try to interpret your experience in and of the world. It is native to the human mind thus to try to give an ultimate account of its own operations. The significance of the critical philosophy is that it centres interest so decidedly upon the human equation that no one who thinks consecutively can overlook it.

If you hold that a primary reality exists corresponding to this your idea, assumed to be secondary, you make this assumption as an act of



faith, because your experience appears to be better accounted for in that way. Whatever experiences and insights you may appeal to by way of substantiation of your faith, your appeal is always for reasons, and it is the philosopher's province to render these explicit. You may shrink from acknowledging these reasons, alleging that your faith far surpasses reason, but you will always do this with lame reasoning in face of the opportunity to stand erect and indulge in maturity of thought. Your only resource, when you dislike the philosopher's statement, is to reason more adequately than he.

Those of us who meet life reflectively are steadily making observations and constructive judgments, and thus we are gradually rearing a theory of the world. This need not imply originality, for we pass through the same process in the study of the great systems of thought. Every now and then we see these systems in a new way and thus we advance a stage in our insight. No one can expect to understand a system who does not as it were live with it as one might dwell with friends under the same roof through varying conditions. But the point is that we mediate, react upon everything we touch. Since this is true, why should we not begin on as sound a basis as possible, making sure of our facts and drawing valid inferences? For many of us this would mean beginning with the



first step in the use of the scientific method, that is the discovery of the actually presented facts of experience, since it is highly important to know the difference between facts and the rival theories which purport to account for them.

In this plea for the scientific method one does not mean that intellectual enlightenment is the same as being "liberal." The liberal is apt to take pride in the fact that he has outgrown numberless beliefs still held by the uninformed. Thus he becomes dogmatic in regard to the higher criticism of the scriptures, he assumes the finality of the Kantian criticism, or laughs at one who has not yet accepted the Darwinian hypothesis. In contrast with this cocksureness, the enlightened person is ever cautious when making general statements, well aware that the results are not all at hand as yet. He is eager to penetrate farther back to the sources of human experience and knowledge, to enter deeply enough into the experiences of men to make sure that he appreciates what is best, never placing too much stress on the crudities of human belief. He is therefore more than merely liberal; he is tolerant, charitable, philosophical; he accepts the entire cosmos, with everybody and everything in it, intent on knowing the total system of things, excluding nothing. He may have as much critical information as the mere liberal, but he must outdo him in genuine liberality.



The dogmatism of the mere liberal is often worse than that of the intellectually innocent.

To be broad-minded in the popular sense of the term is not necessarily to be wise. Some people on principle maintain a kind of open-mindedness which they call being "universal." They are ready to hear all types of thought expounded, they have interests without limit. Admirably free in most respects, they are undeveloped in others. That is, their broad-mindedness pertains to the objects of the senses, the instincts and emotions. But this is not universality as nature teaches it. Nature is not merely elemental, does not merely produce; nature mounts from level to level, in order and degree; nature culminates, attains ends. To be universal is to discriminate, ascertain values, stating the facts in question in terms of law. Hence the universal in the end implies a system which organises, makes whole. Moreover, a universal throws out some considerations as of little import or of the nature of over-production. Hence the merely elemental is only an introductory stage, like the play of the child, or any expressiveness that does not yet involve meanings.

Hence in the study of the great faiths of the world he is equipped who is able to discern what is significant, essential. Merely to listen to representatives of various faiths in a sympathetic spirit counts for little. That which the uncritical



listener applauds may well be that which is of least moment because most peculiar. The reflective listener seeks to penetrate beneath the surfaces that he may grasp the first principles underlying the given doctrine. His part is to reconstruct in imagination the thought which leads up to the doctrine as now expounded, that he may know its type, see what attitude it implies and what contribution it makes to universal thought.

The enlightened man puts things in the right order. He well knows that there is an attitude which impedes the way, insisting that every utterance shall conform to his standard. Hence he gives abundant recognition to the fact that the spirit in man is the leader. He knows that experience comes first, then thought, and that no one is wise enough to map the spiritual cosmos in advance. He knows, too, that the element of appreciation, sentiment, empirical response, will always exceed that of reflective description, which follows haltingly behind. But all this once understood, the more intellectual he can become the better. Simply to say and to maintain that spiritual quickening is of the heart, not of the head, is to adopt an intellectual standard, for a criterion is necessarily intellectual. The crucial point is not then with reference to the nature of the intellect, for we all employ that in any event. The question



is whether we always permit the Spirit to take the lead, whether we distinguish between the finite spirit and the Holy Spirit, taking care lest we intrude the human will and thought, the merely personal preference or emotion.

We have succeeded in this discussion if we have put the emphasis where it belongs at last. Decidedly finite, personal influences, such as emotions, preferences, dislikes, impede the life of the heart as surely as pride, conceit, and coldness impede the intellect. Indeed there are more allowances to be made for the heart than in regard to the head, for reason is by nature universal, while the heart is personal. It is primarily a question of the man, the woman, the type of life or experience. Some need to be broadened intellectually, while others need to be touched in their hearts. We need not be disconcerted by the personal equation if we understand it.

But it is also in part a question of the prevailing point of view. We have noted in an earlier chapter, for example, the artificial point of view which prevails in certain works on psychology.<sup>1</sup> For writers whose point of view is "structural" the human mind is regarded, not as experienced, but as scientifically reducible to sensational elements. Everything of a purposive nature is rigidly ruled out. In other words, the interest is to develop a

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. III.



complete science, one that is æsthetically a whole. On the other hand, the empiricist writer, Professor James, whose lead we have followed, describes the mind as you and I experience it and undertakes to be true to life. In each case the results depend on the starting-point, and we have two decidedly different types of psychological theory. Artificial theorists are found in all fields where human knowledge has attained scientific precision, and allowances must always be made for them. This is no reason, however, for discrediting human powers. The ideal reasoner is the one who allows life to take the lead, who does not decide in advance or arbitrarily what shall constitute his science.

Still another negative tendency is traceable in modern times to Kant with his *a priori* analyses of pure reason. But, again, we need not be disconcerted by a technical interest, judged by those who are far from being close students of Kant. Hegel, Kant's most systematic follower, has been charged with the attempt to deduce the entire cosmos by *a priori* reasoning, as if "pure thought" were all that is required for a starting-point. But those who herald this opinion abroad neglect the fact that Hegel arrives at his dialectic method *by an analysis of consciousness as directly presented*, and aims throughout his system to develop a series of concepts which shall be as true to life as this the starting-point. In the Supplementary Essay



appended to *The Philosophy of the Spirit* I have made a technical study of this subject and given all the evidence required to vindicate Hegel as one of the most concrete of all philosophers.

Nor need the devotee of reason be disconcerted when a clear-thinking writer like Bergson attacks the position of the rationalist.<sup>1</sup> For what Bergson offers is a rival series of concepts intended to be more faithful to life than those of the artificial theorists. This is really a vindication of human reason. It once more shows conclusively the profound import of the law which we have been studying throughout this book, the law of interest or attention. Everything depends in the first place on one's quickening, the experiences in question, the facts brought into view. Whatever interests us the mind works upon, forthwith producing results according to the interest. Reason takes its clue from the subject-matter presented. That the temperament of the thinker is a factor goes without saying. What is needed is thinkers of a more and more dispassionate type, then comparisons between their results, references back to life, thus on and on until we shall arrive at universal truth.

We return, then, to the profound truth that there is but one mind with various processes, one of which is reason, a process through which if we

<sup>1</sup> See especially his *Creative Evolution*, Eng. trans., Henry Holt and Co., New York, 1911.



are critical and diligent we may arrive at truth and reality. Reason in brief, then, is that power in man by which he singles out facts, analyses and classifies them, then proceeds to develop their implications in terms of laws, universals, ideals and values by systematic interpretation. The facts and laws are not the inventions of man, hence no one need fear that he may be deprived of anything of value. The implications are found in the nature of things, like the law of gravitation discovered by Newton. Man formulates the implied principle or law, then proceeds to show how the force in question works, stating the law in exact terms applicable the world over under the same conditions. It is the nature of things that is rational, not any scheme of man. Man in his enlightenment follows the order of nature. He is able to do this because he has the same nature in himself.

The truth about the cosmos is immanent in the cosmos itself, and what philosophy undertakes to do is to make this truth explicit. All truth is ultimately one, that is, it pertains to the nature or system of things. The truth about religion, including the truths contained in sacred books, is a part of that truth; and the data are supplied by the books, prophets, dogmas, creeds, that is, by the given experiences and beliefs of men. The philosophical student of these subjects does not invent his philo-



sophy, although he may suggest hypotheses regarding matters not yet understood. He is limited by the given subject-matter and by the reasoning powers of his own mind. His aim is to state the elements, laws, and values of religions in such a way that any man with an equal degree of enlightenment could arrive at the same conclusions. The most enlightened statements in this connection would doubtless be those which would explain even revelation, inspiration, prophecy, incarnation, in universal terms. This would not be audacious on man's part, since the subject-matter is already given, and since these principles and experiences can be described, explained, and interpreted from the human side. A sacred writing contains its own rationality and is proved by its workability or fruits. Inspiration is really such if it make known truths which can be co-ordinated with other known truths. A prophet is worth while who really stirs men to good works. The incarnation proves itself many times over by the results to which it leads. The same Mind that reveals, inspires, quickens a man into prophecy, incarnates itself, declaring the same truth which the entire cosmos reveals. Hence to get our clue in all these matters we only need think back to the great Source whence cometh all wisdom, in whose reason man's own reason is grounded.

The efficiency of human reason is therefore



dependent on the prevailing ideas of each man. If a man's attitude imply pessimism, rebellion, he will employ his intellect to sustain his attitude, and will find abundant evidence to prove his point. It is nearly always easier to argue against a thing than to plead for it. But the efficient will is the life of true reason. Emerson was nearly right when he declared that "the hardest task in the world is to think." Reason and effort ascend together. Reason is in fact the supreme effort or reaction of man in the presence of his environment. The intellectual life seems a paltry thing, the play of the idle, productive of little save paradoxes and doubts, if we persist in emphasising the negativities of life. Or, if in some measure enlightened, we put forth valiant effort, it leads us on and on until we appear to be participating in the very work of creation itself. Reason was given us that we might become more efficient, and if we do not make the effort we have no ground for complaint.



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE LAW OF LOVE

IT is commonly agreed that in love to God and love to man the highest law of human existence is fulfilled. This complete love is not merely accepted as the summary of all that is noblest in the righteous life because the New Testament assures us that it is "the law and the prophets," but because human experience and thought confirm it. The love for God that is manifested by the hermit, the isolated seer or saint, is never love in its wholeness or sanity. On the other hand, those who try to make the brotherhood of man take the entire place of love for God are no less one-sided. It is no longer necessary to support these points in this social age, with its belief in the divine immanence. We need rather to consider how this two-fold ideal shall be realised under the changed conditions of our day. One can scarcely hope to add a new idea to the rich literature of love. But it is always possible to afford new clues by restating the ideal in the light of present tendencies of thought and life.



No one can claim that we are left in doubt in regard to the nature of this great love for the One and the many. The New Testament is above all a book about the transcendent affections of the heavenly life. The best thought of the author of the Epistles of St. John is put into his characterisation of love, and St. Paul's writings culminate in a classic summary of the greatest of all Christian powers. The life of the Master portrays the ideal of love for the Father and for humanity through complete fidelity to the tasks that lie at hand. He who would know the supreme pathway of love cannot plead ignorance, or claim that the example stops short of full fruition. Moreover, in great hymns the ideal which at times seems beyond human attainment is mediated to us in illuminating forms. The poets have dedicated their best works to love, divine and human, revealing all phases of the heart's affection, while love has ever been the central theme of the novelists and dramatists, sometimes of the essayists and philosophers. Above all, we have everywhere about us splendid exemplifications of the father's love, the mother's devotion, the consecration of the reformer, the zeal of the genuine worshipper. Surely this is an amazing and wondrous possession.

With all this agreement concerning the highest ideal and all this descriptive literature, why is it that love does not as yet prevail? If God is love,



if love is the very centre of human life, why is it that multitudes are suffering and struggling in poverty, misery, degradation, as if left utterly alone? Why do men stand off from their fellows as if they were not in any sense of the same kindred, but rather like foes, ready at a moment's notice to protect what is boastfully their own? Surely it is well to look at the darker picture side by side with the bright one, acknowledging all that is rampant in human nature, admitting the rarity of ideal love. All that is most vital and real is commingled with love. The literature referred to is abundant in its confirmation of this fact. To know love, see its power in the world, and work with it, we must look at life and see it whole, effacing nothing from the picture. If faith must frequently be summoned to our aid, let it be so, but we must be brave and insistent, as true to fact as to ideal—never forgetting to preserve and to manifest the tender emotion while reading its history in the world.

The general answer many would make to these questions is that man is a creature of habit, passion, and emotion; that the world is selfish. It is ordinarily said that our situation in life will be no better until human nature changes, and that human nature will never change. But this is sheer pessimism and we demand the triumph of love. It is possible to make headway from the start if



instead of merely regarding love as a tender emotion with the odds against it we place more emphasis on the *idea* of love, undertaking to inculcate sounder knowledge of its nature, its scope, and power. We may advance still further by more seriously asking, How can our powers be so trained and co-ordinated as to prepare for the expression of love? What qualities favour love's expression? What light may be gained through knowledge that man is in the beginning a divided self? How may love be made more efficient by fostering the conditions under which it lives and conquers? Surely we have no right to condemn the world and turn from God in despair when as yet we have made no attempt seriously to answer these more searching questions.

To give answer it is necessary to look deeply into human life, to search far back, look far forward. For love pertains to the lowest as well as the highest in human evolution, reminding us both of the brute and of the angel. Its mysteries are soluble only through imaginative sympathy with every propensity that actuates mankind, a sympathy which transcends class-distinctions, and passes beyond the dominion of conventionality. The quest for its meaning also takes us into the territory of the unexpected, since its most marvellous expressions sometimes well into the hearts of the despised, the untutored, and the condemned.



The solution of the divinest mystery is not attainable by turning at once to the Father, as if demanding a solution before we realise the full force of our problem. When, granted intimate knowledge of the waywardness of the human heart, we can look upon the passions and contests of men and still see the love of God fulfilled, then indeed shall we be able to love both God and man in high degree. If God is love, His productive heart is profoundly involved in these questions. Possibly we have not taken into full account the far-reaching means to the high end to be attained through our sufferings. Possibly we have held an arbitrary, exclusive idea of love, instead of looking for its law even in the despised things of life.

We may well begin by more generously accepting the entire human cosmos, in search of a larger view of love as a universal power. Whatever love may appear to be, however transcendent, it is plain that men have always been deeply influenced by the theories of love that have prevailed. So long as this is the case it will be possible to further the cause of love by propounding a better view.

To say this is not, however, to be unmindful of the fact that there is an element which surpasses even the most appreciative description. Love is as rich, as mysterious as life itself; and we all know how life eludes us, now drawing from us expressions of bitter discontent, now eliciting our



admiration and our joy, again baffling our wits beyond all endurance. Life's sublimest joys and greatest sorrows are mingled with love. It is love we fight for, live for, give everything to win. Yet since this greatest of incentives is better known than aught else, there appears to be every reason why we should say what we can, leaving to the heart of each to make that addition without which our description were poor indeed. Perhaps our reluctance to speak about the most sacred element in human experience is a mistake. Possibly, half the trouble is that love signifies so much vagueness of feeling that it has not been brought into the clear light of thought. If an inadequate philosophy of the affections has prevailed, the resource is more and better reasoning.

Love is a quality or emotion, then, that is involved in the whole of life, and in the present analysis we are presupposing all that has been said in the foregoing chapters about the original promptings and incentives amidst which the emotions appear. First, we propose to regard it rather as a beginning or means than an end, a prompting far more than a fulfilment. While it partakes of the unstable, flighty nature of the other emotions in its earlier stages, it becomes less like them as the human heart ascends, and is notable rather for its constancy. Its law is best seen in relation to the mile-posts which men pass along the way, the



standards they raise, and the goals they pursue. For while in its essence love is elusive, is a unitary power suffusing the whole of life, the consequences to which it leads may be separately analysed, and under the head of the idea we may state the worth of the otherwise ineffable emotion.

Looking at the subject more closely, we find an abundance of people who are able to tell us what love is not, hence by implication what it is. We have been warned since our youth not to accept the subtle influences and spells that pass as love. The more we know about the dependence of the mind on the body the less likely are we to be misled by its blandishments. Thus as the years succeed one another we may eliminate more and more of the flesh from our idea, steadily building up an ideal of noble, spiritual affection, an affection which transmutes the lower nature into the higher. By inward struggle we have learned once for all that there are two natures in man, and we have come to regard love as a gift apart from passion and essentially unselfish. Yet it is clearly impossible to sunder love from its physical history, a truth most beautifully expressed by Lowell in his poems on love and by Browning in his "By the Fireside." Love in some guise is the incentive which sends all men forth into the world of experience. Life is replete with instincts that manifest love—love for existence, and the conditions that make life



comfortable and happy, for the excellencies and joys, for companionship. Love is commingled with all our instincts, likes, and preferences, whether of the head or the heart. Without taking thought we find ourselves pursuing any number of ends amidst a wealth of propensities that relate us to our fellows on every side. Oftentimes we know not that we love until well launched in a new experience, and then only by painful contrast do we at first know what love is. First in point of time, and first with most of the race throughout their history, the incentives of love are what make us creatures of action, courage, power. Love brought us into being and imbues every activity that stirs within our selfhood, this too despite the other truth that pride, lawlessness, sensuality, selfishness, and sin, also mingle with the motives that give men birth. This indeed is the fundamental prompting around which these secondary impulses gather, and we never read human history aright until we discover that this is so. At the heart and in the beginning, whatever else may intervene, there is love. Hence fundamental knowledge of the heart includes knowledge of all.

Children go forth into the life of play, for example, prompted by love in the sense of self-expression. With restless, persistent power the young life manifests its needs through higher forms, until it wins the attention of parents and teachers, and is



developed in appropriate and well-known directions. The one who approaches the child through the wisest love calls forth the highest reaction; when love for children and the matters that pertain to them is lacking the secondary activities are difficult to regulate. As love advances, its objects become more clearly defined, its varied activities more fruitful. If it meet love and sympathy, the right encouragement coupled with a wise system of training, creative love moves steadily upward to accomplishment. If it meet indifference or severe criticism, love retreats, checked, saddened, and suppressed. It is wonderful how many matters are quickly adjusted when all is well with love.

Again, there is the love for beautiful forms which manifests itself at a later stage of human development. This æsthetic love first awakens in wonder, admiration, praise; for example, in the love of beautiful scenes in nature, particularly in the field and woods, then through love for illustrations in books, pictures, statuary, and other products of fine art. However restricted in expression, it is at least manifested for the works of others, in the enjoyment of music or the attainment of a high degree of excellence on the part of our fellows. Eventually the love of beauty lifts us to the divine, becomes part of the ideal that most directly furthers our spiritual evolution. Thus the love of



the beautiful shows its kinship to love for the good and "the beauty of holiness" transfigures the noblest phase of religion.

A certain instinct for knowledge possesses us long before we consciously become devotees of science. It begins its activity far back in childhood with eager curiosity and restless questionings. It manifests itself later in a half-emotional way, and only gradually becomes itself in the dawning of manhood's life of reason. All through our existence this love of knowledge still urges us on, never permitting us to be wholly satisfied even when checked by outward circumstance, blind allegiance to authority, or a mistaken religious belief. Truth could not be itself without love, for love is the essence or content of which the idea is the explicit form. Reason does not create its objects or invent its field of inquiry, and is not independently responsible for its own nature. Love supplies the absorbing subject-matter, while reason brings into clear light the order and beauty of the living sequences. True reason is the logic of love, that is, of universal love, head and heart are one in the eternal Mind. The order which reason makes explicit in its systematic account of the cosmos is a gift of the experience which makes the philosopher essentially a lover of wisdom.

As Plato long ago pointed out, it is love that



sends us forth in eager quest for completion through the moral life. As mere individuals we are surrounded by limitations, with the odds against us. As social beings, loving and serving, working in consort with our fellowmen, a great realm of possibilities opens before us. Our sense of incompleteness expresses our dependence, shows how we are bound one to another by ties that call for moral self-completion. The love that stirs within us and sends us forth in search of friendship is not merely love for persons but for the eternal idea which rises supreme above all others, unites with the true and the beautiful to constitute the divine order. There is first the love or desire for complete self-realisation, then the idea of the good as the explicit object which love pursues. More than in the case of love of beauty and truth, love for the good leads our consciousness to the divine, enabling us not merely to live and serve but to possess a philosophy of goodness.

Above all there is love for persons, the greatest incentive in human life. Beginning with the manifestations of mere instinct, long associated with private or selfish desires, this love gradually emerges and becomes purified until at length it appears as the actuating principle in the noblest affiliations of men and women. Starting also as a purely domestic emotion, centring about the family, it extends to the larger life of service and



self-sacrifice; and is completed in extensive social groups within and without the church. Here as elsewhere the emotion comes first, later the organisation or form.

Thus we have a general system of love and its allied activities, with the ideas or objects in which they are fulfilled. Love is the central or primal activity which originally stirs us and leads forth to experience, also the chief actuating principle along the way. Out from the single source proceed the various distinctive lines of development, known by the goals they seek rather than by the love which prompted them—love for the beautiful, the true, the good; for persons and groups of persons in family life and organisations; for the cosmic whole, the moral order, the invisible kingdom; above all for God. Although in the original sense an immediacy or native emotion, allied with pleasure and pain, love is singled out from these impulses and in a progressive life constantly undergoes development from the merely immediate into the realm of ideas, aspirations, and inward control through reason.

That love is the central principle of our nature becomes still more clear when we note that in another phase it is will. If you would really persuade a man, young or old, put before him an object which he is likely to will to make his own, love him in such a way that his will may change.



When will has found a way to its end and has brought abundant experience, reason may indeed follow and show why the way was sought. But will is first in order, that is, love is the real incentive. This is not of course to say that the will ought always to triumph, for one would like to be open both to will and to reason. There are matters that belong rightfully and primarily to the heart, such as that wonderful love by which men and women choose affinities. Yet there are also matters that pertain to the head in which no interference of the will is desirable. As human evolution goes forward and love's objects become more explicit, it is inevitable that life should be stated more as idea rather than as will. Hence there is a profound sense in which he is mature who obeys reason rather than will.

By will-power in extreme form we mean a less noble factor in human life than love, for love does not become crystallised and severe. When will is obstinate and rigid, it has already ceased to be love and is subject to selfishness. A selfish person is above all one in whom the will is triumphant. The difficulty is that side by side with marked efficiency, there is the narrowing assumption that one's personal way is the only right way, my doctrine is true while yours is false. When the will is thus enslaved all partners suffer. For the possessor of such a will the way is prepared



for the greatest struggle in human life—the yielding of the will through moral regeneration.

In contrast with this arbitrary self-assertiveness, love is ever outgoing, appreciative; it accepts, welcomes, finding room for many people of diverse types in the world. In love's enlightened world each soul counts for one and one only, each man is encouraged to make his gift. Love moves forward, its pathways lead far beyond mere allegiance to personal leaders, to admiration for universal objects; and these are not limited by time, place, person, or authority of any sort. In due course our revered leaders are seen in proper perspective in the light of the ideal ends which they serve. Later, both persons and the causes to which they are devoted are seen in relation to the divine Person.

The arbitrary person is one who refuses the enlightenment which the head may bestow upon the heart. The assumption is that the feminine or emotional element is all-sufficient, that the intellect is cold and unfeeling. But careful analysis in the light of results shows, as we have before noted, that intuition is at best merely a half, incapable of attaining wholeness apart from the rational or verifying factor; while in many instances an emotion is merely a clue of no value until tested in the light of its consequences. An intuition proves its worth when it leads to successful eventuations,



modified or elaborated through the critical aid offered by reason. The love that is content to remain mere emotion is forever immature and unstable. Mere warmth of feeling is in itself no sign of the noble and worthy, but may lead down as well as up. Genuine love accepts the good offices of reason and is tempered by wisdom. Love and wisdom together make the perfect whole.

In all this, the critic will insist, I am assuming that love is unselfish, spiritual, whereas by my own argument it follows that love is the life even of selfish man. The difficulty is that one must use the same word with reference to widely different motives and types of experience. In the foregoing account I have endeavoured to keep free from theological entanglements and to hold to the Greek conception of human nature as inherently good. That is to say, the power of love in us, even when manifested on the sensuous level, is of and from the divine. Love is the universal activity within us which sends us forth in pursuit of the divine. By implication it is already that which is highest, purest, noblest. Moreover, the self, hence the will, is inherently sound, true; for the soul is a child of God, and exists in order that it may fulfil the purposes of the Father. As little children we go forth innocent, pure and fresh from heavenly sources. Unless heaven were "about us in our infancy," unless we were potentially angels, unless



the Father's love were the prime motive power we never could become heavenly beings in the far future.

Evil and sin are not explained by assuming that the elements are bad, the self is wicked. Equipped with a nature capable of withstanding the frictions and tribulations of growth, replete with instincts, guided by a love that is capable of leading us through everything to the end, we are sent forth into being, unconscious, unquickened. It is natural that with all the care for self required for existence in this natural world we should at first express our love through the channels of self-interest. But it is not necessary to charge love with selfishness, or call it "blind." The natural history of love involves every experience in human life. That history is the record of love's progressive efforts to attain fulness of expression. Thus a time comes when passion and sensuality are put behind, while love presses steadily on. So with all the fluctuations of the human heart through the love-affairs of young and old, the relationships of parent and child, husband and wife, son and mother-in-law. These are stages in the great struggle of the soul into fulness of being. It would be unfair to judge love by the conditions of its evolution.

There is a sense, to be sure, in which love is personal and must ever remain so. The mother



must care first for her own child, protecting it with special devotion and a display of peculiar tenderness. The husband or wife is dear in an individual respect never shared with the world in general. There is a great difference between friendship and complete marital love based on genuine inner affinity. These are rightful differences. They are personal and should remain so. There is nothing higher in the cosmos than to be a person. One would take very little interest even in an angel who should be merely impersonal. One has no sympathy with the rude levelling doctrines which undertake to reduce people to so many units, as if quality were of no account. Love begins by being personal and never succeeds in discovering aught that is higher.

Nevertheless, we have seen that in the last analysis love is intelligible in the light of the ends it seeks. Love for the true and the beautiful, for example, becomes differentiated from love of persons, and rightfully so. Although pursued by persons, more or less for the sake of persons, and in behalf of the good, the arts and sciences are so far independent that they flourish best when most free. Hence the discerning man is one who knows in what respect love leads now to personal and now to universal ends.

Even in the sphere of the good the transcendence of the impersonal and universal over the personal



is seen. That is, disinterestedness takes the place of private considerations. The growing moral man becomes steadily disinterested, narrowing his essentially personal relationships to very few. But the two loves continue side by side in the normal life. The term "heavenly love" is perhaps best expressive of this union of the personal and the impersonal. Such love has in view the highest spiritual welfare of the soul, of all souls, hence is impartial, universal. Yet it centres about personality and is manifested in behalf of personalities. It is not love as ordinarily understood but love fully and harmoniously united with wisdom.

Love is at once the strongest bond in human life and the power that most fully sets men free. If we could do as we like, many of us would doubtless turn from people who are able to be of great service to us, we would sunder family ties and other relationships, and start anew in other fields. But it is fortunate for us that love and the duties that grow out of love compel us to remember and take account of the fact that we have fathers, mothers, grandparents, sisters, brothers, cousins. Thus intimately and inseparably related we are compelled to learn the deeper lessons of life. As a reward for our fidelity the greater love is bestowed upon us. In fact, one might almost say that true love begins with the deepening of ties that hold us where we are and help us to be unselfish. If we



could endlessly yield ourselves to its enticements, we should never know true love. But when we have once committed the heart in full measure to one person, family or group, the will comes to the support of love, scattered affection becomes an affair of the past, and the conditions of stable affection are attained. Thus love and character grow strong together and life is characterised by a purpose.

In our early zeal we are apt to think that love means mating with one person and going away to enjoy life. Now, it is true that love of a certain type begins with a relationship of two, and that every pair of lovers need opportunity to live and grow together. Yet the severer tests of love come with the relationship between the two and their fellows. The ties that unite two souls are strengthened in so far as the influences that seek to come between them are understood and met. The heart-relationships of a year seem meagre in comparison with those of six, eight, a dozen years; and steadily the reality grows. In instances where external influences are permitted to enter and mar or break the gentle, sacred relationship of two souls, a prime reason is found in the fact that mutual understanding fails to keep pace with mutual love. Love of the ideal sort which we find occasionally amongst our fellows is not a simple relationship, but it has become its ideal actuality



through growth, by mutual contact with the wealthiness of human experience, through considerateness, through wisdom, and ever-ready adaptation.

It is necessary to insist upon the transition from emotion to idea, from simplicity to fulness inasmuch as the mere idea of it is usually scorned. People linger endlessly in the emotional stage, endeavouring to hold fast to a sort of ecstasy, as if only thus could love be won. They steadily refuse to bring their affections out into the light of thought, as if intellectual inspection would spoil them. Thus love is confined, checked, kept one-sided as if there were hostile elements that would destroy it. But those large and generous people who stand as ideal representatives of love, permit love to fill their entire being, they love with the totality of the selfhood. Such people find a joy in the mere presence of a revered friend, although no word be spoken, and again in the mutual work to which both are consecrated, the work that proceeds quietly from day to day, with no flourish of trumpets to proclaim it.

Love, one insists, is by nature outgoing, enlarging, quickening. The sign of its genuine arrival is seen in one's longing to share with others, an outreaching in sympathy and eager joy. Those who fail to move outward and forward into completer life are inevitably drawn in the opposite



direction—into a smaller world than before. But the one who responds, moving outward with the new wave of life, finds the possibilities of existence developing without limit. Hence when two who meet in real love, welcome others into their larger world, they steadily grow in devoted tenderness.

Again, love is creative. If men knew this and were able to turn their thoughts and activities in productive directions they would find a sure escape from the emotional fluctuations of the artistic temperament and the inner conflicts of the religious life. The stirrings of love cannot be impeded but must have expression. To realise that love is divine in origin and tends towards heavenly goals is to see that something is demanded of us by way of co-operation. To respond in full earnestness is to consider the particular end just now aimed at by love, hence to become absorbed in the objective. That is to say, while the creative prompting may be the same in origin in us all, it assumes different forms according to our capacity and experience. Some are prompted to paint a picture, some to design a building, others to compose, to write, to sing, or play; still others turn the creative life into the work of the church or some organisation devoted to social welfare. The crucial point in each case is the expression of love for the benefit of others in contrast with the tendency to keep the new life for oneself.



Love not only brings freedom but makes life new. It is remarkable how many times friends are able to make a fresh start in mutual work and service when they meet in love, effacing differences of opinion, drawing nearer to the everlasting realities. A word of love and cheer surpasses all other utterances in power. For love's sake one is willing to undertake the seemingly impossible, to begin again when all signs have failed. If the companion one seeks is not forthcoming, love finds a way to distribute itself, so to speak, so that its ends are attained. Love and a few possessions, and one or two congenial souls make a world for us. Without love nothing is truly worth while.

In this description the central point on which one insists is that love is essentially an activity starting with the immediate promptings of human nature, and passing through various stages. Hence love is not intelligible through static conditions but in the light of its evolution. This is the side of love most often neglected in our zeal for immediate possession, or for satisfaction in the present. Love's choicest gifts are not found in the emotions which fill the hour and sweep outwards to the horizon, leading us to ignore all else; they are bestowed amidst fluctuations and new adjustments along the line of growth. He who does not know that love, especially marital love and the best love which



the Spirit inspires in us, means development, will miss the greatest joys as well as the profoundest lessons. For when we realise that varied development accompanies love through the years, we gather the rich values of experience into an ideal consciousness that moves on apace with added power. Thus understanding plays a greater part in our affections, love becomes calmer and wiser, filling the inner spaces where once we would have been disturbed. Then, marvellous to relate, we discover that at each turning-point love has some new joy commingled with the compensation that completes the latest round of tests or tribulations. This renewing, quickening power of love, delighting us by its noble surprises, is the greatest wonder of the heart.

With the growth of more illuminating ideas of love there comes knowledge of the conditions under which it can best be expressed. While we cannot at will feel love, we may lower the voice, express ourselves in gentler ways, with more kindness and considerateness. We may also emulate the best qualities our friends manifest. For example, here is a man of seventy years who always speaks in the same pleasant tone, with a kindly smile. His wife testifies that in her forty years of married life she has never heard him speak in an angry tone, although he has had abundant provocation. This is a great thing to be able to say of a man. To be



thus kind and pleasant is to go very far towards manifesting the tenderest love.

Again, when there is a division within the self and it is plain that one's inheritance does not foster the expression of love, one may positively refuse to identify the self with the unloving traits that have been handed down. If obstinate, disagreeable, selfish in disposition, yet courteous, kind, pleasant, when in company and with friends, one may group the disagreeable traits manifested at home under the head of "the old self" that is being conquered, identifying the true self with the gentler qualities. Each day one may make determined effort to express the ideal self, turning from the old as from an enemy, withdrawing the attention, hence the life, and bestowing it upon the ideal. Moreover one may rely upon the subconscious responses, remembering the law stated in another chapter that an activity once started in vigorous motion tends to perpetuate itself.

The efficiency of love is thus seen in its determination to find a way, find some way, however many may have failed. To be sure, one must sometimes chronicle the sad fact that husband or wife, mother or son, does not love sufficiently, really does not love, or a way would be found. But it is not easy to condemn if we are determined to know every factor. The most wilfully self-centred person may be turned from selfishness to love if one utter the



right word, approaching in the gentlest spirit, ready to forgive until seventy times seven. Love cannot afford to admit that love is not present in the other. The love that opens wide the heart when the world would condemn awakens a wonderful response. The man or woman who has been most hateful, debased, or sensuous, may become one of the most zealous workers in love's behalf when the heart is touched. A kindly word, a simple deed done almost without thought, may be the turning-point in the life of the one who hears. Religion can accomplish what all other influences fail to attain.<sup>1</sup>

Over against some of the sternest scenes in human life it is ever our lot to witness we sometimes meet the greatest tenderness of which the heart is capable. Now we are pained by the unaccountable gruffness and animality of man, and now touched with the tenderest sentiment from within, as if a listening angel heard the heart's dismay and answered with a gentle message filled with the love of heaven, lest in our bewilderment we should lose faith. Again, one is stirred to the depths by the ingratitude of men, pushed rudely aside,

<sup>1</sup> See the wonderful record of conversions narrated by Harold Begbie, in *Twice-born Men*, and *Souls in Action*; New York, 1910. In these two striking books the author has with singular fidelity to psychological principles stated the crises of the heart, the changes from lower to higher through which a regeneration of character was accomplished.



harshly spoken to, or left utterly alone when the heart is most hungry; but forthwith to be shown anew the fulness and beauty of the divine love which comforts, cheers, even ministers unto us as a person might minister. Thus by contrasts and reactions we begin to know the glories and the blessings of heavenly affection. Thus we see that love at its best is the divine heart quickening the souls of men.

“Behold,” says St. John, “what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God: and such we are.” Consider how beautiful and glorious is the heritage to be children of Him who is love itself, who for love’s sake has sent us forth into the joys of being. Already children of God, “it is not yet made manifest what we shall be,” for sometime we are to be men and women of God, to manifest in love’s fulness the power of the divine in us. This much we know: that when we attain unto manhood’s estate we shall be like the Father—a being filled, literally filled with love, one in whom there is no hatred, no jealousy, envy, or enmity. Merely to have this hope, the beloved disciple assures us, is already to begin to be purified.

Then, too, how sure is the sign which love gives us. “We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brethren. He that loveth not abideth in death.” Love forthwith



prompts us to do something for our fellows, a deed that has life in it, that involves giving up something on our part. Only by opening the heart of compassion can we expect the divine love to enter in. It does not suffice to love in thought, to utter love with the lips; but we are counselled to love in very deed and truth. That is, love becomes objective and is fulfilled both in service and in idea. We possess the truth or reality of love only through this its complete manifestation. When we pass thus into adequate expression we know that we have found the true reality not merely because of the sincere and full response of the human heart but because of the divine spirit conferred upon us. This experience gives a confidence not otherwise known, and the power to ask and receive whatever is needed for the complete life.

When we have thus felt the quickening life of love, it is reasonable to become persuasive and say, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God." Until we have felt the divine touch it seems absurd to be told that we ought to love, for we do not feel love. The best that we can do is to put ourselves in conditions likely to invite the divine quickening. One of these is attained through appreciative understanding of what God is as the Father. The mere fact



of our existence is one clue. But the supreme idea is that of the true starting-point for all philosophical thought, the thought that begins with God. Hence we ascend to the realisation that love is not known primarily because men love but because the Father loves us. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us. . . . We love because he first loved us." Moreover, the Father so loved us that he made full manifestation of Himself through an incarnation which wholly covers the needs of men and points the comprehensive way to the perfect life. Herein is love made perfect—through union of the divine with the human.

Thus again the idea is the greatest help, for we realise the high end set before the love that is manifested in humanity; we have a mode of thought grounded in a secure first principle. Hitherto we may have tried to think upwards to find God, and partly failed; we may even have expected to see Him. Now we realise that "no man hath beheld God at any time," but that if we love one another "God abideth in us." The fruits that follow prove this. The love of God and humanity arises within us, and the desire to keep the commandments, that is, be true to the promptings of the Spirit. God hath given us of His Spirit—that is the essence of the matter. We now have the inmost incentive, and also the true principle



of thought. Hence the precept is no longer irksome to us when we are assured that we "ought" to love one another.

Thus we once more realise that love is the life of man, for we see how much deeper is the conversion that touches the heart. We also realise that the eye must be single. Whatever we unqualifiedly love affects the whole life. When I love God then shall I live by love, opening wide the heart to all my fellows, then shall I know in truth that "God is love." Yet the same realisation that deepens our appreciation of the divine love shows that it is inseparable from the divine wisdom, for the two are one in essence. Likewise in man we see that masculine and feminine, reason and the heart, are one in essence and in ideal, awaiting only the union which this complete consecration to the Father creates within us. Granted this central insight, we have an ultimate principle of thought and a fundamental guide to conduct. He who has thus been unified can find unity, order, beauty everywhere, transcending in foresight at least the discords and misdeeds of men, and beholding in anticipation the time when all men shall be united in love with the Father and with their fellowmen.



## CHAPTER XIV

### MORAL EFFICIENCY

THE greatest problem in the moral order centres about the will, namely, the question of awakening manhood, the arousing of a consciousness of responsibility, the quickening of conscience, the development of character. But before those of us who have the moral welfare of mankind seriously at heart can meet this fundamental need in the wisest manner we must come to terms with another central issue, the insistent question, What is worth while? We are also compelled of course to deal with the problem of evil. For many, however, the solution of this problem is inseparably bound up with the discovery of a goal which shall enlist all man's powers in behalf of the right. Hence there is an urgent call for an ideal to which we may give full allegiance, one that shall resolve our conflicts, overcome suppressions, set our energies free, and ennoble our attitude towards mankind. We are fully persuaded of the value of loyalty. We know that we should be practical, beginning at a wisely chosen point and working



towards a clearly defined end. But we are often at a loss to know what cause is worthy of our zeal, how to apply our loyalty to advantage. Thus uncertain and in a measure unstable, we often work with a sense of profound dissatisfaction, doing as well as we can in the field at hand, trusting that somehow the harvest will ripen and that competent reapers will make good our short-comings.

This indeterminate state of mind is partly due to the fact that we do not more valiantly face the issues of moral theory in search of a unifying principle. We are stronger in the domain of desire, emotional zeal, than in the kingdom of the idea. What is demanded is sturdier analysis of rival conceptions of the good. By this one means something more than the study of arguments in favour or against the notion that the good is pleasure, or the contentions with respect to the origin of morals, the nature of conscience, and the basis of moral obligation. I hope to show that the problem is partly one of analysis of temperaments, partly that of insight into tendencies for which our age emphatically stands. That is, the question of the greatest good is inseparable from the larger issues of the interpretation of human nature.

Such analysis appears to be out of the question for the most of us because it seems to call for



careful study of the great doctrines whose history involves Greek life at its best, also Christian life in its various stages, to say nothing of moral ideals that are partly traceable to more distant sources. But the situation is not so difficult as it appears, for there are comparatively few typical moral attitudes, and these appear and reappear throughout human history. These attitudes are readily discoverable in our time because germane to human nature. Without unduly complicating our problem we may examine the moral issues close at hand. By noting their excesses and defects we shall make headway in the development of an adequate moral ideal. I shall first consider certain types of moral consciousness in which zeal for a given moral standard is overdone, then turn to more recent types in which the moral standard is by no means strong enough. Thus contrast will teach us an important lesson.

It is characteristic of some of the most zealous moral people in the world to state their ideals in negative and prohibitory terms. These leaders not only tell the world what ought not to be done, but insist on their central doctrine in a spendthrift fashion. Ordinarily, too, they are strongly dogmatic in tone, and exclude peoples of other nationalities as well as those at hand who are not so fortunate as to be orthodox Christians. Hence you will find them decrying and condemning as often as



supporting and commending. Now, a universal principle is necessarily in some sense exclusive, otherwise it cannot be a standard, representative of the best. But it must exclude in a totally different manner, and because it is founded on a basis that lies much deeper than merely temperamental partisanship or national faith.

The moral ideal which shall enlist our full activity must be grounded in human nature rationally interpreted, in the moral order itself, and this order includes all mankind. It is not primarily a question of time, place, person, nation, sacred book, code of laws, or religion; but of conscience, righteousness, the moral law. Hence while assimilating the loyalty of the human spirit we must pass far beyond the negations of personal preference and will. In what immediately follows I shall try to throw light on moral ideals by recasting certain negative doctrines in positive form.

First let us consider the self-coercive attitude which some of our most zealous moral friends assume. I emphasise the fact that these strenuous zealots are self-coercive in order to credit them with practising what they preach, but their misplaced energy is chiefly directed against others. These people are extremely capable, and one finds them occupying prominent positions, for example, in schools, or in institutions devoted to social reform. Ordinarily they are dogmatic in tone,



arbitrary, autocratic, cock-sure, and on occasion capable of becoming violent partisans. They retain their positions rather through force of character than through knowledge of human nature or human history. The will rather than the intellect is their chief power, and if their wills were not sometimes softened through the sweetness of their affections it would be almost impossible to live with them. They are persons of pronounced conviction, with the strongest preferences for people and things. Competent specialists, they are given positions of trust because there is work to be done and they are able to make people do it. Highly executive in type they know how to organise their work in all its departments so as to call the utmost from their co-workers. Unsparing of their own time and energy, they expect others to be unsparing, too, and this is where the trouble begins. For without regard to the condition their co-workers are in they will suddenly spring upon them with new work to be done. Their argument seems to be that since there is work to be done the individual must be sacrificed to the whole. Sometimes this means that the co-worker suffers most who is most fit, who demands most consideration, and who just then is least in a condition to serve.

Now, a prime requisite of moral efficiency is adjustment to the work to be done in accordance with the state of mental and physical health of



those who perform it. If a teacher or leader hold himself to his task by sheer force of will, when the organism is unfit, there will be difficulty from the beginning. The assumption is that because the leader is capable of accomplishing a vast amount of work therefore all subordinates should exert themselves to the full, despite the fact that they differ in temperament, in health, and in capacity. The first fallacy hides the unfitness of the leader, the second is the assumption that all can work alike. Charity begins at home in more senses than one, and it is a duty of the true moral reformer to keep himself in prime condition for his work, the work that he can do best. Each co-worker is a human being with individual rights, and no one knows so well, or should know so well, what he can do and how he can most wisely accomplish it as the worker himself. Hence it is wrong for the leader to undertake to be the judge. It goes without saying that the moral worker who is genuinely efficient and knows his powers can on occasion work an unusual number of hours at heroic labour.

To apply the moral lash to those who do not conform to one's personal standard is to be guilty of sheer officiousness. It is not the leader's prerogative to hold others up to the mark, breaking in on their privacy, taking them to task because they do not accomplish more. This means a hard life for all concerned, a self-driven, nervous life likely



to end in utter collapse and failure. The leader's part should be to set an example of prudence, moderation, and equanimity, supported by a well-trained organism. His privilege is to take the lead in such a way as to reveal opportunity after opportunity, showing what glorious occasions for service exist all about us. It is his part no doubt to awaken enthusiasm and enlist co-operative activity to the full. Yet he must know that neither enthusiasm nor loyalty can take the place of rest and sleep, that he is working with and for individuals, not a collection of units.

The strenuous coerciveness of which I speak no doubt arises from a high degree of conscientiousness. It indicates a noble moral standard, nothing short of perfection itself. But it is largely mistaken in method, neglectful of the truth that the moral life cannot be forced but is a growth that may be encouraged. It undertakes to impose a standard on people who have not reflectively arrived at it for themselves. It is exacting, insistent, and springs in part from a mistaken notion of sympathy. Since it demands perfection and never finds it, this attitude is one in which nobody is approved of, nothing is strongly commended save the goal that cannot be attained. The result is not only a state of continual nagging but a sort of adverse criticism that runs over into pessimism, howbeit its devotees believe they are optimists of the true stamp.



Thus it regards men and women as children who are treated as a fatigued and impatient mother treats her children when she has too much to do. Its victims are far more aware of the wrongs of the world than of the forces that make for righteousness. Hence they substitute for knowledge of moral history a purely local incentive, and in place of consecration to the moral law they put devotion to a particular cause, endeavouring to make out that it is the most important issue in the land. Stronger in character than their associates, they usually hold out longer, hence appear to be morally successful, and are revered as models by the community. Thus their localism stands in the way of sane moral progress.

Worse still, these supposed reformers sometimes conceal commercial and other private interests behind the alleged moral ideal. There is indeed a close kinship between women of this strenuous type and men who are typical representatives of the hard, grasping commercialism of the soulless corporation. Both are below the standard of the modern principle of industrial efficiency for, as we have seen, the principles of scientific management respect the rights and limitations of the worker, substituting for the overbearing attitude that of careful study of the work, the worker, and the conditions most favourable to all concerned. It is plain that the new principles are already more



moral than much that passes current as moral. Unless our standard shall be as comprehensive and fair as that of industrial efficiency those of us who are moral leaders might well go to school to learn the new science of business.

Strictly speaking, however, the energies implied in this coerciveness can become of positive value only so far as these self-willed people are brought to terms by their own consciousness. The true moral ideal cannot be developed in terms of the will alone. There must be genuine knowledge of the whole self and of human nature. So long as a person feels it necessary to hold himself and his associates by the magnetic power of will, he is not yet sure either of himself or of his cause. One whose cause is really moral should know that things moral do not depend on human wills, and that righteousness has powers of its own. The best that each co-worker can give should be inspired by a higher incentive than that of the leader's will. Each co-worker should be regarded as an organic contributor to the moral group in question. Each is a child of God, hence in a measure a law unto himself, working for God and the right above the heads of leaders and enemies alike. Therefore each must have opportunity to become efficient in ways of his own. The moral spirit realises itself through men: it is not created and cannot be regulated by the human will.



At best the officious interposer is one who arouses us in our apathy and shows that changes in our mode of operations are imperative. It remains for the more reflective, better-poised, dispassionate person to take the lead. Thus one learns by a study of the coercively strenuous leader what not to do, instead of learning what one ought to do.

Again, moral negativity is seen in the case of hyper-conscientiousness. This ordinarily implies an over-scrupulous examination of motives, leading to indecision, weakness of will. But one refers rather to people who are actuated by an undue sense of obligation, who have a mistaken sense of duty. There are those who on principle choose the more difficult of two alternatives, the hardest task at hand, primarily because it is hardest, hence—though irksome—a duty. Spurred by what is supposably the best sort of conscience, these people hold themselves to a line of work for which they are unfit, convinced that they are faithful to the highest moral ideal.

Now, to object to the weighing of alternatives and the analysis of motives in this extremely conscientious way is not to say that self-scrutiny should cease but that it should be more thorough and incisive. To be fundamental in such analysis is to discover what work one can do best and to proceed in accordance with a purpose to fulfil the self. To choose the hardest task on principle is not to be



conscientious in the best sense of the word, since conscience rationally interpreted bids us choose the greater good. To seek the greater good may or may not be to do that which is harder. Of course there are unpleasant and difficult obligations which we have assumed and which we must meet in order to fulfil our duty. But it might have been possible to make a wiser decision at the outset, one which would have enlisted our joy and called our best powers into activity.

While my work is a task, while I am compelled to hold myself to it, I am unable either to do my best for humanity or satisfy myself. When I am doing my best my energies act freely, and it is not necessary to remind myself at every turn that I am doing what is right. When I do my best I give even beyond what I supposably ought to give. That which I deeply and truly want to do and find joy in doing is most likely to be what I ought to do, what I can do well as a member of human society, possessing individual gifts. Prompted to do the work which is peculiarly my own, it would be wrong for me to hold myself down to a line of work which on mere theory, or because of some one's advice, I assume to be right for me. That is right which enlists my full selfhood and enables me to be morally productive in high degree. A mistaken sense of duty is the equivalent of constant inhibition, or a burden under which a weary



labourer struggles and staggers. The true sense of duty is not puritanical, however great the moral vigour latent in the puritanical conscience. What is called for is life, not inhibition. Our morality is negative until it find expression in eager joy, until it bring peaceful satisfaction. No doubt many of us begin the moral life in earnest by doing what we believe we ought to do in all seriousness, and possibly with a keen sense of effort, since we are all victims of inertia. But to give for love's sake only is to attain a much higher moral level.

The foregoing discussions while primarily psychological have afforded much evidence that it is right to express the self without the puritanical disturbances of conscience which hinder the realisation of the type. Our plea for the understanding, mastery, and wise use of energy, although essentially prudential may be restated as a moral argument. It is surely right to overcome inertias and inhibitions, and develop our powers to the full. This we have seen is an ideal that evokes enthusiasm, whereas stern moral precepts suppress our ardour. We are never satisfied if, doing what we take to be our duty, we have a deep desire to be doing something else which we believe we can do better.

We can render no greater service to our brothers than to help them to become the individuals they will to be, wholly content to see them working in different fields, cherishing beliefs other than our



own, governed by different standards. Nothing is more important for each of us than to be faithful to the ideal as we see it. Hence it is with perfect right that we grant to others the freedom of self-expression, remaining tolerant, charitable, and considerate to the last degree; and that we individually observe the conditions most favourable to ideal self-realisation. To live and let live is the duty of man. "The ascetics and the Puritans made this great mistake," says a recent writer. "They thought that duty was doing what is hard and what you *hate*. The truth is that duty is doing what is hard and what you love."<sup>1</sup>

The reason for this stern sense of duty is found in the theology by which it is inspired. Doubtless many of the sterling leaders of the world have been of Calvinistic temper, that is, those who upheld the moral law with great vigour. But when a follower endeavours to adopt the same attitude he is apt to become a devotee of authority, emulating the leader by engaging in good deeds from a mere sense of obligation. Thus a man will adopt a child, give a large sum of money to an institution, or in behalf of charity, not because of genuine inner guidance, nor because his knowledge shows him what is best for society. By becoming charitable on general principles one appears to be adding

<sup>1</sup> E. L. Cabot, *Everyday Ethics*, p. 158. Mrs. Cabot's book is one of the best on practical ethics.



to the sum of morality in the world. The result is too apt to be an increase of self-righteousness. To give in this way is negative, and under such conditions a man usually gives something which he can easily do without. A positive gift is made because out of the fulness of the heart one is prompted to share, even to give at a sacrifice.

Again, theological considerations enter through acceptance of negative conceptions of the incarnation, the atonement, or the death on the cross. If you believe that Christ came and was put to death because of the sorry plight of man, your emphasis will be negative throughout. Hence you will dwell on the uniqueness, the exclusiveness of the incarnation, rather than on its universality and on the humanity of Jesus. You will accordingly lay stress on the death and resurrection, instead of the life and the glorification. You will say that he who "loseth" his life shall be saved, instead of dwelling on the deeper truth that he who "finds" his life is the one who exemplifies the standard. Worse still, you will dwell on the wickedness of man, painting the blackness of sin, instead of pointing out that it is righteous conduct that avails.

If we turn from the teachings to the Master himself, with these clues in mind, the case is still clearer. Jesus was by no means a passive or negative man. Although a man of peace he came



to bring a sword. He stated principles which brought divisions among his hearers from the first. He inculcated a positive series of precepts, lived according to them himself, and was constant unto the end. He did not meet death as a disappointed prophet, a supposed regal Messiah who had failed to establish his kingdom. No such power could have gone forth from him had this been the case. His death was not a sacrifice but a victory. He valiantly stood by his faith to the uttermost, taking the course which seemed necessary to send forth victorious power into the world. Hence the moral doctrine which is founded on his teaching should be positive and constructive if true to his leadership.

These considerations lead us to a fresh estimate of another moral principle frequently discussed, namely, self-sacrifice. It is safe to say that no one is ever really satisfied with the usual treatment of this subject. It is never convincingly shown, even by the greatest of moral philosophers, that self-sacrifice is wholly good. It is ordinarily spoken of with apologies. It is a "sad necessity," some say, a "glorious madness," involving a leap in the dark. It is eulogised as the noblest element in the moral life, and then its eulogists tell of the tremendous mistakes made by its devotees. To be wholly given over to it is to be one-sided, weak, self-suppressed. Strangely enough it tends to run



over into selfishness, so that the mother, for example who has been praised as its ideal representative becomes its taskmaster, exacting even greater sacrifices from the growing generation. The typical case is that of the woman who works labouriously to send her daughter to college, and who expects her daughter to give up a promising career and settle down in an outgrown village as her companion and servant. Another typical case is that of the young man of promise who wishes to marry and make a home of his own, but who is supposed to take care of parents who are inferior in quality and power. Then there are the sacrifices a reformer makes for a cause, the sacrifices of a religious devotee who would like to be a scholar. In many of these cases we cannot help believing that the higher good is given up for the lower. The world needs the best each can give, especially from people of power and worth. Only now and then are we able to say unqualifiedly that the sacrifice was right.

Is not this difficulty a confession that we have not apprehended the moral spirit on its positive side? If we could somehow state the moral purpose in a given case in terms of consecration to a worthy end, we might be able to gain new insight into the alleged sacrifice. A moral ideal is necessarily selective, but what is given up is not the crucial consideration. They are best able to work



positively who could yield most, give up most. That is, they have large capacity in many directions, could respond to numerous demands, could sacrifice their powers. But instead they inhibit, check, conquer. Therefore it is what they really do accomplish that avails, as in the case of a minister who might have been a lawyer, could have devoted himself to money-getting, but who through his spiritual activities realises his higher selfhood. The real question therefore turns about the choice of the greater good. This is most likely to be in line with the larger self-realisation which gives genuine satisfaction. What is needed is a scale of moral values by which to discover the greater good.

Still another illustration of an essentially negative attitude is found in the views ordinarily held in regard to non-resistance. The command to refrain from resisting evil is either rejected as wholly impractical or is relegated to those poor misguided mortals who fashion their lives after an Oriental model and thereby supposably become passive. But he truly practises non-resistance who on occasion could contend outwardly with great power. He is free to resist or not according to his guidance. Because free and strong he has the power to refrain from giving blow for blow; and instead returns love, tenderness, sympathy, considerateness. Master of his powers,



he is able to give expression to the one that will bring the larger moral consequence. He depends on the silent, interior forces—the greatest forces in the world. His attitude is positive in a far greater degree than that of the man who gives a tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye. When I love my enemies, when I am grateful even under persecution then indeed have I begun to be moral.

Finally, an essentially negative attitude is manifested by those who give free play to general zeal in behalf of humanity. This usually means the laudation of the common types, the celebration of everything that is elemental in human nature, the unqualified praise of people who have no standard. The result is that the leadership of the best is forgotten or ignored, and mere democracy becomes the ideal. This point of view is usually advocated by reactionists who do not yet understand what they are reacting against. They are people who abound in thoughts but who have no thought. Able to make brilliant sallies of wit and learning, they utter many telling remarks, some of which strike home with great force and do a reformatory work in the world. We need these vigorous wits to shake us out of our conservative moods. But to take their alternative seriously would be to adopt a dead-levelism. The merely elemental in our nature, the Whitmanesque, carries us no farther than emo-



tional expression, or mere self-utterance. Without a standard, life easily degenerates into sensuality and the commonplace. Hence the merely elemental man is a negative factor in human society, one who rejoices in the mere openness of the road on which he travels, the freedom from constraint, the departure from conventionality. In contrast with this, the genuinely moral man realises that freedom is indeed nothing to boast of, since he would fain be bound once for all to the life of righteousness. The moral world is very far from being an elemental plain in which one thing is as good as another; it is topped by a mountain of endeavour in which the alternatives ever grow less as greater heights are attained.

All these cases involve elements of permanent value—the strenuous moral zeal that needs to be tempered, the profound sense of duty of the one who is over-conscientious, the insistence on law of the Calvinist, the devotion implied in self-sacrifice, the love for humanity of those who eulogise the elemental. Can we restate all these in such a manner as to preserve them? Yes, in terms of moral efficiency through social self-realisation. This means, in the first place, a full and frank return to the Greek moral conception, that virtue is natural. For it is man in his manifoldness who shall become moral. It is truly right for me to cultivate all sides of my nature, to express my-



self to the full, live the complete life. To do this I must know and organise all my powers, so that virtue may become a habit, may bring peace and satisfaction. I must know myself well enough to see what I can do best, having first learned what I can do and what I cannot do. Having made these discoveries it behooves me to take care of myself so as to be able to contribute my best on all occasions.

Happiness is surely one of the tests of this moral ideal: to this extent the Hedonist is right. Pleasure is not the good, cannot be an end in itself, yet if I do not have joy in my work, if I do not foster happiness and permit my associates to take satisfaction in their work, I am not fully moral. If the moral zealot is ordinarily too severe the Hedonist is too lax. Happiness is the rightful accompaniment of the moral life, and is most likely to be added to moral conduct when that conduct springs from the spontaneous desire to give full measure running over, in contrast with mere work for duty's sake. He who maintains his organism in a morally efficient condition is likely to be happy and to arouse happiness in others. The life of feeling has a rightful place inasmuch as feeling is a part of our nature. The moral ideal which brings genuine satisfaction is manifold in type, taking its clue from the manifoldness of human nature. The ancient motto, "nothing



to excess," applies as necessarily to one side of our nature as to another. Hence there is as good reason to guard against intellectualism as to avoid overdoing the element of pleasure.

It may be objected that the thought required to keep the organism in prime condition, to husband energy here and organise it there, involves an impeding self-consciousness; for who wishes to guard his actions every moment lest he spend his energies in excess? If we give so much time to self-training are we not likely in the end to develop a new form of self-centredness? In contrast with this painful process, to be moral is to work with a will, forgetting oneself in loyal service.

The reply has been given in an earlier chapter, that is, it is not necessary to watch the play of energy every minute lest one overdraw the supply. Power is acquired through use, and what we are pleading for is fulness of life, for the right of every side of our nature to have its place, to play its part and become thoroughly moral. There is no single power, quality, faculty, or organ that is exclusively moral, or even authoritatively so. To be moral is to be a person in the complete sense of the word, not to set a single faculty apart as hard taskmaster over the rest. Conscience shall enter into every part of our being, transfiguring all that is in us. It is fulness of life, we insist, not severe meagreness, that is desirable. This is the truth in



the contentions of those who plead for democracy in the moral realm, who insist that one thing is as good as another. Everything is indeed moral, or may become so: what is needed is the organising system of a scale of values. Things, qualities, and powers are good in relation, in their right place.<sup>1</sup> Hence we insist that there can be no morality without order. In fact, morality is orderliness, not only the possession but the realisation of an organising system.

Now, who can rightly organise and apportion the various tendencies of his nature without giving a certain degree of attention to the powers that are active within him and to the consequences which their exercise entails? Who if he would be thoroughly moral can do aught less than to give heed enough to the nature and scope of his energies to maintain his organism in prime condition for efficient service? It were better to begin as one can hold out. Therefore we insist that to be moral is to attain a condition of mental and physical efficiency. This calls for more analysis and self-consciousness at a certain stage of the moral journey, but the immediate object is to make virtue a habit. The more we give our activities over to wisely acquired habits the more power we should have freely to give ourselves to the interest

<sup>1</sup> See Professor G. H. Palmer's *The Nature of Goodness*, Houghton, Mifflin and Co.



at hand. We are not proposing that human loyalties shall be bestowed at random but upon ends that are really worth while.

Self-sacrifice is good, we still say in accordance with this ideal of moral efficiency, but we prefer to call it devotion or consecration. It is what I do, what I give, that avails. If I give of my full self, calling all my powers into exercise, I shall not give much thought to that which I give up or abstain from. The probability is that the potentialities which might have made me a man of affairs, an artist, a scholar, or what not, will be called into expression through this my chosen mode of life, apparently so far from the world of my earlier ambitions. Whatever I am, I shall find exercise for the fulness of my powers provided I find a mode of life that calls me out at my best. For one is made morally efficient, not from behind but from above, when an absorbing purpose enlists all that is within.

Of far more consequence, then, than the self-consciousness required to make my organism efficient, or the sacrifice through which I become unselfish, is the absorbing interest which inspires me to do my best. Called into action by this I shall not mind either the time or the pain involved in the years of preparation. If I sacrifice myself I shall scarcely know it. What I need is the moral incentive which shall make a man of me, call me



into fulness of being. It is a great help in the progress towards this larger life to conclude that it is right for me to do what I want to, right for me to be happy, right to be young and spontaneous, right *to be* and to express rather than to check and to give up. For there need be no conflict between what I deeply will to be and what I ought to be, between self-realisation, and service. What I profoundly want to be and to do, if I really know myself, is at once what I can do best and that by means of which I can most truly serve. I can actually be both a Greek and a Christian, realising Plato's ideal of æsthetic order among the virtues and imbuing the Greek form of virtue with the Christian spirit. At heart I am already a moral being. I do not know myself until I thus apprehend myself as moral, a being in whom order may prevail to the highest degree, who may at once serve and have a joyfully good time in the mere fact of existence.

We no longer say that the nature of the finite will is to assert itself selfishly, that in itself it is evil. Agreeing rather with Socrates we declare that man sins through ignorance, since the will is not in itself evil. The power within us which wills to go ahead, have a good time regardless of others and of consequences, is precisely the power which, when lifted up, when accompanied by enlightenment, enables us to be unitary moral



beings. Man is not born unregenerate, he *is* moral and arrives at moral self-consciousness. What is needed is that profound self-knowledge which shall show that the interests of self and of humanity are one. As a self I am inevitably and for ever tied in with my fellows. What I sincerely want can be mine only in case I make the utmost of the social relationships which in my ignorance appeared to be weights and chains.

Finally, in this ideal of self-realisation through moral efficiency there is a real remedy for the officiousness referred to above, and for all anxiety and impatience. When I realise that the moral spirit is greater than the life of the individual, more extensive than the social group or than any institution, I learn that it is not dependent on me or upon my immediate associates. Rome is large and there are many roads leading to it. My road may be a very good one but I have no right to be exclusive. I may well make the utmost of it, calling attention to its points of excellence. But the real consideration is the end that is being attained through all the roads. To be anxious were to forget that the right is universal, that God is still in His world. I may not see how the right can be achieved by a route so circuitous as my neighbours', but my first interest should be to acquaint myself with his strange road, to welcome and seek to know my neighbour as a human being



who is probably as nearly moral as I am, remembering that truly to know any man is to gain insight into his purpose.

Does the acceptance of this standard seem to deprive us of all reason for zeal, now that we have discovered that man is at heart moral, that the balance of power in human nature is in the righteous direction? No, what it takes from us is the anxious, officious, overbearing tendency which makes moral theory and moral reform obnoxious. When instead of hounding our neighbours to be good, calling them to judgment, and aristocratically condemning them, we set about being exemplary moral individuals, making the best use of our powers, the chances are that we shall make real headway. If nothing succeeds like success, surely no triumph is more inspiring than the moral victory. To be moral, I insist, is not to be disagreeable, autocratic, dry, but to be a well-molded, joyous person abounding in life. Of course no one likes dry aphorisms and moralisations. What we like is life and life in its integrity includes the moral law, is founded on it. What we object to is an abstraction, a reform or principle for its own sake. We want a true human being who has all the impulses and encounters all the temptations. It is through fulness of life, through exercise and expression that a way out of and beyond our temptations shall be found.



"Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more," is the word of the really efficient moral teacher. For he sees through the sin to the heart, the moral selfhood struggling into fulness of life. To be condemned to sin no more is at once the severest and the most encouraging punishment. It springs from righteous judgment and sets a high standard for the discerning. Hence the possibilities of service are increased a hundred-fold. Never again can we indulge in the usual estimates or put up with ordinary methods of reform. We have passed far beyond the conventional scheme of salvation or regeneration to the discovery of the soul with which man is really born. Now and forevermore it is incumbent on us to penetrate to the heart, calling the struggling moral ego into more complete self-possession.

Even he, this supremely efficient moral leader, found it important to withdraw from the crowd, sometimes alone with the disciples, sometimes a few chosen ones among them, again wholly alone. Even he, with all his insight and power, indulged in prayer, thereby making himself ready in order that the supreme end might be attained. Without this self-preservation and increased efficiency Jesus would hardly have attained his end. Here we have concentration, devotion, carried to the limit, with a power that excludes all else. But here too we have personality realising its heights,



its depths, and beauties. With a compassion and a pathos unsurpassed in history the Master enters into the life of those around him, unstintedly giving of himself, considering each person's need as if he alone stood in want. All the rigorousness of the moral law is there too, and one sees where the strenuous leaders derived their zeal. But the Master has too often been emulated in form to the neglect of the spirit. There is one word which changes the whole matter and transfigures life beyond estimate and that word is love. Love is not the law but its fulfilment and the law should not be made paramount, coercive. When driven home as the officious zealots employ it what is really paramount is the self of the one who lashes his victims with puritanical fervour. It were better to be a mere pagan with his supposably "gilded vices" known to fame as "splendid sins" than to pursue people in this terrible fashion. This indeed is sin, that is, the assertion of the particular over against the universal. But what we want is love and love recognises, does not pass by on the other side, love calls into being, is considerate tender, kind.

One need not preach, one need not plead when love is found. Our sermons are too frequently confessions that we have naught to give, our arguments admissions that we cannot give a valid reason. When we possess love there is



nothing further to say. Love is its own evidence, is all-compelling. When love sends us apart from the multitude it is with a reason so good that we need never question the time consecrated to preparation. If we love we will serve and if we love we will realise the self. Love alone gives satisfaction and love alone makes one fully efficient. It is love that makes happiness and love that bestows it. Only through love does life attain the moral goal and pass beyond it into the larger life of the Spirit. That is to say, the forms are finite, the moral law makes us aware of bounds, but when we are free we share the life of the infinite Spirit, and this we supremely share through love. The moral ideal as matter of form is stated at its best in terms of self-realisation through social efficiency, and is essentially Grecian in type; it is love which saves it from being merely an ideal of individual culture, and love at its highest is of the Christian type—the love in which the human is made one with the divine, in which self-will is lifted up into complete obedience to the imbuing power of the Spirit.

Thus our study of human efficiency reaches its culminating point. For the most part, we have pursued this study with the efficiency of the individual in mind. But it is as impossible to regard the individual by himself as to learn the nature of the will apart from reason. Human nature is



established on a co-operative basis in a two-fold respect; the mind exists as a co-operation of powers such as perception, feeling, will, reason; and the individual is a unit in a larger whole. The first problem is to attain the right adjustment between the various powers within us, so that worthy incentives shall inspire us, while reason controls every activity according to its value; the second is to adjust ourselves to our fellows so as to contribute our share of work and service yet attain self-realisation. Some writers maintain that the right social adjustment must come first before the individual can find his rightful place. We maintain that if the individual begins by becoming efficient according to his type, he will be in the best position to approach the larger question.

It is not possible in this volume to plead for this ideal of co-operation, or even to justify the moral ideal of self-realisation in full measure.<sup>1</sup> Suffice it that in the modern movement towards individual efficiency a principle of co-operation is implied which makes it far more promising than

<sup>1</sup> The ethical ideal here advocated is similar in many respects to that of the recent ethical idealists. For an introduction to ethics see the following, in the order named: *The Field of Ethics*, by G. H. Palmer; MacKenzie's *A Manual of Ethics*, or Muirhead's *Elements of Ethics*; Palmer's *The Nature of Goodness*. These volumes contain excellent references to the literature of the subject. See also J. Seth's *Ethical Principles*. McCunn's, *The Making of Character*, is one of the best books on practical ethics.



most of the schemes for social reform. With this ideal in view, there is no longer any reason for waiting until the present economic order is changed. Nor need we long concern ourselves with general questions such as that raised in the preceding chapter, Why is it that love has not yet conquered? There is in fact no reason for any sort of delay when it is a question of efficiency. If I learn the nature and power of reason and begin to be more rational, I shall be able to do my part to bring the age of reason into being. If, realising the scope and efficiency of love, I seriously undertake to order my life in such a way that it shall manifest love, true enduring love, I shall be preparing for love's fulfilment in the race. All that is needed is that each shall endeavour to do his part, beginning at home, seeking to give rather than to get, to co-operate rather than to control. Hitherto we have not devoted time enough to the science of life. It is time now for each to begin by noting his own powers, their sources, tendencies, and eligibility. The more we know about ourselves the more able we shall be to study and endeavour to improve society. He who is deeply concerned to make himself as efficient as possible will have little time to indulge in adverse criticism, anger, hatred, and complaint. It is within the power of every one of us to contribute to the science of human society by thus making the utmost of ourselves.







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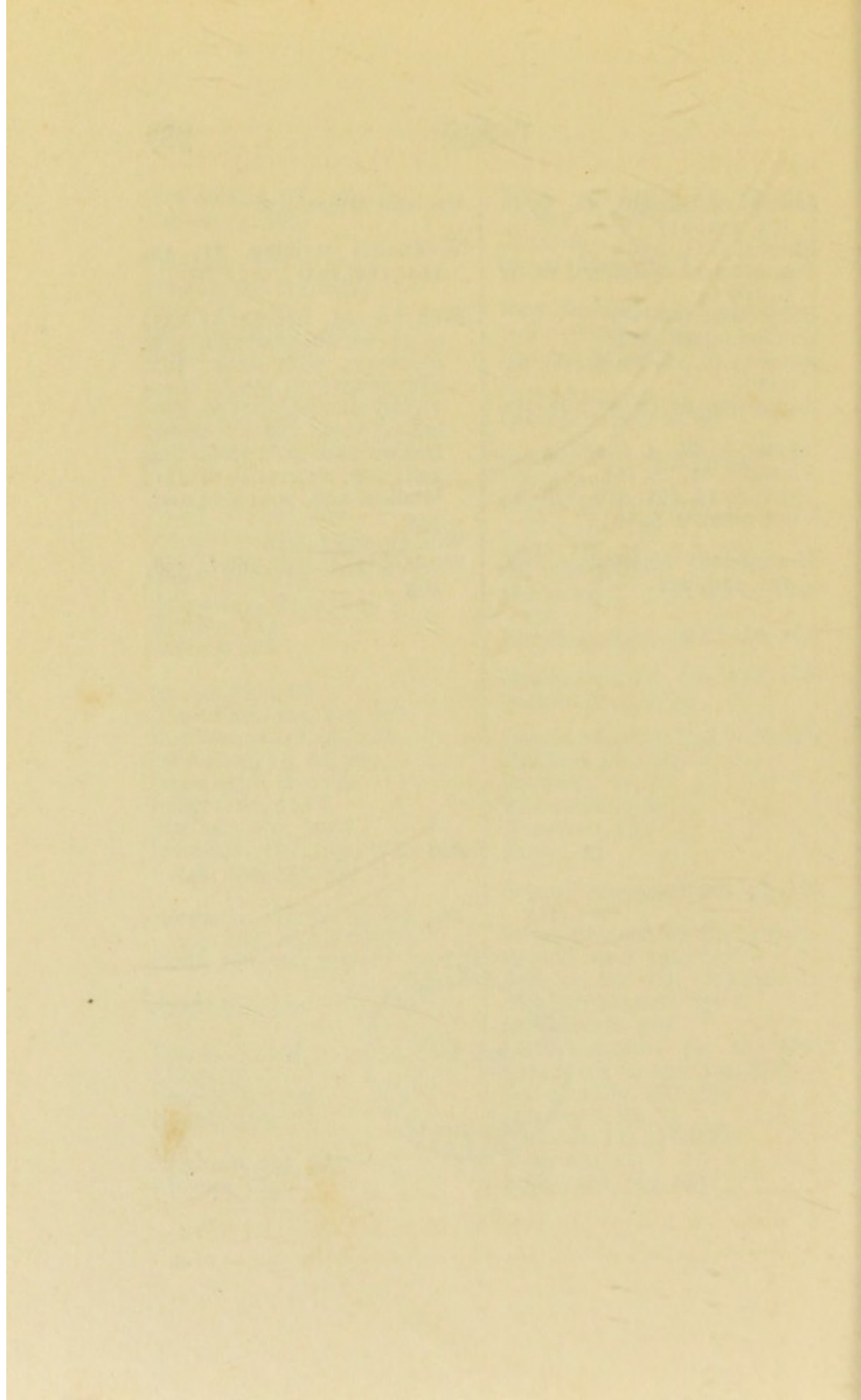
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