

JOY
CREATIVE PROCESS

PHILOSOPHY

by

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(1903)

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Introduction

I know that there is, if not a "higher intelligence," at least a fuller intelligence than this personal one I call my own. Many a time in my life I have been absolutely certain that some particular thing was the *only* right thing,-that if it did not come to pass just that particular way the loss would be infinite and the harm deep as hell itself, and utterly irreparable.

Well, it did not come to pass as I thought it must in order to keep the earth from wobbling on its axis.

And do you know, it wasn't very long before I was fervently glad it did *not* come around as I thought it must and ought to. The way *I* thought utterly wrong was absolutely right and beneficent.

Many a time I have had such experiences, in little things and big.

I know there *is* a fuller intelligence than mine; and I know that when my intelligence goes awry from lack of far-seeing, that this fuller intelligence *overrides* mine. I am *glad* to believe this -glad to know that when *I* get in a quandary there is Something to bring things out right in spite of me.

And do you know-I believe this fuller intelligence is after all *my own* intelligence. It is I who am doing it all the time. Intelligence is not confined in bodies or brains,-no. It fills the universe. All this space between you and me is pure intelligence in which we live and move, and through which we think. But we are *conscious* only of that small portion of our intelligence represented by our bodies. This great sea of intelligence is infinitely the larger part of us, but it acts *subconsciously*, or super-consciously.

But it *does* act, and for my *individual* good, as well as for the good of all others. I am glad to be over-ruled by it. It makes me feel *safe* to know that if I make a mistake in judgment I shall be over-ruled by this fuller intelligence which is over us all.

This book is written to help awake *your* faith in the fuller intelligence which works sub-consciously in us all; and to help arouse within you the joy of living in consciousness with your Limitless Self, which is my Self, too. Health, happiness and success to you, my readers.

Elizabeth Towne (1903)

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Chapter 1

A Good Morning in Two Worlds

Good morning! Isn't it a glorious sunrise? Just see!-not alone one sun is showing its golden rim above the world's edge, but ten million suns are rising upon ten million waiting hearts, and shadows flee to find a place of rest. Truly, a good morning to you of the NEW THOUGHT, whose hearts have turned to smile straight at the sun of life.

I AM the sun of God. Just as this dear, old green earth is turning its face to the sun so you and I are turning our attention to the I AM sun.

"The worlds in which we live are two, The world I AM and the world I DO."

Too long have we faced the world *I DO*. Too long have we judged ourselves and others by the dim light of what hath already appeared. We have been discouraged with comparing the already accomplished with itself. We said, "I can do no more than has been done; there can be nothing new under the sun." So we have journeyed, and gazed, and regretted that it was all done. Everywhere we looked it was all done. "Every art and science and business is overdone," we said, "there is no chance to do anything except what Tom, Dick and Harry have already done to death. There is no chance here for me."

I AM the ideal world. Ah, that is where the sun shines and youth plays eternal and almighty. In the world of ideals I AM omnipotent, omniscient, all-pervading. In the world of *Doing* I AM lost among the many and the already-accomplished.

I have just read a letter from one who has been for 22 years a bookkeeper for one firm. For 22 years he plodded mechanically up one column of figures and down another, and drew his little salary. Now the firm has passed out with its head, and this man is left at 45 without a salary. He is "worn out" and nobody wants the remnants-I had almost said the remains.

This man is a sucked orange and is meeting the natural fate of such. But unlike the orange, he was a free-will offering to the world *I DO*. His young ideals were choked off and crushed out. He said, "A salary in the hand now is worth two fortunes I *might* develop if I followed my ideals. I think I *might* in time work into something great if I worked along another line for myself, but I *know* I can draw a salary if I work for this man. I fear to trust 'the world I AM.' And, anyway, life is short and what's the use of trying so hard? So I'll add up columns, draw my salary and eat, drink and be merry." So his ideals for lack of expression went into winter quarters, and are still hibernating-awaiting a new incarnation in the world *I DO*.

But it is never too late to turn to the sun I AM. One's muscles may be weak and his joints stiff; his brain cells may cry out for a little more slumber, a few more columns and then a long sleep; but still one *can* turn over if he will. It is never too late to begin putting what I AM into what *I DO*. Even if one is 45 and a sucked orange, with not time to accomplish much in this incarnation, he can at least get ready for a better start in the next. So it is never too late to consider and express what I AM-the ideal.

Do you know that your ideals and desires are really YOU?- the I AM of you? Your body and your doings and even your education are but white caps on the surface of YOU. They are but an infinitely small and evanescent portion of your resources. They are what you have already realized of your infinite resources.

The giraffe used to have a short neck. That was all he had expressed of himself. But his pasturage ran short and he began to reach up after the palm leaves. He reached and looked and reached again. This unwonted exercise stretched his neck until it is now long enough to easily reach the palm tops. So it has ceased to grow longer. As long as he kept *reaching out* his neck kept growing.

What are *you* reaching out after? Do you see in the world I AM something that is worthwhile? Do you reach after it in the world *I DO*? Do you keep on reaching, and looking, and reaching again?

Between reachings do you retire into the world I AM for inspiration and power for further reaching?

This alternation from Being to Doing-from I AM to *I DO* -is the secret of power and progress and success. It is the *soul's breathing*. You inhale in the world I AM; you exhale in the world *I DO*. The more easily and regularly you vibrate between these two the more complete is your realization of health and success.

When you have that tired and unsuccessful feeling due to too much exhaling in the world *I DO*, just rise into the realm I AM and by imagination and affirmation pump yourself full of- I AM power.

I AM wisdom. I AM love.

I AM what I desire to be. ALL Things work together for the manifestation of what I AM.

Then rise again and express your regenerated self in Doing.

There was one man who talked back at me for that "Good Morning" article. I received from him an unsigned note which began by acquainting me with his opinion that he is "a very old man" and therefore entitled to assume authority and correct pert, little, young and conceited things like me, for the good of their souls; and it closed with calling my attention to a small attached card bearing in a little black frame this admonition:

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

In my Bible, which is well thumbed by the way, and copiously underlined and annotated, these lines are underscored with red ink. If the sender of that card had dug the verses out of his own Bible instead of finding them where somebody else had put them, his eyes might have traveled down another line where they would have rested upon this:

"Be not wise in thine own eyes."

And he would *not* have found after that any clause to the effect that he is entitled to become wise in his own eyes when he shall have become "a very old man." The "aged" do not necessarily "understand judgment."

But there! I am reminding myself of old Dr. Driver, "the only man who ever downed Ingersoll." But when a man fires Bible verses at me I enjoy dodging 'em and firing the whole Bible back at him. And when a man fails to sign his name to his communication it takes some effort to think of him as anything but an impersonal sort of target that sets itself up and dares you to hit it. Now if there is anything I do enjoy it is hitting the bull's-eye. But if I thought the bull's-eye had any tender feelings to be hurt I'd fire the other way.

But seriously, I do not mean to lay myself liable to be hit with that particular saying of David's. I have lived with it, and tried to let it live with me, for at least 15 years. And I thought everybody knew that I AM is what the Bible calls God, or the Lord.

When I say, I AM power, I lean to *God*, the only power. When I say, I AM wisdom, I call *God*. When I say, I AM love, I reckon myself nothing and God ALL, for God is love. When I say, I AM what I desire to be, I count myself as *God's* manifestation, with *his* desires written on my heart. The desires of my heart are *God's* desires. He worketh in me both to desire and to think, as well as to will and to do *his* good pleasure.

'When I tell you to rise into the ideal and pump yourself full of I AM consciousness I bid you identify yourself with God, the one soul of all people and things; I bid you realize your oneness with *all* power, wisdom, love; I bid you in ALL your ways and thoughts and desires and deeds acknowledge HIM, the One-Power, One-Wisdom, One-Love, as the director of your every way.

When you are disturbed, unhappy, unsuccessful, agitated, you are breaking the connection between God and yourself, by *not taking him into* your thoughts and desires. You are counting him OUT. So I say, stop and pump yourself full of I AM *God*. Power and Wisdom and Love are only names of God. Whenever you reckon yourself Power or Wisdom or Love you *take in God*. When you say, I am weak, or ignorant, or unloving and unloved, you *deny* God and force him out of your thought. Or at least you try to. Then let him in. In all thy ways acknowledge him. In all thy desires acknowledge him.

And verily he shall direct thy paths, and they shall be paths of peace and pleasantness and plenty.

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Chapter 2

The Present Tense

To think or not to think-that is the question raised by different exponents of the new thought. Most of our teachers have been telling us that by thought we are created and by thought we are saved from death. But Sydney Flower says thought is killing us all. We are clogging up with Brain-Ash. And now I come to think of it, Jesus of Nazareth said, "Take NO thought."

Evidently thought and its results are decidedly important to us who mean to Live and let who will do the dying.

But I fancy the thought advocates are not so far off as might appear. Truth is ever paradoxical.

And it is her paradoxes which MAKE us think, and do it in spite of ourselves. Truly, it were vain to say, Stop thinking.

It is useless to say, Forget.

And after all comes my own little suspicion that it is not thinking and remembering, but the *kind* of thinking and remembering we do, which chokes us with Brain-Ash.

The child thinks, and I suspect him of thinking harder and more nearly true than does the grown-up. But a child thinks *new* thoughts; or rather he thinks the same old thoughts *with variations*. And all his thoughts are made light and bright by vivid and *hope-full* imagination. It is as if his thoughts by some divine alchemy of imagination are transmuted into gas or electricity before his brain is stoked with them. There is no Brain-Ash in a child; there is only glow and white light of electricity.

But we grown-ups are stingy with our fuel. We put out the alchemic fires of imagination and burn our Facts direct.

Our consciousness is like a little bird in a wooden hogshead.

It flies around and around, and bruises its poor little wings against the sides; it soars three feet and bumps its head; it falls three feet and-thinks. "Life is only a wooden hogshead of a treadmill," it says, and willingly gives up its little ghost.

In a child's mind, even stone is endowed with life; to the grown-up everything is dead. So the child's thoughts are alive and the grown-up's are dead. The child's thoughts being alive have power to *move* him-truly, "he is full of life." But the grown-up is full of death and Brain-Ash.

Because the child's thoughts are alive he is so interested in the Now that it is easy to forget the past and ignore the future. The grown-up's thoughts being dead, he takes refuge from the stench-he seeks again the *live* thoughts of his youth.

The cure of Age is interest, enthusiasm and their consequent activity of mind and body.

"Assume a virtue if you have it not," and thus *re-call* it. *Play* with your work. Wipe out the past, forget the future, and *play*. Live *now*. Be a child *now*. Endow with life all things you touch. Permit nothing to remain cut and dried. Cut it by another pattern, *your own* brand new one. Talk to it, smile at it, *imagine* things to it, and of it. Quit being serious. "Dignity is a peculiar carriage invented to cover up the defects of the mind." Quit covering up *anything*. Be a child, smiling.

Oh, but you can't feel so? Nobody asked you to feel it. Just Do it, DO it, DO IT!- and never mind feeling. Practice makes perfect and *feeling follows*. Go in to win and keep at it, until you are the happiest kid in the bunch.

Mr. Flower says you cannot have youth and wisdom. He intimates that wisdom goes with Age. Dearie, don't you believe it. The wisdom which goes with Age is a dirty little wooden hogshead counterfeit. Only in proportion as one stays young is he wise. *Real* wisdom is in The Limitless. It is in the electric atmosphere which is breathed by children and fools. In the hogshead it is deadened by the heavy effluvia of dead *things*. All true wisdom, all poetry, all art, all invention, comes to the child-brain in The Limitless. Only as poets, artists, inventors get out of the hogshead do they find that which lives, and stirs the dead things within.

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Chapter 3

A Mush or a Man - Which?

Man in the natural and unregenerate state is an unprincipled being. He is moved by every shadow of feeling. These shadows being cast by people, things and events without, his mental and physical activities represent but a conglomerate of other people. He is a jelly-fish, receiving for the moment the impression of any finger which pokes him. Whether he wants to be or not, he is nothing but a "mush of concession" to every passing person or circumstance. *He is constantly affected from without.* He lives and changes his being according to what is thrust upon him by other things. He has no principle for individual living, except that of stinging the hand which touches him.

The fate of the unprincipled jelly-fish is ever the same. His own power of initiative is so primitive that he is propelled by every current of wind or wave. Everything stands aside for even the sucker, who knows where he is going. But the jelly-fish has no destination. His one object in life is to *keep from being hurt*, and to this end he floats with any current. He effaces himself as much as possible to keep from being seen and eaten. And I suspect he is often indignant and tries to sting because he has succeeded in his attempt not to be noticed. But when he happens to be noticed by *too* large a fish he is gobbled up in a jiffy. If he escapes being eaten he is cast on the beach to lament away his feeble life in a too-ardent day.

Poor little unprincipled jelly-fish! But occasionally a jellyfish gets tired of being a more or less unwilling mush with a red pepper sting. He grows a shell to protect him, and becomes a clam. He shuts himself up with his own opinion of the selfish world outside. He loses his red pepper sting, but if you get *too* close to him he nips your impertinent fingers and shuts the door in your face. He has his opinion of you and he wants to be let alone.

But after a time he gets tired of himself and his opinions- deadly tired. He begins to think even the jelly-fish stage of life is preferable to the clam's. At least the former had a change once in a while, and he saw something of life. He wishes he were a child again-he means a jelly-fish.

But even a clam cannot grow backward. So he becomes a crawfish and goes sidewise. He evolves some ugly legs, shoulders his shell and his opinions and goes sliding forth to see the world again. Really, he is growing a glimmer of a principle to live by. He has builded him a shell which makes him impervious to most outside forces; he has grown tired of trying to enjoy himself; and he has actually made a start at *doing* something on his own account, uninfluenced by the without.

Good little crawfish! He is on a fair road to growing quite a backbone of his own. By and by, as exercise hardens his muscles and stiffens his backbone and limbers his little legs he will discard his ugly shell and walk out straight ahead, instead of crawfishing. He is growing a Principle to live by-the principle of self-expression. He is growing Wits as well as a backbone and well muscled legs, to take him out of harm's way and to enable him to gratify his own individual desires.

A man in the jelly-fish stage is sensitive on the outside. And he is so absorbed in these outer sensations that he is conscious of nothing *within* himself. His soul-center is as unsensitive as his circumference is sensitive. He *has shrunk into* himself so persistently that he has deadened and dammed the power which is meant to *flow outward* from his soul-center. He is therefore utterly unconscious of the law or principle of his own being.

His solar plexus is a hard knot and he is so used to it that he does not know it. He has cringed and cowered and shrunk into himself until his solar center, his soul-center, is in danger of petrification. Life is a dull ache, and the harder the ache the tighter he shrinks inward.

Poor little man, he would better brace up and be a clam; or a crawfish; or better still, a *man* with a backbone that holds him up straight and leaves his solar center free to expand and fill him with vim and gumption to stand other men's buffets and carve a path of his own out into the Free Country where he can do as he pleases. He would better consult his soul-center than his "feelings." He would better grow sensitive on the inside and give his thin skin a rest.

The principle of all being is to EXPRESS, to *press outward*. The jelly-fish, the clam and the crawfish of the human race press *inward* instead of outward. If one of them by any chance does happen to unbend and make a move to express himself he is turned backward again by the first little show of an obstacle or the adverse opinion of some other clam or crawfish. There is no *principle* in him-he is worked from without. He is attracted by this thing and repelled by that, moved back and forth and in and out, galvanized or paralyzed, all from *outside*. And he throws out innumerable little antenna for sensing these outside influences. He is so absorbed in them that he has no consciousness left for the soul-center within himself, where his principle of being is trying to manifest. His *soul's* influence is the last influence he looks for or responds to. Such a being is unhappy, unhealthy, unsuccessful; and he grows more so until he gets desperate and quits. Then he begins to withdraw consciousness from the outside and wake up on the inside. He begins to consult *himself* and *do as he desires*. Hitherto he has been so absorbed in *outside* things that he was unaware he *had* any desires on his own account. Now he begins to explore himself. He expands and grows sensitive on the inside. When he senses a little desire there he pushes out and *acts* upon it-even if he *does* run against a snag or two, or a dozen. He has got hold of one end of the principle of his own being and is acting upon it. Henceforth, his way is *straight ahead*, instead of crawfishy or clammy.

Now a strange thing begins to manifest. In the old days the man was always getting into somebody's way and getting hurt. He spent his time tacking and backing and scudding to keep from being hurt. But now that he has turned himself right side out and started *ahead*, he discovers everybody else hurrying to get out of *his* way, and even to *help him along*. Things seem to loom as obstacles, but lo, as he keeps *straight ahead* they melt away and he goes onward.

In every man's soul is a course mapped out, a chart and compass for his guidance. If he consults *his own chart* and follows it he finds there are no collisions. His course is a true orbit, where all intruding matter is dissipated before it reaches him. His *atmosphere* burns it up, and renders it harmless. It is the crawfish who in his attempt to keep out of one orbit slides into another and meets the comet's fate- disintegration and absorption.

This is a wonderful universe-a one-verse. There is an orbit for every being and a being for every orbit. *Every orbit is written on a heart*, a soul, and may be found only by consulting *that* soul.

Look up at the stars-just a conglomerate of bright spots. Surely if they moved a little there would be collisions. But look closer. They do move, at infinite pace, and there are no catastrophes. There is an order among them so perfect that it takes long study to appreciate it.

Now look at people-a conglomeration of wriggling worms of the dust. But look more closely, dear. It will repay you, for human orbits are no less true than starry ones. The closer you get to human *hearts* the better you will understand their orbits. The closer you get to *your own* heart the nearer you will approach the hearts of others.

The more faithfully you *follow* the orbit written on *your* heart the surer you are to escape disaster.

Grow sensitive on the soul-side and know that your course is sure.

In *Harper's* for November there is an interesting and significant article by Carl Snyder, upon "The Newest Conceptions of Life." He says: "Physiology's present answer to the old riddle is, very simply: Life is a series of fermentations."

He also says there is a destructive ferment, and, likewise, a constructive ferment, conditions alone governing, "When starch, or dextrine, is submitted to fermentation by the malt enzyme, it is hydrolized-that is to say, split-by taking up water into one of the simpler sugars, glucose. *But if the resulting product is not removed*, the action soon comes to a standstill. Add more starch, it will begin again; but add to the quantity of sugar, and the reverse process is begun; the glucose is converted into starch. The enzyme, then, is able to rebuild the molecule it has pulled apart.

"For every vital function, a ferment."

“Naturally, the very first question is, what are these ferments, these enzymes? *That is the biochemical problem of the hour.* Their activity seems bound up rather with the peculiarities of their atomic structure, of their chemical architecture, so to speak, than with any mystery of ingredients. They are compounded of the simple elements of water, air and carbon. *It is how these are put together that is so puzzling.*”

Then he goes on to say: “But this close pressing of the most intimate secrets of life has another implication of far more interest to men and women of today. It is, in brief, that perhaps all the processes of life are reversible—growth even; that under given conditions the oak might become an acorn, *the grown man a child*, the adult organism, led back through the successive stages of its development to the primitive germ from whence it sprang.” And he gives a real illustration of the process of growing young again: “A plant-like little affair, *Campanularia*, living and developing normally in the water, undergoes an amazing transformation simply upon being brought into contact with some solid substance.” Then he describes the process by which it returns again to its original state.

The italics in these quotations are my own.

Life is a series of ferments which *may* be reversed. When we stir up a sponge for bread we put in a little yeast and a little flour for it to work upon. All night long the yeast particles are busy separating the solid wheat particles and filling them with yeast-life. In the morning the entire mass is beautifully “light.”

Everywhere in creation life and light are synonymous terms. Even the “lightness” of bread sponge is its aliveness.

Now, what do you do with a light sponge? You use it to leaven a loaf. You stir it down, and stir in more flour, and knead and knead it until there is a big, solid loaf—within which is the germ of life. Again the yeast-life works, until the whole mass is “light” again—until all that wheat flour you *worked in* has been separated and made light or alive. Perhaps you repeat the process several times, before you finally *kill* your bread by baking it.

If you let your dough rise too long, you know what happens—it gets “too light”; the yeasty principle has nothing more to work upon; the loaf is now *all* yeast; it begins to get sour, and then bitter; it grows porous, gaseous; its surface becomes wrinkled and its once round, smooth cheek falls in; it shrivels; and in due time, if let alone, it will dry up and blow away.

Good, live dough is not the result of a fermentation, but of a *series* of fermentations, each arrested at the proper moment, and more flour added.

Human life is like unto it. The human being who works and works on one line becomes sour and wrinkled. In order to make good human beings they should be allowed to work on one line until they are full of *lightness*, of the joy of life. Then there should be kneading down and a new beginning.

Now, this is all in your mind. Fermentation is a *mental process*. The “ferments or enzymes” are the life or mind principles drawn, not from air or water or carbon, but *through* them. They are “spirit,” love, *life*. The “wheat flour” consists in the *facts* which are worked into your mind, and *upon* which your soul-stuff works, digesting, assimilating it. The same identical process takes place in a loaf of bread that takes place in your mind. *All is life*. ALL IS MIND.

A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, but the moment the whole lump is “light” there must be another working down.

If we do not know enough to work down our own minds Mother Nature does it for us. As soon as we get comfortably past the light point; as soon as we begin to *settle* and wrinkle and die; as soon as life grows monotonous; there is a jolting and a working over. We “lose” our property and our ease. We are detached from the sides of our environment and friends. We are buffeted and soundly thumped, and we find ourselves *set down* in new conditions to begin all over again. Good old Mother Nature has set us to *rise again*.

If we are really wise and willing we go at the task with a will and quickly rise. Having risen once we ought to know we can do it again, and do it *more quickly* than before. You know that is the way with our dough-every time we knead it down it comes up more easily.

Unless we are careless and put it in a *cold place*, it is a cold day when the bread won't rise. But it would be a cold day, indeed, when a human being *couldn't* rise. No matter how much he has been detached from, nor how much he has been worked down, he *can* rise if he will.

That is the only difference between the loaf of bread and the man. The loaf of bread has to be raised in spite of itself-it has to be kept at just the right temperature *from the outside*. But a man has in himself the power to *make his own temperature*. He can *work himself* up to the rising point.

He can shut the door of his heart against the immanent Love and Will of the universe-shut in and *stay* down in the dark. He can *open* the door of his heart to Love, the “enzyme” of all life, which *creates its own warmth*.

The only reason a man does not open his heart to Love and Will, and begin straightway to rise again, is because he does not yet understand that the buffetings of “fate” are no more “against” him than are the kneadings of the housewife against the success of her bread.

Life must be a *series* of beginnings and workings-up. Eternal life must be an eternal series of workings-down and risings up. *A single day's* life must be a series of “fermentations.”

Notice a child. See how readily he *enters into* every change. He is worked down and even sat on, many times a day, and yet he rises quickly and with joy. He never passes that *just-right* point of lightness where his cheek is round and his flesh moist-where he can be *readily* detached from his surroundings. He never shrivels and falls in and *cakes to the pan*, like his elders. He forgets, quickly, the working-down, and enters heart and soul into the business of rising NOW. He is so absorbed in *his work*, the *work of growing light*, that he heeds little the workings-down which are but for a moment.

Out of sight is out of mind. He *forgets* what others do to him. He LIVES Now-he rises.

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Chapter 4

The Center of Light

In ancient days the priests of the Hebrews wore upon their breastplates over their hearts certain jewels called "Urim and Thummim," meaning "Lights and Perfection," by which they received answers from God. When their people were beset on every hand by enemies, and at their wits' ends to know which way to turn, the priests turned to God. After purifying themselves and praying they asked God, "Shall we do thus?" and they watched the Urim and Thummim jewels for the answer. If the jewels appeared dark and opaque the answer was, No. But if they lighted up, as a human face lights when it hears good news, then the answer was, Yes. And the people grew lighter too, and went and did as God had indicated.

Now, right along beside this story of ancient people I will tell you another-tell it just as 'twas told to me, by a woman of today, whose name you have doubtless heard. She writes: "I was washing my breakfast dishes one morning and the thought came to me that I would go and see a friend who lived several miles away. I finished my work and started to dress for my journey, when there came over me such a feeling of depression, or despondency, or gloom, that I was startled. I kept on getting ready, at the same time trying to reason away the feeling. But it would not go. Finally, having donned my hat and one glove I started for the door, when such a wave of heaviness came over me that I went back into my room and sat down, and I said 'God, I want to know the meaning of all this.' And the answer came loud, strong, firm, '*Stay at home.*' I staid, and as I took off my coat and hat such a feeling of *lightness* and relief came over me that I seemed to walk on air. At the time I supposed the voice (I call it a voice for want of a more definite term) had told me to stay at home because someone was coming who needed my help. But no one came that day or night, and several times the thought flitted through my mind that perhaps it was all nonsense after all, and that I might as well have gone. Well, the outcome was that the train I would have taken, had I gone, met with a fearful accident wherein many were killed or badly wounded. This is only one of many such experiences I have had." And I could tell you still others on my own account.

The One Great Intelligence has built in *every human heart* a "Urim and Thummim," which, as a guide, transcends any human brain that ever existed, or ever will.

In fact, every *great* brain is the result of enlightenment from this very center.

At one's wits' ends there is infinite light, only waiting to be used. And if only one's inward eye is single toward this light *his whole wits* shall be full of light.

In olden times people were too dull and material to consult the Light until they had groped into all sorts of trouble in the dark. They supposed it necessary for man to get to his utmost extremity before the Light would shine upon his way. They nosed in the dust and darkness, believing that their natural source and habitat. Then in their hours of extreme need they washed off the dust and went in bare-footed to consult the center of Light upon the breastplate of rightness, over the heart of one consecrated to God.

And they never knew that *every* man in the multitude carried a center of light in his own breast-a center which only needed *washing off the dirt* and letting out the kinks in their nerves and muscles to reveal a center of Light in every breast in that multitude-centers so light and so true that the jewels on the High Priest's breastplate *cast only their composite shadow*.

"There is a light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world." *And it is not the light of reason, but the light that lighteneth reason.*

It is not located at the center of anybody's breastplate, to be seen of every Tom, Dick and Harry who runs and reads. It is located *under* the center of his breastplate, at the solar center of his being. Here his center of Light shines out bright and clear when he is doing the right thing; and when he is doing the wrong, or unwise thing, the clouds of dull feeling roll over and darken his center of Light, and say *No* to him.

And if he goes heedlessly on acting against the admonitions of his center of Light, the clouds keep piling up, and his heart sinks down and down under the leaden weight, and he rarely ever catches even a glimpse of his center of Light. He is "gloomy," we say. And he grows reckless and defiant and rushes on blindly to "a bad end."

He never understood himself. He never knew that the center of Light within him is his most precious possession, the star alone which could guide him into all good. So he hid it with clouds of doubt, and fear, and distrust-with clouds of *ignorance*, of NON-RECOGNITION. He "paid no attention" to it.

And so used was he to living in clouds of distrust that he never realized that there could *be a lighter heart* than his. He laughed loudly, and tossed off sparkling wine, and thought he was having a "good time."

Until the crash came, having obscured his center of Light, there was nothing but his brain to guide his actions. He made mistakes. Then came the crash and a standstill; and he found himself and his heavy heart and the dark clouds, and the bottom dropped out of everything.

But in the midst of despair he found the priceless jewel-the Urim and Thummim-his own center of Light. And behold, the crash was a Good Thing-the best business investment he ever made. He has through it realized the Way, the Truth, the Light of his own soul. Now, he will walk softly in the Light and there will come no more crashes.

I wonder if you think this is a fanciful bit of symbology. It is not. It is plain fact described in the plainest language I have at command.

You have a light at your center, in the region called the solar (or light) plexus. When you feel depressed you feel the effects of *literal* clouds, caused by doubt, distrust, fear, anger, resentment, grief, etc.

Back of those clouds shines the eternal Light, at your *center*-the light meant to guide *you and no other, on your way*.

Shall I tell you what to do? *Get still*. Quit running around after somebody to tell you what to do. Quit thinking around and around in an endless circle. Quit thinking at all. *Be still*. Keep whispering "*Peace*" to the troubled elements of your atmosphere.

After a bit the winds and waves of emotion will obey you and subside. The clouds will roll away and your center of Light shine out in all its glory. *Then* you will know what to do.

When you are *still* then you can ask, "Shall I do thus?" and the lighting or the darkening of your heart will give you the correct answer.

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Chapter 5

The Law of Being

“God is Love.”

God, or love, is the law of every being. By love every being was created; by love he is held together; by love he grows.

Through lack of love man is weak; through lack of love he is ignorant; through the waning of love he dies.

Love is the emotive power of every being; the power which proceeds forth from the central sun of himself, giving life to his body and environment; just as the sun-power proceeds forth and gives life to the planets. As the sun is the source of life, light, power, in the planets, so is the soul-center the source of life, light, power, to the members of the human body.

Love is soul-radiance, *the only power for accomplishment*.

Love makes worlds go round; it keeps hearts throbbing and children growing.

Love is wisdom. Love is will.

Wisdom and will are twined, like two strands in a cable,

Wisdom and will, twined in One, issue forth from the soul-center as rays from the sun.

The soul-center of being manifests as the “solar plexus” a great ganglion back of the stomach; from which nerves radiate to even the backwoods neighborhoods of the body. The solar plexus is the power house of the individuals. *God, or love, is the power.*

The brain is the central station where the individual sits and *controls* the power. He rings it off, or on, little or much, *with a single thought*. The individual at the brain controls the power house and all its workings, *in a general way*, just as Uncle Sam at Washington controls in a general way the power of the United States.

But the individual’s brain is not the only brain he has, any more than Washington is the only directing center Uncle Sam has. Every city, little or big, is a directing center; it draws its own appropriation of power and uses it as it pleases-within *its limits-which* are set by the intelligence at Washington.

Every ganglion in the body is a little brain which governs in a measure the use of its own appropriation of power from the soul-center, the solar-plexus; *but always with the consent of the central intelligence*, the brain-the Washington, D. C., of the body.

Money represents power, the will-strand of love. Whenever a city needs more money than it can draw by its own wisdom, it calls on Washington to send a special appropriation. Washington may pass a law enabling the needy city, or state, to draw more money; or it may appropriate the amount direct from the government source; or, when these processes are too red-tapey, it might make a general call to all hands to dispense with routine and send the money anyhow. This was what happened when Roosevelt called for help for the Mt. Pelee refugees. Money was poured in from all directions, instead of being sent through regular channels.

Whenever one of the lesser brains of the body, one of the ganglia, records a condition of *want* among its cells it tries to draw power to overcome the difficulty. If it cannot do this on its own account it sets up a cry that is heard at the central station of consciousness and government-the brain. When that cry comes we say we feel *pain* in the region of that particular ganglion. If we give our stomach more than it can do we hear a loud call for *power*-we feel a dull or painful sensation there.

When that call comes it draws *special attention* from the seat of general government-the brain.

Now, if the individual whose seat of government is in that brain happens to be wise enough and “strenuous” enough, he will do just what Roosevelt did; he will call for POWER from any and all directions, to relieve the want of power in the stomach. And he will call in perfect faith that the demands will be met with an overflowing abundance.

This is the method of self-healing.

Of course, if the individual whose seat of government is in that brain happens to be a weakling fraidie-cat, he will do nothing but groan over the conditions in his stomach; he will lament and ache with it, instead of bracing up and demanding power to change those conditions.

Wherever the individual’s ATTENTION goes his *power* goes too. All the individual needs to do is to say the word for his power to pitch in and make things straight. Until he does that his power stands around and *waits*, just as all the pocketbooks in the United States just waited until Roosevelt pulled himself together and called resolutely for *money*. That call set up an electric *thrill* which ran through all the little pocketbooks and set them to pouring out the help called for.

When the individual takes that same positive, resolute, commanding and *full-offaith*. attitude, he may ask what he will and it shall be done unto him. He may say the word which will send through his body an electric thrill of health, with a concentration of power in any desired spot.

He may open up every one of those ganglionic centers of power and send their surplus of energy to any given point, for any given purpose. In his own domain he may arise a greater than Roosevelt.

Every ganglion in the body is a storage battery of *both wisdom and will*, drawn originally through the central battery of the solar plexus.

The solar plexus draws its power from the Great Unseen. The intangible becomes tangible at the solar center; the hitherto undirected power of space and eternity here *begins* to be directed; the uncontrolled here comes under control; the unexpressed begins here to express.

You can readily see that great power depends primarily upon a free solar plexus. *Great* power can never be expressed under a tight corset, which binds and packs the solar plexus.

Great power, of mind or body, can never be expressed under either a binding corset or binding *thoughts*.

Fear thoughts are the only binding thoughts there are. Every little fear gives a pucker to the solar plexus, and shuts out just that much power. A starved and distressed body is the direct result of shutting off the solar radiance by fear thoughts-or cinches.

Get rid of fear as fast as you can, and your expanding solar plexus will burst every band, mental or physical.

The first step toward getting rid of fear is to know that your source of power and wisdom is the same great and limitless source from which all men must draw; and that your point of contact with this boundless supply is *within* you, not on the *outside* of you. When you remember this you are not scared by the *outside* appearance of anything or anybody. You do not look to money or a “pull” for power to accomplish; you are not afraid the money or “pull” of another will be stronger than *your* pull on the infinite source of all things. You know that *his* money and pull came by way of his own private *pull on the universal*, and instead of growing scared and kicking and threshing around in a desperate attempt to grab some of the results of *his* pull, you just quietly get down to business and your *own* pull on the universal.

When you look at the *results* of other people's pulls on the infinite source, comparing them with your own, you are sure to grow discouraged, or desperate and fearful. One reason is that you belittle your own results; another is that you *cannot see what the other man FAILED to get*. You see the results of his *successful* pulls on the infinite, but you compare them with your own *unsuccessful* attempts, instead of comparing with your successes. You are unfair to yourself, and you exaggerate what he has accomplished.

Desire governs what one draws from the uncreate. Your desire and his were not alike; so his outward appearances will not stand judgment from *your* standpoint.

Let him alone and find yourself. You are unique. You cannot be compared with anything under heaven. Your pull on the infinite is infinite. But *it's different*. Tend to it strictly, and see what the results are. Quit looking at the other fellow and generating fear thoughts-fear that he will get ahead of you. Look at your own ideals and desires, and rejoice in your own pull on the universal.

When you remember your source, and your different-ness, you are not afraid. When you go about *your own* work in your own way you rejoice in it all, and your solar plexus expands and power flows in and radiates to every corner of your body and on out to the outermost edge of your atmosphere; and away beyond-who knows how far beyond? Ah, then you *enjoy* what you do; you enjoy *yourself*; you LOVE; you are radiating love; and love, you know, is *God*, the only power and the only wisdom. And the chief end *of you is to enjoy God, or love, forever*.

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Chapter 6

How it Works

Quit looking at *things* and being afraid.

Look to your ideals and desires, and remember your source and infinite supply. Keep dwelling mentally on your infinite supply; keep *using* that supply according to your ideals. Fears will drop away from you and power and wisdom, Love, *God*, will flow into you and through you.

Never admit a fear. Bid it get behind you. Never admit a "can't." Pull yourself together and declare "I can-I WILL."

Fear makes you *feel* paralyzed. *Ignore it*. Rise up and ACT, and you will see how little power the fear really had. Fear is but a paltry stage-trick hypnotist. *You cannot be hypnotized if you refuse to look at fear*. ACT and fear flees into the bottomless pit whence it came-into nothingness.

Keep on acting as if you felt no fear. In due time the feeling of fear, the hypnotized sense, will disappear for good. You will smile, and your solar center will expand and let in more *God-feeling*, more power and wisdom, than you have ever had before.

Sometimes you may be too badly paralyzed to act as if you had no fear. Well, then, just *breathe*. You are never too paralyzed to go outdoors, or to an open window, and *breathe*.

Right breathing will dissipate fear. By using the chest and abdominal muscles properly you can shake the kinks out of that paralyzed solar plexus and *let in power*. An influx of power from the Infinite will enable you to turn your back on fear and act as you *desire* to act.

When you are anxious and afraid your breath comes in short, shallow gasps and you can literally *feel* fear clutching your- "heart," you call it. You feel fear clutch your solar plexus.

Now, take a slow, full breath, clear down to the bottom of your lungs, and clear *out* as far as the walls of your chest will go; hold the breath as long as you can without straining; and then see how very slowly you can exhale. Keep your lips firmly closed all the time, but do not press the teeth together; and see you stand *straight*, chest *out*, hips *back*, head up, with crown high and chin in.

Ah, now-after even *one* such breath you feel decidedly less paralyzed. Your solar plexus is not in quite so hard a knot, and there is a brighter look in your face. A good beginning. Now take another such breath, and yet another. Take a dozen of them. *Now*, you will find yourself decidedly less paralyzed. You can go out and ACT now, as if you never had a fear. Of course, your teeth may chatter a bit, and you may feel a trifle weak in the knees, but the hypnotic spell is broken, *power is* pouring into you from the Infinite, and you can ACT. Go right along and *do* it. Keep on breathing deeply and telling yourself that you *can* and you WILL.

And you will succeed. And next time it will be much easier to do.

After practice enough it will grow so easy that you will forget you ever had that paralyzed, hypnotized feeling, of being *afraid* to do what you desire to do. You will have taught your solar plexus to *stay open* and *let in* power, instead of collapsing just at the critical moment when you needed extra power.

Then there are other ways of taking the kinks out of your solar plexus and letting in the power. Any sort of physical shaking accompanied by "I *can* and I WILL" statements will help; especially if the shakings are repeated rhythmically a few times.

Take a good, full breath and stamp your foot and say "I *can*." Then take another full breath, stamp your foot again and say "I WILL." Repeat several times.

Many a time I have freed the kinks this way after everything else seemed not to avail. When I used to suffer horribly from blues and discouragement I used to go away up in the big garret, where none could hear me, and rage up and down its length a time or two, and stamp my foot sharply and declare aloud to myself, "I'm *not* blue-I'm NOT-I am HAPPY; I AM happy-I AM; everything is just as it *ought* to be, and I LIKE it so-I *do*-I DO-I'm HAPPY, I tell you-I AM!" And I'd stamp it down hard. And this little exercise never failed to help me to relieve me from that horrible burden at my "heart"-at the solar plexus. I have "concentrated" and "affirmed" by the hour, all to no effect apparently; but five minutes of this sort of shaking up always freed me, and I went about my work feeling as if I had thrown off a nightmare and found the sunshine. Try it.

Then, there is another way, suggested to me by Dr. Paul Edwards. He said whenever he is in need of refreshing, as after a long day's work, he goes away and shakes himself up for ten minutes or so. He stands up and gets as loose and limp as possible, all over; and then shakes himself just as a big dog does when it comes out of the water. He calls it taking physical exercise with relaxed muscles.

Prolonged effort reduces the power faster than it can, under ordinary conditions, flow through the solar plexus. All the nerves get into a partly collapsed condition, as if the energy had been *sucked* out of them, leaving them dry and *flabby*. All the little muscles which encase the nerves are contracted. This keeps the Infinite from flowing in again. So Dr. Edwards' idea is scientific. He relaxes from head to foot and literally shakes the kinks out; and immediately he is filled again with power from the Infinite reservoir.

All sorts of depressed feelings come from this depleted condition of nerves; and anything which will loosen up the muscular contraction will remedy the condition. Sometimes a single thought will be *dynamic* enough to do it. Sometimes a single hour or so of right thinking will do it. If one can be perfectly still, body and *mind*, for even five minutes, the desired end will be accomplished. But it takes an adept, made adept by years of practice, to attain *quickly* the state of mental and physical stillness necessary to quick recuperation from states of depression. It takes a real master to speak peace to himself in such a way that he is *quickly* obeyed.

And the master attains mastery by a long series of just such little exercises as those I have just given you. All these little "physical" drills get your body into the habit of minding your mental commands. After you have used them long enough your body will obey the mental commands alone.

"I can" and "I will" are words of power. Say them softly to yourself-say "I will" and note the *freedom* with which the sound leaves your lips and throat, *which are never closed on the word*. The sound pours freely forth to vibrate the ethers. Now say "can't" and note the effect; the *t* sound can only be made by inhibiting the vowel sound-by *cutting off* the flow of sound. The use of these words *has the same effect on the solar plexus*- the will-words allow a free flow of soul-power; whilst the can't words *shut off* your soul-power. Will-words *open the solar plexus* to radiate power to all your being; whilst can't-words check the flow of power-just as your tongue checks the a-sound with the tight *t*.

Say "will" with a *will*, and you can actually *feel* power radiate through your entire body; that is, if you say it *freely*; but if you say it *behind gritted teeth* it has nearly the same effect as the t-sound. The clenched teeth *mean a clenched solar plexus, and an inhibition of soul-power*.

Muscular tension of any sort inhibits for the time being the free flow of soul-power; whether the tension come from clenched teeth or from a tongue clenched in the t-sound.

Speak to yourself the words which open up your soul-flow; the *can* and *will* and *love* and *joy* words.

Use these words with all sorts of bodily exercises for shaking out the muscular kinks. These are the words and exercises which make for life, health, happiness and success.

All desirable things are the result of *letting out* the soulpower which eternally presses *for expression through you*.

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Chapter 7

Good Circulation

Do you know that a plant will not grow without leaves? And it will not bear fruit, and will die early, if it has too many leaves? The plant suckles moisture from the earth and *the sun* draws that moisture away again, through the tiny and innumerable pores of its leaves. So the healthy existence of a plant depends upon the *living stream* of moisture which must continually flow *through* the plant. Simply to flow *into* it is not enough; and when the stem is severed we quickly see the results of too much flowing *out*, with nothing flowing in. Death is the inevitable result of any continued disturbance of that steady *flow* of sap up from the earth, *through* the plant, and on out again into the atmosphere.

Of course, a sterile earth can give little sap to the plant and it soon dies; and the more fervently the sun kisses it and draws upon it the more quickly the plant expires. On the other hand, if the leaves are plucked, so that there are not pores enough for the sun to suck the sap through, the plant must die.

But plants are wonderfully intelligent little things, and full of ingenious contrivances for *regulating* supply and demand in such a way as to maintain the equilibrium which means health. The little wild things are wiser than we tame beings, in looking out well for number one. The cactus grows thick, fleshy leaves where it stores up moisture for use in the long, hot seasons when supply is small and demand great. And it glazes its leaves so that the sun cannot draw from it all the moisture it would. Many plants and trees glaze the entire upper sides of their leaves, so that the sun may draw from the shaded side only, where he cannot kiss so fervently. Some trees turn only the edges of their leaves toward the sun. And a great many refuse to grow wide. leaves, and the drier the soil the narrower the leaves, even in trees of the same family. All plants show this intelligence.

We human beings are built by the same Intelligence and after the same manner as plants. Our healthy and continued existence depends upon the same law. We, too, draw our sustenance from the earth and give it all off again through our pores and lungs. To glaze our skin pores would kill us. To shut off our breath would kill us. In either case our *giving off* would be curtailed beyond our limit of endurance. And, of course, to cut ourselves entirely loose from earth (at present)-to cut off our supply of food and water, would end our existence. So we try to maintain a *poise* of receiving and giving, to the end that we keep on living. Eternal life depends upon eternal poise of receiving and giving. It depends upon our ability to LET *life flow through us*, unimpeded and freely. This is the law of being.

Law is omnipresent. Not a crack nor cranny in all the universe, in all time and space, which is not *filled* with Law. No place so tiny that the Law is crowded out. No place so large that the Law is dissipated into nothingness. Law is the all-pervading "fourth dimension" of matter, as well as of spirit.

Two and two make four. This is Law. It works just the same whether it expresses through worlds or atoms, or through ideas only. Two worlds and two worlds are four worlds; two ideas and two ideas are four ideas.

The law of *perpetual flow* is the law of continued existence of any form, whether it be "physical," "mental" or "spiritual."

A physical body which refuses to give off as much as it receives quickly dies; if it persists in giving off *more* than it receives it quickly dissipates itself. A mind which refuses to receive as much as it gives, soon grows weak; if it refuses to give it stagnates and decays.

Do you see that the law of life is a *good circulation*? And that it works in body, mind, *and money*?

A plant. draws its stream of life from the earth. Man has loosed himself from the earth and is learning to depend less and less upon it as his source of supply. He is learning to live not by bread alone, but *by the word*. He is drawing his supply more and more fully and consciously from the *unseen*.

But this does not free him from the law of good circulation. Plants receive carbonic acid and give off oxygen. Man receives oxygen and gives off carbonic acid. Plants receive from the coarser and more tangible forms of "matter" and give it out, again in finer essence. Man does the same.

But man has likewise thrown out roots in the Great Unseen, through which he receives an ever increasing portion of his sustenance; which is brought down and given out in coarser form to earth and plant. Man's veins and arteries carry the transmutations of earth matter, which he invisibly gives out; while his nerves *reverse* the order, and throb with wisdom and love, which come down from "spirit" into "matter" and are given off in coarse and concrete form.

Just as man must receive food and give out to the atmosphere, so he must receive from the spiritual atmosphere and give downward to earth. He must *express* wisdom and love, inspired from above earth; express it in terms of earth. Thus it is true that "The worlds in which we live are two,

The world **I AM** and the world **I do.**"

Human and divine life are One, and the individual continues to exist as long as there is *good circulation between the ideal and the real.*

Some time in past ages man's feet were simple roots, fast to earth. He learned by centuries of effort to pick his roots out of the ground and walk off on them-in search of more food. This is a great advantage to him. But if he should now go up in a balloon and stay there for some days, breaking *all* connections with earth, he would melt into thin air.

In childhood the imagination is firmly rooted in the ideal world, and his feet are at the same time firmly set upon the earth. So he grows fast, mentally and physically, and increases in wisdom, love and power.

But by and by he begins to detach himself from the *ideal*. He detaches one rootlet after another and all the other earth folks pat him on the back and congratulate him because he is "growing up" and becoming "sensible." So he goes on detaching himself from the world of spirit, whilst he plants himself more firmly in earth. By and by he is altogether detached from heaven. He scoffs at such silly, childish visions of glory. He has got both feet loose from the ideal.

About this time he reminds me of Pat's horse, which up and died just as Pat had got him well trained to live on sawdust.

Man dies for no reason except that he educates himself to live on earth instead of in heaven, with babes and idealistic fools.

Of course, every man has a right to make his choice of associates and places. But by and by, we are all going to be wise enough to choose childhood and a good circulation.

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Chapter 8

Low Living

Just as blood circulates in the arteries and veins, carrying material food to every portion of body and brain, so *thought force* circulates in the nerves, carrying *spiritual fire* for the transmutation of matter into *higher forms*.

All disease is due to the clogging either of nerves or veins, or both. The eating of rich food in greater quantities than can be assimilated and eliminated, produces thick, sluggish blood, which tends to deposit sediment at every twist and turn of veins and arteries, thus choking the flow. When a stream gets into this condition navigation has to be abandoned until the stream is dredged out again. When the human body is so choked and clogged with stagnant matter inflammation, fermentation sets in, a "sick spell" occurs and the doctor administers a cathartic to excite the secretions and dredge out the festering debris. Then the patient "feels better" and free circulation is once more established.

Of course it is not easy to know just how to regulate the supply of rich food so that the circulation shall not become clogged; at least it is not easy whilst we cling to the habit of eating three or four square meals a day, whether we feel hungry or not; and whilst we tempt appetite with all manner of highly seasoned dishes.

Wild animals have to hunt for their food, which consists of but one thing at a meal. They work for all they get. Unless hungry they do not hunt. No one calls a catamount or an eagle to highly seasoned feasts at regular intervals. Catamount or eagle eats *when he is hungry*. And before eating he has to wake up and work for his dinner. This induces full breathing and sets his blood to racing at such a rate that it clears the track and leaves room and power enough to take care of the new meal. No sluggish circulation in wild animals, and no disease.

Here is a hint for man. Of course if you are never sick or depressed; if you are strong and well, and growing stronger, you may need no hints. But if you are not all that you desire to be just try a little judicious starving, along with plenty of exercise and fresh air. Live on plain foods, principally fruits and nuts, and skip a meal now and then, or even half a dozen meals, until you get down through that veneer of cultivated appetite- down to real *hunger*, of the sort that impels a catamount to travel for miles and wait patiently for hours to find that for which he hungers.

Hunger is an infallible guide as to *what* to eat, and how often. It is the real voice which comes up from arteries cleansed and *ready* to carry fresh supply to waiting body.

But appetite is the whining call of an *unrested* stomach and unready arteries, which have been *taught* to cry at stated intervals.

Most of us are the slaves of spoiled appetite; but we have never once in our stuffed lives since childhood been really hungry and known the real joy of eating.

Clogging of the arteries and veins results in clogging brain and nerves. It is impossible for a man with a clogged and diseased body to think his best. The clogging presses against nerves as well as arteries and prevents free circulation of thought.

And only *free* thought is high thought.

A man with a clogged system will think cramped, negative thoughts. He can't help it. His nerves are cramped. His doctor may say he is "nervous," but "nervousness" and "weak nerves" are simply cramped nerves-cramped in a clogged system.

Now I know that it is quite possible to take the kinks out of one's nerves by mind power alone- provided one is not too badly clogged and cramped. *But high living will eventually choke off high*

thinking, and **NO** human being can reach his highest thinking along with high living. Reason and *all human experience* proves this.

And I leave it to you if it is not vastly more sensible to reduce your living and thus free your cramped nerves to the free flow of high thought than to attempt to live high and *force* high thought through “weak nerves.” The only bit of you which may refuse to agree with this statement of the case is *your spoiled appetite*. Are you going to pamper that and starve your high thought? It is for you to decide.

But now let us suppose that with your whole being you *will* serve the God of High Thinking. You are going to practice low living that you may more fully serve the God of High Thinking. You are fasting your body into an unclogged state. You are feeding it upon simple foods, such as nuts and fruits, which are not thickening to the blood, as are meat, condiments and pastries. You are exercising freely and taking deep, full, outdoor breathing exercises to promote good circulation of blood and free the nerves. You are doing all this, and you are rejoicing in the glorious feeling of health and courage and freedom which comes to you. You are bright, alert, ready, with “a heart for any fate.”

But you want yet higher thinking. Good! Your nerves are free now, and *ready to receive higher thought than any they have ever carried*.

Now fill them with “*incessant affirmatives*” of your HIGHEST IDEALS. “Go into the silence” and see how *still* you can be, mentally and physically. Simply *rest* until Spirit can *form within you the mental picture of what you are to work for*. Keep being still, and waiting expectantly, until “it comes to you” just what to do.

To that clean body and brain of yours it will come quickly and with joy.

Keep free in body, and keep looking mentally for new things to “come to you,” and the way will grow brighter and brighter. *You will grow brighter and brighter and brighter*. And whatsoever things you desire you shall have.

Say “*I can* and *I will*.” It will fill you with power.

Above all things, say “*I AM what I desire to be*.” It is true. You have made conscious connection with The Infinite.

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Chapter 9

The Limitless Self

"Who are you?"

"Who? Me? *Who am I? Why, I* am the man who was five times elected the mayor of Podunk. That's who I am."

"And who are you?" I asked a rather ragged looking woman.

"Oh, I am the wash-lady," she answers.

"I am a sales-girl in the big department store across the street," says another.

I asked a little child, "Who are you?" and it answered, "Who am I? Why, why, I'm just *me*."

"Well, but what *is* me?" And he looks puzzled, and up and down, and gives it up. But he is sure he is *me* and nobody else.

The five-times elected man has crystallized into a mayor; the woman who does washing has crystallized as a washing machine; the sales-girl has settled into a mere part of the great selling-machine across the street.

Only the child knows that *me* is *undefined*, undefinable, unconfined, limitless.

But he doesn't *know* that he knows it. Consequently as he grows up he becomes so interested in what he *has done* that he thinks it is *himself*. He has grown legs and arms, a teacupful of brains, a little knowledge and a reputation, and when you ask him who he is, he thinks of himself as a mixture of legs, arms, brains, doings and reputation. He is *limited* in his own estimation by what he has done. He remembers it all. Every time he says "I" he sees a panorama of things he has done, or has failed to do. He is little or great, a failure or a success, according to his depreciation or appreciation of what he has done.

The child has forgotten his past. When he says "I" he defines nothing. He sees simply a rosy nebulous mist 'out of which worlds and other wonders may be formed. There is to him nothing formed and fixed. He is a glorious and untrammelled Reality and all things are possible. He is full of the joy of power and prospect.

"Of such is the kingdom of heaven," and "except you become as a little child" you shall remain forever imprisoned by *what you have done and left undone*. This kind of prison is hell, where one grows *not* "in wisdom and in knowledge," but in *hate*- hate for himself and his "life." And his prison walls keep pressing in and in, and by and by they are simply the walls of a coffin.

And it is all so needless. One only needs to *forget*, to be again a child in the rosy mist of glorious possibilities.

Forgetting is so easy, too. It is only a matter of displacing one picture with another, just as one paints a new picture right over the old one on a canvas. As the new one appears the old one vanishes.

Ah, it is *easier* than that. Memory is just the original stereopticon show, where the old picture fades as the new appears. Change the slide and presto the old has vanished from view. Keep on slipping in new slides and by and by the old one will find its way into the ash barrel and the ash barrel will be dumped into the bottomless pit of oblivion. Oh, it is *easy* to forget by *putting in new slides*.

It is our memories which limit us. If we didn't die once in a while and forget, we would surely curl up into something too insignificant to mention. As long as we persist in piling up our doings and misdoings in a great burden of memories we shall continue to be borne down by them to earth and the grave.

As long as we clutter up "memory's walls" with back-number pictures of ourselves and our powers we shall need to call in Death, the Junk Man, to renovate for us.

But we are learning-by and by we will get waked up to the desirability of keeping "memory's walls" *freshly* decorated with *new* and up-to-date conceptions. This thing of hanging on to old things simply because they are old is not only silly but it is death-dealing.

Our mental pictures are the source of our inspiration and power, or of our *lack* of inspiration and power, all according to the style of pictures we entertain. There is no power or inspiration or wisdom to be got out of things that are past. He who dwells upon fleeting *things* runs on with the water after it has passed the mill-wheel-on and on down the stream and out into the ocean, accomplishing nothing. The wise man stays by the mill and *looks for more water* to turn his wheel. If water fails he conjures steam or electricity-always something new. Always he looks *ahead*, not behind, for his power.

Why don't we do that? When all things are failing us why do we think of the time when we *used* to have water to turn our wheel? Why do we look down stream at the water that is past? What *good* will that water do us *now*? And does not the thinking of it simply fill us with despair and paralyze effort and common sense? Of course.

There is plenty more power where that flying water came from. Look up stream, not down; and be ready.

Your mental pictures are your **ONLY** source of power and wisdom. Your continued growth in wisdom and power depends upon your development as a mental artist. And *that* depends wholly upon quiet, wide-awake *persistence*.

Have you held beautiful mental pictures and worked faithfully to put them on life's canvas? And did you fail? Well, what of it? There is *more* canvas ready. You have learned by your mistakes. Now *wipe off everything* and take a **NEW** mental picture. Get away from the old one. Begin as if this were your very *first* attempt in all the world.

Relax your physical efforts for a time. Get limp all over and *let* a new mental picture form. It will be a better work of art than *the last* one-it will be nearer true to principle. We learn to make true mental pictures by making them. We learn by every one we make, even though the picture itself is smashed.

And by and by we learn to make such mental pictures as can be worked out without a mistake.

Success lies all in *keeping at it*. Faith and work will accomplish *anything you can picture mentally*.

When you cannot work a thing out just as you picture it, it is because you have not looked carefully enough at your picture.

If an artist keeps his eyes too steadily fixed upon the canvas where he is working out his picture he never makes a good picture. *He looks at his model*, looks long and with joy. As he looks he sees something new. Then quickly, lightly, with as few motions as possible he reproduces what he saw *in the model*. If he is not satisfied with his reproduction he *looks at his model again*, and keeps looking until it comes to him, just how to get the effect he is after. Then a few more quick, light strokes and success is his. This is what the *wise* artist does. The foolish one *keeps looking at the canvas*, to see where the mistake lies; his eye is filled by his imperfect work. The wise artist fills his eye with the *perfect model*. The unwise artist, seeing only mistakes, is discouraged and incapacitated; while the wise artist *feasts upon the perfections of his model*, and is inspired to try, try again until he hits it *just* right.

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Chapter 10

Ideals

You and I are artists. But we are prone to look too long and often at our canvas- the results of our efforts; and too little at our Ideals, which are the sources of all effort and power of accomplishment.

Let us take special times every day for gazing upon our models-our Ideals. The first thing in the morning and the last thing at night should be daily given to special gazing upon *what we desire*. Then many times a day we should pause in *our efforts*, for a few moments' study of the Ideal.

Choose for these sittings the same hour, the same place, and even the same chair facing the same way. Let the chair be an easy one, but with a straight back.

Keep your appointments with your Ideal to the minute as nearly as possible. But if at any time you are unavoidably hindered take the earliest moment possible.

And remember always that the matter of *first* importance is to *keep sweet*. To let a change upset you simply necessitates extra time and effort to get settled again.

Sit bolt upright, resting against the back of your chair, and in an easy position. Keep absolutely still, with eyes *resting* (not *fixed*) always on the same spot, straight ahead and slightly above the level. Do not get into a *rigid* state, but see that you *are still*. Aim not to move once during the entire sitting, which should be about half an hour long. Perhaps less to begin with.

Now having disposed of your body rise mentally to the highest heights you can picture. For instance, take your highest business ideals; picture it in rosy colors and *definite* outline. *Stretch* it. Make your ideal just as large and fine as possible. Picture out the details as plainly as possible. Make it definite. *Decide* just what you mean to work for and to realize. Let us suppose that you are a married man with a family of small children whom you wish to educate. You don't want just barely enough to send them to college on, leaving yourself a broken down and poverty stricken slave in the end. Neither do you want to remain a hack worker in a mean position and have somebody die and *give* you money to school your children with- whilst you keep on doing hack work. You want to be a **MAN**, so valuable to the world that you can *command* plenty of money as your **RIGHT**. You want to **GROW** in wisdom and knowledge until a more remunerative work will call you and be *glad* to pay for you. You want, say \$5,000 a year, to come *easily* to you as a result of your own good and *enjoyed* effort. Then you can hold your head up and enjoy looking any man in the *eyes-kindly*, as a brother and equal. Then you will enjoy *sitting straight* and being still and happy.

Keep filling in the details of your Ideal and get just as *enthused* over it as you possibly can. But keep your muscles relaxed. Rise above the body and revel in your Ideal.

There is a reason for this;-when muscles are relaxed they are in condition to be filled with power *from the Ideal held*. Tensed muscles keep out the mental energy. Mind is positive to muscle, and *relaxed* muscles are receptive to mental power.

So loose the body and get enthused over the Ideal. Let your mental picture wake as much emotion as possible; for emotion is real creative force, and *creates after the pattern held in mind*.

If you hold a fearful picture in mind *emotion* creates it. Job said "I feared a great fear and it came upon me." If you hold a beautiful picture emotion creates that. Fear and joy, and all intermediate shades of feeling, are *the same force-the* soul-force out of which all creation is made.

So I tell you to do your best to get enthused and exalted over your Ideal. Keep telling yourself that your Ideal is *you*, and that in due time you will prove it in terms of matter. If it is not *you* what is it? Your Ideal exists *within* you, does it not? And therefore it *must* be you. And your poverty, or your

work, your “conditions,” exist *outside* of you, do they not? Then they are *not* you. What exists within is *you*.

Of course your “conditions” have their mental pictures within you *too*, -*pictures which preceded the conditions themselves*. In past years, perhaps in past ages, you have held with emotion the mental pictures of these very conditions. Hence their creation. *But these pictures have grown old*, as people grow old, *and are ready to be laid away and dissolved in ashes*. Every single day and hour you are dwelling with emotion upon more mental pictures which are to take their place, both inside of you and out. So I bid you take special hours for holding with enthusiasm the sort of pictures you *want* to create; instead of letting your mind perpetuate the same old things over again. And I bid you put into this Ideal picturing all the emotion you can summon, to the end that you the more quickly and *vitally* create what you want.

Of course this is not at first easy to do. *Conditions* will come in between you and your Ideal-conditions which arouse fear; which is emotion, remember-your creative energy. Your emotion has habitually gone out to conditions, recreating them. And when you picture your Ideal it seems cold, dead and unreal.

But here is another place where practice makes perfect. Repeated efforts will soon switch emotion into new channels, permitting the old mental pictures to shrivel. And conditions will follow.

And the more *regular* the efforts the more quickly will energy acquire the *habit* of flowing in the new directions. There is enormous power in *rhythm* of effort. One soon gets into the *swing* of a new thought and it fairly does itself. By rhythmic effort one soon creates through the Ideal a heart-throb. The Ideal passes the period of gestation and comes forth into the actual.

Make light of the actual. Do not permit it to play upon your emotions. But exalt the Ideal. Glorify it. Accord it all power. Rejoice in it and give it your most loving thought. Return to it at regular intervals, and always enthuse over it. To yourself.

As to other people, keep mum. Many a man’s Ideal is stillborn because he wastes his energy in *talk*; and because he draws to himself the opposition or contempt of others. *Be still*; make no noise, except when there is something to be gained by it. Noises of all sorts *use up* your mental energy. In stillness power is generated. Be still.

After a few days of faithful practice at gazing upon your Ideal you will find your whole life changing. You will find yourself with more heart for your work, and things will seem easier to do. Depressions will grow less frequent and less profound, and in time they will entirely cease, and you will find new ideas coming to you about *how* to do your work. Then your interest in it will increase and you will begin to know the joy of the successful artist.

When you arrive at this stage you will wake some morning to find yourself making more money. And you will find yourself with a little real faith, or conviction, that in due time your Ideal will become real. After that all is easy - our Ideal will *live you*, instead of having to be carefully nurtured at stated intervals.

Between the times when you gaze specially upon your Ideal it is well to forget it as fully as possible. Put your best thought into your work. But never neglect your stated seasons with your Ideal.

All life is growth, and a live Ideal is no exception. *Let* it grow. Stretch your imagination to take in all you can. When you find yourself approaching the \$5,000-a-year mark you have set for yourself you will find yourself wanting \$10,000. Now don’t accuse yourself of never being satisfied. Just rejoice in this evidence of spiritual growth, enlarge your operations and go in to win on a larger scale.

When you have got your children well educated don’t stagnate. Look within and find another Ideal to work for.

Your Ideals are God-given for use. Look eagerly upon them and know that they are Life.

You do not make your Ideals; they make you-if you keep mentally in touch with them.

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Chapter 11

"I Can and I Will"

The effectiveness of "I can and I will" as a statement to live by depends upon the manner in which you say it.

To say "I can and I will" through gritted teeth and with clenched fists is to defeat the very object you aim for. To assume a prize-fighter attitude toward life is to invite a licking.

And yet it will not do to say "I can and I will" in a limp, half-hearted fashion.

The right manner, which means the effective manner, of uttering this potent phrase depends upon a correct knowledge of the meaning of "I." "I can and I will" may be the truth or a lie, just according as you define "I."

For instance, a foolish man who happened to be mayor of Minneapolis said to himself, "I can and I will make a lot of money for myself out of the criminals of this city." There were others who said the same thing. That mayor reckoned the "I" simply as so much personal cuteness pitted against the city. He gritted his teeth and pulled in all the money in sight. He pitted himself *against* the city, which rose up and placed him behind prison bars. He may still be gritting his teeth and saying, "I can and I will get out of here." He may be able to get out of those particular prison walls, but all the world will be to him a prison. He will have to skulk and hide-he is not *free*. The money he took was never his and he knew it. And he could not keep it, though he said mightily "I *can* and I **WILL**."

You see, "I" to that mayor meant a small something bounded by a skin, a suit of clothes, a hat and a pair of shoes. The rest of the city, and the world, and the universe at large, seen and unseen, had no part in the "I" he placed before "can and will."

The undefeatable "I" has no such puny boundaries. It fills all space and expresses through all personalities. It is **ONE** and never goes back on itself. Sooner or later- generally sooner-it punishes fully every puny rebel who rises against it.

In other words, a man must consider *all creation and uncreation* when he says "I." If he fails to do this his success is but a transitory imitation and his down-fall sure, as in the case of Minneapolis boodlers.

It is a foolish and short-sighted business policy which ignores the Golden Rule.

To do unto others that which you would not like done unto yourself is to bite off your nose in order to leave more blood for the rest of your face.

All life is One, and the good of all is the good of each one; the hurt of one is the injury of all.

When a man realizes this his personal I has expanded and merged in the "I" of omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence which really "*can* and **WILL**" do things he has found the Sublime Self which cannot be denied. Instead of gritting his teeth and driving ahead *against* the will of the Whole he identifies himself *with* the Whole. He works with All and All with him. The entire universe backs him.

Clench your hands and say "I can and I *will*" several times in succession through closed teeth. Note how you force all the breath out of your lungs as you repeat it, and how exhausted you feel by the effort. Why? Because you shut yourself off from the source of breath and will-power. You tried to act and will from the little skin-bounded "I" The result is that your skin-bounded self is quickly exhausted of the power it had-had from where? From the All. Now straighten up and stand like a young god. Look upward and imagine yourself possessed of all power in heaven and an earth. Imagine that all the world and the starry hosts are waiting alert and with shining eyes, to do your bidding. Imagine that you are to touch the button now and instantly they will spring to do the rest. The instant you say "I can

and I will” the entire powers of the universe are to be set in motion. Ah, your eyes shine and your whole form expands with gladness, you unconsciously take a full breath and “I can and I will” rings forth in its full harmony. You are filled with joy and a sense of full power. You feel that you “can and will,” and that it will take no clenched muscles, gritted teeth and brute will to accomplish, *for all creation will back you.*

Will is not a matter of straining muscles and set jaw, but of quiet, firm **RECOGNITION** of your oneness with all creation, and of creation’s *readiness* to further your cause.

The most effective practice for the cultivation of will is that of dwelling mentally upon the Sublime Self. Go away by yourself for a half hour or more and simply *remember*, and try to *feel*, this unity of the personal self with the Sublime Self. Do not try to *argue* yourself into believing and understanding how it can be so; simply relax your muscles, lift up your soul and try to *feel* as if it were so.

At first you will see little result, except that you feel more *quiet* than has been usual with you. You will be less easily and frequently upset, and recover more quickly.

Rejoice in this and keep at the recognition exercises.

Very soon you will find this peace deepening in you, and you will find it growing *easy* to do many things you had considered hard. You will find yourself remembering without effort that **ALL** things are working *with* you, and that you are free to do as you will.

Keep on with the practice and you will find all the deepest desires of your heart growing easy of accomplishment. You see, you are making sure your *connection* with the All-Self. Instead of having to do things all by yourself as you used to, you have opened the sluice for the Sublime Will to flow into and work through you for the accomplishment of what you desire.

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Chapter 12

Desire the Creator

Hunger has built the universe. Hunger is desire. Desire is love. Love is God.

Of course we agree that God built the universe.

But it was not a God on a great throne outside the universe- *one* at whose behest angels and devils picked up handfuls of world-stuff and fashioned things, which were then set running.

It was God, or desire, *in* the universe, which has grown it up to its present state, and which will keep on growing it through all eternity.

Find desire in your own self-good or bad desire, it is all off one piece-find desire in yourself and you find God. Study the motions and results of desire in yourself and you will understand how God works to create worlds and peoples.

Note how a desire for food affects you. Does it cause you to sit still and sigh? Not until you have *first* tried every ingenuity you can think of to gratify your hunger.

Desire impels you *first* to effort.

You go first to all the places where you have been accustomed to find food. We will suppose that you find nothing in the pantry, and of course that discovery whets your hunger. You again go over all the shelves, hoping to run across something. Nothing there.

Now note that up to this point your hunger has impelled you to do just what you have been in the *habit* of doing. Of course this effort has done nothing further than *fix a habit* of looking in certain places for food.

But now: You have failed to *find* the food and hunger urges you a bit farther. You *begin* to think. You keep moaning inwardly, "*Where* can I find food?" Your wits grow a little keener as hunger sharpens. You *begin* to think. Mentally you recall all the places you have ever *heard others* speak of as abounding in food. Your sharpening hunger impels you to an entirely new kind of effort-for you. You go prowling about in search of places you have heard others speak of. Your hunger is now impelling you to follow *race* habits of thought.

But you still fail to find food. Your hunger grows sharper and sharper and your wits follow suit. YOU try everything you ever heard of and still no food. There is famine in the land. You have exhausted your personal resources and the race resources, and still hunger grows and urges you.

Then at last you begin really to *think*. Your wits go feeling out beyond all the realms you ever heard of before, or they go roaming with a new intelligence and questioning over the same old ground. Sticks and stones and all sorts of things nobody ever dreamed of eating are now with new eyes examined and tested, and by and by you discover food and satisfaction where nobody ever before dreamed of finding it. At last hunger has made you *think-it* has made you *in this particular thing* wiser than the whole race. It has differentiated you from the rest of your kind. It has impelled you to a little higher mark of intelligence than has even before been reached.

Now the rest of your race gazes at you and calls you "*so original, you know.*" And it straightway adopts your new food and is differentiated as you are.

This is the way desire has created the world as it is, and this is the way desire is every moment changing it.

We evolve by the acquisition of knowledge and wisdom.

Desire impels us to the acquisition of knowledge and wisdom.

Can you see why a too prosperous nation or individual begins immediately to degenerate? All his hungers being readily gratified his wits are dulled and he ceases to gain intelligence. Soon the *sameness* of that in which he lives grows irksome and he loses his *desire* to live. Disintegration sets in. He is *tired* of the same old thing, even though that thing is beautiful and comfortable.

When a nation or a man gets into this state of satisfied stupor, it takes the Goths and Vandals to keep him from dying completely.

It takes necessity to keep evolution going. Or else it takes an overweening ambition, which is after all the same thing.

And underneath and in it all is Desire, the great God, creating after his own image and likeness.

The more desire a man has the greater god is he, and the faster he evolves consciousness of his god-ship.

For thousands of years the race has been trying to crush out its desire, and the result was a paralyzed and half-dead race, with only here and there a live spot.

The "new thought" is really the thought that desire is God and should be *encouraged* to express. And this new encouraging of desire has already resulted in wonderful growth and lengthening of individual life.

"Oh," exclaims the Orthodox One, "how *can* all desire be good-how can desire be God and yet impel people to such terrible misdeeds-surely there are devil desires as well as God desires" And yet this same Orthodox One has read many times how "God hardened the heart of Pharaoh" to resist God's *own* commandments about letting "his children go."

Now harken: When you found no food in the pantry, and none in all the land, and still hunger grew, you went out without chart or compass into strange places, and you tried many queer things. Some of these things proved bitter and unprofitable and you left them and went on and on. And at last you found the New and Good thing. But it was the *very same* old desire that made you try the bitter and unprofitable things, and the New and Good thing. You did not try the bitter things because you *desired* bitter things, did you? Of course not. All the time you hungered, hungered for the Good thing; and kept seeking it; and as soon as you knew the bitterness of the bitter thing you left it and went on, still seeking.

You see, you were in a Strange Land. You had never been that way before. How could you know what was bitter and what Good, except by trying them? Of course there were people who told you of the bitterness, but there were still others who scoffed at the warning-who told you they had tried it and knew better. And they pointed out to you many personages who used the bitter things and yet looked sleek and prosperous. And you were hungry, hungry. So you tried the bitter things, and found them unsatisfying. And hunger kept urging you until you found the New and Good.

Now was hunger any more "evil" when you tasted the bitter things than when you ate of the Good? Of course not. It was simply blind, and *had to abide by your wisdom*.

It impelled you to try bitter and Good alike, and *each trial increased your wisdom*.

So is it with the good and evil of this world. The one good Desire is the life-urge of us all. Whether it urges us to heaven or hell it is still good-and *it still urges*. When in answer to its impulse we taste the bitter we learn the lesson and go on. When we find the good we return to it again and again.

But whatever we taste *we are taught something*; and that is what all Desire urges us to-to *learn*.

In answer to the impulse of desire we grow in wisdom and knowledge-the *only growth there is*.

This Desire-God which works in us to will and to do of its good pleasure, is a good God. It must be as good in me as in you; as good in the worst sinner as in the sweetest saint. The only difference between saint and sinner is a difference in *wisdom*, not in *desire*.

Since desire urges us to grow in wisdom and knowledge it is evidently only a question of time when we shall *all* know enough to turn from the bitter and find the New and Good. Is not the One Desire urging us irresistibly on *for its own satisfaction*? God in us, not only the hope of glory, but the absolute certainty of success.

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Chapter 13

Desire and Duty

Desire has urged us so long and so hard. We have persistently cuffed it into the corner and gone after new gods.

But despised Desire, deprived of its surface expression, has sunk deeper and deeper into our souls and refused to be comforted. After trying everywhere else for satisfaction, for a god to guide us, we have come back again to poor neglected Desire. In our extremity we see Desire with new eyes—we begin to *think*, and to understand. We try to coax Desire out of the corner and make peace with it. “The stone that the builders rejected” has become “the chief of the corner.”

The only way to find peace is to follow desire. Desire is the only guide to heaven, and the road lies through hell. Worse yet, it trails a labyrinthine way over the dead-levels of indifference, where Duty lies in wait to nip its every expression.

Sometime you will grow to hate the dead-levels where Duty stalks. You will wake to the duty of being undutiful; to the desirability of following desire to the mountain-tops. You will look at desire with new respect and ask it to lead you up and out of hell and the dead-levels.

Hell comes before the dead-levels, you know, and all on the road to Transfiguration Mount. And when you begin to want desire to guide you you will have been a long time on the dead-levels.

Then desire will whisper to you that she is God and you want to follow her.

And when you agree she will begin *by leading you straight away from Duty*.

Many, many times your faith will not stand the test—you will turn back again from following desire. You will turn to duty because you are *afraid* to leave her.

Well, never mind; caution and conscience are good things and easily taught. Follow Duty when you must.

But keep your eye on desire and follow her every time you dare. “Lay for” desire and make haste to follow her every time you can. Keep in mind that desire *is God*. Keep watching and she will *prove* it. When you just *must* follow Duty, do it; but tell yourself it is *desire* you are following—not Duty. *You are doing your duty, not because you must, but because you DESIRE to*. Always remember this. Never humor Duty to the extent of letting her think she is *making* you do things for her sake.

Let me whisper something to you: *Duty is a sham*. She is a hollow mockery. She wears a dignified demeanor to cover her real nature. Duty is **DESIRE** in a *goggle-eyed domino* which scares you stiff. Just you follow desire and never, *never* give Duty the satisfaction of thinking you’d follow her, and by and by she will get tired of masquerading. She will take off her mask and you will smile to see that she really *was* desire all the time, and you knew her not.

You see, you and other folks had such a habit of cuffing desire into the corner every time she tried to lead you, that she *had* to go and cover herself up in order to get you to follow her at all. So all along on those horrid dead-levels where you thought Duty was leading you such a stupid and righteous chase, you were *really* following desire all the time.

Now if you will keep telling Duty to her face that you *know* she is only desire—that *you* are following desire and *not* Duty; if you will keep resolutely sticking to it Duty will soon give it up and take off her mask, and you will really see the smiling face of desire where you thought there was only stern-eyed Duty.

I write Duty with a capital D because that is the way we have always thought of her. But desire has always been just plain desire to us-something naturally and loveably wicked and familiar; so familiar that we bred contempt for her. But our eyes are opening.

Do you remember that when you say "must" to the children they straightway are "willful." Children are true to God, to desire-"of such is the kingdom of heaven." When you dress desire up as a goggly-eyed scarecrow Duty, the child will have none of it. He might have been just on the point of following desire into the very thing *you* desire him to do, but one sight of Duty is enough-he won't go a step.

And you call him stubborn, contrary, bad. You are mistaken. He is only *true to God*. And until you become like unto him you cannot enter the kingdom of eternal youth and joy and godliness.

Practice doing as you desire, to the end that you may desire to do as you will. You cannot go far astray, for in your real essence you are the *Good God*, who cannot go back on himself.

Duty is a fetish of the conscious or objective mind, whose processes comprise only about *five per cent of all your thinking*. The other 95 percent mind is subconscious and *is true to desire*.

Desire is the drawing power of 95 percent of you; will is the drawing power of only 5 percent of you. Then do you wonder that desire often governs you *in spite* of your little *will* to follow Duty?

Your little percent thinker has conjured up Duty as a guide, whilst your 95 percent mind sticks to desire. You are two-minded, at war with yourself.

Unmask Duty and you will find yourself **ONE** and invincible. The 5-percent tail will lose his job of wagging the 95-percent dog, and you will reach Transfiguration Mount.

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Chapter 14

God and Devil

“You seem to think God put *all* our desires in our hearts. What if we have desires to do things we *know* are not right, and the doing of which will hurt someone’s feelings? I do not believe ignorance is the only cause of sinning. We do things we *know* are wrong.”

If “God is All,” where can a desire come from if not from God? There is *no* thinker but the One Great Thinker you call “God.” All creation is made up of God’s *trains of thought*. The real, informing, thinking self of *all* beings is that same One Thinker. He (or It) is working through all ages to *think* out the justice, love, wisdom that is in Him. He weighs one side of a thing through me, and another through you; and He waits patiently until He can figure it all out and arrive at the meeting place of truth.

Just as in your individual mind you seem to weigh and reason first one side and then another, so the One Thinker weighs and reasons *all* sides of The Truth through all people.

Sometimes you are inclined to think one thing is right, and then you change your mind and go over to the other side. So the One Thinker seems to change His mind and go from one side to another.

He first decides that the Israelites shall go; then He thinks through Pharaoh and says they shall not. Then He thinks still louder through Moses and they start. Then He sees Pharaoh’s side again and “hardens Pharaoh’s heart” (that is *just* what the Bible record says), and tries again to hold them. Then inch by inch He fights over the two sides in His mind (there *isn’t* any place but God’s mind, and we are all in it) until he finds the point of perfect justice, or *equity*.

The same One Thinker, or God, has debated within Himself as to whether the Filipinos shall go free or belong to the United States. *You* thought the people of the United States and the legislators in particular were doing all that thinking and talking for and against. Why, bless you heart, the people and the legislators are *dummies in God’s mind*-they are little thoughts moving around in the mind of the One Thinker-thought through which He weighs and balances and decides the equities. He thinks out and *proves* His *intuitions* in this way.

Now don’t all of you anti-expansionists jump up and screech at me that it is *not* equity that we should own the Philippines. *You* are only one side of the debate.

And don’t all you expansionists come smiling around to pat me on the back. *You* are only the *other* side of the question.

I AM on the fence and I can see you both. All keep still now and I will whisper to you a secret-*God hasn’t thought it all out yet*. He is still thinking alternately on one side and then on the other. It is nip and tuck with him whether to hold the Filipinos or to let ‘em go. But He *thinks* He’ll let ‘em *go-when he finds a way*. He’s thinking it out through you and me and Governor Taft and President Roosevelt and the rest.

There is just One Mind, which fills space full. All minds are inlets of the One Mind. All thoughts are thoughts of the One Mind.

Desire is the *will* of the One Mind. All desires are *inlets* of the one desire or will. *All desires are of God*. They are God’s desires, fitting in with that particular *train of thought*. As the thought changes so will the desires. God’s thoughts and desires change through all eternity. His desires fit the particular train of thought He is working out-one thing in you, another in me; changing in each of us from day to day; but *always God*.

God is proving through you and me what is right and what is wrong; what is just and what is unjust.

Wrong ALWAYS brings unhappiness; right ALWAYS brings happiness.

It is not enough that you have been *told* that it is “wrong” to tell lies. God hardens your heart to tell lies and suffer for it until you have so thoroughly proved the wrong and unhappiness of lying that NOTHING could tempt you to lie. So with all other wrongdoings.

But lots of times we *think* things are wrong when they are not really so. We have been *told* things are wrong—we do not know for ourselves. God “tempts” us to *prove* things.

The gaining of wisdom is *all we are here* for—here in God’s mind. We learn, and God proves, as much by our wrong deeds as by our right ones. By lying and suffering for it we learn first to *wish* for truth, then to work to gain it; then finally we *love* it and *live* it.

But not all in one little span of life perhaps. That is the trouble with people who are so greatly worried over right and wrong—their noses are always to earth and a death makes them lose the trail. They see a *single* being in one short span of life; instead of looking up and taking all life and *all* lives as a Whole.

But they, too, are learning.

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Chapter 15

Let Us Play

Except you become as a little child you shall in no wise be able to “concentrate.” Concentration is the natural mental attitude of a child.

A child is one-minded. When its attention turns to any given object its whole being is polarized to that object. To all intents and purposes there is nothing in existence beyond the one thing to which the child’s attention is turned.

Did you ever notice a fine horse when its attention is turned toward something? He “pricks up his ears” and they point directly at the thing that has attracted his attention. Every cell in a child’s body, and every atom in his soul, “pricks up its ears” at the thing his attention is attracted to. Every cell and atom receives clear impress of the thing attended to. This is “polarization,” or concentration. This is the secret of the child’s marvelous aptitude for learning. It is likewise the secret of good memory and the joy of living.

But the child forgets the art of polarized attention as he grows up. The main cause for losing the art is lack of gumption in parents and teachers. The child is charged with “musts” and “don’ts” to which he is *compelled* to pay attention. Every little cell is made to carry such burdens that it simply has not the *heart* to “prick up its ears” and take in a new impression. Only here and there is found anything *vital* enough to polarize attention.

BURDEN-BEARING is the great cause of lack of concentration, lack of ease in learning, lack of memory and of joy of living.

If we were a bit wiser life would be a continual playground, where we’d simply *grow* in wisdom and knowledge and self-use by having a good time at our games.

When we *must* play there is no joy in it. We *must* play the business game and support our families. We *must* “keep up appearances.” We *must* do as others do. We *must-we MUST*.

Nonsense! The only *must* there is about it all is the cue we *took from* our **PARENTS** and teachers and the traditions of men. We are hypnotized to think we *must*.

And it’s all a lie, too. Suppose you *try* it once and see. Suppose you sit down and say you *will not*. Who is to compel you? *Nobody*. You have heard of women who took to their beds and staid there-out of pure lack of anything else to attract the attention they wanted. They *could* have walked if they would-as circumstances proved-but they *wouldn’t*. They went to bed. And somebody or other always met the compulsion and took care of them. They *refused* to even take care of themselves; they slid the “*must*” off themselves. *And there was always somebody else ready to assume the “must.”*

That is it-we *assume our own burdens*. The less vigorous and determined and wise we are the more of these burdens we *assume-burdens dropped by others*.

And what good does it do to bear burdens? None-worse than none. The woman who dropped hers and went to bed simply stagnates and atrophies for lack of activity; and the woman who assumes the burden of walking and thinking for her wears herself out for nothing at all. If she had walked out and left the woman in bed that woman would have got up again and walked and thought for herself.

All our burden-bearings are as utterly foolish and unavailing as that. I have before me letters from two women who are still toting their sons around, although the sons are past the thirty milestone, and do not even take the trouble to let their mothers know their whereabouts. If those mothers had dropped those boys years ago and made the most of life for themselves they would be now such bright, handsome attractive women that they couldn’t keep their sons away from them.

The burden-bearing woman (or man) tires herself so with *useless* efforts of mind and body that she has not energy enough left to keep herself in even decent trim. She gets bedraggled and falls away back to the tail end of the world's never-pausing procession.

Women as a class do not *think* and command themselves to best advantage. They are content to shoulder any old burden they see slipping from the shoulders of another, and to spend days and energy in *feeling*. Any kind of a *feeling* will keep the generality of women from *thinking*. Women shoulder indiscriminate and useless burdens and *feel* themselves into innocuous desuetude.

It is a hardship when one does not learn in childhood to read and write. But it is not an irremediable evil. One can learn when he is 20 or 40 or 60. A great authority on the Greek language learned the language after he was 80. He couldn't have done it though if he had fagged himself with burdens other people had dropped.

It is never too late to drop burdens and use energy to some *purpose*. All one has to do is to declare "I *have* no burdens- life is a play-ground !" -and *stick to it*.

You *have* no burdens-they are all an hallucination. Life *is* a play-ground. This is the **TRUTH**. Just tell it to yourself until it works its way into your semi-paralyzed mind and makes itself *felt*. Relax physically and mentally. Lie idly under the apple tree and look up to the blue sky and let fancy play with the world. You will find new and happy **TRUTH** in common things, as Newton did.

Lie there and let truth regenerate you. By and by you will think of something you want to go play at. Perhaps the pervading humor of the world will suggest that you want to make mudpies again. Perhaps it will suggest a blackberry pie instead. It is a *lot* more fun to make blackberry pies than mud ones; and it's such pleasure to watch the other children's shining eyes whilst you all eat.

Perhaps you will prefer to go play the game of business. Well, play that. This whole great play-ground is before you. Go *play*. Make your own choice of games and have a good time.

Somebody says, "Life is real, life' is earnest." But I say unto you that "Life is real-ly what you *think* it." It is a great game, a tragedy, or a sentence at hard labor, just as *you will*; if you don't like what it has been, *use your ingenuity* to make it different.

Above all things, *drop the burdens*. Refuse to make bricks without straw. If the world won't let you go just go anyhow.

There is always a Red Sea to cut off pursuers and *obliterate your tracks-unless* perchance you dig up your old tracks and lug them along through the wilderness. If you do, I give you fair warning, you'll never get across the border into the land flowing with milk and honey.

This is a new, glorious *day-different* from any other day-a clean, beautiful day. The Red Sea 'has wiped out all the old days; the new days are not yet born. *This* is the *only* day there is. *Go play in it*.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." *One* thing at a time, and that thing done with *all* thy heart;- this is concentration, the secret of Life and Creation itself. And it is a simple little thing- so simple that a child does it without effort, and any man or woman can acquire it again *by practice*.

Remember, that every time you say to yourself, "I *must*," you *tell a lie*, and you commit a crime against yourself. You lay upon yourself a burden and rob yourself of the joy of doing.

Every time you catch yourself saying, "I *must*," **DENY** it *hard*. Sit down in a chair, relax all over and ask yourself solemnly *who* says you "must." *You* said it. *You* are doing all the compelling. Why? Simply because *you choose* to do this particular thing. There is *no* compulsion about it. You **CHOOSE** to do it-you *want* to do it. You are exercising your divine **FREE WILL** to do it. Oh, of course

you can say, "If it wasn't for this, that or the other I wouldn't do it." But that does not alter the fact that you *can* fold your hands and leave it undone if you choose. But you desire to *do* it. You *choose* to. You *want* to.

Keep at this practice of logic until you realize that you have thought yourself completely out of the old "must" feelings.

As you emerge from the "must" feelings you will find the *joy* of life filling you, and you will find memory and other faculties regaining the vigor of youth.

Everything but a mushroom or a toadstool takes *time* to manifest. You have been growing into the "must" habit since childhood. It may take time to outgrow it. But perseverance will accomplish it. And the more *faithful* you are in practice the more quickly will you realize the freedom, joy, youth you desire.

The joy of life is HERE and **NOW**.

Joy of life is the power of accomplishment.

All things are easily possible to him that believes-and *practices*.

"The proof of the pudding is in the eating."

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Chapter 16

The Old-Clothes Man

"Some months ago you wrote in a short letter to me, stating that when a person leaves this earth, death is only a door to another state of life, and that we don't enter it unless it is best for us at that time and place. Do you consider death in all its different forms, in a young person as well as old, best for them, no matter whether they die from accident or natural causes? Mr. Towne writes in his article on reincarnation in October that what we learn during one life is carried forward into the next. Now how much knowledge can a child have learned when death comes, compared to an older person? If death is the door by which we enter another state, and that is spiritual, what comes from that? Do we inhabit this earth again? Won't you and Mr. Towne give us a little more light on the subject?"

When we are children and go to school we work problems on a slate-or used to. If we made a little mistake and quickly discovered it we wet our forefinger on the tip of our tongue and wiped out the mistake, and then we filled its place with the correct figure, or figures. But sometimes we made a mistake away up near the top of a long problem of long division, and that mistake was carried on down until there were more mistaken figures than correct ones. Then we wet our little sponge and wiped the whole thing out of existence, and did it all over again. Sometimes we did this several times over before we learned how to do the "sum" correctly.

We are still doing that sort of thing. Life is really a "problem," which must be done by mathematical rule. Our bodies are simply the figures on the slate. Every day we work away like more or less sensible and happy children; every day we find ourselves making and correcting mistakes, wiping off a little here and adding a bit there. *Our bodies* record all this, mind you.

But sometimes we fail to see our mistakes in time to correct them a little at a time, and sometimes we have not the patience to correct them. The mistakes are carried all through our bodies, just as through our problems on a real slate. Then we discover what a *lot* of blunders there are to correct, and we grow discouraged and quit trying. This relaxation of effort and will and *interest* is the wiping off of the slate. We do it ourselves- do it *sub-consciously*, from the habit of ages of wiping off the slate. That which goes out of a body at death is the *real* person. and he it was who wiped off the slate, who withdrew himself from the body.

No man dies unless he is ready to die-unless his mistakes of thinking (*his body is built of his thoughts, you know*) are so in preponderance that he cannot hold himself longer as an *organization*.

A body is an organization of thought things which must *fit in* and *work together*. When a man's mind is filled with *warring, opposing* thoughts, he is disorganizing himself. It is as if he turned wolves and lions and dogs all into the same corral, to oppose and rend each other, as well as to tear down whatever else was therein organized. Lions, wolves and dogs are warring organizations.

A man's body in order to endure must be *one* organization,- every part must work *with* every other part. But as long as a man *thinks into* his body, one day good things, kind things; and another day ugly, revengeful, death-dealing things, he is turning lions and lambs together. And it is only a question of time and the kind of thought when he will cease to be an organization,-he will fall to pieces, a victim to opposing forces.

And a man need not even *be* ugly himself in order to die. He needs only *recognize* ugliness in others. The Pharisee who has spent his life in ferreting out meanness and obscurity in others is as full of meanness as the nastiest sinner that walks. Man becomes what he thinks upon.

But such a one may be strong and healthy a long time because *nearly his whole body is organized of the one kind of thought*. So full is he of "evil" that he is an *organized evil*-a one-mind of evil.

It is the "good" and the goody-good people who fill themselves up on the warring factions of good *and* evil, whose bodies are choked with the warring and who suffer most and die youngest.

The same thing is true of people at all ages. Wisdom does not necessarily come with years, though no soul ever lived five minutes that did not in that time discover and eliminate mistakes *by waking up to more, or less truth*. All experience enlightens-even that of being born to die in a day or a week.

Don't imagine babies are such ignorant little lumps. They are not. *They are wise enough to choose their environment*- just the one best calculated to teach them what they most need to know NOW. To be sure they do not choose parents as you and I would go out and look over a stableful of horses and choose one. They do better than that. As the birds obey the desire to fly south when winter comes down with frosty breath, so the infant soul obeys its sub-conscious *desire* for a particular parentage. In other words, parent and child are *attracted*; and each furnishes to the other the particular sort of experience necessary to its *next* further growth.

Just as we sometimes wiped off our problem before we had half a dozen figures down, because we had found our mistake and wished to correct our work, so the infant soul may find a big mistake and wipe out its body-only to begin again somewhere else.

Oh, don't be sceptical because you can't *remember* doing such things. You cannot remember many things that happened just a few years ago. How, then, shall you remember back to the time you chose your parents? Or still further back to the infinitely greater number of parents you may have chosen in succession, since the beginning of eternity. *You cannot even remember those problems you put on and wiped off your slate at school*. Is it, then, wonderful that you forget some other things?

But you can do other problems *like* those you learned on, and do them *almost unconsciously*, so easy has it become. You *learned much* on those old forgotten "sums"-you remember the "how," but you *forget where you learned how*.

So, no wonder you forget your old bodies and experiences. *But the wisdom gained with them is still with you*.

And every hour you are learning new truth-and forgetting *how* you learned it.

The babe is conscious, and the babe learns-fast, *fast*. But it forgets *how* it learned. And if it is not *pleased* with its experience and learning it *lets go* its body and *passes on-to* other experiences.

Those who die die because they are *ready*. And they "are *taken away from the evil to come*."

"Accidents" are *results* of "natural causes." An "accidental" death is a "natural" death-and sometimes much easier, and preferable to a so-called "natural" death. Who would not, if left to a decision, unbiased by public opinion,-who would not prefer instant death in the electric chair to a slow rotting by cancer or tuberculosis? One death is as "natural" as another.

No man dies unless it is *best* for him to do so.

"Has anyone supposed it lucky to be born?"

I hasten to tell him it is just as lucky to die, and I know it."

There is nothing about death to be afraid of. It is but a wiping off of the mistakes which have handicapped you. YOU go on forever.

Death is as natural and as good as life.

Only the *fear* of death can harm you, by tearing down your body before you *want* it wiped out.

It is said the first mark of insanity is that the patient fears and hates his best friend. The fear and hatred of death is insanity. To fear death for yourself is foolish. It but hypnotizes you, and death charms you as a snake charms a bird. You die before you would need to if *you had not feared death*.

It is still more foolish to fret over the death of another. In this case you not only add the death-dealing forces to your own body, hastening death for yourself; but *your heavy thought handicaps in the outset of his new state of existence the friend for whom you grieve.*

Spiritualists who claim to see and converse with departed souls often tell their friends that the "spirit forms" are "so weak and worn" that they are not able as yet to communicate with their old friends. The medium says the new made "spirit" is "heavy" over the unhappy state of its earth friends.

Why should not this be so? If our heavy thoughts *ever* affect each other (and we know they do) then death does not change it. *Our thoughts carry help or hindrance to those of whom we think, be they dead or alive.*

We think we must eat right and live right and think right for the sake of our unborn or new-born babes, that they may have the best possible start in their new existence. We need *just* as much to eat right and live right, and especially to think right, in order to give our "departed friends" the best possible start in the new life upon which they are just entering. We need to lay aside every small personal consideration, and bid them a hearty good-speed with every thought of them. We need to cultivate peace, and quiet joy, and *willingness* to have them go, for their sakes.

We can easily do this if we remember to be glad *with them*, instead of selfishly fussing around our own little personal "loss." They have wiped off the slate and gone on, with added wisdom, to better things. Why not be glad with them, *and for them!*

Whether we are spiritualists and believe in departed spirits; or evolutionists, who believe in an immediate reincarnation; or theosophists, who believe in a Devachanic rest before reincarnation; or Catholics whose friends may be in purgatory; or Protestants who hope they are in heaven,-whatever we are, the fact remains that our friends can no more fly beyond the reach of our help or hindrance *than they can fly beyond our thoughts.*

Let us *help* those who have "passed out." Let us treat them for power and love and joy and progress. Let us make them glad *by being glad ourselves.*

Death is good.

But it will cease to be necessary as we cease to make and *perpetuate* mistakes.

Being *afraid* of death and mistakes is the greatest mistake of all.

Get rid of it. Face death in your mind, until it loses all terrors for you. Call it *good*. Tell it if ever the day comes when you want to die you will do so with a good grace. Call death *friend*, and not foe. Tell it you may need it some day to wipe off your body, but remember that YOU couldn't die if you would. Death is only your old-clothes man-you *may* need him, and you may not.

For my part, I don't care whether I ever die again or not. If I keep on building better and better (and I see no reason why I shouldn't) I shall live right along indefinitely, maybe forever.

But if ever I get myself into such a tangle as some folks do, and as I have got into in times past, I shall do what Jesus did- give up my body.

Ida C. Craddock, sweet, earnest, clean soul, chose, for the sake of forcing her teachings upon an unready world, to butt her head repeatedly against the stone wall of Law, until she was so bruised and discouraged that she-wiped off her slate by conscious will. She made the martyr's choice and mistake, which means always death.

If ever I got tangled up as Ida Craddock did I might end the matter as she did-as Socrates ended his troubles.

But I hope to avoid the paths that lead to death. I love to live, and I mean to keep on living more and more fully and positively. I am seeking FIRST the law of Life and to live it.

Ida Craddock sought FIRST to convert and reform the world. The world, which did not want to be reformed, nor even to be taught too fast to reform itself, made things so warm for Ida Craddock that she couldn't stand it.

It *seems* a great pity. But it isn't. Ida chose her own course, knowing the result; she has learned her lessons, wiped off her mistakes and gone on to do still better work for herself and the world.

Jesus of Nazareth did much as Ida did. He spoke out in meeting, and out of it, until he stirred people up to crucify Him. *He wanted* to be crucified, in order that He might prove that He could live again.

But I want to live *all the time*, and I don't care whether or not I prove anything to anybody but *myself*.

Jesus and Ida Craddock deliberately trod the road to death. According to their faith and work, it was unto them.

I am treading my own individual path *where no death is*.

Death lies waiting for him who *works against* the established order—who makes crosses and carries them.

Life lies within and without for him who, resisting nothing, *grows out of* the established order—as a branch from the tree.

I believe I have found eternal life. Time alone will prove it. To live is to love and *work with* all things, knowing that all is good and all is life.

To resist *anything* is to cut off so much of life.

To fear death is to bring it upon you.

Get busy with LIFE.

End

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