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THE MAN WITH THE MIRROR

BY ELIZABETH GIBSON CHEYNE



ADAM &
CHARLES
BLACK

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TO
MY HUSBAND

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THE MAN WITH THE MIRROR

I STAND on the highway, guarding a mirror, that was given to me at birth ;

The mirror was then a small one, but the older I have grown, the larger the mirror has become :

It was given me by God, to image heaven, for those folk who have no inclination, or who think they have no time to look up to heaven ; so that when they pass the mirror with downbent eyes, they may be startled by a flashing of beauty and radiance, and may look up to heaven to see the source of the wonder.

I need to take great care, in placing the mirror, to keep myself out of it ; and I have to clean the mirror from moment to moment, lest heaven appear blurred to any passer-by.

I can never leave the mirror ; so I do not see anything of the great world ; but I see the pageant of the changing earth, and I enter into the mystery of the changing heaven.

I live on such wild fruits as grow within my reach, and on what is given me—half in pity, half in contempt, and sometimes in gratitude—by the passers-by.

I tell my tale to anyone who will listen—the tale of the changing heaven—how, when I began to hold the mirror, heaven was a place


woven of earthly and worldly beauty, and how it has gone on changing, till it is a condition of spiritual beauty.

I dare not leave the mirror for a moment, lest it should be lost or broken before some one else should be ready or willing to take charge of it.

While I am guarding the mirror, I make a rough sketch of the changing heaven, and I give it to any passer-by who will have it ;

And I cry continually : " Look up ! Look up ! for the God of the Ages passes by ! "

LIFE

 O be wisely lived, life needs to be lived in the past and in the future, as well as in the present ; for the past gives man wisdom, and the future gives him inspiration, as guides for the present :

Without these guides, man stumbles in the dark, or walks into a morass, or treads a dreary level, hearing none cry : " Come up higher ! "

Man needs to realize that the past, the present, and the future are an indivisible trinity, and that whoever tries to separate them, and to live in one of them only, is bound to fall short of completeness of life.

The world appears different to the aviator, the herdsman, and the diver ; and man's spiritual universe appears in accordance with his spirit's attitude to it.

Events are winds that plough the deep of life, lest life become stagnant in hollows of lethargy ;

Man cries to the event : " Forbear ! " Yet, in time to come, he is thankful to the event for disturbing his tranquillity.

Every wave brings the watcher news of all the oceans ; and every cloud brings the gazer knowledge of all weather ;

Every animal brings the student evidence of all life ; and every star brings the learner intimations of the whole universe.

MULTIPLE-BEING


EVERY man is composed of many comrade-selves, who have kept each other company on his life's long journey, and who know all each other's points of assailability and points of vantage :

Some of a man's selves are mortal harriers, and others are divine inspirers ; and it is a man's lifework to repress those, and to develop these.

A man may, by wisdom and striving, make all his selves serve him, through holy affiliations and divine alliances.

No man need lay himself open to his own contempt, or strangle his gift, or dishonour his sorrows ; for it is always possible for his best self to make a superhuman effort, and to transform him into an omniscient god.

THE HOUSE

 HERE is a house which man inhabits, from the day of his birth to the day of his death : he does not like the house, and he would be glad to exchange it for a perfect dwelling.

He has to pay a perpetual ground-rent to a landlord, whom he never sees, through the landlord's agent, the doctor.

Man would destroy his house, and build one he might like better, if only he could discover how to build a different one :

He thinks he has discovered, at last, the secret of the materials and substances of which his house is built and maintained ; but he does not know how to combine them, in order to erect a house that would be more beautiful and serviceable than his present one.

Yet man has great consolations ; for, though he cannot change the outside, he may make the inside of his house as beautiful and as clean as he chooses ;

He may hang his walls, and line his shelves, with the work of the Masters of all the ages ; and he may use his house as a work-place for his peculiar genius to develop its individual gift in ;

And he is free to use his house as a divine temple of creation, as a holy sanctuary of birth, and as a resting-place of death.

THE BODY

EVERY texture of being is needed to clothe the infinite variety of souls.

No man can map out the several territories of body and soul ; but the Spirit can tell a man whether his desire is of the body or of the soul : the body and the soul are always at variance in the absence of the Spirit.

Man, who is born of fire and water, is bound to live at variance with himself.

The flesh has material dreads ; the soul has spectral dreads.

The soul is the body's light-bearer, kindling its fires, and lighting its recesses.

The soul's betrothal-ring becomes one with the flesh it encircles.

Every cleansing of the body can be a cleansing of the soul.

When the soul's wings are torn in a combat with the flesh, they are long in healing.

As matter returns to the ether, so the soul returns to the Spirit.

EXPERIENCE

LIFE makes no gifts, but only loans ; and it insists on its loans being paid with interest ; and it demands them, sooner or later, without warning.

Life's chief loan is experience, and man is allowed to leave its results as a heritage to his heirs.

Experience and imagination are virile parents of wisdom ; every new experience re-strings the lyre of life.

Experience goes about, trying to be a saviour of men, and, sooner or later, it convinces them of their sins ;

It is an outlaw that robs men of every kind of Phariseeism, and dissipates their prejudices, leaving some men better than it found them.

Men often woo experience for the sake of ignition, for its fires burn well and long.

Experience is a channel for inspiration.

CIRCLES

MEN are angry when the little circles of their lives are broken and merged in the ever-widening circle of the universal life ; for they prefer to dwell in their circles of censoriousness, fastidiousness, pride, or indifference ;

They defend themselves against the attacks of thought, that would wear away their limitations, by reading and much speaking ;

And they absorb themselves in petty matters, because they are afraid of the great unknown in life and in death :

But sooner or later, in this life, or in another, the beneficent wave of humanity will wash away their defences, and merge their circles in the circle of the universal life.

DETAILS

EVERY man makes a collection of more or less valuable details, which he preserves carefully in his mind :

It is depressing to his fellow-men when the details consist merely of compliments paid to himself, trivialities of appearance, his neighbours' offences, or fashions in attire ;

But it is elevating to his fellow-men when his collection of details is full of the wide experiences of travel, knowledge, religion, art, common humanity, and universal life.

WASTE OF LIFE



THE undesirable do not understand the relation between desirability and acceptance ; so they marvel that they are undesired.

Life asks every man the question : " In what degree are you lovable ? "

Men spend themselves in living where they are neither needed nor wanted—ignored, disliked, despised ; and in being pensioners on other men's patience, and devourers of other men's sufferance.

They should, instead, arouse themselves to go where they are needed and wanted ; to lose themselves in the fascination of a beloved's identity ; to grow one with the disciples of some stupendous idea ; to enrich and be enriched by life, through offering themselves at the right shrine, instead of upon the wrong altar.

If men would be acceptable, they must take the trouble to find out where they are desirable ;

And instead of bewailing their griefs to an indifferent or resentful audience, they should try, in secret, to learn the causes of their griefs.

The only way to have a lover is to be a lover to the uttermost ; for a friend's love for a man is the reflection of the man's spirit on him.

INDICES



THE student of mankind sees in everything relative to a man an index of character ;

The disciple of love sees in everything relative to a man an index of possibility ;

And the worshipper of God sees in everything relative to a man an index of divineness :

To him, who can read these indices, the book of life is accessible, and the universe is instinct with everlasting interest.

THE PLAY

LIFE is a continual miracle-play,
where there is a seat for every man.
The world is an inhuman spec-
tator of the drama of a man's life ;

It enjoys his miseries, as though they were
but a tale that is told ; and, if it has a hint of
his agonies, it discusses them as callously as it
discusses the newspaper ;

It is amused by his struggles, and it lends
no hand to help him ;

It is jealous, when he is victorious ; and it
is triumphant, when he is foiled ;

The more privately he lives, the more
zealous it is in watching him ;

It is never so thoroughly satisfied as when
its curiosity has driven him to suicide ; for
then it has the pleasure of condemning him as
a sacrilegious malcontent.

SHIFTING

MAN'S life is ever shifting, in every hut, in every town, in every palace, and in every kingdom, every moment, every day, every hour :

The child changes from being its parents' plaything into being its parents' oppressor ; and the lover shifts from love into indifference, contempt, or loathing ;

Youth drifts from passion for the regeneration of mankind into callous acquiescence in the ways of the world ; and warm life is ever shifting into the cold grave.

THE MAGICIAN

TIME is a magician, who practises enchantments of every sort, wherever he wills ;

He transforms the same heart in its brief lifetime into a million forms. by means of myriad adventures, through labour or amusement, love or glamour, loss or possession,—through every condition and every emotion :

Yet few thank the enchanter either for the passion of youth or for the peace of age.

A HUNDRED YEARS HENCE

A HUNDRED years hence, any man now living, may be able to look back upon his circle of life, and to see everything that he cannot see now ; he may see which of his seeds have grown and thriven, and which have died into the body of the soil, that other seeds grow in ;

Any man may well wish to see a joyful harvest of goodly grain overspreading his circle of life, a hundred years hence.

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POSSESSIONS

MATERIAL possessions need not exclude enjoyment ; yet they generally limit the power of progress : the fewer they are, the greater a man may be.

Few men realize that possessions are burdens, and that the less they have to carry, the farther they can travel on the journey to their ever-beckoning ideal :

If travellers are heavily weighted by clothing, books, or provisions ; and if their road is blocked by baggage, tents, utensils, and servants, they move slowly along the common thoroughfares of the world, instead of being free to take this or that track, whenever they hear the calling of the Universal Spirit.

TROPHIES

EACH man's possessions are different ;
but none of men's possessions differ
so much from one another, as their
individual trophies may :

One man's trophy is a weapon, with which he slew some unoffending fellow-being ; and another man's trophy is a maimed limb, received in the saving of a fellow-being's life.

One man's trophy is a book, written in the cause of Truth, at the sword's point of untruth ; and another man's trophy is a hurdle, to stay the swift running of the spirit of progress.

One man's trophy is a picture, painted in courageous defiance of traditional canons of Art ; and another man's trophy is a flattering mirror, held up to popularity.

One man's trophy is a life-garden, where the innumerable moods flower in unsurpassable beauty ; and another man's trophy is a market-patch of everyday opinions, for profitable commerce with the world.

TRIUMPH

HE, who triumphs, should remember that every victorious step, that he takes, is on the Way of Graves ; and that, wherever he may go, he may walk upon a grave :

Then he will learn to tread softly. .

Whereinsoever he triumphs, he triumphs where other men have attempted and failed ;

And when he realizes this, he will hold their path of dead effort sacred ;

There will be no danger of his thankfulness for victory degenerating into pride, and becoming an offence, instead of a cry of joyful and dutiful praise.

God and man can only triumph through each other ; and man, who walks, unburned, between the earth's fire and the sun's fire, yet may cry with certainty : " I am Life, the Everlasting ! "

MAN'S TWO HOUSES

MAN has two houses—the winter-house of sorrow, and the summer-house of joy :

He lives chiefly in the winter-house, because the winter of life is longer than the summer of life ;

He looks longingly at the summer-house, but seldom enters it, because he is afraid of its unwontedness, and because he is more acclimatized to the house of sorrow ;

He thinks that if he lived more frequently in the summer-house, he might fall a victim to cold winds when he left it, and that its beautiful memories would make the winter-house more unendurable to him :

If man would trust himself to live in the summer-house for longer and longer periods, he might come eventually to live there altogether.

LANDMARKS



S the stars are set for a light and a wonder, men's lives are set for a beacon and a glory.

The landmarks of mankind are the lives of men, as the landmarks of the earth are of the earth's substance.

Any man's life may be a landmark of warning, aspiration, destruction, comfort, lure, or worship ;

And as landmarks of aspiration, comfort, or worship may endure for ever, it is worth while for a man to leave his life behind him as one of these landmarks.

One man's life is a workshop for the service of mankind ; and another man's life is a house of pleasant entertainment, where bonds, that hold mankind together, are tied ;

One man's life is a hut for wayfarers to shelter in ; and another man's life is a cathedral, where mankind can offer praise to God.

Every man owes his life to some landmark.

No man need complain that he has no place wherein to offer hospitality to God and to man.

CHILDISH THINGS

MEN would be amused if they were asked to play in the nursery of their childhood, with their toys and rhyme-books :

Yet they continue to cherish legal fictions, Sunday-clothes, funeral trappings, sectarian religions, class-exclusiveness, sex-shame, and all the insincerities that artificiality can devise.

Men are not satisfied by the cherishing of childish things ; but they cherish childish things because they are afraid of coming into contact with the great instead of the small, with the real instead of the unreal, with the living instead of the dead, and with God instead of gods.

VALUE



HERE is no such thing as general value, for nothing can be of the same value to any two individuals ;

The value of everything depends on the means of its possessor—his means of livelihood, and his means of appreciation :

Kindness, to one man is an unconsidered matter of course ; but, to another man, is the Deity made flesh ;

Leisure, to one man, is of no moment ; but, to another man, is an opportunity of creating ;

Travel, to one man, is a round of monotony ; but, to another man, is a sacrament of wonder ;

Freedom, to the free, is of no account ; but, to the prisoner, is deliverance from death.

Most men value themselves according to what they have, instead of according to what they have not :

He, who has much, has surely given away little ; and he, who is choked with material things, cannot be alive to spiritual things.

He, who possesses the world, cannot possess the earth ; and he, who imprisons beauty under his own lock and key, cannot receive beauty's reward of universal admiration.

If misers and hoarders would free themselves from accumulations, they would receive the comfort of their scattered gifts.

DESIRING

LIFE says to Everyman : " What do you want ? " and offers ways and means to those who want earnestly enough ; for desire can create what it craves.

He who cannot climb a mountain, knows that there may be a path round it.

Everyman will have what he wants ; but the will must pay the price of its desires.

A man can grasp only a handful ; woe unto him whose hand seizes only gold !

He who does not thirst for air, water, and love, is already dying.

A man is the child of his desires.

Nothing disconcerts a man so much as the fulfilment of his foolish wishes : when he is hungry and cold and comfortless, he sometimes wonders what is the matter, not realizing that the things he seeks and finds have not the power to satisfy and console.

One man walks abroad, and brings back a weight of mud ; another man walks abroad, and brings back a lapful of stars ;

One man collects coins ; and another man receives thanks ; one man builds houses ; and another man entertains the health-giving winds ;

One man places gods in a temple full of little

shrines ; and another man receives from God all the temples in the world.

It is man's good fortune that there are such splendid things to be had—cleanness, fresh air, nature, art, love, and God :

And it is man's bad fortune that there are such evil things to be had—luxury, artificiality, deformity, ugliness, indifference, and demons.

The less worth having what a man wants is, the less he need exert himself to get it ; and he can buy it with base coin.

Riches are easily got, by stealing ; a grand appearance is got, by lying ; and position is got, by unscrupulousness ;

Vice is waiting for a man on his own doorstep ; and ugliness is purchasable at the price of ostentation ;

Demons will keep him company day long and night long, on his expressing a self-indulgent thought.

The more worth having what a man wants is, the more he must give for it :

Cleanness and fresh air need his constant service ; friendship and love demand truth and faithfulness ; nature insists on his renouncing the worship of the world for the service of the earth ; art asks passion, patience, and care ;

And, if a man wants God, he must give himself for God.

III

RELATIONSHIPS

MEN make the tie of blood of paramount account, and they insincerely parade its questionable serviceability, dependability, and force, for the sake of customary appearance—the god to whom they habitually sacrifice Truth ;

And they ignore the closer ties and irrefragible bonds of divine friendships, of God-made love-unions, of merciful adoptions, of protection, and of service ;

They ignore the facts that ties of blood are chiefly accidental, and that they may be an intolerable bondage, imposed, undeserved, by their careless formers, on the unconsulted formed ; whereas other ties may be deliberate, holy, and responsible, in the eyes of their makers, and of the Binder of Men.

A man's family are not his blood relations, but any group of individuals in the human race in whom his aims are centred.

The affinities bind men to one another by subtle, unbreakable bonds :

All true artists are brothers, the world over, without the need of a guild to flaunt their sacred relationship, or to commit them to promises to help and to cherish one another :

The tie of the Lovers-of-God is inseparable by the forces that either life or death can bring against it ; and the passion for Truth unites men to one another with the indissoluble bond of eternity. .

A BROTHER

I WAS walking through the wilderness ; and I heard a woman say :

“ Blessed be the holy bond between brother and sister ; for my brother has been to me not only brother, but father and mother and sister. ”

“ He has descended into the Valley of the Shadow, and has carried me thence.

“ He has fed me sacramentally with patience and with tenderness, in hours of agony, when every movement was a cry.

“ He has sacrificed daily on the altars of my sorrows with reverence and with pity ; and he has never turned away his face from me in any time of tribulation, nor ever refused sympathy in any day of joy.

“ He has shared his friends with me ; and if his friends have forsaken me, he has forsaken neither me nor them.

“ He has shared with me all love, all skill, all heavenly wisdom, all knowledge and all beauty, all wonder and all glory.

“ He has led me from misery to forgetfulness, and from the sombre forest of death into the cheerful fields of life.

“ He has placed me beside him on the throne of his dreams in the hours of his triumphs ; and there evermore he keeps a place for me,

which he offers to none other, and which none other invades.

“Blessed be the holy bond between brother and sister ! ”

And I saw the woman lie down to sleep in peace.

SEVENFOLD

AS light holds seven colours in its ray ; so love embraces the seven faculties of pity, mercy, passion, tenderness, imagination, wisdom, and faithfulness :

Pity sees man's need of love ; and mercy overlooks his undesirabilities ;

Passion kindles his spark of divinity ; and tenderness grants him the bread of life ;

Imagination sees him as he may be ; and wisdom guides him ;

Faithfulness cleaves to him through good and evil, and through hope and despair :

There is no love that is not the sum of these faculties.

THE GUEST-HOUSE



LOVE is a guest-house, which God has prepared for humanity; and it is every man's privilege that he may bring something wherewith to beautify the guest-house, and wherewith to serve the guests :

The guest-house is always open ; for the Host is always there, and any man born may visit it.

Every man who brings an offering to it, is invited to enter ; and guests of every age, colour, and clime are there, living in the radiance of their Host's joy.

Men make many journeys into all the distant countries, which they have the means of reaching ; and they say that there is nothing to compare with the fascination of travelling ;

They are willing to spend their whole substance on the fixed iron-road, or on the ever-new track on the water, or on the ever-new path through the air :

Yet they do not set out on the greatest journey, that any man may make, at the expenditure of no material means, but at the expense of his whole self—the journey into the mysteries of love, which has illimitable expectations, innumerable combinations, and incredible surprises.

TIDES




O life, over which the whelming tide of love has rolled, is ever the same as before ; for lives, that have been flooded with love, are fertile, and are beautiful with the flowers and fruits of the wave—flowers of grace and desirability, and fruits of pity and mercy ; and they are cheerful with the evergreen of understanding.

No tide rises, but some tide falls : so, in the pleasant flood-tide of a man's life, it is well for him to consider those from whom the flood is withdrawn, and to anticipate the time when it may be withdrawn from himself.

As the wave cannot be moored, so the tide of the spirit cannot be checked ; and as foam rides the wave, so the soul rides the tide of the spirit :

And, when the tide of the spirit is in high flood, the soul never fails to ride to God.

A TASK

 HERE is a task allotted to every man, who is capable of having a friend—the labour of hewing a doorway in the rocky wall of his friend's limitations :

If he tires of the labour, let him remember that, without his efforts, his living friend may become immured in a tomb of prejudice, where the brambles of his own ideas, and the dust of his own opinions, close over him :

The best hewing is done little by little.

THE FAITHLESS



THEY who have been true to no man, yet expect to meet with truth ; and they who talk most about faithfulness, are often the least faithful :

They say : “ I never forsake anyone ” ; yet as soon as illness, or poverty, or any other affliction, lays hold upon their friend, they say to him : “ Depart from me, for your further acquaintance is no longer either a pleasure or a credit to me, and it dims my shining progress ” ;

Thus they add disillusionment to the burden of their friend's affliction, and rob themselves of the opportunity of allying themselves with the Eternal Pity, and of carrying on His work of universal mercy ;

And they lay themselves open to the attacks of the ravager—the hardener of hearts, and make friendship the world's derision.

A man's dead are not those who have become invisible, but those who have ceased to love him.

EMOTION



AS Earth is the mother of every variety of life, so Love is the mother of every variety of emotion.

Emotion is a wave ; and thought is a current : emotion and thought are different states of the same substance, varying degrees of the same force, and diverse actions from the same spring ; and the sea of life needs both the wave and the current.

As every man is related to every other man, and to his cousins, the animals ; so every emotion is related to every other emotion.

There is no such thing as an isolated emotion ; for every emotion has innumerable and immeasurable effects on the whole of a man's being.

The fibre of every impulse is knit to the fibre of every other impulse ; so that, whatever happens in a man's life, is related to, or connected with, everything that ever has happened, or that ever will happen.

Therefore, it behoves man to be more than the slave of his moods, and to be infinitely greater than the sum of his impulses.

TEARS



MAN'S tears are his pool of healing.

A man can be neither clean nor in health, if he never sheds tears in which to bathe his soul.

The upright shed tears for their own cleansing ; but the pitiful and the merciful let their pools overbrim and flow into the universal stream, which is for the cleansing of the nations.

Tears wear away sin, as water wears away the earth.

PASSION

I AM the Magnificent, flashing out of mystery—out of the eternal darkness of incomprehensible creation.

I am always great : my flame is stupendously good, or overpoweringly evil, according to the cleanness of the lamp of man in whom I am imprisoned for an enraptured moment.

I am the sacred fire, that cannot be extinguished : I burn whoso seizes me, to his forgotten shame, or to his ever-living glory.

I am the hidden source of birth, of art, and of religion ; and of death, of devastation, and of profanity.

All men, save the dull, light their lives' lamps by me, at one time or another ; and so they are deified or demonized.

I am the Magnificent, and I abide for ever.

THE PASSIONS

DEPTH of emotion corresponds with strength of character.

Both goodness and evil insist on a response ; and they are both eternally lying in wait for a man.

They, who are born of conflict, must needs do battle till their lives' end : the taming of the passions is the height of man's achievement.

The passions were not given to man for the sake of self-indulgence.

There is keen zest in pursuing a passion, but to combat one is a life-and-death struggle.

He who can withstand the onslaughts of the world, and the lures of dream, may yet fall in an encounter with a passion.

Fierce passions have violent ends.

Passion is a magnificent ally, but an implacable enemy.

Desire begets memory, and memory begets desire ; but faith suffers the torment of neither.

The city of death is peopled with discrowned kings and queens expiating the crimes perpetrated by their untamed passions.

The passions are tides of life, ebbing and flowing from the world of a man's qualities.

In order to live, a man must be possessed by


some supreme passion, for, without a master-motive, life languishes.

As the sea has its perceptible tides, and the earth its imperceptible tides, so the heart has its visible expansions, and the soul its invisible expansions.

The bird that soars skyward, seeking paradise, has sprung from lower ancestry ; so Love, that enters into Divinity, has sprung from mortal passion.


Burning lava consolidates into a serviceable mass ; and a flaming passion may cool into solid strength.

MERGED LIFE

S the stalactite and the stalagmite meet and form a pillar, so two lives may, in the droppings of the grace of God, meet and form a mighty monument to the Everlasting Mercy :

Blessed be the grace of God, that drops from one man's heart upon another man's heart, until the one can rise to meet the other, and be irrevocably united to it in the serviceable column of friendship.

MARRIAGE

HEN God made the first star, the wherewithal that was the stuff of two minds, was one substance, that broke and was separated by the everlasting whirling ;

And afterwards the everlasting whirling united it again, so that it was again one body.

And the Divine Purpose may yet combine it anew with other changing bodies.

THE CHILD



HE sight of a child cries to man :
" Come out to play ! "

Few parents deserve their children.

A man should seek to make his children mankind's delight.

The childless complain of their dearth, instead of buying a child from poverty, at the cost of love and sacrifice ; they forget that man can pay his debts to the past and to the future by generosity to the present.

The children of a woman's love are as much hers, as children of her flesh and blood might have been.

The wife is proud of her offspring : the unmated is thankful for her rescued.

The world gives to manhood the crown of wisdom ; but Christ gave to childhood the crown of the ages.

DIVORCE

FOLK are surprised when a marriage needs dissolving ; for they forget that most marriages are experiments as to how long and how calmly any individual temperament can bear the strain of association with another temperament too like, or too unlike, its peculiar self ;

And they ignore the right of the individuals to set themselves free from the disastrous result of the common experiment that man makes daily.

Not even in marriage can two lives become one.

The chief necessity for divorce arises from a marriage having been made for the sake of greed, convenience, or sensuality, instead of for the sake of holy passion ; and from a lack of the realization of the sanctity of both fatherhood and motherhood.

The self-indulgent, in marriage, are as culpable as the self-indulgent, out of marriage.

Marriage for amusement is marriage for tragedy ; and a wedding is not a ceremony, but a sacrament.

Morality is not a question of marriage, or of non-marriage, but of love and restraint ;

and it is immoral to use marriage as a means of self-gratification.

Morality is a state, not a quality.

Morality is faithfulness, not necessarily to an individual, but necessarily to Love.

IV

THE PROPHET

THE prophet and the poet are echoers of the Eternal Voice ; and they do not concur, but announce.

The prophet announces his vision ; and men, hearing the word, may become doers of the word.

A vision cannot be stolen, nor a dream taken away.

Woe unto the withholder of visions, for he will not work with the Almighty !

As the meteorologist can foretell the weather, so the prophet can foretell events.

Loneliness is both the prophet's penalty and his reward : the prophet dwells on a storm-assailed island, or on a mountain-peak ; and on all of his tracks up the mountain-side the stones are reddened.

Life cries out for a prophet ; and, when he appears, the world stones him : but death cannot silence a prophet's cry.

There is no son of God, who has never been rejected.

The prophet is consoled by the thought that his message will fit the future, and that men will listen to it in the mouths of other messengers after he is dead.

RELIGION

RELIGION is a divine instinct, not a human reasoning ; and man's progressive experience is its true development.

Men speak of religion as a circumscribed finality, regardless that it expands to embrace every new beauty of Nature, every perfect creation of the painter, every divine song, every triumphant human prophecy.

A living religion includes morals and politics.

The religious soul is vexed and troubled by the services and ceremonies that soothe the irreligious.

Every meal with a friend is a sacrament ; every tear of pity, a baptism ; every touch of holy hands, the seal of an unbreakable covenant.

Religion smiles tolerantly at the churches playing about its feet.

Religion is not a recurring ceremony, but a continuous consciousness ; it is not the repeating of a creed like an algebraic equation, but the reverencing of the profound mystery of life ; it is not a donning of externals, but the entire devotion of every passing moment to the ends of the Supreme Being ; it is not the blending of the archæology and the poetry of

past ages with vague speculation as to a possible life beyond the grave, but the marriage of man's heart and soul for the fathering and mothering of God.

IRRELIGION



RELIGION is oftener founded by a prophet's literary devotee than by the prophet himself.

Men argue about revelations of God, ignoring His constant presence ; and they interest themselves in geographical religions, instead of in religion : they forget that opinions are leaves which the Tree of Life will shed.

They hear the echo of their foolish prayers in slightly varying sound, and think it is the voice of God ; and, on that supposition, they found a cruel religion.

The dogmatic seek to hedge in other men's lives with hints and upbraidings.

One religion despises another, instead of learning from it.

Many men seek their religion in books instead of in life.

The religionist makes his god : God makes His worshipper.

Men adopt a religion from motives of respectability or cowardice ; and the noise of the religion drowns the sound of the Divine Voice in their hearts.

The comfortable Christian says to the out-cast, the suicide, and the prisoner : " You have sinned."

The priest lights his little lantern in men's prisons, instead of leading prisoners out into the sunlight : a man must lay down a church before he can embrace a religion.

WORSHIP



EVERY impression needs expression : devotion is the expression of admiration, and the acceptance of service ; *appreciation is a humble form of worship.*

Only the irreligious do not worship life : whether a man's study is the minute life of an insect, or of a flower, or the enormous life of a distant sun, it is worship of the Universal Creator ; and all service of mankind is worship of God.

He, to whom water is not sacred, nor grass hallowed, has never worshipped ; and no common day is complete without worship.

Many men pray to God daily, but few praise Him daily.

Admiration cannot exist without joy ; and joy cannot breathe except in worship.

A man admires nothing he is not willing to pay for, or to sacrifice to ; and to admire his fellow-beings is the salvation of the self-centred : the power to admire keeps many a man alive.

The home of a friend may be a house of God.

A man can only appreciate the greatness he is great enough to recognize.

They who admire the remarkable, instead of the wonderful, do not offer God full homage.

They who worship beauty, see the shadow of God ; and they who worship duty, see the face of God.

The more the dull see, the less they wonder ; but the more the understanding see, the more they wonder.

The dull are incapable of *passion*, which is woven of *admiration*.

It is better to make idols and break them, than to worship nothing : man should seek ever a greater shrine.

One form of worshipping God is by casting out fear of man.

When God possesses a man, mankind has an opportunity to worship.

As the sun, shining on different objects, causes them to throw back different colours, so God, radiating mankind, causes each man to offer Him the gratitude of a different goodness, in worship.

If a man cannot sing of the glories of God, he may write them, paint them, carve them in stone, or beat them on metal ; or he may live them triumphantly in his daily life.

When a child is born, the human cry : " Behold the infant god ! " and when a man's cross is lifted up, the gentle bow at its foot.

Any man can worship the three certainties

in the universe—God, Love, and Immortality.

God, the worshipped, is also God, the worshipper : dawn is the thanks of God, breaking into light ; and sunset is the thanks of God, ebbing into peace.

FELLOW-WORSHIPPERS

IT is not surprising that men should have so many different religions, considering how different men are. It would not even be surprising if every man in the world had a different religion, as he would have, if he were religious enough to trouble about religion.

But it is surprising that men should accentuate the differences of their religions, and quarrel about them, instead of accentuating the similarities of their religions, and co-operating in their worship and in their sacrifices.

Men cannot live together peaceably, till they are willing to recognize their essential differences ; and they should be thankful when a man has any religion at all.

Quarrelling about religions arises from men's mistaking religions for Religion, which is the flower of all religions.

Religion overflows in the divine union of diverse religions.

PRAISE



WITH singing and with dancing I will praise my God ; and with sorrow and with penitence I will praise Him.

I will praise Him with every mood, that He sends me ; and I will magnify Him with every capacity, that He has given me.

My words shall praise my God, and my life shall praise Him.

God is light, God is beauty, God is joy ; and God is darkness, God is terror, God is agony : God is all, and in all, and through all ; for God is Everlasting Life.

I adore God in men, in women, and in children ; and I adore God in animals, in plants, and in all substance.

I adore God in His daily dying, and in His daily living.

I adore God by naked truthfulness, by holy anger, by passionate tenderness, and by fierce insistence on reality.

I adore God by the pride of His gifts, and by the humility of my defects.

I am conscious of God in every beat of my grateful heart ; and the more my life has defamed Him, so much the more shall it praise Him : I cannot breathe unless I am praising Him ; I cannot live unless I am

loving Him ; I cannot die unless I forsake Him.

I serve God in my little dwelling, and in the spaces of immensity.

I supplicate God in my forgotten past, in my vivid present, and in my beckoning future.

I know that my momentary-seeming life is part of the eternally-living fabric of the universe.

Blessed be God, my Begetter, and my Befriender !


Blessed be God, my Punisher, and my Forgiver !

Blessed be God, my Passion, and my Peace !

Blessed be God, my Inspiration !

Blessed be God !

THE SABBATH

HE Sabbath is not a fixed length of time at a stated season :

But the holy day is the day on which a man sees his friend, and on which he can enjoy the green earth or the blue sea, the day of deliverance from unhallowed labours, or from deathly servitude.

The Sabbath is the day when a man may play, and when he may sow his seed, or gather his fruit ; the day when he is free from the tax of the world.

He whose seventh day only is a Sabbath, may well be weary.

HEAVEN AND HELL

HATE and love may be transmutations of each other, for each of them is a man's supreme interest in a fellow-being : if a man entertained this possibility, hate might become transformed into love at any moment.

Heaven and hell are not locations, but conditions of a man's being ; and they are nearer each other than a man's mind and his body, and can become one another by means of the flicker of a thought ;

He who does not realize this, may drop insensibly from heaven into hell at the happiest moment of his existence.

They who never rein their passions, are filled with unrest, and spend their lives in devising heaven and hell ;

Whenever they are in the one, they are conscious of the other ; and they pass continually from the one to the other, until their ultimate absorption by the Creator of both heaven and hell.

IDOLATRY



FEW men nowadays worship stocks and stones ; yet many men fall into the snare of foolish and fatuous adoration of their prophets, instead of devoting themselves to the worship of the Eternal Righteousness proclaimed by their prophets ; and thus they do more harm to their religion than its opponents do to it.

Indiscriminate adoration weakens a cause ; but deliberate opposition may strengthen it.

The childish transform natural coincidences and remarkable happenings into miraculous tales ; and they treat their prophets as gods, by taking their suggestions as universal'com-mands.

They cannot understand that a message, which is necessary for one race of mankind, may be wholly unsuitable for another race ; and that living faith cannot be bound by ancient dogmas.

They contemn other men's lords, asserting that their particular hero is the lord ; and, by deifying their master, they seek to glorify themselves.

Their petty idolatry belittles their lord's reputation, and narrows his opportunities of influence.

Their mistake is in trying to make gods, instead of realizing that God makes men.

THE BELL



HERE is a tiresome bell that is forever sounding, from dawn to sunset, and all through the night, all over the world.

It does not ring : “ Come, and worship God ! ” but it rings forever : “ Come, and do as we do—your relatives and friends, your missionaries and coercers ;

“ Come, at the cost of expensive clothing, and at the price of hypocrisy.”

If the bell would cease ringing, men might hear each other praising God.

THE STONE



HE Lord is entering into the city—
the Lord who is wisdom, pity,
mercy, patience, and healing—the
Lord ! the Lord !

The Lord is entering into the city—the city
of the world, the city of sorrow engendered by
ignorance, cruelty, hate, indifference, and lust
—the savage city.

None cries out : “ The Blessed, the
Blessed ! ” The Lord is thrust from the city
gates ; the gates are closed ; and he turns
aside, to seek a home in the wilderness.

But I cry out in the savage city—I, but a
stone that is trodden and trampled, day and
night, by the stony-hearted—I cry out to the
Lord departing :

“ Blessed, Blessed be Thou, Who in the
name of the King—Humanity—comest to
mingle heaven with earth, if earth will haply
mingle with heaven ! ”

No more a stone that is trodden and trampled,
out of the road I am wrenched and flung after
the Lord as He passes on ;

I am to wound, for my tribute of worship,
wound my Adored, through the desperate
hurling by a hand in the savage city. . . .

“ Lord ! Lord ! harmless I lie at Thy feet,
singing about Thy track ; and Thou liftest

me into the fold of the garment at Thy heart,

Saying to me : " O stone, stone ! O singing stone ! wherever I may go, from age to coming age, from clime to stranger clime, I will bear thee in my breast ;

I will build thee into my hut in the gentle wilderness ; I will build thee into a shrine in the savage city of men, in the day when none gainsays that I shall enter therein ! "

A stone of the common stones of the road, trodden and trampled by all men's feet, torn from the way in demoniac haste, and flung as a missile with deathly aim—

Cherished and used by the herald of God, I shall fall to dust but when He is dead, when the Maker and made are merged in One.

V

k

GOD

IT depends on man whether God is a Word or a Being ; it is because man is human that God can be divine.

The theologian and the theist make an offence of the archaic use, or of the modern disuse of the word God, taking the name of sacred names for a fatal weapon of persecution against the less arrogant in expressing consciousness of the immanent Deity, who are content with "ideal" as justifying and elevating their own and other men's lives, and as evincing their faith, aspiration, and homage.

The only way to magnify the Divine is by being a superb Human ; for God is the projection of man's aspirations upon the infinite and illimitable.

God is the orbit in which the soul moves, and man's goodness is the strongest evidence of God's existence.

God is man's thirst for goodness ; and God is the goodness, welling up in man's heart, to satisfy the thirst.

The Holy Spirit is the atmosphere of no Church, but it is the outer air men breathe ; and God is not the god of one religion, but the God of the universe.

A creed contains less of God than a hand can hold of immensity.

No denial of man can gainsay God ; and the believer in God glories in his belief.

So long as there have been men, there have been gods ; but, before men and gods, there was God.

A personal god is an idol ; but the Universal Love is man's Lord and Creator.

Wherever grass grows, and wherever light and darkness alternate, there is God.

LIVING WITH GOD

HABITUAL goodness is the only safeguard against sudden temptations ; and the only refuge for man is in living with God : a man's deliverances ally him to God.

Unless the soul is strong, through continual sacrifice to its innermost divinity ; unless the mind widens itself, by merging its circles in the universal circle ; unless the body hardens itself by the observance of habitual chastity ; the soul may be overcome by its attendant demon ; the mind may become stagnant, and a breeder of disease ; and the body may be ensnared in the toils of the flesh : wherefore man's soul, mind, and body should live ever at their noblest.

Meditation is idleness, renunciation is folly, and good works are an offence, unless a man is living with God ;

But, if a man is living with God, meditation will flower into prayer and praise, renunciation into glory, and good works into universal charity.

They who never live without God, communicate divinity by their presence.

The greatest misfortune that can happen to a man is that he should be living without God : for the moments that a man lives-

without God, overshadow the lifetime that he has lived with God.

Nothing is worth doing, nothing is worth having, nothing is worth while, without God.

When a man lives with God, he becomes radiant, as God is radiant ; his feet bring peace ; his hands heal diseases ; his mouth utters joy ;

He possesses the strength, and exhales the gentleness, of the Almighty ;

And he lives for ever in innumerable forms, becoming eternal, through ceaseless contact with the All-Glorious : for only God and life-with-God are eternal ; all else fades and withers away into a soil for goodness to grow in.

BECOMING GOD

AS God may be a Man of men, so man may be a God of gods.

No created being is without some germ of the intelligence of the Creator ; and the God without beckons to the god within.

He who will not dishonour himself, will not dishonour his god.

Nothing is forbidden to man, except to cut himself off from his divinity.

By a tear of penitence, of pity, or of forgiveness, man becomes God.

Man becomes God as imperceptibly as the plant became animal, and the animal became man.

As discovery is continually simplified by the work of every successive explorer and inventor, so divinity is evermore universally attainable by the continuous sacrifices of all true hearts.

The conviction of immortality, and the pursuit of goodness, are man's chief part in divinity.

The flow is man's effort towards humanity ; and the ebb is his return to God : and with the ebbing of the wave there is peace.

God is a part of every man ; and, if man would cherish Him man would become wholly God.

REALIZING GOD

NO man, who ever lives, shall not see God, whether he believes in God or not ; if a man cannot see God by sunlight, or by moonlight, he may see God by lightning : God is the Sun of suns, and every flame that is kindled has its source in Him.

God quickens whom He will, either by a fiery tongue, or by a burning silence.

Men may shut God from their day ; but they cannot shut God from their dreams.

On any day of his life, man may see the triumphant passing of God and His bride, Nature.

A man may become suddenly aware of God, but he realizes God's presence slowly.

Man may try to live without God ; but he cannot escape God's re-creating love.

There is only one strength for man—the strength of God.

In God, there is the variability of the myriad forms of life : the wills of God are as many as the sands of the desert ; yet man must do the wills of God.

Where the world reads mystery in a face, the human soul may read God.

God is man's supreme satisfaction, and man's unassailable defence : the renouncer's

God gives him all, and the martyr's God stands between him and his executioner.

Every event that happens to a man is a word out of the mouth of God.

THE GRACE OF GOD

THE grace of God is an ever-varying communication from the Divine Spirit to the human spirit ; and it may take any sound or shape, and may exist in any state, and may make any motion ;

It may be manifested in music, in a floating cloud, in a child's dance, or in a toil-won slumber ;

It may come as a fleeting sorrow, eventuating in everlasting joy ; and it may come as implacable discipline, eventuating in divine beauty :

Any man who is open to receive it, may receive it ; opinion is the most effective barrier between a man and the grace of God.

When a superhuman thing is done by a man, it is a surprise to his fellow-beings, who do not know how he has been able to do it, for they cannot trace his successive steps to his divinity ;

They do not know that he was living in entire obedience to the will of God, and keeping himself ready to fulfil the hourly commandment ;

They do not realize that obedience is the preliminary to ability to serve and power to act, and that they, who do not live in obedience,

are not able to see the opportunities offered them, and thus compel God to seek other workmen.

None who take counsel with the will of God, act amiss ; they who live in conflict with the divine will, can only learn through humiliations.

DEVELOPMENT

HERE is never a day but man stands at the cross-roads ; and every hour the diverging of his path causes him to ask himself : " Which way shall I take ? "

Man loses his way, because he looks at the road instead of at the landscape.

Every path he can make, and every way he can take, lead to God ; the good and the evil speed alike to their development by diverse paths :

The longer paths are easier to travel in the beginning, and more difficult to travel in the end ; and the shorter ways are more difficult to travel in the beginning, and easier to travel in the end.

They who arrive are happy ; and they neither envy each other's method of travelling, nor upbraid each other concerning the way on which they have travelled ; for they have learned that whatever happens to a man is for his development, and that no event leaves a man where it finds him.


Some souls speed to God upon a sun-shaft, and others by a lightning-flash ; some souls sail to God on a flood of life, and others on a flood of death

Some souls reach God by a day's journey,
and others by a voyage æon-long :

But as every soul came from God, so every
soul returns to God : otherwise, God would
not be complete without it.

The more the soul realizes God, the more
transparent it becomes, so that man may see
its Divine indweller.

SUNS

 HE stars of mortality will collide
and be fused, and will fall into the
sun of eternity, whence they sprang ;
And the sons of men will merge
in, and emerge from, humanity, and be
absorbed by the God, Who evolved their being
from His inscrutable will.

Man is not able to surmise what God and
His suns will eventually achieve.

VI

THE TREE



MAN'S life is a tree that outlasts many seasons and outlives many years :

Every year it bears innumerable leaves—each leaf beautiful, different, and according to nature :

Yet the thoughtless expect each leaf of a man's life, in every season, to be exactly alike, and precisely similar to some preconceived leaf-pattern of their own devising.


FLOWERS



THE banks of the river of life bear many beautiful flowers : chastity is a blue flower, blossoming among the snows ; passion is a red rose that needs to cultivate its thorns ;

There is no flower more fragrant than the lavender of sacrifice ; and the root of love creeps beneath the stones of indifference till it can find a crevice through which to spring.

THE MORNING

N each uprising a man is born again.

No one who has not begun his morning-song, is yet awake.

A man needs not only to be awake, but to be aware of life.

The morning-singer knows that one bad day cannot becloud all his good days, and that it is a common duty to be cheerful.

A pilgrim's requests make a man aware of his resources ; deprivations make him aware of his blessings ; solitude makes him aware of thought ; opposition makes him aware of strength ; and love makes him aware of his possibilities.

Every dawn brings man the gifts of light, thought, and opportunity ; and he must fill his pitcher at the wave of opportunity, or thirst forever.

The despondent forget that every morning brings a new day, and that life is a winding road ; but the joyous leave themselves free for each new day's development.

Curiosity is the caravan in which man traverses the desert of life : if man does not take a lively interest in his encompassing desert, he will find no oases, and he will surprise no mysteries of birth and of death on the boundaries of the desert.

Every dawn utters a promise, and every sunset breathes a benediction.

To him who is aware of new-day, every spring is brighter, and every summer is greener, in the light of the world-to-come.

More insistent than the sighing of night to a lover, is the crying of day to the adventurer.

Man should leave everything behind, and set forth on life's quest : he who voluntarily carries his ancestors on his back, carries an unnecessary burden.

Though man cannot choose his circumstances, he can choose the soul's environment.

The solitary mountaineer must be prepared for many a mist of terror ; and the watcher on the battlements is a mark for overthrowing.

Life becomes monotonous when man forgets his previous existences, and cannot anticipate his future ones.

Man attempts to ride the air, because he remembers the time when he was a bird.

He explores the sea-bed, he tunnels the mountains, and he steers his ship through the air ; yet he is incurious about the destiny of his own soul.

Ideas do not come to those who are afraid of them : a chance word fires the adventurer, or daunts the dullard.

If those who are in search of experiences, try giving, they will have many surprises.

All man's adventures are in search of love ; and all his wanderings are in search of God.

Life is a climbing, but Death is a flight.

THE OPEN LIFE

DEATH cannot send her hundred messages to a man through a closed door; and night cannot impart the full measure of her peace to him through a closed window.

If his door is not ajar by day, neighbours cannot come to him for help, nor friends for comfort, nor pilgrims for refreshment; and he will not be able to receive the blessedness of the helper, the comforter, or the host.

If his window is closed by night, pictures too great to be painted, temples too high to be built, poems too divine to be written, cannot come to him in their full glory: so he will miss the realization of wonder.

The hedge that shelters a man from the wind, also hides him from the sun.

A man should blow out his candles, that he may see the stars: if he always remains in the little room of his own life, with only the tiny tapers of his own wisdom burning, he will never feel the ecstasy of great spaces, nor see the shining of the innumerable stars of immensity, nor realize that his own mind is a prison, in which he is liable to be burnt to death, from a conflagration of his tapers.

Therefore, a man should blow out his candles, and come forth into the night: at

first, the night will seem too dark and too large for him ; but soon he will be glad to be alone in the splendours and the spaces of God ;

When he returns to the little room of his own life, he will always leave its window open ; and he will no longer be afraid to blow out his candles and to let the night enter.

One man seeks the forest, because of its cool, green peace ; and another man seeks it, because of its slumber-stream ;

One man loves the sound of its rushing waters, where the stream meets boulders ; and another man needs its chant of the wind among the trees, for the expression of his hymn of praise ;

Another man finds in the forest the presences of his world-eluding gods.

THE COMPENSATIONS OF POVERTY

POVERTY can teach man a noble generosity.

The ragged may paint for immortality, and the beggar may give the world its eternal poem.

They who have stolen the land, with the trees, the grass, the flowers and the beasts that are thereon, and the seas, with the fishes that are therein, and with the ships that ride thereover—have the lands and the seas and the fulness thereof, to turn into merchantable gold ; and they are frequently insatiable, proud, drunken, diseased, or insane :

The poor are the real possessors of the beauty of the lands and seas, that take momentary colour and form, not only with every ray of the universal light, but with every honest beat of a generous human heart ;

For the poor, the lands and seas are not material, but spiritual ; and the riches which the lands and seas bring to the poor, are peace, inspiration, and healing.

IN THE GARDEN OF THE WORLD



IMPLICITY is the flower of the plant of greatness ; and complexity is the flower of the plant of grandeur ; Experience is the fruit of the tree of life ; and religion is the fruit of the seed of aspiration.

Art is the blossom of the tree of imagination ; and labour is the expression of man's disciplined will ;

Sacrifice is the fruit of the bush of devotion ; and passion is the blossom of the tree of love :

By the cultivation of these plants the garden of the world is beautified and maintained.

THE PARABLE OF THE ROSE

NONE who gather roses for the sake of adornment, can avoid being wounded by their thorns :

Yet men are so enraptured by the beauty and the scent of the roses in their gardens, that they ignore the inevitability of their being wounded by the unapparent thorns.

They are seldom conscious of the thorns, and of their wounds, until after the glowing roses have withered and fallen :

Then they realize that roses are lovelier in gardens—alive, and fresh, and radiant—than in airless dwellings—maimed, and drooping, and dying.

MAN AND NATURE

IT is man's fault, that in all the wide world, there is not room enough for mankind, nor, in all the earth's fruits, food enough.

Man despises the fruits of the earth, and falls to devouring his fellow-beasts, ignorant of the fact that many of his evil qualities depend on his own and on his ancestors' habits of feeding.

The rich drink of the first pressing of the vine and of the olive, and they suffer from satiety ; the poor drink of the second pressing, and they thrive on frugality.

Man reviles the goddess of health, instead of forswearing his poisonous foods, and making daily immersions and clean breathing part of his religion ; and he forgets that he need no longer poison himself by sealing his dwelling against the wild beasts.

He is too sophisticated to realize that he who tills his garden, rears, not only the fruits of the soil, but the fruits of the spirit.

Man disfigures the earth by abominable devices ; but, in time, Nature obliterates the traces of them, and of him.

He deforms his body by wearing hideous and uncomfortable clothes ; and his thoughts become foul, because he does not cleanse them

in the sea and in the sky ; and his life is mean, because he avoids the grandeurs of dawn and of sunset.

Man does not respond, when Nature, walking on the tops of the mountains, cries :
" Come up hither ! "

If he pitched his tent by the streams, they would leave an echo in his mind ; and, if he wandered by the sea-waves, they would bring him innumerable thoughts.

Man lives in his black sorrows, instead of in the joyful colours of the earth, while every breeze is calling him into the air, and every sunbeam is crying to him " Be thankful ! " and every wave is beckoning him to renewal.

FREEDOM

COURAGE and defiance are all that are needed to set a man free ; yet he is content to remain caged in a prison of straw—a marvel to the free—who pass him daily on their way to the open world.

Men are unhappy, because their lives are choked ; they will not take the trouble to free themselves from disorderly habits, entanglement of ideas, the filth of self-approbation, and the dust of other men's opinions :

But if they would open every door and window in the house, and throw away their furniture, utensils and clothing, and let the clean air of sincerity invade their houses and themselves,

They would have the chance of beginning life afresh, and of reducing their needs to only such realities as God Himself lives upon.

VII

ILLNESS

ILLNESS is a corridor between life and death ; and many folk enter the corridor, and dally there : some folk go a little way ; some folk go half-way ; and some folk go almost all the way ; and some folk return, and some folk never return.

They who have been in the corridor, are never the same again, but carry secrets about with them ever after.

The folk who return, can bring with them, out of the dim corridor, the priceless treasure of understanding.

HEALTH



HE law of health bestows the liberty of joy ; and the laws which men are to keep, are written in their breasts.

Wealth and poverty are both responsible for many diseases, and living for pleasure is death in a lethal chamber : the well-being of the commonwealth needs the health of every man.

He who sacrifices health, offers it to death, and not to life ; and no man, who is not following the avocation of his birthright, can be healthy.

Sanity is the flower of health ; and health is a mistress, who demands many sacrifices.

Apathy begets atrophy ; but yearning increases life.

Artificiality is a hopeless disease, which no man need contract ; and superfluity is an offence against health.

Every misuse of the body hurts the brain ; and every ignorance of the brain injures the body : where rest and toil do not balance each other, disease or insanity is the inevitable result.

The more truths a man is capable of entertaining, the more likely he is to preserve his sanity.

Disease is the crying of body and mind for their re-creation ; and many diseases are not only a sin against God, but a sin against man.

To be ashamed of natural defects is a disease : self-consciousness, shame, and sin are the diseases the most difficult to heal ; and if men are absorbed in their defects, they fail to see kings of glory pass by.

Men loathe the diseased, instead of trying to prevent disease.

Sin and disease would cease to exist, if men realized that the body and the soul are one.

AT THE POOL OF HEALING

L WAS wandering by still waters, and I heard one crying :

“ Let me be a spirit, sent by the Sender, from His heights of compassion, into still waters, to stir them to mingle their springs—their secret springs of sorrow, pain, experience, faith, and wisdom—that they may heal the helpless, the distraught, and the broken, who lie upon the shores of the still waters, awaiting the Infinite Mercy.

If I may be sent into the sacred pool, to trouble the waters, I shall exult to be hidden in their depths.”

THE FLOOD

LIFE can only be cleansed by a flood : therefore, a man need not mourn when his pleasures are drowned and swept away, when his moorings are lost and his habits are obliterated, and when his acquaintances flee for their safety ;

For the flood will abate, after cleansing his stream, and fertilizing his meadow, and renewing his life :

Without a flood life becomes arid, and its streams become stagnant.

CHANGE

WHEN a physician is at a loss as to what to do about his patients' health, he prescribes a change of air and scene: but, if he had courage enough, he would prescribe a change of ideas and ideals for most of his patients, and a change in life for all of them.

A man, who never alters, is like a beggar, who always wears the same wearisome garment.

Change is the law of nature, and the commandment of the spirit; routine is deathly, if it does not suggest change: eternal change is the secret of eternal inspiration.

Man has learned to change the atmosphere for his body, and to breathe clean air; yet he stifles his soul by breathing the same family air, class air, church air, and national air, over and over again;

If man would let his soul roam with the winds, with the horizon for its only goal, he would find new uses for his faculties, and would thus prolong their activities.

Man needs to learn that the keynote of sanity is change—not only a wandering from place to place, but a frequent escape from the visible into the invisible, by the ways of the emotions, the passions, and the imagination.

OTHERWHERE

MAN sights the ports he has never touched, and lives in the lands he has never seen ; he takes what voyages he may, and what journeys he can ; and he peoples the rest of his empty life with the companionable presences of eternal memories ;

The Englishman covers his walls with Italian Art, and so lives in Italy ;

The city-woman sings the songs of remote island-folk, and so lives the free, untrammelled life of the sea-born peasant ;

The student, in his attic, lives in Rome, Greece, Palestine, or Egypt ;

Severed lovers live and die in each other's thoughts, in each other's homes, and in each other's arms ;

The God-devoted lives his life—a man among men—without leaving the temple of God.

Man has no greater privilege than to project his soul beyond the limits of his body.

SIMPLICITY

SIMPLICITY is a beautiful living form, clad only with sincerity, that unconsciously brings artificiality into judgment, and is the adjuster of all involved relationships.

Simplicity is a firm basis for the achievement of any form of Art: with all true greatness there is ever the simplicity of a child.

The lives of the simple teach mankind the real values of things.

The more truthful men are, the simpler they become; and the simpler life is, the wider it grows, leaving room for infinite variety.

The simple are saved the thousand petty cares, of which, by reason of their nature, they are unconscious; the simple find a straight path to God.

The simple are capable of habitual, generous economies, and can well afford to be thought mean:

The nature of a man's economies is an index to his character: patches have bought the splendour of indelible memories; and bare walls, the freedom of the universe.

Most men spend on themselves, and economize on other people; and so their lives are

choked, their life-place is overcrowded, and the worship of the Christmas Child is forgotten.

The world is sick with a long-standing disease, which cannot be healed, until mankind worships simplicity, as the adoration of the Christmas Child prefigured.

Simplicity has no difficulty in distinguishing between luxuries and necessities: books, travel, and experience, are necessities; but fashion, position, and state are luxuries: until this is recognized, disease cannot be eliminated, Truth cannot be supreme, and Art cannot be paramount.

DEATH

DEATH is but life, grown older : she who sent man forth to play, and, later, to labour, takes him in her arms to rest ;

Man need not fear her ; for she has learnt many things by the universal way : she has learnt charity and pity and mercy ; and, in the end, she has found wisdom and peace :

And man will learn that by either of her names she is adorable.

VIII

THE SENSES

MAN thinks it is impossible for the senses to deceive him ; yet nothing is so likely to deceive him as they :
For where he sees a beggar, he may look upon a god ; where he hears reproach, he may receive a crown ; while he feasts gaily, he may partake of death ; while he desires love, he may be approaching lust ; and where he scents peace, he may be in deadly peril :

Wherefore let man be aware of his irresponsible senses.

RESPONSIBILITY

RESPONSIBILITY is man's dignity, and it offers him development : every thought that man evolves from his consciousness, affects the welfare of the world ; and every word that man utters, goes about the world seeking a response.

Each new discovery is a new responsibility.

To perceive a duty is to be bound by the perception ; and he who sees the heedless on the edge of a precipice, without warning him, is responsible for his death.

He who manfully undertakes his personal responsibilities, often fails to realize his national responsibilities.

When every man seeks the welfare of all men, every man will be happy.

It is an unrecognized vice to do nothing for other men's benefit : a man should seek, not only those who can help him, but those whom he can help : there can be no greater misery than to have helped no one.

BORN-BLINDNESS



No man would sin, if he could realize beforehand the prolonged agony of his act.

If sin could foresee the end of its careless journey, it would shudder, instead of laughing along its route ;

And if it could see the pit beneath the golden bracken, the black swamp beneath the emerald moss, the cunning snare across the pleasant pasture, the gap on the dark bridge, or the worm in the mellow fruit, it would alter its hasty course, and seek to change its nature :

The chief mission of righteousness is the merciful relieving of sin's born-blindness.

RESPECTABILITY

MEN choose respectability as their master, for he is lax and easy to serve ; he allows his decorous men-servants and his demure women-servants to lie, and steal, and cheat, in every subtle way imaginable, but in no obvious way ;

And he allows them to be as vicious as they have the opportunity to be, but not to reside with their paramours, nor to rear illegal families ;

He allows them to kill whom they will, in any imaginable manner, so long as it is not done openly, and so long as they are not found out.

His servants do not recognize their fellow-beings, who are akin to them in temperament, qualities, and avowed characteristics, when they meet those fellow-beings in the street :

For they are ashamed to condone publicly what they enjoy privately.

They desire respect, without being worthy of it ;

They have not the energy to contend with their vices, nor the courage to proclaim their opinions ; so they mask themselves with social tradition.

An earthquake alone can reveal their personalities, and effect their unwilling deliverance.

PERFECTION

MEN demand perfection of the artist and of the prophet, forgetting that they also are men.

As no man is perfect, so no human system can be perfect; and men make themselves miserable by expecting life to be perfect in a world that is not perfect;

Instead of setting about the perfecting of the world, they waste their time in complaining of the imperfection of their little lives.

TAKING FORETHOUGHT

FOLK often say to me : " How did you know this or that ? " " How were you prepared for such a contingency ? " " Why had you planned in case of that emergency ? " " How did you escape a certain calamity ? " " We should never have thought of such a thing. " " You surely have second-sight. "

And I smile and say nothing, lest my reply should seem to them brutally rude, or abnormally conceited.


But I could tell them that, whenever I see smoke, I go to see where the fire is, lest my home-place should be consumed, and my household be made destitute ;

And that, whenever there is a smell of something-the-matter, I go to see what is the matter, lest the evil grow too strong to be combated, and in case I may be able to save the good from misfortune, or the wicked from remorse ;

And that, wherever I hear dropping water, I search for the leak, and have it amended, lest a flood devastate ourselves and our neighbours, and reduce us all to beggary.

It is a simple and a natural thing for a man to use the wits the gods have given him, for his household's protection.

CROWNED AND CROWNLESS

 HERE are some men whom I never see without their crowns—their iron crowns of labour, their flower-wreaths of desire, their brier-wreaths of passion, their silver crowns of service, their golden crowns of love, their gem-set crowns of honour, or their tarnished crowns of dishonour.

And there are many men whom I see wearing no crowns—the apathetic, the indolent, the indifferent, who never know that they have been alive until after they are dead.

IX

MOTIVES

MAN is chaste, to please himself ; for being unchaste would be as unpleasant to him, as if he were unclean, or wore a filthy garment.

He is kind, to please himself and others, for he would not enjoy hating or being hated ; and he is generous, to please himself and others, as he would not like to be thought mean.

He is unconventional, to please Nature, who will only speak to him, on that bargain being kept.

He is active, to please Life, who turns away her face from him, if he is indolent.

He is true, to please God, for, otherwise, he cannot see God.

When all is said, man might have worse motives.

VIRTUE

GOOD and evil are relative, and not absolute terms ; and one age's virtue is another age's vice.

Virtue is not a mechanical regularity of life, but an acting on divine impulses ; not an unchanging stereotype, but a growing picture, changing daily from one beauty to another.

It is a man's attitude, and not himself, that is moral or unmoral ; and his attitude is the chief factor in determining his virtue.

The passions are given to man, not for indulgence, but for magnificent possibilities ; and virtue can grow in the soil of any heredity : the wild-beast element in man's nature is not for his destruction, but for his defence.

Virtue is not ignorance and inexperience, but the persistent battling with temptations ; it is a living thing that propriety strives in vain to stifle.

Man makes his chief temptations, by reason of self-indulgence ; yet, because temptation is continuous, the power of resistance is inexhaustible.

There can be no spiritual holiness without bodily chastity ; and chastity is not a quality, but a divine instinct in the human race, which any man can foster.

Man is the variable outcome of his natural tendencies and of his deliberate strivings : if he develops the one, and neglects the other, he sinks to the level of his animal-brothers, or far below their level.

Humility is an essential part of virtue, else virtue is ravished by its own pride.

No man is good, till he is purged from censoriousness by imagination and experience.

FAITH

IF either God or immortality—man's sun and moon—were always realizable, the star of faith would be less visible.

Men talk about a reasonable faith, not understanding that faith is a divine unreason, and that divine madness is better than human sanity.

He who rends the veil of a mystery, will find that the mystery has fled.

Faith is the conception of the thing desired: a man's work is his confession of faith.

Hope expects the possible, but faith expects the impossible: faith sees a great and beautiful event awaiting every man.

Faith casts out superstition, and carries on incessant warfare with dogma; a man's life becomes stunted, if he does not believe in the eternities.

Man lives confidently on the thin crust of the glowing earth, yet he cannot trust the Being, Who set him there.

Belief in God is the transformation of life; and distrust of God is man's keenest thrust against the Everlasting Patience.

If God could be comprehended by man,

then man would be God, and God would be man.

He who disbelieves in sin and death, cannot fail to believe in righteousness and everlasting life.

FORGIVENESS

MAN'S highest ministry is forgiveness ; it is for Christ's power of forgiveness that men have made him a god.

Man forgives his brother hourly, but his friend, seldom ; his hardest task is to forgive those whom he loves : yet daily forgivenesses alone can keep a heart from rancour.

As God leaves nothing unforgiven, so man should find nothing unforgivable.

He, who forgives, is doubly avenged ; for he has both unburdened himself and his enemy.

• Anger causes a scratch, but unforgiveness causes an incurable wound ; yet he whom God has forgiven, can wait for man's forgiveness.

No man can accept God's forgiveness, until he has forgiven his fellow-men.

A man hopes that they who cannot forgive him, will forget him.

He who has taken his meed of punishment, may hold up his head among the innocent.

“ Thy sins be forgiven thee ! ” should be the cry of every healer.


• Man hugs his sins sorrowfully, but God burns them in the fires of oblivion : every dawn is a new token of forgiveness.

God punishes no man ; man, in sinning, punishes himself.

Forgiveness is not a remission of consequences, but a strength given for expiation of transgression.

God is more ready to forgive sins than man is to excuse mistakes ; He can forgive even depression—man's despair of Him.

THE PURE-HEARTED

HE Nazarene has said that the pure-hearted shall see God :

Yet many men have said : " Am I not pure ? I bathe daily ; I adore my person with ceremonial rites of clothing and feeding ; I am chaste myself, and, with my wife, I do not defile the holy sacrament of generation : but I do not see God."

They forget to cleanse, with every cleansing of their perishable body, their imperishable soul, from the filth of censoriousness ;

They feed themselves daintily and delicately at great cost, but they do not call in the beggar to take his share at their table ;

Each of their garments robs a score of their fellow-beings of sufficient clothing ;

They do not burn in their altar fires their household sins ; and their vaunted chastity is passive and dead, until it spends itself in actively opposing the conditions that breed the wanton and the wastrel.

They need not wonder that they do not see God.

LONELINESS

MANY folk complain that their lives are dull, and that they have no one to speak to, and that their lot is cast among strangers and aliens—strangers of their blood, and aliens to their temperament and interests : yet Nature and Humanity are beckoning to them daily ;

And they may listen to the voice of the Past, warning and consoling ; to the voice of the Present, rousing and counselling ; and to the voice of the Future, entreating and revealing ;

They may learn to read the secret history of every man, whom they meet, in the indelible marks he imprints on himself ;

And they may learn that man, cut off from his fellow-man, may chance to find God in the wilderness.

They cannot fail to learn that it is to the solitary that souls turn for consolation.

APPRECIATION

DEPRIVATION is a source of appreciation : not until a man lies on his bier do men realize their duty towards him.

While a man is alive, men discuss and censure his faults ; they ignore his virtues, and magnify his mistakes ; they belittle his successes, and tarnish his glory with the breath of censoriousness ;


They harass and torture him, instead of sustaining and comforting him.

Some of those, who have had no sympathy for his lifelong sufferings, affect commiseration when he is dead ; others are haunted by the spirit of his living goodness, and they forget the body of his disabilities, that moulders into nothing in the purifying grave.

Appreciation blossoms most abundantly on a man's grave, where it covers both achievement and possibility.

When men realize that reverence is a key to appreciation, they will love man living better than man dead.

GIVING AND TAKING PLEASURE

 HE habit of pleasing himself is the seed of all man's vices ; but no man would sow selfishness, if he could foretaste its bitter fruit.

The hard-hearted buy their pleasures with other men's lives : all their pleasures are costly, but frequently not to themselves ; and all their pleasures are unsatisfactory, because they are not shared.

Some men have no pleasures, because they are ungrateful enough not to enjoy the sun, the air, space, and the changes of day and night ; other men have few pleasures, because they love no one, and give pleasure to no one.

Many men make excursions into coarse kinds of pleasure, whose preliminary cost they know, and are willing to pay, but whose eventual cost of life they do not even guess ;

And few men make excursions into ethereal kinds of pleasure, for which there is not any charge, but an eventual acquisition of universal experience, for their own and other men's guidance in the pleasant ways of life.

Giving pleasure is the surest way of receiving pleasure ; and every resisted opportunity of giving it lessens the power to receive it.

Every pleasure that a man receives, is a gift, to be bestowed on some other man.

They who cannot enchant men's senses by some physical loveliness, or hold men's minds by the exercise of some intellectual gift, can yet please men by kind and free services.

X

BEAUTY

MAN cries continually to Life : " Give me Beauty, or I die ! "

Beauty is an elusive being, for ever wooed, but never wed.

Beauty is a lamp of the sacred heart that is never extinguished.

Beauty is a gate by which the kings of glory pass into a man's life.

Beauty is not a formulated code of feature, but an eternally changing wonder of expression.

The motion of the sea of life is the source of its beauty.

Many folk mistake prettiness for beauty, as they mistake society for life, and as they mistake a Church for religion.

The less decoration there is, the more beauty there may be.

Beauty cannot fail to inspire every man capable of seeing it.

Men may be thankful for their happenings, but they forget to be thankful for their visions ; they receive paradisaical sights and sounds, yet they live as though nothing had happened :

Beautiful dreams are given to men, to be added to the Universal Beauty.

To the worshipper of beauty, a time comes, when beauty is more attractive than friendship, kindred, labour, or learning.

The beauty of the earth can overgrow the devastation caused by the beauty of the world.

Beauty covers the steps of desolation, as the vine overgrows lava ridges.

THE BEAUTIFUL

PERSONAL beauty is one of the greatest of responsibilities: few of the beautiful realize either their privileges or their responsibilities.

The beautiful move through the world, either kindling or consuming; they are foredoomed to tragedy, and only the miracle of goodness can save them.

The world is unfair to the beautiful, for it intoxicates them with their own completeness.

The souls of the beautiful are handicapped by reason of the perfections of their bodies.

Every lover of the beautiful is scorched by either their cleansing, or their devastating fires.

The beautiful see one side of life; the unbeautiful see another side.

The beautiful attract whatever homage a man's nature is capable of yielding.

Beauty is marred by unworthy homage.

If the beautiful realized their universal power, they would devote themselves to spreading the sway of goodness, instead of to increasing their personal prestige.

Undisciplined beauty becomes, at length, the prey of its victims, and becomes entangled in the meshes of its own vanity.

A star is beautiful overhead ; but its fallen fragments may be unlovely.

They, who are thankful to be beautiful, instead of being proud of it, can, if they will, regenerate the world ; there is no true thankfulness without living praise.

IMAGINATION

IMAGINATION is a man's power of realizing other lives than his own ; there can be no sympathy where there is no imagination.

Imagination is the source of loving communication ; it is the sacred spring and the overflowing stream, on which man ferries to man by the innumerable boats of spoken or written words.

Imagination can lighten any labour ; and it is often the chief part of joy, and of grief.

Imagination is a quickener of events ; and, when life is monotonous, it is because man does not exercise his imagination.

Imagination is a sun that gives colour to life ; and it is the faculty that endows the artist with supreme gifts.

Imagination is a runner that arrives at the goal of truth ; and it is the keynote of every religion.

Imagination is the creator of the past, the present, and the future ; and reality is only the shadow of imagination.

Imagination is the source of wonder and terror and pity ; yet men spend their lives in frustrating the holy waters, by choking them with the ashes of their daily and deadly method, and of their evil or careless habit ;

Or they roll the stone of active opposition over the well's mouth, to drive the welling waters down and away to some fissure beyond the scope of their preoccupied lives, where the waters may rise at will without disturbing them.

"Let the waters well," they say, "but not near us; for we are too busy for either smiles or tears: let other men laugh and weep--we have work to do;"

Idlers may sing in their boats, as they cross the magical stream; but we have neither time nor desire to sail on the mysterious waters;

Our religion does not bid us bathe daily in the stream, nor does it bid us cross our brows hourly at the fountains, built and brimmed by idlers with their sacred waters;

We do not believe the cry of the idlers that the waters in their fountains mirror God.

We do not care to see, or hear of, the ways of the waters; and we turn away our faces from any man, who tells us of them;

Let us live and die, busied, beyond invasion by the stream of imagination.

EXPRESSION



THOUGHT is the swell in deep waters, and expression is the breaking of its wave.

A man must utter what he knows, to make room in his mind for new knowledge.

Each age requires a new expression of religion ; and the spirit of any age is the spirit of its intensest lives.

A man's politics betray his character.

If a man has not a religion, an art, or a craft in which he can express his life, he will express it in trifling matters of dress, style, or money-getting.

Expression is the tatters of thought ; it needs the needle of invention and the thread of imagination to piece it together ; and only they, who have these aids, can comprehend the full meaning of any form of expression.

Man loves to confess himself to his priest, his friend, his soul, or his God, and in his books, his pictures, his labours, and his tolerances :

If he does not confess himself to these pious absolvers, or to the winds, the waves, the moon, and the stars, he sinks into the pit of unrelieved desolation, dragged down by the weight of incommunicativeness.

Man rails at words for their inadequacy to

express the thoughts of his mind and the feelings of his heart ;

He says that he cannot utter half of all that he means, and that words are poor symbols.

Yet he should remember that words are images, not to his mind only, but to the minds of other men ; and that when he utters words to express images, feelings, and ideas, other men receive the words, according to the images, feelings, and ideas in their individual minds, hearts, and imaginations ; and that between the sayer of a thing and the hearer of it, the inexpressible half of man's meaning may be easily apparent.

' Life is an eternal struggle for expression ; and life, with no outlet for expression, is life in a dungeon : words are the eloquence of the brain, and deeds are the eloquence of the heart.

ART

IMAGINATION is the source of Art and of Religion.

All Art is a miracle ; the Artist does not copy forms ; but he creates forms.

Art does not propose to be a photograph of Nature ; but Art reveals the meanings of Nature.

Photography gives the body of a thing ; but Art gives the soul as well as the body of a thing.

The Masters do not follow laws, but make them. The masses follow what they can see ; but the discoverer follows a divine clue.

The painter paints his idea ; and men, seeing the picture, are debtors to the idea.

Music is a wave of the soul's flood : it is a hint of the glory too great to be uttered, the word too sacred to be spoken.

The musician shares the melodies, heard by his finer sense, with mankind, thus enriching mankind.

Art is a sacred temple, where the worshippers invite one another to universal praise.

Art is spread by the meeting of its streams of poetry, painting, music, sculpture, and whatever of it the imagination of man can devise.

Nothing is a work of Art that does not

suggest innumerable thoughts ; for all Art is a gate into the imagination, by which the unimaginative may enter and develop their latent sense of beauty.

There is no limit to the greatness of human achievement ; and, if a man is inclined to rail at the inventors, the artists, and the discoverers, let him turn the page of history, or pursue the path of science, or enter the field of Art, that he may humbly change his attitude from unbelief to faith.

A man's work is his supreme offering to Art ; and no life is complete without a realization of Art.

All true lovers of Art must have both knowledge and intuition.

The poet, the painter, the musician, and the craftsman, by their presence, can increase a man's perception of beauty.

It is not enough for an artist to see beauty ; beauty must lay hold on him, and make him its own.

Every artist reveals invisible beauty, and cries to mankind : " Behold the shadow of what I have known ! "

The painter shows the deep beyond the sea, and the height above the sky ; and he shares with mankind the rapture of his godlike sense of the glory of colour.

It is man's sacred duty to spread the joy of gleaming stone and glowing colour : a man's Art is his thank-offering to life.

Art needs to lay itself at the mercy of the super-critic, life ; for Art is a halting criticism of life, that betrays the critic's strength and his weakness : yet every addition to Art is an addition to life.

Art is power to see and to present ; and a man's Art should be his religion ; the Art that is merely a fashion is bound to die.

The Artist's chief joy is to express his love of sound, of form, and of colour ; and to encourage their cultivation.

Simplicity is the first law of Art, as of life.

Few men's Art appeals to their own generation ; for every artist lives before his time.

Art, like Love, is a redeemer ; and money is redeemed in its service.

Skill, without inspiration, is an empty cup to a thirsty man.

The uncultured mistake ingenuity for Art : make-believe Art, like make-believe friendship, pleases the vulgar.

The harp yields its secrets to none but the master-hand ; and only the master-painter realizes the full power of the sun.

POETRY



POETRY is the marriage-song of experience and imagination : so long as there is poetry, there will be new life.

Every poem is written to the rhythm of heart-beats, and sings itself to its own music.

Poetry is the expression of the inexpressible ; and it is not ingenuity, but a spirit made visible.

Mankind lives by poetry ; yet the world reviles the poets.

The novelist brings mankind news of the world, but the poet brings mankind news of life.

The world despises the dreamer and the poet, and chains them to a machine, or ties them to a mill, lest they should deliver their divine messages ;

The Church says to the poet : " I do not approve of you " ; and the poet answers : " I did not expect that you would approve of me."

The poet who dare declare the mysteries life has shown him, suffers as a warlock.

The earth-tormented takes refuge in the moon.

Men admire the poets of a past generation, but ignore those of their own day : poetry is

a living thing ; and in its own day there is no standard by which to judge its new growths.

The birds learnt their songs from the waters, and man learnt his songs from the birds.

To the poet, every word has a being or a substance, and every sight suggests a poem : every particle of animate and inanimate nature cries to the poet : " Sing of me ! " and no human emotion is beyond a poet's comprehension.

Poetry is the glorified body, as well as the glorified soul, of the universe.

Poets are a divine race scattered among the countries of the world ; and poetry is the interchange of speech between humanity and divinity.

The priest is the servant of his Church ; but the poet is the servant of mankind.

Poetry is the transfiguration of life ; and it turns beauty of one kind into beauty of another kind.

In a poem, the poet perpetuates both his own personality, and the various personalities of his fellow-beings.

A man does not choose to be a poet ; life chooses him to be a poet ; and a poet does not choose his subjects, but his subjects choose him.

The poet is the son of all the ages ; he is not the student, nor the pensioner of life, but the child of life ; and he is one who whispers of the eternal in the ear of time ;

He knows that his visions are realities ; and he never forgets those who have brought him visions, nor those who have taken them away.

The poet never prays to Nature unheard ; and he expresses his realization of his kinship to the universe by telling the unending tale of life.

He must be attached to mankind, but detached from the world : poetry is a deep consciousness and a wide unconsciousness.

Waking or sleeping, the poet seeks to enter the kingdom of heaven ; so he walks the shores of life, where the tides of humanity ebb and flow.

The poet knows that the only way to make a new heaven is to make a new earth, for heaven is the reflection of earth upon man's imagination.

He writes his inspiration ; and man, reading the poem, may receive the stimulus of aspiration.

• Poetry is not in the matter, nor in the manner, but in the whole ; and every poem must embody living thought.

A true poem bears innumerable leaves of healing.

As sound and light spread in all directions, so poetry and wisdom reach the ends of the earth.

OF A BELOVED MUSE

IN all my life there is one, who has never failed me : she has gathered up the gleaming, fallen feathers of my belated and brief-flashing joys ;

And she has wept, tear for tear, with me, in my secret and unbearable agonies of disillusionment and destitution ;

She has paced step by step with me in the penitential tracks of ancestral and household sorrow ;

She has bathed with me in every flood of beauty, that I have ever looked on ; and it was she who told me that God is willing to give a man the universe.

She has accompanied my heart through the deeps and the heights of my adoration of man and of God.

She is my undeserved gift ; and she is also the offering I make to my Creator and to my fellow-men.

BOOKS

MEN waste time and eyesight in reading the dust of books-about-books, instead of reading the word itself.

Books of time fall into the fire ; books of eternity take root in the universal mind : the book that does not quicken, is a mass of worthless paper.

The writing on a leaf may outlive the inscription on a stone.

Men may realize that a book is a man's self, but they do not realize that he is his book ; as they may realize that God is Love, without realizing that Love is God.

A man's visible life is the cover of a book, which only God and himself can read.

A book is a shipload of ideas, hailing from, and bound to, many ports.

The writer makes one part of the book, and the reader makes the other part.

The timid may address an audience from the pages of his book.

The fool's library is a tomb : the wise man's library is a birth-chamber.

A living book is a sacred object, made of nights and days, flesh and blood, mind and soul.

Only the book of life is worth writing, and it can be written on either flawless or tear-

stained pages : it is always interesting, for it is everlasting—always being written, and never completed.

· Every mind chooses from the world's writers a different scripture ; so no two men's Bibles need be the same, any more than their prayers need be the same : it pleases the God of variety that men should worship Him by methods of variety.

IN THE LIBRARY

THERE is a large book in the library of life—the growing Bible-of-all-the-Ages ;

The library is free to all men, on the payment of the fee of intelligence ; and the book is open to all readers, who will read it carefully, and handle it reverently ;

Any reader, who may be inspired, may add to the sacred writings, in return for his privilege of reading the sacred scriptures of the Singers and the Sayers of the Ages.

The book of peace is hidden in the library of life, among innumerable books of vastly different import :

Some men, who search for, and are able to find it, read it long and well ;

Other men who come upon it, lay it aside hurriedly, because they will not take the trouble to master its strange alphabet.

Some men find it early, and other men find it late.

They, who care to read it, read little else, for they know that the time is near when they must leave the library to make way for newcomers.

CULTURE



CULTURE is instinctive discernment in knowledge and feeling : it is a blending of education, refinement, courtesy and grace with the quick power of choice of the ever beautiful.

Intuition always overrides tradition ; a man should walk but one pace behind his intuitions.

Man is ground to nothingness by the mill of fact, or is multiplied a thousand-fold by the sower, intuition.

Ignorance despises ; but knowledge pities.

The educated secretly deplore their lack of culture, without realizing wherein the lack lies ; and they do not understand that education is never achieved.

Most men's vaunted refinement is at the cost of their ill-paid servants' lives : that the refined may be indulged, their servants are worn out ; and that they may be pampered, their servants are deprived of necessities ;

That they may be leisurely, their servants are harassed ; that they may sleep, their servants lack sleep ; and that they may expand, their servants are pent.

• Refinement does not consist in illimitable possessions, and in the superlative degree of attention shown to a man's physical require-

ments ; but in habitual gentleness, and cleanliness, and courtesy : refinement is poor without culture.

Gentleness may exist without culture, but culture cannot exist without gentleness.

Reverence is not only requisite for the physician and the priest, but for all men in their common dealings with each other.

No relations between man and man can be perfect without charm : cultivated gentleness may bear wild charm.

Flowers blossom, that no man may be ashamed of his tenderesses.

The gentle bestow opportunities upon all with whom they come in contact ; and they treat rudeness as non-existent, never descending to recrimination and retort.

Courtesy ignores small annoyances, though they are more difficult to tolerate than great injuries.

Pride is no part of culture ; and it is a film on any shining gift.

Resentment is as odious as the pride that occasions it ; and majesty is a horse that only the high-souled can ride.

Grace is the flower of goodwill ; and goodwill evokes geniality.

Only the genial appreciate the blossoming of little virtues.

There is no virtue in unthwarted goodwill ; but goodwill is capable of flourishing anywhere.

No man can avoid the cross of other men's temperaments, whether he bears it with patience or with resentment ; and it is only intolerance that does not perceive the necessity for variety.

Courtesy is the fruit of cultivation of thought and character, apparent in manner.

Manners are a veneer, but manner is of the fashion of the real substance of a man's spirit.

Courtesy does a kindness as if it were receiving one, and it receives a kindness graciously : a man's degree of gentleness is proved by both the manner in which he gives, and the manner in which he accepts.

Grace doubles the virtue of every action ; and it is a plume in the helmet of strength.

In renewing the world's life, the bustling make discord, and the gracious make music.

The little adore their own ideas of elegance, instead of admiring wild beauty's revelations.

The gentle tread upon grass and stones ; the proud tread upon human hearts.

'Gentleness is the first title of heart-nobility ;
it springs from an intuition of other men's
sorrows, and the realization that every man
lives on the sufferance of his fellow-
beings.

THE SINGER IN THE STREET

IN the town where I live, there used to be a singer in the street, who was wretched, ill-clad, and altogether unpresentable.

Few folk stopped to hear her songs ; for she sang chiefly of her own misfortunes, and of the miseries of the world.

She passed through both the rich and the poor streets of the town every night, always singing as she went ; and when she had finished a song, she gave away a copy of it to anyone standing by, who would accept it.

Some folk, who read the song, laughed, and other folk shook their heads in disapproval ; most folk, however, did not trouble to read it, but crumpled it up, and threw it into the gutter.

Sometimes, folk invited the woman into their houses, to sing to them there ; but the same folk rarely asked her to come again, for they said that both she and her songs made them feel depressed and out-of-sorts with the world ; they said that it was quite bad enough to know that there was sorrow in the world, without having the fact enforced upon them, and that, until sorrow clutched themselves, they were determined to ignore it ;

Some of them parted with her unkindly,

some half regretfully, and some unconcernedly ; and a few folk drove her away with blows, which left her permanently scarred.

Where the woman slept was a mystery, for no one knew where she lived ; and no house in the town owned her as a lodger.

Every night, when she had ended her singing, she knocked at some one's door, asking for shelter for the night ;

Occasionally folk had pity on her, and took her into their houses for a few days ; but they all sent her adrift again ; for they said that she was too tired to work by day, and that, when the evening came, she insisted on going out to sing, no matter how bad the weather was.

I was away for some time, in a foreign country ; and, when I returned, I no longer heard the Singer in the street : so I asked what had become of her ; and I was told that a great man had passed through the town one night,

And that, on hearing the voice of the Singer in the street, he exclaimed : " That is the voice, and those are the songs, for which I have been waiting all my life ! " and that he took the woman away with him.

And folk say that she has really ceased to exist, for the great man has transformed her ;

and that now she is happy, and well-clad, and fit-to-be-seen ; for she is both the great man's companion and his servant.

They say she no longer sings in the street, but in the great man's garden, and that all her songs are cheerful, and that her favourite song is of how a little happiness can overcome great misery.

And I have heard that the great man, who is stricken with a sore disease, lives in peace and contentment with the singer, whom he has taken to be his wife, and that he is never tired of hearing her old and new songs.

And I know that this is true ; for in my dreams I have heard the woman singing her new songs, which are all happy : and my dreams are always true.

