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THE RELIGIOUS TRAINING OF CHILDREN

BY

ABBY MORTON DIAZ

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1. Every new idea or plan has rights we are bound to respect; one of these is a thoughtful investigation, irrespective of present conditions, of any existing authority, and of anybody's opinions, our own included. It must be judged by recognized principles.
2. As truth is infinite, the human perception of it must always be a progressive one. Thus progress is the natural order.
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4. The most obvious principle of the universe is that of life. Nowhere is there a needle-point speck of vacuity, from the infinitesimal atom to the highest human intelligence.
5. Co-extensive with life is the principle of individuality; the whole universe is life, individually expressed. Life, for every created thing, means the fullest development of its highest and best, according to the laws of its individual nature.
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7. Oneness. The good of the whole *depends* on the good of each, and the good of each *makes* the good of the whole.

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THE RELIGIOUS TRAINING OF CHILDREN.

CHAPTER I.

OUR HEAVENLY HOME.

Truth should be the ground of all teachings, and surely of religious teachings. In the first place, then, since "God" is the declared standard of perfection, and "Heaven" the supreme object of human attainment, let us free both from the falsities now so widely taught; for while these are accepted as truth, how can the true get recognition?

Mark how man has manufactured a God out of himself, and a Heaven from his own earthly ambitions, values, and ideas of enjoyment. The classic gods and goddesses, in their home above the sky, were simply human beings with human characteristics, good and bad, but with superhuman activities in either direction. As the word "heaven" means the high, or what is raised—from the Anglo-Saxon verb *hebben*, to raise—and as the sky is raised high above the earth, it is used to represent our earthly idea of utmost height. In more primitive times, when this was supposed to be a flat world with a substantial arch overhead, it was natural that superhuman creatures should be assigned that high location.

We call those more primitive people pagans, but their paganism still marks our religious teachings. In these it has been represented that above the sky is a fixed locality called Heaven, having a crowned King seated on a throne with a Son on his right, and a court, so to speak, and an angel population distinct in kind from mortals, yet having mortal shape and qualities. Wings have been added as being mortally thought needful for locomotion "up there," the monstrosity of arms and wings giving way to this requirement. Shape, qualities, and powers are necessarily limited to mankind's conceptions, since no created object can form ideas absolutely outside of its own nature. A pebble, for instance, could not conceive of growth upward, and branching and blooming; the aster could have no understanding of locomotion, and surely not of flight and song; nor could a bird comprehend the varied possibilities of the human being.

This same limitation shows in conceptions of God and heaven as humanly portrayed. Thus in representations of God we find a magnified human wrath, cruelty, partiality, vengeance, injustice, and an extremely human delight in personal dominion and glorification, and in an adoration rendered with all the earthly accessories of pomp and subserviency, as waving of palm-branches, prostration, instrumental music, and noisy acclamation.

The science of astronomy and a progressive intelligence, together with the more Christlike, or spiritual, conceptions of heaven, have shown the falsity of such representations; yet it is not long since a preacher stated that the future occupation of the righteous would be "casting down their crowns before the great white throne," and that a mother *knew* her deceased daughter was "up in heaven, walking the golden streets." Aboundingness of gold quite naturally comes into our highest earthly conceptions; also opportunity for that idleness, or "rest," so longed for in this workaday world.

Magnitude predominates in human ideals. Rev. Jonathan Edwards could scarcely find words strong enough to depict the horrors and the everlastingness of the agonies of "sinners in the hands of an angry God," and the exultant jubilations of the "saints in heaven" in witnessing these sufferings. "God will get himself honor upon you, will magnify himself in your ruin." "When the saints in heaven look upon the damned in hell, with how much enlargement of the heart will they praise Jesus who was pleased so to distinguish them," "who deserved no better than they." [1] Hymns of like character were extensively used in churches and committed to memory by children in homes and elsewhere.

John Milton, our standard religious (?) poet, exerted his mighty genius to materialize spiritual things, and thus keep from us the true import of the Master's teachings, and all they mean for us here and now; and in our modern times Spurgeon has equalled Edwards in depicting the Heavenly Father as a monster of cruelty: "In fire exactly like that we have on earth thy body will lie, asbestos-like, forever unconsumed; all thy veins roads for the feet of pain to travel on; every nerve a string on which the devil shall forever play his diabolical tune of hell's unutterable lament." Spurgeon preached twenty years to immense audiences, and more than twenty million copies of his sermons have been circulated in the various languages of Christendom. His death was mourned as causing "a great loss to the Christian world."

But sadder than mortal death is the fact that as yet no one has been able to find a "Christian world!" And how can there be one when the Christly teachings of love and spirituality are set aside to suit our earthly methods, and when to assert that they can be lived is to incur the stigma of being "visionary," "Utopian," "a crank," or "a little off," and when the loving Heavenly Father of Jesus has been held up in church and in Sunday-schools as unlovely and unjust.

But why say "has been?" That these traditional beliefs still prevail is shown by the ecclesiastical attitude toward certain

of those who venture to doubt them in their entirety, it being declared by high authority that such doubt would "cut the sinews of the missionary enterprise."

It is plain that to Jesus the heavens, or the high, signified an inward condition, not a place. "The kingdom of God is within you." Now, as the King would be in his kingdom, and "God is Love," this would imply an exalted condition of love and divine communion as Jesus' conception of heaven. When a listener to his sayings came to perceive that "love is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices," and so declared, Jesus gave him the assurance, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." Yet this man was not supposed to be going away from earth. Heaven is a heavenly state; a heavenly state *must* express itself in action; and as heavenliness overcomes worldliness, earth will become the kingdom of heaven.

But for this there must come a great change in much of our Sunday-school and pulpit teaching, and of the home talk about God and heaven. When a woman was recently asked, "How dare you become a Sunday-school teacher? what can you answer should a child question you about God?" she replied: "Oh, I don't have any trouble about that. If a little boy in my class behaves badly, I tell him that if he is naughty God will not love him." "But, my dear friend," was the rejoinder, "how can you say that? You depict God as being worse than a human parent. Don't you love your children when they are naughty?" "Oh, I never thought of that," was the reply.

Surely more thought is needed, wiser and more careful thought, in our talks with children; for this matter has vital concern with all the problems of life, and we should beware of speaking without knowledge. "But we must tell little children *something* about God," say many parents; and with this conviction they proceed to "tell" what they themselves do not comprehend, and to give as facts mere earthly imaginings.

Now, why *must* we "tell" little children about God? In regard to abstract geometrical problems we should defer explanations. Why not do the same in regard to this which "who by searching can find out?" and of which we all feel our ignorance? Surely silence for a while is better than falsities and unproved statements, based upon materialism and causing agonizing and groundless fears. Many a little child has trembled before the ever-present "Eye," which they have been told is watching them from above and before which their every inmost thought stands revealed. Suppose this fear does cause them to refrain from certain objectionable conduct. Are they thereby made good? Is there any goodness in good actions done through fear? Is a compelled goodness in any respect good?

A most discouraging fact is that even those denominations which declare themselves freed from certain materialistic ideas still persist in presenting them. A recent publication for Kindergarten use in their Sunday-schools teaches—

"Remember though God is in heaven, my love,
He sees you within and without.
He always looks down from his glory above,
To notice what you are about."

Think of the picture sure to be imagined by a little child while listening to this! The picture of some huge form seated on a throne which is supported by the sky, watching little children!

"I long to be an angel, and with the angels stand;
A crown upon my forehead, a harp within my hand.
There, right before my Saviour * * *"

—has been sung by thousands of children in Sunday-schools and elsewhere. Another common "religious" song states that —

"In the sky above us, where the angels dwell,
God will surely love us, if we serve him well."

Thus the idea of separateness—God up there, we down here—gets firm hold; and it will cling fast in spite of any after-recognition of the Divine Omnipresence and Immanence, and will hinder a full realization of all this implies of ever-present help and strength. Surely protest should be made against this cruelty to children, as shown in making them suppose their very innermost Life and Friend so far away from them! Even in church they hear this Divine *Omnipresence* besought to "look down," and to "draw near." But, "Am I not a God at hand and not afar off?" "Do I not fill all?" "There

is none beside." When, oh when, will preaching make its hearers to know—not merely believe, but to know—that they are the temples of the living God, the "habitation," "heirs," "offspring;" and that they are "saved" every moment by recognizing and depending upon this Divine Inmost, not by either creeds or ceremonies; and to know that "whosoever will" has such salvation merely by claiming it?

When all this shall be set forth with the simplicity and joyfulness its nature demands, then we shall see congregations held together, not by intellectual beliefs but from heart and soul enthusiasm, which after all is the only sure holding. A divine enthusiasm, or ardor, comes from this inmost religion, as inevitably as warmth from fire; and it will melt away that cold indifference which resists the strivings of our present too largely intellectual and formalistic church. That very worldly methods—mammon's methods—are now so generally depended upon to "support religion," is of itself proof that the compelling power of a spiritual understanding and a spiritual enthusiasm is greatly lacking in our so-called religious observances.

Now as to the religious instruction given our children. This is avowedly based on the teachings of Jesus. And right here comes a question in regard to the teachers themselves: What is their understanding of these teachings? Surely, the all-important question, for this understanding, whatever it may be, is taught as truth and so accepted.

To illustrate, we will suppose the Sunday Bible Lesson to include some of the "Blesseds." Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, or for Jesus' sake, "for great is their reward in heaven." We will suppose the teacher has the common understanding of this, namely, that it refers to a future existence in a location somewhere above the sky, where "God" is to be seen in personal shape, where he receives constant praise and adoration, where there is a great deal of singing and of playing on instruments, and everlasting repose.

Such a teacher would impress upon her class the great personal benefit to come to them in the future life from being good and doing good in this one. She would explain to them that all those who had thus been good and done good would enter after death, into the kingdom of heaven, and that any who suffered persecution here for the sake of doing right would there have a specially large share of heavenly blessedness. That such is a common interpretation is shown by a printed verse brought home by a pupil of one of our most liberal Sunday-schools. This verse states to the children in plain words that all they will have to recommend them to favor when they go to heaven will be the record they will present of the good deeds done in this present life. This suggests a provincial going up to court, and it will be observed here that the primitive king and court idea is still preserved. Now mark the low motive—"and you will get a reward!"

One of this kind of believers said to a friend who differed in belief: "*You* have no motive in doing right; you don't *believe* in any hell!" This reminds us of the old handed-down story of the woman who was met bearing in one hand a torch and in the other a vessel of water. In answer to inquiries she replied that her purpose was to burn up heaven with the torch and put out hell with the water, that people might be good neither for hope of reward nor fear of punishment, but just for goodness' sake.

A truer interpretation of these texts would show them to be, not promissory notes for value received, not promises at all, but assurances of a present blessedness. According to the teachings of Jesus, heaven is a state of mind and heart; a spiritual exaltation; a feeling of nearness, yes, of oneness with the Divine; in fact, a "kingdom of God within you;" and as "God is Love," all this would imply a most blessed condition. This is the "Kingdom." Kingdom signifies dominion. Those coming into the Kingdom, if recognizing their power, would have dominion over every manner of evil, "even to the outermost." They would become centres of life and light and joy, and—may we not say?—would radiate heaven as they go. Consecrated by Love to a life of service, with selfhood cast out, living in the realities, ever in conscious oneness with the Divine, they would be "blessed" in being far, far above the touch of persecution—superior to it; and great would be their recompense in that exalted condition which is itself its own reward; as a traveller who has climbed the mountain-top has reward in being able to look serenely down upon the storm raging below—so far below as to have for him no terrors.

Imagine an entire Sunday-school of children getting such understanding of these texts; imagine the teachings here briefly suggested carried out in detail; imagine all Sunday-school children and home children receiving them and living them, and think what would be the influence of this on human affairs here and now! It should be observed that the texts themselves do not refer to a future blessedness. "Great *is* your reward;" "Yours *is* the kingdom," etc.

Earth signifies the low, heaven the high. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." These latter are commonly supposed to be enjoyed in a future state called "eternity." Now as

eternity has neither beginning nor end, it follows that we are now in eternal life, and as God is Spirit, of whom we are children, heirs, offspring, and likeness, it must be that we are now spiritual beings. Created from and of Spirit, Intelligence, Love, Wisdom, Strength, Power, Mind—all these together make us what we are. They constitute our high or heavenly plane. On a lower one we have fleshly gratifications, worldly power and position, display of wealth, deference, praise, landed properties, mansions, costly apparel, and rare possessions in well-guarded treasure-boxes.

There would be some hope of a Christian world, could children be taught to underrate all such and to set their affections on things above, and to find their most precious enjoyment in the pleasures of mind and heart, in spiritual delights, in loving service, in promoting harmony, in renouncing selfhood, in all that is high and pure and noble and godly, in more and more nearness to the great Omnipresent Life which is back of all that is manifested. If created spiritual beings, why not now live in the spirit, walk in the spirit—that is, in conscious touch with the Divine Indwelling—and thus bring forth the fruits of the spirit, as scripturally described?

If wisely presented, much of this kind of teaching would be comprehended by children; and how greatly it would raise the character of our civilization if we could bring about an undervaluing of what is now most sought after, and a general desire for those "treasures above," the heavenly "treasures" of mind and heart, which cannot be taken from us!

Multitudes of children sing the "Gospel Hymns." Here the constant theme is the heaven we are to *go to*, and the joys which will be ours *then* and *there*. How is all this so surely known? No one has ever reported an experience of these joys. What a living inspiration would be the singing of these hymns, were they supposed to mean what is attainable in this present life!—Our Eden Above; Our Heavenly Home; Our Sweet Beulah Land; Our Christian's Home in Glory; Our Land of Pure Delight; Our Blessed Home-land; Our Beautiful World;—all these and many others would mean a high (heavenly) condition to be entered into here; a state, or "home," or "land," of Peace and Love and Trust, of self-renunciation and spiritual exaltation. Surely the home of the soul is with the God whose habitation is within you—not you as body, however: for, truly, as Jesus declared, "The flesh profiteth nothing." It is "the Spirit that quickeneth," or maketh to live.

CHAPTER II.

RESTRAINT AND GUIDANCE FROM WITHIN.

What is religion? Hearing it always spoken of as referring to the One Universal Cause, we may naturally wonder how this matter is regarded in other parts of our common universe, not alone in that small portion occupied by our solar system, with its Jupiter, Saturn, and the rest, but in the infinitude of fixed stars and their planets, and in all the worlds existing beyond our telescopic vision. As the Source of this infinite manifestation is omnipresent Mind, we may safely infer that from this Source mind everywhere exists; and, further, that proceeding therefrom it will be likely to do elsewhere what it does in our small speck of a world—*i.e.*, strive for a conscious union with its Source.

True, we cannot know; but with us religion seems so narrowed, so materialized, by the restrictions and forms of ecclesiasticism, that somehow we can have more breathing room by considering it co-extensive with the universe.

It seems good, however, to find everywhere a surety that this world with all its belongings is not doing itself, so to speak, but that it has a producing Cause—a somewhat other than appears—immanent in all, and to which, or whom, we as individuals stand in the relation of the created to the Creative, existence to Being, sustained to the Sustaining. To this unseen Presence we ascribe what alone seems sufficient unto its full manifestation—namely, the infinitude of wisdom, love, power, strength, intelligence, harmony, good—all united in the one word God. In the Hebrew this word signifies Being, Life; to nourish, to sustain, to pour forth energy; a power going forth, entering into, setting up motion, ruling, guiding, causing to revolve. From the same root are derived words which signify brooding; the act of a mother nursing her offspring; the principle of motherhood.

In all times and places, people have striven for a consciousness of union with this omnipresent Cause. We have from the Greeks: "There is but one Being. . . . author of life . . . energy of all things. One universal soul pervading the universal sphere." Hindoo: "Consider all things as existing in the Divine Spirit . . . supreme, omnipresent Intelligence pervading all. . . . All things in the universe are merely the primeval heart of Buddha. This heart is universally diffused and comprehends all things within itself. The Lord, existing through himself, of whom and through whom all things were, are, and will be." Egyptian: "God, the beginning, the One Father, the Spirit who animates and perpetuates the world." Mohammedan: "God is the All." Our own Scriptures: "One Father, of whom are all things."

In regard to this divine life in *man*, we have in our Bible: "It is the same God working in you all. The tabernacle of God is with man. Ye are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." Hindoo: "I am pervaded by Thee; Thou containest me. Within, beyond, my God existeth. In thee, in me, in every one, the Lord of Life resides." Persian: "Soul of the soul, intellect exists by Thee." Dr. Channing: "The everlasting Father, quickening, sustaining, renewing us." Theodore Parker: "As God fills all space, so all spirit. Thou art nearer to us than we are to ourselves." Emerson: "Man rests upon the bosom of his God, and draws, at his need, inexhaustible power."

Statements of this nature, expressed in the Scriptures of the different peoples, are known as their religions. None show need of creed or formalistic service. They have no formal significance. They are of the spirit, and concern man's inmost. The word *religion*, aside from the thing itself, has been variously defined. According to Cicero it signifies "to re-read." Another ancient authority gives for the meaning, "to bind back to God." Dr. Watts defined it as "duty to God." We are told in our Scriptures that man is patterned after the Divine.

Now, as to these meanings, we may well say that each human life should be such that observers may there "re-read" the divine pattern inscribed on the heart. We may state also that, for this complete outliving, the individual human being must turn inward from the outer, the sense-life, and feel consciously "bound back" to the Father, or Begetter—that which gets us to be. And we may further say that duty to God requires a complete showing forth of the divine pattern, and that lack of this completeness is irreligion—actual sin—the word *sin* meaning, to come short of the mark. "We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God;" that is, we have all failed of showing forth the gloriousness of our divine possibilities.

Religious training, then, is so to manage, to train, that the God imprint on each child shall be revealed. How shall this be done? Obviously not by teaching that this innermost Presence is far off, up above, looking down; nor by making this far-away God a convenience in answering unanswerable child-questions—as God did this, God did that, God will feel thus and so. A little girl, asking about her deceased baby brother, was told that God had taken him up into heaven, the idea

being given that heaven was somewhere above the sky. Soon after the birth of another boy, her mother noticed that in saying her evening prayers the child mentioned every member of the family except the baby. "But why not pray for your little baby brother?" the mother asked. "Hush!" whispered the child, "I don't want God to know I've got another little baby brother." She evidently had an idea of magnitude, of far-offness, and of an unearthly sort of Being, somewhere, with unlimited extension of the sense of hearing as well as capacity for taking away children.

Man is said to be created in the image of God; but we may as well say that God has been made in the image of man, for it is certainly the case that man everywhere has carried to infinity his own highest conceptions, and called that infinite GOD. This, indeed, is a necessity of the case. But let us take what is really our highest. By this, our present conception of God is infinite love, intelligence, truth, power, wisdom, good, strength, life. Our duty to God, then, is to let these appear in character and conduct. In the religious training which will accomplish this we are not to consider the child as a receptacle to be filled. We are not to put anything into him. The divine germ is there, awaiting development. How shall we aid this? Is it by telling him if he is naughty God will not love him, or will send him to hell to be forever lost? Or must we make him afraid of God? Clearly this cannot be the way. Fear can never develop love. Nor will the intellectual methods of learning texts of Scripture be effective, nor yet repeating the Golden Rule, or the Ten Commandments, or answers to questions contained in the Catechism.

What is the divine method as seen in nature? It accomplishes by working from within outward, not from without inward. The inmost desire of a pine, we will say, is to be a pine. This is its ideal, its religion, or duty to its Creator. In a nursery of plants their training does not consist in putting anything into them. What they can be and do is already there in embryo. It cannot be supplied. So of our nursery-ground of young human plants. In each are divine possibilities. Our part is to aid in their development, and our first move is to gain that co-operation which in the plant seems automatic. Like the nurseryman, we must work *with*, not *upon*, our material. And how can this intelligent co-operation be secured? Interest the child in his own perfection. Lead him to desire this as he desires of a plant in his garden—that it shall be, and do, its best. He would have it gain a full and shapely growth, and express its utmost possibilities in foliage, bloom, and fruit. Wisely trained in this line of thought, a child would be as much disturbed by finding a blemish on himself, as to discover that a spot was soiling his white lily.

Every child enjoys perfection. A boy is pleased to see perfection in a jackknife. The better its steel, the keener its edge, the nicer its finish, and the more things it will do well, the greater his pleasure. The girl, likewise, is pleased to see a superior kind of doll. The more life-like its countenance, the sweeter its smile, the more *real* its ringlets, the more shapely its limbs, the more gown-like its dress, the more things it can do well, and the more closely it corresponds to a live child, the greater her pleasure. So of any tools or toys; also of fruits and flowers. A perfect apple or rose causes involuntary admiration. In a story, the child is pleased with the brave boy—the truthful, the kind, the honorable, the helpful, the generous, the intelligent; and the brighter these qualities shine out from a dark ground of circumstances the greater his admiration.

It may be said that this is no more than natural. But what do we mean by natural, other than that such is his nature? He responds to perfection because it is his *nature* to do so; and what is this nature but a manifestation of the Divine? Even a boy possessing opposite qualities is compelled instinctively to appreciate the good ones in others. Why not take advantage of this natural aid, and, by wisely thought-out methods, induce the little one to make himself the kind of boy he can approve? In this we can always trust nature as a compelling power. No boy will be able to approve of himself if that self be unworthy his approval. Thus we have an almighty force on our side, if we will but recognize and work in line with it.

Begin early, say the trainers of animals and of plants. Likewise, with children begin early—that is, before they can perceive that anything is begun. It is the unconscious influence that tells. Not even grown people like to know that somebody is trying to do them good. To a very young child a mother could say: "My dear, suppose you make yourself just such a little boy (or girl) as you would like to play with and stay in the room with. You know what kind you like best." This could begin a profitable talk, and it might be further suggested—"for you know you will have to stay with yourself day and night as long as you live; and as there can be no separation you will be more comfortable by making yourself the kind of companion you can enjoy. It would be unpleasant to be obliged to take for a constant playmate a person you disliked or despised—how much worse were that person yourself!"

Just here a child incident related by a mother is apropos: Her daughter of four or five years told a falsehood. She said to the child, "What a pity! for this makes a dark spot on yourself." Hearing this the girl began to cry. "But, my dear," said

the mother, "if from this moment you speak the exact truth the dark spot will go away." This comforted the child and gave her inspiration. How much better some such method as this than the customary one of saying: "Oh, what a naughty girl! Now God won't love you," or "God will punish you," or "if you do so, you will not go to heaven when you die!"

In regard to the matter of interesting the child in its own perfection, it may be asked, Is this religion? Surely. Is not God perfect? And is not the child created spiritually in the image and likeness of God, thus bearing the Divine imprint? And is it not religion that this *inmost* of the child be shown forth? Is not this "duty to God?"

A question is sure to be raised concerning the ability of a child to tell right from wrong; but it has already been shown that as soon as he is old enough to hear a story he approves the good, the true, and the lovely. As to how he does it, there is no better answer than—because it is his nature to do so.

It is usually at about this time that the child, having heard various allusions to "God" by various people, begins to ask those unanswerable questions so perplexing to a mother, and which are often answered by statements having no foundation in knowledge. Now, as in all the world it is only we humans who are spiritually one with the Divine Cause, it follows that all God-knowledge must come through our own innermost. This guide is called conscience. We are spoken of as being guided by its voice. Of a penitent wrong-doer it is said that he is "conscience-stricken." Of a doer of right that he is "conscientious." Now, what is conscience? When that earnest seeker, Madame Guyon, asked her spiritual adviser, "Where can I find God?" he answered, "Look within." And, indeed, in what other direction can we look, since it is by the spirit that we are allied to God? God-seekers in all times and places have thus found and spoken. This inner witness, this voice of conscience, is the voice of God. And can there be a surer guide?

Suppose, then, we answer our young questioner, our child God-seeker, in this way: "My dear, when you hear of two children and their different ways, you do not have to be told which is the right and which is the wrong way. You do not even ask. And when you yourself speak in a kindly or unkindly way, there is an inner something which lets you know which of the two is the good way. You do not hear this something; you do not see it; you cannot touch it. It speaks without the common kind of voice. But in its silent way it informs you of the difference between right and wrong. This inner voice, which you cannot physically hear, but which lets you know, you may call the voice of God; and the more earnestly you listen the more plainly it will speak. Is it not good that children and all of us have so kind a teacher?"

The child may not fully understand—does any one? But of the two directions—within ourselves and a special place located above somewhere—we have set our young questioner in the true one. To bring a child under the rule of this inner Voice does more for him than to answer his question. It establishes within himself an ever-abiding tribunal, clothed with authority from on high.

Next we will consider what would come from bringing all children into obedience to this Law written upon the heart, and how we may advance still further in our religious training of children.

CHAPTER III.

THE DIVINE INDWELLING AS A DEPENDENCE.

In their longings and strivings for divine truths, during the journey through life, mankind may be likened to travellers seeking out the resources of a strange country which is theirs by inheritance. It can abundantly supply their every need, but they have been misled and impoverished by errors in guidance. Asking for gold, they have accepted base alloys. If overcome by the burden and heat of the day, they have begged for water, it has often been furnished them from stagnant pools. If a longing has seized them to gaze skyward, to mount the hill-tops and thus extend their vision over the broad landscape, they have been warned that such efforts were beyond their feeble powers, cautioned not to raise their eyes above the horizon, and by all means to keep on the safe, level track. Pining for cheer, they have been overshadowed with gloom, man-made torches often passing for the glorious light of day. Husks have been provided them by way of nourishment. Demanding rare wines, invigorating cordials, they have been offered common adulterations. When tempted to wander off on either side, to roam the fields and gather for themselves the abundant fruits and flowers, strict orders restrained them from other than the well-trodden paths. And all the while it has been assured them that they were getting the best of all that was theirs.

But occasionally some have broken away from the guidance, have wandered through the fields, have stood on hill-tops, gained ideas of the extent of their dominion, and gathered confidence in their own powers. Enraptured with the discoveries, they have joyously proclaimed them, beseeching their companions: "Oh, do not believe you are getting the best! There are priceless jewels, mines of gold, belonging to you! All this and more has been revealed to us. We have fed on the nourishing grain; had experience of the life-giving cordials; quenched our thirst at the fountains. Taste, and know. And we pray you, come out of the gloom into the light. The freedom of this broad domain is yours, and all herein. And why those downcast eyes? That they cannot bear the light is untrue. They were made for light; made to gaze upward into infinite space. The air here is stifling. It is not real air—not God's air. You do not half breathe. Come, mount the hills where you can take a full, free breath, and extend your vision on every side. You have dominion over all!"

Few listen; fewer believe. It is so far beyond their narrowed conceptions as to be met with derision, often with wrath. The tales of abounding wealth are but fables. If content with husks, why ask for grain? The rich cordial overpowers them. Fresh spring water lacks the old familiar taint. Long used to gloom, their eyes shrink from the full light of day. Pure air is unduly exhilarating. Fearful dangers await those venturing from the well-trodden path; and, as for hill-top climbing, their unaccustomed feet refuse the effort. Thus, to our misguided ones, the weakness due to long repression seems the full measure of their natural powers. Indeed, they angrily deny the ownership of their own possessions, and denounce, even slay, those who declare to them their birthright inheritance.

As travellers through this human period of life, many of us will recognize ourselves in the above illustration. It is sadly true that the falsities early taught as religion do now hinder our full realization of truths since made known to us. There are multitudes who believe all that is now told of our rich possessions, of the true nourishment, of the welling fountains, of the wider range, the freedom, and the hill-top delights; but it is almost impossible to free ourselves from the errors of a misleading guidance. Our long-unused powers cannot at once spring into full activity.

But the precious children, now just starting out upon their life-journey—surely we can save them from the restrictions which have so fettered ourselves. Let us try to put them in possession of what is theirs. These little ones—bless their dear hearts!—how trustingly they come to us with questionings about God, and heaven, and death, so sure that grown folk know all things! And with what confidence they accept our replies! This very trust gives us solemn responsibilities. Let our answers be Truth, so far as we know, and if we do not know, let us say so, or defer answering rather than state what has no foundation in knowledge.

What is Truth? and what do we know? It is true, as was said in a former article, that there is an Inner Voice, and that it guides us in distinguishing right from wrong. It does not speak to our bodies; it speaks to *us*. Our ears do not hear it, but *we* hear. *We* have sure knowledge of this, and of a great deal more that is apart from sense-knowledge—of Love, of Intelligence, of Good, of Will, of Energy, of Harmony, of the True, of Mind—and as no limit can be assigned to these, they stand to us as omnipresent *Life*, the hidden Cause, working back of all that is made manifest, called by Herbert Spencer "that Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all proceeds, . . . manifested within and about us;" and "of whom are all things," according to our Scriptures.

There is nothing mysterious in this talk of the Inner Life. Why, then, is the subject alluded to with an ominous shake of the head, and denounced as "mysticism," or "mystical?" For our surest knowledge is of this very unseen—the thinker, the knower, the *we*. We are not the body, we *have* the body. We are not its possession; it is ours—ours to rule; a physical appendage, so to speak, composed of gases and minerals the same as in the earth we walk upon. Service for us ended, they return to their native place. They do not represent *us*, but a much lower plane of existence. As to knowledge, we cannot be said to *know* them. To our inner consciousness they are nothing. But with Will, Energy, Love, Intelligence, Harmony, Good, and Truth, we have close acquaintance, for these make the innermost life of each one and represent us as spiritual beings.

A true religious training would make our children familiar with this divine Indwelling, and with all that it means for them, here and now. This would bring high results. To accomplish the high we must deal with the high. Fear is low; we will have none of that. There shall be no fear of a hell, nor of punishment, nor of any one's displeasure, here or hereafter. Nor shall reward be offered of a place some time, in some locality called Heaven; nor of any one's approval, nor of worldly profit. Intellect is cold. We shall not reach the heart of a child and warm him into enthusiasm by memorized hymns, texts, and commandments, nor by direct moral injunctions. The surer way, the inmost way, is by the heart and through right exercise of the imagination.

The first step has already been suggested. Tell Johnny a story of Tom and Joe, the first a true-hearted, honorable boy, the second just the opposite. "Johnny, which boy do you like?" "Tom." "Why?" "Because he's the best one." "Who told you?" "No one; I knew myself." "But how did you know it?" "I knew it, because—because—I thought it." Thus Johnny is made to recognize an inner something, and a reality, too, entirely apart from the bodily senses; a Voice which speaks without words and is heard without sound, and he is told that it will be his guide for life in questions of right or wrong, whether of thought or action.

It should next be suggested that this Voice has *Authority*. Its decisions are final. Higher than the highest earthly tribunal, its commands must be obeyed. From this would naturally follow the idea of *Intelligence*. What decides so promptly and so surely must be intelligent; must think, must know, must be alive: therefore reality. Next, *Good*. What always approves the right must be good.

Note how much, thus far, we have given the child. We have assured him of an inward Presence as Guide, as Authority, as Intelligence, as Good, as Life. In connection with this last we can add the idea of *Strength*. The lesson might be conveyed, we will say, by a song-bird overcome by some disaster. It has been found dead, upon the ground. There it lies motionless. Not a note of song can come from its tiny throat. By its inner life it had lately been singing and swinging upon the topmost bough. There is now no *Strength* in its wings for lifting that small body. Its body has no life now for flight or song, yet to appearance the bird is all there.

It could be explained that after what is called death the form of a man would be in the same condition. Seemingly the man would be all there; but not a limb could stir. The Strength, Power, Life, Intelligence, which shortly before had set the body in motion, have fled. We do not now say "he;" we say "it." The thinker, the knower—all that make the Indwelling Presence—being gone, the body is merely "*it*."

With this Presence we have now associated Strength and Power. Before adding Love, it will be well to give an idea of Omnipresence. We can say to our boy that as his own body can thus move only by the unseen Life back of it, the same must be true of all people; and if true of human beings, much more must it be true of the whole lower creation, so that even every tree and plant should be considered as having a tree or plant intelligence, whereby it is guided in taking from the earth, air, sunshine, moisture, just what is required for making itself its own special kind. It is by this innermost life that the oak-tree takes shape as an oak, a lilac-bush as a lilac, a daisy as a daisy. Thus every object, large or small, becomes such by virtue of the life that is back of it. It is the one Life, variously manifested, from the tiniest atom up to man, both inclusive.

Having thus conveyed the idea of Omnipresence, we are in position to add that of *Love*, as shown in the evident care and protection exercised over all. Nothing could be easier. The boy knows how Love works in providing food and shelter, and in protecting from harm; he may have noticed this in domestic and other animals, may himself have shown it in caring for some pet creature. He can be led to see that an omnipresent Intelligence works everywhere to these same ends, care and protection. We can show him, in the first place, that the plant thus guided is careful to produce plenty of seeds, so that its own kind may be preserved. Then let him see that every seed, even the tiniest, is protected by suitable coverings, and that every leaf comes forth tenderly tucked up in enfoldments and is closely shielded during its opening

period, lest it be too suddenly exposed to "outdoor air."

With this thought of care and protection, a child will like to notice how even the tiniest insect, and the least speck that swims, carefully protects its atoms of eggs, whether in the water, or in the meadows, or on the underside of green leaves. It would not be difficult in almost any household to show how very cautious is the moth-miller to seek out dark hiding-places, and so to place its eggs that the younglings will find themselves in warm woollens; and it would amuse the child to be shown that these same coverings serve them for food, so long as that kind of food is needed—an economy far beyond our own!

Speaking of eggs would lead quite naturally to the funny little unhatched chick, in his small, white egg-house, just fitted to his shape and furnished with food enough to last until he is able to step out and pick up for himself. And as a matter of course, these lessons of loving care would enlarge on that of all animals for their young: the brooding of the hen, and the subsequent danger-call and gathering under the wings; the mother sheep, bleating for her lamb; the "moolly," taking comfort in the pasture with its "bossy," or mourning all day if bereft of it; the protecting devices of the quail for saving its young in moments of sudden danger, and their instant obedience; and the motherly robin, foraging for bird-food.

In this connection also would come in for notice many "mystical" wonders, as the fish returning from open sea to their native streams; the foreknowledge and constructiveness of the beaver; the homing of the pigeon; the unerring sky pathway of the wild-fowl; the geometry, and architecture, and government, and "bee-line" of the bees; the humanness of the ants; and, in fact, the human qualities and tendencies seen in all the lower creation. Even among plants we have the sturdy, the yielding, the sprightly, the drooping, the creeping, the clinging, the majestic. Thus, besides bringing to notice the loving Protection everywhere manifest, tenderly brooding over all, we could so extend the lesson as to lead the child into that acquaintanceship with our lower relations which would greatly enrich his life and tend to attract him from less worthy pursuits.

But our all-important point is to show that the Life so variously expressed is One Life, and this oneness should be specially dwelt upon as true of human beings; for a recognition of this, with all it implies of equal opportunities, would work wondrous changes in present human conditions.

The period of time to be covered by these lessons would vary according to circumstances. In some cases the progressive steps would need to be taken very slowly. But even the first one—recognition of the authority of the Inner Voice—would do a child rare service. And note here that by this first step, and the succeeding ones, the child is turned in the right direction: from the fleshly, which "profiteth nothing," to the spiritual, which is *Life*; from a great white throne away up somewhere, with a magnified Being of human conception seated thereon in the midst of "the righteous" casting down their crowns and playing on harps and waving palm branches and walking on golden streets; and from an awful "judgment-seat," whence goes forth the sentence of eternal woe or the assurance of eternal bliss—turned from all this materialism and shown that the great white throne is the reign of Truth and Purity, and that the judgment-seat of God is within ourselves, where judgment is pronounced by the inward Divine Presence; and this latter will prove to him inspiration and strength and joy unspeakable. He will thus be led to see that Religion is not chiefly a future affair, a something set apart from the common, and with a special Sunday delivery preached from Sunday pulpits to Sunday congregations clad in Sunday clothes, and passing in and out in a staid and solemn Sunday-ness, disconnected with everyday-ness and exalted above it; will see that, as the sunshine from above permeates our atmosphere and fructifies and glorifies the earth below, similarly must heavenliness work right down into our worldliness, and so fructify and glorify it that worldliness shall itself be heavenliness.

There is nothing "mystical" about this. It is as natural to be spiritual as to be material; to be heavenly as worldly—ininitely more so. In fact we are natives of the spiritual kingdom, subject to its laws only. It is our home, though at present we seem very much like persons who have so long wandered from their own country that its language falls strangely upon their ears.

We must next proceed to show (1) the *standard* of this inmost judgment-seat; (2) the *privileges* which are ours as having the Divine Indwelling for our "sufficiency;" (3) the *obligation* of letting this indwelling be shown forth in character and conduct; (4) that a general training of the kind suggested would cause a wide-spread recognition of a joyful truth—that the Kingdom is "at hand," so close, indeed, that "whosoever will," at any minute may—go?—no, *come* to heaven, since it is an inward condition; and (5) to show how the establishment of the kingdom would be the surest political economy, since religion is not something imposed on humanity, but is a necessity of humanity.

CHAPTER IV.

OUR HUMAN WORLD.

A builder builds in accordance with the plan of the architect. *We* are world-builders, building this human world. The plan of the Divine Architect is revealed to us in the methods of the visible universe. "The invisible things are understood by the things that are made." This understanding is of the utmost importance in our religious training. For are not the children of this generation to be the builders of this human world? And must they not build by the Divine plan? Such training becomes imperative, when we consider that, whatever the requirements of special beliefs—Hebrew, Christian, Mohammedan, Hindoo, Persian, or Egyptian—as all believers are natives of the universe, none can free themselves from the laws of the universe.

It will now be shown that to work strictly by these laws would develop the whole nature of the human being, including the spiritual, which, as supreme over the lower, is the true basis of all child-training.

The most obvious law of the universe is that of Life. From the most infinitesimal atom to the highest human intelligence there is no vacuum—Life, Life everywhere! And what is it to *live*? The answer has weighty issues. To live is *individually to fulfil the purposes of existence*. How shall these be known? By observation. Lead the child to observe that a vine is created to creep and cling; an apple-tree to grow into its proper shape, put forth leaves, bloom, and bear fruit; a bird to fly and to sing. Observing human beings, we see that they are created to think, to know, to reason, to understand, to love, to will. Their possibilities are in the way of character, genius, talent, artistic expression, constructive skill. They are heart, mind, and soul possibilities, added to or working through the physical. Life, for human beings, means these possibilities made actual.

Illustrating by the birds, let the child perceive that, were a net thrown over a flock of them, they might step around and pick up crumbs and worms, but would not *live*, as birds. Illustrating by the tree, show that if the growth be unshapely, or its leaves and bloom scanty, or its fruit imperfect, it does not fully *live*, because the pattern, or plan, divinely inscribed in its heart is not fully shown forth. Consider the lilies, how they grow. The lily has its pattern, and the materials are given it. Its *life* is to work up these materials into a full expression of the pattern. Just so far as any of the pattern is dropped, there is life-failure. It would follow quite naturally to say the same of human beings, and thus put the child under the same obligation—to make actual his highest possibilities in the way of character, of conduct, and of useful service.

This gives him an exalted standard, but according to the Law of Life no lower can be presented; nor need he be at loss concerning its obligations, for these will be indicated by the *Inner Voice* already recognized by him as guide and authority. How could we do better by the child, either for himself or as a future builder of our human world, than cause him to live and work by the Divine Laws as these are revealed both within and without?

As a help in bringing him under conscious obligation to live fully and entirely the law of his being, ask: What if the culturist were satisfied with stunted growths, scanty bloom, or imperfect fruit? What if an artist were content to produce low-grade pictures, perhaps even debasing ones, when his divinely given powers would enable him to make his art an uplifting influence, as well as a joy and a blessing? What if a divinely gifted singer should introduce false notes, or be satisfied with anything less than perfect accord? Or if a farm laborer were purposely and contentedly to sow partly unfruitful seeds? Or if a builder should use defective materials?

Children take in from illustrations more than from maxims and counsel; and simple lessons of this kind can be extended in all directions, for *to the religion of doing our best* there is neither high nor low, great nor small, any more than for the sunlight which touches impartially the mountain-sides and the least little sand-grains in the lowlands. So of emotional religion. It can stir equally the hearts of the exalted and the lowly. This to be preached, prayed, and sung? Yes, surely, if with the understanding; for thus it works for heavenliness. But unless by these acts it shall be made to touch and glorify every thought, word, and deed, then are the preaching, praying, and singing in vain.

Brought into daily life, the obligation of doing his best would be shown by the child in his way of learning his lessons and of writing his compositions, in his intercourse with schoolmates, and in his conduct in the home. Guided by the Inner Voice—the Voice of God—he could never manifest untruth, nor hatred, nor greed, nor dishonor, nor unkindness. Inspired with the idea of excellence, he would be eager for the development of his highest powers.

But mark here—not for himself alone. Life is service. Our orchard illustration must show him that, while the apple-tree's religion is to work out the Divine plan by making itself a perfect apple-tree, yet by this full development it is made to serve the common good. It becomes a pleasing feature in the landscape; it shelters from the heat; it provides a nesting-place for the birds; it clothes itself with verdure grateful to the eye; it affords us the beauty of its bloom and the enjoyment of its fruit; the leaves fall and enrich the earth, and even its wood is made to serve. Becoming more and more familiar with the Divine Omnipresence as manifested in the lower world, he would see that all things were giving forth of their best; that the rule is to take in and give out. Think of the practical benefit to this world of ours, were every child to grow up with the conviction that Life means the fullest possible development of our own powers for good and for use, and to make this development helpful to any who may need such service!

This obligation of living out the divinity within was declared nearly two thousand years ago, by a pagan slave, Epictetus:

"You carry about a God with you, poor wretch, and know nothing of it. . . . It is within yourself that you carry him, and you do not observe that you profane him with impure thoughts and unclean actions. . . . When God himself is within you, are you not ashamed to think and act thus? . . . Why, then, are we afraid when we send a young man into active life? . . . Knows he not the God within him? Knows he not in what company he goes?"

"If you were a statue of Phidias . . . you would remember both yourself and the artist, . . . would endeavor to be in no way unworthy of him who formed you, nor of yourself. And are you now careless . . . when you are the workmanship of Zeus himself? And yet what work of any artist has conveyed into its structure those very faculties which are shown in shaping it? . . . The Minerva of Phidias, when its hand is once extended, remains in that attitude forever. But the works of God are endowed with motion, breath, the powers of use and judgment. Being then the work of such an artist, will you dishonor him? . . . He has delivered yourself to your care and says . . . preserve this person for me. And will you not?"

Epictetus enforces also the idea of this paper—that individual existence is fully accomplished only when "each fulfils the whole purpose of its creation."

Here, again, teach by object-lessons. Show that use strengthens, and disuse weakens. Fishes in dark caves lose the faculty of sight. A blacksmith's arm strengthens by use. So of the muscular powers of the trained rower, dancer, runner, and the professional athlete. So of our powers of mind, heart, soul, spirit. These, too, will enlarge and strengthen by use. They are just as natural to us as the so-called bodily powers, and, by familiarity gained from practice, we should use them as naturally as we move hand or foot.

We come now to a matter of paramount concern. Our song-bird and other illustrations of death, previously mentioned, are supposed to have shown the child that all manifested life becomes such by virtue of the One Omnipresent Life-Source at the back. We must now explain that the lower creations seem thus to exist without knowing that they do so; but for human beings, having the power of thought, also of choice, something more is required, namely, *recognition*. The Divine Indwelling must be recognized as our life, help, strength, intelligence.

In this connection we can bring in many Bible sayings, valuable because the utterances of human beings as they became conscious of this inward sustaining. "Valuable" is too tame a word. They are of unspeakable worth in giving us a recognition of our Divine Sufficiency. Suppose a company of people far from any known supplies, surrounded with dangers, weakening for lack of nourishment, knowing not which way to turn, dejected, all hope lost, trembling with fear—suppose they hear voices calling thus: "Help and defence and guidance are close about you; also stores of everything needful for sustenance. There is nothing to fear. All is free, if you will apply for it! We know!" How quickly would their lamentations be changed to shouts of joy! Those utterances would have been to them of priceless value for this reason: they gave knowledge of the resources so much needed.

Now, in the whole universe, as known to us, the spiritual experiences of human beings are our only warrant for a belief in the unseen Supply and a dependence thereon. In all the known universe Man is in closest touch with the Divine. Mankind was before books, and every uplifting and sustaining book-utterance was first a human experience.

The *voices calling* in the Psalms give their testimony under every possible simile. The Ruling Power within, or Lord, is

declared a very present help, a refuge, a shelter from heat, a fountain of life, a house of defence, a treasure, a rock, a guide, light, deliverance, shield, strength, salvation, health. "The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid?" "Power belongeth unto God." "Which holdeth my soul in life." The joy and exhilaration of this inward sustaining break forth into song. "I will sing! Awake up, my Glory! Awake, psaltery and harp! Make a joyful noise! Clap your hands, all ye people! Sing, all the earth!" And to think that the Source of all this support and exhilaration is not away off at a distance, but is within ourselves, as spiritual beings, existing from and of Infinite Spirit whose kingdom, or reign, is within! God is our sufficiency. "Know ye not that ye are the temples of the *living* God?"

Somewhere, at some time, the support and inspiration of the Inner Life have been thus felt and declared by human beings. What was possible for them is possible for us. But besides recognition there is one other condition. First, recognition; next, *claiming*. "Seek." "Knock." "Believe." Appropriate.

These sayings and the preceding ones have been repeated so many times they seem like platitudes. Why? Because they have been so understood. They are not supposed to mean what they declare. Indeed, the prevailing understanding is just the other way. To assert that they do mean what they say is to incur derision. People in general, even the most devoutly religious, speak of strength as being their own; as if they held in their own right just a limited amount and must be sparing of it; or as if they were their own sufficiency. These inadequate conceptions are largely owing to the *infidelity* of religious teachers. After reading to us these precious experiences of human beings just like ourselves; telling us that we have an infinite sufficiency to draw from; that Omnipotent Life manifests directly through ourselves; that we are builded together for a habitation of God; that God works in us to *will*, and also to *do*; that we are of Divine parentage, hence inheritors therefrom—then we are told that we are weak and vile! Is not this a libel on the Divine Indwelling? If by direct inheritance we have Divine qualities, why all this talk of poor, weak, vile human nature? We do not know what human nature really is. It has never yet been freed from the restrictions upon it which have come from trying to build the human world on principles directly opposed to those of the Divine Plan. Suppose a gardener were to have growing an unknown plant, and that the conditions of soil, warmth, and moisture were unfavorable. When this plant should arrive at maturity of bloom and fruitage, would he have just ideas of its nature and qualities? The conditions for developing the highest human possibilities have never been favorable.

It is not right to give children a belief in human weakness. *Such belief is weakening*. When the good kind of people yield to temptation their wrong-doing is excused on the ground of the weakness of human nature. This makes a comfortable bed for sinners, but we should not keep such a bed nicely made up for them. They have no right to it. Making them comfortable endangers the community and harms themselves.

Whatever standard we hold up draws all men unto it. Then hold not up weakness as a standard. How dare we do this in face of the assertion that Omnipotence is working in all, and through all? For if we do have human weakness we have also Divine strength, and will any dare say that human weakness rules over Divine strength?

In ancient writings there is frequent mention of a "Lost Word" which would work miraculously for health and for power over material conditions. This Word may never be found, but we have a word which, if applied to many of the scriptural assertions, would work wonders. The word is *therefore*. Our sufficiency is of God; *therefore* we have supply for all needs. The Lord is my strength; *therefore* I have strength for every duty. We are the habitation of God; *therefore* no plague can come nigh.

We do not begin to comprehend the mighty import of this word. Bring to mind all the declarations of the Divine Indwelling and working, and of ourselves as living from this infinitude; add to each a *therefore*, and think what it would imply for us of health, strength, goodness, wisdom, and freedom from fleshly limitations!

As the child advances in years, all the time becoming more and more familiar with the Inner Life, it will be more and more easy for him to "trust at all time" that he can draw inwardly for power to resist temptation, and for the performance of all duties; and he could really much better understand this drawing from within, than from a Being throned afar and working down upon him in some mysterious way. He can be shown that entering into our closet, as enjoined by the Great Teacher, means just this turning inward to our spiritual nature, where we are closest with the Divine. Are we not told to turn to the Lord and live? and that to know God aright is life eternal? What pity that such knowledge has been so hedged about with mystery! The highest is ever the simplest. Sunshine is the Life Eternal of the earth, yet all the little mosslings understand sunshine.

We have scarcely begun to be conscious of our full powers. Our recognition of them should increase day by day, and

with recognition would come use, and with practice a readier use. Thus doing our best is not doing our level best, but our progressive best. Truly it doth not appear what we shall be when all people give up their infidelity and renounce their "weakness," and turn within from the material to the spiritual. By proper training all children can be made to grow up with their highest fully developed, and become consciously filled with the fulness of God, and shed abroad this fulness as they live their daily lives. Then indeed shall be seen a human world built according to the Principles of the Divine Architect.

One of these, the Law of Life, has been herein briefly presented. We will next consider this Law as working through the two other grand laws of the Universe—Individuality and Oneness; and will show that our present world-building is by no means in accordance with these Laws. It is important that all child trainers perceive the requirements of the Divine Plan.

CHAPTER V.

WHAT IS IT TO "LIVE?"

"My people have gone into captivity because they have no knowledge."

Horace Mann, speaking of teachers, says: "In regard to the subject of his work, a workman should understand its natural properties, qualities, and powers." How true! For example, a house-builder must know of his materials, their capacities for endurance, for firmness, flexibility, strength, beauty. Unless he believes in these capacities how can he build? Take from a culturist his belief in the natural powers of his plants to grow and produce, and he has no basis for his labors. Thus confidence must precede effort, and whoever undertakes the religious training of children must believe they have the ability to live religion; that by their inborn capacities they can be always good, true, pure, unselfish.

But, oh! the pity, the sadness, that even among the teachers and preachers and supporters of religion this is not believed! Said a worthy church-member: "As well try to sweep out the Atlantic Ocean with a broom as to change conditions founded on the selfishness of human beings. Selfishness is their nature, and you can't change nature." People of whatever social standing, learned and unlearned, members of all the professions, clergymen included, business-men, Congressmen, all look with pity and almost contempt upon any who venture to assert the contrary.

Now the very foundation of our religion, of their religion, is human brotherhood. Selfhood is exactly the opposite. Religion stands for goodness. Selfhood makes possible every kind of badness. If, then, selfishness is the fixed and unalterable rule of action, what ground is there for religious training? The child will accept the prevailing standard. If this gives him a low estimate of his possibilities it will be the measure of his actual life. Suppose this low estimate were of his bodily powers. Suppose it had long been the prevailing belief that we could walk only in a stooping posture. What a race we would have of weaklings, creeping about with small use of their limbs and never seeing the sky!

The first step toward freedom from such restrictions would be to change the prevailing belief. So in regard to the crippling, cramping belief that we must be under the rule of selfhood, with all that selfhood implies. For beings created in the image of the Divine, this is a stooping posture. The belief in its necessity comes from existing human conditions—a false belief, since these conditions, in having selfhood for their basis, are out of line with the Divine Laws. Call attention to this. No matter if the whole world assume that selfhood must rule in human affairs, declare to the contrary, and prove it. How prove it? By showing that it is not in the Divine purpose. We have knowledge of this purpose in two ways: as revealed in Man, and as revealed in Nature. In Man, by the *Inner Voice*. This never speaks for selfishness. It speaks always for the good and true, for mutual helpfulness, for self-renunciation.

In Nature's methods we find everywhere the Law of Oneness. A step onward in our religious training would lead naturally to this Law. From previous instruction the child has some understanding of the Unseen Life as the cause, or reality, of all which is seen. Take him out among the trees and flowers and let him see this universal Life as it works through organisms. Explain the offices of the different parts and how the leaves, roots, stalks, fruit, seeds, in serving their own good, serve each the good of the whole. Show that, unless the tree-life goes forth into and develops the leaves, the leaves cannot breathe and digest for the tree. To prove how opposed to the Divine Rule is selfishness, ask how it would be with a plant if any of its parts could appropriate to themselves an undue share of sunshine, moisture, air, or earth. He would readily see that from thus breaking the Law of Oneness would come disaster to those parts left in want, and through them to the plant as a whole.

The Divine Plan, acting through organisms and through combinations, reveals a law which may be worded thus: The good of the whole *depends* on the good of each, and the good of each *makes* the good of the whole.

It is a point of interest here that the Oneness (Human Brotherhood) enjoined in the Scriptures, and generally considered mere sentiment, mere morality, or mere religion, is *Law*. Religion has different interpretations; morality varying standards; sentiment is derided; but *Law* commands respect as having sure penalty. Even the "survival of the fittest" does not disprove this natural Law of Oneness. A plant which flourishes in a certain locality fails in another. The reason is that in the latter the conditions of growth are lacking. Where no management is attempted, as in uncultured vegetation, individuals survive according as each finds suitable conditions. Thus we may say that the survivors *are* fittest because they *find* fitness; that is, conditions tending to bring out the fulness of life. In nursery grounds such conditions are furnished, for, take notice, with management comes responsibility. Each individual must have conditions for showing

forth its special best. This full expression is its life, and so far as it is lacking there is life-sacrifice; for whatever may be the range, *expression* is the grand consummation.

With human beings the range runs high, as high as our very highest conceptions. The conceptions prove their own possibilities of realization. Says Browning: "All we have willed, or hoped, or dreamed of good, shall exist." And Tennyson sings Hallelujahs to "Infinite Ideality," and declares that "Our wildest dreams are but the needful prelude to the Truth." "Visionary" is no stigma. First the vision, next the realization, has ever been the course of events. Then let us all be visionary and not hesitate to declare the vision, since it is the "needful prelude." Declare that human possibilities are the utmost individual expression of all that is noble in character, of mind powers, of spiritual unfoldment, and of capacities for active service. Is it not grand that human living means all these possibilities made actual? But, alas! anything short of this is life-failure, human sacrifice; and where do we find its realization?

We have said that with management comes responsibility. The human world is under more or less of human management. Look at prevailing conditions from extremes of wealth and high position, all the way through society—business, politics, toil, destitution, repulsive degradation. Are they anywhere favorable for bringing out the highest and best of the individual in the way of character? in the way of use? in the way of mind and soul expression? On the contrary, we find everywhere conditions tending to a repression of these possibilities and therefore out of line with the great Law of Life, namely, to fulfil individually the purposes of existence. Nor can the human world be built up on this Divine Plan until the Grand Law of Oneness, or Union, or Mutualness, shall be recognized and obeyed. However named, in it lies our salvation as a country.

The country is an organism, and in Humanity, as in Nature, the completeness of life in the whole depends on the completeness of life in the individual. As our allegiance now is openly declared not to this Law, but to self-interest, with little view to the interests of the whole, either as one or several, it follows that we are in actual rebellion against the Divine government. We are then anarchists, and with anarchy reigning what can we expect other than the chaotic conditions which our innumerable reforms and charities, philanthropies, missions, crusades, rescue-bands, penal enactments, and Law and Order Leagues are vainly-struggling with—vainly, because they are striving against immutable Law; because they are endeavoring to bring order out of chaos instead of making chaos give place to order; because the work of adjusting the inadjustable can never be accomplished; because those engaged in such efforts themselves help to carry on, or advocate, the competitive selfhood system which causes the very conditions they are laboring to abolish.

What we need is a Law and Order League which shall declare the Divine Law and Order and demand obedience thereto. Mutualness, or union of interests, tends toward the centre. It builds up. It is integrating. Selfhood pulls away from the centre. It is disintegrating; therefore destructive. The Law of Oneness, by making other laws needless, would be political economy. Think of the multitude of our laws, lawyers, law cases, law proceedings, law schools, law penalties; and all to "protect society!" Civilized and Christianized are we? when the highest intelligence in the land is employed in keeping us from preying on each other! [2]—which is none the less barbarism in being carried on with sharpened brains rather than with sharpened steel.

Mutualness established as political economy will provide for the utmost development of individual human value by giving to all equal opportunities of development. For it will be seen that human value is the true wealth of the State. Extent of territory, commercial facilities, forests, mines, rivers—these do not make a country; for with these must be progressive intelligence. A State can rise no higher than the level of its individuals; therefore develop the full value of each. Only human grandeur makes a State grand; only human worth gives it stability and standing among nations. Exalted, then, and long enduring shall be that country whose people have every useful faculty brought into activity and every possibility for good made actual. This, and nothing less, is human living; and for a human being, born highly or lowly, the necessities of life are whatever human living may require. These are usually reckoned on the animal needs of food and bodily protection; but all that makes man *man* lies beyond the animal, so that the necessities of life for a human being must be reckoned on the higher basis of heart, mind, and soul; of thought, talent, skill, genius, and the spiritual nature. Human beings are created to *live*, not to fit into places which class distinctions have prepared for them.

Will this change the foundations of our social structure? Undoubtedly. In an arithmetical problem, call two and two anything but four and the result will be confusion. Efforts at adjustment will be labor in vain. And has not the human problem as sure a principle? We are working it out by the wrong rule, and it will never be solved until we substitute the right one and so fulfil the Law.

But there should be no sudden overturn. The change can be partly made by extending our present degree of governmental

ownership and direction. This will help in freeing us from the dominating selfhood of the competitive system, in which every man's hand is against his brother man. But the radical change will come from a scheme of education—not yet devised, or even thought of—whereby the "protection of society" shall be found in the hearts and the minds of the people.

This leads to a consideration of character-work in our homes and schools, and of that Parenthood Enlightenment which Herbert Spencer declares should make a part of any complete system of education. A thrifty statesmanship would call a convention of the wisest and best in the land to confer on educational methods of developing the sturdy, wholesome elements of character, and, indeed, the highest individual possibilities, in whatever direction these may lie, and to an extent limited only by the individual capacity. That our present system is far from accomplishing this is proved by dishonor in high places and low; by the acknowledged business greed and self-seeking; by the avowed corruption in public officials; by our crowded prisons and reformatories; by our multiplied laws; and, especially, by the need of that unceasing effort which condemns a large part of our population to hard labor for life in the treadmill of philanthropies and charities. These are considered our pride and glory, but the *need* of them is our shame and disgrace.

Religion as it is preached declares us all one human family. Suppose that of a family of brothers and sisters a part were allowed conditions for the highest culture, and were taught methods of self-support, while the others grew up without such opportunities, and in various respects weaklings. Suppose the favored ones provide for the others inferior dwellings, clothe and feed them poorly, visit them at long intervals with perhaps a few groceries, a tract, and fifty cents in cash: would they consider this doing a glorious thing by their brothers and sisters? By no means; for the charity should not be needed. Born of the same family, all should have had equal opportunities.

Our Principle of Oneness requires not associated charities, but associated justice. Political economy would develop the good and the uses of all. Our present political shiftlessness allows multitudes to grow up paupers and criminals, and then, at enormous outlay of money and mind, organizes great Boards of Charities and Correction to take charge of them, not to mention the innumerable private enterprises, crusades, missions, and reforms, which, like ambulances, are carried along by each generation, their number constantly increasing.

All this is directly in line with our subject. The object of religious training is to cause a recognition of the Divine Laws and obedience thereto. We know by the Inner Voice that their mandate is always for goodness, for truth, for honor, for mutual service, for Oneness; never for selfhood. Now it is openly declared that these Laws cannot be lived. This has everything to do with the work of religious training. Suppose that to a person setting out on a journey you are at great pains to present him with certain articles, beautiful and needful, but which cannot be used. What will he do with them? Suppose you teach your boy always to obey the Inner Voice, to be always truthful, honorable, thoughtful chiefly of others' interests, to give a kiss for a blow, yielding to others the best place, the softest seat, the most desirable opportunities. Under present human management, what is he going to do with these fine principles? and what are you going to do with your good boy? In any ordinary situation, commercial or political, he will have small use for the principles, and the place small use for him. What is avowedly required in such places is "pliant material;" "not the Golden Rule, but a brass one." Such is the testimony of those engaged therein.

The texts learned at Sunday-schools and at the mother's knee—as, "Let every man seek another's, and not his own wealth," "Love thy neighbor as thyself," "Lend, hoping for nothing again"—are not framed and hung up for constant reference in our halls of legislation and places of business, nor are they in the written instructions of travelling salesmen, nor in our social code. Long ago the newspaper organ of a large religious denomination spoke regretfully of the "business knavery and financial jobbery of professing Christians." A man of high standing in the community and in the church, in explaining a dishonorable occurrence in his own firm, said: "My dear sir, that was simply a business transaction."

When a double standard of morality is recognized by persons high in influence, is it not time to sound the danger call? Those engaged in the religious or moral training of children should take alarm at leading editorials (read in families) which, speaking of startlingly corrupt gains of two prominent men—both connected with the church and one a high official—said: "While contrary to strict morality, these were not dishonest when judged by the prevailing rules of commercial morality." "He was no worse than thousands of others who stick at nothing not a crime according to law." "In mercantile morality he was neither better nor worse than many others in good standing."

The low badness of burglars and legally recognized thieves offends against morality; but respectable and Christian

badness *lowers the standard* of morality. Who, then, are the dangerous classes? Influence works down, not up. It would seem, therefore, that the effective work for humanity is to Christianize the Christians and make respectability respectable. Especially in a republic should a strict standard be held aloft with the persistency of a Farragut, since in keeping that intact lies the salvation of the country. "When the people become corrupt there is no resurrection."

How shall this be done? There is but one sure way. Begin with the children. In our supposed case of the stooping posture and the cramped limbs, the children would have had to be told thus: "It is not true that you will have to go stooping through life. That is the prevailing belief, but it is not true. You are made to look aloft; to see the stars, to stand erect, with the full freedom of your limbs." So of the prevailing belief in the necessity of selfhood, with all this implies of the despicable. It is a false belief that we are compelled to go through earth-life thus stooping, thus cramped. Swedenborg tells us, "To wish to be greater than others is Hell." Say to the children: "As you grow older you will see that things not right in themselves are held to be right in practice; and that the human world can go successfully on in no other way than by the spirit of competition. Do not believe a word of this. Competition causes cunning, trickery, deceit, dishonor, injustice; all these come of selfhood. Such limitations are not for you. The Inner Voice declares you to be made for truth, for honor; for the full, free action of your highest powers; for mutual love and consideration."

The Law of Life demands the out-living of every one's best. Differences in capacity will cause boundless variety; but if every one's best be lived out, then all will receive of this best. If every one lives love, all will receive love. If every one is devoted to the common good, all will be advantaged; we shall have a heavenly world, for the high, or heavenly, will reign.

That many have the vision of this is warrant of its coming reality. Carlyle says: "Every child has the possibilities of its source." Were all children trained to believe in the possibility of living out the three Divine Laws—Life, Individuality, Oneness—what would come of it? Just this: When of age to assume the management of affairs, finding that the Laws could not be applied under existing conditions, they would change the conditions and hold by the Laws. The methods of the new management cannot be foretold. Always the New must be established in the terms of the New. When the boy Watt saw that invisible steam raised the solid tea-kettle cover, there were neither trains nor locomotives, nor roads of steel. The New brought in its own conditions, and the spinning-wheels and stage-coaches dropped away of themselves. When Franklin brought down electricity with his kite there were no cables under the seas, neither wires nor plants for its use. With the new force came new methods. Thus we see that existing conditions can never be a true standard of judgment. The force of electricity was lying around loose, so to speak, for a very long period unused. At last came the time when it was practically applied. And think what gain!

Can we suppose these lower forces are thus to serve us and human forces remain unapplied? Love, the highest human force, has been, as it were, lying around loose for a very long period. It has been talked about, written, sung, and preached about. The time is near at hand when this potent force will be practically applied in the conduct of human affairs. It will not work into our present business and political and social system; but, as with those other forces, the new will establish its own conditions. These are not our present affair. "It is the business of the Prophet to declare Truth and let it crystallize as it will." Now, as Truth is infinite, the human perception of Truth will always be a progressive one. Thus progress is the natural order, and we are not always going to be selfish, any more than we were once always going to be cave-dwellers.

It is declared that excellence can be attained only by competition, and that inventions for the good of humanity are dependent on a striving to excel others. But, take notice, under rule of the higher human forces, *excellence itself will be the aim, and the good of humanity sufficient motive*. The artist will paint his picture, or mould his figure, or compose his music, for the sake of embodying his highest conceptions. No catering to the low for hope of gain; no "pot-boilers," either in art or literature, or in any kind of employment. Every artisan will be an artist. Every doer and thinker and writer will respectively do and think and write his best, not to excel others, but continually to excel himself. And for any who can serve the good of humanity, that serving will be its own sufficient reward. The grind and strain of money greed will have been removed; for riches are not always to be the measure of our rank. When humanity shall come to itself, to its higher self, the rating will be by nobility of character and by mental and moral wealth, and mere money will be held vulgar; for under the rule of Oneness, or human brotherhood, we shall feel a great deal more ashamed of being too rich than we now feel of being too poor. Where there is greed for self-gains and strife for self-exaltation will then be the *slums*. The highest thought will hold dominion, and those who love most will be most revered.

Such changes are in direct line with the Divine Laws, and they must and will come. Astronomy teaches that in the

boundless immensity of planetary systems each point is equally the central point of the whole. So in the Infinite Life back of all manifestation, "every individual is a point at which Divinity speaks;" and this divineness will yet obtain recognition. "My spirit shall not always be humble in Man."

The great Teacher we all love and revere, felt in a superior degree this touch with the Divine. None other has seemed so close as to *feel the love*, and to have perpetual consciousness of the union and all that this implies of strength and of power over material conditions.

Our religious training must exalt His life and teachings, and cause these to mean immeasurably more for humanity than they have ever yet meant. The judgment-seat of Christ is the Christ standard of Truth and Love, and especially a sense of oneness of each with all and of all with the Divine. This high standard will draw all men unto it. Thus drawn, we shall live in the higher, and the lower will fall into disuse. Thus liberated, humanity will show for what it is. Browning says: "Man himself is not yet Man. . . . These things tend still upward. Progress is the Law of Life." He pictures man as just awaking to conscious existence:

"But when, full roused, each giant limb awake,
Each sinew strung, the great heart pulsing fast,
He shall start up and stand on his own earth.
And so begin his long triumphant march,
And date his being thence—then, wholly roused.
What he achieves will be set down to him."

The way to hasten this is by the power of thought. Think of it as sure to be, and awaken this thought in others by the spoken word, that they, too, may send it forth. As electricity travels by ether vibrations, so thought travels by vibrations in the general mind atmosphere corresponding to the material. "Vibration sets up sympathetic vibrations." "High notes in music are always drawing lower ones to the higher pitch." When all shall think the true thought, then shall we see fulfilled the Divine Law of Life. The change must begin with the children. Inspire them with enthusiasm for excellence, and for loving service. This general inspiration will bring the time when—

"Each man finds his own in others' good;
And all men live in noble brotherhood.
Then shall the reign of mind commence on earth
And, starting fresh as from a second birth,
Man, in the sunshine of the world's new spring,
Shall walk abroad o'er earth as some new, glorious thing."

CHAPTER VI.

A FEW HOME SUGGESTIONS.

Home is where the heart is; in the heart are the issues of life; life is divine; the divinest known manifestation of Life is the human; we find this human life beginning in the home. Home, then, is the innermost sanctuary—the holy of holies; and no cathedral dedicatory rites, no array of dignitaries, nor organ pealing, nor voices choiring, nor censers swinging, nor incense burning, nor splendor of robing—none of these ceremonies, however imposing, can invest any place with that sacredness which the birth of just one little child brings to the home: for in the child-soul we have, indeed, the real Presence. Thus the home of little children, whether in mansion or hovel, is alike holy ground, and none require preparation and the consecration of holy rites more than those who here assume control.

First of all, there should be a recognition of the solemnity of the office, also of the wisdom required; for love without wisdom is a blind force working at random, often marring where it would make, and destroying where it would save. It will not answer to grope blindly among the complex mind and heart machinery, touching a spring here and there with careless or uncertain hand. Yet right in this very innermost, among motives, ideas, desires, purposes, is just where the work lies. For nature's method is ever from within outward, not the reverse; so that conduct, commonly made the aim of management and ground of punishment, is simply character made manifest. Character is compelling, like the works of a watch. These being all right, the hands move accordingly. Thus goodness is compelling, though it is the general opinion that badness is compelling and goodness only possible.

Character rules. It determines the use of our abilities, our opportunities, our means. Character gives value. We value our friends for what they are. Character saves. Whosoever loses the essentials, truth and honor, is considered lost. In a republic this is the important matter for home consideration. A republic is ruled by individuals; individuals are ruled by character; character is shaped largely by the home atmosphere; and the quality of this depends upon the general plane of thought and conversation, the standards recognized, the aims made prominent, and the degree of heart-culture. Home, indeed, is so made up of responsibilities that we cannot wonder at the often despairing inquiries—What shall we do, we parents? and how shall we learn? Would that such questionings might be so frequent and so urgent as to reach the ears, and understanding, of those high in school control, and startle them into the recognition of a fact paramount in importance, namely, that the welfare of the republic demands in its educational system an advanced department to be called the *Department of Parenthood Enlightenment!* And if the wisest of the nation were assembled for the purpose of bringing the light of their wisdom to a focus on the point most affecting the nation's interests, no more important measure could be placed before them. This is a matter which underlies all reforms, all charities, all reformatory and penal measures, and all political economy: for the effective work for humanity is not to supply needs, but to prevent them; not to *re-form*, but to *right-form*; not to punish, but to direct.

In view of this educational need, Herbert Spencer says:

"What is to be expected when one of the most intricate of problems is undertaken by those who have given scarcely a thought as to the principles on which its solution depends? Is the unfolding of a human being so simple a process that any one may superintend and regulate it with no preparation whatever? . . . Is it not monstrous that the fate of a new generation should be left to the chances of unreasoning custom, impulse, fancy, . . . undertaking to do that which can only be done imperfectly even with the profoundest knowledge?"

If the community could but be aroused to a sense of this need of preparation! With strange blindness it virtually says to the mothers: "A fearful responsibility rests upon you, that of training these young immortals; this is your special mission, your high and holy calling; the work is delicate and profound; a mistake may tell fearfully in the result; but it is not important that you should have given any attention to methods and principles; and as to special preparation, none is required." Truly no other affair is so shiftlessly managed—neither bee-culture, nor fowl-culture, nor plant-culture, nor manufacturing, nor building, nor other forms of business. In none of these is there so little of adaptation of means to required ends. Even common justice should declare that if the people are the State's to punish they are hers to direct. And Science? where is Science, that in its numerous and varied departments we find no human science? Among all its "ologies" is there to be no *human-ology*, treating of the production and rearing of human beings?

The prizes offered by horticultural societies and the ready responses show earnest desires and efforts that the world of

vegetation should attain excellence. Is it too much to ask that there should be desire and effort for as high a degree of perfection in human beings as in strawberries, roses, chrysanthemums, squashes, and potatoes? The low standard of excellence demanded in the human being shows that at present this is too much to ask.

Earnest home-makers are inquiring, What shall we do? Perhaps it should rather be asked what not to do—there is so much of woful doing. There are many who seem to consider the child a receptacle to be filled up with an article called goodness. This is done by various and contrary means—advice, moral maxims, coaxing, threatening, hiring, scolding, blaming, punishing—and by more or less severity and ridicule, the angry tone and raised voice often being supposed necessary for authority. These methods lamentably show need of the proposed educational department, for they chiefly antagonize when the true method is to harmonize or make *at-one-ment* between parent and child. And here we have again our familiar and necessary working *law of oneness*. Humanity has so long suffered from the disease of selfhood that the very malady itself is supposed to be the normal condition.

Health has the same derivation as *whole*, which means integrated, undivided; while selfhood implies separateness, disintegrated, divided. The law of oneness is everywhere apparent. Its emblem is the circle. Planetary circles occupy space. "The world is round, like a ball." The horizon encircles us. Tree growth takes circular form, the trunks growing in circumference by added circles; flower-petals circle around a common centre; fruits grow round; liquids take circular shape in drops and in bubbles. Our eyes are circles, and perhaps this is why we see beauty and grace in curved lines, rather than in angles.

With human beings, oneness is a fact. Intelligence, genius, talent, skill, stupidity, wit, humor, generosity, vanity, selfishness, kindness, pity, grief, honor, hope, greed, servility, jealousy, envy, affection, pride, fear, joy, worry—all these are exactly the same, wherever found, and a line running straight down from palace to hovel would cut through them all. Sympathy reveals our oneness. We cannot enjoy alone. The child is swift to show his pretty flower or seashell. His elders give quick summons to look at a rainbow, a brilliant sunset, a work of art, or an unusually beautiful fabric. And the news of an uplifting thought or fine stroke of humor must straightway be told, and experiences related. A Robinson Crusoe on his island would gaze with but mournful pleasure upon its strangely beautiful flowers and magnificent scenery, having not a person to say with him, How beautiful! how grand!

But oneness is even more strikingly proved by the union of religion, science, philosophy, and poetry, in recognizing the one immanent Life back of all that is manifest, and by the fact that such recognition is universal. This is shown by its individual expression in the scriptures of all times and peoples. Even the phrasing is almost identical. The sameness of these utterances, widely separated by time and place, is of unspeakable value, as by showing a unity both of source and manifestation, they prove mankind a unit. By way of explanation Science may like to claim that unity of thought comes from unity of vibration, or else that thought by its vibration brings the unity. Music—the nearest we have to heavenliness, and sometimes called our highest religion—is itself oneness. Note, in the busy street, how every footstep within hearing distance unknowingly keeps time to the music of a band. Note, too, that whether a performance be vocal or instrumental, even humming or whistling, if it stop before sounding the common chord, the *one*, it leaves us in distress, and we are inwardly compelled to sound it for ourselves. A circle, the emblem of oneness, is yielding in every part. In a musical performance excellence of effect is secured by each performer yielding to the whole. Should any one part be unduly self-assertive, the symphony would be destroyed. A single note out of tune—out of the accord of oneness—works disaster. There can be no music without union. A single note, be it ever so sweet-sounding, cannot make harmony, or even a tone. The divine law of oneness cannot act in singleness, that is to say, separateness; and it is a point of interest here that the Greek significance of *tone* is "a cord; a rope," the union of several. Thus we may say that, like a single note in music, a single human being has no completeness.

The home should be a symphony; the life there at concert pitch, with high intelligence, as shown in direction, emphasis, motive, and the general thought and conversation; this intelligence (light) to be combined with strength of purpose and effort; these in turn joined together by the mighty bond of Love;—*Light, Strength, Warmth*: these three in one, corresponding to the common chord in music, and soon to be recognized as the only true ideal of a complete human living, in the family, the community, the nation, and the world.

Where to begin? Begin where human life begins—in the home. Make the home harmonious. There must be no undue self-assertion among the elders; no aggressiveness; each ready to yield personal preference; ready also to take advice, suggestions, even criticism, though never offence; eager to render service, to do little kindnesses; remembering always that the home atmosphere is the environment from which character is assimilated; and that, as in plant-culture, perfection

in results depends upon observance of the requisite conditions.

Too often the first requisite, harmony, is made impossible by a management which creates antagonism between parent and child—the mother, for instance, making herself appear as a being clothed with authority to rule, to thwart, to deny, to scold, to blame, to reprove, to coerce, to give pain, to irritate, to punish; the latter often interpreted by the child as a species of revenge, or returning evil for evil. The effect is to establish a separateness, and even direct opposition, both destructive of harmony. Think of the gain of "togetherness," when the word *with* is substituted for *against*! The mother and the child working *with* each other for the heavenliness of the home—both enthusiastic for the good and true, for excellence; both filled with exalted ideals of what it is to live! The highest is ever the simplest. Born of the high, it should come natural to us to live in the high; that is, the heavenly. The low is foreign. An acquired quality of heavenliness would rule us all, young and old, with the ease and power of habit.

To insure the harmonious action of mother and child, suppose we suggest *obedience*, to be secured for the child at so early an age as to have no unpleasantness in its meaning. This can be done by a gentle use of the words *yes* and *no*, the latter spoken as pleasantly as the former. The sameness of manner will produce the desired effect of *no* by *the idea* of the word, rather than by a repulsive outside accompaniment of voice, pitch, tone, and facial expression, all this repulsiveness being destructive to harmony and creative of antagonism. To secure the result, obedience, all that is needful is patience, a kindly painstaking, and a considerable degree of unyieldingness for a comparatively short period. This habit of obedience is by no means to interfere with the child's individuality, but only to serve as a working basis for insuring oneness between mother and child until his intelligence shall develop and he be of age to begin to understand the guidance of the *Inner Voice*, and be responsible unto himself. Such a habit, pleasantly established, can be pleasantly and harmoniously maintained so long as that kind of obedience is needful.

Children are keen to judge, and only by their own high qualities can parents gain their respect and affection; only by such means can be obtained that heart-obedience which consults the parental wishes and opinions long after the period of authoritative obedience is ended, thus insuring a lifelong "togetherness." Mere mechanical authority is too often associated with harshness, injustice, hurt feelings, ridicule, tyranny, from all of which many children have to suffer merely because they are under the absolute power of their elders, who seem to take advantage of their position to treat children far more impolitely and discourteously and unfeelingly than they would treat those of their own age. Children do not grow up into human beings; they are born human beings, with a human desire for good treatment and a human sensitiveness to injustice, rudeness, and ridicule.

The Golden Rule is too little recognized in family relations with children, though there is plenty of unwise indulgence and subservience, and too much outside work. Nature produces her results by unapparent efforts, working from within outward. Her apples are not made on the outside of the trees, nor her roses on the outside of the bush. They come from the heart. Children, like adults, are not pleased at knowing that some one is trying to do them good. We should work with direct purpose by indirect and unapparent methods. Moral precepts and wise injunctions reach the intellect only to put the child on the defensive. The vulnerable spot is reached through the heart and the imagination, which are always willing, and, in the child at least, not on their guard. Stories, incidents, anecdotes (related at table or elsewhere), comments on every-day occurrences, praise of fine traits as exhibited by acquaintances or others, steady support in conversation of the right, quiet assertion of principle—all these have their results. The quick response of smile or tear, the flush of delight at the courage, or integrity, or self-sacrifice, or loving-kindness of the hero—these instant heart-signals show that the child's inmost soul is readied, and without his knowledge.

By these and other means all children may be enthused with the idea of making themselves all they were created to be. Enthusiasm is power. In the springtime of life, kindle in the child the springtime enthusiasm of the plants for working out their best; the grass eager to show its green; the trees to clothe themselves with verdure; the flowers springing up to offer their brightness and fragrance for all who will accept, each contributing to the general advantage its own individual best, this latter having been accomplished through the law of oneness whereby the completeness of the several parts—stalk, roots, leaf, and seed-vessels—has made the completeness of the whole. It has already been shown how this law, practically applied, would smooth out the grievous snarl and tangle of human affairs, now claiming so much of high endeavor—wasted, alas! because of the attention paid to the outside. The perfect flowering out of humanity can come only from its inmost heart and by that absolute law which makes the welfare of the whole dependent on that of the individual. But individuality must not be confounded with individualism, which is *selfness*. To be rid of this gives room for godliness, hence we should not encourage personality by making a personal merit of being good. It is not considered a merit in a tree that it yields good apples, nor in wheat that it produces good grain, nor in a flower that it blossoms. The

best each can do is no more than is demanded by the divine law, or pattern, written on its heart; for its very best is but the measure of its abilities, and less than this is failure.

The same is true of ourselves. To live out our divine plan in its fulness is not our merit; it is our religious obligation, and when rightly comprehended it will be our joy and delight, as we can imagine a rosebush enjoying the working out of its roses in their full perfection. We might also imagine its distress should they be poor and mean, or that of a tree if it could not "leave out," or of a bird that could not fly or sing.

This line of thought cannot but remind us that by our present human arrangement multitudes are compelled to pass through earth-life with no possibility of living and enjoying their highest; getting not even a consciousness of it; generation after generation plodding laboriously on, overborne with the pressure of worries, needs, wickedness, money greed, and money grind: like a perpetual heavy-laden mule-train, winding around the mountain slopes, all unconscious of the magnificence attending its way! The illustration is suggestive but incomplete, for these human generations do possess exalted capacities; but our present conditions hinder a full development, and as to excellence in the way of character and conduct, there is small place in the busy, every-day world for an *inner voice* that will not recognize two kinds of right, one for precept and the other for practice.

As to the first quality, most business men believe they cannot afford to use it. Parents think they cannot afford it for their children, especially their boys; it is of so little account in getting rich. Yet this is an enterprising age. It has "trusts" for cheapening almost everything. Is there not enterprise enough left for starting a human trust for so cheapening the higher human qualities—truth, love, justice, honor—that they can be used, and lowering the price of the Golden Rule? How wonderingly will they of the future look back upon our times as the Dark Ages, when goodness was a luxury too dear for common use; when the wisest thought of the age and untold millions of money were spent in contending with evils easily prevented by a wise system of education; when the Divine stamp imprinted upon every man was irreverently ignored, and the human stamp of wealth, position, and learning substituted therefor; when human life was of comparatively small account, and human value undeveloped! But what will strike them as the most ludicrous of our absurdities is the zeal, the time, and the money we spend in preaching and exalting what is declared cannot be lived, our present conditions making this impossible—which is virtually to say that we approve the Divine laws, extol them, and will follow them *so far as our own human arrangements shall allow!*

Notwithstanding the absurdities and hindrances of the times, the child must be made conscious of his divine possibilities, and shown that religion demands their fulfilment and that life means nothing less. The ideal is the closest we can get to accomplishment; therefore, train the child in accordance with the highest ideals. They must be maintained in spite of the general unbelief; in spite even of the derisive accusation of expecting the millennium. We must bear up under even this reproach, and declare that the millennium is exactly what we are made for; that we have ability and qualities specially fitting us for that state, as is shown by the constant assertion that they have no place in this one. Present conditions, it would seem, do not correspond to our high lineage. We are, then, astray; princely wanderers; so clad in strange disguise as scarcely to be recognizable. But one whole generation of children divinely trained would bring us into our kingdom; then our disguises could be thrown off and we should know one another as we are, and, thus freed, put away the folly and misery of the money reign and begin to live the spiritual life.

Here is the need of parental enlightenment as a department in our system of public education. Teachers should be given the same instruction, for home and school are a common working ground. (In the Light Ages both will be vastly different from those of the present.) When it shall be generally understood that it is as natural to us to be spiritual as to be material, the work will be transferred almost entirely to this higher plane, the gain in speed and ease of accomplishment corresponding to that of electricity as substituted for the paddle and canoe in the sending of messages. Some mothers and teachers have already made the substitution, and, entirely without the spoken or written word, have effected the desired improvements in character as well as in mental and physical vigor. These faithful (full-of-faith) pioneers are but heralding the whole human host in its advancement to a higher plane—the Realm of Realities. The wonder at results now accomplished is in the wonderer, not in the thing itself, and comes from ignorance of an uncomprehended Law.

CHAPTER VII.

THE IDEAL AND THE PRACTICAL.

"Terrestrial charts are drawn from celestial observations."

"The Real drinks music from the Ideal Thought."

Since "in union lies strength," success in any enterprise demands union of purpose and of methods. The multitudes that are dealing so vigorously with existing evils are evidence enough of common purpose and effort in the direction of improvement. In methods, we find confronting each other, as if they were two, the Ideal and the Practical. The idealist presents as ideals Truth, Love, Justice, Honor, Oneness, and Spirituality. If distinctively religious, he urges certain lines of belief; if distinctively metaphysical, he withdraws from the practical, since "all is Mind," and confines himself to the announcement of truths and gaining their recognition, perhaps insisting that in order perfectly to reflect the Divine Image we should not disturb our serenity by meddling with the disorder around us, and that even cases of healing are important only as they demonstrate Being.

Says the practical man, "Tell us not what to *be*, but what to *do*." He works at what he sees. He sees a swarming tenement-house and sweat-shops, and forms a League to suppress them; sees a saloon, and calls for legal enactments; sees pauperism, and builds an almshouse; sees crime, and builds a prison; sees hunger, and supplies "free soup"; sees rags and nakedness, and furnishes garments; sees disease, and deals with it bodily, by founding hospitals. His work is chiefly one of adjustment, dealing with results rather than with causes.

Now, for successful world-betterment, the ideal and the practical should be recognized as one—as a daisy is one with the daisy idea at the back. Indeed, this union of the two has high indorsement. The dictionary tells us, from good authority, that "when metaphysics loses its connection with physics it becomes empty and dreary," and "when physics ceases to be penetrated with metaphysics it becomes confused and stupid." A far higher authority is Life as manifested in Nature, the inner connecting itself with the outer in the very minutest details, each form becoming such from the unseen ideal which shapes it. Let the practical men, then, seek the highest ideals. And the metaphysical—let these not sit apart in ecstatic contemplation of themselves as images of the Divine, saying, serenely, "All is Mind; this all is the all of Reality." Since Universal Mind concerns itself with the outward, why not they? Also, if reflections of the Creative, they should themselves be creative. "The Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Then let the Ideal and the Practical unite in building up this human world by divine methods and according to divine laws.

Suppose the union were made. Says the practical man to the apostle of Mind: "What is your idea? You wish for our children a religious training. You see with what they will have to contend—the political corruption, the planned ruin of railroads, the knavishness in business management, the money greed, the accepted rule of selfhood, the tyranny of trusts, the distress of the impoverished, the desperation of strikes, the enormous outlay for the punishment of wrong-doing, the extent of the social evil as showing the degradation of both men and women, and the hosts of the unemployed: have you an idea mighty enough to cope with such a multiplicity of evils?" Surely, is the reply, since their multitude need not imply the same number of causes. The affairs of a whole city would be thrown into disorder by the single error of calling two and two five, in keeping the yearly accounts. The sure move toward order would be to find the mistake. So in this human entanglement. But who is to move? Who is managing all this? Who punishes the wrong-doers, supports the impoverished, and makes the laws for the people? The State. Very well. The obligation of supporting implies the economy of *educing* the useful faculties of each; the right to arrest, judge, and imprison, includes the duty of correct guidance; moreover, the cost of all these demands the economy of prevention. What can be a more practical idea than that the State should use the means she possesses for the ends she desires? The schools are her charge. She desires, in her citizens, usefulness; and in the way of character, excellence.

The ideally practical thing, then, is a public education which will tend to develop in *every child* the faculties for use and the qualities of character which will insure excellence in conduct, thus securing for the State the utmost of human value. Were a force discovered which could be directly turned into money, how swiftly would it be utilized, its full capacities learned and brought forth! But the most precious of all, the human life-force, is allowed to run to waste, and even worse. Here, then, is the mistake. How much of crime and misery might be saved by a thorough education in honor, justice, integrity, in the religion of the heart! Methods of accomplishing this are yet to be thought out and brought into general use in schools and homes. [3] It is safe to say that they will be other than our present methods—discipline, reproving,

punishing, rivalry, and moral injunctions.

The just-mentioned essential qualities, together with love, goodness, kindness, unselfishness, have been theoretically connected with "religion," and thus in a measure set apart from common use. Indeed, much of our present discordance is owing to a teaching and a preaching which have made a mystical separation between religion and every-day life. If it only could be understood that the highest religious ideals are to be made practical in the commonest affairs—just as the Divine Intelligence is everywhere present in the common, every-day proceedings all about us which we call Nature! As to the objection of bringing the Bible into the school—bring only what has general acceptance. Of this there is plenty in our Scriptures and others. From the Persian, Hindu, and Chinese we have: "Justice is the soul of the universe." "Poverty which is through honesty is better than wealth from the treasures of others." "Not in the sky, not in the midst of the sun, not if we enter the depths of the mountains, is there a spot in the whole world where a man might be free from an evil deed." "More lofty than a mountain will be the greatness of that man who controls himself." "Silence for the remainder of thy life is better than speaking falsely." "Feel toward others as you would have others feel toward you." "Bear, even when you can retaliate." "Overcome anger by love." "To him who does me a wrong must go forth my ungrudging love." What a book of inspiration could be made from principles thus set forth, with similar ones from our own Scriptures! And since character influences character, to these should be added, as studies, biographies of noble men and women, and collections of incidents illustrating all noble qualities. The highest ideals are none too high for the children, as individuals and as the future builders of our human world. Enthused by these, a competent teacher will find ways of making goodness as compelling as the rosebush idea is in forcing the out-blooming of the rose. But for this the separateness of "discipline" must be replaced by the at-one-ment of teacher and pupils in a mutual purpose. In a school not far from Boston, such union was secured by means of both parties deciding in common council what rules would best serve the interests of the school. The result was seen in that harmony or perfect accord which always *must* come from applying the grand world-principle, *Oneness*. Conscience ruled. The pupils, having agreed to "no communication," felt in honor bound to fulfil their agreement, and except at appointed times refrained from conveying an idea to each other, even by signs. The teacher could leave the school at any time and the honor of the pupils preserved perfect order. They were glad and worthily proud that it should be so. Neither in her presence nor absence was the stillness an enforced one. It came naturally. The compelling power of goodness was working by its own inward necessity. The delighted co-operation of the pupils, and their respect and affection for the teacher, were a fine illustration of the ideal working out into that practical good order so striven for by teachers and commonly secured by "discipline." The school was not a kingdom; it was a republic. A grand object-lesson must any such school be to the youth who will compose the future governmental force of a People's Government—formed on the idea of mutualness and modelled after Plato's ideal republic, whose affairs were to be conducted for "the equal advantage of all." Another character school, once well known, was that of Felleberg, in Hofwyl, Switzerland, of which an account may be found in the libraries.

Imagine schools like these, instilling principles the most exalted, and creating an inward necessity for righteousness! Imagine them everywhere throughout the country, giving the life-direction to *all* its children! What could be more practical? For this must not be regarded merely as duty or favor to the individual. It would be the surest economy, even at the needful additional expense of a much larger number of schools, with many less pupils to a teacher, and at the further cost of teachers possessed of the finest culture and qualities, and well trained for character work. In fact, the preparation of teachers for their calling exceeds in importance that of preachers as much as right-forming is better and thriftier than re-forming.

Now, those who are in and of the existing conditions of a period usually judge any proposed plan of advancement by those conditions, which is like trying to lift oneself by one's own boot-straps. Thus, to show what should be the true aim in human management we must take an outside stand—as would a culturist in regard to his nursery—and consider education, not as it may fit human beings for places graded according to prevailing ideas, but as preparing them to *live*; and life, for any and every one of them, means the distinctively human powers in full activity: whereas multitudes now are fitted merely for hand labor, and chiefly for animal existence, their higher faculties being undeveloped; which not only deprives them of that fulness of life which is their birthright, but is a loss to the State of so much of human value.

At present all education has to be considered chiefly with a view to money-earning; nor can this be otherwise so long as even artists have to talk of "pot-boilers," and religion has to be supported, and often to support itself by the ordinary money-making methods, although these are directly opposed to its own fundamental principle—*oneness of all with each and each with all*. It is well known that these methods are based on the selfhood principle—each for self, regardless of loss and ruin to others; also that human existence is now arranged on the layer plan, the underneath layers making a

standing-place for the upper ones. Obviously, those who consider this state of things natural and right, and are reaping its material benefits, cannot see the importance of an education which shall bring out the full individual powers wherever existing; much less will they formulate a plan for such education.

Who, then, will do this, if not the religious people, together with the metaphysical; in other words, the idealists? "Build your castles in the air, and then—supply the foundations." Every step of the world's practical advancement has been accomplished by an advanced ideal and by insistence on its application. The idea of equal right to self-ownership, and a demand that such right be allowed, overthrew American slavery. This was ownership of body. But Man is other than body, and our present ideal is for a higher freedom. We must now assert the equal right of *all* to the unfettered exercise of the higher human faculties—yes, the highest—and repudiate any management or system which makes this impossible. Might must yield to right, and existing conditions restricting this right of complete self-ownership will have to yield, some time and in some way. That this may come about in the natural way, Nature's way, which is the Divine way—from within outward—let the idealists unite in setting forth a plan of education which shall so educe the powers of mind, heart, soul, and body that human beings shall be free to live human lives with all their powers for good and for use in full activity; and let the "necessities of life" mean whatever this may require.

Several causes now operate against this, and "to explain the why of things we must discover their reasons and their ends, which is the office of metaphysics." And surely those having religious training in charge should demand of the State a kind of management which will allow a practical righteousness now declared impossible. And, above all others, should those engaged in the Religious Training of Children ask that conditions be so changed that the high principles instilled in the training may shape and rule the after-life—this, too, being now declared, for the most part, impossible.

In regard to the improvement to be wrought by a complete education, what would be the ideal? That is, what conditions would we seek, supposing we could obtain them? Take, for instance, one family now in the ignorance and destitution of the slums. We would like, would we not, to see them, by their own efforts, well clothed and well fed; living in healthful dwellings; taking books from the libraries? And if the children have mechanical or inventive skill, a taste for music, painting, literary and scholarly pursuits, a liking for studies in science, we would wish these powers developed. Should they become so "improved" as to be eager for the highest culture and enjoy best the highest enjoyments—what a gain, both to themselves and to the community! We believe, then, in such a change for our family. *Believe?* Why, had the committee of the Christian Charitable and Reformatory Association been the means of it, so wonderful an instance of success would have been proclaimed from platforms and pulpits, published in official reports, heralded in newspapers, and made a matter of general rejoicing.

Now, if this would be so in regard to one family, the prospect of a similar elevation for every family should be hailed with a universal chorus of delight. Are you good people all ready to join the chorus? Are you desirous that house-servants, seamstresses, the various craftsmen who supply your needs, together with street-sweepers, rag-pickers, and the still lower grades—are you desirous they should become your equals in culture and intelligence? Those who now take pleasure in a cheap chromo, would you have them take greater pleasure in a true work of art? Those who delight in the hand-organ, would you have their musical taste best satisfied with the works of the great composers? Those who are now captivated with the dime novel, would you see their eyes kindle and cheeks flush responsive to the well-put wisdom of a George Eliot or a Shakespeare? Those who are not good—this question, however, need not be asked. There is no doubt that you are willing all should be as good as yourselves; but are you in your heart of hearts desirous that all should be as learned and as cultured, and in every way as advanced, as yourselves? Is everybody? Are all the members of all the churches and of the Christian Charitable and Reformatory Association? If not, why not? On the principles of Christianity and of republicanism, why not? Will any dare say that the subordinate who serves their needs should be educated for no higher plane, because, as society is now constructed, there must be the servers and the served? Is "society" a divine institution? Is it a part of the divine plan that human beings exist in layers, or strata, arbitrarily laid? Natural inequalities there will be always, but all should have equal chance of attaining unto *their* highest; and if this Law of Individual Freedom break down society, what then? Why, then, something a thousand times better—different, but better.

To go back to the family whose improvement was effected by Philanthropy. Can any be so blind as not to see that all such efforts should be taken from Philanthropy—which is but an embodiment of past thought and has to work upon material already shaped—and assigned to Education, which by its one vast opportunity (an ideal education in home and school) can do for all what philanthropy would so exult in doing for a single family?

In giving suggestions for such education the idealist will put aside all thought of human beings as a part of our present system of rivalry and competition, and consider not "the life of trade," but the *life of Man*. What culture does for plants—enabling each to show forth its full powers—must education do for every child. "Education acts on original faculties. . . implies that he is full of possibilities; that he can be helped to self-realization and power." A recognition of the Divine Image in every human being will cause all to be revered and thought worthy subjects of educational effort. The stigma upon hand labor will be removed by disassociating it with ignorance, but at the same time it will be taught that a lifetime of what has no use for *mind* cannot be life for a human being. "I think; *therefore* I am." "To think is to live" (Cicero); and the definition of Man is "one who thinks."

The inward necessity for righteousness will be a chief aim in the new education, and, by the restraining power acting from within, human affairs will proceed in an orderly way. Education will be valued, not chiefly for getting a position or for acquiring wealth, but as it helps in developing life, that life which is to be continued beyond the existence of the flesh. For this the spiritual nature should be aided in its development; and not only for this, but that the spiritual be made for all a sure dependence for health and strength, and a sure basis for that exalted living which the Scriptures declare to be "the fruits of the Spirit."

As to Religious Training, the new education will join what man has put asunder, so that there will be no distinctively religious training. All training will be religious, for it will show the divine laws as everywhere revealed, and insist that these rule human life; also, that the Divine Indwelling, known as the Inner Voice, guides in every act. It will undo what so-called religion has done in the way of separation by locating God and heaven far away, and will represent heaven in its true light as an inward condition attainable by all at any time, and the Divine Being as omnipresent with all and in all.

Coleridge speaks of the incessant activity of early infancy as "body and soul in unity." So of heavenliness, and worldliness; it will be taught that these should be in unity, the heavenliness working out by and through the worldliness, in the very smallest details, as does the Divine intelligence in Nature, and as devoid of mystery.

While thus insisting on the almighty power for good in every child, the Idealist will meet with tremendous opposition in the form of a belief in the absolute and unchangeable selfishness and badness of human nature. It is one that effectively blocks the way to human advancement. It is everywhere expressed; it seems to be a race-belief, and is obstinately held even by church people, and just when they are exhorting to a righteousness which this belief makes impossible. The weight of it holds humanity fast. As well expect a body of cavalry to advance when every horse is tethered to a post, as to expect human advancement when every one of a vast majority is held fast by a belief in the selfishness of human nature.

This obstacle will be disposed of in two ways: First, by showing the opposite Law of Oneness as revealed in the outer world—life there being carried on by organisms, where, as has been shown, the complete life of each part *makes* that of the whole, and the complete life of the whole *depends* on that of each part. This plain and simple law, uniting the ideal and the practical, is easily taught, being revealed in every plant and flower, as well as in the human body. Secondly, this obstinate and prevalent belief is also disproved where the human touches the Divine—by the Inner Voice, which *never* gives responsive approval of selfishness or of anything known as evil. Also, the highest thought of the world, spoken in all ages and places, shows the demand for and expectation of human excellence. "Thou pure and all-pervading Spirit that dwellest in me, as I know by my own horror of a lie, manifest thyself in me as Light when I think; as Mercy when I act; and when I speak, as Truth—always as Truth." (From the Egyptian.)

The three grand Laws of Life—of Life through Individuality, and of Oneness as acting through organisms—will be made the foundation of the new education. We can almost imagine, even now, the change wrought in human conditions were all the children educated in the belief and practice of the law of Oneness and to show forth the fulness of individual life.

The idealist's mental vision will show him that what is done in the schools will be only partly effective if not done also in the homes. Now, what does this prove? And, further, what does it demand? It demands in the advanced stages of education a department of Parenthood Enlightenment, devoted to the *science of human beings* (or human science), and teaching, for one thing, *how* may be developed the good existing in every child. So much depends upon methods! Space limits forbid even the mention of the aims of such a department, or a suggestion of its methods. But the idealists should keep the idea in view until Boards of Education recognize its necessity as a means of the country's prosperity. [\[4\]](#)

Religion, too, should demand of the State conditions allowing the divine laws to rule in human affairs, that religious teaching and preaching shall not be in vain. This, indeed, would be the true union of Church and State, which would

result in worldliness and heavenliness in unity.

CHAPTER VIII

THE INFLUENCE OF IDEALS.

Calling attention to the objectionable in our civilization is not necessarily pessimism. On the contrary, if done with a view to improvement it is optimism, since it implies three good things: faith, hope, confidence—confidence in our higher possibilities; hope that these may be made actual; faith that they will be. It all depends upon the point of view.

Dwelling upon evil may cause a despair fatal to progress; dwelling upon good may prolong a satisfaction equally dangerous. This is especially true of our so-called civilization, which is defined as the "uplifting of all the individual members of society—morally, mentally, and socially." Barbarism is a state in which the strong prey upon the weak. It is a plain fact that we are now compelled to enact laws innumerable to keep us from preying upon one another—laws guarding every possible point of approach. Each period uses its own weapons. Those of the present can accomplish disaster as much more widespread and ruinous as mind can outreach the weapons of the old barbaric times. The "raiding" effected by a "corner" in wheat, or a "combine" in coal, may reach every family in the land. Then there is the highly respectable individual raiding, done on the well-approved business principle—get as cheap as you can and sell as dear, with small regard to the "mental, moral, and social uplifting" defined as civilization.

In spite of our modern methods of defence by the protection of human laws, shrewdly devised schemes wreck both human homes and lives. Can it be said that the scheming "uplifts" the schemer? On the old maps there were different depths of shading that marked off the different conditions—as barbarous, half-civilized, civilized, etc. The multiplicity of our laws alone shows how difficult it is for us to keep our hands off of one another; but we might rank as half, perhaps as three-quarters, civilized, considering our philanthropies and charities, though the need of these is our reproach, and the *justice* of a complete civilization will make them needless; for the educational plan of that possible period will furnish opportunities sufficient for bringing out, in every child, the individual possibility for good and for use. The eternal law of individuality will prevent the monotony of equality, or similitude. No one can take in more than his capacity allows. This much must each one have, and the duty of providing it belongs to those who assume the management of human affairs. With the capacities fully developed the people at large will then establish their own public libraries, hospitals, art galleries, and the like; and no longer will the many work at starvation prices to gain wealth for the few to do this in the name of philanthropy.

As to who will do the disagreeable and mere mechanical work, when all shall have the use of their higher faculties, the *principle of Oneness* would decide that if undesirable work must be done, it is not just to set apart a certain portion of the community for doing it. Divisions should result only from differences in capacity. Also, as *expression is law*, everywhere visible, man cannot escape it. Therefore, any management which calls for "mere mechanical" ability, leaving the higher faculties unused, is contrary to the divine law. A universe conducted on such a purposeless plan would be unworthy an infinite creative Intelligence. What would be thought of even a human designer who should construct an elaborate piece of mechanism, the marvellous and exquisite contrivances of which were without purpose?

It is true that all work is honorable, but this quality alone does not suffice for a complete human living. It is honorable to polish spoons, to pick up pins, to measure off ribbons; but to devote human existence exclusively to such work does not fulfil the *law of life*. Had there been intended a fixed division between mind-workers and hand-workers, humanity would have been created in two distinct classes—a mind-class, having mind and no hands, and a hand-class, having hands and no minds. Our factory term, "hands," shows a common idea of the best way of creating human beings! The reason that hand labor is considered "low" is because it has so long been associated with ignorance. Labor cannot degrade nobility; nobility will elevate any kind of labor. Think how our noble-men, Lowell, Emerson, and others, would have ennobled even the commonest farm work, and our noble women the commonest household work! With mind, heart, and soul culture made universal, there would be neither low nor high.

But "work," as at present conducted, is not always to remain the same. As the natural forces have been made to serve us within the last sixty years, observe how tallow candles have been replaced by incandescence; hand-looms by steam power; stage-coaches by railways; horse and foot and watercraft by electricity! Cataracts are being harnessed into service. Prophetic science tells of forces in earth and air, as yet too closely held, but some time to be applied in ways at present inconceivable—not always for the enrichment of the few, however, while the toilers toil on, as is now the case. They will be made to forward the general "uplifting" which shall mark us as wholly civilized. A portion of the human

family is not always to spend existence in the depths of the earth. Warmth and light are to be furnished in ways now unthought of, and so it is of other needs and labors.

As to house labor, let it not be supposed that "the eternal womanly" is always to be a cooking-stove attachment, or that food will continue to be used in its present state of crudity. Furthermore, the act of feeding is not always to claim its present degree of consideration. It does not yet appear just how bodily life will be sustained after half a century more of applied forces and applied intelligence, when nourishment shall be taken simply to keep the body in best condition for uses of the spiritual self—the real being. This, once in full control, will insure us that human freedom which is known as yet but in name. As a step toward this end we have but to disturb the prevailing contentment which thinks it right that multitudes should pass their whole earthly existence almost entirely on their lower or rudimentary plane.

"Can you attend a very interesting and instructive lecture this evening?" was asked of an intelligent young woman in a garment department. "Oh, I should *so* like to!" was the reply; "but when we are through our work we are too tired to listen." From men and women everywhere come similar replies: "Too tired!" "No time!" "All used up!" Look at them, the host whom no man can number, caged within four walls, looking out from behind iron railings, imprisoned for life, planning money, thinking money, counting money, guarding money! So many longing for time to read, time to study, time for music, and for the delights and refreshment of outdoor life—in a whole year getting perhaps only two weeks of Nature!

A business man who had these longings sometimes "stole time" (mark the common expression) for a singing lesson. Chief among his enjoyments was family and social singing. He would snatch at least five minutes for "a tune or two." His yearning for nature was equally strong. But for these the cruel pressure of business allowed him only the briefest periods. In the early part of an illness, not expected to prove fatal, he occupied himself with a book of a high order. "I never have had time to read," he said, "and I must improve this opportunity"—the opportunity of sickness! Later, when asked one day if there were anything he would particularly like, he said: "Yes; singing. I have never had enough singing." And so he passed away, in the prime of life, with life's deepest yearnings unsatisfied, life's highest purposes unfulfilled: the illness itself brought on by that too well-known cause—*business worry*. This is but one instance of thousands who perish in striving to earn what is termed a *living*. How few see the sarcasm of the term!

Substitute idleness? All would like it? By no means. There is no one who would like it. The law of the universe is *Life*, and life is activity. But occupation is not necessarily activity. At present it is largely a toil, a burden, a grind, a repression, a strain, a struggle, a hindrance to the fulfilment of the law of life. It is only by contrast that entire rest has been made to seem heavenly, since in itself nothing is more irksome. The nature of activity is joyous. The flowers seem joyous in their blooming, the birds in singing. It is joy for an artist to paint his picture, or to carve his statue; for the poet to indite his poem; for the composer to write his symphony, and for the performer to render it; for the author to write; for the thinker to think; for the light-footed to dance; for the swift-footed to run; for the designer to plan; the constructor to build; the inventor to invent; the discoverer to discover. *Rest?* Why, heaven as a condition of rest would be hell! Blessed be activity—a wholesome, natural activity! And how those who come after us will enjoy it, "when this cruel war is over"—this money war now raging—leaving them the chance to be as good and as free as they were created to be!

Goodness abounds, even now. There is more of it than can be used; some people say they have to lay their goodness aside for a part of the time. But, nevertheless, it abounds. Human beings all admire what is admirable. Truth, honor, affection, justice, courage, excellence—all *respond* to these, even if not living them; and the response proves these qualities to exist in our inmost nature. This being the case, such qualities are some time to be lived, since nothing is created without purpose. Should the piece of mechanism just spoken of be actually discovered—one having uses beyond visible requirements—it would be sure proof of a state of things demanding these very capacities. By the same token we have prophetic evidence of a human life now made impossible by the strife and selfhood of money-getting. Sixty years ago we were as well fitted as now for our present improved conditions. And we are now equally well fitted for those of prophecy. As our special methods and appliances could not have been planned by past generations, so we may safely trust those of the future to the advanced wisdom of the future.

As to what everybody will be doing, if money-getting is to be supplanted—it will be something better, and more humanizing. The question is about the same as if a family dwelling in the cellar, absorbed in cellar life and accommodating themselves to underground conditions, were to ask what they would do should they make a change and live above the ground. Small idea they would have of the upper life, with its light and airiness and its varied activities! So of the human family dwelling in the lower region of selfhood, which, alas! is declared by even the superior among

them to be its perpetual abiding-place. Conducting their affairs on that narrow basis—with its necessary rivalry, contention, and crowding; its repression of the higher tastes and longings—they have small idea as to what awaits them in the light and freedom of the higher state: where the human shall know itself in full touch with the Divine; where the good of each will be the good of all, and the spiritual man will find full expression and have complete dominion. Neither can they know of their absolute fitness for all this.

What shall we be doing? *Living*. There will be time for it. The vexing human problems—of capital, labor, crime, the unemployed, pauperism, etc.—will have been solved. There will be a system of education causing the development of all good qualities and the useful activities of every one. This will render needless our present reforming, rescuing, supporting, and penal work. The word *charity* will be marked "obsolete." We shall enjoy the delights of human companionship now scantily allowed us. We shall have time to know each other by heart; shall get each others best thought and most interesting experiences, especially those of the higher life. We shall be on terms of intimacy with *our lower relations*—even down to the pebbles and mosses; we shall get the confidence of the flowers; enjoy to the utmost the woods, the sky, and the sea. The government will be of, for, and by the people—a government of *mutualism*. We shall have an actual civilization as it is defined: a state which insures the "uplifting of the individual members—mentally, morally, and socially." All will give forth of their best, and of this all will receive.

There will be plenty to do: suspected forces to be brought into service and others sought out; nature's secrets to be discovered; the air to navigate and explore. The planets are yet to be reached—perhaps it is a long quest; but there will be plenty of time and plenty of helpers, supplied by multitudes that are freed from the toil which would have been theirs under the old conditions, and fitted for the service by a "mental, moral, and social uplifting." Mind is to supersede electricity as a means of communication—and, by the way, this will no doubt be our means of reaching the planets, since Mind is universal. Spiritual man is to dominate the fleshly, and also to control the elements. All this will come in the direct line of natural progress, the word *nature* itself meaning "a state of becoming."

True, it will be a long time in becoming. Therefore, begin quickly to prepare the way. It will come through the general recognition of the law of *Oneness*, and all its demands in the way of individual unfoldment. This general recognition depends much upon the religious training of children. As they will soon be managing the human world, give them true ideas as to what such a world should be in order to fulfil the whole law of God. They should be taught that whatever existing conditions conflict with the three great divine laws—life, individuality, oneness—are *irreligious*, and that by these all human arrangements must stand or fall. The "inner voice" must be recognized as the restraining power, and as bringing every child consciously in touch with the divine Indwelling. This consciousness will cause them to regard themselves as above any unworthy thought or action. The fact that every one has this Indwelling will insure from them a reverence for all of whatever condition. Teachers themselves should possess exalted ideas of a human world as shaped in accordance with the divine plan, that they may inspire the children with enthusiasm for a glorious world-building.

Now, as to these high ideals, duty does not end with acceptance. Immediately upon belief comes the responsibility of declaring and extending it. Send out the thought. Form thought-centres; *be* thought-centres. "The power of a high ideal established in a community is incalculable."

[THE END.]

EXTRACTS FROM PRIVATE LETTERS TO THE AUTHOR.

A Sunday-school superintendent, writing of this series of articles, says: "They are fully in accord with my ideas. . . . I wish every Sunday-school teacher could read your statement, 'As eternity has neither beginning nor end, it follows that we are now in eternal life.' It seems to be the keynote and appropriate motto for the teacher and the Sunday-school at all times."

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Footnotes

[1] See Edwards's volume of seven sermons on the future condition of sinners.

[2] Think of the guns—little guns, big guns—manufactured in the world, and all for the express purpose of killing "Christians" and destroying the property of other civilized (?) people!

[3] In many of the States school attendance is not compulsory, and in a number of cities there are too few school-houses for the children.

[4] See "Lectures on Education," by Herbert Spencer, and by Horace Mann; also, for details, "Domestic Problems," by Mrs. Diaz.

[The end of *The Religious Training of Children* by Abby Morton Diaz]