

The Splendor of the Soul

by Katherine Tingley

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About the Author: Katherine Tingley was leader of the Theosophical Society (then named the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society) from 1896 to 1929, and is remembered particularly for her educational and social reform work centered at the Society's international headquarters at Point Loma, California. This book has been compiled from material in her *The Voice of the Soul* and *The Travail of the Soul*, both long out of print. The chapters are virtually verbatim transcripts of lectures given by the author in the late 1920s, which have now been edited to modernize punctuation and to remove dated references and repetition. The usage of "man" and "men" to include members of both sexes has been retained.

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Chapter 1

THE VOICE OF THE SOUL

How little is said or taught about the soul-life and its complete identification with the human being! To most men the soul is something apart from themselves that is only to be talked of and trusted in on special occasions: there is no real companionship, no intimate affiliation, between men's minds and souls in their everyday existence. Now there is in every man a divine power, and when that divinity, which is his real self, is acknowledged and understood by the mind, it takes a very active part in man's life — indeed, it should fill at the very least one half of his thought-life. When we have this full view of the identity of man with the soul, we move outside the ordinary way of thinking and find ourselves on a new path, daring to think towards the unknowable, the seeming impossible. In doing this, we bring the soul into action.

According to my philosophy, every normal child when it is born is enveloped and covered, protected so to speak, with soul-forces. We must not think of the soul as something apart from ourselves, as something that occupies a special compartment in our brains or in our thoughts, for every time a child is born, through the operation of those sacred and wonderful laws of nature which men do not yet understand, it has the spiritual backing, the spiritual support, the divine enfoldment of the soul. And if the child is rightly understood, this spiritual part will be at least as fully recognized as the material part.

How many children go wrong; how many parents wear their lives out trying to bring their children up rightly. When I think of the failures along this line, it looks to me as though the ignorance, stupidity, selfishness, and egoism of the age had turned the children directly away from these soul-forces and launched them out into the world without their support. We cannot see these refined and wonderful forces of nature, we cannot easily describe them nor can we fully measure them. It is not for us to understand them fully, yet we all catch glimpses of them.

A child should be nourished with spiritual food and care as much as with material food and care. Every true mother has at least some understanding of the spiritual laws of her own being from the beginning of the gestation of the child. With her love and care she carries the child, envelops it, holds it, and serves it with what knowledge she has. And when the child is born, in her innermost thoughts she knows that there are two sides to the little one entrusted to her care: on the one hand, there is the immortal, divine, eternal, and real essence of the child's character brought over from previous lives; and on the other hand, there is the material body, itself produced in a mysterious, almost magical way from a tiny seed.

The soul of man is seeking to utter itself from the time of its physical incarnation. It knows its birthrights, it knows more than is apparent. But it is thrust into the world under very adverse circumstances, and the child is fed, cared for, loved, and nurtured as a physical being and as little more, with the vague possibility of having a future life somewhere or somehow. But we are sacredly and divinely made and built for this life, and only by understanding the lives of our children, approaching and reaching them from the standpoint of spiritual knowledge, can the soul speak.

Some people may say: all this is too abstruse, it is too far away, and we have no way of proving it. Well, men and women do not even understand themselves and are mysteries to themselves. When a child is born, can the father and mother explain the profound mysteries of how that soul came into physical incarnation — of the processes that took place when from a seed the child stepped out into our universe, radiant in its spiritual potentialities although not visible to the human eye — and became a part of the human family? If we know so little about the creation of physical life, how can we expect parents to have the information needed for them to do full justice to their child in the spiritual sense?

Our great scientific thinkers accomplish wonders in very many ways, but unless they dare to face the unknown, unless they have imagination that stretches out beyond time and space almost, unless they recognize the higher imagination as a spiritual and divine attribute of the soul instead of a faculty useful only for the play of fancy, to entertain or to give pleasure, they will never hear the voice of the soul. Let us reach

basic truths. We must study causes; we do not study them enough. The usual way is to study effects. We are afraid to step out and venture in thought, in action, in will power and determination, into the unknown and with imagination to visualize the dignity of the soul of man.

Let us seek to awaken in our growing children a consciousness of the nearness of this affectionate, indescribable something which I have called the soul. Teach them that they are not thrown out into this world alone, that they are not ignored, but that they are enveloped in the soul-life and possess the inner wisdom with which they were born. Then with the environment that our children can have through the intelligence of the parents, and with the noble examples that should be set by every man and woman on the face of the earth, the voice of the soul would be heard and recognized.

The closer we come to the beauties and realities of nature, the more quickly shall we begin to feel the power of the soul-life. But alas, there are so many distractions and allurements in the world. Then, too, there is the bread-and-butter question that has to be solved. There are poverty and suffering and vice and crime that must be faced, and these things are not lessening, they are increasing.

We must dare to do something more than we ever did before, dare to step up higher, to climb. We must dare to do it alone, without public heralding or recognition but just within the silence of our own soul, of our own conscience. This superb opportunity is at hand for all. Yet we go on day after day drifting and drifting, until we have drifted beyond all likelihood of recovering our anchorage in this lifetime. Then what regrets and tears and despair!

There comes the question: Why has not somebody done something? It is because nearly everybody is waiting for everybody else. In spiritual efforts we do not need to wait for unity. Let every man and every woman act for himself or herself according to the individual evolution and enlightenment. One must have the disposition and the daring to act alone, indifferent to results so far as they affect himself or herself, so long as the motive is pure. When we reach this state of mind, we shall see new cheer in the world, new evidences of purity in the lives of men and women, and consequently more purity and more joy in the children of the masses. This is the way to reach our children and to enable them to hear the voice of that divine part of us that is our real self — we could not exist without it.

On the other hand, there is the picture before me of how this innate divinity is ignored, how it is thrown aside, and how it takes nearly a lifetime for people even of the highest intelligence, striving to do their best in order to gain knowledge, to reach the first fundamental idea of their own soul-life. It is true that we have opportunities for wonderful scholastic education; our country as a whole has plenty of wealth, great territory, and an overabundance of public laudation of our outer material progress and prosperity. But the inner life, that silent power that speaks to us, is very largely ignored.

To me one of the most beautiful experiences in life is to retire into the inner sanctuary of one's own being, away from all the rush and so-called allurements of the outer life, and in the silence to listen to the voice of the soul, to hear its pleadings, to know its power, to clasp hands with the spiritual soul, the higher self — to work with it and walk with it and live with it. A man must do this before he can be absolutely sure of anything. If I go to school, I am entitled to a full educational equipment, provided I reach out for it; but I must get it by application and conscientious work. So it is with the wider schooling of each earth-life. I must get it by devotion, by understanding the fundamental principles and ideas upon which I hope to live, and by a harmonious relationship with my fellow men and my environment. Then I may know something about the voice of the soul.

I was talking with a lady a few days ago and she asked me, "How can the soul be redeemed?" I told her that I had never given any thought to such a question, for the reason that the spiritual soul itself is so potent that it will redeem mankind if people will only hearken to its voice. We do not have to fashion any special form or way of bringing people to redemption. Just give them the opportunity to be themselves — their real selves, their higher selves. Do not try to dictate to them, do not drive them, but challenge them! Cowards are they who do not make the effort to liberate their souls from the bondage in which selfishness and weakness hold them. It is the inner laws that are the realities, and because humanity does not know about them nor understand them, it has been fighting the realities.

Enlarge your vision, dare to climb, dare to go forward, dare to think for yourselves and to look ahead! Question; put yourselves in order! When you do this, revelations will come to you — not in any magical way with visions or messages from on high, nor anything of that sort. Let me illustrate by the growth of children: if one sees them from day to day one is hardly aware that they are growing, yet to those who see them only at long intervals their growth is very evident.

The fact is that the divine forces and processes which bring a child from a seed so small that a hundred of them can be placed on a one-inch strand of a spider's web, into babyhood, and from babyhood through childhood to manhood or womanhood — these processes, so delicate, so infinitely and spiritually refined, are taken care of by the laws of life which are only partially understood even by our most learned scientists. Still less can the process of man's spiritual growth and unfoldment be understood without some knowledge of the ancient wisdom, theosophy.

Real inner knowledge comes from the courageous stepping out of ordinary ruts into the great broad blue of life, and from looking at nature as it is — courageously. Study the trees and the flowers, the ocean and the wonders of the life around you. Notice the growth of a tree. During the springtime it will put forth green leaves, then its exquisite blossoms, and in the summertime it will bear its fruit. After a while it is bereft of leaves, blossoms, and fruit — of everything that was beautiful and attractive. It appears dead, but the inner life is continuing all through the season of quiet and rest. The processes of inner growth are taking place. How wonderful in the springtime, when the tree bursts forth into beautiful foliage again — who can question that preparation was going on all during the sleeping-season?

So it is with the flowers that cover our fields, fill our homes, and beautify everything. In them we can see the wonderful working of the divine law. We must feel it and know it and find our lessons in it, not simply admire the outward beauty. But you cannot feel it by study alone. You can get a touch of it only by daring to step forth and to think thoughts quite apart, if necessary, from anybody else's. Then you will be really climbing in the spiritual sense.

Seek the companionship of the silence, for the silence is the most precious companion in the world. Someday expectant mothers will go forth into their retreats, as they used to do in ancient times, living the most abstemious and beautiful life in touch with nature; not tied down with family difficulties and cares, cross purposes and poverty, but filling their souls with the music and the joy of nature — calling out the voice of the soul. When that time arrives then we may honestly talk of a new and far better generation. That will be the answer to the woman who asked what were the processes by which we could redeem the soul. It is the soul that will redeem humanity. There are as many processes as there are human beings — each must work out his own salvation according to his environment and his enlightenment.

In the deepest spiritual sense we are all united, though not on the outward plane. But because we have differed so much and so long, and have moved so far away from the great principles of life, we have lost the secret of living together in outer harmony. Yet in the inner life we are still working together in unity, in harmony with the divine laws, understanding them and obeying them in the dignity of true manhood and womanhood.

Let us teach our children the better way. Let them hear everyday in their own home the voice of the soul. Those adults who are single and have no homes can make a home for themselves in their own hearts, in their memories, and the divine power of the soul can enlighten them and impress the mind with better things. If the mind is filled with high incentives, beautiful principles, royal, splendid, and uplifting efforts, the voice of the soul speaks and the evil and weaknesses born of the undeveloped and selfish side of our human nature cannot come in, so they will die out.

The voice of the soul is the voice of the universe, in all its wonderful manifestations. How remarkably and clearly and divinely it speaks to us through all the days and nights of our lives — and yet, to a very large degree, we heed it not. The voice of the soul is also the divine quality in every human heart, and it is this aspect of my subject that I refer to more especially.

I have often referred to the coming into incarnation of little children. The laws of nature or the divine laws

have prepared everything for the incoming of souls; but is it not possible that we humans with our limited knowledge of divine things, and our still more limited practice of them, have failed to accentuate the divine side of life for the little children? A child will develop as naturally in harmony with the divine laws as with man-made laws, customs, and practices, many of which are farfetched and quite unessential. If the soul-qualities of man were undisturbed from the very beginning of childhood, we would have a higher and a better expression of babyhood, of boyhood and girlhood, and inevitably of manhood and womanhood.

Think of the wrecks along the way — of the many boys now behind bars who were once mothers' darlings. Most of these may have been fairly well taken care of in the physical sense, but morally they are lacking. This does not necessarily mean that the parents neglected doing anything that they knew they should do; but not having been educated themselves to understand the importance of depending on the moral and spiritual laws, they cannot impart what they themselves have not in their own make-up. This may possibly explain in a satisfactory way why humanity is all awry.

There are thousands going or striving to go the right way, but there are also thousands going the other way. There is little harmony in the great human family. One may find harmony in the flowers, in the trees, in the silence of nature, and in the stars above us, but in human life it is nowhere to be found. People may have their aspirations, their prayers, their desires; they may also have a splendid scholastic education — they may even be ranked as geniuses — but the one great thing that humanity is hungering for, pleading for, and yearning for is not to be found in the deepest sense.

There is no question that thousands are striving and have the disposition to make worthy efforts, but they are all fettered by the lack of knowledge. They have not the one great key that H. P. Blavatsky brought to the modern world, the ancient wisdom-religion. It lifts the veil, it opens the way, it answers your questions, it dispels your doubts and your fears. According to the teachings of theosophy, we are religious beings by nature, the soul-life being an essential part of ourselves — the real, eternal man. The rest of man dies when the body dies, including the brain-mind upon which we all depend so much, and upon which we should indeed depend to a large degree. All the mental faculties, including personal memory, die when the physical man dies. But the real man, the spiritual man, lives on forever.

Man's spiritual nature is difficult to understand for most people because it is supposed to be difficult to prove. But there are thousands of things in the world today that are true and we have to accept them even though we cannot prove them. Man's spiritual nature is so refined and so etherealized in a sense, that it is difficult to prove it formally. Nevertheless it is visible to the inner eye. But we must have the vision to see it, we must have the ears to hear its message, and we must know what we are seeking. We must reach out for it, and our life must be in harmony with our aspirations: we must not play angel today and demon tomorrow, we must not do good today and tomorrow deceive ourselves and our friends. We must be true to the inner quality of our own nature — the divine spark, the ray of the universal life. Be true to that, and all other good things will come.

The great human race must see more than it now sees, must hear more than it now hears, must know more than it now knows. But the difficulty is that for thousands of years we have been held back by false teachings which have given a backward turn to human nature. If our blood could be analyzed by a spiritual chemist, we should find that the very atoms of our body are tintured with the errors that we have been taught all down the ages. The result is that when our hearts might urge us to leap forward in search of spiritual truth, or when we might feel a touch of divine inspiration for the moment, there comes the contrary impulse of the doubting nature that shuts out the light. There is a thousand times more to be discovered in human life than we know already. There is enough light in this great universe of ours to bring to the whole human race a song of eternal peace of a quality that would keep humanity always together. In the truest sense we are all members of one great universal brotherhood, we are all of God's great family. But in the outward sense we are frightfully divided.

Think for a moment of the creations of men of genius. If they had stopped and turned back in doubt at the time when the divine impulse touched them, we should have no grand music, no beautiful paintings, no inspired art, no marvelous inventions. These splendid, uplifting, creative forces originally come from man's divine nature. If we all lived in the consciousness and the conviction of our own great possibilities, we should

realize that we are souls and that we too have divine privileges far beyond anything that we know of or even think of. Yet we throw these aside because they are not acceptable to our limited, personal selves. They do not fit in with our preconceived ideas. So we forget that we are a part of the divine scheme of life, that the meaning of life is sacred and holy, and we allow ourselves to drift back into the vortex of misunderstanding, misconception, doubt, unhappiness, and despair.

Theosophy, on the other hand, is optimistic. The moment when its teachings touch the heart of a man or a woman, there is a lifting of the spirit, there is a new fire burning within. It may not perhaps be spoken of or described, but something has come into that life. That soul steps out on the path of self-directed evolution — evolution directed by his own higher nature — and he moves along that road with a conviction that the ultimate relative perfection of man is assured.

A soul that starts on the path that I have spoken of finds the companionship of his own essential divinity. He is conscious of an increasing knowledge, so delicate, so refined, so subtle, and so far away from the senses that no language can express it. It is something akin to that mystical quality that touches the human heart when the word love is devoutly uttered — a touch of the divine. Along this path of self-directed evolution one meets of course many crossways; disappointments visit him. But think what an appeal there is to the brave man to continue the journey. He is marching on in response to the challenge of his own soul, of the divine quality within himself.

As he moves forward, he will begin to find the reality of things which he had formerly ignored. Sacred blessings will come to him without money and without price. He will find the beginning of great joy, the beginning of a new life, the beginning of sublime efforts, and a quality of courage that will enable him to proclaim from the house tops and the mountain tops, anywhere and everywhere, that man is essentially divine — and that is the voice and the music of the soul seeking expression in the hearts of men.

Humanity is hungry for its spiritual food, for that quality of soul-nourishment that should have been given in childhood but is given only occasionally when the mother is at the height of her aspirations for her child, when she is thinking in the silence and praying to her God for something better. Then she hears the voice of the soul. But the pity is that she cannot hear it continuously — from lack of unison between the inner and the outer life.

There is little cooperation but much fearful division in the minds of men and women and in the forms and customs of society. These things are the enemies of our progress as long as we allow them to be. The voice of the soul is seeking expression in the outer world in order to bring to the recognition of men the real spirit of brotherhood, that spiritual unity that belongs to us, that inner fire which marks us as religious in essence, religious by birth, religious by heredity, religious because it is instinctively felt that justice and truth will ultimately manifest themselves. By listening to the voice of the soul one becomes not only a good man, but a noble man, a holy man, and a blessing to all the world.

I lived during my childhood in Massachusetts. My home-life in the summertime was in the woodlands on the banks of the beautiful Merrimack. Much of my young life was spent in the company of a very great man, and yet a very simple man, quite unrecognized by the world for his remarkable virtues. He was my grandfather who, under peculiar circumstances, had asked for and had finally obtained the right personally to control my education.

I have no recollection of anything irksome or hard that I had to learn from him. I always felt that my real teacher, if it can be called a teacher, was within myself. Even as a child I used to talk in this way, which led my father to fear that by the time I was twenty-one years of age I would be somewhat demented! Nevertheless, the conviction that my real teacher was within me was very strong. When I was four or five years old, I used to disturb my people by telling them that I heard the trees sing and many things along that line, which seemed very uncanny to people of those days in New England, where the power of dogmatism and convention was very strong. So all through my childhood I led quite an isolated life, except for the inspiring companionship of my grandfather.

It was not the intention of my father or mother that I should mark my life with any eccentricities or

peculiarities, so the path that I should follow was laid out with conventional precision. My father secured the services of the best teachers and musicians, but I never could learn from them. I do not mean by this that I was anything remarkable at all; on the contrary, I was considered a sort of freak. But sometimes I improvised, and at other times I had very clear mind-pictures of the future, one of which was of the "White City" that I should some day build in the "Gold-Land" of the West, where I should gather together children of all nations and teach them how to live rightly.

In communion with my grandfather there was one thing that impressed me very strongly, small as I was, and I have never forgotten it: the most beautiful memory I have of him is that what he preached he lived. My father too was a very delightful and splendid man; I loved him dearly. But he was a materialist and had little in common with my thoughts or my grandfather's. To a very large degree my grandfather and I understood each other, and our understanding was expressed more in the silence than in words. Whenever I think of him, I am always impressed with the fact that the soul of that man was so much alive that he was ever conscious of its presence and guidance.

When I grew older I said to him: "Is it because I love you so, or am I right in feeling that when you speak, something besides that great intellect of yours is speaking — something different from what I hear and see?"

In a very simple way he answered: "It is the voice of the soul that you hear. The soul could speak in all men did they but keep the conscience clear, trust in the divine law, and live for a high purpose."

"What is that purpose?" I asked.

"There are a great many high purposes," he answered, "but the one purpose above all others is so to live as to be a benefit to humanity." He was my first ideal of a great character. He was the first outward proof that I had that man in his innermost nature is divine.

I remember when I was a little girl, I worked very hard to avoid going to an extremely orthodox church. On account of this I was considered very eccentric and so I was let alone, and that was the happiest time of my life. When others went to church, I would skip out into the woods with my dog. It was there that I learned some of the great secrets of life. I think that every lesson that I received came first through the woodlands, from the birds and the flowers or from thoughts stimulated by being there. It was there that I found myself; it was there that I found the little spiritual strength that I had. It was there that I had the vision, in a sense, that real life was wonderful and beautiful, but that humanity as a whole was living in the valley of the shadows because as a people we had not reached up higher, we had not trusted ourselves, because we had been hemmed in by the false teachings of the past.

Many things that I read in the Bible I found very interesting, but there were other parts that I could not accept at all. I never had accepted the idea that we were born in sin, nor from that time until now have I ever believed in a personal God. Nevertheless, my thoughts dwelt very much upon the spiritual side of life. We have quite enough of the outer side of life all the time; in fact, we are oppressed with it, we are actually persecuted by it. But when we seek to find the soul of things, we must search for something within ourselves, so that we may gain confidence in ourselves. When we have this and carry with us daily and hourly the beautiful, uplifting, and enlightening thoughts that come from such trust and such confidence, everything else is cared for.

In the deeper sense there is no such thing as chance in life, but everything is a part of the universal laws. As far as we choose to work with them, to clasp hands with them though we see them not, we feel them in our innermost natures, in our hearts, and their light shines through our eyes. Thus we work in harmony with the divine qualities within ourselves and we make the great wheel of human evolution move more rapidly forward towards the goal of ultimate perfection. Man is something more than most of us ever dream of being, and the divine qualities of man are seeking to express themselves in every hour that we live, almost in every breath that we take. But the larger number of people have depended so long on the mentality alone that spiritual knowledge has been to a large degree ignored.

The mind of man is indeed a wonderful power. When rightly used it can be a guide and a help, but it is not the highest part of man's nature. When this higher part impresses the mentality with those inspirations that

distinguish real men and women from merely human beings, it brings joy into life to replace the travesty on real life that we see all about us. Then one can speak of the soul of man. Then one can know how beautiful, how superb, how grand the spiritual things in life really are. Then one realizes that just as today is an experience and tomorrow another experience, so is a lifetime just one experience in the progress of the soul of man towards perfection. It is not the only one; there are more and more, and still more. Thus the soul advances, becomes strong, grows powerful, and at last has the foresight to direct its own destiny. If a man will set his feet firmly on the path of self-directed evolution, believing in the eternal verities that make life joy, that make life peace, that make life powerful and just, then he will begin to hear the voice of the soul.

Now, while we are suffering still from the effects of that dreadful World War and from the indiscretions and vices and crimes that afflict our civilization, it is high time that humanity as a whole should awaken. Dare to believe that tomorrow can be made better than today — never be discouraged: go through life unafraid. In this way you will dare and conquer and move onward toward ever greater achievements. As yet life is only half lived when we depend upon the mentality alone. Unless we have a solid foundation on which to build our character, the shadows are heavy, everything is discouraging, pessimism reigns, leading in extreme cases to suicide, and more than all else to the terrible crimes that confront us day by day in ever increasing numbers — a great deal of this I know is the result of the World War. Thinking of these things, we have a tremendous duty to perform. We cannot afford to lose one moment in moving away from the light of truth in our own inner natures. Where did Jesus tell us that the kingdom of heaven was to be found? Did he say it was up in the skies? Did he not say that the kingdom of heaven is within you?

II

In the truest sense, theosophy frees the human mind from thralldom. It enables one to meet tomorrow without fear and to look at death as something beautiful. We should not be afraid to think of our dear ones who have passed on. In the real sense they are still living, still loving, still faithful, and still devoted, for real love is eternal. If it is eternal, and if it was yours here, it is yours forever.

Have a little more confidence in yourselves! Do not be so dependent upon worldly position, upon intellectual attainments, upon environment or personality. Find the silence within you, find the peace and quiet of nature away from the rush and whirl of daily activities. Thus you will be free to know the inner mysteries of life, and you never can do it until you take the first step in that direction. Meet these teachings halfway, and then apply them to your lives. It is the application that counts: knowledge is only half-knowledge until it is applied.

One of the greatest impediments to the human mind's grasping its sovereignty or understanding the power of the spiritual life, and thus overcoming all difficulties, is the belief in only one earth-life. If the mind is oppressed from morning until night not merely with the actual duties of life but with countless nonessentials, it finds itself in the old rut of limiting existence to seventy-seven or a hundred years. But of course in every age there are a few progressive minds who dare to step outside the beaten path and to take great long breaths of spiritual life. They dare to believe that there is something more in human life than they already know. They dare to acknowledge to themselves that in their silent, their most aspiring and best moments, there is something beyond this one earth-life. The soul of man in its dignity, in its sovereignty, in its royalty, gives us the beautiful vista of the continuity of spiritual life. We are assured that man does not die in the real sense, for the real man, the spiritual entity, is an eternal entity in the great scheme of life, and he only seems to die.

But most people in Western lands are so absorbed in the delusions of the outer life that they think that they themselves are merely the bodies which they inhabit. They are so psychologized by this idea that when they reach the age of forty-five or fifty they are already planning for the disposal of their worldly belongings and beginning to think just how the end will come. In the old days when I lived in New England, it used to be quite a habit among some of the dear old ladies to show one a little outfit of frocks which they had prepared for their exit from this earth. To me there is something pitifully sad about this attitude, because it is such a reflection on the human mind, it is such an insult to the dignity of the soul, it is such a denial of man's highest hopes and aspirations.

Let us have common sense and illumination enough to believe that we are something more than we seem, and that in the wonderful universal scheme of life there is a great destiny in which we are to be very active, in

which we are to live and work, fully conscious of our own essential divinity. One of the greatest secrets of life is for a man to believe in his own divine qualities, in his power to surmount all difficulties and to overleap all conditions — especially to overleap the irrational and gloomy picture of death which so many people hold.

We must begin early to teach our children the idea of the eternity of the spiritual soul, the divinity of the real man, and remove from their minds the horrible harrowing picture of death and funerals. Let us teach humanity the true story of nature: that when the body dies, being physical and material and of the earth only, all that belonged to the body returns to its material elements, but the wellspring of man's being — the enlightener, the invigorator, the great life-giving urge, the spiritual soul — is part of eternity and cannot die, but goes on and on upon its evolutionary journey. Nature is very gentle and kind and allows us to leave behind us all sad memories.

How readily one can conceive that from those who are conscious of their own essential divinity the voice of the soul is heard. And while this voice should not be taken for the voice of the great universal soul, it is at least an echo of it, a reflection or ray of it, so to speak. There is a mightiness in the thought of the spiritual power of even one single human being in this world, and greater mightiness in the thought of the thousands who are all moving on, though as yet unacquainted with their spiritual heritage. But in spite of all our aspirations, we still move on with our eyes downwards. We do not keep them up to the grand possibilities of another life and of still other lives. We do not look out into the future and visualize the possibilities of a man who wins his victory, not only with one or another kind of self-control, but of one who finds his true place where he can shine out in the glory of his life and send back to us the story of the beauty of a perfect life.

And how easy it is to attain! How much sweeter would human life be if we could only fulfill our missions here. How much happier we should all be, how much better we could then all keep united and live out our lives to the fullest point of perfection for this one life. We are not declaring the glory of the spiritual soul until we can stand upright and recognize our superb possibilities and future.

Each one evolves according to his understanding of the facts of nature and according to his education and his environment, so each has his own way of learning, which is different from that of everyone else because no two have evolved to an equal degree. The beauty of reincarnation is that it gives every man another chance. It is one of the brightest and most beautiful doctrines that I have ever been able to present to anyone, even to the condemned in prison: yes, there is another chance for all.

The laws of the universe or the laws of God are eternal and universal. One cannot escape them. Try, therefore, to reach a conception of the spiritual life and then apply it to daily life. It means nothing unless it is applied. Carry with you every day as you go through life the idea of the eternal fulfillment of the law and man's perfectibility. Only those who hear the truth from the voice of the soul can understand these things and apply them fully; yet they are so simple that a child can comprehend them in degree.

Unexpected things must evolve where there is a body united in a grand purpose, in universal, unselfish purposes. Something must be growing, something more than you can say or do, something within the air, from the very source of life, the great wonder of life, that inexpressible source and center where we sometimes go in our silent moments. It is to me a fact that something then happens, that something noble then grows out of our natures; we cannot describe it, we can hardly echo it, but somehow it has come to stay. We shall find new light and new life and a better understanding, a sweeter and nobler unity, and more comprehension. It is the unspeakably beautiful things in the simple efforts of noble living that make life possible. There is so much meaning in some of the very smallest things we do. But we do not often speak of or believe in their importance until they come home to us on such an occasion as the parting with our loved ones. When we do our duty well and we have the opportunity to gather about us those who love us, we mark time for some new and splendid events.

Be willing to struggle, if there is struggle; be willing to be disappointed, and be willing to suffer, and be willing to be misunderstood — anything in the world that will give you the chance to throw away all personality and bring home to yourself the realization that soul-power is the only thing that will make life livable. We have only to think just a little deeper and look a little farther away from our personalities to realize the mightiness of life and to feel our closer association with the higher possibilities in our own natures

and a rising quality of sincerity. This is what is needed more than anything else to awaken humanity to deeper thinking and to a realization that man is in essence a mighty creature; and that a human being with all his possibilities, with all that nature has given him, and with all that lies within the soul is afforded rich gifts continuously.

As we push forward, as we think more deeply, as we enlarge our conception of life and our conception of duty and grow ever nearer to its fulfillment, we challenge ourselves again and again. It is beautiful to think that we are ready, that we have the opportunity of challenging ourselves. I wonder if all of us attempt to reach sufficiently towards the depths of our natures in one lifetime ever to keep on doing, to persevere, and to hold firmly in the spirit of the nobler efforts? Thus we cannot fail to push forward with more trust and more confidence in the larger life and, in this determined push, throw ourselves out to what seems impossible to our human minds now. If we do this, we shall open the door to such splendid and undreamed of realities for us before we go on to another life that we shall surely think we have passed through several incarnations in one.

We have our hearts touched very deeply when we undergo the experience of the passing away of those whom we love dearly. There are always compensations, of course, in the thought that they have gone to a condition that is better for them, to a larger development. But we should also stop and realize that there is then a sacred demand made upon us to cancel our indebtedness not only to humanity but to the divine law working for us and in us in this earth-life.

In view of all that happens to us, and all that we see and know and feel and desire, we ought to realize that we have a duty that is so sacred that it would be cowardly to turn away from it. We must answer the challenge and realize the soul's possibilities. We are not working just for today or tomorrow, but we are working for all the days to come and the months to come, and for the people to come and for the souls that will return here. So take hold of the Now as a great omen, a very splendid promise that has come from somewhere, we need not question how, to bring us to the point of awakening where we shall find ourselves fully alive, fully up to our duty, and full of that great love which the higher law demands.

Man undervalues himself in the spiritual sense. He undervalues his responsibilities, and therefore he is very apt to undervalue his neighbors. If, on the other hand, he begins to value his inner life and the spiritual side of his being, he is bound to reach a quality of his nature that will bring him to more conscientious thought of his neighbors. Pursuing this line farther, we shall find ourselves working out a grand scheme of justice for all men to each other, and we shall begin to have some idea of the splendid promises that are written in every moment of our lives.

The consciousness of real manhood and womanhood we must have if we are to do justice to the purpose of our lives. We do not have to follow beaten tracks in any of our efforts to help humanity. We must begin in a new way. We need to think of the newborn day. We need the newborn man and woman, the newborn hope, and the newborn promises. We need many things which we have not because we do not reach out for them. The preciousness of the moments lies not so much in the actual physical work that one does, but rather in feeling through every fiber of our being something that will strike a higher note for a brighter tomorrow. It is essential that we attend to the small things in life — the small duties and responsibilities and the small demands that are made upon us by the very laws of our being. The seemingly small things in my life have often led to the greatest opportunities. It is often the small things that carry us to our goal.

My endeavor is to give you a conception of the importance of a man's life when he has found that he has an inner nature and that it is wholly dependable, that he has within himself those rare and wonderful resources for self-restoration. In the inner chambers of our natures there are wonderful mysteries. If we could fathom these, we should have a true companionship with the inner self, and that inner self is of abiding, eternal character.

Do not try to fashion yourselves like others. Dare to think sufficiently long and sufficiently deeply to receive a revelation from within. Make clean self-analysis a regular habit: take ten minutes with yourself every day and absolutely surrender your mental self to your higher self, then you will open for yourself a book of revelations.

Everyone is at times touched with unhappiness, but the shadows and the disappointments will stay by you and they will grow, and you cannot undo them, until you find within yourself the energy and the inner enlightenment and inspiration that come from a man knowing himself and bringing himself to the point of adjustment where he is willing to face the world with a quality of optimism. Bring humanity into this state of mind, and then think of the possibilities of motherhood and of the possibilities of the children. Then think of the possibilities of eternal life — of never-ending progress towards an ever-expanding perfection through many lives. Even if one does not believe in reincarnation, that does not make it untrue. One may not find it out until, in a sense, it is too late — until he passes on. But the teaching takes nothing from you and it gives everything to you. It is as old as the ages and has stood the fiery test of time.

If you spend all your time thinking of the outer aspects of this one little earth-life, if you keep away from the largeness of your own inner nature, if you have no faith in your essential divinity and no trust in it, the light is not with you. Consequently you lose the things that you really most need. These things of the spirit are greater than all the money or success that can come to you, and greater than all the outward facts of your existence, because they touch your inner nature. All the greatest teachers, savants, and writers who have attempted to do anything really good for humanity have taught of the inner life of man. Jesus in his time, and to the people he taught, did so as fully as others.

Are we not looking for something better than what we have now? Are you satisfied with life as it is? Are you ready to go on and on and see children born in ignorance, unwise marriages and tragic divorces, and murders and unnameable crimes sweeping in to the very threshold of your own homes, and not turn for knowledge to these higher laws? Certainly something is lacking, and that lack can be met by each of us if we can have courage enough to believe that we are something more than what we seem in our merely physical aspect, that we are a part of the divine scheme of life, and that we have within us those latent powers which Jesus referred to when he told us that the kingdom of heaven is within us.

You may have glimpses of a solution of life's problems in your own mental attitudes, you may have touches of it in your hearts, but the world does not propose — according to our present form of civilization so called — that you shall grow spiritually. The general opinion of mankind today is that man is weak, vacillating, and has no spiritual basis upon which to work. But while it is true that we are all subject to the laws of change in evolution, still life is a superb challenge if one knows how to meet it. The idea that man is born in sin and is helpless is nonsense; there is nothing reasonable in it. On the contrary, man is essentially divine, he is a part of the eternal plan and has within himself the key to the mysteries of the universe and therefore of his own nature. If he hasn't it consciously, he should find it.

I do not talk very much about humility; I do not believe that a man or a woman should be humble in the ordinary sense. I believe that they should find the strength of their own characters. They should analyze themselves cleanly, find out whence they came, what they are here for, and what life means. They should challenge themselves and move away from the nonsense that they have been taught for so long about being such dreadful sinners. Move out into a great world of superb thought and universal ideas!

If a man lose faith in himself, can one expect him to believe in his neighbor? After all these ages of a certain quality of education that has been given us from childhood, we still have not our hands on the oars that will carry our boat into port. If we are not sure of our spiritual immortality, if we are not sure of the divine life within us, we cannot live it and we cannot act in accordance with it, though it is there. The inner life is the real life.

When you come to the point where your bodies are tired and you are ready to throw off the worn-out overcoat of flesh, then the truth will be revealed to you. But by that time you are speechless in what the world calls death, but which theosophy calls rebirth. The revelation of these inner mysteries can come only to those who will receive them; yet every man and every woman can have glimpses of the truth, day by day and hour by hour, without price. Spiritual truths are not purchasable.

Mere reason and brain-mind arguments keep humanity away from the richness of the inner life that belongs to all. When you have that truth, you will know how to live: when to speak and when not to speak, when to act and when not to act. You will be so conscious of your essential divinity that you will have the strength to dare

to do a thousand things that you thought yourselves incapable of doing. You will remove yourselves from the negative psychology of the age and become characters of true positive nobility. Your whole life depends upon your character.

We are either going up or we are going down — we do not ever stand still. Continuous and confident virtue comes from the knowledge of one's soul-life. It is the expression of the strength of the inner man, that part of one which does noble things, aspires to do them, and is ever restless until one has done them. Love is the greatest power in the world and self-control is the magic talisman. With love in our hearts, and self-control, we are on the path that leads to the relative perfection of man.

People do not stop to think how humanity has been psychologized for ages with the old idea that man is born in sin. How much real soul-courage can one expect from a man who is burdened and weighed down with that old dogma and carries it with him night and day — eats with it, sleeps with it, and lives with it? There is degradation and humiliation in it. From these follow lack of courage, lack of confidence, until life seems a farce if it were not for the tragedies and heartaches everywhere. If one accepts the idea of only one lifetime, he loses sight of the grandeur and beauty and inspiration of the idea of eternity.

If man as we know him today is the highest aspect of creation, then it is easy to believe that there has been some mistake made somewhere along the way. For thousands of years these teachings have been instilled into the minds of our ancestors, until we carry the poison of them in our faces. It has made men timid and doubtful of their own abilities. It has limited the courage of even the bravest heroes and lessened the power of the greatest statesmen and the most splendid men and women who have accepted the idea of man's original sinfulness and the limitation of one earth-life.

On the other hand, let us face the man who knows that he is born under the divine and wonderful laws of nature, whose life is a series of awakenings through babyhood, childhood, boyhood, into manhood, with a consciousness of his own essential divinity. Now this divinity is not such an abstraction as many imagine — it is not so very far away. To believe that the all-powerful, all-loving, ever-serving center of light, the great source of life, has designed or had any part in a work that would bring degradation or despair to "His" own creation, is an insult to our manhood and our womanhood, it is an insult to our time and to our intelligence and to our civilization.

If we could only spend less time talking of men's weaknesses and of our children's weaknesses, and move out into the great broad view of life which theosophy gives! The mother's soul would speak and say, "Nay, never was this child of mine, this mystery to me and mystery to the world, born in sin. It is only to be explained by accepting the divine laws of nature, and it came to me for a great purpose. The soul is full of richness, full of possibilities, full of potential qualities, and the divine is in every man."

If our children could grow in this idea, we might bring our youth up to such a high standard that we should all look at life in an entirely new light. Could it be possible that there would be so many disasters and terrible crimes and shocking evidences of man's inhumanity to man? But we have grown negative, we have lost to a degree — or at least we have overlooked — the strength of our own souls, the power of the inner life. All will be right if we are right ourselves. But we must be in place. We must meet these teachings at least halfway. We must look at life differently. If you have no other teacher in the world, study nature and she will bring you new life and new light.

I am absolutely assured of the essential divinity in man, of his power to conquer conditions and to make the whole world over again. Bring yourself to the knowledge of your essential divinity, of your strength and your real purposes, your hopes and your visions. The will which makes a man a good man and brings these things into realization is the spiritual will, whereas that will which makes him lose his way is the will of the personality, of the body only, and dies when the body dies.

The great beauty and charm of life is to have knowledge — not just belief and faith. All our disappointments and trials and apparent injustices will not disappear immediately, because the basis of most of them was sown by ourselves; but they can be so well understood and so intelligently met that we can rise above them and soar beyond them, and bring out before the world the richer and deeper meaning of our life.

It is a mighty thing to know that there are laws, so infinitely and divinely true and just that if we will reach out to them in aspiration, we can find ourselves in a new world of thought; and when we are discouraged or despairing, we can fill our lives with a royal optimism, for we can take in the grandeur, the beauty, the mercy and, above all, the superb justice of life. We can look into our own hearts and go back to the aspirations of our youth, when we were trying to do some of the grand things that earth-life offers us opportunity to do, and we move away from the limited conception of one short life on earth and see the vision of another chance, and another chance, in repeated incarnations.

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Chapter 2

THE PERFECTIBILITY OF MAN

Time is so precious, so valuable, and so very much misused even by intelligent and well-meaning people. One can appreciate time more in remembering that this particular moment will never be ours again. We must work and study: in studying great teachings the heart is attuned to aspirations that lift one naturally out of the material and everyday way of thinking into great hopes, great dreams, great visions, and great resolutions. While one may not respond always to such thoughts at the moment, still sometimes from the smallest endeavor, if the conscience is clear and the motive high, great things can and do happen.

Not only is time misused, but human life is also misused. The great majority of people today either have no serious beliefs at all regarding the soul and its destiny, or content themselves with a sort of half-belief in one earth-life only, without any knowledge of the future. The limitations that necessarily result from holding such restricted ideas greatly impede one's spiritual advancement. But from the moment when one can attune his spiritual aspirations to a high standard of living, even in just one earth-life, the soul is immediately aroused and the results are beyond all reckoning because each man is absolutely his own savior or his own destroyer.

The treasures that belong to the inner life, to the spiritual man, can be found only by research, by living in accord with the higher law of the spirit, and by holding firmly to aspiration. In following this path one will be better able to understand the theosophical teachings and the wide field of thought that they embrace. There are three outstanding principles of theosophy which should never be forgotten: the doctrines of karma, of reincarnation, and of the actuality of human perfectibility. In regard to this last doctrine we have not only the belief, but the absolute knowledge that man can attain through self-devised efforts to such a high degree of evolution that for any one period he may be said to have reached a state of relative perfection, but with the possibility of attaining a still larger and profounder state of development in future evolutionary periods.

When I first came into the Theosophical Movement I had only the theosophical books and H. P. Blavatsky's knowledge of her great teachers on which to rely. But since that time I have had in my own experience the proof of those truths which theosophy expounds in reference to man's attainment of a state of perfection so far as it can be reached in one earth-life. This fact of relative human perfection was revealed to me through a personal meeting with such a man — one of our great teachers. What I tell you is not the result of fancy, nor of dreams, nor of delusions, nor of an imagined self-sufficiency in my own spiritual discernment. But I do tell you what happened and what I saw and what I myself learned.

Not so many years ago, on my first tour through Egypt and India, I received an invitation to meet a great teacher. I met this great character in India. Early in the morning before the sun was up I had a call from the teacher's chela, as they called him, who brought four servants and a special escort with their open palanquin. The chela acted as guide and, with my maid, I went out up the mountains, and up the mountains, and up the mountains — the heat of the day was beyond anything that you can conceive of. After miles of travel we arrived at noon at an almost unimaginable height. Everything except the great range looked small and insignificant. In looking out over the wonderful prospect, one could see how very easy it would be for one living up there all the time to have high aspirations and great ideas and to grow and to become royal and splendid. All that was possible.

I had my mind fashioned, as I think yours might have been, to see something quite remarkable — some astounding manifestation. But when I reached this person, he was standing leaning against a tree with an English jackknife in his hand — he was cutting a little piece of wood. When he saw me he came to meet me, asking me to excuse him for a short time because one of the bullocks with which one of his chelas was plowing had suffered an injury to his neck and he was trying to repair the yoke.

I looked straight at the man. Now, even in H. P. Blavatsky's time he was considered to be quite old in years, but he looked very young when I saw him. I would have said that he was then not more than thirty-two or thirty-three years of age. He appeared to be Tibetan, dark of skin. His face was unlike any other that I had

ever seen before. His whole life was lighted up with an inner light that had toned his features, had brightened his eyes, and had brought to him the glow of youthfulness and splendor of character. One could not look merely at his face: his whole figure commanded attention. Yet he was very unpretentious in manner.

I did not ask many questions because I found that he anticipated them — questions that I had wanted an answer to ever since I came into the Theosophical Society, especially as to how I was to meet the heavy responsibilities that became mine when I was named as the Leader of the Society for life — the responsibility of helping to direct this Society of aspirants for spiritual wisdom and knowledge at a time when I was unknown to all save perhaps one or two members of the Society.

I am trying to enter again into that meeting with the teacher, so that I may give you whatever I am allowed to speak of. In the first place, there was a conversation in reference to the little time that I could stay there. He urged me to hasten back in order to be inside the village before darkness because there were bandits and queer people all about. He then gave me many ideas, which of course might not interest the public because they pertained very largely to my theosophical work. Besides, it is very hard to find the language to describe the most glorious, superb, magnificent things in life. The most wonderful things that one ever sees in all their beauty can never be described. But in his presence I felt the greatness of life, the true splendor of life, and its royal promise. My mind at this meeting was unusually alert and awake.

It was utterly impossible that this man was an impostor, as some might think, because he referred to incidents in my own past that I had almost forgotten — incidents that at the time turned my footsteps in this or in that direction, and that finally led to my meeting with W. Q. Judge and eventually to his appointment of me as his successor in the leadership of the Society. Mr. Judge had found me working among the poor of the slums on the East Side of New York City, trying to help the unfortunate and to lift some of their burdens in an honest and determined way. That in itself was to me a great big world of effort. It seemed to me at the time that it was about as much as I could handle. But here was a man who had grown great in unison with the higher expressions of life, to which he had attuned his whole being in utter self-forgetfulness. We all have this same opportunity, but he was a great soul and welcomed this opportunity, and profited by it daily.

We must all, sooner or later, believe in the marvelous powers of the spiritual soul of man. We must all sooner or later fathom the depths of our own nature and find therein the royal talisman of wisdom and truth. This is what I found with and in this great teacher. Just while I was standing there with him, I discovered anew, under the great force of his presence — and it came to me like an illumination — that there was something indeed in me more than the mere mentality, that there was a vital, latent force inside me that desired to come out and inspire me to achieve things that I had never done before. It seemed to me as if I had never really lived before that moment, and never known so much about life as I then knew. This was the great day of my life — a day of greater promise for my work for all humanity. Since then I have felt that it would be easy to go through fire and suffering and persecution and anything to push this message of theosophy out to the world. The credit for this spirit of courage within me is not mine; it came to me from being in the presence of this great teacher and from realizing in him to what heights a true man can reach.

I will only add that when I went to visit this teacher, I was weighed down with the responsibility of carrying on the work of the Theosophical Society throughout the world and of meeting the conditions that I knew must be changed, because my predecessor, William Quan Judge, had been ill for two years and during his illness many things had drifted along in the Society by no means in accordance with the highest theosophical standards. But when I bade goodbye to that wonderful character and looked into his bright, kindly eyes — I never saw a pair like them — I had renewed life. I was then under the care of physicians who declared I never would live to reach home and, traveling on the cars from town to town, it was daily expected that I would die. It may be very hard to believe it, but I recovered my health although I had been condemned by three of the best physicians in London and two in New York to die from Bright's disease. No great magic was performed, and I did not become well the very next day. But physically and mentally I was so aroused that I steadily improved. My whole nature was alert, so that it was impossible for me to give way. And here I am still active, thirty years later!

I do not think it was any miracle — I do not believe in anything supernatural at all. I believe that my soul was hungry, that I was to a degree weary of the weight of woe in the world. I saw people everywhere struggling,

making their mistakes, and I was oppressed with the thought: "Poor me! What can I do to spread these great theosophical teachings throughout the world?" Therein I was belittling my own power and almost losing sight of my own soul-strength when I entertained such thoughts. And then I met this great teacher. My soul-hunger was satisfied, my questions were answered, and my tired body responded and was cured. Believing in reincarnation — that man has life after life in which to reach ever higher states of perfection — one can imagine how much grander even this great teacher himself would be in yet another life.

The greatest language that was ever uttered can never fully bring to you the consciousness of your own essential divinity until you have aspired to even more than I speak of, until you have looked within yourselves, challenged yourselves, and rebuked yourselves just enough to find your strength to go forward and to become. You must have a spiritual awakening — you cannot tell when it comes or how it comes. All you have to do is to open your minds and look at the universe as something so vastly superior to anything you had dreamed of it as being before, look upon life as something sacred and grand and sublime in its promise and possibilities. Then recall what your aspirations and your dreams of noble action have been, think of your hopes and of the fragmentary touches that you have had of the spiritual life. Then you will find revelations upon revelations right within yourselves — in your inner nature. They are priceless.

I suppose that if we were told today that far off in the desert somewhere there were rich gold mines waiting to be worked, we would all be up bright and early and start out in the morning and walk or run thither barefooted, if there were no other way by which to reach the gold mines. But if we are told of the beautiful spiritual treasures that are right at hand in our own lives, in our own thoughts, within ourselves, few stir themselves even sufficiently to investigate.

These teachings of the ancient wisdom enable the true disciple to go through life unafraid — most beautiful of all, unafraid of death. He has a new view of death, and life itself is so lovely and sublime, if rightly lived, even in one incarnation. No matter what your cares and your disappointments, you can depend on the inner life and find its peace without money and without price. When you realize this truth and take it into your mind and your heart and into your very soul, you may be sure that life is joy and that every moment is beautiful and sacred.

Each of you has a responsibility that you know very little about: you do not yet understand the real value of yourselves and your moments. So it is the duty of every man who can believe and think and dare to fulfill his mission to the very end. Do not talk despondently about old age. Perhaps the body is indeed becoming old and tired; but think of the soul growing young in its splendid vitality, in its inner vision of things, in its realization of the value and the virtue of the spiritual life.

The one great need is for man so to arouse his mentality to the conception that he is a soul and that there can be the conquest by the soul. When men have reached this point we shall not need any more prisons nor punishments. I do not believe we shall then have any more murderers anywhere, for the very atmosphere will be teeming with these finer forces which science is bringing forward to our view very rapidly. These will lead man to his heritage, to his light, to his own salvation.

Lest we should, perhaps when too late, look back over the record of our lives and be dismayed at the thought of what we might have done, I say again: time is precious. In the short space of five or ten minutes one can change his life for the better to an almost inconceivable degree. Let even those with the most obtuse minds, who are indifferent to anything but to eat, sleep, and be merry, just feel once the thrill of the knowledge of the soul — of the real life; awakened to that knowledge and time will become indeed very precious to you. How royally and magnificently an awakened soul uses his moments, how joyfully he sets behind him all temptations and weaknesses! No vain regrets, nor great suffering, nor self-imposed martyrdom: he just steps into the new life, rejuvenated, renovated, restored to his spiritual rights and to that quality of knowledge that is essential for a man in order that he may understand his own responsibilities in life.

There are many people in the world, as everyone knows, who do not aspire. They have been miseducated for so long, as were their ancestors before them, that it is in their very blood to suppose that when a man dies, that is the end of everything; or, if he has been reasonably good, he goes to heaven, and if he is not among the elect, he goes to the other place. O ye gods, what nonsense! To the theosophist, on the other hand, the picture

is such that he learns to realize how precious life is. He values every moment of his time and applies his aspirations to real living. He stands constantly in the knowledge of his soul-life. He finds himself alert, alive, and moving positively onwards. It is only those who merely half-place themselves in touch with these ideas and then play hide-and-go-seek with their own souls, who fail — yes, who fail for this life, but for whom there is another chance in the next life.

We must all make our choice sometime; and the question is, shall we do it now or shall we wait until another life? Then we shall look back and see the time we wasted and the opportunities we lost, and how we turned away from the true path. I am not a pessimist, for I realize that despite the crimes and the disappointments and the despair from which the world suffers today, there is a great promise of better things ahead. A change is coming. We are reaching the tether end of things as they are, and in the course of time something will happen that will suddenly arouse humanity to a realization that the only safe thing to hold to will be the great and inspiring truths of the majestic theosophical philosophy.

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Chapter 3

THE REAL MAN

That men and women are not greater than they are, and that more is not accomplished in the grand advancement of the human race, is very largely because real knowledge is lacking. The differences among men are so marked all over the world that there is continual warfare going on, and at any time we may be overwhelmed with the outer aspects of war. The brutal side is in control when any man is ready to kill his brothers. War is savagery, and because it is accepted by the so-called civilized world, this is no proof that it has the favor of God.

It is dreadful to think of the millions that are spent in preparation for war, and how little is done to keep our boys and girls from going to dope for the want of that quality of education that would give them a balance of all the faculties — physical, mental, moral, and spiritual. Mothers and fathers are bringing their children up with a fear of the possibilities of what may happen to those children in the wrong direction, and yet day by day and year by year they seem to be growing less competent to ward off the catastrophe. What promise or surety has a mother of anything that is permanent in this world for her children so long as human beings will encourage warfare? Yet man can attain perfection. If this is true and feasible, then we have the possibility of something new happening for all.

The real man is not some special individual of unusual and remarkable gifts who will lead us to the heights. The real man is he who is conscious of his own essential divinity and acts accordingly. This divinity is a power that shows to every man the god in himself, that brings home to the minds of men and women the fact that, being immortal souls and parts of the great scheme of eternal life, they have sacred duties to perform. So instead of expecting the real man to come from some unexpected quarter, heralded by the angels, let us look for him even in our midst, wherever we may be, because it is possible for any man to have the knowledge of his own essential divinity. Once he has that, he has a key that opens up his whole nature. It carries him out into such an atmosphere and realm of thought, into such a breadth of vision, that he no longer accepts the limitations that were his yesterday.

This morning I looked out over the blue Pacific, saw its beauty, felt the touch of its wonderful appeal, and I asked myself, what does man get out of life? Everything is so imperfect, so uncertain at the present time. People find themselves disappointed not only in themselves, but in their nearest friends — sometimes it is a shock. All over the world we see degradation, dissipation, and the deathly forces that are at work upon the youth right at hand. For proof of this all one has to do is to read the daily papers or walk along the street and make ordinary observation of those who pass him. Is not this something to think of?

Once man becomes conscious of his own essential divinity, that he is a part of the eternal scheme of life, and holds to this state of consciousness in faith and absolute confidence, he opens up his whole nature and finds a revelation within himself. Where he was weak, he becomes strong; where he was ignorant, he acquires knowledge; where he had the limited idea of one life, he has the conception of many lives, and so on. He is in himself an epitome of life. All the best books in the world cannot give to man the knowledge that he has within himself, right within his own heart.

No matter how disappointed or discouraged we may be, let us remember that we all belong to deity's great family. Let us accept the fact that there is not a moment's time to be spent, then, in the question: Is this right or wrong? The real man knows what is right and wrong. He is inspired, he is affected to such a degree that if you could look into the inner part of his being, you would find the very atoms of his blood going through changes. The whole constitution of his life is changing, so that he is no longer the same man he was yesterday. He is ready to accept anything and everything that is right, that he may live the life, that he may become, that he may win the victory and be the living example for all men.

The beautiful part of it is that one strives then for all humanity. He has not to know all humanity, nor to be recognized by all humanity. But if he is living to serve humanity, he is writing down in the very atmosphere

in which he lives the foundation and basic thoughts that every man should have: that man is his own redeemer and that he either blesses or curses his own life, according to his choice, because man has all choice.

Man lacks in knowledge in many ways because he has had only faith, but not until he reaches a certain point of knowledge can he avoid the extreme, imaginary, and foolish ideas everywhere current today. Such a man will not be flooded with the spirit of the age — for this is not a desirable age. But what one man can be, all men can be. There is no need of waiting until tomorrow to begin, nor of depending upon a so-called new-coming Messiah. We are waiting only for each man to find the Christos-spirit in himself, by himself, in the silence of his own heart, in the inner chamber of his own life.

Look at the youth of today: a few years ago, they were little innocent children. Look at them today as you see them on the street — these exemplify the facts that we have to meet. We do not have to go anywhere else to see them: we can go even into our own towns and see the devastation, and the degradation, and the awful pressure that is brought upon the youth particularly, because of the lack of that inner knowledge which young and old should possess.

If we wish to bring humanity to something new and better, let us accentuate more than ever the idea of man's essential divinity. Let me take as an example a man whose life has not been flooded with the influences of the age, who has risen above them and is standing out conscious of these things that I have told you about. The very fact that he is aspiring is a wonderful thing. But we can aspire and aspire, and if we do not act it is of little use. But if a man takes up every duty as conscientiously as he would if he were to die tomorrow and be brought to the judgment seat, how different life would be.

But the real man that I speak of has the courage of his convictions. Where different attributes of his nature were weakened or enervated or negative, they become positive and strong through the application of the human mind to the realization that man is essentially divine and, being essentially divine, that he has potent inner dualities, which we seem not to know much about. But man can be eternally seeking them, eternally aspiring, eternally advancing. And if he is, the records are being imprinted continually in his own inner nature.

These records are not imprinted by telling him and assuring him of his growth and praising him. But he realizes that he has begun to think in a new way; that most of the thinking he did before was just surface-thinking. He never took time to think deeply into his own nature; he never knew anything about his higher states of consciousness; he never applied his mind to the possibility that there are more worlds than one, that there are thousands and millions of worlds, and countless ages before us and behind us. He is no longer satisfied with merely mental activity: he goes above it. He pushes on in his investigation, to strengthen his life, to purify it, to beautify it, and to perfect it.

When he has this consciousness of something divine in him, something he cannot go away from, it is so absolutely fascinating that he commences to train every part of his nature. A revelation comes to him — not in the sense that many might imagine, but it is a conscious power. He reaches another state of consciousness. When he reaches this state, he is likely at first to be confused, to doubt because he has not yet reached the full state or the better state, which everyone can reach in this one life. Not until he reaches the third degree of thinking can the confusion and doubts vanish.

How easy it is to compare this inner development with the study of music. When you started to learn your notes, did you ever dream for a good long while that you could do anything more than run up and down the scales and play a few simple pieces? You did not expect to find yourself coming out before the public as known musicians; and it is the same with all classes of men who work in that way. They work on one line.

But the real man works on all lines. First he makes his physical body a fitting house for his spiritual soul — the immortal man. He keeps himself pure and clean and strong, not only in the outward sense, but he keeps his inner life so as well. Then he realizes that for thousands of years men's minds have been weighed down with teachings that are impossible to accept in the light of reason. He realizes further that he has not heretofore reasoned deeply about them; he has let others do his reasoning for him. He passes through this and reaches another state of consciousness, where the higher soul speaks, where the immortal man speaks. He

receives the light of the living power that is in each of us, from the smallest to the greatest, from the weakest to the strongest — the power of the inner divinity of man. This will carry us through the ages and change the whole aspect of life. It will take man right to the point of understanding nature.

How much do we know about nature? How much do we know of what happened to our children before they were born — of the prenatal conditions and all that preceded? We cannot know much because we are hemmed in and psychologized by the influence of the age, by the teachings of the past that have held us. The minds of men have fashioned our lives, the minds of men have fashioned the system of living, while it is our own souls that wish to speak. It is our own souls that are ready to proclaim to us these great truths, while we may be living away from the world, unrecognized by many. But the growth, the ascent, is taking place. And if one can do it, all can do it.

If a man can astonish the world with the extraordinary, seemingly phenomenal results of his achievements in music, in art, in invention, and so forth, we call him great. But great as he is, how small he is in comparison with the man who has discovered within himself that sweeping, rushing, pulsating, ever-living power of his own divine soul. You cannot move away from it. It will hold you forever. Your eyes may become dim in time, and your hair grow gray, and your body look tired and worn, but the soul is alive. There is no aloneness any more: there is the realization of the higher state of consciousness, the consciousness of the companionship of the gods, so to speak.

I have never had any children of my own, but I have seen very beautiful children: I have looked into the eyes of a little innocent child, and at such times I have felt that if I could have been entirely true to myself in other lives, and if I had had even the knowledge that I have now, that child could, without a word, without a sermon, but just by its presence and in its eyes or its manners, reveal to me many of the secrets of life.

I believe many of these children come prepared to give us our life's message, but we do not hear them. Instead we commence to train them just as grandfather or great-grandfather did, according to a certain system. We do not give them any chances at all. And so they grow up, and then we blame them afterwards when they are all out of tune, when things go wrong. After a while some of them may be so far off the track that they go to prison, and a few of them are hanged. Isn't it pitiful? They are not wholly to blame. We cannot blame anybody or anything except ourselves. And even in doing this, we should not bring ourselves to embarrassment, but rather should we feel the importance of reaching the light, of pushing our way along the path until we reach the heights and know the truth and *become!* Real life is joy, even here on this earth. If you do not find the joy of life, that is your own fault.

Have some conception of the nature of a real man or a real woman! It is not so far away from anyone, if those who have aspirations can try to reach the point of believing in themselves, ignoring all the old conceptions of fear and dread of punishment, of hell and death, and look upon them in another way. Consider death as the most divine phase of life. This brings home to you something that nothing else can. Those who are tired and think, perhaps, they are nearing the end of life, let them realize that theirs is a glorious prospect. Death is wonderful! When the old coat — the body that we have had to wear in order to keep ourselves together in our mortal life — is about to be changed, do not believe that the great, eternal source of light and life is going to give you less privileges than just everyday nature has. Even the trees reincarnate, so to speak.

So do not limit yourself in your thought — drive out of your minds this picture of a life of only seventy-seven years, and then your hells and your eternal punishment and your revengeful God. See all eternity before you for the completion of your life. Find new hope and new courage, for life is joy, the real man is possible, and wonderful changes in human nature can happen when men are ready. Everything is ready; but alas! we are not.

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Chapter 4

THE SACREDNESS OF MARRIAGE AND THE REAL CHILD

If the sacredness of marriage were rightly considered, we should not have such a dismal story to tell of the failures in married life — the disasters, the mistakes, and the sorrow. In our modern life with all its reading and study and mental acquisitions, humanity seems to have lost sight of the fact that a real marriage is almost a divine institution. When marriage is accepted as a sacred sanction, a sacred gift, and a sacred power, and it is entered into understandingly by both man and woman, we shall have no more divorces. There are surely enough divorces today to compel us to take another view of marriage.

For marriage there should be great preparation, just as there is for everything else of a serious nature that is accomplished in life. This preparation should begin in rightly forming the character of the children. If children were rightly educated, the sacredness of all life would creep almost imperceptibly into their hearts. We need not talk to them of marriage, but we can give them even before they are ten years old some slight conception of why they are here and what is the meaning of life.

No man who has any respect for law and order should have the audacity to assume a position of responsibility which he knows very little about. It is the same with women. If this rule were followed in marriage, we should have true marriages and there would be no divorces. But marriage is taken up so lightly nowadays that the disasters that follow its many failures are pathetic. They bring heartache, sorrow, and disappointment; and one never knows how far the effects may reach of a marriage entered into without a full consciousness of its sacredness.

Our duty compels us so to fashion our children that before they are sixteen they can feel so deeply and profoundly the seriousness of life that there is no room in their minds for them to absorb the errors and weaknesses, the insinuations and the innuendoes, of false teachings and bad examples. We must educate our children on such a high key of morality, of honor, and of justice that they will have a firm anchorage in the great vortex of human life. How can you expect boys and girls to build their homes spiritually and splendidly and justly if they have no foundation of character on which to build?

Coupled with all the good intellectual training that we give to our children, we must give them primarily the moral education. We must teach them in their tender years, before they move too far away from us, what it means to live, to love, and to serve. We must imbue them with the idea of the greatness of human life, showing them so plainly and so clearly that they will accept it, that life is precious, sacred, divine; and that being divine, it is a part of eternity.

Boys and girls brought up in this way, with their thoughts rooted in the spiritual realities, will grow as the flowers grow, and by the time they have reached a point of decision, of selection of their life-companions, they will act slowly and understandingly, thoughtfully and wisely and rightly. They will realize that human life, rightly understood and rightly lived, is joy, and that this joy to be lasting must be built on high principles. Our power of service to humanity, our real joy, happiness, depend upon the education of the spiritual side of man — especially of the child.

The children in the Raja-Yoga School at Point Loma begin in their tender years to *find themselves* in their efforts, in their mistakes, in their disappointments, without fear of punishment. They begin to find that knowledge is within, that the glory of God is within, that the divine life is within, and in the simplest possible way they move towards it, just as they would towards a flower in the garden.

Why can we not make the whole world sing of the joy of living, the joy of loving, and above all, the joy of serving? Why can we not live out our highest aspirations? Because we have been for ages psychologized with the fear of punishment and the fear of that awful hell, wherein we were to be burning for all eternity. The teaching of karma, that as ye sow, so must ye also reap, does not condemn you to eternal punishment. It merely means that you shall reap the consequences of your own actions until you have learned your lessons

therefrom, until you have canceled your indebtedness.

Nor can we move away from the spirit of forgiveness, because it comes right out of our divine natures. It breathes the Christos-spirit, it takes us away from our personality and our selfishness, and we have no more time to think of our wrongs. We ourselves, rather, must become an example to humanity which will challenge all thinking people to a deeper and more profound conception of life. Remember that they themselves are essentially divine, splendid qualities are sleeping within them. No matter how great the worldly success or the scholastic attainment, there must come that inward consciousness of divinity, best expressed in the spirit of loving and forgiving. When this is done, we shall know the meaning of eternal love, of eternal justice, and of the sacredness of marriage.

Man knows, if he thinks at all, that there are many universes, many lives, and glorious achievements for all men; and that life can even now be made beautiful and helpful and optimistic. But first he must have the basic idea that the spiritual man is immortal, hence that man is essentially divine in nature. Then we shall have a new conception of deity — not as a personified being, but as a superb, wonderful, full expression of divine perfection. With this knowledge of essential divinity which every man can find within himself, there must come a higher education for the youth. The child that comes to us is not all ours; he is a part of the great scheme of life, and he has a great mission to perform. It is not for us to attempt to limit the possibilities of that child, for wisdom is to be learned even from the lips of little children.

When a child comes to us, who can tell the mystery of its birth? Science goes just so far, but it does not take us into the spiritual realm. It does not bring us to the realization that that bit of humanity is essentially divine, that we have a sacred responsibility in giving it its due. You can educate it, love it, pet it, provide for it, suffer for it, sacrifice yourself for it; but you fail in your duty to your child until you can give to it that which it expects from you. You are the teachers. Children are not put in our keeping just to be cared for on the physical plane. We must give them the realization of their essential divinity which they are entitled to. Maybe the child, within its own nature, unable to speak or act, may teach its parents something about the spiritual life.

You have your money and lose it, you have your property and lose it, but once you get that divine force, that divine consciousness that you are a part of the great universal scheme of life, you have found the treasures of the law. You can suffer then understandingly. You may be without a friend, without shelter — never mind, you have this treasure, the consciousness of your essential divinity. That is the keynote of man's life — to find his divinity and realize his heritage. Then he immediately understands his own responsibilities. He does not have to be taught them: he knows within himself his own responsibility to himself, to his children, to his city, to his nation, and to the world at large. This responsibility is ennobling.

With the consciousness of their own essential divinity, mothers and fathers must necessarily have a broader view of life, for if they have it not, how can they give it to their children? So that not only do we need a higher education for the youth, but for men and women as well.

When we have a new conception of ourselves, a new conception of the responsibilities of married life, then something new happens: we become optimistic instead of pessimistic. We have risen above that limited idea of one life, our vision opens as we begin to see the greatness of the divine and the greatness of man, with his possibilities. Then man is made anew, he is blessed in his own knowledge, in the reality of his consciousness that he is essentially divine. It is something so sacred, it is within the heart of every human being and every man has felt it.

So in order to do justice to our children, there is a sacred duty for the parents, and that is to know themselves. When you find yourself you then have the secret to give to others who have it not. And here is where you should press into the atmosphere of home-life something new, something that makes you forget your trials and troubles.

The children come into your life right out of the unknown world, the world of living reality. They may know more than we do, and it is for us, in bringing them into the exterior and everyday world, to search within our own hearts, find the key to the situation, and then awaken the children to this reality. Then our anxieties and

our worries would be lessened because in the broader conception we would be working in harmony with the divine law, our whole natures would be alive and afire and aglow with that beautiful reality of the divine life.

The real child or youth is humanity's promise for the future. We must, of course, consider this child as being born to the real man and woman living the real life in a promising environment, with at least partial understanding. I shall make very little attempt to treat of the outer man, who lives entirely in the dollar-and-cent world and considers this one life the only one, because his ideas are very limited with regard to the divine scheme of existence. But, rather, I shall speak more of the inner man.

It is an ancient teaching that the child should be cared for from its very conception — that there should be preparation for the incoming soul. Those mothers who have talked most seriously to me on the subject, and who seem to have the greatest concern for the welfare of their children, tell me that they are not well satisfied with the little that they have in their hearts and minds, with no basis upon which to work. The child has been born into this world many times before. The child is a glorious, heaven-sent gift to the real man and woman, but the gift is not so exclusively theirs that the child is outside the workings of the divine laws and the wonderful natural laws that are always acting.

The mother should be the real teacher from the time the child is conceived; and from then on, if the child is placed in the proper environment and has the proper education — both spiritual and worldly, in the right degree — that child has the promise of offering an example of probity, sincerity, and virtue.

Neither you nor I could exist if there had not been some starting point, some great universal idea. And this universal idea is eternal love. Before the child is born, the real mother has confidence in her husband because he is walking on the same path as herself in self-directed evolution. There is no halfway loving, because they are both living the real life and finding happiness and peace. These two that I speak of believe in the essential divinity of man. They know that their child is, in the deepest part of its being, a soul. So they have a rare treasure placed in their care. They know that it has two natures in one being: that the outer flesh-house, the mortal part that we can all see and love, is capable of great development even in one lifetime; but that their child's full advancement and progress in this life cannot take place if it is eternally confronted with only the environment of the outer man and has little if any touch of the inner.

I am confident that many mothers, in the deepest recesses of their nature, in their silent moments and unuttered feelings, do come very close to some of the sublime truths of the inner life without being able to explain them. The home of the real man and woman that I have spoken of is of a rare quality, built on spiritual and inner forces as well as outer. There the mother has a basis on which she can work. She guards her thoughts from the time when the child is conceived. She builds high ideals into her thought-life before the child is born.

Without this inner spiritual knowledge that I speak of, the key to the child's future is missing, and when its dear little eyes look out into the world, telling all humanity of the godlike things it has brought, it gets no answer, save perhaps from the innermost recesses of the mother's heart. For she is the creator, the one who is molding that character, possibly for glorious achievements and superb victories in self-conquest.

How lovely children are even in their mischief and their little difficulties! How marvelously more so would they be in rounding out the spiritual nature under the guidance of the real mother and father, who are not only the caretakers but the watchful angels. In the ancient days, the expectant mother was not under the pressure of the annoyances and trials of everyday life. She had a sacred obligation to perform, a tremendous, sacred right. She was about to receive the gods, so to speak, so she spent her time quite separated from the many unnecessary associations and pressures that bind the woman down to the everyday life of care and perplexities and anxieties. The husband understood that it was to be so. Thus the nurture and education of the child began even before it was born, in preparation by both father and mother.

It does not matter how poor a mother is nor how many struggles she may have, she can conceive of such a picture by throwing herself into her own sacred thought-realm, where the very silence will be full of music, beautiful surroundings, and golden promises. This is the story of the ancient wisdom and of the inner life of the mother. The mother and father who follow this path find the joy of life, and their greatest joy is in having

the power to give enlightenment to their child.

As soon as a child is able to raise its hand in a temper, or to scream, or to say "I will" and "I won't," that is the time when mothers and fathers should begin to teach the child to know the duality of its own nature. We do not believe a mother will ever have success with her children as long as she loses her temper in trying to manage her child. She then goes down to the level of the child, and sometimes drags it lower down than it already is.

How many of our children and our young men and women do we prepare to meet life's battles? All down the ages we have been educated almost entirely in the outer life. The inner life has scarcely been considered at all, and so the real things are not accomplished, the great results do not come. If they did, the world would not be as it is today. We would not have so much crime, distress, suffering, and vice. If the child has been prepared through the rounding out of its character, so that its soul can breathe the invigorating fresh air of the eternal life, when it reaches the age which most parents realize is the time of greatest temptation for it, that boy or girl will not only be practical, sensible, pure, and good, but you will find it the strong boy or girl who can resist temptation. Such a one is wonderfully protected for the whole of its future, is not bewildered nor misled, and has even in its early years a comparatively clear insight into its possibilities.

The spiritual man takes in the needs of the outer life, adapts himself to it, does not run away from it but goes through it victorious. He is able to lift the burdens of humanity and to teach men by the beauty and simplicity of his own life. No man can become a real father, a real benefactor to his country, nor a real honor to his family and himself if he does not know something about the laws governing his inner nature, pointing to the essential divinity of man. So in dealing with our children, we must be clean and strong, pure and true and firm in our convictions, so that when those children look into our eyes we are not ashamed. Besides giving them the worldly things and ministering to their needs, we must give them one half of our time, one half of our nature, one half of everything that is blessed and true. So in your love of the true and the beautiful, you will find the great secret of living in such a way that life will be a joy, and the children of this coming time will receive blessings through you, so that you will make of your own home-life a heaven on earth for those who depend upon you.

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Chapter 5

SELF-ANALYSIS

Self-analysis is one of the phases of thought that is least accentuated in human life. We eagerly pass judgment on our neighbors; we are quite ready to criticize great writers and bogus ones; we read almost innumerable papers, magazines, stories, and books that are useless to us; but self-analysis is nowhere found as a practical feature of human life.

A man is heavily in the shadows if he has not been taught, or if he has not found out for himself, that he is essentially a spiritual being, that his soul is alive with superb possibilities. The hunger of his heart tells the story of how the soul longs for real freedom, how it is seeking recognition, how it is trying to find its place, to become more and more intelligent and better informed, how it seeks knowledge of facts in place of mere beliefs.

Another cannot give you what you own yourself. Self-analysis is the secret of coming into your own. Examine yourself: do not be satisfied with today or with the books you read or with the half-living that you call life. Dream yourself out into your greater possibilities. Visualize the future — if only a single year ahead. Day by day gain knowledge through self-examination, through the realization that man is spiritually immortal, through the royal dignity of the higher soul. Remember that this little span of seventy-seven or a hundred years is only a step in the progress that we as souls are about to make. When we do this, we can look back at our sorrows and trials and see that some of them were merely necessary experiences in our evolution. And some of the things that we considered injustices we will find seemed such because we looked at effects only and not at causes. When we find ourselves in that state, how broad, how liberal, how magnificent, how splendid we will be in the realization of the knowledge that bespeaks us as immortal.

Examine yourselves: question the eternal laws of life, ascertain the secret of the many riddles and problems which confront you. Why do our souls respond to the grander notes of music? Why are we carried away with the glory of the sun, the fragrance of the flowers, and the beauty of all that nature offers? Because then we are nearer the spiritual side of ourselves. Even if you cannot live up to your highest feelings, you touch the fringe of great truths in your aspirations; and when these are registered, the answer must come in time.

Find the higher self through self-analysis. To find the immortal self, the divinity in man, is to open up for yourself a new existence, a new vision, a grand and superb symphony of life, singing all the time though your ears may be deaf and your eyes cannot see. But within is the rising, surging, pulsating power of the soul, which tells the story of the eternity of man and his vast possibilities.

If a man has no more conception of the deeper things of life than mere brain-mind argument can give him, and if he is limited to the belief in one short earth-life, his power of self-analysis is very small. Real self-analysis is impossible to anyone who has not to a degree found his own essential divinity. Believing in his own essential divinity, something opens up in his nature. He finds himself on a line of investigation and research, he has made a beginning for his future happiness. He uses ordinary reason, of course, but he has something more. He must go beyond the limitations of the external man and visualize for himself a picture of the possibilities of the human soul. Then he reaches a point where real self-analysis is possible. Of course I am speaking from the standpoint of the idea of many lives in repeated incarnations on earth, the idea that man is divine in his potential qualities.

The man who accepts the idea that he is essentially divine must also accept the idea of spiritual growth, evolution. Evolution is often taught in a ridiculous manner, but evolution based on the essential divinity of man, on the eternal progress of the soul through the experiences of many earth-lives, ever approaching the great goal of perfection, is an inspiring and sublime doctrine and it can never conflict with any proved scientific fact.

The most beautiful secret is that no matter what knowledge man may acquire necessary to balance and adjust

his own life and bring it into harmony with his aspirations, he must impart to others the peace and happiness which this knowledge gives him. There must be something more than merely gaining knowledge for himself, attaining wealth, winning a position, writing learned books, and being considered important or "advanced." There must be burning in his heart that spirit of mercy and compassion which will lessen man's inhumanity to man. That is the true love of the divine. The divine love is all-powerful and all-merciful. There is mercy in the laws that govern our being, mercy in nature, mercy in divinity.

The knowledge of external nature taught in the schools is necessary for our education, but it is not enough. There must be knowledge of the inner laws of being, familiarity with oneself, with one's weaknesses and one's strength. No real self-analysis is possible to the man satisfied in acquiring merely intellectual knowledge. With all his worldly attainments, the one thing that man most hungers for is knowledge of himself — the power to analyze and understand his own life. This is essential for his soul's advancement. When man finds this knowledge, then he can declare that the divine is love and that human life is essentially beautiful. Life is beautiful as far as we make it so. Every man makes or mars his own life according to his own inner knowledge and the choice that he daily makes of the path he will walk.

Everyone fails in his duty if he does not realize that we all owe a great duty to our fellow men — even to the most unfortunate and degraded. We might have been in the same position ourselves if we had had the same surroundings as they. We must acquire a new idea of compassion, a new sense of justice, then our consciences will grow. And as we climb the hills of progress and reach the heights and learn of the glory of life, of the glory of the divine, and the love and mercy in the human heart, then we shall, in the spiritual sense, embrace the whole of humanity. For brotherhood is a fact in nature. We are all united by the same natural laws and must follow the same divine guidance.

Lay up your treasures in heaven by rounding out your life on earth, freshening and beautifying it. Let each one fulfill his smallest duty to the fullest, and live hopefully and trustingly, uplifting the world by the purity of his individual life. The world needs a change. We need the sweetness and nobility which every living man and woman has potentially within himself or herself. This is the way to bring humanity up to a higher state of morality and dignity. The weakness of our present civilization is in man himself. The reason for it is that he allows the lower nature in him to rule instead of the higher, divine self which is immortal. The lower nature is the undeveloped side of him, which can be transmuted and brought up to a quality that leads ultimately to happiness and perfection.

If you could move out of the glamour of the world, out of the psychology of the age, away from the insanity of its unrest, you would find a new kingdom within yourselves. There is no limitation to the power of the spiritual soul of man. All that is needed is for the brain-mind, which belongs only to the mortal and dies when the body dies, to become conscious that there is this divine power of the higher soul. It may seem to us to be sleeping, but it is within the very nature of man. Reason has its place of course; but if we appeal only to our reason, only to the outward man or to the world's conventional thought, if we come under the psychological influence of the unrest of the age, we receive very heavy doses of despair. We manifest it in different ways — suicide is an extreme instance.

But there are a great many very splendid people who have within them royal qualities of superb character, yet they do not know it. And that is why they struggle so, that is why life is such a terrible riddle for them. If a man does not know his own essential divinity, he cannot know his own inner god nor begin even to think towards universal deity intelligently. He is the greatest of all mysteries, for the last thing in the world he would ever do would be to come to himself for knowledge. He refuses to challenge his heart, his soul, his principles, and his conscience. No! He will go anywhere and everywhere but to the right place, and still despair.

So the supreme courage of the soul can be manifest only in one who knows himself, at least to a degree. One who has such knowledge is as sure of it as he is that the sun shines, he is so sure of it that it is teeming through his whole nature. It revivifies him, gives him a new conscience and a steadfast courage. Any man can make the effort to reach that knowledge. It requires no great strain, no remarkable process of the mind. It is just a calm, quiet confidence in oneself, that one can reach the goal. Then comes the real joy of living. We must admit that we do not meet so many people in the world who carry in their lives or in their faces, or in

anything they do or say, much that bespeaks the joy of living. But that is what we should all find, because nature is singing a beautiful song to our souls and our hearts all the time. There is something in the splendor of nature that appeals to us.

The more we know of our divine selves, and the larger consciousness we have of the greatness of life, the better we comprehend that it would be impossible in the divine scheme for man to be born on earth and fulfill his complete destiny in just one lifetime. It is impossible because the program is such a great one — it reaches out to eternity. What could be grander and more beautiful than to reach a point of certainty? Everything in life would change. I am firmly convinced that if we take care of our divine natures in the sense that we should, and if we utilize for all our lives this knowledge of right living, we would have the secret of longevity; and really and truly, the old would commence to grow young.

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Chapter 6

THE SPLENDOR OF THE INNER LIFE OF MAN

The grandeur and the splendor of the inner life of man should apply to everyone and interest all. We do not need anymore superstition, nor any more weird, uncanny teachings. We desire the truth about why we are here, what we are here for, and the meaning of life. When we find these truths and apply them to our daily activities, we also find the beauty of life and some wonderful explanations of the apparent injustices of the world.

Man is his own greatest enemy and his own best friend. He has the power of destroying himself or advancing himself. He can bless or curse his own life. So if we are looking for the splendor of the inner life of man, we are not going to speak of the exterior life — we are not going to speak of successes or mistakes or attainments or honors or wealth or possessions — but we are going to speak only of the inner life of man.

Man cannot live rightly without the splendor of his inner life, though of course there are different degrees of it, different expressions of it, and different stages of its growth. One might go into the prisons and find there a most degraded type of humanity, but there is yet a hidden ray of the inner life left in him because he was born a man and as such he had the rarest opportunity of all living creatures to realize that he is a soul.

The body dies, but the higher soul lives on, for it is a part of eternity. There is majesty in the thought; it is something to lead us away from our trials and difficulties out into a realm of thought where man can think and live and know and grow and love and serve. The poorest man can do this, the most uneducated or the educated. We say to those who err or to the prisoners: "Remember that for every moment you breathe, you have another chance. Realize further, that when you are tired and your eyes close, and you throw off the body, instead of going to death you go to life. It is nothing but throwing off the worn-out overcoat of flesh. Then the soul rises in the splendor of its life, just as far as it has lived; for there is that inner life, there is that spiritual manhood." That is a message for every man — indeed for every boy and girl and every woman.

Each one has his opportunity of finding the key that will unlock the riddle of his own nature: Man, know thyself! We do not presume to say that anyone could know all there is about man or his possibilities in one short lifetime, for we are yet like little children out in the woods, trying to find our way. No one can tell half of the wonderful processes of nature that made a human being out of an atom. So life at the present time is a mystery because man does not know himself. But from this point of view, one can see with what joy and delight I dare to think into the life of man, and to think into the possibilities of his inner life, because that is the spiritual man, the living soul, not the part that dies when the body dies. The world may not know anything about the inner life of man, many may not believe in the possibilities of the inner life, but that does not make any difference. A fact is a fact. Nature is a fact, and the universal infinite laws of life are facts, and we must meet them whether we will or not.

According to theosophy, the great purpose of man being on this earth-plane, living this life and other lives, is that the soul may have the privilege of growing and advancing and learning through experience. This opens a new vista of inspiring hope for the human race. It lifts the veil on the inner life of every human being. But one cannot understand this at all or have any interest in the subject if his mind is so limited. What are we here for? What are we searching for, what are we trying to reach? Why are we living in this world of effort? Are we not trying to show that man is a spiritual being, and that as such he is born for all eternity? There is a great, magnificent, sacred, and universal plan in life. But those who live entirely in the outer world, following solely worldly pursuits from day to day, if they do not believe in the inner life of man and live in accordance with it, must still remain ignorant.

In the Bible Jesus taught that the kingdom of heaven is within. He did not say we would find it in a boat out on the great sea of life without a rudder, or on some other planet, or anywhere else but within ourselves. Now, man evolves from one life to another, and in proportion to the knowledge he seeks, or the knowledge he gains, he goes ahead. To advance along the path of self-directed evolution implies self-study, self-growth,

self-control.

We must be like the musician, who starts in childhood with his five-finger exercises and counts aloud — 1, 2, 3, 4. As he continues applying himself, after a while something new and promising is aroused in him. His ability increases day by day, and after some years he finds himself acknowledged a master musician. So it is with the great artists, the great writers, the great inventors, the great thinkers: they have found within themselves the splendor of the inner life which is the key to their success. Their souls are touched by their aspirations. They have made up their minds that tomorrow they will do more than they did today — nothing can discourage them. That is what I mean by the splendor of the inner life of man.

Evolution shows us that there are different degrees of progress and various stages and conditions in life. It is obvious that one man may know more than another, that one man may serve more than another. So in the process of evolution we have all varieties of human conditions to deal with. But the essential teaching is that man shall know himself. Do not bother about your neighbors until you have found out that secret in your own nature. And when you find it, you will aim to impart it to the whole world. And it is inspiring for us to rejoice even in our trials!

In the study of theosophy and its application to daily life, man will find his inner life. But no man can find its splendor if he is looking for the outer expression of it. He must look for something that his heart yearns for. There is not a man living, provided he knows how to think and his brain is properly balanced, who does not yearn for something better, who does not aim for something higher and more true, and who does not aspire to become a nobler man. But how much encouragement does he have in the world? Not very much, you will agree.

Selfishness governs the world, and selfishness is the insanity of the age. In the different countries of Europe which I have visited one can see the misery and the agony, the torture, the suffering, and the injustices that have been inflicted upon the people as the result of this insanity expressing itself in the Great War. That war created a hell that we shall not move away from for many years. And we in America also took part in it, and we have yet to suffer for it too.

Let us realize that every century has its own time and way of doing things. And right now, this very hour, will never come again. You will never have this chance again, nor shall I. So we can see how precious the moments are, how precious time is, how gloriously sacred and beautiful life is. When we are in search of the truth and are on the right path, when we believe in self-directed evolution and in our own essential divinity, we are marching forward in confidence. We may make our mistakes, we may falter and find ourselves in the shadows, but the spirit of the eternal truth is then working through our lives, no matter how little it may be seen by others.

The splendor of the inner life of man is manifested by the truly great thinker. I hold that no man can think in the truest sense, and find himself even in small degree, without drawing upon the spiritual strength of his nature. He finds the truly creative powers of his mind if he is not wedded to mere intellectualisms. He will not try to refashion himself for the world and create his god on the basis of what he already knows. The moment you find a man who thinks he knows much, run away from him; he is dangerous. His egoism is so great that he is really a colossal failure.

The real thinker is not to be judged by his wealth nor his fame nor his position. He may or may not partake of these things. But the real thinker is so involved with and so much a part of the new life and the new knowledge that come to him from the inner man that he has twice the strength to do his daily duties: he meets the battles of life with twice the courage he had before. You will find more love in a man like that in one moment than you will find in another in ten years. Why? Because his mind is open to the light of the eternal man and of the soul living its different incarnations. Each time he comes back to earth he is in a new school of experiences, new processes of growth — he is ever advancing.

Consider the growth of a child from a single cell — that is a magnificent, wonderful, and glorious process. And we human beings, with our little minds, have nothing to do with it at all. The mother is the nurse, she has a holy treasure to take care of. But suppose she does not believe in the spiritual nature of man, suppose she

has no vista of life's grand possibilities, suppose she has neglected or forgotten or overlooked them, or suppose she has been too weak to make an effort to become: what kind of a mother can she be to the little innocent soul entrusted to her care? What can she teach her child, or her husband, or her community of the real life? How little she knows, because the basis of life is in the spiritual nature — that is the part that knows, that progresses, and that aspires.

With humanity in the condition it is in today, one may think it is rather farfetched to speak of these subjects. But this is just the time to talk of them, to attract people to the importance of studying the whole nature of man, of trying to understand the sacred meaning and purpose of life. I cannot conceive that any mother and father are fitted to be parents until they have learned something of the universal laws of cause and effect. They must know something of their own inner natures. They cannot live entirely in the brain-mind, the mere intellect and mere scholastic education. They must have *spiritual* enlightenment.

So where you find great thinkers who have reached the heights, you will probably find also, if you study their mothers and fathers, something very unusual. Something had happened in their lives — there was a divine trust, an inner trust. It may be that nobody knew anything about it because they had made no effort to speak of it to the world, but it marked the child for better things. Now, in becoming a real thinker, the first thoughts that one has are a little dangerous, and one should go very slowly in following those thoughts in the conduct of the practical affairs of life. The wise man always goes slow. But when he reaches the position where he can recognize that there is this inner something in himself which aims to express itself, he will meet it halfway.

Considering the different degrees of thinking: when man first begins to think, using only his brain-mind, he is confused. The next time, he thinks he knows a little more and is a little more confused. The third time he commences to think, he is just coming to the depths of more serious thoughts, and that is the time when a man becomes discouraged and gives up. He does not know that the higher laws are right in his inner nature, and perhaps the very question he is confused about can be answered by himself, if he is patient.

But if he seeks again for knowledge at this fountain of truth, this center within himself, in the confidence of his dignity and manhood, then he finds something. There is where the great thinkers live, who are the dominant powers of the ages. And none but the generous and unselfish can ever reach the real thinking quality. Others are so absorbed in themselves and so afraid of losing their identity, fearful lest they become lost in the clouds or something of that sort, that they dare not challenge themselves to find out who they are, whence they came, and what they are here for.

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Chapter 7

SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The whole of humanity needs a new spiritual awakening. Knowledge of the great, splendid, inspiring, and eternal life of the soul is not yet ours, for if it were we would meet life with a new cheer, a new trust, a new hope, and a new love. We would have the key to our problems, we would be climbing the mountains, we would be living in the eternal and yet doing our full part here. We would be loving as we have never loved before, understanding as we have never understood before; we would be drawing all our thoughts out of our inward, spiritual natures, out of our aspirations. If we were to do this, the glory of the great universal law would shine in our hearts with every breath that we drew. Then we should clearly understand that this one lifetime is but one schooltime in our many lives.

When will the time come, when men will awaken? Only a very few here and there are boldly seeking the light. Half the good people in the world meet timidly the larger truths that are coming to humanity. Go out into the gardens of nature, away from the reach of men, and there find yourself, there talk to your God — or do it alone in the silence of your own nature, sounding the depths of your own soul — and you can never tell how soon the light will come to you.

The awakening must come through suffering if people are not ready to reach out and receive the light spontaneously, trustingly, lovingly, hopefully. You may read the best books and have the most learned teachers, but you never can get the real secrets of life that are at hand for each until you have found them within yourselves. Then there will be a new spiritual awakening in you, and you can answer humanity's cry for help. Through catching a glimpse of the soul's possibilities, everything will change. A wonderful soul-dignity will arise among men.

Let each man believe more in his own possibilities, hugging closely all that is true and beautiful and leaving behind him all his mistakes, setting aside his prejudices and stretching his mind out into the eternal things, realizing that this earth-life is necessary in a sense, but only so far as he concerns himself with his needs and not with his wants. If we could give one half as much time to our spiritual selves as we do to some of the nonessentials in our daily lives, we could make the world over. We have not to look to anything external for the help that we hunger for, we are to find it within ourselves, each one according to his own evolution.

Science fails by being too much materialized, and religion as it has been taught for so long fails for the same reason. We are not placed on this earth to be parrots or babies. We are here to redeem ourselves, to take our opportunities for self-directed evolution. There is nothing more terrible than to see so many splendid people just drifting about, accepting so-and-so simply because their grandfathers did. That is why I say that human life is a terrible tragedy, for the reason that the divine laws or the laws of nature are not understood. Life is not made beautiful, the real depth and glory of everyday life is not known because more time is spent in the material things than in the spiritual. When we can fashion love and justice into our lives and build a great new hope through the teaching of reincarnation, of more and more experiences so that we may continue to grow, then comes real independence of soul, then comes that wonderful spiritual awakening which is the keynote for the New Year.

I believe that when our children are born, or reincarnated, they are ready for the awakening, for the revelation of revelations in themselves. They might teach the elders when they come, but they are not given half a chance. Are they not tied down with customs and habits and set plans and the old limited idea of just one earth-life? What does the boy or girl have in the growing time to attach himself or herself to that has the basic spiritual life in it? And after a while they move into the psychological nightmare of half-dreaming and half-living instead of fully living.

When the material life is well understood and lived truly with an understanding of the spiritual life, we will not have to spend our time studying from books who and what we are: we will find inside our own natures a wonderful poem of life, a wonderful revelation. It may not come in a moment or in a day. It is something

indescribable. Think of the spirit of universal brotherhood ripening the heart of humanity. All the difficulties that confront us would be surmounted. Sickness, disease, sudden death, and all the unnatural horrors of the world were never intended for us. They are the result of the misuse of knowledge or of the lack of knowledge.

But the divine glory of having a knowledge of life that is all-loving and all-powerful, in the belief that not one is lost, that self-directed evolution is the plan that we are a part of, each one moving according to his evolution and the ultimate goal the ever-expanding perfectibility of man! We will not presume to insult the divine laws by expressing an opinion as to when that will be. But it will come through the spiritual awakening of our higher natures, which are indestructible and eternal. A very few people can do tremendous things when their minds are rightly attuned to the needs of the hour. The divine laws of life are the factors that we must appeal to — we have enough of the world's pressures, of vice, of sin, of crime, of disharmony.

The world is filled with a tremendous amount of brain-power, great intellectual energy, and in some directions superb efforts for the advancement of the human race. But there is still something woefully lacking. While it is true that man is a thinker and that some men do much thinking, still we do not think deeply enough and so we do not comprehend the strength, the beauty, the grandeur, and the potency of man once he has raised his consciousness to a higher state. There is no limit to the possibilities of man's growth. As yet we are all as little children on the by-paths of life, often discouraged and then again renewing our courage. We have much to lead us astray, but the light shineth within. Every man has his own light, his own strength, his own ability, and his own opportunities if he will but grasp them. Instead of looking outwards or to others for a knowledge of the divine wisdom, look within — that is the place. Men must be led kindly to this spiritual awakening.

There is something tremendously fine in man when considered as a whole. His possibilities for future development are magnificent. But if one has no faith in anything outside of his thinking qualities, he can have no adequate idea of his own strength of character or of the possibilities of his life. He cannot get these until he has discovered within himself those spiritual qualities which come from his highest yearnings — the spiritual awakening. Sometimes it comes through sorrow and misery, sometimes much thinking and much questioning bring it, sometimes it overwhelms him like a revelation and takes him out of the common way of thinking into a new world of creative ideas. He awakens and finds who he is and why he is here. He commences to see that there are wonderful divine forces playing through human life all the time — visible and invisible.

Certainly whatever that source is that fashions this wonderful scheme of the universe, whatever that center of light or energy is that developed and brought us where we are, it has the power to explain the mystery of our lives, to tell us who we are, why we are here, whence we came, and that all knowledge is at our command if we seek it.

Theosophy teaches that man is essentially divine in nature and that the part of him which is not divine is what worries him, frets him, keeps him discouraged and down in the shadows, and creates all disharmony. That is not his higher nature; and he cannot live in his higher nature if he does not make room for it and make for it the right atmosphere. We have scarcely begun to think yet. We touch the fringe of great truths, but it takes human hands and human hearts to bring these truths closer to our understanding.

If our journey through life can be so solidly true that every note in thought and act is pure and every motive unselfish, then we shall be able to hear some of the undertones and overtones of the great harmonies of life: we shall have our spiritual awakening. These things are possible. Then there will come stealing into our natures, into our hearts, our heads, and our intentions, a larger charity for those who err, a new quality of tender compassion that will make us forgive our enemies. We will close our eyes at night knowing that something quite new and all our own has been born of our thought and our will power — not from our criticism, our intellectual harshness and severity, but from the softness, the tenderness, and the gentleness of our own hearts.

Think of the fear that people carry through life — the fear of death, of suffering, of poverty. Fear consumes a great deal of man's brain-oil and dissipates much of his energy and power. Once man's consciousness of his own essential divinity is aroused, it is like a new circulation of the blood: it makes new life, it gives new vision, it creates new hope, it can and does reflect itself onto the physical body.

What man needs more than anything else is balance. Unless man is a bump of walking egoism that nobody could endure, he knows in his striving and in his yearning that there is something more waiting for him, that there is something he should have had which he has not had. It takes so few to do grand and magnificent things when they are united. Many men do well, but they do not do well enough. Many men think, but they do not think deeply enough. Men have not faith enough in themselves to bring themselves to the point of challenge and self-analysis.

With this awakening to new and better things come revelations so sacred that no words can describe them. A man with full confidence and consciousness of his own essential divinity, though he may not have a dollar or a friend, yet has one of the treasures that every man must possess before he can reach a point of understanding and knowing his God or himself.

Death according to theosophy is rebirth. Understanding this we should not be ready to hold our loved ones with us when they must go. We should not hold them with regrets and tears and selfish grief. We should put these aches and pains aside and forget them, and thus help our loved ones to their freedom and their release from the body the soul has been struggling in. When you can think of death in this way it is a revelation. You can smile while the tears are bursting through your heart.

Move away from the psychology of just brain-mind thinking. We think we have educated ourselves, whereas it is the world that has educated us. We are an epitome of the world's joys and its woes. Our brain-mind shuts out the enlightenment that the soul would give us. The soul is the companion, the warrior, the friend. It travels the path for eternity, whereas the body is just the physical overcoat that we wear for this time while we are here on earth.

Move away from small, narrow, personal things and go into a higher state of consciousness. The feeling will be like that which comes to one who has been living down in a valley without seeing any sunshine for a long time, when suddenly he finds himself at the top of the hill with the most glorious vista of the world's beauty spread before him. The whole make-up is changed. One attains a quality of the mind that belongs to the immortal man — intuition. Depending upon your own intuition, the very trees and flowers will talk to you. You will be so sure of yourself that you cannot be interfered with, if you are on the right path of self-directed evolution.

What are mothers and fathers giving to their children that will stand by them when the parents are gone, that will make their lives bearable, that will enable them to understand the meaning of life and find its joy? Keep thinking and thinking more deeply, and before you know it you will find yourself caught up from this web of controversy and questioning. Enlightenment will come, more smiles will be on your face, more gladness in your eyes, more joy for your children and also for your community and therefore more peace for the world.

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Chapter 8

PROSPERITY AND THE POVERTY OF OUR IDEALS

In the sacredness of the silence great and wonderful things are done. One has not to move very far away from himself to realize that the very best thoughts he has ever had have remained for the most part unuttered. Man's greatest aspirations, his brightest dreams, his grandest hopes have been so deep in his heart-life, in his mind, and in the silent yearnings of his better nature that no words could utter them — so sacred are they and so little understood.

In spite of all the great efforts that have been made to spread the truth, this silent power in our hearts, in our longings, in our unuttered prayers tells of even better things for humanity all the time, just as far as our motives are unselfish and impersonal. If every man today could have just the one living idea of his own essential divinity, of his everlasting, eternal life, of his being a part of deity's great family!

Nothing is lost. Consider everything that happens in our waking and in our sleeping, in our thinking and in our talking, and still more in our silences. Is it understood or even dreamed that one's most beautiful and helpful ideas come in the silence? Think of the glory and mystery of the beautiful flowers: in the early springtime we have little evidence that anything is waiting for us, and then almost in a day, from all parts of the earth, everywhere, come these beautiful messengers of silence. There is certainly a mystery about them. We cannot yet fully tell what the wonderful processes are that have brought these flowers to such perfection. We do not know how long ago the first seed of them was planted.

There is so much that we meet in our everyday lives that we cannot explain, that we do not understand. The reason is that we have removed ourselves so far away from our higher source of knowledge — the better part of us, the nobler, aspiring, eternal part which is to be found only in the silence. The other part of us belongs in a sense only to the outer world, to the mortal man, to the one lifetime. But we shall live again and again!

Hug to your heart the idea that you are divine in essence. Believe that the best of yourself is to be found in the silence, when your soul is seeking recognition. Yet the soul of humanity is so lonely because men live so much on the outer plane and so little in the inner field of the aspirations and the hopes and the consciousness of their essential divinity.

We have been educated for ages to look outside of ourselves for help, so most people have tried to penetrate through the mysteries of life with the brain-mind alone and have never reached the Real, because they have depended upon external help instead of retiring into the silence of their deeper natures and feeling their own heart-throbs, so to speak, and challenging and questioning themselves. They do not reach it because struggling humanity has for ages been continually reminded of its mistakes, its weaknesses, its sins.

So men have had little time left for finding out who they are, where they come from, and whither they go. They have had little to satisfy their souls. There are some things that may satisfy a limited mind, the brain-mind, because that mind may be yet psychologized with the unrest of the age. It may mean well, but it does not know itself; consequently it does not aspire. But there are thousands and thousands in the world today who are seeking the light and the truth.

Considering prosperity and the poverty of our ideals, I shall speak of America in particular. We cannot help acknowledging that in the material sense America is prosperous, and as the country advances in its outward prosperity, so do the people to a degree. But they do not reach the deeper needs of their natures in this way, and what they do get through such prosperity is only for this one life, unless they are of the kind that believe there is more light and therefore long for, strive for, and work untiringly for more light. Such as these are moving in quite another direction than those entirely occupied with material prosperity. They have a superb trust because when one is absolutely conscious of his own essential divinity, the light breaks, the veil is lifted, and life has a new meaning.

In the great scheme of our spiritual evolution, it was intended that we should love one another in the truest sense — be brothers, live in the spirit of brotherhood. If we so lived and had the knowledge of our own essential divinity, all the rest that our souls long for would come. But without this there is no way to solve the perplexing problems which confront us. It is intended in the great plan of the universe that man should know himself. The greatest writers, savants, scientists, even the world's geniuses, go just so far, and they cannot go beyond because they have not the wonderful key which is that man is divine in essence. They do not see beyond this life.

Conscious of man's essential divinity, and still more conscious of the love of the great central source of life, all the rest is cared for if we are doing our duty, if we are living according to the best knowledge we have, and especially if, going beyond that, we are ever seeking more knowledge. Do not look upon the idea of man's essential divinity and his eternal life as such a faraway ideal. Consider it more deeply, and then look out into nature and see what she will tell you. Then come back to the realm of deeper thought and face yourself with knowledge, with enlightenment, with larger trust, conscious of the power to overcome through this trust.

Know well that we are challenged by the divine laws of life. It is not intended that we should be disconsolate or think we are such wretched sinners. Such a belief has no place in the great scheme of eternal life, which is all love. Reach out into the atmosphere of love — think of it, work for it, live for it, serve for it — then you will find a touch of that peace that you forever crave.

Every human face tells its story in a different way because we have all grown up differently and in different environments. So take the idea of self-directed evolution in connection with the idea that man has within himself the inner knowledge of his essential divinity and is able to direct his destiny — to make it strong, splendid, pure, and full of service, or otherwise.

It is remarkable that, in spite of all the grandeur and beauty of life, we allow ourselves — not intentionally or understandingly, but ignorantly — to drift into the vortex of the world's chaos, confusion, doubt, fear, restlessness, and despair. Yet every man is his own savior: he can curse his life or he can bless it. Until a man has the knowledge of his own essential divinity, he is not to be condemned for the mistakes he has made when looking outside for the light while it was within. But he *is* to blame if he continues doing so after he knows that there is another door open for him and that all he has to do is to enter in.

The stars and the light and the very atmosphere challenge every man, but first he must challenge himself. When we think along these lines we are out in a vast field of thought. We no longer suppose that this is the only world. We learn of the hundreds of other worlds and the hundreds of other planets. And then we might possibly have courage enough to believe that we have lived before and that some part of the knowledge that we have in our lives now, we have had before. But our lives are still unfinished because, if man is essentially divine, eternal, one wonders if a rational mind could conceive of man living only seventy-seven or one hundred years — just one lifetime in which to solve this great riddle of eternity.

There is a great poverty of ideals in human life today: the best of them are unexpressed. What field does the world offer in order fully to live out our ideals? Where is the comradeship or the education that will take us out of our limitations into a larger view of life and a larger view of the majesty of the infinite laws and the glory of living? In very truth humanity is crying today for the peace that comes from living out our inner ideals. Even the unborn children are calling for it.

While, as I said, material prosperity belongs only to this one life, yet surely you do not think for a moment that I would not wish you prosperity. But to be so absorbed in material gain in the outer life as to imagine that that is all, or that it is going to bring you the peace that your hearts crave — nay, it is only transitory. If this material prosperity is sustained by honest dealing and right conduct, it is a part of the scheme of life, but otherwise there is nothing to it. Better be out in the woods with no shelter than to be living as many are living today, gaining their prosperity at the expense of their suffering brothers.

I am more and more impressed with the poverty of our ideals today. I often ask myself, have we advanced? Has civilization reached a point where we can speak with pride of it as a glorious civilization? No, we cannot do it, because we must ever keep in mind those fellow human beings who are going downhill all the time,

losing their way; those who have no faith, no love; those who have been overlooked and are drifting downwards. We must be doing something more than we have ever done, and we must do this very soon. We must raise the ideals of men to a higher standard. Too many people have their ideals for Sunday only and forget them the rest of the week.

Theosophy offers humanity a philosophy of life that is so optimistic that it brings to the realization of all the wonderful power of changing one's own life. Surely every man and woman in the world today can do better than they have done. The silent power that I spoke of is everywhere. You will not always see it under the name of theosophy: you will find it in the kingdom of nature, in the woods, in the stars as they speak their silent language to us, and in the silence of human hearts everywhere. And then your mind will go beyond into a grander vista of another world and more superb possibilities for all — even for the very least of us.

The things you have lost or missed in this life that really belong to your souls can be yours because everyone has another chance — always another chance! So let us work for the grander ideals and discourage anything and everything that leads to the extreme. Let us bring our boys and girls into a commonsense line of action — a more quiet, more thoughtful way of living and growing. Pray let them not suffer from our poverty of ideals. And because these ideals are not tangible, do not imagine they are not real: they are the greatest reality of our existence.

There are of course very good men and women everywhere; but they are the exceptions. And when I refer to the poverty of our ideals, I am not referring to our beautiful buildings, our splendid school edifices, our great inventions, nor to the world's enormous wealth of material possessions. No, I am talking about our children, our boys and girls who walk our streets every day. Most of them are not going the right way, many of them are drifting the wrong way — some rapidly, others slowly and insidiously. There is no real chance for them. Why? Because high ideals are not presented to them from Monday morning until Saturday night, as they should be. On the contrary, they have drummed into their ears, and they read in the newspapers and everywhere they turn, dollars, dollars! Now of course the dollar-and-cent question has its place, but our minds are made for something more. They are made to do grand thinking, to echo the thoughts of our higher natures. When the body dies, the brain-mind dies with it. What does go on forever is that eternal, spiritual part, the spiritual soul, the essential divinity.

The cry of the age is: More light, more light! We must therefore make truth so easy to understand that even the children can grasp it and grow in it and conquer and find the joy of living. Nowadays our boys and girls are not happy unless they are moving about, here, there, and everywhere. They think they must have the fever of excitement in their everyday lives. The restlessness of the youth is menacing. To change this condition, make your homes more attractive in the truest sense: illumine them with the light of real knowledge, bring them to a condition where your children will know that *you* have found the right way. Then you will begin to accentuate something new in your own souls that will reecho in your children and in all. Of course you must have your outward life and you must work for dollars and cents rationally. But you must divide your time and give to your souls, to your consciences, and to those you love a tribute of the gods, for such it proves to be when a man finds in this noisy world of ours that humanity is divine in essence and that nothing is lost in the great scheme of life. This gives a man a larger view, another view, and still another, which are not contradictory but are the result of his continuous growth, of his deep aspirations strengthened by his spiritual will.

One need not be surprised if he looks in the glass and finds that some of his wrinkles have gone out of his face, that his sorrow and despair have begun to vanish. He will begin to find in himself secrets of a divine love that warms his soul and enlightens his mind and enables him to give courage to others. Perhaps he will find in his own home new opportunities and ways of speaking more kindly and building more securely and more richly for the future through his knowledge of the everlasting life.

But we need not wait for another life. Every moment can be made so precious that ere long we shall have the evidence of true, splendid, royal ideals active in the world for our children, taking the place of all that distressed us yesterday. Then we shall find men and women growing more closely to the divine plan, more gloriously and splendidly for their fatherhood and motherhood and for the greater good of all humanity.

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Chapter 9

DOES THEOSOPHY BUILD OR DESTROY?

If we can get into our minds the deep and profound meaning of brotherhood and if we can commence to live the life of brotherhood, we shall then have no divisions and there will be no wars. Struggle, suffering, and conflict are the result of people being so separated in interest. One nation is against another, and it is fight and battle and struggle for bread and butter all along the way, when all we have to do is to find the secret of living and to realize that the life of man is a true, mighty scheme. Man is the commanding figure in life; he is the summit of its expression on earth.

When one thinks of that, everyone — even the most discouraged, the most disappointed, the most disheartened — can rise in the consciousness that every man is essentially divine in nature and that he has the power within him to know this truth. When he knows it he will apply it to his life, and when he applies it, he will live more truly. Then his life will be one of joy, of service, of helpfulness, and of peace instead of what it is now. If we can seek truth with confidence in the self, in other people, in our country, and in other countries — if we can have that sweet, warm, beautiful, binding force of brotherly love with us constantly, we shall be as happy as nature is.

Theosophy aims to set aside and eliminate all the shadows and the disappointments and the discouragements that come into man's life. I have not to spend any time in telling about how discouraging are the conditions in the world today. And why are they so? It is because humanity is yet ignorant of its royal heritage and its possibilities. So instead of blaming and criticizing man, let us believe in man in a new way. Many have endeavored to bring out this idea, but they have not hit the mark because they are so overburdened and overshadowed with pessimism, with doubt, with timidity.

Now, that is not the religion to teach. Man must have hope, and it must be built upon the heart-doctrine, out of his own nature. It must be built upon the pictures or the visions that he has of the growth of his own life. And one cannot be satisfied with the same thing every day, because one does not grow if he accepts only the things that satisfied him a few years ago. Every day should add something to one's knowledge of oneself, knowledge of the divine laws that govern life. When one can find this knowledge and apply it to his life, he has touched magic. To a large degree he sweeps away all the difficulties in his life — the disappointments, the overshadowings, the limitations, and the over-humility. One awakens every morning with a consciousness that something new has happened, a great light has come, that the great blessings of the eternal truths of life are here, close to us daily.

Then one begins to see that man is not to be set aside, he is not to be belittled. Nor can he ever find the peace and the joy and the knowledge of living until he has found himself. He may read all the books, have all the teachers, listen to all the preachers, but never will he win in the truest sense until he finds his own heart, his own soul, and believes in the eternity of man's spiritual nature. When this happens, one can very easily realize that something wonderful comes to a man who has long lived in the shadows of discouragement and then suddenly finds himself in the light, aspiring, becoming.

Now, according to theosophy, we are never alone because within this body of ours, within this part that in seventy-seven or a hundred years dies, is the inner part, the eternal part, which lives and goes on forever. That is the spiritual soul of man, and the soul is traveling on its pathway of spiritual attainment. It is progressing, it is climbing the mountains each time it is reborn, each time it suffers to gain more knowledge. That is growth.

Move away from all the weights and shadows that are upon you and love yourself — your inner spiritual self — for truth's sake! Love that self, that you may have the power to serve others; love it because you are loving the eternal man. But the trouble with humanity is that it sees and loves the outer man, the physical man, the mental man, and it thinks that this is the whole thing. But the other man, the real man which is the spiritual, eternal nature, this has very little attention given to it.

Cease dwelling on your sorrows and troubles, and go out into the bright light of truth, out into the great hopes. Build castles for yourselves, build vistas. Let them be merely from the brain-mind, if you can do no better, but build them high towards the spirit and plan them today that tomorrow shall bring you more light, more knowledge, more courage, and more determination to win out, not just for this one life, but for your soul's sake and for humanity's sake.

Humanity is waiting for humanity, and the hearts of men are bleeding for that help and that quality that can be given, not from one man alone but from that unity of force, that wonderful bond of brotherhood, that must come and bring us to a position where we can look out over the tops of the mountains. There, instead of struggling with our difficulties, we can rise above them. When we reach that position, then we are constructing, then we are building for the future — not just for a hundred years, but we are building the very thought-atmosphere that we live in. We are building our country for even better things, we are purifying our politics with a new life through the spiritual energy and will of man.

There is no disposition on my part to disturb those who are satisfied in their spiritual knowledge. There is no attempt to do away with anything that is good, or to teach theosophy except for the purpose of bringing more sacredly to every man the knowledge of his spiritual rights and duties, so that he may live in those duties and rights happily and truly, that he may sustain his country with such force of truth and higher patriotism that it will be impossible to have war. War is in the air; we have not passed it yet. And it is for us, just this growing body of people in the right state of mind, to be up and doing. One can never know what such a body can do.

The real thing is to construct, and to construct *today*, not preach construction today and tomorrow do nothing. That is not the way to do. The way is to live every day in such manner that the next day may be a better one, that there may be more courage tomorrow than today.

Follow the simple teachings that Jesus taught — not the teachings that others have added to what he taught. Live in the spirit of brotherhood and keep yourselves in the sunshine. If the shadows are over the hills, know that they are good: the rain and the clouds are also needed for vegetation. But wait until tomorrow, and build, construct in the sunlight and joy of life. By doing this, one destroys error and stands before the world as an example of spiritual living — not a halfway life, not a timid life, not an apologetic life, not shams, but real things.

It is wonderful to realize that man is a soul, that he is a part of the universe, and that nobody can rob him of this fact: that he has within him the power to conquer, to overcome, and to *become*. Man can stand before the world as one who knows his soul, who knows the truth that is before him, and who is ever striving to grow in this knowledge.

When one stops to think of life as it is, one realizes that we are little children. The best of us, the most studious, the most advanced in thought, experience, and education know very little of human life; indeed, very little of anything. The one essential for us, if we are to round out our characters and become anything that approximates to our ideals of manhood and womanhood, is that we shall *know ourselves*. We must know the secrets of living. We must know what it means to live nobly and honorably and truly and with such dignity and power that truth will manifest through us.

So the mission of theosophy is to teach man to construct, to make everything better today than it was yesterday for humankind, so that each may find within himself the secret of governing his own life and bringing it into harmony with other lives. Thus there will be a united family of human beings all over the world, so strong, so impregnable, so impersonal, that war cannot come. When you demolish the spirit of warfare and make it disappear, you are beginning to climb the mountains — to reach the light.

And it does not take great oratory to bring home to one the hidden impulses of the heart and all the hopes and aspirations that have never been answered, and to solve all the questions and doubts. All these problems must be solved before humanity can find its way, before the best nation can find its real nationality, before the unity among men and women shall be of such a kind that it cannot be broken because the spirit of brotherly love, which Jesus taught when he said "Love ye one another," will then be triumphant. That is the spirit that must exist in the hearts of men.

How is it that we have so many aspirations and so few of them are fulfilled? How is it that we long for the day when all men shall be at peace with one another and with their own souls, for the day when we may understand the future, when the conviction will come to us in such a way that we cannot dispute it, that *there is no death*, that what we call death is but a transition, a change, that we live here for seventy-five or a hundred years and then instead of dying out or going to some place in space — none of us being sure of which place we are going to — our souls do but take a needed rest before resuming the duties of earth-life again in a new human form?

It is utterly impossible for a human mind that is clear in confidence in his own soul and in himself to accept the idea that the divine — the great, eternal, all-loving deity — could ever have planned for us to go through the suffering we have endured. No! *The suffering which humanity has had for ages has been inflicted by man himself*. He does not do it intentionally; he does not know why he does it. But spiritual man is eternal. The body lives and then, tired and worn out, dies. But the soul lives on in just the same way that the trees live on through the seasons. You see them springing into sunshine in the summer with their beautiful foliage, and when the winter comes the leaves all disappear. If you were a stranger and had never seen a tree before, you would say it was dead. But it is not dead because the spirit of nature, the elements of nature, never die. The real principle of the tree is not changed. Next year you see fresh leaves, but they are not the same leaves. They are, in a sense, a copy of the leaves of the previous year. The life of man is analogous.

Put yourselves into this position: that the God that you must revere, and the God that you must follow, must be a God of love. Your God cannot be unmerciful, because divinity is perfect. Divinity cannot punish you, because divinity is perfect. Divinity does not place you on this earth and then punish you for being here. *You punish yourselves* — possibly not today or yesterday, but somewhere along the gamut-pathway of your lives, you have sown seeds which have yielded their harvest of misery and doubt and suffering.

Look within your own natures and believe that man is essentially divine! But when you reach this position of realizing that the great eternal light is centered in man, as a source of light and help and strength to him, your conviction of the possibility of spiritual life and the possibilities of another life and the eternity of man is rekindled. So is your love of the divine, of the eternal, in such a way that your confidence is reborn. When you understand this, you will find something new in your heart, something new in your mind. You will have new hope, more trust, a broader vista that will tell you of the mercy of the divine or the great source of life, and will bring home to you in the saddest moment of life the compensation which you cannot get in any other way. It does not take very long for a man who is weighed down and discouraged to reach out and to meet life with a belief that there is something noble and splendid in the hearts of all men, something that has not been expressed, something that has not been awakened.

It is the lack of knowledge that humanity suffers from, not because it is evil, not because humanity is low and degraded in its nature. It is simply because it is unacquainted with itself and because the real spiritual man is not recognized in the true sense that would enable the mortal man to find his own way out of ignorance. Think of all the time we spend in eating and drinking, and also in gaining dollars and cents so as to do our duty by those we love. And then think how little time we give to these ideas: Who is man? Whence comes he? Whither goes he? What is the meaning of life? Books are read, preachers preach, and teachers work, but how much more could be taught and lived if life were met heartfully in spiritual trust.

Have you ever thought, when you listen to beautiful music, how your natures change, how your minds open to the beauty of life, how full of cheer and hope and trust you are? The real secret of true living is finding inner peace and happiness, and I do not believe one human being can be found who can honestly say before the divine and before his conscience that he has found true and complete happiness. But if we can build our lives on a belief in the eternal man, happiness can be found. And there is no other way. Believe first in the essential divinity of man and the all-loving power of the divine — no punishment, no revenge, but love and service and encouragement and that spirit of brotherly love that brings all men together so there can be no wars, no difference among men. Then in the course of time disease and many darkening, discouraging phases of life will disappear, because in treading this path of light man will have found his happiness, he will have found his peace, he will have found his inner divinity, and also he will have *found himself*.

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Chapter 10

AGAINST CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Theosophy teaches that man, being divine in essence, is immortal — that he lives on and on. This doctrine is wonderfully beautiful and is common sense. It is quite impossible for one who thinks deeply on the subject to settle down and be satisfied with one short life. Those who have the highest aspirations, the grandest hopes, and the largest plans never can fulfill them in one lifetime. If humanity is, as we believe ourselves to be, the highest expression of creative life on the earth-plane, what limitations are put upon man by the idea of just one existence. What an insult is such a conception to his spiritual dignity, to confine him to one life on earth for the realization of all his aspirations, his hopes, his yearnings, and the splendor of his inner character, which may not be known at all in the outer sense. Man cannot find the justice of life if he is confined to one existence on earth.

Reincarnation is built upon a larger and more optimistic view of life than the Western world is accustomed to. It teaches that man is essentially divine and therefore sacred, that while the body is mortal, living on this earth and then dying, the spiritual soul is immortal — it does not die. With this conception man expects more of the higher majestic laws of being which govern our lives. With this new view of existence, the man or woman who is nearing the time when he or she is about to be separated from this earth for a time is to be envied. Why? Because the body, the physical garment, is worn out and is to be thrown aside. It is of the earth, earthy, while the spiritual soul is a part of the divine life which we cannot control but which we may understand to a degree, if we will, and which cares for us.

One of the most beautiful subjects to consider is the explanation of death. You know it in your soul, when once you grasp it, that death means life, liberation, advancement, progress, and another chance. I cannot conceive how anybody can be timid or fearful or regretful about coming back to earth again. Of course, I have met some really splendid people who rebel against the idea of reincarnation because they imagine that they will come back to the same old locality as before, and have the same old aches and trials and disappointments, and have no larger vision than before. But such a conception is absurd. We have no right to say what the world will have in store for us, but of this we may be sure: it will give us our due because nothing in the great universal economy is lost, nothing can be lost.

So that which the immortal man fails to achieve in this life, he has the opportunity of reaching in another existence. We always have *another chance*. There is great significance in those two words when applied to one's own life, and more particularly when applied to some poor unfortunate fellow about to be hanged. The idea of another chance, considered from a theosophical standpoint, is of great importance. In my experience with prisoners, extending over thirty years, I have found that the assurance of another chance — given to a prisoner with a friendly smile of sympathy that will prove one is not working in jail from curiosity or for questioning, but rather to do something helpful — will do more for that prisoner than all the preaching in the world. One must give him time to think it out. Then comes the questioning: What does it mean? And then the book of revelations of theosophy is open, if the one who gives that message does it intelligently. It gives hope, it gives understanding, it gives a definition of life, it gives to the man who has committed a crime a clear explanation of the fact that he possesses a higher and a lower nature.

I suppose that all of you, in your moods or notions or whims or experiences, must have sometimes found in your own lives many things that you were not overproud of — perhaps many thoughts only, or perhaps some acts, that were not creditable. But when you thought more deeply, the better things would come to you — your higher natures would assume command again. So in considering the unfortunates who have drifted off the path, let us remember that we too might have drifted — and might be drifting now — as they did, if we had had no better opportunities than they. We cannot know what the prenatal or hereditary conditions were in these I speak of. We know very little about their parents. We do not know what the fathers and mothers taught them, or failed to teach them.

So the man who is about to be hanged — what has he had to depend on? Can you not see that somewhere

along the road he has lost faith: probably first in himself, then in his neighbors, then in humanity, and finally in the divine? And then he commits some offense which brings him within the reach of the law and he must be punished. And if his offense has been murder, the only way men know how to punish him is to kill him! This we will not have: we won't listen to it without protest, we won't tolerate it. It is barbarity, it is murder legalized by man-made laws which are against the divine laws. It is an outrage to all the finer and better qualities of human nature, no matter how low the offender had fallen. We do not know what the causes were that led him astray.

This does not mean that we should extend our mercy so far that we will excuse him or place him in a position where he can repeat his crime. But we should all recognize that that man, being a part of the divine scheme of life just as we all are, possesses at least a spark of the divine in him. There is something sacred in him in spite of his degradation and sin and the horror of his offense. We cannot recall to life the one he may have slain, but we can at least open the way for the offender to find his own soul so that he may recover himself before he is launched out into another life. All that it requires is the spirit of mercy, of true brotherhood. And no matter how much we may differ, or how many horrible and dreadful things we may see in the records of those who have erred, we must cultivate the spirit that Jesus taught. If there were no other reasons for abolishing the death penalty, we ought to remember his words: first, that ye love one another; and second, thou shalt not kill.

In considering this question of the death penalty, one has to meet not only the law of the land but the men who administer that law. It is not possible for us to think for a moment that any judge would wish to impose a sentence of death on a fellow man. I have no question that many people think that every governor who refuses to raise his hand or his voice to give a man who is condemned to death another chance does so from choice. Of course he has the power to do it or to refuse to do it, and the legal right to do it or to refuse to do it. And if he refuses a pardon because he has had so much ingrained in his mind the principle of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, we are at an extremely dangerous point, where we can label such conduct as man's inhumanity to man. For did not the Teacher declare that we must "love one another"? Those simple words need no amplification.

The only way you can reach the point of seeing it as I do is for it to strike your own children. If it touches your own hearts that is when it sets you to thinking. Then you can move into a proper atmosphere for realizing the awful injustice that is done by war, and also the awful injustice that is done by capital punishment.

How does our life come to us? Does it not come out of the eternity of spiritual things — out of the majesty of the higher law? It comes to us with a power that we can neither explain nor control, according to that divine law. And so life should go, when the body is tired and worn out, when the physical has done its part. Then the spiritual soul seeks the liberty that it should have. But to launch a life out of existence by the hand of man is an interference with this divine law. It is the result of man's inhumanity to man, it is a part of the insanity of the age, it is the lack of brotherhood — it is fiendish and it is barbaric. No matter how bad the man we speak of has been, we have no right to take his life. How much more liberal, how much more in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ, how much more grand and godlike it is to show mercy.

Can you not conceive how one who has been condemned hates humanity? He hates everything that has crossed his life because he has been deprived of some of the essential things he should have had. And because we have had them, we stand and pass judgment on him; whereas if he had had the same chances that we have had, perhaps he would never have been where he is. One cannot think along these lines very long and let one's heart warm towards the subject, without reaching one's higher nature, the spiritual part of oneself, that really demands that nobler justice may be done.

But it is not for us to condemn even him who condemns the unfortunate to death, because he does not know any better. For he has been taught the doctrine of centuries in the Occident that we are born in sin, that there is a damnation, a curse on us, from the time we breathe as little innocent children. Oh, how pained I am to think that anyone will talk of the all-loving God, the all-powerful, omnipresent One who is ever guiding our lives, and then imagine that it could make such a law for its children. Of course, theosophists do not accept that man is born in sin. But they accept the teaching that we have lived before, that we are imperfect, and that as we live, so we receive in return; that if we have lost opportunities, understanding them and knowing them,

we must make them up. There is compensation everywhere. Eternal justice will not permit any overdoing on one side or the other.

I do not know how many read the criminal statistics and how many realize, in our great "civilization" of today, what monstrous and almost unbelievable reports we have of crime and of the so-called correction of crime. Our newspapers are teeming with them. It is pitiful that the newspapers print the stuff. It is poisonous in its psychological influence on the young — indeed, on all minds — and this evil is constantly increasing. We have new forms of crime, more fiendish, worse than ever before, showing man often as seemingly only a brute. But the worse he is, the more he has my pity, because I always ask myself: What brought him to that condition? What were the influences that fashioned his life? What knowledge did his parents give him — in fact, what knowledge did they have to give him? Within the last few days we have been reading of several very young men who were put out of physical existence by the noose. That was to "square the account" — an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. The situation has become something monstrously dangerous and terrible.

Have you ever stopped to think of the psychological influence of the public reports of these crimes and hangings? A young boy or girl, possibly with good, loving parents, sits down and reads of the crime of legal murder, of the legal destroying of human life by the state. They notice that papa and mama take their breakfast just the same, read the paper and show no distress at all, and so they too read the papers and become callous. After a while something happens to them because, let me tell you, the soul of man must have the best in its environment, it must have the light of truth and the consciousness of its own essential divinity that it may stand and live and become. We cannot give our children this soul-freedom if we allow them to be brought up under the psychology of the appalling spiritual ignorance of the age.

True, we have great institutions, we have high schemes of education, science is making great strides on many lines. But show me the evidence that men are growing better, that families are becoming more united, that the youth are maintaining their virtue and fulfilling the promises of babyhood and childhood. Such evidence is nowhere to be found. A good man — noble, courageous, and true — is a rarity nowadays.

But, on the other hand, that the race is still standing on its feet at all, not dismayed, not horrified, not completely thrown down and rushed into the insanity of the age is proof enough for me of the essential divinity of human nature. This innate divinity will continue to sustain us if we will turn towards it and permit it to do so. Of course, if we turn away from the sun, we might say that it did not exist. And so, if we turn away from our own essential divinity, it does not exist in our consciousness.

This morning, when I saw the beauties of nature, felt its touch of kindness and quiet, everything seemed to be telling me of the finer things of life. Then I thought of the youth of the present time and of their shadowy future. What example do we give to the youth today? What do we give them that is so vivifying, so engaging, so convincing, and so powerful that it lifts them above the psychology of the age? Physical and mental ability are not enough. There must be something behind these, and that something is the spiritual soul of man that must speak. It is the soul of our reformers, the soul of our teachers, the soul of the parents that must save the situation that confronts us today.

No matter how many laws are made, no matter how many systems are introduced, no matter how many sermons are preached or articles written, our boys and girls and young men and women are going to the dogs as never before in the history of modern times. You, who have had some experience, compare the youth of the present time with the youth of even forty or fifty years ago — and that was by no means the best type! Even then there was pitiful ignorance, there was the psychology of centuries of false teaching, and though you might not admit it, there was on your minds the blurring and marring influence of the dogma that we were born in sin.

In taking up this study of the death penalty, let me first remind you that those who are sent to prison, and those who are hanged, were children once — mother's children — and not so very long ago, either! But they drifted and, let me talk plainly, we have let them drift. I say this not in the spirit of blame for anyone, but the fact is we have let them drift away from their moorings, from their soul-opportunities, from the sacredness of the home, and from the sacredness of the divine laws. Yes, we have let them drift, and they continue to drift.

A few years ago we read occasionally about a murder or a hanging. Now our papers are full of them, sometimes two or three in one day in one state. The picture is black and discouraging. Splendid men in some of our states have worked until they have succeeded in abolishing the death penalty, and their reports show that there is no more crime in their states than in others where this relic of barbarism still persists. If we are to do away with capital punishment in our own state, we must throw all our force, our minds, our hearts, our energy, and our speech against it.

Many a young boy has never known of crime and has no intention of doing any evil, yet does not know the difference between his impulses and his intuitions; and under the influence of bad company or of strong temptation, he makes his first mistake. What is it that makes the boy go wrong? It is the unspiritual and deadening influence of the psychology of the age that is sweeping all over the world.

Many of our systems of education are good as far as they go, but they are too negative. They have no spiritual basis to work on. They do not understand the laws that govern man's life. And no father can tell his son or his daughter anything about those laws if he has never been taught them himself, even though he may have had a superb education, hold a prominent position in life, be good in heart, and desire the best for his children. But he cannot grasp those laws if he knows nothing about them. Let him realize that there is no possibility of a change for the better until man finds himself. He must take a new pride in himself and his own spiritual dignity. Let him say to himself. "I may not fully believe it yet, but I will see how I feel for few days, trying to believe that I am divine in essence, that I have the power of self-control and can gain many victories over myself even in one life. I have no time to think about old age and loss of money or anything else."

Men must of course give a large portion of their time to the bread-and-butter question. But when they see that they are still under the sweeping influence of the world's psychology, that crime is increasing, that the children are going to the dogs fast, and that human life is threatened, they must look for a panacea. A man may do just as nearly right as he can, the best he knows, but if he knows that within the depths of his own soul there is vast knowledge for him, if he thinks again and again of the possibility of realizing his essential divinity, before you know it he has imbibed some of that undying, eternal, ever-breathing force that is right at hand if he will only reach it. And when he reaches it, it brings him to a place of surety from which he can work.

A question was put to me two or three years ago in Berlin by a great scientist, which was in substance as follows: "If, as you say, all are God's children and under His protective power, how is it that we have these awful catastrophes, disasters, floods, and so forth, where so many lives are lost?"

I said that is very easily answered. In the olden days, those people who had the larger knowledge of these inner teachings did not make the mistakes that we make. When a man selected the place where he was going to live, never was such a thing heard of as his depending on his brain merely in order to decide where he would go or not. So, today, if he applied the ancient wisdom to his life, he will know more or less clearly where he should go. No matter how great the inducement of money and opportunity, he would not go to an unsafe place; and if he believes in his essential divinity and does justice to his inner life, he will have this consciousness that I speak of, that will warn him where *not* to go.

This is not farfetched at all; it is right within your grasp. You can know what will come to pass. If these people that we speak of had had their intuition awakened, they would not have gone to those places. And when the catastrophe happens, are we going to blame God for it? Why not accept the fact that the divine laws are immutable and that it is for us to accept them and apply them, but that we cannot twist them to our intentions? We must meet them halfway, and if we meet them halfway we get a response in our natures, in our souls. We get an explanation of many things that otherwise we cannot answer.

We do not know all the definiteness of these laws any more than a mother knows about her little prenatal baby. Do you suppose that she could tell you anything about the mystery of the processes that govern the development of that body in her body? No, she could not do it. One must keep thinking and thinking! One of the great secrets of the ancients is: think, and think, and then think again, and then hesitate to speak or decide. And then think still again, and if your mind is receptive, if you are ready for the truth, if you are seeking it, light will then be yours and you will progress surely.

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Chapter 11

THE CHALLENGE OF THE HOUR

The men and women of the present time are being challenged by the condition of the world. Crime, disease, vice, and insanity are increasing rapidly, and the greatest remedial efforts that have been made have not brought us to a state of security. We all wish conditions could be better, but the challenging question is, how much are we doing to change them? Can we be satisfied with present conditions? Can we be satisfied to bring up children in the shadow of the world's present condition and not enlighten them as to their possibilities?

The light will not all come in a flash. Each one of us must seek the truth and find the way for himself. We must find strength; we must find our spiritual individuality, if one may call it such. We must strengthen our minds with a purpose so true, so high, and so constant that we cannot move away from it. It will stay with us all the time and fill us with that spiritual something that all humanity is crying for.

When we get this, then we will commence to climb. We cannot measure our steps, but we will find that something is happening to us. We will have more sympathy for the sin and sorrow of the world than we ever had before. We will find that we have more spiritual strength than we ever had before, and we can meet our trials and our difficulties much more courageously, because we are slowly delving into the depths of our nature and finding there those godlike attributes which every man possesses. Even the humblest, the most ignorant, the most forgotten, the most mistaken — all have this royal privilege.

The question is, are all the mothers and fathers perfectly satisfied about their children? Are they perfectly satisfied with themselves? The very fact that they are dissatisfied shows that there is still unfinished business in their natures. The great heart of the universe opens its doors for those who earnestly seek the light — without price. But they must find the warmth of the eternal love of the divine in their hearts, that we know exists. How much mothers know of that love, and how beautiful it is! And if they have it for their children, what must it not be in the great heart of the universe — deity?

You mothers know in your hearts that the children you have borne have something divine and splendid in them, and you try to keep it and to protect it. But you cannot keep it, you cannot make it grow, you cannot make it a living power in their lives unless you have faith in yourselves and in that thing which you most love in your children — the divine soul. When you feel the mightiness of the real, inner life and are growing in the richness of it, then you begin to know the fullness and the grandeur of the love of the divine. But remember, you have your own life to fashion, and you go only just so far as you permit yourselves to go.

We know the infinite laws exist because we feel the touch of them in our hearts at times. When we can build our natures, our characters, our souls, and our love for humanity on the great broad platform of these universal laws, in the atmosphere of continuous growth, evolution, of the exchange of the spirit of brotherly love and patience towards one another, then how different will life be to us.

This is the time of challenge to the real inside thinker, the loving mother and the conscientious father. We must awaken and find the key that will bring to every home and to every human heart that spiritual quality that so many seek. The eternal love of the divine is in every human being, down to the lowest type, even those who have sinned and whom we condemn. No matter! Underneath the enfoldment of all the miseries of life, there is the power of love.

All nature is challenging us. Those who have passed on are challenging us. Those who have failed, and some who have not failed utterly but have made mistakes, also are challenging us. All the miseries and heartaches of the past can go out of our lives if we can begin to make new records by bringing our souls into a higher state of consciousness. We live so much in our bodies and so bind ourselves to our physical needs that we forget our souls and our eternal future, and so we are only half living.

There is a challenge to every human being to use present opportunities, which will never come again. We

must color our lives with a new hope, with a beautiful picture of the future, with confidence in ourselves. We must begin life anew. There will be no sounding of bells or cries from the house tops — only that wonderful inner touch of the sublime in man that opens the doors of the mind so that the spiritual sun can shine in and enlighten and warm our lives.

Then that beautiful, inner, eternal part of ourselves, which has so little recognition in the workaday world, will bloom and blossom like the flowers, and we shall find that after all, life is joy. We shall learn that much of what we call suffering means growth if we are only big enough to rise above it. And we shall realize that the other part, somewhere along the line, possibly without intention, we ourselves have caused and that we are but reaping what we have sown.

The great doctrine of reincarnation enables the broad mind to open the next page of life, to lift the veil. It shows him the wonder of the universe — not only of one universe, but of thousands of universes, millions of stars and suns and planets, all in their ordered places. And we are shut in, in a little town, or a little state, or a little country. It is too small for us — there is something more; try and find it!

This New Year is, on the one hand, a time of chaos, confusion, unrest, misery, and suffering; and yet we might also say, on the other hand, that it is a time of glorious possibilities. If we could stretch our imaginations, we might open up for ourselves a wonderful vista, for the reason that humanity, and each individual member thereof, holds within himself treasures of untold blessings — treasures of truth, of enlightenment, of godlike and god-given things that we are all asking for. The very fact that we are dissatisfied reminds us that things are all awry in ourselves. We have not to go to New York or Boston or to Europe or anywhere at all in order to find out what is the matter with human nature. All we have to do is just to look at ourselves. We must come down to basic facts and look at life as it is.

Nature in all its glory is singing to us everyday its wonderful song of peace and beauty and enlightenment, but we hear it only a little, just occasionally, because we are so held in with our mental attitudes, our states of mind, our limited knowledge. One must go a long way before finding many who will tell one of their absolute belief in something more than one earth-life. And with this limited conception of only one earth-life, I do not see how we can have a vista of possibilities that are encouraging, I do not see how we can have much to offer our children, I do not see how we can dare to live beyond a day, because everything on the outer plane, as far as we have gone, is incomplete.

It is impossible for so much misery to exist in the world without our taking part in it. We may not commit as great wrongs as some do, we may not suffer poverty and hunger and other misfortunes, but we do feel deeply, when we are true to ourselves, the suffering of humanity.

H. P. Blavatsky gathered up the teachings of theosophy, as she found them, and brought them to suffering humanity, hoping to do her part to lessen the world's misery; and she certainly did it most grandly. She never claimed that she originated the teachings, which are as old as the ages and were not invented by anyone. But she lifted the veil for us and made a vista so broad and high and eternal that following the path she indicated, we could not lose our way, for in following that path we would find the true key of life: a knowledge of the essential divinity of man.

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