

# THE TRUSTEESHIP OF LIFE

BY  
WILLIAM GEORGE JORDAN

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED 1921



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## Introduction



IN all Mr. Jordan's books the dominant note is a sane idealism. He gives good counsel for the practical affairs of life because he takes a rational and moral view of human existence. He regards it as a partnership of body and spirit, of self and neighbour, which prospers only when the mutual claims of the partners are recognized and reconciled and fulfilled. Man's physical nature is best developed under the guidance of reason and conscience. His spiritual health is promoted by a proper control and satisfaction of his bodily needs. The individual grows stronger by the performance of his social duties. The purpose of the community is realized in the production and protection of better individuals, fit for a free obedience to the natural and moral laws which condition human life.

This, in substance, is Mr. Jordan's philosophy of conduct. I think it is a good one,—a working hypothesis in harmony with the Christian faith. It is expressed in this latest volume, under the figure of Trusteeship, in clear and vigorous language, and with a direct appeal to that sense of honour which lies at the root of all noble living. The goodness which is here commended is more positive than negative. The success proposed is one in which "the spiritual side of life," the human kinship with God, is not solitary but supreme. It is a wholesome, stimulating book, all the better for its brevity.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Henry van Dyke". The script is fluid and cursive, with a prominent flourish at the end of the name.

Henry van Dyke

*Princeton, N. J.*



# Contents

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I.	<i>The Finer Spirit of Trusteeship.....</i>	<i>1</i>
II.	<i>The Joy Note in Life.....</i>	<i>5</i>
III.	<i>The Supreme Court of Self-Respect .....</i>	<i>10</i>
IV.	<i>What Money Cannot Buy.....</i>	<i>13</i>
V.	<i>Life's Walls and Its Open Road.....</i>	<i>17</i>
VI.	<i>The Red Blood of Courage .....</i>	<i>21</i>
VII.	<i>Buying at the Store of Life .....</i>	<i>26</i>
VIII.	<i>The Spell of the One Thing Lacking .....</i>	<i>29</i>
IX.	<i>The Glory of the Commonplace.....</i>	<i>33</i>
X.	<i>The Vision of High Ideals .....</i>	<i>37</i>
XI.	<i>When We Change the Emphasis .....</i>	<i>43</i>
XII.	<i>The Crowning Gift in Life.....</i>	<i>47</i>





# I

## The Finer Spirit of Trusteeship



HE individual never sees life in the radiant glow of its greatness, its dignity and its privilege until he realizes it as trusteeship. Life itself is but the individual trusteeship of time. Man does not truly own even his own life; he has merely a life-interest in it, and sometime he must surrender it.

In the truest sense, man owns nothing absolutely, to do with precisely as he pleases; over all his possessions ever breathes the spirit of trusteeship. His time, his money, his health, his mind, his character, his business, his worldly goods, his opportunities, his influence—all that he is, and has, he holds but as trustee for his higher self, the world around him, and humanity itself. These possessions are all covered by a first mortgage of the rights of others.

Trusteeship began away back in the dawn of history, with the very first man, when the earth was young and the first tenants moved in. Adam had a wonderful chance: he owned the whole world except one tree, he lived absolutely rent-free with everything provided for him without cost, and had very little to do. He was entrusted with three things—himself, a garden and a woman—and he failed in his administration of all three. And we have been paying the price ever since. Adam ignored trusteeship, Peter denied it, Pilate repudiated it—and all suffered. Across the pages of all lives is written this one word, trusteeship. The final test of the men of the ages is not what they had, but what they did with it.

Trusteeship is one of the great words of life because it concentrates in a single expression the essence of all true living. It inspires man with the revelation of his constant relation to himself, to all others and to the Infinite. It gives a royal dignity to life, making man, not a mere isolated individual, but interblended with other lives and an indispensable factor in the whole scheme of living.

Health is trusteeship. Man sometimes says, “My health is my own. If I choose to neglect it or to ruin it, that is no one else’s business.” This foolish boast of ownership would not be justified even if made by Robinson Crusoe on his lonely island, for any day he might have been rescued and taken back to the world of men. We have no more right willfully or carelessly to injure our own health than we have to injure the health of another. Man cannot do his best, in all his relations to himself and to others, unless he is at his best physically. When he fails through carelessness or recklessness he is making himself an unnecessary burden on the care of others, he is making them pay for his wrong, he is invading their rights. The overlapping of our rights into the rights of others is ever under the guardianship of trusteeship. It reveals our constant dependence on each other in all the relations of life.

Wealth is trusteeship. He who has riches has every right to spend it freely, generously for the good things of life for himself and for those dear and near to him, but there is an overflow that belongs to those he can help, to those who need it. This should not be doled out reluctantly as we pay tithes or taxes, but in a glad spirit of joy at being able to give, and being privileged to give. A little here and a little there may bring new courage to someone struggling, the dawn of new hope to someone weary and faint-hearted, a new chance and a new inspiration to someone to pull through a crisis.

Wealth is but a great human privilege committed to one to do his part toward equalizing the inequalities of opportunity and need. This trusteeship is no easy task. It is infinite possibilities of helpfulness concentrated in coins. Absolutely dividing with the world, or splashing wealth indiscriminately even in gifts would be folly, and perhaps bring more harm than good. It is a trust not to be dodged nor evaded, but to be accepted, with all the dignity and the burden of trusteeship.

Citizenship is trusteeship. He who is interested only in questions that appeal directly to himself and his selfishness, letting himself eclipse his city, is a citizen in name but not in essence. He has not an ounce of public spirit. He has no right to criticize and condemn those in power, in the city, state or nation, if he does nothing by his initiative, influence or cooperation to change conditions. A people usually gets the government it deserves, what it accepts, what it surrenders to, what it tolerates. Every man has a vote of selection, a voice of influence and a veto of protest. There are men who feel they are fulfilling their duty when they vote, without the least personal thinking, a straight party ticket. They do not put into their decision as to the relative qualities of two candidates to rule the nation as much thought and investigation as they would put into selecting an office boy and looking up his references. Every citizen in a city is trustee for its government; it is the duty of trustees to know its workings, to judge of its administration and to attend some of its meetings.

Friendship is trusteeship. It must be nourished and nurtured, as we care for a plant, or it will die. It is the joint trusteeship of two over a rare possession common to both; each can do part, neither can do all. Some people like the premiums of friendship but dodge its assessments; they think more of what they can get than of what they can give, they do not fill then- thoughts so completely with the riches of what they have, that it is a joy to enrich it still more by constant acts of expression and service.

Love is trusteeship. Those who may yearn for it, struggle to attain it and have joy in its possession, may soon drift into a false sense of ownership instead of the watchful guardian spirit of trusteeship. Love is not a fully paid-up policy of insured happiness; we must gladly go on paying our premiums of new thoughtful expression and service or it will languish and grow commonplace. Feeling love is nothing in itself, the mere possession means little, if we do not make it constantly evident in little acts of fine expression that ever tell of its existence as perfume reveals the presence of a flower that we do not see.

Trusteeship must be a clear vision to the mind, a dominating sentiment in our heart, and a radiant purpose in our soul or we shall ever miss the real joy and dignity of living. It is ever the clasping hand of a loyal guide through all the mazes and problems of life. In its highest phases, it is ever the fine attitude of a fine soul, but whether we live it or not, the responsibility for the living of it ever confronts us. In its perfection it implies the strongest individuality consecrated to strongest cooperation. It means being one's best in order that one may think best, act best and live best. It dignifies even the poorest and narrowest of lives; it makes a great life sublime. It is putting the most into life in order that we may get the most out of life.

He who has mighty influence for good and uses it merely for petty selfish ends is false to his trusteeship. He who has talent and keeps it wrapped up in the camphor of laziness and neglect is unfair to his stewardship. He who puts away the golden hours of his living as though they were worthless pebbles when they are really gems that a Monte Cristo might envy, is unworthy his trusteeship. He who regards his daily labour as mere drudgery, unrealizing the finer spirit of joy he could put into it and of joy he could get from it is unequal to the trust committed to him. Such a man exists but he does not truly live; he breathes but he does not truly grow.

We are, to a greater degree than we realize, custodians of the happiness of others. It is part of our trusteeship. No man can live for himself alone, he never alone pays the penalty of his wrong-doing, he never alone receives the whole results of the good that he does; there is always an overflow he cannot control, but the character of which he *can* control.

There are pillows wet with sobs because of our unkind words, there are hearts heavy with pain because of our injustice, the sunshine of some one's whole day is darkened by our anger, some one doubts all humanity because of our ingratitude, our disloyalty, the lark-song of joy in some one's life may be silenced for long by our momentary surrender to our temper. Man has no more right to make others suffer from his moods, gloom, meanness, injustice, selfishness or others of the whole snarling brood of petty vices, than he has to let a ferocious dog of his run at large. He should keep the dog and his own bad qualities chained at home until they can be so tamed that they will not injure others.

Trusteeship is never satisfied by mere refraining from doing things that hurt; this is good enough as a beginning, poor as a finality. The cemeteries of the world are filled with people who are doing no harm. We are responsible for the good we might do, but which we leave undone. Too few of us is given the power or the opportunity to do spectacular or monumental things for the world, but if we cannot do great things we can make the simple trifles seem great by the fine unselfish spirit we put into the doing. The widow who gave her two mites was not liberal, for she had little to give, but she was generous, for the spirit of fine love inspired her giving all. Each of us has a circle of power, influence, possibility, that is all our own, it is our trusteeship, our sole possession. It is not what a man is or has, but how he uses it that is the final test of living.

Trusteeship does not mean that one must be a stained-glass saint, living a life of constant self-sacrifice and self-denial. It does not mean that one should go round with the responsibility of the whole world on one's shoulders, like a modern Atlas supporting the globe. It does not mean a life of constant self-consciousness, weighing every word and act to determine whether it is twenty-four carats fine or taking one's moral temperature every half hour in any spirit of morbid introspection. Trusteeship means only taking a fine attitude toward life and humanity and living joyously and simply in harmony with it, being intensely human, not unpardonably good, but getting the most from life, by putting the most into life.

## II

### The Joy Note in Life



FEW here are who feel the positive joy of living, whose blood tingles and surges with the thrill of delight just at being alive. It means loving life in a big, free, unquestioning way, feeling it a wondrous, gladsome privilege, drinking it all in, with all it is and has of good or ill, not heroically from a half-filled cup but joyously and unstintedly as from some ever-gushing spring.

Those who love life in this way have a buoyant, bubbling gladness that fills them to the brim and spills itself in joy and laughter that overflows into the lives of others. In their presence one feels a finer, truer attitude toward life, a sense of being on the mountain tops and breathing a purer air, a new touch of courage and inspiration that makes even the hard problems of life, for the time, seem nothing.

It is not that life has brought much to these men, but that they have brought much to life. It is not what they have, but what they are that makes their living a joy. When we look into what they have, we find it is rarely any direct personal possessions, but merely the great common things of life that belong to us all. But they bring to these things the seeing eye, the listening ear, the sympathetic mind and the heart attuned to all life. They own the whole world around them through their intense interest, their vivid imagination, their fine interpretation. They make even the commonplace wonderful by the spirit they bring to it. As the poet Gannett has so picturesquely expressed it:

*The poem hangs on the berry-bush  
When comes the poet's eye,  
The street begins to masquerade  
When Shakespeare passes by.*

In the city they find the joy note in the big simple things that appeal to every side of their nature. The slant of shadow cast by strong sunlight on some building, the sky line over the park, the hurrying crowds, a group of children at play, a store window, the wealth of colour and perfume reaching their senses through the open door of a florist's shop, a picturesque house-front, a vista through the trees,—the infinite variety of the commonplace that has constant freshness and ever new-born thrill and joy to them.

They love humanity and have kinship of interest and sympathy with rich and poor alike. They love people because they understand them, and understand them because they love them. They see and feel more than appears to their eyes alone, they read faces and imagine life-stories, threads of conversation heard in passing appeal to them; they see the humour of street scenes, they realize the pathos and the tragedy of life but are not dulled or depressed by them, forever they seek to lighten them and lessen them by their sympathy, their help, their influence.

The vital pulsing life of a great city with its undertones, its splashing waves of frivolity, its mighty ebb and flow, its relentless surge and roar, appeal to them much as the ocean itself speaks to those who love it, its infinite moods echo in their own souls, its majesty inspires but does not awe, its rage speaks ever of remembered calm and dancing waves capped with sunshine.

In country, as in city, the world around them is ever a place of wonder and beauty, with the freshness of the dew of the morning of creation still beading moist and bright upon it. Their eyes never tire in resting reverently on the splendour of the sunlit hills; they love with the soul's devotion the trees in the woods, God's miracles in green; the dancing shadows on the fields of corn, the gurgle and murmur of a mountain brook, the cool of a garden at the sacred twilight time, the glory of midnight sky; studded with its millions of stars trailing into finest star-dust along the wide sweep of the Milky Way.

This joy note is not a matter of temperament, it is fine character; it is not intellectual, but spiritual; the thought does not feed the emotions so much as the emotions feed the thought. Mere philosophers can never get it by any reasoning of life into its elements and formulating them into a code. They reduce it to its cold, dead anatomy, they approach life as something they must catalogue rather than read; they seek to master it rather than surrender to it, they live so intensely merely intellectually that they seem to be afraid of their emotions.

The joy note in life comes from having fine emotions, trusting them, giving them the freedom of a bird in the open, and, because they are fine and we trust them, permitting them to govern us instead of our dominating them. The joy note comes only to those who have preserved the child still young in their hearts, the child-spirit, strengthened, mellowed, sweetened, grown wiser but not older, simpler, more conscious of giving than of getting, of radiating than of absorbing. People say that the world is growing older, but in the spirit of the joy note we must realize that each new day is as fresh from the hand of nature as if it were the first edition of the first morning. The world is ever young, it is we who grow old.

This joy in living, this love of living, can never be assumed as a pose or put on from the outside as a mask. It comes from the very depths of our nature. It is a fine attitude toward life somehow transformed into the atmosphere of our living. It is surrender of self to the big things of life that spiritualize the commonplace and make it warm and glowing. It can no more be counterfeited than you could manufacture a sunbeam.

The people who have this joy of life do not talk of it, they radiate it; they do not tire you with cheap preachments about looking on the bright side, taking inventories of your blessings, and telling yourself how happy you are when all the while you have inside information that you are miserable; they just live their joy and let it splash its sunlight and glow into other lives as naturally as a bird sings.

Those who have the joy of life are never those who have been without care, sorrow and failure, but those rare souls who have suffered and conquered, who have been mellowed,

sweetened and glorified by pain, who live in peace in the arms of some simple constant abiding faith that cares naught for the struggle of effort to solve life's eternal problems.

This joy never comes to the frivolous, the superficial, the selfish. It is not the same in kind or in quality as the joy that comes to all of us in certain high-tide moments of life. The latter joy is the exultant acceptance of some great gift from life; the joy of life is the exultant acceptance of the great gift of life itself.

We can never get it by working for it directly; it comes, like happiness, to those who are aiming at something higher. It is a by-product of great, simple living. It is an award of Nature, that, like an honorary university degree, is conferred for what one does for humanity, not what one does for himself. We can all get part of this joy in our living.

The joy of life comes from what we put into life, not from what we seek to get from it. It is ever love that brings the joy note, big, earnest, glowing love for something higher than self, love of Nature, of the beautiful, the true, the good, love of humanity, love of service, love of work, love of thinking, of seeing, of being, of doing. This love must be spiritualized, permeated with something higher than the material, glorying in the consciousness of our kinship with the big eternal things of life and radiating that feeling in every phase of our day-by-day living.

The religion that does not make a man feel that he is buoyantly, exultingly glad he is living and makes him make others glad he is living is not much of a religion. There is something wrong about it, or about our slant of interpretation of it. What a strange idea of God the Puritans had, for instance, to believe that they were doing Him honour by going about with long, sour, uncharitable faces and uncomfortable, gloomy, ramrod lives, and believing whatever was natural and joyous was wrong, and if they were as miserable here as they could make themselves it would all be squared for them, somehow, in the great beyond.

The joy note in life is the real note. It is higher than pleasure or even happiness. No man can have this joy without being his best and giving his best to others, meeting life undaunted and unafraid, facing bravely its trials, its sorrows, its cares, its tragedy, its pain and its loss. These are real things to us, that dull and deaden and silence the joy note in even the bravest for a time, but they do not last forever. Much of them comes from our own wrong-doing, our own blindness, thoughtlessness and unknowing, from the wrong or weakness of those around us or from the evils of the larger world of humanity.

Life is not easy, but we can make it easier. The joy note will help, it will give us clearer heads and truer hearts. That life is hard is no recent discovery; Adam probably thought so before two o'clock on his first day in the garden and was probably bored with loneliness.

We start out in the morning not realizing that we have been born anew, have a new start in life as though it were a new first birthday. Of course there are some mortgages left over from yesterday, but there are some dividends as well. Why should we take up our burdens of cares, worries, fears, duties and responsibilities as though we were hoisting to our shoulder the groaning, heavy pack of a peddler? We grow round-shouldered, and old

and bent, physically, mentally, morally, emotionally and spiritually in peddling our pack of woes to others, instead of scattering sunshine and smiles, laughter and roses, joyous service and gladsome inspiration along the road that others may find them.

There are those around us who need the illumination of our laughter through their day, the new courage that we may bring them, the helpfulness we can give as freely as a full fountain scatters its waters, the fresh, tonic sea-tang of our joy note that brings a reminiscent smile of gladness and a new zest to living because we passed along their road.

Let us not stifle the lark song in our throat, but let it trill its way upward joyously for our own sake and for that of others. Let us find joy in our daily work; if we cannot find it we should search for it, cultivate genuine interest in mastering its problems, in making each new day better, finer, truer than its yesterday, glory in having responsibility thrust upon us, feel the glow of pride in having work that calls forth our best, of doing aught that our hand touches in a big, fine, masterly way that makes it a joy, as the touch of Old King Midas' hand transformed all that felt its spell into pure gold.

We talk of life being the supreme gift to man, sometimes when we are in that mood, and yet we go round as though we were paying off a mortgage each day. We seek constant pleasures to offset the pain of living; in most cases it means losing one's self, while joy consists in finding one's self. Joy of life sees it with finer, clearer vision, in truer perspective, in spiritual communion with all that is best.

What can be finer reverence for life than living it with the joy note? Yet many preachers, poets, philosophers and pessimists belittle life, bemoan it, degrade it with their slurs and contempt, as though it were some dismal, dreary, corrupt thing to be lived through, when it is really a great spiritual thing to be lived up to. They are life's victims, not its victors; they feel that they deserve heaven as a compensation for having suffered life; they seem to assume that they are dignifying a future life by saying unkind things about this one. This is not true religion, true spirituality, true living; it is but ghastly irreverence.

We hear too much about "making the best of life," too little about "making the most of it." We make the *best* of a duty, the *most* of a privilege; the best of an evil, the most of a good; the best of a sorrow, the most of a joy.

Life is never empty except as we empty it, never dull except through our poor living, never a failure except as we fail because of petty selfish living.

Joy is radiant, expanding, exultant, expressing. It is more intense than happiness, more definite, more explicit, more contagious. We gravitate naturally to sadness and depression, to joy we must rise. This joy is possible to all in a greater degree than we realize. In general it is not the weight of some persistent sorrow, trial, or benumbing responsibility that keeps the joy note from our life; the failure is in ourselves, not in conditions, in our wrong attitude toward life, in measuring it by what it fails to give us rather than by the infinite blessings it showers on us.



Let us look upon life as a glorious privilege, of fine service, not dull servitude, of splendid giving rather than petty getting, of unselfish trusteeship rather than selfish ownership, of seeing it as our triumph, in the greatness of our powers and possibilities, over life's trials and sorrows that cloudlike dim and dusk its beauty, its wonder and its message. Let us face life each day with gladness that we are alive, that it inspires us to greater, finer, freer, fuller living, and let our joy note ring out clear and exultant, not that we ignore life's trial, hardship and evil, but because we see beauties others pass by, feel underlying all its discord the eternal music of some great purpose, some higher destiny.

### III

## The Supreme Court of Self-Respect



SELF-RESPECT occupies a position very near the throne of the great words of life. It is a prince among the virtues. It never advertises. It is not for shop-window display. Its quietness, its simplicity, its modesty, its calm, unpretentious strength, have obscured from many its real dignity and value, like a diamond buried in its native quartz.

Self-respect is the Warwick of character, the King-maker of individuality. It raises man to his loftiest levels of living, glorying in his freedom, guided by his own judgment, governed by his own conscience. It is not respect for self as it is, but reverence for what it should be. It is the supreme court of individuality, deciding every individual act by its own high code of justice and honour.

Self-respect is so far above qualities with which it is commonly associated that it does not even move in the same set. Self-conceit loves to strut before large pier mirrors of admiration, constantly finding new points of wonder in itself. Self-esteem always tries to play a bull market on its private corner of its own virtues. There are few takers, because the quotations are too high for the stock. Vanity is never satisfied with burning its own incense. Unlike the orchid, it cannot draw its nutriment from the air. It must ever be fed with the honey of flattery. Unlike the camel, it cannot live on the interest of past appetites; for, if unfed, it sickens and droops. Self-respect is insulated from all these currents of self-love.

The man who has self-respect realizes that the severest punishment he could have for a mean act would be his own consciousness that he has lowered himself in his own eyes, that he has done an act unworthy of himself. He realizes that it counts but little whether the world knows of it or not—he himself knows, he himself condemns; that is punishment enough. He has wounded his own honour, and he feels a sense of shame that no mere argument can remove. Self-respect is justice, honour, and truth blended into a force.

He who has self-respect has a fine contempt for whatever is low, petty, mean, or vulgar. He is like a modern elevator with an automatic safety clutch; if he does drop, he cannot fall far. He quickly stops himself. No matter what the provocation, how deep the cause for righteous anger, he will never humiliate another unjustly, he will never speak mean, contemptible words that bite deep into memory like acid into an etching plate. For the petty satisfaction of self-vindication he would never plant tares in the field of another's reputation.

Self-respect meets attacks squarely, as a man should do; but it wields an honest sword. It fights in the open, and scorns to win victory by a treacherous thrust. It is a hard fighter;

but it fights by the code and will stand up for the rights and honour of the individual as courageously and as cordially as any brave captain in the days of the duel.

Self-respect has red blood; it has no fear. It makes the individual respect the rights of others fully, freely, firmly, and demand that his own be equally respected. He realizes that self-respect is a double justice, to himself and to others. He is quick to resent a real injury, quick to accept a real apology. Retaliation and revenge are so far beneath him that he would not soil his mind by even thinking of them. He makes his protest in the right way, at the right time, for the right—and that ends it. He does not deal in fancied wrongs; he is not suspicious; he does not go round with an overheated dignity which may take cold at any moment. He is sensitive; but this means only finer justice for others, keener perception for himself.

The man whose self-respect safeguards him never takes undue advantage. There is a strain of fine chivalry which runs through it all. The secret of another is as secure from discovery as though it was a pebble thrown into the sea. He would be above using it as a weapon, even of defense, no matter how hard pressed. The sanctity of his word of honour closes his lips forever. The secret belongs to the past. Broken friendship, misjudgment, or misrepresentation would never tempt him to reveal or betray it. His respect for himself, for his word, for what his friend once was, puts a lock on certain memories, and he throws away the key.

Self-respect realizes that no one but himself can degrade the individual. The undeserved insult which may sting for a moment he forgets quickly in the thought that it is only a revelation of the character of the source from which it comes; that he himself is invulnerable from insult when he is right, when the armour of self-respect makes attack harmless.

The severest wound that our self-respect can receive, outside ourself, is from those who are near and dear to us through friendship or love. When one has honestly earned the right to be believed implicitly, through years of unbroken truthfulness, when on many occasions a simple little lie dressed in white, which remained unspoken, would have saved the situation, and one finds himself later disbelieved in some supreme crisis, then it is hard. When the sacrifices that were only joy to make are profaned by cruel mistranslation, when the music of the purest high notes of the soul echoes back to him as jangling discord in words of misjudgment, when the truest, finest, and most exalted motives are interpreted in a key of sordidness and meanness then self-respect is wounded. It is only because emotions have been hurt, not that we have been false to principles.

Then self-respect may find itself numb with a subtle pain; it loses confidence for a little until, like a cold douche in the face of one fainted, the shock of the cruel injustice begins the work of restoration. Self-respect always rights itself from unjust attacks from without, like those counter-weighted toy mandarins that rise erect no matter how often pushed down. Self-respect may even be made stronger, more serene, and better balanced by the very assault.

Self-respect never shakes dice with conscience to see who wins. It never cheats the scales of its own judgment, like a grocer weighing in his thumb when he is selling butter. It never pleads a technicality or a flaw in the indictment against self. It sees a mean action in all its rags of pettiness, though it be presented in seemingly clean robes of policy and practicality. It is above pretense in either winning or holding friends.

There is ever the instinctive feeling, though unspoken, "People must like me or dislike me for what I am. While I am living my best, it would be beneath me to counterfeit what I have not the moral courage to live."

No man remains true, constant, and loyal for years unless inspired by self-respect. Let us trust others and let them know that we trust them. It is our self-respect recognizing theirs. There may be some who betray, it is true,—even Christ's carefully selected little company of twelve had its Judas,—but the successes will be more than the failures; those who betray will sometime awaken, sometime realize. If we do what is right, we must face results with calmness, knowing that we have done our best.

There is a certain reserve in self-respect, a reverence for the fine dignity of the individual self, which keeps man from taking the whole world into his confidence. His real, deeper self he keeps for those who are nearest and dearest. There are men and women who, at the first meeting, as mere casual acquaintances, take you through the windings of their most intimate thoughts, feelings, and experiences. You have a sense of shock at their sudden housecleaning and fumigation of the emotions, as though you were looking at someone in a bathrobe walking down the street. Like the holy place behind the veil in the tabernacle, where even the high priest could enter but once a year, there are some memories, episodes, and experiences in the individual life that are sacred. Self-respect realizes that this sanctuary is no place for a crowd of tourists.

There are men whose self-respect seems to have died or gone on a long vacation. Revive that self-respect, and you begin the moral regeneration of the man. Religion itself never really reaches a man until it touches the secret spring of his self-respect. One of the chief causes of making confirmed criminals out of first offenders—outside of the prison associations—is that their self-respect is chloroformed, if not actually killed. They feel the prison brand, the prison taint, the prison poison, in their memories, making them feel they are no longer men, but outcasts. If the warm breath of possibilities of a new, better life can fan the faintest spark of self-respect among the gray ashes into flame, the man begins to thrill with the new glad hope and confidence that he can wipe away the old past in better living, as sunrise banishes the darkness.

Self-respect should dominate every expression of the individual, from the mere matter of personal appearance and dress to the most supreme manifestation of his real self in all the relations of life. It has greater reverence for its individuality, rightly directed, than for all its rights, powers, influence, or possessions. Self-respect, in the highest sense, is the honest pride of trusteeship over self, not the petty vanity of proprietorship.

## IV

### What Money Cannot Buy



NATURE revealed a wondrous sense of justice when she admitted money into the world merely as a limited legal tender. All the greatest things in life, those of mind, heart and soul, she put safely beyond the power of money to buy. Money, in its purchasing capacity, is restricted to the material things of life, those that appeal to the senses in some way, and to service, comfort, luxury and position. Just a little way beyond these is a clearly marked dead-line that money as a mere finality cannot cross.

Mere money can buy none of the eternal realities of life—all that makes living highest, truest and best. They are as far beyond its reach as the Polar Star. It cannot buy love, happiness, honour, truth, justice, faith, self-respect, hope, trust, friendship, loyalty, courage, genius—any of the fine manifestations of mind and heart and soul. When money enters the field of the intangible, it ceases to be legal tender for realities. It can buy only semblances, substitutes, imitations, never realities. In this field, it can buy only evils, never virtues. It is only in the market of the material things of this life that it can buy what it will.

Justice, the eternal principle of the true relation of man to man, cannot be bought. Money may buy judges, but never—justice. When they tell us that some great corporation, with millions in its control, has bought justice, in verdicts wrongly delivered in its favour, they are incorrect in their statement. Money has bought not justice, but only injustice. If it were mere justice that was desired, money would be unnecessary. It would be a bribe, an insult—but injustice is always willing to pocket money which is powerless to buy justice.

Honour, the very soul of self-respect, is as impossible of purchase as a solar eclipse. When one blindly believes he has bought the honour of another to do that which both realize as evil, both have been cheated. The honour was dead before it passed to the purchaser, and dead honour is dishonour. Money has killed a virtue, it could not buy it. When honour could seriously consider permitting itself to be bought, the insidious poison of desecration that killed it was already coursing through its veins.

Love is the divinest element in the human. It is God's finest gift to man. It is the most powerful factor for good in the whole world. Under its protecting wings nestle all the virtues. In marriage it means that two face life together, with each other, for each other, content with whatever life may bring if it leave them each other. It means letting the small world outside dwindle into insignificance while their larger world rises to the dignity of two who have become one. True love means all that is finest, most tender, most lasting, consecrated to union and unity for a lifetime. It comes to rich and poor alike, but it cannot be bought.

When loveless money seeks to buy love by spreading out on the counter in the matrimonial market its stocks and bonds, houses and lots, bank accounts, automobiles, fine dress, position in society, travel abroad and the others, and the woman looks languidly over the outfit where she has to take the owner too, and finally consents, he has not bought love. He has some understudy to love, an imitation, a combination of policy and pretense. There is never a sweet spontaneity, a word, a look, a tone that splashes like water from an overfull fountain, but only the pettiness of cool, counterfeit emotion. He has closed an option on a partner in matrimony as he might on a block of stock. He has bought not Cupid, but cupidity. If wealth wants love it must give love. It must be an exchange not a purchase. The rich man must win love as the poorest man wins it—because of what he *is*, not for what he *has*.

When Joseph's ten brothers, under the leadership of Judah, hurriedly organized a little syndicate to sell him to a company of Ishmaelites for about eleven dollars and a quarter in our money, they sold only the tangible man as a slave, with whatever service might be forced from him. That was all the money bought. It could not buy the real Joseph. His clear head, his high principle, loyalty, generosity, energy, purpose, and those other vital characteristics, that made him second only to Pharaoh in all Egypt, could never be bought with money.

Capital is in error when it says, pompously and arrogantly, "I can buy brains." This is across the deadline. It can buy only the service of brains, its output, its product, but never the mind behind them, that generates new ideas as a rose-bush puts forth new blossoms. Money can buy a masterpiece of painting but it cannot purchase the power to put on the faintest flesh-tint nor even the power to really appreciate the marvelous canvas at its true worth. So far as the depth, the secret, the sublime conception of some ideal, realized by the artist genius, the picture may be as meaningless to its owner as though it were a cuneiform inscription. It may be to him merely—thirty-five thousand dollars in a frame. The rich man who has genuine joy in his art collection, receives it from some innate kinship with the artists' imagination that no money could buy, no loss of money take away. You can never buy taste, the individual's own appreciation of the beautiful.

A millionaire in his box for the season at the opera, where the magnificent glorious voices in the sextet from Lucia, rising like incense and swelling vibrant through the air, threaten almost to drown the desecrating buzz of conversation in his box, has bought only the privilege of seeing and hearing. He might well envy the quiet little man on the back seat of the topmost gallery who is oblivious to his strained position and his tired muscles, who is lost to the world around him, while he is feeding his soul from the almost divine music and the message it brings to him.

Money can purchase a great library of books, bound in the finest levant and harmoniously arranged in sets, but it cannot buy the magic power to create one single thought of some one of these great minds, there reincarnated in type, that has influenced countless thousands for centuries. Money alone could never bring the joy and companionship from books that comes as a benediction to some student in an attic, poor in money but rich in

intellect. He can call the greatest thinkers of the ages to speak with him from his little mantel-shelf of classics, and feel their joyous nearness to him as he comprehends and responds. He is living, for his brief hour of respite, in the great democracy and brotherhood of letters, and so absorbed that he does not note the growing dusk that begins to dim his page. This appreciation defies any mere check-book. The man who is rich may have it too, but it never came to him by purchase.

There is a certain pathos about the poverty of wealth, the emptiness of mere riches in its relation to all the greatest things of life. Superfluous wealth is like the load on a camel's back, he cannot use it, he dare not shake it off, but he must—carry it. The things that wealth can buy for the individual and his family are so soon exhausted, the novelty palls and the pleasure of mere buying so soon reaches its saturation point that the wealth begins to tug on the individual's moral reserve unless he is strong enough to resist. There is danger of speculating in the non-dividend paying stock of the follies, the frivolous, and the immorals of life.

The first money ever spent in the world was about \$225 that Abraham paid for a burial plot when his wife Sarah died. Since that time a goodly portion of the world's money, of both rich and poor, has been spent in buying graves,—graves of varied evil wherein the individual buries the best, the highest, the noblest in his character. The limitations of the purchasing power of money and the attempt to force it into fields where it can do no business because it cannot enforce the delivery of the goods, applies equally to the poor and to the rich in all the manifold affairs of life.

Money is a necessity in our civilization. As it has possibilities for evils, so has it great powers for good. While it can *buy* only within fixed limits, it can give, spend and serve without limit in the interests of humanity. It can feed the hungry, help the sick back to health, and in many ways it can overflow the material things of life beyond its own narrow channel, as the rising of the sleepy Nile from its bed and its spreading over the land makes its delta one of the richest soils in the world.

While money can *buy* neither mind nor heart nor soul; it can inspire, it can furnish new opportunities; it can hearten the sorrowing; it can strengthen the weak; it can give new starts in life to those fallen by the wayside; it can give new impulses, new glad hours of fresh hope and the sunrise of new purpose to the struggling, the sad and the suffering.

The really greatest things in life being beyond the power of mere money to buy or to corner, they are thus revealed as the possibility and privilege of all who will pay for them in the consecrated energy of body, mind, heart or soul. Let us seek to escape the miasma of today that has crept over the land, the money-worship, the constant talk of success as though it were merely a synonym for money-making.

Let us face the great truth that the greatest success in the world is that of those brave souls who made a hard fight, on the battle-field of life, for character and—won. Character is the only real life, everything else is either getting ready for it or evading it. Let us

regard money in its true light, give to it its just due and throw no shadow of cant over its possession.

If we are blessed with real wealth let us realize the greatness of our trusteeship in inspiring, heartening and helping others perhaps to do some great real work for the world that we could never perform ourselves. By making it possible for another to do it we are doing as valued service as though our own mind or hands added a new miracle of genius to the heritage of humanity. But we must know that trusteeship is not limited to money, but covers all we possess in any form. Let us realize in all fairness that money is mighty, but not—almighty.



## V

### Life's Walls and Its Open Road



FOR more than fifteen hundred miles along the northern frontier of China stretches, and spreads, winds and turns the Great Wall. It stalks defiantly through fertile valleys and arid plains, climbs daringly steep mountain-sides, and strides like a colossus across mighty rivers. Towering in its sullen strength and seclusion, for over twenty centuries it kept the mighty empire from living contact with the great world beyond.

Long after its need as a defense against invading tribes had ceased, it still threw the dark shadow of its symbolism over the lives of countless millions. It stood ever for inhospitality, intolerance, and isolation. It became the grim embodiment in stone of the traditions of the nation, the silent teacher of the exclusion, the enmity and the fear it perpetuated, and it dominated the very people who had created it. But the levelling hand of time has crumbled most of this greatest wall in history to primitive dust.

The world, in general, is tearing down many of its walls, literal and figurative. Walls around cities have largely disappeared from the face of the earth. Recent years have shown a constantly growing tendency to remove walls and tall railings and fences from public parks and institutions. High rails and heavy hedges that formerly aggressively separated private grounds and grassy sweeps of lawn have given way to the lowest of stone markings which indicate differing ownerships but which do not overemphasize them.

The finest triumph of civilization, in every phase of human activity, is the tearing down of walls of separation, aloofness and antagonism between nations, classes and individuals. Commerce has done much, the telegraph, the telephone and wireless have had their part, increased travel and the spread of education have also been factors in sapping to a degree the walls of ignorance and intolerance.

The great walls of life that shut us in so that we can neither give our best nor be our best, are those of repression, of prejudice, of ignorance, pride, fear, suspicion, selfishness, and misunderstanding.

This world of ours needs fewer walls but more roads, open roads, sunlit roads to the minds and hearts and lives of those around us. Walls separate, roads connect; walls exclude, roads invite; walls have the limitation of an accepted finality, roads the spirit of adventure into the land of new hope; walls speak ever the "mine" and "thine" of proprietorship, roads whisper the "ours" of trusteeship; walls mean imprisonment, roads freedom; walls proclaim aloofness, roads smile companionship. Consciously or unconsciously, purposefully or idly, day by day, we are all either builders of walls or makers of roads. Walls encircle us within ourselves; roads enshrine us in the hearts of others.

We all need each other, we all hunger for sympathy, recognition, understanding. That is one of the joys of being human. If it were not for this constant human interdependence there would have been no sense at all in overcrowding the world as it is today, when there are, according to the latest statistics, enough stars in the heavens to give every couple on earth a whole star all to themselves, with the nearest neighbours fourteen billion miles away.

Sheltered behind the wall of repression our kindest thoughts, our deepest feelings of appreciation, are worthless unless translated into word or act that make them real to hungry waiting ears, or eager watching eyes. Corked up in the silence of the unspoken, they do not exist. It is only expression that counts. All the light, heat, electricity and other forces of the sun would be useless if kept close-hid within its heart; it is only because they are expressed, because they are continuously radiated, because the earth is ever bathed royally in them, that the earth exists. It is not what the sun is, or what it has, that counts, but what it gives. It is not the feeling, the friendship, the love, the appreciation or the kindness we have, that counts, but only what we express, what we reveal, what we radiate. Then do we tear down a wall and make an open road to the hearts of others.

A word of honest praise means much to us all. We hunger at times for this recognition of what we are, what we have done and the good we have striven to do. We want the understanding of our higher self, not flattery which appeals only to our lower self. The eye of the soldier brightens, tired limbs grow suddenly soothed and rested, a new glow of courage comes, triumphal music seems to fill his ears and he grasps his weapon firmer and fights harder,—just because his General said to him, “Well done.”

We all want to hear this from our friends and from those dearest to us. If your friend means much to you, tell him so while he is alive to be helped by it, give him praise then for his good qualities, sympathy and help in his struggles, generous appreciation in his triumphs. The dead have no ears. Saying it with flowers at the funeral is a poor substitute for the real thing. In families, even where love itself is strong, there is often a strange lack of expression. Such love is like gold hoarded in vaults, useless because denied its one function—circulation.

There are men and women who bore outsiders by talking of their wonderful family yet never let it leak out within their own four walls. They seem to think it good for export trade and put none of it on the home market. Sometimes it trickles back home somehow in a roundabout way, but it has lost most of its freshness and perfume, like roses sent by parcel post.

Repression is intensely Anglo-Saxon. We are not, in general, demonstrative. We hold our emotions often so tightly in leash that it strangles them. We are afraid to show the affection or sentiment we feel, afraid of tears, afraid of being natural, afraid of what others may think of us, afraid of ridicule, afraid of being misunderstood. There is a constant fear of seeming to be different from other people that tends to veneer every expression of individuality, with a protecting layer of conventionality. Nature never

intended us to live such dwarfed and stunted lives. Let us tear down all walls of unneeded reserve and hurtful repression and find roads, or make roads, to the hearts of others.

We often build up such a wall between ourselves and those we love. We withhold our confidence, and refuse to give an explanation that might throw a trail of golden sunlight through the years. We fortify ourselves behind the wall of our silence and pride, perhaps not realizing its cost to ourselves and to another. Sometimes it begins in a blind and foolish fear of the uncomfortable quarter of an hour that reaching an understanding might entail. But in avoiding a brief unpleasant skirmish we may bring upon ourselves a siege of years, of aloofness, doubt, clouded happiness and the common, unspoken acceptance of a spectre that comes between the two who love each other.

What has been an hour of repression may become a lifetime's regret. Every wall breeds a new wall. Our wall of silence may build a wall of doubt, wonder or suspicion around the life of another. The double wall may become impossible to break down.

Sometimes we feel hurt or wounded by what seems to us injustice, or indifference, or neglect, and we do not speak of it, but let a feeling of resentment grow and rankle. If we are really wronged we are not fair to ourselves in sullenly hiding behind our wall of reserve; if it be but a seeming wrong, not an actual one, we are unfair to another. A few moments of frank kindly speech may make a broad open road where in the atmosphere of larger freedom we can banish the misunderstanding as the sun-burst scatters storm-clouds.

What is true of walls in our social relations is equally true in the world of business. In every line of commercial activity and trade industry there is a growing spirit of getting together, of working out common problems, plans and policies through cooperation rather than competition. It means the united wisdom of all concentrated on the problems of all. It means trusteeship taking the place of selfish individualism, walls of isolation and aloofness giving way to open roads of freer discussion, interchange of ideas, and mutual helpfulness.

In the relation between capital and labour, the pay envelope is not the final symbol of their joint interest. If the ring of the cash register closes the transaction, if it tells the full story it is a poor lifeless affair for both. There is a human, man to man element that is the tonic, vitalizing force and inspiration for the only safe adjustment of the rights and duties of each.

The employer may sit stolidly and stupidly behind the wall of repression and isolation, deeming his workers mere human machines, artificially speeded up to mechanical efficiency and accepting good and faithful service as coldly and impersonally as if it came from a slot machine. The labourer is worthy of his hire but he is worth more; he deserves for good work a word of appreciation, a smile of encouragement and the inspiration of merited praise. Labour may be equally to blame behind its wall of the tyranny of organization, of giving as little as it can for the pay it receives, and of opposition to capital.

Whatever keeps us from being our best and from giving our best to others is a wall built squarely across an open road. These are walls of ignorance, of prejudice, of selfishness, of pride, intolerance, bigotry, caste, suspicion, fear, misunderstanding and others that we mortals build around ourselves and those near to us.

Tearing down walls symbolizes the recognition of trusteeship, the common ground where our rights merge into the rights of others. It means finer vision, deepened sympathy, broader interests. As we tear down the walls in our own lives, we sap those in the lives of others. Every wall of ours throws its dark shadow over the lives and happiness of many.

The world would be transformed if the energy we spend in building walls were consecrated to the making of open roads, leading to fuller understanding, closer cooperation and a finer spirit in living.

## VI

### The Red Blood of Courage



THE courage that is most needed in the day-by-day battle of life is not physical but moral. Moral courage is consecrated self-mastery. It is the optimism of the soul manifest in action. It is the kingly consciousness of the individual that there is a something within him that makes him greater than all the forces that can be ranged in battle array against him.

Courage is moral muscle. It is aggressive loyalty to conscience or conviction. It is the soul's fine attitude toward the disagreeable or the difficult. It is red blood in the heart of purpose. The great men in the history of the world have all had courage of some kind, that sturdiness of the soul that was undaunted by opposition, obstacles or opinions. They won with all the odds against them, they never drifted into success, they steered for a certain harbour and battled against adverse tides and winds and storms unflinchingly, ever confident of the final outcome.

Courage is no gaily-decked joyous craft to skim the summer seas when waves are sun-warmed; it is the sturdy life-boat that rides the angry waters when skies are dark. The lives of some men are a constant struggle, hopeless but for their courage. For fourteen years Robert Louis Stevenson had not a day's health. When the use of his right hand failed him, his left hand assumed the burden of writing; when he could not use either hand to hold the pen, he dictated; when he could not speak, he still dictated, but by means of the deaf and dumb alphabet. His fine spirit defied the limitations of the body; there was no moan, no twinge of pain, no voice of protest, no obtrusion of self crept into the sunlit pages of his prose or verse. He gave the world his sweetness and his strength, the perfume from the crushed flowers of his struggle and sorrow, the honey of his triumph, not the sting of his mighty effort.

This fine courage of the soul has fathered many of the greatest works in all literature, which will live as long as human eyes can read the printed page. No message that these men could give the world could be more glowing and inspiring than the lives they led. They played the game of life in a big, manly way, made no bid for a handicap because of their affliction, but with courage paid the price for what they wanted,—and got it.

It takes courage to live boldly by the truth, to speak the truth we know, to live the truth we speak, and ever to seek higher truth. The great failing of humanity is not ignorance of the right, but cowardice, selfishness, and moral laziness that prevents them living it. Standing boldly by the truth is often a short cut to unpopularity. The advance guard in new ideas have always to suffer the temporary neglect and contempt of the rear guard. If it be a great truth, upsetting tradition, conventions, and the placid lines of thinking, it may require decades for its acceptance; if it be but a mere grain of truth, cleverly capsuled in alluring error, it captures the unthinking with the magic of a fad. It takes courage to speak

a new great truth or to be a first disciple; it requires no courage to stand in the ranks of the heavy battalions of belief.

It takes courage to live squarely in accord with principle, to be loyal to the inner vision, to move forward bravely along the road of right, when the by-paths are alluring with the roses of desire, and the joy we crave tempts our hungry outstretched hand, and that which our heart longs for would be ours for the taking. But it would mean a wrong done to another, a sacrifice to principle that the world would never know, a wound inflicted on our self-respect, a failure to live up to a real man's consciousness of what is right. It takes courage to exercise the heroism of the soul that asserts the kingship of self-control and chooses the harder road of renunciation, hearing the hopeless clang of the gates of some paradise closing behind us. Moral courage fights it out bravely in the silence and conquers: moral cowardice surrenders, caring naught what the price or who pays it.

Courage is the will controlled to conform to a need. We hear much of the nobility of bearing patiently and of the glory of long-suffering. Sometimes this represents courage, sometimes it is tame, anaemic surrender to conditions. When we permit any wrong, evil, injustice, invasion of our rights, or any unfair situation at the hands of another, without using every effort to change it, we are unjust to ourselves and are stimulating and abetting the selfishness of the one who inflicts the injury. There are those who from day to day stand indignities, suffering or petty weakening wrongs that a bold handling would remove, unprotesting, through cowardly fear of what they call a "scene."

The highest courage is not the heroic effort of an hour but the sustained courage that meets trial, sorrow, suffering, disappointment, hope deferred, misunderstanding day after day, week after week, and year after year, and stands serene and steadfast with a smile. It is in remaining strong under all conditions. Long after the rebel lips have said "I can bear it no longer," the brave soul keeps sturdily on its lonely way. Such courage is not a matter of mind but of heart, not of temperament. It comes from a serene confidence, an abiding faith in some power, principle or purpose to enable one to endure or to conquer. It means self is great because of something greater than self that sustains.

Courage inspires coolness, confidence, calmness, in meeting the problems of each new day with the full realization that it is our part to do each day the best we can by the light we have and to accept bravely whatever be the results. Even the angels can do no more than their best, and the serene restfulness and peace that comes from knowing we have lived up to our highest self is a wondrous source of strength.

Man is the only animal that can put up a moral fight, the only one that can consciously, with blood tingling with the glow of purpose, seek to overcome an environment and to attain an ideal. We should esteem it not a duty, but a privilege; we should see it not as an unjust pressure put upon us, but as a glorious opportunity to assert our power to prove the moral mettle of our character.

There are times in all lives when hope grows dark and effort seems useless, when nothing that we do seems to count, the forced retreats baffle and dishearten us, we have tried so

hard and results seem so meager and our weary hearts and our weakened hands long only for rest and for freedom from the struggle. But we should not surrender, we must not give up. This is the hour for new courage, for new drafts on our reserve, for new realization that truth must conquer, right must triumph, justice must prevail.

Even a coward may fight when inspired by the bugles of victory, when the thrill of purpose almost accomplished nerves him to a last great effort, when the shouts and cheers of comrades brighten his eye and strengthen his aim, but it takes a real man to fight on alone, unnoted, uncheered, with no inspiration but the voice of his own soul ringing through the darkness. There is always more gain than we know, more progress than is evident, for every effort produces result, whether we see it or not. Another hour of courage, another day of loyalty, may bring victory greater and finer than our rosiest dream dared to foreshadow.

*For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,  
Seem here no painful inch to gain,  
Far back through creeks and inlets making  
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.*

It takes courage to make right, not expediency, our standard, truth our test of action and conscience our sole court of appeal. It takes courage to fight the conventionalities of life that often place the semblance higher than the reality, that too often let mere worldly success obscure the methods by which it has been attained; to fail nobly, going down with colours flying on the ship of an exalted purpose is greater than to succeed at a price that brings twinges of remorse to conscience in the hours of solitude when one is alone with his soul.

It takes courage to choose the harder road and to walk bravely in it, simply, steadfastly and uncomplaining. If you are right and know you are right it matters not what the world thinks or what it says. You can fight your way through the smoke of doubt, the choking atmosphere of misrepresentation, the blinding sulphurous clouds of unjust criticism and plow through the serried ranks of jealousy, cruelty and injustice, vitalized to new wondrous powers of resistance by the consciousness of right. You will know no fear but the fear of failing to do your best; you will glow in the thought that, no matter how hard the fight, the eagles of victory must finally rest on the banners of right.

It is on the battlefield of the soul that the hardest warfare and the longest sieges are fought. Each of us has his own temptations, his own struggles, his own close-hand fight with human weakness and sin of which the world knows naught. Knowing the special weakness within us, the traitor in our camp that dampens the powder of our best effort, we can conquer it. It is sometimes easier to fight a big foe than an army of little ones.

There are men who are courageous enough to grapple with a strong temptation and kill it, but who are victims to vague fears and phantoms of worry. Worry must be fought to a finish. It will kill us if we do not kill it. It is the spell that what may not happen casts over our present. When we fear we acknowledge something as being greater than we, more

powerful. Worry always saps our strength before the time of need. It requires real courage to cut worry absolutely from our lives; it means realizing with every fiber of one's being the utter, unqualified, uselessness of worry. Forethought helps, but worry disturbs; it is forethought, wild, rebellious, unruly, dominating us instead of serving us by obedience.

In life as in war there are times when the wisest course is simply to stand still, to rest on one's arms, to watch and to wait. When a mist of uncertainty enshrouds us and life seems to come to a pause, when we do not know just what to do, it is best to await the sunshine of revealing that will show us our way. To active, nervous, energetic natures, keenly hungering for action, the hours of waiting are hard. But they are often necessary; they are part of the discipline of life. It requires more courage sometimes to survive the dull, dead tedium of a siege than the tingling, thrilling exhilaration and excitement of the perils of a close fight.

There can be no true living without the red blood of courage; it is never in what we bear but in how we bear it. Without courage we are but feeble slaves of condition, accepting life dumbly and with cowardly resignation in all that it may bring of good or ill. It is the steady glow of moral heroism in the dull round of daily duties that counts most, not the spectacular showing on some great occasion.

It takes courage to be loyal to ideals, to stand alone, to smile bravely; when it covers a sob, to confess oneself in the wrong, to stand erect when others fawn and cringe for power or favour, to hold on, to face failure calmly, to speak the right that others fear to speak, to live under a cloud of uncertainty, to face continuous poverty unlit by a hope, to bear another's wrong, to be unmoved by criticism, to sacrifice our life's happiness and have it unknown or unappreciated, to rise above ingratitude, to control oneself under injustice, to live without anger, to be silent when silence costs a struggle. These are but a few of the phases of courage that show themselves in our daily living.

Tennyson uses the fine phrase, "the glory of going on." There is tremendous power and influence in plowing through obstacles and opposition as though they did not exist, of remaining calm and undaunted, meeting fate or failure without protest, but ever seeking a new way out. Courage is not in never fearing but in conquering the fear, not in seeing no danger but in seeing safety beyond; it is the soul's supreme contempt for cost so long as it gets value. Courage comes from conviction; it always rises when we face a situation with supreme confidence that we can master it, when we remain cool long enough to generate the energy and heat to go on.

If hero-medals were given to those who show truest moral courage we would find often their true place on the breasts of those brave ones bearing crosses for others, silently, serenely, sweetly, unknowing their own greatness. It takes courage to bear bravely for ourselves; more sometimes to bear for others; most perhaps to bear from others, where every act of our lives makes the infliction doubly unjust. There is courage unnoted in daily life that makes the greatest physical courage on the field of battle seem spectacular



and garish compared with the great simple courage of those who for years fight fairly, fearlessly and faithfully not for self, but that the sunshine of life may fall a little stronger and more glowing on some loved one.

Let the individual feel he has the right to happiness, to whatever his soul tells him is right, but let him feel if it be worth having it is worth fighting for, fighting in that truest sense that we must ever fight; we are either battling for the right or against it, on the side of the battalions of God and justice or the darker forces of error. Let us feel that no right price is too much to pay for what it is right to have, and let us fill our souls with that divine optimism, that heroic courage of one demanding his heart's desire and boldly avowing his willingness to fight for it to the end.

## VII

### Buying at the Store of Life



LIFE is the largest department store in the world. The date of its first organization no one knows. The earliest customers on record were Adam and Eve. They started the paying-the-price system by an ill-advised purchase of a new variety of apple. The price was confiscation of all their property, eviction, dishonour, emigration, and descent from the proud dignity of landowners to the humble position of originators of hard labour.

Humanity has inherited their purchase and is still charged with the account, the debt remaining unpaid.

The stock of the store of Life consists of all the countless millions of articles in the world that appeal to the four great hungers of man—those of the body, the mind, the heart, and the soul—and to their perversions into morbid acquired appetites. The articles for sale are good, bad, shopworn, and indifferent. They are tangible and intangible. At this great store of Life everyone who lives in the world must be a customer. While we live we must buy continuously, and pay. Nature runs long credits, but she never forgets.

There are strange rules and peculiar methods in this store of Life, and learning them and buying more wisely is called profiting by experience. The prices are never marked in plain figures, nor in cipher. No two persons ever pay the same price for identically similar goods. No two derive the same amount of satisfaction or use or wear from them. No goods are guaranteed. We may pay the price and the goods selected may not be sent us. Years after we may realize that the finest value we ever received from the store of Life was when the purchase that then seemed the desire of our very soul was not delivered.

We may pay the full price and an inferior article is sent, but as time goes on Nature, representing the store of Life, more than equalizes the goods by extras. We find a joy that gives a sunlit glow to all our life, on the bargain counter. Again, we may be delighted at what seems to make all life a guaranteed joy; we purchase it and when it is sent home, packed in scented cotton, ribbons, and cushioned silk, we imagine that it must be a diamond tiara set with Kohinoors. In a short time, when the saddening hour of revelation comes, this high-priced purchase is revealed as worth less than the string and wrappings.

Sometimes a misplaced trust and a few words of special confidence may wreck the happiness of long years. We had our moment's oil of consolation but the price proved far too high. There are times when those from whom we have expected least prove to us angels of inspiration, leading us with gentle hand to the fine glories of the heights of finest living. We paid a small price for a wondrous vision of the possibilities of life on earth.

We often pay most for our mistakes, even more than for crimes. This is vividly shown in the “matrimonial department.” The price of a mistake here may mean the darkening and blighting, for years, of two lives. It is usually not the fault of the store but of one, or both, of the customers.

But under all the activities, and hurry, and rush, and seeming confusion of the store of Life there is the quiet, restful system bringing order out of chaos. Nature is ever working for the individual, even under the opposition of humanity leading unnatural lives and then blaming Nature. She seeks ever to equate conditions, to intensify the solid satisfactions of life, to balance life equitably.

Beneath all the seeming injustice, sorrow, grief, heartache, poverty, and misery is Nature constantly auditing the books of Life. She puts down every item of pleasure, treasure, self-conquest, influence—the thousands of “offsets” we may too lightly consider. Some of our purchases we realize are great but we forget their true value because they are commonplaces.

Nature watches so carefully that no single good act of ours, no smallest payment, no slightest purchase of unselfishness, though disdained by the world, passes unrecognized by her. No wrong, unkind, selfish, cruel, mean, or petty act, or series of them, even though seemingly unpunished for a time, fails of record in her books with the individual, to be paid somehow, somewhere, sometime. And if we could get a writ from the Court of Divinity, ordering Nature to produce the books of the store of Life, we should see justice far greater and truer than our human concept in its highest flights of idealism.

Sometimes, in a whimsical kind of way, as though we were smiling bravely through tears, we wonder why the store of Life does not issue a mammoth complete catalogue and make purchasing so much easier. We would like to have the goods accurately described, with the prices fully marked and with all extras clearly set down, and with a good index, so that we would make fewer mistakes in our buying and have fewer memories that burn and scar because what we paid was so much and the sham that we were deceived into buying now stands out in maddening mockery.

There may come to us the luminant revelation that the greatest sorrows, the most constant daily sources of pain are not due to the store of Life at all, but to the customers. It is not Nature that is at fault, not Life, but humanity. It is the cruelty, meanness, selfishness, weakness, lying, wickedness, and treachery of individuals to each other. They dare throw the responsibility of it all on the store of Life, on the very scheme of the universe, when it is humanity that creates most of the sorrow and suffering of this world for the individual and for others.

It is the every-day tragedy of the manifold, man-made wrongs that we know and realize fully, that can be prevented, that should be prevented, and that will keep us from making a better world of this until they are prevented—these have caused most of the unjust tirades against the store of Life. It is finally a matter of the finer action of individuals. If it

be a matter of individuals each of us must be to some degree responsible. Let us learn the true values of Life, the great simple things that are really worthwhile.

Let us live this, day by day, doing justice to ourselves and to others, and we shall begin to learn more of the fairness and justice of the store of Life and profit more by Nature's efforts in our behalf, and get fuller strength when all seems dark.

Then, in a supreme hour of real grief, when the heart seems broken in its helplessness, we find that Nature has been reserving, as in a bank, all our payments of courage, strength, loyalty, faith, and sterling character, and returns it all to us with interest. There are times in all lives when lonely, body weary, and heart tired, when we have fought a hard battle, when we have paid a high price for what we most hunger for and find it again denied, we doubt whether good, square, honest living really does pay. We wonder why those who lead selfish, trivial, or unprincipled lives seem the most prosperous and happy.

We see a seeming success, but not the price they are paying. We never can be told, nor can we ever know, the terrific price someone has paid for wealth wrongly acquired, for some foul act of treachery that for a time seemed successful, some seeming happiness, love, power, position, possession, or prosperity. But they pay, and Nature, as a collector of the store of Life on such bills, never loses sight of the customer.

The store of Life deals with individuals—humanity is only an infinity of individuals. He who inherits a vast fortune may think it has come free. The philosophy of paying on inherited wealth is equally true of all phases of heredity. No, it must be paid for again by him. The testator paid, perhaps, in terms of energy, struggle, shrewdness, business sagacity, consecration to this one object. The beneficiary pays in new cares and responsibilities, against the relaxing hazard of great wealth on character. The first paid to win it; the second pays to keep it, to spend it wisely.

Payment of price does not mean an absolute equivalent at the ^core of Life any more than it does on some of those little shops on the avenue; we may pay much more or less than the article is really worth. It is ever the simple, true, real things that are the finest wares. They are honour, truth, justice, love, loyalty, sympathy, and those other sterling characteristics that give sunshine, optimism, joy, radiant sweetness, and simplicity to countless thousands. They can never be bought with money. They are bought by vanquished temptation, by courageous bearing, by passing with head erect along the road of sorrow, suffering, isolation. They come from the conquered self.

These great, unchangeable, simple things of life cost many an hour of bitter sorrow, a tightening of the heart strings, a moan in the silence, the courage to be misunderstood. Then the Angel of Love may send someone dear and true, kind and tender, wist\* fully solicitous of our every thought, and with new inspiration and joy we begin a new life—two paying the price instead of one. We need then fear naught from the store of Life, for no price we could pay could be too high. We may have fought for a fine character and won it; we may have hungered for a great love and it came. Life has given its best. We have made the wise purchase at the store of Life.

## VIII

### The Spell of the One Thing Lacking



ABOUT world's attitude towards the birth of every great twenty-five centuries ago, in the old Biblical days, there lived in Shushan, in Persia, a man named Haman. He was self-made, and was very proud of his work, and one night he invited a number of his friends to his house to hear him talk. He frankly confessed how great a man he was; he dilated on the wealth he had accumulated; he bragged in twentieth century style about the clever things his wonderful children did; he boasted of being solid with the King and of the promotions and increases of salary awarded him during the last year. He waxed very eloquent over it all. Everything seemed coming his way, and that very day he had received an invitation to a little private supper to be given by Queen Esther to himself and the King.

Haman distended his chest right valiantly, in unabashed vanity, as he said, "And tomorrow am I invited unto her also with the King."

It was so delightfully human, this putting of himself first, to get under the limelight of his friends' envy, as though Esther had wanted him only, but said casually, "Bring your friend the King along," as an afterthought. Then Haman, after he had worked his story up to a dramatic climax, put in his big dash of colour on the emptiness of all life with the words:

"Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the King's gate."

Here was the sand in the sugar of his happiness. This it was that put Haman under the spell of the one thing lacking.

We each have our Mordecai. It sits ever at the gate of our unsatisfied longing. It is the hunger for more. Our Mordecai is the possession our heart so craves that life without it, at times, seems dull, drear, hopelessly empty. It concentrates all desire in a word. It is the focus of every ray of our deepest thinking. It is the great sea into which flows every river, rivulet, and rill of our restless yearning. In the garden of Eden it was an apple; with Alexander it was more worlds to conquer. Between these two, the seemingly most trivial and the greatest goal of ambition, lie all the Mordecais of life.

Our Mordecai may be some great joy or ambition toward which we extend empty beseeching arms, or some torturing sorrow, pain, or memory from which we long to be delivered. The one thing lacking is always the next milestone on the road to happiness, and we think if we could only reach that stone we should sit down and rest calmly and be radiantly satisfied. It is ever the human craving for a new freedom, freedom of possession or of dispossession. And when one Mordecai enters the city of fulfilled desire, a new Mordecai sits down placidly in his place.

Wealth is the Mordecai of countless thousands. In a garb of gold he rests at the gate of our ambition. We may seek to woo and win him by years of consecrated absorbing service, or to capture him by some sudden bold assault of graft and dishonesty. We may let the thought of his entering our life dull our eyes to the glory of our present possessions and deaden our ears to the finer music of living, as we hear in imagination the unending clink of the coins of gold dropping into the coffers of our desire.

We may pay too big a price for the conquest of this Mordecai. We may sacrifice friends, honour, love, the joy of living on the higher planes of life, and find finally that this Mordecai possesses us, not we him. We may become his slave instead of his master. In the silence of the night, when the soul has been swept clean for a moment by the breath of some high inspiration, we may realize we have been fooled by a beggar in a dress of gold and this Mordecai that meant so much to us is not worthwhile.

We may long for fame. We may feel that if our name was on thousands of tongues, like the name of a popular brand of cigars, our words quoted with the signet of authority, our portraits sold in the shops, and our biography in every work on successful men, then the roseate dream of our life would be a glorious reality.

But when it does come, it does not long satisfy. It soon palls; the adulation that once trickled sweetly and meltingly in our ears grows insipid “r the scent of the burning incense stifles us; conspicuousness reveals its thorns. There seems one note missing, and we may not be able to tell what it is; but without it the music must be a jangle. We are again under the spell of the one thing lacking.

Our Mordecai ever keeps us from happiness. Sometimes it is the existence of someone who blocks the path of our progress, someone possessing what we desire sitting stolidly in the way of our ambition, and we may surrender all that is best in our nature to have him removed. This Mordecai, breeding jealousy, envy, and injustice, may transform even our dearest friend into our deadliest foe, and we may sacrifice him to the compelling hunger of a moment, something worth far less than he. We may realize later that it was like tearing down a cathedral to make room for a meat market; but it was our mistake, under the spell of the one thing lacking.

We put too big a premium on physical afflictions when we set them up as Mordecais that kill the joy of life and bury all our usefulness. If they cannot be removed, they must be borne. They should call forth our moral courage, the red blood of undaunted optimism, which would defy them to dictate to us limitations to our power. There is a wondrous reserve in every individual, treasures of undreamed-of strength, determination, and conquest that sweep away all obstacles as a mountain torrent drives before it opposing things in its course.

There are memories of past joys which have faded like a sunset,—prosperity of earlier years or regret for wrongs done in our blindness and unknowing, that we permit to sit like Mordecais blocking our way at the gate of happiness. This is a folly of the soul which we

must either conquer or permit to blight and shrivel every growing bud of joy in the garden of ever new days given to us for better, finer living.

The alchemist of old had a beautiful dream of transmuting the baser metals into gold. It was the great get-rich-quick scheme of antiquity. All they needed was one substance. They felt sure it existed somewhere in nature and that it would precipitate the cheaper metals into a nugget of pure gold at the bottom of their crucibles. It was the north pole of infant chemistry. It was the one thing lacking. It was the Mordecai sitting dumbly at the gate of their golden dreams of fortune.

We seek ever, like these visionary Paracelsians, one element. It is the one thing we deem necessary to transmute the dull dross of our daily living into the gold of true happiness. We may not realize that love is the missing philosopher's stone of life. Love of man and woman, love of parent and child, love of man for man, in a vital, pulsing human brotherhood, love consecrated in some form or in some work,—this is the final Mordecai of truest happiness.

Love, in its highest sense, is the voice of the infinite echoing in the finite. There are human hearts, in hours of loneliness, emptiness, and isolation, that hunger for love as the one thing lacking. Under the spell of their heart's longing, riches, fame, honours, success, seem trivial, tawdry substitutes, worthy perhaps to offer as sacrifices on the altar of love, but unworthy a shrine of their own.

Those who thus make love their Mordecai wait and watch longingly for it as Noah looked over the great stretch of lonely water for the coming of the dove with the tiny leaf of promise and hope in its beak. Sometimes they may pass a great love in silence, in blindness, or unknowing, as ships steam past Gibraltar in the night when the passengers are asleep. Sometimes, by selfishness, meanness, false pride, jealousy, or lack of faith, they kill the love they seek, not realizing what they are doing.

We must all face our Mordecais. The seat at the gate of desire is never vacant. They are the symbol of the needs, the hungers, the longings, the aspirations of humanity. When man says he has put all these things behind him and wants only rest and peace, he merely gives name to his new Mordecai. Man's constant unsatisfiedness is evidence of a divine essence within him evolving to some higher destiny.

Our individual Mordecai is ever our confessed choice of what we deem greatest. The choice is ours; the battle must be ours. If it be unworthy of our highest and best effort, we must battle, bravely and unflinching, squarely on the fighting line, till the worthless Mordecai lies dead at our feet. If it be worthy, if it be high, true, and exalted, let us fight to the end, till the victory of attainment crowns our happiness. But the true Mordecai should never depress but ever inspire us, ever give new intensity to purpose, new fiber to character, new glow to the trifles of living.

Mordecai means ever the sunrise of a new hope, the satisfying of a new hunger, the realizing of a new ideal. Man was meant to fight and to hope—and to hope more in order that he might fight more fearlessly. And at the end of life, man sees sitting at the gate of

his still unsatisfied longing a new Mordecai,—an angel of pure whiteness, with the radiance of eternity in his face. This last hunger, this last Mordecai, is—immortality.



## IX

### The Glory of the Commonplace



THE greatest things in life are the commonplace. Their very profuseness, their wide distribution, their unfailing constancy have in a way cheapened them in our eyes as some people unconsciously grow to think too little of a friend they see too often. Familiarity throws an obscuring veil of illusion over them that hides from us their wonder and their revelation. The more we know them the less we know of them. We call the usual, the frequent, the habitual “commonplace” and we say the word with a slur as though in our weariness we had consigned them forever to the outer darkness of the uninteresting, the empty, and the exhausted.

The fault is not in the things themselves, but in us. We do not bring to them the seeing eye, the listening ear, the free mind, the full heart. We do not see them illumined by the light of the higher vision. It is not what we have in life that counts, but the fine self we put into it, the finer meanings our interpretation brings from it. We often miss the great things of life because we are looking for them in some new, splendid guise; we do not see the wondrous possibilities in the trifles of our every-day living. We expect happiness in the future; we do not make it today. We expect it to dawn on us in an hour when some vague dream shall come true, when the eagles of victory shall perch on the banners of our ambitions, when some great hope of the heart shall be crowned with the laurel of attainment. We stretch out empty, imploring arms to the stars, when we might fill them with flowers of joy growing hidden in the commonplaces about us.

Were the sun to rise in its royal splendour but once a year—that day would be a world holiday. The roofs of the houses would be covered with people, the hills would be crowded with countless thousands, venturesome ones would climb the very mountain peaks. All would seek higher levels to witness the miracle of the birth of a new morn. But the daily rising of the sun has made it commonplace—and it passes unheeded. It ever requires higher levels to view the commonplace aright.

A drop of water is commonplace, but the strong eye of the microscope sees it as a teeming ocean whose wonders no naturalist could begin to exhaust in a lifetime. A snowflake, closely examined, is revealed as a marvel of exquisite geometry, based on six lines meeting in a common center and united at an angle of sixty degrees, beautifully elaborated into traceries and arabesques of more than a thousand separate and distinctly different designs of crystals.

The wayside dandelion is passed by with half-tolerant contempt because it is commonplace. Naturalists claim it is king of the vegetable kingdom. It is one of the most perfect forms of the largest, oldest, most widely diffused, and most highly finished order of plants. It is of a far higher type of plant life than a rose or a lily, or even a cedar, a palm, or an oak. The common field daisy modestly hides its wonderful structure by its

very commonness. Idle passers-by would never realize that it has three separate methods of reproduction and is put together in nearly thirteen hundred pieces and that each of its hundred little anthers, or bags, contains about five hundred yellow pollen grains.

Life is made up of common things and of common deeds of the common days. It is on the field of the commonplace, in the dull round of daily duties and daily cares that the battle of life must be fought and the victory of character be made manifest. High-tide moments in individual lives are rare, opportunities for spectacular display of heroism are few, power to inspire or influence millions is a gift never bestowed on the many, but to all is given the commonplace to live to its truest and highest and best. Let us realize the magic of a smile of appreciation, a look of love, a word of cheer, a handclasp of confidence, a tone of tenderness, an expression of new courage that brings the sunshine of new purpose into some one's life, that makes some one's heart sing joyously over tasks that seemed hopeless, that sends the blood of new inspiration tingling through some one's soul.

These are commonplace; these are trifles, it is true, but trifles make up the sum of living. It is the little things that make the body weak, the mind worn, and the heart weary. It is the hard fight against the commonplace, unilluminated by the higher vision, that brings that sense of dread monotony, of dreary drudgery, that saps the waters of the very spring of life. Let us put love into the commonplace and it becomes a sacred joy, let us fill it with imagination, when love has taken wings, as children do in their play, and the commonplace will be transformed.

The great things that make life worth living are so generally distributed that we take them as a matter of course—health, love, friends, liberty, labour and countless others. Sir Walter Scott once said to his daughter Annie: "When you have lived to my years, you will be disposed to agree with me in thanking God that nothing really worth having or caring about in this world is uncommon."

The great things of life that we possess in common with all humanity seem to us nothing. We measure the value of our possessions by their unusualness, by what we have that others have not. We quietly eliminate the blessings common to all from our list of causes for thankfulness. We want exclusiveness. It is this feeling that makes discontent a perpetual motion factor no matter how the average of any community or nation is raised and intensified.

Often we regard certain people as commonplace, and we may draw the robes of our self-awarded superiority about us as though we were made of some finer clay. But if we be wise enough to become interested in them, we see that love, courage, loyalty, hope, trust, sacrifice live in them, perhaps greater even than in us. In the light of the higher vision we begin to glory in the commonplace; we are glad to be united to our fellow man by the tie of a common nature; snobbery of the soul grows contemptible in our sight, and we feel that the heart of the infinite pulses through all humanity.

It is as we look at common things with spiritual eyes, that they glow with beauty and revelation. The Bible records about three dozen parables, all based on the most seemingly

trivial and commonplace incidents of daily life—a lost coin, a sheep that wandered away, five girls who had lamps but no oil, ten pounds put out at interest, two men who owed money, a net cast into the sea, a grain of mustard seed, a wicked farmer, a rich fool, a boy who went wrong and came back and similar every-day events. They were commonplace but the illumination and interpretation of them will last as long as the world.

The philosophy of the commonplace reveals nature's great leveling process, her attempt at equalizing, her constant tendency to balancing, to bring justice throughout the world. The possessions of the rich soon become to them as usual, as habitual, as unsatisfying as the smaller holdings of the poor. The commonplace is never absolute in life; it is only relative. A lifelong dweller in the Alps may find the glories of the mountains tame and uninteresting and be hungry for a sight of the great sea, while a traveler viewing the great succession of peaks for the first time, sees in them no suggestion of the commonplace.

Down deep in the human heart nature has planted a love for the commonplace, for the accustomed, for the familiar, and the tired traveler returns after a time to his own country and his own home, glad to take up the dropped threads of the old life, to see around him the faces of those who know him and who care for him, and to get back to the simple duties and associations that have become part of his real living.

The greatest things in all literature, the poems that will forever stir the hearts of men while blood runs red, are not those like Milton's magnificent and colossal "Paradise Lost," which everyone has read of, but which few have read, but the great, simple, familiar, commonplace things glorified through the magic interpretation of genius, the every-day seen in relation to the eternal.

The plowshare of Robert Burns startles a mouse in the field, and Burns and the mouse are immortalized. Shelley tells of a skylark and the world never tires of listening. Keats sings of a nightingale and the music pulses through time unending. Browning records a day in the life of a little factory girl, and "Pippa Passes" lives forever. In countless phases it can be shown in all the other arts. What could be more common than a street parade, yet the genius of unknown Greek chisels make the friezes of the Parthenon eternally young and eternally beautiful. One of the greatest gifts of genius is the power to give its seeing eyes to the world, to see the wondrous vision in the commonplace and to make that vision real and lasting for all the ages. Nature makes the great things of life common; it is we who make them commonplace. Let us cultivate that fine insight into the soul of those things that familiarity has made commonplace that will make them stand out clear and luminant as though we saw them for the first time. Let us realize the golden stream of possibility for good to ourselves and to others in the things of our everyday life that we speak of as commonplace. There is nothing commonplace in life as a reality. Faraday, the scientist, took a common candle as his theme for a series of lectures and showed that in its burning was revealed every law of nature. Spurgeon, the preacher, reached the souls of thousands by a series of sermons on the same commonplace light.

Let us see sweetness, richness, beauty, dignity, wondrous revelation of possibilities in the thousand phases of the commonplaces of our living and begin to realize them. Let us see even the trials, sorrows, suffering, and struggle that come to us all as revealers of new moral strength, courage, and uplift, and we will begin to see real glories of living that we have blindly overlooked.

## X

### The Vision of High Ideals



THE great men of the world have ever been its men of vision, men of imagination, of ideals and of inspiration. They ever hold their heads high, and see above, through, and beyond the limitations of their time and environment. They will see with the poet's imagination, the prophet's intuition, the philosopher's reasoning.

Vision sees a mighty forest of oaks in a handful of acorns. Vision sees a glowing revelation of the ideal as the birthright of the most sordid and seemingly hopeless real. Vision sees far down the coming years the culmination of the logic of events where others may not note even a trend or tendency. Vision sees the sunburst of the final triumph of right at the very hour when all seems wrapped in the darkness of doubt and failure.

Vision sees the desert become a luxuriant tropical garden under the magic wand of irrigation, the abyss that defies passage spanned by a mighty bridge, a jungle fade away into a land of teeming cities and happy homes, the angel of infinite possibility that slumbers in the lives of even the worst of men, the glorious opportunity that rests in the shadow of supreme obstacle, the working of some eternal power for good, under all the turmoil, evil and injustice of life.

Solomon uttered an eternal truth when he said: "Where there is not vision the people perish." He epitomized in eight words the secret of the fall of the world's great civilizations. When their rulers and their people, intoxicated with prosperity, wealth and power, grew arrogant and imperious, looked away from their ideals, forgot the vision, and trailed the standard of right in the dust, they sowed the seed of their own shame, their own humiliation and destruction. They fell from their kingship of mastery and became slaves of the low ideals into which they sank. They failed because they were disloyal to their privileges as individuals, untrue to their trusteeship.

What is true of a nation or an empire is equally true of an individual. There can be no real growth, no fine development, unless there be a vision, a guiding star, a looking upward and outward, and a moving forward.

Man must realize that he was not placed in the world, as a finality, something fixed, limited, restricted and unchangeable. He was entrusted with himself as infinite possibility, as mere raw material to fashion as he will for better or for worse as he may determine. It is part of his glorious gift of freedom, his responsibility of trusteeship. For what a man *has* he is dependent on others, but what he *is* depends on him alone. We may counsel another, help him, inspire him to live his life, but we cannot live that life for him. That is his individual problem, in accord with his vision and his ideals; the battle is his and the final victory or defeat, with its responsibility to himself and to others is his.

What a man *is* is never the measure of what he may become; what he has, never the measure of what he may acquire; what he has done or is doing, never the measure of what he may do. This is the final lesson of all the world's histories, all its biographies.

Ideals are born of discontent. Satisfaction with any condition may bring restful ease and content but it never led man to the heights to see the vision, never thrilled him with a sense of his possibilities, never showed him the end of the road he might tread to higher being, higher attainment. It is when man becomes conscious of the wrong, the pettiness, the narrowness, the selfishness of his living, and, dissatisfied, searches earnestly for a finer, truer something to inspire his living, then are his eyes opened to the vision and his step guided along the way. The vision comes as a definite aim, purpose, principle or ideal. There must be an intense desire and determination to live in accord with the vision or it fades into darkness and nothingness like a sunset.

Nature does not pay much attention to the mere shoppers in the higher things, she is too busy helping the buyers; she ignores those who merely wish for something and serves only those who want and will, who want so intensely that they will to pay in time, constancy and persistency for what they desire. These are her terms, whether it be for the physical, mental, moral, material or spiritual. No ideal, no vision, no principle is strong enough to accomplish aught for man unless he cooperates, unless he does his part. Nature will provide the road but man must do the walking. It is part of the fine dignity of life that man is trusted to cooperate. George Eliot expressed it forcibly when she said:

*'Tis God gives skill,  
But no without men's hands.  
He could not make  
Antonio Stradivari's violins  
Without Antonio.*

When man takes stock of what he is or has, and is dissatisfied with the inventory, it usually results in one of two things: it ushers in the birth of new purpose and persistence in removing limiting conditions or he settles back into an anæmic, tame, weak surrender to resignation.

Usually he tries to throw dust into the eyes of his self-respect, files a foolish alibi, and finds any number of excuses. He adopts the martyr pose, tells himself that he is not appreciated, that his best work is fruitless; he is the victim of someone else's wrongdoing. It is the fault of society, or the whole scheme of life is out of key. When things are not going well with us we should be glad if it can be proved to us that we are to blame. This means real vision. If we are in the wrong, we can change, we can set right, but if we suffer from the evil doing of another, we have not the power to change him and we may have bravely to endure what we cannot cure.

Even if others have done us an injustice it weakens us still further to hold long postmortems, and dull our energies with the deadening incense of self-pity. Most wrong are only incidents or episodes, never life's complete story; they are handicaps, never the

race. If we suffer from another's ingratitude let us forget it in our watchfulness that we do not permit anyone to suffer from our ingratitude; if someone has been unjust to us let us be glad that we were not unjust to him. We cannot always prevent the wrong that others do to us, but we can determine that we will not permit it to weaken us still further by morbid regret or petty hunger to retaliate. Forgetting is one of the fine arts of living that comes to men who have the vision of the bigness of life that inspires them to rise above the petty things that threaten to eclipse its greatness.

It is not fair to blame the whole scheme of life when all its evils are due to ourselves and to other men and women who make up the world. It is not fair to condemn the game merely because some do not play it in a big way. Life glows with infinite possibility of love, tenderness, courage, trusteeship, sacrifice, helpfulness, charity and a host of golden virtues. If we, and others, bring forth only discord instead of the music that should thrill under the touch of our living, it is not fair to throw all the blame on the instrument. In the words of one of our modern poet-philosophers:

*Our life is likened to a silken string,  
with precious pearls to deck it near at hand  
If dull and worthless beads appear instead  
'Tis poor philosophy to blame the thread.*

It has been said that we never realize our ideals in life. This is not quite true; we may realize our *ideals*, in some definite line, one after the other, but never our *ideal*; it is the last in the series that we cannot attain. Each ideal when realized becomes a new real, to project before it a new ideal to be in turn realized. This is the story of human progress in every phase since the dawn of history.

In man's conquest of the sea, in his efforts to make it carry him where he would, the first "real" was perhaps some tree-trunk torn from its rooted love of nature by a primeval storm and cast into the angry waters. Man saw that the tree floated and there dawned on his simple mind an ideal; a vision. If he could hollow out such a tree trunk, so that he might sit in it, he could ride the waves in safety. This accomplished, he desired to make it larger, to move faster, to move against wind and current, and so through countless progressive steps we reached our finest ocean steamers of today, ideal to all that preceded them but mere "reals" in relation to some finer ideal in the keep of the future.

What is true of the history of the race is equally true in the life of the individual. Unsatisfiedness with what is, inspiring a vision, revealing but a step of progress beyond is as truly an ideal as though the ideal were so supreme that it would be countless leagues beyond his present. Man may make his ideal so perfect and so exalted that it no longer inspires him but discourages him, weakens him with the seeming hopelessness of all effort.

Were he to see his final ideal clearly, merely to get direction, general bearing points and guidance, he could put before him some nearer possible ideal in the line of the larger one that he could attain in preparation for a further step beyond. He could thus each day make

conscious progress; with each advance he should be satisfied with it as a step, discontented with it as a finality, satisfied with it as a station along the way, discontented with it as a destination.

In mountain-climbing a man may select some peak that he desires to conquer. Seen from the valley it looms high, grim, hopelessly inaccessible. But he has the experience of lesser climbs, the courage of vanquished dangers and obstacles overcome in the past. With all knowledge that he may gain or with the leadership of trusted guides he makes his preparations. When once started on his way he does not concentrate on his goal, his ideal, but merely on his first stage, an hour's climbing to some predetermined place where he may rest before seeking the next higher station on the road to his ideal. He is ever encouraged by what he has accomplished, rather than disheartened by what remains undone.

If we make perfection our goal, our one ideal, we may not have the courage to move continuously forward, but if we are wise enough to be content with the successive realization of ideals along the way, inspired by progress toward that perfection, gladdened by the thought that we are growing better, stronger and wiser, rather than dissatisfied that we are not best, strongest and wisest, then all things are possible for us. In this spirit we can conquer any evil, attain any good.

It is in the golden hours of youth that ideals glow brightest. Some supreme ambition calls us and we answer it with the assurance and confidence of our unknowing of the cost of conquest; some evil or injustice in the scheme of society wakens in us the spirit of the crusaders and we vow that we will remove it, and we thrill with a sense of divine trusteeship; some one idea seems to us worthy of our whole life of devotion and consecration. Sometimes it is but roseate day-dreaming, sometimes a clear vision. But the days go by and are devoured by the years and the years slip silently into new years and we may have accomplished naught. We may even look back with a half-patronizing smile at these dreams of youth and think how much wiser we are now. We may know more, but we are not wiser. There are men who still have the vision of youth but seen in truer, finer perspective, they still live in a spirit of trusteeship despite all they have suffered, despite all the ingratitude and the selfishness of the world around them. Their seeming failure may be finer, in reality, than someone else's material success.

But we lose our vision, too often, forsake the ideals which lift us above the dull drab of living, surrender life's poetry for its cheaper prose. We are rarely conscious of giving these up voluntarily, they are crowded out, they slip away in our unthinking, they are starved in the pressure of our day by day living. We do not put forth the effort and energy to keep them live and radiant; they forsake us because we forsake them; we may chafe under the guardianship and long to be free, unrealizing that we are exchanging the freedom of kingship over our habits for slavery to their dominion over us.

In living loyally by our ideals the most subtle of all temptations is the seeming prosperity of the wicked, the superficial, the vapid, and the incompetent and the selfish. We see vice



swagger in its furs while virtue may shiver in the shadows, intolerance sit in the seats of the mighty, dishonesty flaunt its ill-gotten wealth, bluff succeed where real worth is pushed aside, the frivolous capture the world's attention while he who has a royal message cannot get a hearing. These are but types of countless other phases of the seeming injustice of the world, the unfair distribution of the awards of life. Tired hands may then drop to one's side helplessly, brave souls may sob in the silence, and lips that have tried hard to be brave and loyal may say: "What is the use of it all? Why make any effort? Why struggle for the better things?"

The man who has true vision upheld by the supreme courage and the faith his struggle has brought him realizes all this, feels it keenly but is undaunted by it. He has no full explanation for it, yet he does not falter. He realizes that he has a serene sense of calm and peace, the consciousness of a noble battle, nobly waged in a noble cause, he hears the "well done" of his self-respect and moves bravely on. He knows that the wicked and the lower forces may have an inning, but it is not the whole game; they may win a few laps, but they are not the whole race, that material prosperity is not the test of mental, moral or spiritual growth. He knows that living on the heights is no guarantee of immunity from poverty, sorrow, suffering, trial, misrepresentation and neglect. It was so with Christ, with Luther, Socrates and the long band of those who have inspired the world. He knows that many who are enjoying what would mean much to him, are paying a price he would not pay—and he goes calmly and undisturbed along his way.

When we use the word "ideal," unqualified by any limiting adjective, we think ever of what is high, noble or exalted, but ideals may be great or small, high or low, true or false, selfish or unselfish. Napoleon's mad ambition of world conquest with his supreme disregard of the price he and the world must pay for its attainment, and his arrogant contempt for human life and justice made his ideal low, despite the genius and the marvel of the man. He sacrificed great gifts on the altar of a false ideal, degraded them by making them the instruments of lower uses.

Man can never escape ideals; if he do not choose high aims and purposes, then low ones will choose him. Whatever a man most longs for, works for and makes supreme in his life is his ideal, even though he be unconscious of it as such or might refuse to admit it, if he knew. If he is ever making self the final test of good, then he is making selfishness his ideal. If he lives only in the present with no guidance from aught to lift that higher or to make his future living fine he is making that present his ideal. Trace any man's living to its logical conclusion and you reveal his ideal. It is not measured by what he is forced to do by limiting conditions but by what he wishes to do or be, what he longs for, what he struggles continuously to acquire or to attain.

Belief in an ideal, loyalty to a vision, means sane optimism; it is a stalwart faith that the best is possible for man, and that all lesser conditions are neither normal nor final. When he thus realizes that he is entitled to the best if he work continuously for that best he is seeing the ideal in the illumination of clear thinking. No vision of revelation or

attainment that begins and ends with self is great; there must ever be an overflow into the lives of others, their bettering because we are living in the finer spirit of trusteeship.

## XI

### When We Change the Emphasis



It is not what we have in life but our attitude toward it, how we view it, how we live it, where we put the emphasis, that really counts. When we shift the emphasis we get a new vision, a new illumination, a new inspiration. For years we have regarded the fourth commandment merely as one exacting observance of a day of rest, the keeping of one day holy; we have put all the emphasis on this and entirely overlooked the command equally imperative, "six days shalt thou labour."

We misread the text of life, misinterpret and mistranslate so much that we do not get the message, wander far afield and miss the joy in living. We may read "money" in such italics that it seems the only big word in the world and it throws the greater words into the shadow, so that we slur over them with no consciousness that they cover the reality of all true living.

We may speak "reputation" so emphatically that we may think if we can only keep that clean before the world, it does not make much difference about "character." We put a heavy emphasis on "duty," and talk of it as supreme, as though we were going through life under the lash of moral compulsion, doing the right because we have to, instead of gladly as a spontaneity because we love it, because we feel it a privilege.

The finer spirit of privilege changes the emphasis on the duty and the dull drudgery of life, and gives a new glow to the heart, a new courage to the soul. It appeals to a more inspiring motive, gives a new key-note, keeps the joy note of life alive, beautifies the commonplace, and transforms living by our new attitude and the finer spirit we put into it.

Like Socrates, Plato, Epictetus and others of the immortals, Tom Sawyer was a great philosopher and he made a great discovery. Sentenced by his guardian aunt, in punishment for divers sins and misdemeanours, to devote the best hours of a free Saturday to whitewashing the back fence, he was surely facing hard lines. That stretch of unwhitewashed fence seemed to lengthen out interminably into the perspective like the Great Wall of China. It represented to him the tyranny of elders, the inevitable, the stern, grim, implacable duty, the forces of destiny mocking the human. Listlessly and snailingly his brush moved in short unavailing strokes, punctuated by sudden jabs of protest.

The boys with whom he should have been playing care-free gradually gathered round him. They had no generous sympathy, no words of cheer or comfort; they laughed at him, scoffed him, taunted him, ungraciously flaunted their own freedom in the face of this slave to duty. Then suddenly to the hopeless boy came a great idea, a wondrous illumination that transformed that long fence into an inspiration, an investment, an opportunity. He shifted the emphasis in his thought from duty to privilege; it was no

longer work he had to do but a great privilege entrusted to him alone. With leisurely manner and assurance he dipped his brush into the pail of white, put on a broad dash of colour, stepped back from the fence as an artist genius might have done from his canvas, half-closed his eye to study the effect, and became seemingly oblivious of the jeering chorus.

His new spirit became contagious, the onlookers began to think in a different key, the hush of dawning wisdom pervaded the group, the disagreeable had suddenly become irresistibly and tantalizingly alluring. And still Tom silently whitewashed on. Tempting offers for a few strokes of the brush fell on the ears of the philosopher, at first unheeding; he could not lightly delegate a privilege, evade a responsibility, and still unconsenting finally surrendered to share his joy at so much per share. Tom had a monopoly in an active sellers' market and he manipulated it in masterly manner; he cornered all the worthless trifles that constitute the legal tender of boy life; the fence was whitened by the labour of the sub-lessees and Tom went to bed that night a capitalist.

Some moralists, sticklers for the higher ethics, might insist that it would have been nobler for Tom to have obeyed his kind guardian, that he should bravely have taken his punishment as needed moral discipline, that he should have gloried in his triumph in a martyr spirit. Had he done these things he should have been gently chloroformed and quietly buried because he would have been too good for this earth. Being good is all right, but being unnaturally good is insufferable. Let us be grateful that Tom was no moral prig, but just delightfully human; his discovery of the philosophy of the shifted emphasis from duty to privilege is of more value to the world than any exhibit of morbid obedience like the boy who stood on the burning deck and got roasted, because papa told him to remain.

The schoolboy invited to stay after hours to help the teacher feels the added dignity of privilege that gives a feeling of joy and enthusiasm to tasks that would be repulsive if presented as duties. The soldier, chosen for some dangerous undertaking, feels a glow of pride and a thrill of privilege that the honour of responsibility should fall to him, and hardship, privation, danger, merely inspire him with determination, and a courage that counts as naught all that stands between him and the fulfillment of his mission.

Such an attitude would transform all living. The spirit of privilege is direct, conscious concentration on the brighter side. It is not that false philosophy, that placid bovine contentment that mildly accepts everything that comes as best, but it is bringing our best to bear on whatever comes in order to make the bad good and the good better.

If we have to live in the city when we long for the country, we can shift the emphasis by thinking of what a privilege it is to live in a great city with its teeming life, its great problems, its titanic forces, its opportunities, its enterprises, its red-blood stress and storm, its big human side. If sentenced to live in the country when our heart longs for city bigness, we may find the same finer spirit of privilege in the calm rest and peace of it all,

the beauty of the hills, the glory of the stars, the tonic breath of the woods, the sanctuary of the garden, the flight of the birds and the murmur of the flowing waters.

In this spirit of privilege a hard temptation is an opportunity to show our moral fibre; a sorrow or trial, a new chance to show fortitude in bearing, our courage in acting; a time of loneliness, a new revelation of our spiritual reserve, a call on our helpfulness, a new privilege of service. If we have little for ourselves we can make it seem much by the joy we put into the having; if we can do little for others we can make that little seem great by the beautiful, finer spirit of privilege we put into the doing.

There are those who have a chronic habit of putting so loud an emphasis on the difficulties of any situation that the possibilities cannot be heard above a whisper. They give in rapid tandem forty-nine reasons why a given thing cannot be done, never the dawn of a suggestion of a way to accomplish it. They are experts in destructive criticism but shy on constructive thinking. They may admit the need of action but seem so anxious to prove that it cannot be taken that they kill their own initiative, silence their resourcefulness. We should realize difficulties and objections but not idealize them and make them greater than they are. Emphasis on the possibility stimulates thought to find a way out; what we cannot bridge we may tunnel, what we cannot fly over we may undermine, what we cannot conquer we may evade or meet in some other way.

We misplace the emphasis when we measure men by their weakness, their petty departures from our standard as though our measure were the only final one. We emphasize the mortgage without considering the net value of the property of character, the equity, what remains if the mortgage were removed. It would be as though we were dead to the majesty, beauty and genius of some great poem, in our absorption in some petty typographic errors we had discovered. We may, in our misplaced emphasis, permit one act of our friend which hurts our pride or our confidence, to wipe out years of loyalty and devotion as a tidal wave may submerge a town.

We may place the emphasis in our living on “tomorrow” and slur over “today” as if it were but some incidental word in the text. Tomorrow we are going to do wondrous things, we are to live life in a big way, we are going to enjoy it as we never dreamed of before. We make our resolutions for tomorrow as though they were checks we dated ahead because unable to pay them today. What a glorious world this earth of ours will be tomorrow—but it could be made wonderful today if we but began to make it so.

Shifting the emphasis to today changes the entire view of life. It is not the idea of “living just for the day,” as though it were all, but it is realizing that tomorrow is the child of today, inheriting all its weakness or its strength, its poverty of aim or its wealth of purpose, its garnered wisdom or its harvest of folly. Putting the emphasis justly on today gives aim, courage, concentration, command, continuity. It makes us master of our vision instead of slaves of our dreams.

When we make the negations of life the measure of our happiness instead of its positives we are sadly misplacing the emphasis. Concentrating on what we have instead of

squandering sympathy with ourselves for what we have not is a right note of emphasis. It gives strength in hours of darkness, in the memory of sorrow outlived, of trials survived, of obstacles overcome, of ideals progressively realized. Living intensively in the thought of what we have will produce miracles of joy and sufficiency, multiplying them for ourselves and others as in the instance of the widow's handful of meal and her cruse of oil, or as in that day, in a desert place, when five loaves and two fishes fed over five thousand.

We need to develop "selfness" instead of selfishness, raising ourselves to our best and sustaining ourselves at our best, so that we may have finer individuality in finer cooperation. This is but recognition of trusteeship; that we get the overflow, for good or for ill, from other lives as we overflow ours into their living. Putting the emphasis on trusteeship confers a new dignity on life, deepens our sense of responsibility and broadens our field of vision. We can never evade it, we can merely determine the quality of our living it.

Had we the eye of omniscience to see in the illumination of all revelation and understanding, all the infinite detail of thought, emotion, effort, motive, purpose and action, in the life of any individual, we should find it key-noted in certain words, words continuously recurring. These are the words upon which the individual either consciously and purposefully places the emphasis or which he intensifies without his knowing under the dominance of temperament or of habit. They are the ideals, the qualities, the forces that make his living what it is, with all its possibilities, all its limitations.

Where we place the emphasis, what we determine shall inspire and dominate our living, rests with us alone. The choice is ours, the responsibility is ours, the trusteeship is ours.

## XII

### The Crowning Gift in Life



THE spiritual is the divine in man, the supreme, crowning gift that makes him king of all created things, the one final quality that makes him tower above all the other animals. The old Greeks concentrated a wondrous wealth of poetry and philosophy in a word when they invented “anthropos,” their term for “man.” It really means “the upward looker,” the animal that is spiritual.

Spirituality is the sunshine of peace in the soul. It is the heart’s glad surrender to the eternal things of life. It is radiant consciousness of kingship over self and of kinship with the Infinite. The thoughts, yearnings, aspirations or moods that wing us high above the mere material things of life are spiritual. We may say that they come from the spirit or soul, but, so far as we actually know, there is no soul in man apart from mind.

Spirituality is the glow of the mind in its finest, highest, purest activity, calmed, poised, guided and inspired in harmony with belief in some power greater than the human. It is the “noblesse oblige” of the soul, consciousness of the nobility of its birth and destiny making nobility of living imperative. Spirituality is man’s pervading gladness in the knowing that his higher self can dominate and transform his lower self, as he makes real and living his relation to the God of the universe and the universe of God.

Spirituality not only whispers to man his message of life, but it gives him the wisdom and courage to deliver that message aright; it is not only the vision of his individual powers, privileges and possibilities, but the inspiration to be equal to them and to make his vision progressively a reality. This spirituality gives Life a calm, restful dignity, unifying man’s days into consecrated loyalty to the highest and best in his nature, making his days but connected progressive pages in the book of his living.

Every noble impulse, every unselfish expression of love, every brave suffering for the right, every surrender of self to something higher than self, every loyalty to an ideal, every unselfish devotion to principle, every helpfulness to humanity, every act of self-control, every fine courage of the soul, undictated by pretense or policy, but the being, doing and living of good for the very good’s sake,—that is spiritual.

Have you ever stood alone at night on the beach, moon-washed into wan whiteness, heard the mighty battle-line of the surge charge and recharge on the shore, and felt your sense of the finite strangely change into one of infinite greatness?—that is spirituality. It may have come to you as you reverently watched the glorious miracle of dawn or in the hush, and cool, and sweetness of a garden in the vesper hour of sunset when the cares, and frets and worries of the day faded from your thoughts as the sun itself faded behind the hills, and it seemed that you were held in the protecting arms of perfect purity and peace.

Have you ever bent over the cradle of a sleeping child and reverently kissed the little hand on the coverlet and stepped softly and silently away with a half-smile lingering in your eyes and unknowing just why the moment has spiritualized you anew?

Has some act of fine moral heroism, greatness of soul, brave self-sacrifice that you have seen or read, given back to you in a moment your faith in humanity that has been dusking into the darkness of despair and thrilled you with the knowledge that you, too, could so inspire the world if you only would?—that is spiritual. The sudden clear illuminating vision of one's living that shows it in its emptiness and selfishness and makes one realize with deep intensity that he is not getting the best from life because he is not putting his best into life, is spiritual. The regenerating power of a great love that makes us finer, truer, better, is but the spirituality of love.

These are but types of the inspiring force of spirituality. God does not enter man's life by any one door, meet him on any one road, speak to him in any one voice. There is no moment, no event, no act, no material thing that may not be made a temple of communion, of spiritual vision. Spirituality is something greater, finer, truer than man, wakening, inspiring and lifting him to higher levels of thought and living.

Spirituality in its greatest, truest, purest sense is higher than religion, for spirituality is what religion is designed to bring to man. Religion is the road, spirituality the goal; religion is a formula of faith, spirituality the warm glow of inspiration; religion is the reason of the heart, spirituality the intuition of the soul; religion is a code of living, spirituality is the life.

One may be religious through fear, through training, or surrender to authority, or in mere mental acceptance of some formulated belief; spirituality comes only through love, reverence, consciousness of the realness of present living, belief in some finer beyond. Spirituality is not reached by a creed; it makes its own creed. It lives its life at its best without hope of reward or fear of punishment; its reward is the consciousness of true living, its punishment the self-inflicted wounds that stain the ermine of its life.

Spirituality is an attitude, an aspiration and an atmosphere of living. One cannot be coerced or argued or terrorized into spirituality. It does not come from any conscious process of reasoning to secure it. Job put it aptly in his ironic question, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" The spiritual comes from surrender to the eternally great things and permitting them to dominate our living. He whose life is warmed and pervaded by the spiritual never parades it, never vaunts it, may not be even conscious of it as spiritual at all. It does not detach him from the world, making him live a saintly, superior life of aloofness, but makes him in closer touch and keener vibrant enjoyment of what is best. It is the fine sincerity of the soul that attunes itself to the eternal great things of life and is not unduly anxious over the problems of life's evils. It means holding fast to a few great positives that throw the negations into eclipse.

As we make love not a mere theory of life but a great dynamic force that vitalizes and permeates our thinking and living, we are spiritual. As we grow in unselfishness and



radiate our best in the world around us, we are spiritual. As we keep the material things of life from possessing us, while we possess them, we are spiritual.

As we become more reverently appreciative of the beautiful, the good and the true, we are spiritual. As we feel we are born for eternity, not for time, that we are ever dependent on some higher power, we are spiritual. As we fill our mind and life with a divine sense of peace generating an atmosphere wherein petty cares, fears and worries cannot live, we are spiritual. As our faith grows simpler, and as we realize despite all life's sorrows that "underneath are the everlasting arms," we are spiritual.

Man's best and truest life must be in recognition of the duality of his nature: that he is both physical and spiritual. Without denying either, nor confusing them, he must *spiritualize* the material by realizing that it is the expression of some higher thought, principle or law, and *materialize* the spiritual by making the eternal truths of life as real, as true, as actual, as though they were absolutely perceivable by his senses. The material in life can be perceived but the spiritual can only be deduced. If man were all spirit he could not live in this world; if he were all material his life would not be worth living.

We *spiritualize* the material when we regard our body as the temple of our soul; when, looking at a picture or a scene, we are inspired to finer thinking and living; when the commonplaces of life become glorified to our eyes; when we master an evil habit through the kingship of our self-control; when we use our wealth and material possessions unselfishly in a spirit of trusteeship for those less fortunate; when the stars, and the flowers, and the trees, all the million manifestations of Nature speak revealingly to us of the eternal God of law and of the eternal law of God.

We *materialize* the spiritual when we realize that man is something greater than the sum of all his thoughts, all his acts, all his living; that the material things of life are but the shadowings and analogues of the spiritual; that moral forces are as real as mechanical forces; that the dynamo is no more actual than the law of electricity that governs its activity; that thought is no more destructible than matter; that we can make the unseen, the spiritual, as real to ourselves as though directly perceived through our physical senses, that life itself is only time entrusted to us, second by second, which we can spend as wisely or as foolishly as we do our money.

We speak much of those who think only of the material side of life, but there is as much danger, though it is less common, in over-concentration on the spiritual. There are those who are as selfish in the accumulating of spirituality as are others in their absorption in worldly things. They read spiritual books, listen to spiritual lectures, think of the spiritual, and talk of it as if it were the only life. They accumulate the spiritual as a miser hoards gold; they acquire but they do not spend. Spiritually they are over-fed but under-nourished. They live selfishly in a world of their own out of touch with the realities of life and become dreamy, speculative, unsympathetic, self-circumferenced.

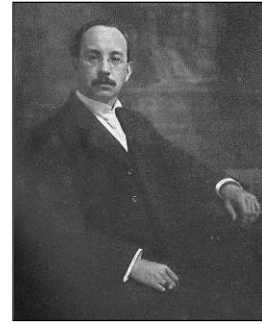
Physical food is of value only as it is transformed into blood and brawn and nerve and tissue; spiritual food is worthless to the individual unless it be transformed into finer

thought, truer purpose, better acts and nobler living. Like the manna given to the children of Israel in the Wilderness, what was unused became worthless. The spiritual heights are lonely and isolated; they are good places to visit but poor places on which to live. Christ went up into a mountain, away from the world to get strength to live in the world, but He did not live on the mountain; He left it with new inspiration to help man throughout the ages.

Truth is so mighty that a little of it truly lived will fill a life and reveal the false by its very presence. The world does not need a new great spiritual revelation so much as the inspiration to live up to the simple spirituality that it knows. This is the spirituality that means finer, simpler, greater individual living in finer trusteeship.



**"The Trusteeship of Life"** was written by William George Jordan and first published in 1921. While it is available now, both in hardcover and paperback, copies can be difficult to find. It along with other books can be found on my blog [mannkindperspectives.blogspot.com](http://mannkindperspectives.blogspot.com)



**William George Jordan (1864 - 1928)** William was born in New York City on March 6, 1864. He graduated from the City College of New York and began his literary career as editor of *Book Chat* in 1884. Later he became the editor of *Current Literature*, from which he retired to enter the lecture field. In 1897 he was managing editor of "*The Ladies Home Journal*," after which he edited "*The Saturday Evening Post* (1888-89). From 1899 to 1905 he was the editor and vice-president of Continental Publishing Co. He was the editor of the publication *Search-Light* between 1905 and 1906.

In 1907 he published a pamphlet entitled "*The House of Governors; A New Idea in American Politics Aiming to Promote Uniform Legislation on Vital Questions, to Conserve States Rights, to Lessen Centralization, to Secure a Fuller, Freer Voice of the People, and to Make a Stronger Nation*". This was circulated to each state governor and to the then president of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt. The concept was well received and the first meeting of the governors was held in Washington Jan 18–20, 1910. Mr. Jordan was elected secretary to this body at the first meeting and then dropped as secretary September of 1911. However, the group became part of his legacy and his part in its formation was often cited in later references to him by the press.

William married Nellie Blanche Mitchell on May 6, 1922, in New York City at the Grace Episcopal Church.

He died of pneumonia in New York City on 20 April 1928 at his home.

The following is a letter written to the editors of the Improvement Era in May of 1908, by Hon J.A. Hendrickson from Logan, UT regarding two of Mr. Jordan's other books. His remarks could equally apply to this book.

*"I cannot refrain from expressing to you my pleasure in observing the announcement in the May ERA, just arrived, that you intend to publish, beginning with the June number, the contents of the two books written by William George Jordan, entitled The Kingship of Self-Control and The Majesty of Calmness. I congratulate you on having received this courtesy from Mr. Jordan, and your decision to give to your readers the contents of these volumes. They are worth their weight in gold. Every subject treated, while brief, is applicable to the daily life of every individual, and no one can read them without receiving encouragement, strength of purpose, and added determination for the right. Every line is a gem. As I see it, these two books are among the very best given to the reading public. It has been my pleasure to read them several times, and each time I receive added strength, and feel to extend my thanks to Mr. Jordan for his thoughts."*

Rod Mann