

What are we here for



**BY
F. DUNDAS TODD**



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What Are We Here For?

BY F. DUNDAS TODD,

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PREFACE.

These are the day-dreams of a worker. Very probably the idea they enunciate is old, but to him it is new, and possibly may be so to others. They are published in the hope that they may prove to be a reasonable working hypothesis to induce greater individual and collective effort for advancement of the human race.

What Are We Here For?

CHAPTER I.

ANSWER.

Whatever we are here for we are doing.

Not in any narrow sense do I make this assertion. I do not mean that the man who farms or bakes or buys and sells or teaches or heals is on this earth to follow that particular occupation, but I do insist that we are fulfilling the purpose of our being.

We are either here for a purpose or we are not. If we have no mission on earth, if we merely happen to be, a very little consideration would soon decide for us how we ought to live to get the most out of life, for this being the only life, there would be no good reason for trying to live unless we enjoyed it. I will, however, defer discussion of this proposition until I have dealt with the affirmative form.

If we are here for a purpose, we must be fulfilling it. This ought to be a self-evident proposition; but for countless years the members of the human race have

been convinced that all our natural efforts are antagonistic to the end of our being, and therefore any counter theory must be backed up with reasonable proof. The existing opinion is based entirely on writings that claim to be a revelation from the Creator. They may be true, and we may have faith that they are so, but when we come to a question of belief, which is opinion founded on reasonable premises, we must follow the scientific method of reasoning and argue from facts, for, as has just been said, while the other data may be absolutely true, we have no means of verifying them at present, and therefore any conclusions based on them are liable to be seriously wrong; while, if we argue from premises that may be studied from many points of view, there is a possibility of reaching a sound conclusion. Truth is absolute, and will ring true every time a fact is brought in contact with it; if it fail but once it is not a truth, but a sophism.

The evolutionist after years of struggle has at last been able to convince thinking men that nature does not make misfits; that, while in individual cases there may exist defects more or less serious, yet the type is admirably suited to its environment, and therefore the organism is assuredly fulfilling the purpose of its being. The full force of this conclusion has not been altogether appreciated by students of humanity, for on every hand we hear lamentations that man is undoubtedly vile

because of this very instinct to act along natural lines, and constant effort is being made by appeals to his reason and especially to his emotions to throw off the natural man, be reborn, and to endeavor to live another life wherein the new-born tendencies of his mind will be at constant variance with the natural law that is in his frame, and just as much as he can suppress the latter so will his success be measured.

Now, is there any good and sufficient reason for supposing that the universal law that admittedly governs all life inferior to man should not also apply to him? He lives and moves and has his being exactly like his fellow creatures, differing from them only in the attributes of his mind. Seeing that he is controlled by every law that affects them, so far as he and they have qualities in common, we are forced to the conclusion that all life is dominated by the same laws; that as the bodies of all are wonderfully adapted for life under certain conditions, so must the mind of all animals be fitted for the particular sphere they will naturally inhabit. And since their bodies are at every moment actively working out their mission, I am compelled to believe that their minds are just as continuously working out their chief destiny.

To me, then, the mind of man is not a something that has a natural perverse tendency to do what is wrong, but is rather possessed with an instinct to do

what is right according to natural laws; but we have seized hold of it in its formative stage, forced it into unnatural channels and then complain because it does not conform to the standard we have set up as correct. I must not be understood to be asserting that every natural mind is disposed to develop and work along true lines, for I must acknowledge defects in individual cases as in our bodies, but I insist that the type is right, and it is our bounden duty to ourselves to study that and to work along natural channels.

My first contention then is, that whatever man is on this earth for, he is doing, and doing every instant of his life. The infant mewling and puking in his nurse's arms, the schoolboy creeping unwillingly to school, the lover sighing like a furnace, the soldier seeking the bubble reputation at the cannon's mouth, the justice full of wise saws, the lean and slippered pantaloon, the old man in his dotage — all are doing one thing above mere living. The naked savage of the Australian bush, the muscular Kaffir of South Africa, the dusky native of Hindustan, the Indian of the pampas and prairies, the Esquimaux of the frozen North, the patient Chinaman, the fierce Mohammedan, the plodding German, the vivacious Frenchman, the stolid Briton and acute Yankee — one and all have an occupation in common.

Whether we are at play or at work, in town or in country, under the blue vault of heaven or a roof of

man's construction, in the hovel or in the palace, by night or by day, during every waking minute and probably while we are asleep — we are always doing one thing. Willingly or unwillingly we do it, and when we do it willingly it must give us the greatest pleasure that poor human mortals can know.

What, then, is this universal occupation? I know of only one answer; it consists of but one word, but it tells what I conceive to be man's mission on earth, the purpose of his being. He is **LEARNING**.

But what are all men learning? Human knowledge is already very diversified, human interest is shown in multitudinous directions, in some that are useful, in others that are hurtful; but if my theory be correct every member of the human race must be acquiring the same kind of knowledge, and once acquired it must be beneficial to them both physically and mentally, must add to their bodily comfort and broaden their minds and provide them with food for reflection. Nay, more, each bit of knowledge won will be in its turn an incentive to still further effort in the same direction. Again the answer comes clear and definite, **ALL MEN ARE LEARNING FACTS OF NATURE AND THE GREAT LAWS THAT GOVERN THEM**. And everybody will admit that it is the knowledge and application of nature's laws that differentiates the civilized man from the savage.

I will advance my theory a step further. If man's

mission on earth is to learn, no individual can ever know it all, and the human race as a whole at any one time can never collectively know all that is possible to be known about nature and nature's laws. As fast as we advance toward eternal truth it recedes from us, and what today may be considered as a whole, tomorrow will be found to be but a part of something bigger. So individual men, nations and the human race will, so long as they inhabit this earth, find something to be learned.

I can only liken man's career here to an experience I once had. One misty day I started to ascend for a little distance a mountain about a thousand feet in height. After climbing some little time, I saw as I thought, the top, and hastened toward it, being much surprised to find it so near and so accessible, but on reaching it I found it to be only a knoll; however, the top was seemingly visible a little bit above. Again I urged my steps upward and again I found disappointment, for a new top vaguely loomed through the mist. This happened at least a dozen times, always new interest and new pursuit wiling me upward to a goal I had not at the start desired to reach. But at the end I was rewarded, for within a few feet of the real top the mist failed and, breathless with the exertion, I stood on the peak, and more breathless with amazement I drank in the most glorious prospect my eyes have ever beheld.

Overhead the sun shone in its glorious radiance, while underneath, as far as the eye could see, there stretched a wondrous billowy sea of cloud, gloriously white, with here and there a tinge of blue to indicate the waves in this ocean of vapor. But the path by which I had traveled was hid, all but the few yards just below me. So it is with man. He sees the summit of his ambition just a little bit ahead of him, but when he attains it he finds the real summit has receded, and so on he clammers through life. Rarely does he get above the clouds; but I will suppose I have in this case, and from this point of view I propose to study a few of the multifarious interests of humanity in general and see how they are affected by my theory, and how my theory affects them. If it be true, every phase will be forcing us into that channel, and should we find this to be the case, it will be very much easier and pleasanter for us to help the natural forces than to try to oppose them.

CHAPTER II.

EDUCATION.

Very frequently I am appalled with the vagueness with which men conceive the meaning of terms they are constantly using and how they cover up the paucity of their thoughts by the use of high-sounding phrases and a perfect flow of words. I speak from sad experience in educational matters, for I have been both pupil and teacher, having spent almost thirty years within the walls of a schoolroom. Education has been briefly defined as "leading out of an individual what is in him," but broadly speaking I have found it to be cramming into him what he did not want. And when the task is completed we are amazed to find that the result is too often different from what we expected; that, in fact, after bending the young tree we are surprised to see it is crooked for life, and then we lay all the blame upon the perversity of human nature.

Well, let us just look nature square in the face and see what it wants to be at, and let it get there by the shortest possible route. And for that purpose I know of nothing better than a young child, just able to give

expression to his simple emotions, for he is freshest from nature's hand, and has but few "improvements" wrought upon him. What is in that child? Watch him and see. Does a cat or dog come his way, see how frantic he becomes to reach it. Can he toddle round, then watch him clutch at the flowers and chase the birds. See how he rejoices in the rays of the sun, how he marvels at his shadow, how he is fascinated by the glorious moon and twinkling stars. Wind makes him laugh as he staggers against it or scurries along in front of it, rain amuses him, and snow fills him full of glee. He must handle everything, aye, and taste it. He is busy every waking moment learning about facts of nature. He discovers some things to be hard, some soft; some heavy, others light; some round, others not; some big, some small. Then when he can use a few words, listen to him. Every sentence begins with Why? When? Where? How? and they come forth as a flood, all about things that grow and live and move. Oh, what a wonderful world it is, and how busy he is trying to learn all about it!

And how do we treat this tender plant fresh from nature's garden? Do we nurture it in nature's way? No, we *cultivate* it. At first we humor the little man because he amuses us, but our interest fades and his questions get beyond the limit of our knowledge, and soon our answers begin with "Don't," winding up

finally with the sweeping remark, "Don't bother me." We head him off from following his natural tendencies, then we commence to train him according to our ideals. At its best it is little better than a cramming process whereby we introduce certain undigested matter into his head, and we fondly expect him to remember it all to utilize it in taking care of his body and providing for its sustenance. Every minute of the day he is in contact with facts of nature which he must endeavor to utilize for the benefit of himself and fellows, yet we think it most important that he should know the date of a king's birth or of a battle, the exact height of a mountain in feet, or the length of a river in miles; but only recently have we begun to realize that possibly it is advisable to know something about soils, strengths of materials and the chemistry of cooking.

The benighted savage of Central America displays more sense than we do. His children are born as ignorant as ours and their very existence depends upon the knowledge of certain elemental facts. On every hand he is surrounded by fruits, some nourishing to his system and some injurious, certain animals that are dangerous, others that are not. His food supply is largely dependent upon his skill in securing it, so his parents at the very outset teach him what he may eat and what he must avoid, what animals he must shun and what he may disregard. This is practical education and along

nature's intents, but, unfortunately, it does not proceed very far. Man there as here has his theological beliefs, and these he thinks paramount, so he takes the brain of the young child and encases it in a solid cast of doctrine that not only prevents him, but forbids him investigating, learning and thinking about nature and nature's laws. The individual learns a little, but the aggregate advance is slow, for it is only by the happening of incidents and events that the mass of people learn, and these must be repeated at short intervals before the facts become impressed upon the public mind, their importance appreciated, and at last admitted into the category of knowledge considered by the priest as permissible.

The theological idea in education is a very persistent one, and no people or race is to be found where it does not pertain. In comparatively recent times in public schools it formed practically the only subject taught, the idea being that a thorough theological course of study made men moral. We have this conspicuously illustrated in the early public school system of Scotland, a country that has always been considered in the front rank of popular education. Its school system from the time of the Reformation until 1871 was practically controlled by the clergy, and their conception of education was to teach the youth to be able to read the Psalms of David, the Proverbs of Solomon,

the Four Gospels, and to repeat the Shorter Catechism without a verbal mistake.

The results were not what was expected, and so the idea of "Humanity" was conceived, and tacked on to the other. In order to broaden men's minds and fit them for judicious consideration of present-day problems, the ideas of people who flourished two thousand years ago, their conceptions of morality and manly conduct, their ideas of justice and law, were laboriously crammed into the heads of the rising generation, and behold it was found that educated men were not always good ones, that the imaginings of brilliant men twenty centuries ago did not teach them to see things as they actually were in their own days.

It is rather interesting to unearth the beginnings of things, as the original idea is very often vastly different from the one that pertains, once the fact becomes persistent. Take, for instance, this theological-humanitarian conception of education and we can readily understand that it took its origin from the fact that the only educated individuals then were to be found in the ranks of the priesthood, who, as a matter of professional efficiency, had to study theology, Latin and Greek. Therefore when the noble baron developed a desire for his sons to be scholars they drank at the only fountain there was. So by pure accident these became the chief studies of the schools, and such they remained until a

very recent date, but other reasons had to be found for their retention. Thus today we find a new line of defense in favor of Latin being taught, that it helps very materially in understanding the meanings of words in our own language. Whether this be true or not, it can be put to a very practical test, for it so happens that in the medical profession there are in use hundreds of technical terms that are strictly classical in their origin, and a little patient inquiry among doctors should determine whether they found their knowledge of Latin useful or not. My own investigation showed that each individual memorized the term as such just as any one would do who was absolutely ignorant of the language. This coincides with my own experience, for I can not recollect any occasion when I was helped to an understanding of the meaning of a word until I consulted a dictionary.

But education in recent years has been more or less in the melting pot and new ideas have been coming fast. About the middle of the nineteenth century the cry became "Let us equip the young folks with weapons with which to fight the battle of life." And so they proceeded to pile a mass of cold facts on top of the theological-humanity system then existing. I call them cold facts, for this was the melange I was forced to swallow, and I look back with a shudder on my school days. By persistent application of a leather belt the

young folks of my day were compelled to learn the Shorter Catechism, the Psalms of David in meter, such cold, uninteresting data as I have already mentioned, to which was added the illogical spelling of thousands of English words, the only relief being the hour for arithmetic, when our young minds were permitted to revel in the study of constant law. How supposedly intelligent men could dream that the fact of Mount Blanc being so many feet above the sea level or the river Nile being so many miles long would ever help a boy who was to wrestle a lifetime with soil, wood, stone or cloth in an effort to make a living, is more than my mind can conceive, but the fact remains that such was their ideal. The growing plant was in their hands and they bent it as seemed to them best.

Let us see if we can not get a sound practical definition of education. The child learns much at school — and forgets most of it, so that if our aim be to store his head with useful information the result is practically a failure. Surely such can not therefore be our aim. I can best liken educating a child to starching a collar, for when the work is done there is little of the starch in the collar, but the effect is there. What, then, is the effect we want in the child when he has finished his school career? So far as I can judge it is summed up in three words — to appreciate differences. We want him to observe, to reason, to remember. Any individ-

ual who can observe correctly, reason soundly and remember perfectly will prove to be a good and useful citizen in any community.

If such be our ideal, how can it be best attained? The child can learn to observe by seeing facts and by no other method; he can learn to reason only about effects and their cause, about facts and the laws they manifest, and he can learn to remember only by repetition, and this is possible only by the insistent presentation of facts and laws to his inquiring eyes. To nature must we go for facts and laws and repetitions, so that education proclaims in no uncertain words that we must study nature's facts and laws, and thus corroborates the claim I made in the previous chapter.

A rosier day is dawning for the children of the twentieth century. The clergyman is no longer considered a paragon of wisdom because he has studied dead languages and knows something about theology. The rich man is no longer deemed an epitome of business sense because he was born to wealth. The great common people are fast taking the management of their affairs into their own hands, are realizing the needs of their offspring better than do their self-constituted guardians, and in a blind, groping way are dimly realizing that it is essential for their children to know things and the living facts about things rather than to be familiar with old-world ideas. So kindergartens

teach the infant to handle objects that nature makes or man has fashioned. Little peeks are made into nature's laboratory and man's workshop, and the young minds are gradually introduced into this wonderful world, which presents to them an ever-changing panorama of beauty and delight. There is yet much that is objectionable in the higher grades, but a workshop is fast becoming a necessity in every well-regulated school; and there the rising generation are taught to make things, not that they may thereby learn a trade, but that they may be taught to see things exactly as they are, for no one can make a fair copy of any object unless he sees it as it is, and so there is nothing that can develop the observing faculties better than the making of objects. Most of our troubles in this life are due to the fact that we see things, not as they are, but as we think they are. The schools and universities of the future will become more and more a combination of a natural history garden and a workshop. The grip of the dead hand will be loosened, and the people who are to live in the twentieth century will learn the ideas of that century, and not those of men who died hundreds and thousands of years ago. Living men will be quoted as authorities — not those whose bones are moldering in the dust.

Reader, did you ever change your opinion? If you are like me, you will have done so frequently, and if you have ever altered your views, can you swear sol-

emply that those you now hold are truth? If you feel as I do—that you may be wrong—you will frequently look at your child and wonder if you have any right to take his fine, fresh young brain, which belongs to him and not to you, and mold it to suit your ideas. He must live his own life, not yours; so what right have you to curtail his mental freedom? Your duty consists in putting living facts of nature in his way that he may become familiar with them, and to guide him to discover the principles that control them. You must remember that practice always precedes theory, and that once the child becomes familiar with the practice he will soon inquire about the theory. When he asks for bread, see that he gets it; do not give him a stone.

CHAPTER III.

WORK.

Work has been defined as a curse. I do not believe it. Every animal works; if it did not it would starve, for in not one instance does nature provide food for a living organism without effort on its part. So work is a natural instinct, and to work comes as naturally to a human being as does eating. All children work, only we call it play. And while they play they are learning facts of nature. Everybody has noticed how an infant when he drops a toy out of his hand is just as apt to look upward in search of it as he is to look downward. But after a few such experiences he invariably looks in the right direction. He has learned the fact of the law of gravity, though he is not aware of having acquired any such knowledge.

He tries to build houses of sand, but they crumble to pieces. Some day, however, he finds that moist sand is more stable, and he ever afterward applies this knowledge and works more industriously. Accidentally he finds that moist clay is even better, and so he makes bricks and gets along famously. He learns

something about the adhesiveness of matter, though the name is unknown to him. Once in a while he finds some nice flat stones, and since they can be used without preparation, he prefers them to bricks of his own making, and besides, they are better than the latter, as they do not crumble to pieces in the sun's rays. He thus learns the difference between adhesion and cohesion, but he could not express the idea in words. I could write a long chapter on this stage of a child's education and of the hundreds of facts of nature he learns, but enough has been said to show that the child in natural conditions is learning every minute of the day and that his tendency is to at once apply his acquired knowledge to the doing of something—in fact, to work.

But — and this is where the fond parent steps in — he dirties his face and hands and musses his clothes, and is not presentable when a neighbor calls, so he is forbidden to learn what nature has to teach him in nature's own inimitable way, and "Don't do this" and "Don't do that" are dinned incessantly into his ears until he learns his new lesson and does NOTHING. Then he is called lazy, especially when he is forced to learn something in an unnatural way. Nature is always logical, but the poor child's first efforts at work in school are usually devoted to wrestling with the ridiculously illogical and absurd spelling that is supposed to

represent the sounds of the words in the English language. Naturally the child revolts from it, and so is pronounced lazy.

We teach geography, and think we are educating him by cramming into his head cold facts about size, height, depth, length and breadth, which would be of no practical value to him if he remembered them, which he never does. And because he protests against the absorption of such matter he is lazy. Try him on the living facts of nature, physical geography, and see the difference. Show him the action of rain in wearing down the surface of the earth, explain how frosts disintegrate rocks and mountains, let him see how little streams form bigger rivers, draw his attention to the thousand and one things that are going on right under our eyes, but which we never see — teach him the real things, not from books but from nature, and at once your lazy child becomes an enthusiast. He will work, and work hard. In history we teach him dates. If the teacher had her way he would leave school with at least a thousand pigeonholed in some part of his brain. But really does it matter very much if he never knew them? If we just think for a moment it will dawn on us that in its simplest terms history is a record of the efforts the members of the human race have been making to live peacefully with each other. They have tried thousands of experiments, a few of which have been suc-

cessful, the majority failures, and their experience has been tabulated for our guidance, if we care to study it. It is worth a vast amount viewed scientifically, and is mighty interesting from a more commonplace standpoint, but is never considered this way in school. Let the teacher make the past alive, not dead, and the child will absorb every word and ask for more.

Do you think children lazy? Then please step with me into the manual instruction room of one of our progressive schools and cast your eyes around. I have seen as many as a hundred boys in one large room at work with tools, and not one lazy boy in the lot. All were working as for dear life, for there was much to be done and little time in which to do it, so all were niggardly of the minutes. No laziness here. Why? Because, like the baby with his mud pies, they were dealing with facts of nature and learning them. Are they working in wood? Then they find it will split easier than it can be cut. So they learn about grain. Some woods are harder than others, some take a finer polish, some bits of the same log are more beautiful than others.

Is it iron they are using? Why, then, they discover it is malleable, that it can be bent and twisted, filed and turned. Just as fast as the boy learns these facts he wants to use them, and so he works, and works enthusiastically. No laziness here.

“Let nature be your teacher,” we frequently quote, and fold our hands complacently and look as if we had said something wise. Then we proceed to divorce our children from nature as thoroughly as possible in order “to equip them for the battle of life” in every waking minute of which he will be striving to utilize nature’s products for the benefit of himself and fellow creatures.

We have seen the practical part of a manual school, now let us look into the theoretical section. In nature, practice always precedes theory, but we try to improve on nature’s ways and teach the theoretical and bar the practice. Watch the chemistry class at work, or that in physics, mechanics, mathematics, or drawing. Any laziness discoverable? None that I could ever see. The pupils are studying nature’s laws, and are following with zest every experiment that is being carried out. The teacher is wise and lets them get their itching fingers on the apparatus, and now see how lovingly and carefully they handle all the pieces and how enthusiastically they proceed to watch nature’s wonderful laws working magical changes. Truly no laziness here.

Ask further regarding such boys, and the teacher will tell you that no better and more industrious workmen are to be found anywhere than those who have gone through such a course, and the manufacturer, banker or professional man will speak enthusiastically of them as servants. They are intelligent, that is, they

recognize the power of law, and no matter in what phase of business they may be employed, they look for the law, and having got it, apply it.

But look at the boy who has been "equipped" in the standard manner. He has become possessed of a certain number of useless facts, and unfortunately, has never had suggested to him the idea that law prevails everywhere. Things are because they are, and little wonder is it, that to him labor is but a means of providing so much money to procure certain things he wants. There is nothing in his early school training to furnish him with interest in the things he sees around him, and since he must be doing something, his every thought is on amusement. He is frequently lazy because his work is uninteresting, but the fault is ours, not his. But place this supposedly lazy boy next to nature, get him in the primeval condition where he must hunt for a living, and the same individual will exert himself with pleasure. It may be called play, but in reality it is work, and it only shows the wonderful recuperative power of nature. I have heard true happiness defined as consisting of three words — congenial remunerative employment — and I must confess I see a world of truth in the idea.

Work, as I said at the beginning of this chapter, is a natural human instinct. True knowledge, that of nature's laws, I have tried to show is always converted

into labor, and therefore if we wish our children to be industrious we must educate them aright. Nature must be their teacher; they must learn nature's facts and the laws that govern them.

CHAPTER IV.

INTELLIGENCE.

We say a man is intelligent when he realizes the consequences of certain possible actions — in other words, he appreciates the force of natural law.

Of course, certain men are born with a finer susceptibility for seeing cause and effect than are others, but on the other hand, environment plays a most important part in the development of this faculty. This was brought home to me at a very early period of my life by the fact that I was in close touch with the working classes of Scotland of both town and country. The first eighteen years of my life were passed in small villages and a second period almost as long in large cities. But during the latter period I spent some six weeks of every summer in the country, and I simply reveled in the society of the common people. I was thus able to compare the same class in different surroundings and I have no hesitation in saying that the rural men were infinitely superior in intelligence to those in the city. The latter were undoubtedly quicker in speech than the former, quicker in reply, quicker in superficial smartness, but when it comes to grasping

principles, then the former is his superior. Every one knows how the green young man from the country with but a common-school education finds his way to the big city and in but a few years is apt to outdistance the city-bred young man with all his supposed better educational opportunities. What is the reason? The fact is there; let us look for the cause.

Suppose we take a wider view. We have in this world civilized races and those that are not. The former have thousands of advantages that the latter do not possess. The individual civilized nations are vastly greater in population than are the individual barbarous tribes. They are highly educated while the savage probably never saw a book. They possess enormous wealth, the others are ignorant of the value of money. The one is provided with all the resources of civilization for the slaughter of human beings — rifles, machine guns, cannon of diverse descriptions, smokeless powder and shrapnell shell — the other has only spears, bows and arrows, or possibly antiquated firearms. To all appearances, civilized man should be able to subdue his savage brother at his own sweet will, but the facts are different. Through all history the superior races have been trying to conquer the inferior, but the struggle has not been all one-sided. Rome, by dint of using one inferior race against another, not by the arms of her own children, conquered most of the then known

world, but in the end had to succumb to the children of nature, the Goths and Vandals. The wild fanatical hordes from Turkestan threatened at one time to overrun civilized Europe, and even today the "Sick Man" is a thorn in the flesh, and a living insult to the intelligence of humanity.

Really, when one comes to consider it, the average civilized nation has made but little headway against the savage. France for centuries tried to acquire foreign possessions with but little success. Italy's recent experiences in Abyssinia was to her a big disappointment and surprise. The only European nation that has been successful in subduing savage races is Great Britain, but even she has not been without her failures. When she meets the white race in primeval surroundings she is comparatively helpless. Her children in America wrested freedom from her for themselves, while the Boer in South Africa, though greatly inferior in numbers, has given her a difficult problem to solve. The United States had a foeman worthy of her steel in the untutored Indian, and found the white man's diseases an efficient ally, more so than his weapon. Even the Filipino proved himself no mean foe. Now what is the cause of all this? In trying to account for it we use a few pet phrases which practically mean nothing. We speak of the "wily" savage, his wonderful "mobility," that he does not know when he is licked, and his

astonishing ability to live on a handful of food, and so on.

Let us examine these expressions. Wiliness is a mental quality — the ability to throw dust in the eyes of an opponent, so to speak, and we have to acknowledge that the untutored savage, who probably is not aware of the fact that he possesses a mind, is able to overreach the men who have had their minds put into scales and weighed, then developed to the finest pitch and nature's supposed deficiencies made good. But the child of nature, taught by nature alone, develops a generalship at demand that frequently excels the product we manufacture in our schools, colleges and military academies. He is, to my mind, more intelligent — more able to utilize nature's materials — than his book-educated opponent.

What about his mobility? The users of the steam engine and the breeders of fine horses confess that the people who never saw a locomotive, or possess very ordinary horses, can outclass them in running.

But it is said that they can live on so little, while the white man must have a gigantic commissariat. There is the rub. An army marches on its stomach, and civilized stomachs need so much. The savage's stomach is more natural, he eats what nature provides for him and thus a little suffices for his wants, and that little does not need much transportation. Hence his mobility.

Thus we see the child of nature — the man raised among hills and plains, where trees grow, flowers bloom and birds sing, while the evidence of nature's great forces is visible on every hand and the results occur so frequently and regularly that he can not but observe them — is forced by the very exigencies of his existence to study them and to utilize them. Hence he is more intelligent, more adaptable than is the man who grows up amid a wilderness of stone and lime. The latter sees force exerted, but one word explains all — machine — so his mind inquires no further. He is superficially smart, but he lacks depth; he is a brightly polished tooth in a wheel; the other has in him greater possibilities of making a whole machine, for he has learned to appreciate the power of universal, absolute law.

The struggle for existence is today just as keen as it ever was, but it is becoming less and less a question of physical supremacy, more and more a matter of mental superiority. The individuals and nations who can develop the highest intelligence, the keenest appreciation of the forces and laws of nature, who can utilize nature's material to supply their needs, will survive. To learn about nature we must go to her and not waste our precious time with abstract propositions seven times removed.

The same hour that these last lines were written

there died, in Chicago, P. D. Armour, one of the world's greatest merchants. On one occasion he was asked the secret of his success and he replied, "I try always to get at the truth, the simple truth, and I work." Mr. Armour was not an educated man in the ordinary acceptance of the word, that is, he knew little about books. But his early days were spent on a farm, in his youth he walked to California, and he roughed it in the mining fields. He was emphatically an intelligent man, one who by practical association with nature had learned facts and saw the operation of absolute law. So in business, although perhaps not able to express it in so many words, he knew that law was operating there, hence he was aware that if he learned to see things as they actually were, he could reason as to the consequence from the operation of law on these facts. Thus his incessant command to his lieutenants: "Tell me the truth, the exact truth."

CHAPTER V.

DISEASE.

All animals die either from disease or accident, and since all men die, disease must have been contemporary with the first of the human race as it will be with the last. Very many conceptions have arisen about its origin, and a glance at some of them will not be uninteresting. The savage blames its presence to some evil spirit, and tries to propitiate him by making offerings or worshipping at his shrine. In a more advanced stage when he believes the possibility of some of his fellows either by great piety or wickedness to have secured influence with the unseen spirits he gives them the credit or blame, according as he happens to view it. The man who is supposed to secure influence with a good spirit is a priest, while he who is agent of a bad one is a wizard. Both are feared, but since the priest is supposed to be able to reward as well as punish, while the wizard can only work evil, and that out of spite, it naturally follows that while both are dreaded, one is to a certain extent revered.

The priest's word is law, and disobedience to his

will is punished by the infliction of bodily ailments as a means of bringing the sinner to repentance and obedience. The wizard is more secret in his working, but he equally can bring disease and is willing to do it — for a consideration — so whichever way disease comes upon poor man it is the work of spirits, either for punishment on account of evil doing or for revenge. Even among supposedly intelligent people this view of sickness holds good, and witches, wizards and all that genus are devoutly believed in by the population of inaccessible mountainous regions of Europe today. They are no longer drowned in ponds or burned at the stake with the full consent and approbation of the Church as they were not so long ago, because the law forbids such acts and is certain to view the deed in a very prosaic way instead of complimenting the perpetrators on their assiduity in disposing of a servant of an evil one.

As the human race advances intellectually it revolts from the idea that a spirit of evil can possibly have more power than the good spirit who made the universe and so a new theory of disease has to be invented. On every hand mankind sees both saint and sinner equally affected by its visits. Death is claimed to be the wages of sin, but that which produces death is not alone confined to the sinner. So the facts were accounted for by assuming that the good spirit wished

to try the faith of the good, but to punish the bad for their wickedness. Here again the priest kept his hold on the minds of the populace, for from either point of view his services were necessary, as the spirit's special deputy on earth to make intervention with his master to remove the burden. He was just as essential at the bedside of the sick as was the physician, and probably for many a long century just as efficacious.

Among primitive people the doctor is clearly an evolution from the wizard, who tries by spells and charms to frighten away the spirits who are causing the ailment. We laugh at him, but in his day he did good work, for he was busy, although he did not know it, eliminating error. He proved that cures can not be effected by such means, and so he was forced to try something else. The whole history of medicine is just like that of any other art and science; it is empirical, and its progress is attained by trial and error or success. Experiments must be made, the results in a large majority of cases noted, so that at last the physician can decide whether the patient recovers or dies as a consequence of the use of the medicine or in spite of it. Every new theory advanced is most strenuously resisted, and at first it must be confessed they are certain to be not only complicated but fantastic. Each one advanced but paves the way to another, simpler and more reasonable, until at length we begin to get theories

that will square with the actual facts, and the art can be applied with intelligence.

Medicine has now largely shaken off the past. Men are no longer quoted as authorities because they lived a thousand years ago; in fact, the tendency is more toward seizing the most recent ideas because they are new. But this is a pardonable fault, for out of the conflict of theories truth ultimately arises, and, as I said before, mankind moves toward truth by experiment.

Medicine has emphatically disproved the idea that disease is sent by the machinations of evil spirits or wizards to our hurt, or that it is bestowed on us by a loving spirit to chasten us for our sins, or try our faith if we are good. It has proved that most of the ills that flesh is heir to are due to the presence of bacteria that are harmful to man, just as some of them are beneficial if not indispensable to his welfare. So when sickness attacks us we no longer ponder what offences we may have committed, or what lesson it is our duty to learn, but instead we endeavor to discover where we got the contagion, so that the source may be removed to prevent spread of the disease.

We now know that decaying organic matter, especially our own excreta, is the finest nursery that can be devised for the propagation of disease germs. Nature warns us of the fact by making its smell exceedingly objectionable, but the human race is apt to neglect

nature's warnings persistently, and consequently to dull the senses that warn us of danger. But dire experience has taught us a sharp lesson, and so sanitation has become a vital question among all civilized peoples. Among primitive races the little they know about sanitation has crystallized into religious observances, and so, especially in hot climates, the ablution of the external orifices and the burying of excreta is made obligatory by religious ordinance.

With the growth of large cities the subject presented a new phase. The crowded condition of the community prevented the burying of all decaying organic matter, and the great accumulations of it on the streets were not only a continual offense to the sense of smell, but a perpetual breeding-place for disease germs. It is little wonder that, even so recently as the beginning of the nineteenth century, various epidemics swept over civilized Europe again and again like a scourge, and that the death rate in even ordinary times was very high, in some cases about double what it is today.

At length men were driven to the conclusion that certain epidemics were due not to the visitation of God but to the fœtid rubbish heaps of their own making. True knowledge is always converted into work, and so the rubbish heaps were removed. By and by there was a step in advance and sewer pipes were laid

in the streets to convey the sewage outside of the city. Since a river would carry it still further, the pipes wherever possible found their exit in a stream, and soon all running waters near big cities were transformed into little more than currents of putrid, offensive matter.

Then came the germ theory of disease and every effort was made to find destroyers for them. This accomplished, soon every well-regulated family possessed itself of a stock of disinfectants and used them freely. Disease was to be vanquished in this fashion, so a feeling of security reigned. While the idea was a good one, it was only half a truth, for since people believed they had killed the germs, they were apt to be careless about the removal of the matter. So in due process of time it was learned that cleanliness was just as important as the use of germicides. Each is good, but both are better.

In recent years we have learned that while some germs are harmful to man, there are many others whose existence is as essential to his welfare, for it is their work to resolve dead organic matter into its component elements. Were no such agency at work this world would soon be a gigantic rubbish heap, where life of any kind would be impossible. With a clear appreciation of nature's mode of working, we are no longer in sanitation and medicine endeavoring to oppose her,

but sensibly trying to make it easy for her to accomplish her purpose.

Disease teaches us, then, that true knowledge—that of nature's facts and nature's laws — is life, while ignorance is death. In civilized communities in the past century the study of nature has resulted in adding a dozen years to the average duration of life. Disease, then, may truthfully be called the penalty that man has to pay for lack of knowledge either on his part or on that of his fellows. This fact leads to some rather startling and far-reaching conclusions, but as they are more or less related to the subject to be discussed in the next chapter I will postpone their consideration until then.

CHAPTER VI.

WAR.

War is hell, and when we consider the millions of fine young lives, the finest specimens of physical manhood of the nation, the wide-reaching misery falling upon parents, wives and little ones deprived of their breadwinner and natural protector, the vast amount of treasure military operations require, the awful loss to production entailed by a standing army in times of peace — when we consider these things we can call it by no other name, for it is the most awful calamity that can apparently fall upon a nation. Little wonder is it that mankind dreams of a time still future when war shall be no more, when the millennium or thousand years of peace shall permit them to make their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks. Efforts to secure universal peace have been made again and again, but the net result today is that Europe is one armed camp, while the United States has been forced to depart from her old traditions and to quadruple her standing army.

It is evident that the millennium is not at our door,

and much as we like to see conditions different from what now obtain, all we can do is to inquire into the cause of so much strife and bloodshed, and if we can discover that, then we may in part at least remove the effect.

I remember once being completely floored by a doctor telling me that a person rarely died of the disease that supposedly killed him; but with experience of death I learned that while the principal disease lowered the tone of the system and upset the functions of the various organs, the immediate cause of death was some secondary ailment, such as bronchitis. So the ostensible cause of war between two nations is rarely if ever the real one. Behind it, possibly extending back for years, may be a host of other matters, and the last incident may be the spark that sets the powder on fire or provides the excuse that was wanted.

The most fruitful cause of warfare is, I believe, the development of new ideas, and the extraordinary repugnance of humanity to accept them. No truer statement was ever uttered than this, "The greatest pain in the world is the pain of a new idea," and while human beings individually sigh for variety in things and scenes, they resent collectively the introduction of a new idea. I account for this peculiarity by the belief that man is intellectually lazy as a consequence of his education, his mind at an early stage being

burdened with a lot of dead facts and fancies that dull rather than sharpen his reasoning faculties. The most important of man's interests is religion, and therefore we find the vast majority of wars have religion as their primary cause. The priest is naturally a laggard. Mundane comfort has little interest for him, as all this world is but a fleeting show where men are drilled, frequently rather roughly, to prepare them to enlist in the great army in the next world. All that he wants is that his charge should live up to the standard of moral ethics and dogmas that he has received from his prophet, and all will be well. All that is worth knowing is to be found in his book of revelations, and consequently further knowledge must have its origin in the evil one, for if it were for man's good to know it, the prophet would have revealed it.

When, therefore, a new prophet arises with a new system of ethics, or even a slight change on an existing one, there is instant warfare — at first between small bodies, but, if the philosophy make headway, then it will embroil nations. The dungeon and the stake are sufficient for the few, but the sword is necessary for the many. So religion sets brother against brother, community against community, nation against nation, race against race, and in the name of the Creator, whom they proclaim to be all good, all powerful and full of loving kindness, men burn each other at the stake and

slaughter each other on the battlefield. All profess to be seeking the same goal, many seek to enter by the same gate, but one and all object to any one marching along a different road, even though it be parallel with their own and but a little distance away. Racial hatred is a terrible thing, but religious hatred is a thousand times worse, and while religion claims to be anxious to make a heaven of this earth, it has, alas, too often made it a hell.

The Israelite proceeded to exterminate every inhabitant in the land of Canaan because they worshiped a different God. The Mohammedan in the day of his power gave the conquered the choice of the Koran or death. Christianity claims to have been propagated by peaceful means, but this is pure myth, for it is on record a hundred times that the conquered demanded the acceptance of that religion as part of the terms of surrender. The Papacy, in the heyday of its power, flung armies wantonly in the field to increase its domination still further. The Reformation was attained only after prolonged strife and today the line of demarcation in Europe is practically a religious one, Protestantism on the one side and Catholicism, Roman and Greek, on the other.

The most conservative figure in Europe is the Turk, holding fast to the supernatural and refusing all knowledge of the natural. The Christian dogs of war snap

and snarl at the foot that rests on this side of the Dardanelles, and once in a while they seize a mouthful. He knows his fate, but faces every foe, believing that while he may suffer worldly loss here, he will receive high honor in Paradise for every drop of Christian blood he sheds.

How do we today account for all this terrible bloodshed in the past between different religions? We shake our heads sadly over the facts and blame it all on ignorance. We now proclaim on the housetops that a man's religion is nobody's business but his own, but oceans of blood had been shed before a small portion of mankind accepted the doctrine that a man's thoughts ought to be as free as the winds. Even the Pilgrim Fathers who migrated to a new world to get freedom to worship God in their own way considered that this liberty empowered them to compel all others to do as they did.

The end is not yet. The Anglo-Saxon proclaims himself the highest type of the human race because he is so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of freedom, and he is most assiduous in sending out missionaries to every land, where they force themselves into all corners and try to convert the natives to their views. Of course, the native priests resent them, for they are as other priests; violence ensues, international complications result and war follows. The missionary com-

placently folds his hands and bewails the ignorance of the poor natives.

Yes, it is ignorance that is the cause of all religious wars, and the more we learn the more broad-minded we become, the more tolerant of others' ideas. Unfortunately, a nation that knows can be dragged into war by one that does not. For instance, the ignorance of Spain as to how colonies should be governed embroiled the United States into war with her over Cuba, so that the latter's knowledge counted for nothing. The Boers in the Transvaal organized themselves into a nation, but were ignorant of one elementary principle that all other civilized nations from the days of the Israelites until now have followed — to deal with the stranger within their gates as they would with one of themselves. They violated this principle, which experience has proved to be good, and the consequence was that they got into war with Great Britain, who has known its value for centuries.

One of the oldest and most erroneous ideas of humanity is that which permitted man to own his fellow. The early settlers in the United States followed the example, and provided material for one of the most awful conflagrations the world ever saw.

Another fruitful cause of war is the desire of one body of people to possess the territory of others. With the consolidation of kingdoms, either by conquest or by

the marriage of sovereigns, that has been so frequent in Europe during the past century, this has ceased to be as powerful a factor now as it once was, but still the law is supreme that a nation will hold its territory just as long as it can resist the invader. Nations rise and fall, and the conqueror in one age becomes the quarry in the one succeeding. The decline of every decadent nation has been considered by the historian, and in every instance the verdict is, that they were ignorant of the effects of certain causes which they themselves brought into existence. One and all lagged behind in the mental development of the human race. Some other nation, generally by dint of hard experience on uncongenial soil, had solved certain important problems of nature, such as the utilizing of her material resources, and this gives it a big advantage in warfare, while the mental processes that made possible the utilization of such resources enable this race to handle effectively the weapons it has devised. A striking illustration of this is found in the Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic races, who are, when one considers the facts calmly, the only ones that can invent, make and handle machinery. This one fact alone is sufficient to account for their all-conquering history, for it enables them to wrest from nature her finest products and use them to build up a physically and mentally strong people.

I might enlarge on this idea almost indefinitely, but

I think I have said enough to show that war is the outcome of ignorance and that rivers of blood must flow before error can be eliminated and an elementary truth be accepted.

War, then, is a terrible penalty for lack of knowledge, and is thus closely allied to disease and personal discomfort. If I were to generalize on the conclusions to which the reasoning has led, I would say that the penalty of ignorance is discomfort and discontent to the individual, disease and unhappiness to humanity in groups, war and misery to humanity in the mass.

I have shown how discomfort and disease are excellent educators, but they are far outdistanced by war. The issues at stake are so gigantic, the present dangers so imminent, that the wits of every one are working at the highest pitch. Deficiencies of weapons, of transport, of food supplies and of medical needs are promptly noticed, and the memory of them after the campaign is very persistent. Experiments are entered upon to learn more about physical facts so that in future struggles the fighters may have the very best that the ingenuity of man can devise. Our present knowledge of the strength of materials, of mechanics, of many departments of chemistry, of food, of medicine and sanitation, of stable ship-building, of housing and of many other arts and sciences are largely owing to the investigations of the finest brains working in

government laboratories. The physical facts discovered by the soldier become the property of the civilian, and he quickly utilizes them in forwarding the arts of peace. Thus in modern times, we find martial nations are also manufacturing ones; the successful Anglo-Saxon and Teuton on the field of battle are also foremost in the practical arts of peace.

It has frequently been remarked the wonderful recovery that many nations make from an exhausting campaign. Look at the astonishing advances made by Great Britain after the struggle with Napoleon, after the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny. Prussia was an almost negligible factor in Europe until after the Seven Years' War, while after the Franco-German struggle she developed into a strong rival of Great Britain as a manufacturing nation. Even France, the conquered, surprised Europe by the rapidity with which she paid the indemnity of the vanquished and resumed her place in the front rank of powers. Had she been less in the grip of the religious dogma that prevented the absorption of scientific data she might have been as successful as her rival, Germany. The United States seemed to have committed national suicide with her long internecine struggle, but in little more than thirty years she paid the cost of the campaign and rushed into the very forefront of nations, numerically, financially and industrially.

On the other hand, races so confined by religious beliefs that all modern ideas are deemed alluring devices of the evil one, slip backward after every war. The living instances of this are Spain, Italy, Austria, Greece and Turkey. Russia is the most aggressive power in the world today, though her people are dominated by the Greek Church. But her expansion is at the expense of inferior races, her defense is her vastness and inaccessibility. Her military debts are a grievous burden, unlike that of Protestant nations who bear theirs with greater ease. The head of her Church is also the head of her army, and military exigencies press him too hard to permit mistaken ideas to stand in the way.

The most noteworthy instance in history of a nation avoiding war is China, who, building a huge wall around her borders, made invasion for two thousand years impossible. When she performed this wonderful task she was probably the most advanced nation in the world; but freedom from attack, instead of resulting in great progress in learning, industry and art, had a contrary effect, for everything crystallized as it was then. She is now so backward that she floats, a gigantic carcass, on the stream of time, the jest and the terror of the rest of the world. The day of her awakening has come; once again will she be born into the kingdom of knowledge, and a deluge of blood will be her baptism.

It is now time for me to redeem the promise I made at the end of the last chapter that I would draw attention to some interesting conclusions that followed as a corollary the train of reasoning we have been pursuing. Disease, I there showed, proved that knowledge is life and ignorance is death. War adds its testimony to the same doctrine. It follows, then, if all life were possessed of perfect knowledge there would be no death — life would be eternal. But such universal knowledge is manifestly impossible; so, therefore, man is doomed to struggle with discomfort, disease and war through all his generations. If any part of him is fated to live forever, by the same reasoning, it must possess universal knowledge or must always have existed; but this is beyond human power to prove or disprove, and so I must leave the subject.

Mankind has dreams of two golden ages, one past and the other future. In the first, man was perfect and intended to live forever, but he was tempted and fell from his high estate. Desire to know was the cause of his downfall, but we have just seen that ignorance is death while perfect knowledge is life eternal; therefore, increase of knowledge could not bring death into the world, while a being fated to eternal life must have known everything and consequently could not add to his stock.

The golden age in the future is when war shall be

no more ; when, during the glorious millennium, there shall be a thousand years of peace. I am sorry to dispel such fond delusion, but it can never be. For while even a little remains unknown to man war will be one of his severest castigators for ignorance, and perhaps most persistent educator, compelling him to study the facts of nature and the laws that govern them.

CHAPTER VII.

COMMERCE.

Commerce refers to the exchange of commodities, and this postulates the idea of private ownership of property. I am inclined to believe that the nucleus of human society was the tribe, not the family as we are apt to suppose, the members being compelled to associate for purposes of defense against the lower animals, and that each individual was born into the community, for when promiscuous intercourse was the rule, as it surely is in the primitive stage, no individual but the mother could be held responsible for the support of the young, and she being frequently unfit for the task, all food procured by the men would necessarily become the common property of the community. Communism, then, in its simplest form, must be the primal condition of human society, each providing according to his ability, each receiving according to his needs.

When then did the first departure take place? My consideration of this proposition tends to the belief that man's first property, recognized by others as such, would be the possession of a female all to himself, the

outcome of the experience that free love led to quarreling and murder, the tribe thus being deprived of its providers and defenders. Such a departure must have been governed by the operation of some definite law, and this we find in the law of least effort which demands the elimination of economic waste. It was in operation the instant life appeared on this earth, compelling the simpler forms to differentiate in their feeding so that all organic matter would be consumed. It is great economic waste to raise a human being from infancy to maturity and then have his life needlessly destroyed. It is wise to keep the workings of this law well in mind, as it determines remorselessly vast commercial and ethical developments in human affairs.

But possession brings responsibility, and so in due course of time each male became responsible for providing food and shelter for his mate and their offspring. The exigencies of the family demanded private ownership of property, and this followed as inexorably as fate. The change would be a gradual one, an evolution from one condition into another, one class of articles after another being transferred from the communistic class to that of private ownership. The less perishable articles would naturally be first, such as weapons, tools and shelters, while perishable commodities like foods would be for long common property. But increase in numbers, such as would naturally follow a system of

conduct less liable to the propagation of disease, would tend to specialization of pursuit, one man being better fitted for hunting, another for making the necessary weapons, etc., and so an exchange of commodities became necessary. This would be conducted on a very elementary basis at first, the one getting what he needed in return for what the other wanted, without reference to the time, effort or skill required in the production.

This is commerce in its simplest form, but even here its operations are just as much under the law of supply and demand as in the complicated form we see today, and while ignorance might never dream of its existence, it was at work, forcing man to move forward on the line of his destiny. For in due course of time the individual who learned how to make flint hatchets that would do better work and last longer than sandstone ones, also found they took longer to make, and so he demanded more of the hunter's product in payment. The latter, finding the new weapon more efficient, had to have it, and thus the demand being ahead of the supply, the price of hatchets went up, and remained so until a sufficient number of new workers had learned the new process of manufacturing, and then hatchets fell in price. The production of a new commodity has far-reaching effects that very few men realize, and it is apt to affect many lines of business that seem to have no relationship to it. And so every

little improvement, even in primitive times, changed materially methods of working and modes of living. A man's wants are almost invariably ahead of his income; had he but a little more he would be perfectly contented, but the gratification of a want makes it a need, and it in turn creates new wants. So the tendency is toward greater complexity in living and simplification of employment, each man becoming more and more of a specialist.

The multiplicity of articles manufactured in due course of time evolves the merchant, who acts as agent for both manufacturer and buyer. He gives the producer less for his goods than the latter would get from the consumer, and the last must pay more for them than if he bought direct. But it pays both to deal through the agent, as he is a timesaver, for each would necessarily waste much valuable time looking for the other. There is nothing in nature to tell a man how to buy and how to sell; experience is the only teacher, and we readily fancy that the first merchants made a sorry mess of their business ventures. But bit by bit the experience gained became tabulated, so to speak, and working principles were evolved. Here is the beginning of the science of Political Economy, and its first rule is very simple: Honesty is the best policy. Well, I wonder how many thousand years passed ere business experience taught men that axiom.

With the increase in the multiplicity of commodities, and the varying wants of the consumers, barter would become more and more an impossibility, and at length the value of each article would be referred to some special object known to every one as a standard. This we know to have actually happened, and shells, beads, cows, etc., have been used as measurements of value or money. But they were cumbrous things to move around, and ultimately some article well known, desirable and portable was adopted. In some cases it was copper, some silver, some gold, but the latter is now in common use in all civilized communities, and the natural conclusion is that it is the fittest standard, since it has survived.

Commerce, as has been said, is the exchange of commodities, and I often wonder how the idea could originate that restrictions of trade were good for it. As travel extended, one community came to know of another's existence and also of the goods they produced. The one naturally wanted to exchange commodities with the other, but I suppose some merchants feared the competition and were able to convince the members of their own community that commerce was the exchange of goods for money, which it is not, and they could not buy from the local producers unless barriers were set up. In their own interest the latter must protect the former and they did. But it is really

a case of beggar my neighbor all round, and there is little profit in it. It is another illustration of trying to outwit nature's law of the struggle for existence, and sooner or later we find it to be in active operation, and the balance sheet is not as pleasing as we expected it to be. Let us see the effect of a prohibitive tariff. It means big profits to the manufacturer, but big monetary success invites competition, and he gets it. Too many enter into the field and the consequence is that profits vanish, not infrequently become converted into losses. The latter condition is worse than the first, and at length to avoid financial death, they try the effect of combination so as to head off competition.

It is rather interesting these days to note for a moment an effort that is being made to avoid competition in another way. Centuries ago the English Parliament fixed the price of the most important commodities by one of its acts, and visited with awful penalties any infringement of the law on one side or the other. But Act of Parliament notwithstanding, the law of supply and demand ruled with an absolute power as before, and the human law became obsolete. Again, Mr. W. E. Gladstone, in proposing to fix the rents of Irish tenants for fourteen years by Act of Parliament, boastingly said that he would throw the laws of Political Economy to Saturn. He ought to have known better, and must have felt rather humble a few years later

when he had to concede a further reduction on the rents fixed by his law. It is utterly impossible by Act of Parliament, Act of Congress, or any other means to fix prices that will endure for any length of time, and had a few of our leading politicians had a schoolboy's acquaintance with English history they would have been warned by England's experience and never propounded the scheme that distracted this country for eight weary years. It is the old story; incidents and events alone teach the unthinking, and these must be so frequently repeated that they impress themselves upon the memory of the individual. Occasional experiences are known only to the student, and he is laughed at by the demagogue on the stump.

But other factors are also at force, for the law demanding the elimination of economic waste is working in the same direction. It is more economical for two men to work under one roof than for them to operate under two, so partnerships are formed. This in turn tends to great elaboration in details, and therefore more capital is necessary in the business, so that it becomes harder for the average man to start, and he is compelled to sell his labor to those established. There is but one limit to this consolidation of interests, and that is when only one corporation owns all the business interests in a country, although we can hardly fancy such a possibility — still it is the logical conclusion.

We are apparently moving rapidly toward some such goal, and the most characteristic feature of the end of last century was the remarkable concentration of capital into gigantic combinations popularly known as trusts, their aim being to lessen the cost of production, that is, the elimination of economic waste.

The trust is the modern form of monopoly. The latter held its ground for many a long year, but it outlived its time. The trust will not last forever; it is merely a transition to something else, and the point that is bothering most thinking men is, what will that something be? When we come to the consideration of morality, we may find the answer.

While discussing special privileges, I may refer in a few words to the extreme case of land, which at first glance may not appear to be in any way connected with trading. But all our commodities have their origin in the soil, and land therefore is a very fundamental factor in commerce. We can easily conceive how private ownership in land arose. When population was small and consequently soil was in excess of man's needs, each would locate himself wherever it suited him. His descendants kept on using it until possession became recognized as ownership in that family, and by and by was subdivided among them. Then when population increased and demand for land arose that could not be supplied by nature, the recognized owners exacted

a price for the privilege of using it. Value of land is practically determined by density of population, and so as the human family increases in numbers, the greater a price must they pay for permission to use the soil. This is a special privilege of the extremest kind, and apparently a successful one, a complete outwitting of nature's law. Is it? Let us see. The land on which Chicago is built was bought from the natives for less than a cent an acre. Today it would be hard to compute the value of that actually in use, but it must amount to an enormous sum. Here is an immense profit that the community has earned and put into the pockets of a few individuals, and seemingly the landowner has the best of the bargain. But let us have a good square look at the landowners in the mass and learn whether or not they are all getting rich. For many miles around Chicago all land is divided into lots and practically has been so for many long years. It is absolutely worthless as a producing factor to the community, and many of the individual members thereof are big losers in time and money by being compelled to travel for long distances past the vacant land because the owner is holding it for a big price. But consider the ridiculous hopes of the owners of these lots. They seemingly do not realize that the subdivided ground, if built upon, would house a population many times in excess of Chicago's present population,

and that the probabilities of their particular lot of property being wanted in the next half century is not one in a hundred. So if they will but figure up the original cost of their lot, the compound interest on the same, the taxes of all kinds they have paid, I am afraid the average man will find himself decidedly the loser. In plain English, far more money is lost in landownership than is made in it, and since the laws of political economy all work toward the elimination of economic waste, it is only a question of time when private ownership in land shall cease and determine. In the meantime its existence is utilized by nature as an efficient teacher of the principles of political economy, but her education fees are pretty high, and she sees they are promptly paid. Every twenty years or so she makes a special levy and the collector stands by us until we pay up. Each time he calls we put on our thinking cap and as a community learn a little more than we knew before, and possibly some day our education will be so far advanced that we will know something, and then our knowledge will be converted into work.

Let us see the influence of these facts on the mind of mankind. The captains of industry are mighty geniuses in their way. They have learned facts in a hard school, and by their blind appreciation of the power of certain laws have accomplished some extraordinary transformations. Not one of them ever

dreamed of creating a condition of his affairs that was to be largely beyond his own control, but the gigantic scope of their enterprises demands the help of efficient lieutenants.

“Really good brains are scarce,” says the capitalist, “but I must have them,” and in the effort to get them, all men must be educated, and educated right. The successful organizer of a big corporation remembers how valuable it was to him to know all the details of his business from actual experience and so he insists that all his help shall begin at the bottom of the ladder. One and all get facts rubbed into them until the power of generalizing is developed. The youth with the soundest school education advances fastest, and so work at school is more thorough and more practical every year. One no longer talks of mental culture in connection with school life, but the developing of the powers of observation and the reasoning faculties. We want our youth to see things as they really are, and to appreciate the cause behind the fact, so that they may be able to make their living in a world of facts that exist through, and are modified by, the operation of absolute law. In many ways business is a pocket edition of nature. It is a desperate struggle for existence, with the survival of the fittest; hence the common phrase, “There is no philanthropy in business,” is a picturesque description of nature’s law.

Ministers preach about the introduction of religion into business, but their ideals would not run a factory or store a month before it would go into bankruptcy. The average business man must have in business circles a name above suspicion, no matter his creed or want of one, otherwise he goes to the wall sooner or later. Between man and man he must be just, but the moment he tries to become generous he infringes a law of nature and must pay the penalty. He must continually endeavor to supply the same goods at a lower price, or better goods at the old price, and to obtain this end he must secure higher skilled labor and better machinery. So his incessant cry is: Educate, educate, educate, and no more efficient drill sergeant did Mother Nature ever evolve than the business man of today. Truly, he compels men to learn nature's facts and the laws that govern them.

CHAPTER VIII.

MORALITY.

Perhaps there is no phase of human interest that is more in the thoughts of most people, especially in civilized communities, than that of morality. The average parent is ever on the lookout to note a child's deviation from what he considers to be the true path, and the wandering one is at once forced to return either by moral suasion or possibly sterner means.

Morality may be defined generally as behavior according to a code of ethics which may be called the moral law. Such a code forms the basis of all religions, and while it agrees in many points with common and statute law it also differs from it especially in stringency, and takes cognizance of matters that are absolutely beyond the control of the latter; for instance, the Hebrew moral law forbids covetousness, but the difficulty of proving such an offense would alone forbid its introduction into any legislative code.

Again, while there are many moral codes in existence, all of them claiming, more or less, a divine origin, no two of them agree in details. Thus the Hindoo is

forbidden to eat flesh, the Mohammedan to indulge in spirituous liquors, the Israelite to eat pork, the Christian to have more than one wife at a time, while the Mormon is urged to take as many as possible. Even the races who believe in the same religion have different standards. The Scotchman, until a few years ago, took his Sabbath very seriously, and any attempt at even such mild recreation as a short walk on that day was sternly frowned upon, while his continental fellow Christian looks upon Sunday as a day especially set apart for recreation and amusement. So that morality depends very largely upon latitude and longitude and the year of the calendar. Moore puts this idea very neatly, when he says :

“I find the Doctors and the Sages
Have differed in all climes and ages,
And two in fifty scarce agree
On what is pure morality.”

We can readily understand that in his most primitive condition man would act toward his fellow men exactly as he felt like doing, restrained solely by their behavior under the influence of similar impulses. The primal condition of society, as I have tried to show, was probably communistic, everything being for the use of all. Each added the results of his efforts to the common pile, and took from it what suited him best. His wants were few, being confined to such fruits as grew

wild and such game as he could easily secure. Like all other life he was under the domination of the law of least effort, which demands the elimination of economic waste — that is, securing the greatest amount of return in exchange for the smallest amount of exertion. This produces coöperation, that is, the specializing of industrial effort. Each individual thus becomes more valuable to the community, and it must use every means to keep him in health and vigor. I have shown that in all probability the idea of private ownership of property began with the allotment of a female to each male in order to avoid as much as possible fighting among the men. This is the beginning of restriction of conduct and others follow in natural sequence. It would almost appear then that morality is the outcome of expediency, but I think I can perceive a stronger influence at work.

Let us see if we can not picture an elementary condition of affairs where we can get rapid evolution. Let us suppose that on some large uninhabited island there has by some untoward fate been thrown a couple of boys, say twelve years of age. They are on different parts of it, and are unaware of each other's existence. Each has to secure a living as best he can, helping himself to such of nature's products as are accessible and suitable. Each is absolutely unrestricted in his conduct, for there is no one to say yea or nay to any act he may wish to do. Viewed from a strictly matter-

of-fact human standpoint, can either of these boys be immoral in his conduct? He can not possibly commit any offense against his neighbor, for he has not got one, and so we must consider him as being in a neutral condition. When they have attained manhood or even middle age, by which time their early training has become dulled and the habit of doing exactly as they pleased has become decidedly developed, we will suppose some event throws them together. The social instinct determines them to companionship, and the interesting problem arises, will they be the better or the worse for each other's company? It will all depend upon their conduct. Each has been in the habit of helping himself to whatever he fancied, and will continue to do so. One may be expert in fishing, the other in hunting; one may be able to get all he thinks needful in a few hours, the other may take a whole day. Sooner or later, therefore, we can fancy each will begin to think that he does all the work, while the other gets all the benefit. Each as a consequence will exert himself less, so that the condition of each is worse than before they met. Wrangling will ensue, and peace will only be secured by an arrangement being made that whatever each secures by his exertions shall belong to him, and that the other can get it only by exchanging something mutually satisfactory. The result of adhering to this agreement will be that each will specialize in

his labor, and the material and mental condition of each will be vastly improved.

I might enlarge on this idea by supposing that a couple of females is added to the group, and then picture how quarreling and fighting would arise as each sought the companionship of one or the other, as the whim happened to be. We can fancy how in one of their struggles one injured the other sufficiently to make him helpless for weeks, and how the one would have to bear the recriminations of the other three, and at the same time have to work harder to supply the wants of all. He had gained his point, but might be apt to consider he had paid too high a price, and so the men would have to come to an agreement to limit their attentions to only one of the opposite sex.

This little fancy sketch provides us with material that may enable us to attain a clear definition. Arguing from these premises I would say: *Morality is the product of coöperation, and consists in the surrender by the individual to the community of certain natural rights, in exchange for which he is guaranteed the satisfaction of corresponding desires with more certainty and with less risk of injury, either by accident or disease.*

If this conception of what constitutes morality be correct it will stand whatever tests we apply to it on broad lines. Thus the more complex our coöperation

becomes, the more stringent will be the demands of morality; that is, the more rights will the individual have to surrender, but the more will be guaranteed to him. We find this to be true. The great manufacturing nations are more moral both in ideal and in actual conduct than are those where labor is less highly specialized, while the very lowest moral type is that of the untutored savage where communism of effort and ownership largely prevails. We can now account for the gross immorality of the mining camp, where each man is an unattached atom dependent on himself alone, and then explain the better conduct of the community when the capitalist secures control of the region and specializes the labor. We can now understand why the negro of the South, the unskilled laborer of the slums, and the idle son of the rich man are equally apt to be below the standard of the rest of the community in their behavior; it is because neither is sufficiently involved in the general coöperation. No need to question now why so many of the heroes taken care of in our old soldiers' homes grieve by their conduct those who wish to see them end their days in peace and happiness; they are outside the restraining influence of coöperative industry. If there be any general condition of immorality that this theory fails to explain, I have failed to discover it and will be glad to have my attention drawn to it.

The variable character of the moral standard can now be accounted for along evolutionary lines, a question of trial resulting in failure or success, as the case may be. It would be only by experiment that the difference between the essential and non-essential could be found. Such principles as were supposed to be conducive to the common good, no matter how hard they pressed upon the individual, would become crystallized, and with the preëminence given to them by long custom, would become part of the religion of the race. The immediate effect of the violation of any of the principles of a moral code are not always evident to the wrong-doer or his fellows, especially when they are inflamed by passion or have self-interest at stake. As a simple illustration, it is not infrequent for a man to mete out the death penalty to another for some real or fancied wrong, and so far as he is concerned nature would inflict no punishment. But the community suffers, for it loses the services of a producer in times of peace and a defender in times of war. So self-interest impels the community to forbid murder and to punish severely any one who commits it.

A more complicated case is that of the propagation of the species. This results from the gratification of a natural appetite; if it were not so, all of the higher forms of life would soon cease to exist. Among the lower types of the human race intercourse is very pro-

miscuous, and there is consequently the same fighting and contention that we find among the lower animals. This proves injurious to the community as a whole, resulting as it does in the loss of producers and defenders, and accordingly regulations are devised for governing the possession of the females. As the race advances in civilization the nurturing of the young becomes a more complicated problem, and so it is necessary to know who will be responsible for the support of the child until he can take care of himself. The marriage ceremony is practically such a declaration of responsibility, and the community, in return for the individual surrendering part of his rights, guarantees him the complete possession of the female. When natural food supply was easily secured a strong man could readily provide for many mouths, and accordingly gratified himself with a number of wives; but as population increased, and food and other commodities depended more and more upon exertion, the fewer could a man care for and so he had to content himself with but one wife. Once the custom became established it naturally became part of the moral code.

Certain violations of this particular rule in the moral code are considered as criminal in all communities and visited by severe penalties; others are not recognized by the law. But while it is hard to conceive how obedience to a law of nature can be a sin at any

time, such an act may be a decided offense against the well-being of the community and with great risk to the individual of personal suffering from contracting contagious disease; therefore, it is very properly reprobated. And so all violators are ostracized, and to emphasize the point they are threatened with awful punishment in a future state, for it need hardly be said the offender has found the offense not unpleasant in this.

Offenses under the moral code can be classified under two headings, those against the Creator and those against man. The former are practically summed up in the word negligence — the omission of rendering the homage due him as our origin. The punishment for such is to be in the great future, of which by our senses we know nothing, and, therefore, it can not be discussed here. Those against man naturally fall under two heads, the physical and the mental. Among the former we include all that tend to suffering and to death, such as personal assault, theft, licentiousness and intemperance, either in eating or drinking. Among the latter are lying, hatred, contentiousness, envy and heresy.

Among most civilized people personal assault, whether death ensues or not, is a crime and punishable by law. But it was not so always. In the days when physical courage counted for so much — and they are,

after all, not so distant — the strong and bold man was an object of admiration and dread, and was permitted to do pretty much as he liked. If he was a born leader, and could gather round him a band of similar spirits, build a stronghold from which he could sally forth and rob and slay the comparatively defenseless at his pleasure, he gained the respect of the community. If he was fortunate enough to be a first-class swordsman he could insult and abuse with impunity, for he was considered a finished gentleman, because he granted to the ordinary individual the inestimable privilege, supposing he objected, of being done to death in a ceremonious fashion known as the code of honor. The Church, which claims to be the supreme court of appeal in all matters of morals, and the protector of the weak against the strong, gave sanction to all these acts, blessed the leaders before they started out on their expeditions, and, their earthly careers being ended, buried them with all pomp and ceremony and guaranteed perfect happiness in the future state.

But in due course of time the weak banded themselves against the strong, gathered themselves into villages, which grew into towns and cities, and from merely resisting, began to carry the war into the enemy's camp, and subdued the noble robbers. In response to their demands all bloodshed and robbery became a crime, no matter who the perpetrator was, and

once the custom became established, the Church found it a part of the moral code.

So with licentiousness, for until comparatively recent times it was highly creditable to bear the reputation of being a libertine, and the highest dignitaries of the Church rivaled the laity in the looseness of their conduct. But again the common people, who were naturally the sufferers from all this laxity, rebelled, so once more the Church found something in its moral code that had been dormant.

Intemperance is usually supposed to be a term synonymous with drunkenness, but it applies equally to eating as to drinking; yet the glutton is called a hearty eater and complimented on his appetite, while the excessive drinker is pronounced a nuisance and a danger to society. But from what I have seen of this world more people die from excess in eating than in drinking, even although the latter is undoubtedly unnatural and of questionable value.

Yet not so many years ago, to be recognized as a hard drinker was a certificate of eminent respectability, while the reverend gentleman who could dispose of six bottles of wine at one sitting, and then pronounce without a stammer the mystic words "Biblical Criticism," was deemed to have qualified himself for the degree of D.D. But now times are changing, and it is a disgrace to be seen drunk even once in a lifetime.

Why? The answer is contained in four words — machinery makes men moral. When the workman handled only tools, and this still holds true, his absence from the bench did not stop the routine of the workshop to any great extent, but when he controls a machine which turns out articles by thousands every day, his absence for even one day means considerable monetary loss to the employer, and so drunken workmen are soon discharged. This is especially noticeable in the printing, tailoring and shoemaking industries, which at one time were notorious for the inebriety of the employes. Very naturally the temperance movement took its origin among the working classes, for they were the principal sufferers, and just as naturally the upper classes and the clergy scouted it as being too extreme. The latter quoted myriads of texts from the Bible to show that wine was one of God's best gifts to man, they deplored intemperance, but curiously enough the grace of God did not prevent many of them from becoming drunkards. We are now in the second generation from the beginning of the temperance movement, and the new stock of clergy, raised with the new ideas, are finding just as many texts to prove that drink is one of the inventions of his Satanic majesty, and therefore abstinence is essential to moral living. At no distant date the exigencies of living will probably compel every man to be an abstainer, and then the

Church will accept the custom and make it part of the moral law.

Our reasoning so far fairly well illustrates that the meaning conveyed by the term "moral" law is a perfectly correct one, that it is the law, or rather the rule of custom. As time advances the origin of a custom is lost in the mists of antiquity, especially when the reason is not self-evident, and so a supernatural halo is apt to be attached to it.

We can now readily understand why the moral standard is so much higher than it was fifty years ago, and far in advance of a few hundred years ago; it is simply a process of evolution or development, keeping equal pace with the industrial progress of society. But the end is not yet, for every year finds greater complexity in our coöperation which, as we have just seen, compels more surrender of natural rights by the individual, and the more certain guarantees by the community. What is the logical limit of this movement? Does it not seem as if the time will come when our coöperation will be so complex that the individual will have to surrender all his physical rights to the community and in exchange be guaranteed full satisfaction of all his needs? I feel certain such a time is bound to come and then we will have — *socialism*.

From communism to socialism, that is the great onward movement of all society; from a condition

absolutely free from restriction to one that is girded on every hand, from chaos to perfect order. I can not attempt to picture what such a state of affairs may be like, but of one thing I feel certain, it will not be a condition of absolute equality, as some fancy it. But its broad basis will be, as far as is humanly possible, equal opportunity for all, with less difference between the worldly comforts of the most and least fortunate. Private ownership will probably be limited to the home and its contents; all else will be owned by the state. But there will be inequality in income just as there is now if we judge by such socialistic conditions as we have at the present time — the postoffice, army, navy, police, school, etc. — where there are grades from general to private, from superintendent to humblest servant. When such a condition of society shall arrive I can not foresee, whether in my own generation or the next, or a thousand years hence, but to me this course of reasoning about morality is the absolute proof that it is coming. From the moment that the first restriction of human action was made this end was in sight and the onward march to the goal had begun, but it is only in recent years that we have begun to vaguely see our destination.

The individuals who strive to increase the complexity of our coöperation are the ones who are working most assiduously for socialism, and so while our

monetary giants, in order to increase their immense accumulations, are straining every nerve to organize huge corporations, they are but hastening the day when the social condition they most detest will be reached. This is the grimmest example of the irony of fate I know of in modern times.

It may not be uninteresting to glance for a few moments at other ideals that appeal to many members of the race as being desirable. For instance, there are the communists who want a system of affairs or form of common life in which the right of private or family property shall be abolished by law, mutual consent or view. To this community of goods may be added the disappearance of family life. That is, they wish to revert to the primal condition of human society — to turn the hands of the clock backward. Undoubtedly, they wish to conserve coöperation, but this we have seen is the prime cause of restriction of liberty, so that the two conditions are incompatible. Hence all communistic experiments are doomed to failure.

Then we have the individualist, the extreme type of which is the anarchist, who pursues a theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal. He will be interested in the general coöperation only when he feels like it; so when he decides to stay out he is consequently free from all social restrictions, and

if we follow his ideas to the logical limit he reverts to the primeval conditions of doing exactly as he pleases, limited only by what others may do to him.

His position is rather an interesting one and worth examination. To give it due consideration we are forced to ask ourselves this question, Do we human beings possess free will or do we not? We have either one or the other: there is logically no half-way house. If we have no free will, if we are victims of our hereditary instincts, plus all the impressions we may have acquired in the course of our life, then the individualist is asking for the unattainable. But if we have absolute free will, then he may claim that he is entitled to do exactly as he pleases. Suppose that he considers himself perfectly justified in helping himself to any article that belongs to another individual — steal it, according to our present-day notions — by that one act he at once reverts to the primeval condition. Then so far as he is concerned the community are equally entitled to revert to the same condition, and do with him as they please — in other words, punish him. The anarchist's position therefore, whichever way we look at it, is a very absurd one.

Consideration of it, however, has enriched us by a logical basis for the punishment of lawbreakers, and that in turn brings us to the old proposition, What is right and what is wrong? The definition of morality

I have ventured to give leads us to this judgment: that any restriction of human conduct that is advantageous to the community as a whole and also to the individual affected, is right. So that whenever we deprive him of a certain liberty we must give him something better in exchange. For instance, we forbid him to help himself to other people's property, but as far as is humanly possible we guarantee possession of his own, which is more advantageous. Again, the community forbids free love, but on the other hand it makes possible the home life, the center of most of the pleasures that we mortals can enjoy. And so on with every limitation of our conduct, so that any proposal to restrain the liberty of action of any sane and well-conducted individual, without giving him an equivalent at least, is not right, and is bound to fail.

As a corollary whatever is injurious to the individual and to the community is wrong.

The evolutionist believes that all habits and traits persisted in for many generations tend to become automatic in the race, therefore we should expect that it will be natural for the vast majority of human beings to conform readily to the restrictions of conduct that have proved themselves to be advantageous. Through long sustained effort our ancestors must have subdued the strength of certain desires and passed on to us a moral instinct that would tend to guide us right. This

is actually the case and *we find in Conscience the sum of the results of the moral experiments of all our ancestors*. With it for a guide all of us are up to a certain point automatically good; beyond that, even with the best intentions to do the right, we are apt to do the wrong, simply through ignorance. Thus life will always have its problems, for while we may understand the theory of conduct, it will frequently be difficult to decide what to do in any particular instance.

We all have our moral ideals, and we are all anxious for others to live according to our own standard rather than their own. The surest means of elevating the moral conduct of any individual or class of the community is to involve them more thoroughly in the complexity of our coöperation; in plain English, teach them how to work and if necessary find a field of labor for them. To me it is plain as day that they can logically require this, for if we insist upon a certain effect, they are more than justified in demanding that the community provide the cause.

But work, I have shown, is applied knowledge of nature's facts and laws.

CHAPTER IX.

HUMANITY.

It is rather difficult to get an exact definition of the word that heads this chapter. For instance, I find one authority who says, "Humanity is so much kindness and tenderness toward man and beast as it would be inhuman not to have." That is, humanity is the state of not being inhuman, which is no definition at all, for there are many kinds of human beings in this world, the least civilized individuals being atrociously cruel and vindictive, and most others intensely selfish. To my mind, humanity means something more than strict justness would demand. We all reprobate the individual who exacts the uttermost farthing from his debtor, if such action will leave the latter destitute. There is the feeling of humanity in the friendly greeting of the rich man of the village to his poorest neighbors, of the most cultivated to the most illiterate, though in strict justice neither seems necessary, for the one is in no way apparently obligated to the other. But it has long been realized that every human being owes it to his fellow creatures to consider their condition

and if possible to make life more worth living for the millions who at best know little of its pleasures.

This conception of humanity is a noble one, worthy of the finest ideals of our imagination, and looks forward to a time when there will be plenty for all, when crime will be unknown, and kindness and consideration shall be on every hand — the ideal time when no one shall be for self but all shall be for the state. It is almost desecration to take such a noble sentiment, lay it on the dissecting table, cut into it in a cold-blooded, matter-of-fact way, lay bare its mechanism and try to discover its origin. It is undoubtedly something natural and will therefore work in a perfectly natural way, be found to have begun, developed, and to be still developing, according to some definite natural principle, and therefore we are perfectly justified in stripping off its flesh to examine its bones.

Let us look at primitive man as he exists today, and also at highly developed man when some untoward accident reduces him to primitive conditions, and let us see how much humanity there is in his composition. How much does the savage display, whether he be Australian aborigine, African Kaffir, or red Indian? The word is unknown in his vocabulary, and his every act indicates that cruelty, bloodthirstiness and robbery are with him the greatest of virtues. Every individual finds it difficult enough to get sufficient food to keep

himself and those dependent upon him alive without wasting his thoughts on how to help others outside of his own tribe, and even the latter would be neglected were it not that they are a valuable factor in times of danger and at the season of securing food. No humanity here, but rather a desperate struggle for existence where only the fittest survive.

The struggle for existence — ah, there is possibly the key to the problem; so let us see how civilized man behaves when food is scarce and hunger is pressing. Let us look into the slums of our big cities where such are most plentiful, and what do we find? Even here there are grades of penury, but when we get right down to the lowest stratum, there we see no evidences of humanity. Where every one is on the eternal rack wondering where the next crust of bread is to come from, we find man's inhumanity to man as pronounced as among the lowest savages, only restrained by the power of law enforced upon him unwillingly by the community. Cruelty to wife and little ones, cruelty to man's faithful friend, the dog, savage exhibitions of bloodthirstiness, and robbery at every turn, all indicate no sense of obligation to one's fellow man. Only the desperate struggle for existence, and the survival of the fittest, survival to a life that is not worth living.

Let us take a higher flight. The British soldier has never been called a coward; nay, on a thousand

occasions he has nonchalantly sought death at the cannon's mouth, cheerfully giving up his own life that others may live. But let us see how he behaves in the hour of his direst necessity. Every one has read of the infamous Black Hole of Calcutta, when one hundred and forty-six British prisoners were thrust into a dark prison cell with only one small window, on one awful tropical summer night, and how in the morning only twenty-three were found alive. There is no need to emphasize the harrowing scene the dawn presented, how strong men had fought like demons, treading under foot gentle women and crushing out their lives in the desperate effort to get a mouthful of fresh air. Here was a deficiency of an essential to human life, and the natural consequence a desperate struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest. Yet we can picture to ourselves how these brave British soldiers at the outset would courteously give the ladies the position next the window ; but only a little later, when nature asserted itself, trample them down as they fought for the point of vantage.

Is there a cry of fire in a crowded theater? Then instantly humanity and discretion vanish and all rush pell-mell for the exits. Too often the story has been told, how in such awful stampedes hundreds have been crushed to death, when, had coolness prevailed, all would have escaped in safety ; but the tale is almost

always the same — only a desperate struggle for existence.

Can you picture to yourself a community deprived of food until its members were famishing, and then a supply injudiciously placed where it could be got at by them helping themselves? It has happened again and again in the world's history when stupid men had the management of affairs, and the result has always been the same: a desperate struggle to satisfy the craving of hunger, the crushing out of helpless lives and the maiming of poor unfortunates. No humanity there.

When men are well fed, they will in the face of danger meet death with banners flying, bands playing and drums beating, as in the case of the "Birkenhead"; but when pressed by hunger or thirst or asphyxiation they revert to the primeval state and act like savages.

There is no humanity in the face of a deficit, only a desperate struggle to obtain the means of subsistence in which the fittest survive.

It is a humiliating conclusion, but it is a law of nature and therefore absolute; so we can only accept the facts, because it is utterly impossible to change them.

But let us look at the opposite condition — that of a surplus. We are at a banquet, where there is plenty of everything, far more than the company can eat. Not

one individual has missed a meal for years in all probability, in fact has not known what it is to be really hungry, and should he even miss this one, would not be greatly inconvenienced. See how leisurely the company sit down, how courteously each wishes to help his neighbor before attending to his own wants, and in every action tries to show that he considers others before himself. Listen to their conversation as the meal draws to an end, possibly they have been hours over it, and you will find it very edifying. As they complacently fill their own stomachs they pity the poor unfortunates who have not enough to eat, and only hope that the rulers of the feast will let them have the crumbs. A most benign wish, breathing of beautiful humanity. Yes, there is humanity in a surplus. I need hardly say that the British soldier in the Black Hole of Calcutta, who trampled down tender women in his desperate effort to get fresh air, would, in the shaded garden where it was plentiful, most courteously attend to every whim and wish of the same women, finding for them the most shaded nooks and most comfortable seats. But then, there was no question of air supply. There was a surplus.

And so in all our multifarious interests. We can be very generous, very humane, when we have got more of any one thing than we can possibly find use for. We are all more or less like bees and possess a

mania for collecting and storing up until we reach the point of satiety. The youthful stamp collector, while the craze lasts, is a most selfish individual, but in due time he becomes satiated, his interest wanes, so he generously gives away part or all of his collection. We all remember how enthusiastically in our boyhood days we schemed to get the other boys' marbles to add to our collection, and generally were not too sensitive on little points of honor when an advantage could be gained. We stored them away in bags and boxes, and nothing in the world in our estimation could equal in value a fine collection of marbles, but we became satiated, our interests changed, so we made another happy by our generosity.

In older life it is much the same; we still want to collect. Now it is engravings, paintings, books, antiquarian relics or dollars, particularly the latter, but some day we find many of them are of little value to us, so we give them away to some public institution, and the world talks of our generosity and humanity. The gift measured by the standard of those who have not is a noble one, but when judged by our own it is a mere bagatelle.

In surplus there is humanity, in deficit mighty little, the greatest amount in self-interest. In the name of humanity we push sewer and water systems through our slums, provide schools, colleges and libraries, build

hospitals, provide doctors, nurses and medicine, yet, after all, the mainspring is self-interest. The sanitation and hygiene of the poor did not interest the rich man until he learned that the slum was a hotbed of diseases that found their way to the mansion and palace. Then the conscience of Dives was aroused and he forced his humanitarian ideas on his poorer neighbors, much to the latter's disgust. The business man needs educated labor in his business and therefore in the name of humanity he builds educational institutions and compels the poorest to attend them. This is self-interest, pure and simple, and is only another illustration of my contention that true knowledge is invariably converted into work.

Self-interest is frequently railed at as being an ignoble quality, but so far as I can see, it is a natural instinct, and is the mental equivalent of our physical appetites. When nature wants us to do a thing, she makes certain that we shall do it. She intends us to eat, drink and reproduce, and we have no choice but obey. Were the question of living left to our own volition, had we the choice to eat and live, or fast and die, we may safely assume that the human race would cease to exist in a very short time. So if nature intends that we shall study her facts and laws, she will assuredly compel us to do so. This she does by implanting self-interest in us. Under this impulse we investigate

nature, our work becomes the common property of the race, and its members benefit equally with ourselves. Conversely, our ignorance influences them injuriously, and theirs is equally hurtful to us. When the human race thoroughly realizes this mutual interdependence, it will enter upon a career of mutual education that will mark the dawn of a new era for it. I will not prophesy a halcyon age, but one of greater pleasure and happiness, since there will be a perpetual interest in life.

I recognize to the full the altruistic tendencies of the present day which influence many thinking members of the community to give of their time, money and effort to ameliorate the surroundings and elevate the standard of living of the poorest and most miserable members, but I would draw attention to the fact that all this humane effort is of comparatively recent date, and appeared only when the race had exacted from Mother Nature more than the members could comfortably use — in fact, had a large surplus on hand. Should the time ever come when the population will overtake the food supply, as is the normal condition of affairs, then I am afraid this altruism resulting from surplus will die a natural death. We must have one founded on a stronger basis, and this we find in nature's own plan — self-interest.

Now let us compare the results produced by self-interest with what is attained by the exercise of that

phase of humanity popularly known as charity. Christ told one anxious inquirer to sell all he had and give to the poor, and Christians in every land consider it one of their greatest privileges to give something for nothing. No matter the cause, if any one be in need of the necessities of life, doles are handed out much to the satisfaction of the recipient and the pleasure of the giver, the latter feeling that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Poets have sung of my lady bountiful, and painters have enshrined her in living colors, while every church in the land boasts of the amount it gives away in charity. One church above all others for long centuries has been famed for its eleemosynary deeds, and today it has a band of devoted men and women whose only aim is to receive with one hand and give away with the other. If there be anything in the evolutionist theory of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest, then their whole policy is to thwart the workings of this law of nature, and if they can combat it successfully, then the law is not a law, for it is not absolute, and therefore need not be considered for one moment.

Do they outwit this law? If they do, then the recipients of their bounty through long generations will have at least held their own, nay, will probably be marching at the head of the races. What are the facts? Look at the nations still under the control of the

Romanist Church, which is ever ready to succor the starving with enough to keep body and soul together; look at Spain, Italy and Austria, and tell me if you find a virile race. I trow not; in fact, we call them the decadent, degenerate races of Europe. Protestant Ireland has a hardy, energetic, thriving population; Catholic Ireland is a seething mass of hunger and discontent.

After the Reformation there was little of charity among the Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic races. In a blind, brutal way they realized that he who does not work should not eat, and left him to his fate. Such conduct was undoubtedly hard on the individual, and must have caused great misery, but the actual outcome is, that the desperate struggle to make even a bare living has resulted in the most wonderful and plenteous production of comforts, and the great mass of these races is well housed, well clad and well fed. With such a wealth of products it is little wonder that in their ignorance the tender-hearted have foolishly developed the habit of giving something for nothing, with the inevitable consequences — the degeneracy of the recipients, and a rapid increase in their numbers. We can expatiate for thousands of years to the lapsed masses upon the beauties of industry, thrift and the hundred other virtues they ought to practice, but so long as they can eke out a precarious livelihood by

playing the parasite, they will be perfectly content to be such. Nature's laws are inexorable, and any effort to trammel their free play is the height of folly.

Did you ever stop to think where the highest types of the human race are reared? Not in the lap of luxury, where the summers are long and the winters are short, where the soil is rich and easily cultivated, but on the lofty mountains of Switzerland and Norway, the salt, sterile, marshy land of Prussia, the bleak, cold soil of Scotland, perhaps the most infertile ground naturally in the world, and in the tangled backwoods of New England and Canada. Struggle, eternal struggle, is nature's law for the development and advancement of the human race, and any effort to withstand the operation of that law will recoil with terrible punishment upon our heads. We are beginning to realize this a little in our dealings with the lapsed masses, and are frowning upon indiscriminate giving. When a man asks for bread we offer him work if we possibly can, but too often, alas, he knows no labor the world wants. He is ignorant, and must pay nature's penalty; discomfort and discontent are his portion. No need to bewail that in all probability he is not to blame, for ignorance of a crime is no excuse for its committal, and we are punished for the ignorance of others as well as for our own. So having found that preaching the gospel makes but little impression on this poor,

inert mass, that amusement provided by young ladies in tea-gowns and young gentlemen in evening suits has no effect, that compelling them to memorize much uninteresting data about geography, history and a dozen other useless studies does not elevate them any, at length it is dawning upon us that it might be sensible to teach them how to handle tools so that they could earn a living. The mind of man hath sought out many inventions, a few of them good, the vast majority of them worthless; but the brightest discovery he ever will make is when he learns that the only way to outwit the law of the survival of the fittest is to make the weakest members of the race more fit.

So here we are again back to the old conclusion: man is learning facts of nature and the laws that govern them, and whenever he gets at true knowledge the result redounds to his comfort and the good of the race.

CHAPTER X.

RELIGION.

The subject of this chapter is a ticklish one, for whenever the word religion is mentioned, every religious man feels that it is his religion that is being discussed; not only that, but the particular creed in which he believes. Now I will state it as a general proposition that the more ignorant a person is, the more positive is he that he knows it all; further, that the value of a man's opinion upon any subject can be measured only by the amount of brain quality he possesses, plus the amount of mental effort he exercised before forming the opinion. The average individual's religion is that to which he was born heir, so we can ordinarily assume that he sucked it in with his mother's milk, and his brains had little to do with the case. Here is the simple reason why most people are so terribly touchy on religious matters — in plain words, their knowledge being a minimum quantity, their obstinacy is at its maximum.

All races possess a religion of some sort or another, and this has always been advanced as an unanswerable

argument in proof of the existence of some supernatural power or being. The most advanced races call their form of belief — Judaism, Christianity, Mohammedanism, Buddhism — religion, all others are superstitions. What constitutes the distinction between these two classes? So far as I can determine, in the one the belief in the supernatural is supposed to influence the moral conduct of the individual; in the other it does not. The latter being the more primitive, deserves first consideration.

Man is a rational animal, who rarely reasons; in fact, credulity is the characteristic of the majority of mankind the world over. They are but overgrown children, who, being unable to trace effects to their natural causes, at once assign to them a supernatural origin. This is a very convenient means of confessing ignorance without being exposed to the reproach of stupidity.

We can readily see how in the infancy of the human race nature worship would arise. Man's world would be a little one, for it would be confined within the natural barriers that prevented him from roaming, probably a few hundred square miles in area. As he mentally progressed he would begin to note the recurrence of nature's seasons. The gentle rains of spring causing the buds to sprout and the life-giving fruit to follow would be to him even a greater source of pleasure than

it is to us today, as in all likelihood he had not learned to store up for the time of dearth in winter. He would rejoice in the summer's heat and revel in the bounteous fare spread for him as the autumn approached. Winter with its chill winds and scanty food supply would be but a weary season.

But they recurred so frequently and so regularly that he soon learned they were perfectly natural, and therefore to be expected. It was different, however, with the torrential storms carrying destruction in the roaring floods or the lightning's path, the pestilence that walked by night or the earthquake that shook his little world till it seemed about to collapse. These were accidents, that is, unexpected, because their cause was not understood, and therefore must have been sent by a superior power whose sphere of action was partial and invariably injurious. Such a whimsical being would have to be conciliated and the most natural thing in the world would be to offer him such things as man himself liked — food and ornaments — so we can readily account for the origin of the sacrifice.

Whatever forces of nature produce results beneficial to man he deems good; those that injure him are bad. So there are good and evil spirits, the one to be thanked, the other humored. But the former brings round the seasons with all regularity whether he be worshiped or not, and so is apt to be neglected; the

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latter may develop an evil mood at any moment and must therefore be assiduously wooed to keep him, if possible, in good humor. We can today laugh at such simple conceptions of the force of nature, but after the Galveston horror I took occasion to inquire of two very devout friends of mine how they accounted for it, and one assured me it was undoubtedly one of God's terrible warnings to sinners, while the other was as certainly convinced that it was one of Satan's most wicked acts, and that he wrestled in prayer with the Lord every night to so restrain him that he could never repeat such a terribly iniquitous deed. Both are highly intelligent men, so the incident shows how much one is influenced by the point of view. The weather observer foresaw the possibility of the disaster days before it occurred, and considers the matter as the result of a combination of natural forces that happened to concentrate their power at the same spot.

From nature worship to deities is an easy transition by evolution. Great chiefs die, and their memory lingers long in tradition. Their qualities and powers are exaggerated as time goes on, until they are deemed to have accomplished unnatural wonders while on earth. This is no fancy sketch, for the populace dearly love the marvelous, and I have vivid recollections of an event in my boyhood, when a doctor from an adjacent county was pointed out to me by an old man as being the clev-

erest in the world, for in a case of diphtheria he had cut off the boy's head, scraped his throat, sewed on the head again, and the boy recovered. Everybody in the district believed in the truth of the tale, and berated me because I could not even at that early age accept it. Very probably he had performed the operation of tracheotomy.

So the nature gods become personified in the ancestral heroes who are supposed to still exercise the great powers they possessed during their lifetime, and not infrequently are represented by images. If neglected, any calamity that occurs is at once credited to them, and conciliation is necessary. Like a mighty chief, the god can only be approached by those who are friends of the family, so men superior in intellect pretend to be the visible representatives of the invisible god symbolized by the image. They assume to exercise in his name the power of good or evil, and claim offerings or voluntary contributions from the worshipers for their services as mediators between the poor, miserable mortals and the invisible god before whom the worshipers tremble like slaves in the presence of an enraged master. Here we find the evolution of the idea of a future state, which is limited to but a favored few, those who were chiefs or kings on earth, for how could a poor slave or humble member of the tribe ever dare to hope to be on the same plane as his ruler. Here also originates the priest,

claiming what does not belong to him and reaping where he has not sown. He becomes one of an institution, a close corporation, which puts him on a plane high above his fellows.

As knowledge of nature is acquired, effects are one by one traced to their natural causes, and so one after another the gods are discarded until they are narrowed down in the religion of Judaism to only two, representing the forces of good and evil—God and Satan. Being the most highly developed animal on this earth, man assumed that he was the special end of creation, that everything in the universe—sun, moon and stars; trees, flowers and fruits; animals, domestic and wild; the perfume of the flowers, the melody of the birds, the gorgeous coloring of the blossoms—all were created for his use and delectation. We know better now. We have learned that, as compared with the stars and other planets, our earth is little more than an orange, while we are not so much as would be ants crawling around its rind. But while he believed himself to be the most important end of creation, man measured the value of everything by its utility to him; if beneficial it was good, if detrimental it was bad. But now he is gradually learning that physically he is only one among other animals, all struggling to eke out a livelihood by securing the most useful of nature's products. In this strife he has a tremendous handicap in his favor, being pos-

sessed of reasoning power which enables him to understand nature's forces and so guide them that they provide bountifully and with certainty for all his needs and most of his wants. Wherever other life competes successfully with him he remorselessly destroys it, whether it be flitting insect, ravening wolf or elusive gopher, just as they would do to him had they the power.

Having, as in Judaism, reduced his gods to two, one is made subordinate to the other by being considered his creature, but for some reason or other utterly unexplainable is given tremendous powers for evil over the human race. The beneficent spirit is deemed the creator of all things, and being good, can manifest himself and his power only in goodness, so the original condition of this world must have been perfect. But one of his creatures to whom he had given great authority over the world revolts, and proceeds with great subtlety to bring the principal inhabitants of this earth—the first pair—to his sinful level, and with them, all life.

The Creator is naturally very angry and visits the poor, deluded victims and all their descendants with severe penalties, including death. To regain his favor they must first proclaim frequently and aloud that he is the only god, and continuously obey without question a large number of severe laws he imposes upon them, every one of which is at variance with their natural

instincts. To help them he selects certain of their number, whom he favors, to be the channel of communication between him and them, and they must accept without question whatever communications are delivered, disobedience being visited with great calamities.

His intermediaries, like those of the benighted heathen, form a close corporation, and their physical welfare is provided for by commands delivered through the individuals to be benefited.

When the human race attained to fairly developed intelligence these messages ceased, and the work of the intermediary today is to expound the vague meaning of those received thousands of years ago, which, on account of their florid imagery, are open to many interpretations.

In the course of the exposition of my views I have studiously endeavored to base all my arguments on recognized facts, and so I will say nothing on that part of the theologian's dogma which treats of man's obligation to his God, for this is something entirely beyond proof and is based by them entirely on faith — that is, acceptance without understanding. But they also claim that morality takes its origin in their institution; that in fact it is a revelation of God's will through them, and that disobedience to it will entail punishment both here and hereafter, and they point to many instances of physical suffering as the penalty meted out to violators

of the moral code as proof of their contention. But nature's laws are absolute, and so we can logically expect that the moral laws of the Creator of the Universe will be just as certain. Therefore punishment will invariably follow the offense, the sinner will be in constant trouble, while the conformer will be always healthy and happy.

But the facts do not square with the theory, for the wicked too frequently flourish like the bay tree, while the righteous are even more prone to be in perpetual discomfort and misery. For twenty years of my life I have continually asked myself this question: "Why are there so many decent, industrious, good-living people who are anxious to do what is right, suffering trials and tribulations all the time? It could not be on account of sin, for their constant effort was to be as free from it as possible, and I knew and still know many whose every thought and act is in violation of the moral code, but who are seemingly as free from care and trouble as a healthy child

Now I know the cause of their suffering; it was not disobedience to a moral code, but ignorance of nature's laws, and she exacted the penalty to the limit as she invariably does. So the theologian's claim as to what constitutes morality is just as unfounded as is his assertion that it takes its origin through his institution, the Church; for, as we have seen, it is the product of

coöperation in obedience to the working of a great natural law. So, like the priest of the aborigine, he is reaping where he did not sow.

Religion is universal, and has persisted undoubtedly since the infancy of the human race many long years ago; therefore it must have been advantageous, otherwise it could not have had so prolonged a career. What then is its mission? I have shown that all religions invariably resent the introduction of a new idea, but that after the principle has been established it is admitted into the canon and vouched for by the priest as not being at variance with God's revealed will, but unfortunately, had been overlooked and consequently neglected. If we consider the point we will find that from the general acceptance of the idea by the laity to its tolerance by the priesthood the interval is about a space of a generation. This is easily explained by the fact that the clergy are devoted to the study of written dogma and entirely out of touch with the active affairs of the world. Their successors are probably not yet born, but in the formative period of life they are associated with the mass of humanity, see the principle in active operation, and therefore tolerant, if not enamored of it; so when they in turn control the affairs of the religious world they square the theory with the fact. But in turn they crystallize in the condition in which they renounced active interest in mundane affairs and

devoted their efforts to expounding the theory of living for the best interests of the race. Any new idea is resented by them in turn, so the heterodoxy of today is orthodoxy a generation hence. The origin of the principle is soon forgotten, for its introduction is probably accidental, but, being of benefit, expands and survives, and becomes persistent. It was clearly not man-made, so the priest reasons, therefore must have been a direct revelation from God, and so the sacred book is added to.

The more advanced theological thinkers of today recognize that religion and morals are as much governed by the law of evolution as are all animate objects and their other interests. They no longer insist on the Bible being word for word a direct revelation from the Creator, but the result of impressions that he made on the minds of the writers, such impressions being suited to the peoples and times to whom the revelation was made.

They can not account why a definite revelation was not made at once, but take refuge behind the assertion that it is God's way of doing things. They may be right, but it is one of those phrases which are incapable of either proof or disproof.

The function of religion, then — all religion — is to preserve such principles and rules of conduct as experience has demonstrated to be conducive to the welfare

of the human race. Its natural tendency is to conservatism and crystallization, and once it attains the latter condition it becomes a positive hindrance to progress. But there is no limit to man's learning new truths by experience, for the incidents and events are happening continually, and so the more intelligent members of a race develop beyond the standards of their religion. This marks the beginning of a struggle between the more intellectual and less intelligent portions, the latter trying to suppress the former as heretics. But there can be no bounds or bars set on thought, and in due course of time the parties become more equally balanced. The struggle is now desperate, appeal is made to arms, and possibly for centuries the strife may continue until the new ideas prevail. The nation or race is reborn to a new system of ethics which in time will become as intolerant as the one it supplanted. If we look around us we can see the process going on today. The Roman Catholic Church for many centuries satisfied the ethical ideas of Europe, but the people of northern Europe who had to struggle hard to eke out a precarious living developed mentally at a faster rate than those along the shores of the Mediterranean. They had to study more closely nature and nature's laws and learned things the more favored ones did not. Reasoning upon these experiences, new ideals were formed the Church failed to satisfy, and so they diverged. The

conservative element tried to restrain the other, and war followed, bathing many a fair acre with blood. The struggle is not finished even yet, for France, situated partly in the north and partly in the south, consequently partly conservative and partly progressive — fickle, in fact — is prolonging the agony over a period that will probably be measured by centuries. To make matters more complicated, the pains of a second labor are upon her, for in her struggle to retain her industrial status she is forced to study science, and thus she is compelled to take at one effort what naturally should come in two.

The influence of religion is manifested through the Church, which is an institution composed of those who lead and those who follow. The former deny the right of the latter to freedom of thought and insist that they shall limit the wanderings of their intellect within a certain sharply defined area encompassed by a formula called a creed. Acceptance of this insures eternal happiness in a future state, rejection will result in the very opposite. Viewed calmly, this is a most absurd proposition, but it is only one more proof of how slowly human liberty is being regained. It took many a long century of weary struggle to secure to every man in the civilized world the right to transport his body wherever he pleased, and it is now gradually dawning upon the human race that as the mind is higher than the body, it ought to be just as free.

All institutions, whether sovereignty, legislative body, judiciary, Church, land ownership, industrial corporation, or trades union, wield tremendous powers and possess great possibilities. Being formed by combinations of individuals, they have the characteristics of men. All individuals tend to accumulation and aggrandizement, too often at the expense of their fellows, but death puts an end to it all, and what was gathered is scattered. Institutions are practically permanent, and so they continually add to their privileges, each new aggrandizement being at the expense of the great mass of humanity. When the latter realize a little part of what they have lost, and demand restitution, they find the former intrenched firmly behind laws they themselves have made. A long desperate struggle is likely to follow, and not infrequently the rights are recovered by revolution.

The Church is our oldest institution, having outlived dynasties and kingdoms without number, and therefore at its height it was the most privileged body on earth. Not only did it control the thoughts of men and dictate their rules of conduct, but it secured possession of the best land in Europe and one of its finest realms for temporal government, at the same time dictating the policy of all other countries. The inevitable followed — the struggle of the Reformation occurred, and little by little the Caucasian races are recovering

their rights from the Church. With the introduction of schism, the human race entered upon a new era, for in the multiplicity of creeds there is safety. Sorrowful is the condition of a nation where only one is permitted; two lead to perpetual contention; a hundred permits man to be what he is, a rational being.

The Church has been and is a conservative force in society, but also obstructive. As a preserver it has worked for the best interests of the race, as an obstructor it has wrought untellable misery. It is, I feel, humanly impossible to draw a balance sheet to find its actual position, but the following facts may be interesting. On the credit side we have the great mental pleasure and comfort it has given to millions, its defense of the poor against the oppression of the rich when it suited its purpose, its keeping up before the human race ethical ideals that were for the benefit of mankind. Against it we must charge the direct loss of ten million lives slain in campaigns as a consequence of religious wars, with all the attendant misery; the awful retardation to human progress due to its forbidding for more than a thousand years any study of nature, so that the art of medicine came to an absolute standstill; the spreading of disease and vermin by the filthy habits of many of its devotees who, to crucify the flesh, eschewed the use of water and clean clothes; its aggrandizement of so much land that in some countries

it practically owned half the soil, the product of which was spent in vainglorious show instead of on the mental development and physical comfort of the people; its stunting the minds of men by insisting that they must not think even if they were rational beings, but that they must accept without question certain creeds, even if they did seem absurd. This is the record of its past; today it is not so oppressive because the laity have wrenched from the priesthood a great many of their rights, but still the domination of the Church is very strong, although it is fast losing its grip. It has been ousted out of state government and school control, much to its indignation, but he would be a bold man who would propose among a free people to return to the old conditions. Today it costs the people of Christian lands one billion dollars a year to uphold the Church, and this does not include the value of the free services given to it on every hand by enthusiastic devotees. What material results does the world get for this tremendous expenditure. Viewed from a strictly materialistic standpoint, the Church is paid to uplift the moral behavior of the community, so that the worst may try to live in accordance with the ideals of the best. Does it fulfil its mission? It may point to its well-filled pews as an answer, but it can claim no credit for keeping men and women moral who were born and reared that way. It must prove its case by

curing the morally diseased, the denizens of our slums. Here organized society is giving it every possible aid by appointing officials whose sole business it is to force everybody to conduct themselves in accordance with the best ideals of the majority, and to deprive offenders of liberty, aye, even of life itself in some instances, as a punishment for non-compliance.

I frankly concede the gigantic efforts that churches of all denominations are making to elevate the morals of the lowest stratum of society, and I respect and admire the persistency of every worker, but do they accomplish anything; does the combined dread of punishment in this world and in a future one make men moral? Is the mass becoming smaller? Here and there they snatch a brand from the burning, but despite their efforts it grows bigger. It is a sad thing to see a man fired with enthusiasm and overflowing with the milk of human kindness, laboring earnestly for years, and then to hear him confess that so far as he can judge his efforts have practically been in vain.

Let us go back a little. Not so very long ago in all Europe there was but one Church, and it claimed the control of the gates of both heaven and hell. Every human being was under its dominion and had to accept its creed and conform to its standard of morality, otherwise eternal punishment of the most terrible kind was threatened. Surely, if the Church can make men moral,

then was the time when every man and woman would be a living saint. And yet history records a condition of immorality, of inhuman cruelty, of gross oppression, such as we of today can scarcely believe one-tenth of it as being possible. Any institution with such a terrible record behind it, were it not conjoined with men's notions of the future, would have been hurled to the ground and trampled under foot. It is easy to say that a better means of elevating the race could have been devised, but the fact remains that it has persisted through all history, and so we must accept it as being the best possible so far. Nay, more, it will have a future, and possibly we may be able to forecast what that will be.

All Protestant churches today are clearly in the waters of solution. They are eternally on the defensive, conceding point after point to the aggressor, until they no longer insist on belief as the only sure means of salvation, but more and more on proper conduct. They are becoming practically moralists, though they may call themselves religionists, and still endeavor to make men moral by appealing to their emotions. Being neither one thing nor another, they are fast losing their grip on the community, and are casting about how to regain their hold. They can no longer compel, they must supply what the public demand, and the puzzle is to know what that is.

We are getting to be a very materialistic people nowadays, and look upon a church as little different from a business. If we get what we want, we patronize it and pay our money; if not, we stay away. There are good men and bad inside the Church, and those outside are little different, if any, so the mere form of church-going is no longer deemed a guarantee of respectability. It may be all wrong, but few believe in the possibility of future torment for unbelievers, so every one is trying to get the utmost pleasure out of this life.

Many roads are presented to the pleasure-seeker, some of which look very promising but have a sorry ending. It is the business of the Church to demonstrate conclusively that the very best time can be had by treading the path it indicates, and if it goes the right way about it, it can easily prove its case. It must cease appealing to the emotional side of man, and deal logically with his reason, and to do this it must explain the nature of his environment and how he must comport himself to be in harmony with it. No longer must religion be morality made emotional, but morality made reasonable.

The preacher of the future will, I am convinced, be less of a theologian and more of a scientist. His themes will be the great laws of nature and how it will be to every one's advantage to accept the restrictions of

conduct demanded by the community. This idea may bring a shock to many, but if moral worth be the standard they set up, and I know of none higher in this world, then let me point out to them that the most moral class in any community, in any country, in any race, are the scientists, the men who study nature's facts and nature's laws. Can any one point to a better living, more unselfish body of men than they, whether doctors, teachers, students, or the mere lover of nature in a simpler way. No matter how small the community there will be found some one whose every spare minute is devoted to flowers or birds or other animals. How about him? I have never yet known an ardent lover of nature who was a bad man, and I can hardly fancy you ever did. And if you probe the scientist deep, you will rarely find him an enthusiast in religious dogma.

So the conclusion of the whole matter is, in the interests of your children's morals, give them free access to nature, teach them the living facts about nature and nature's laws and you will be reasonably sure of attaining your end. You will find their natural tendencies that way, so all you need do is to clear all obstructions out of the channel and make it easy for them to be good and do good. Such training may never qualify them to wear the martyr's crown, but on the other hand they can not blossom into persecutors,

for bigotry and science — true knowledge — can never occupy the same brain at the same time.

Ere I conclude this chapter I wish to mention what is to me perhaps the greatest puzzle in the realm of fact. In the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the bread and wine, after being blessed, is held by the Roman Catholic Church to be the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ, while Protestant denominations consider it as merely symbolical of the same. Now, here is a pure question of fact, yet millions of undoubtedly honest men and women hold absolutely opposite views on the subject. What can an ordinary individual think of such a controversy? It is enough to make him doubt the value of all evidence and to make him wonder if, after all, we really exist or only think we do.

CHAPTER XI.

SUCCESS.

What is success? One of my pet weaknesses is to get a clear definition of a term in common use, and I need scarcely say that I have wrestled with this word off and on since my boyhood days. Thirty years ago the clergy of Scotland controlled the public schools and once a year they came in a body to the school I attended, gave us a few simple questions in arithmetic and spelling, a searching inquiry into our verbal knowledge of the Shorter Catechism, and then wound up by wordy orations about fighting the battle of the world and making a success in life. Then, when the school board system was organized, the fussy nonentities who managed affairs took the place of the ministers, were content to hear us read, and then inflicted on us even worse orations, in which they discoursed more or less disjointedly of the battle of life and of attaining success. As a young man, I listened to speeches by the hundred, and about my only recollection of them is that to be successful was the great thing. I do not think I exaggerate when I say that as a unit of a mass I have

been advised a thousand times to try to make a success of life, but not once have I been told how I would know when I had succeeded, and so it has been to me a long-felt want to know, for certain, what really constitutes success. I have no doubt but I voice the thoughts of the average man and boy when I express this idea, so many may think it rather foolhardy of me to proceed to give a definition of the word that will satisfy every one, and which, above all, will make it possible for everybody to succeed.

In a vague, indefinite way certain ideals of success have been held up before the youth of all nations and races in all ages. Among primitive people the most successful is he who can slay the greatest number of his fellow men, especially if they be public enemies. The mighty warrior has the prominent seat round the council fire and the daintiest tid-bits at the feasts. He is given the most wives, has the biggest following, and when he dies, the greatest number of victims are slain upon his grave so that he will have plenty of company in the land of spirits. But we laugh at their ideal and pity them for a lot of ignorant savages.

Alexander the Great was not a barbarian, but his idea of success was to conquer the known world of his day, and in his efforts he caused a loss of life that was simply appalling, and when he had succeeded he wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. His

ideas of success were exactly those of the most primitive savage, even with all the civilization and luxury that was found in his court, yet who today would call him a successful man? He realized his ideals, but the world pronounces him a failure.

Through the earlier part of the Christian era, on through the Middle Ages, even up to comparatively recent times, the same ideal was held; slaughter and rapine were the earmarks of a successful man, and he was promoted by his superiors, fawned upon by his inferiors and blessed by the Church at every turn. The greatest example of modern times was Napoleon Bonaparte, who, at the head of his conquering armies, seemed to have the world at his feet, made and unmade kings at his pleasure, and was the cause of shedding more human blood, inflicting more misery upon defenseless women and children, and wrought more pillage than any one man that ever lived: yet who is there today will call him a success?

He was almost the last of his kind. Today the ideals have changed and with the restrictions modern civilization has placed upon warfare it may be considered impossible for another Alexander or Napoleon to arise. But the rapacious instinct still rules, and so for fifty years the man who amasses great wealth is the one who scores success. All our children's "good" literature is little more than the tales of some boy born in

penury, but who by industry, shrewdness and the power of thinking money from early dawn to dewy eve, aye, and dreaming of it, at last accumulates a gigantic reserve fund sufficient to insure him against starvation for centuries, but who dies without needing a cent of it. He is a successful man, at least so the books say, and our young people are advised to follow his example. The real pleasure in life, then, is to add more to the pile, and the bigger it grows the bigger a success the owner will be.

But what about the poor wretch who has no pile, who never will have one though he lived a thousand years, for he is not built that way. He may be stupid, easy-going or physically unfit, or almost anything else but a moneymaker — and now I am describing the average man — is he to trudge through his allotted span, feeling every day that he is nothing more nor less than a failure, a worldly misfit, one who has had his chance and missed it — what about him, I say? Oh, the Church provides for that, for while it is exceedingly obsequious to the rich man while alive, and preaches pathetic funeral sermons over his dead body, it also informs the poor wretches that this world is but a fleeting show wherein all is vanity, and that the man who fails to accomplish anything here will stand a specially good chance of having a prominent position in heaven. In fact, it is better to be a failure on earth, for they

picture the almost utter impossibility of the rich man ever seeing heaven, though when it comes to the particular case they are always sure that the dear departed will be as much admired and respected in Paradise as he was on earth. With such passports he will get the best of it in both worlds.

But is the rich man successful? While he lives we say so, after he is dead we doubt it. The world admires a successful man and to perpetuate his memory they erect statues and monuments in public places. Are all those of recent times built to commemorate the Goulds, Vanderbilts and Pullmans, who died leaving millions upon millions of dollars behind them? Let the facts answer. I know of not one monument erected to the memory of a rich man, simply because he was rich, but I could, offhand, tell you a hundred built to the memory of men who were always poor. Lincoln, Grant, Beethoven, Nelson, Columbus, Audubon, Linnæus, Burns, Shakespeare — none of these were moneymakers, yet the world calls them successful men.

With all their wonderful power of speech human beings are after all very inarticulate; they have great difficulty in expressing their thoughts clearly. They very often act right, but can not talk right; so they build monuments to the right men, pronounce them the highest examples of success, but fail to say clearly why they think them so. Let me endeavor to put their

ideas into plain words. They admire these men and call them great because they did something for the good of the race—they were, in fact, master workmen. But men who do must know before they can do, therefore they must have learned, since all are born ignorant, and must have learned more than their fellow men. Learned what? They had to deal with facts, not dreams, facts of nature and nature's laws, and so they learned about them. Here we have the reason why the great warrior and the great moneymaker are considered successful, for we measure the amount they learned by what they accomplished. The mere inheritor of money gets little respect from the world, since he has done nothing. *Success, then, lies in knowing one's environment, and that man is most successful who learns most of nature's facts and laws in proportion to his ability and opportunities.*

This definition of success makes it possible for every one to be successful and to know that he is such. Nay, more, to achieve true success, to fulfil the purpose of his being he will find the country more suited than the crowded city, for in the one he will find nature ready for his study, in the other he is cut off from it. No longer need the dweller on the prairie bewail his lack of opportunity, but rather thank the kind fates for giving him such golden chances. "I ben on prairie for fourteen years and I learn someting new every

day"; so said an old Swedish farmer at a dinner held in connection with a country fair in Minnesota a few years ago. Think of it, ye jaded city idlers dying daily of *ennui*, a word the poor man does not know the meaning of, far less pronounce it correctly — think of it, something new every day! and say if you do not envy this humble farmer. Something new every day! The thought of it sends the blood dancing through my veins; why, it is enough to make a man wish to live forever. And yet, that is just what bounteous nature gives us lavishly — something new — not one thing, but thousands of new things, and we tread them under foot and never see them. Alas, it is too true, our eyes see in things only what they bring to them, and the one regret of my life is that instead of trying to thrash into me a dose of Latin and Greek, my teachers did not satisfy my longings and introduce me to the wonderful things that I passed by daily. I have tried to remedy the defect in later years, but I feel it is too late, and much as I have learned of the great joy of living, I know that I have missed much that I might have had. So I pay the penalty of another's ignorance, and so do we all.

Let us look for a moment at the other way of doing things. This is Sunday, January 20, and today the wind has shifted to the south, driving away the zero weather we have had for some time, and melting the

snow that lies on the ground. We have a mild case of scarlet fever in the house, so the other young folks have been quarantined. They have never wearied a minute, for in the basement there is a work bench and a fair supply of first-class tools, and in our living-room a wonderful collection of what most people call "trash," consisting of a great variety of stones, bird nests, dried flowers and what not. They have arranged all these again and again, not very scientifically, but according to the facts they know. I make it a rule to volunteer no information, but I answer every question they ask, get out the books and hunt for the information. Each day, therefore, gives them a new knowledge, so they start in to classify and arrange them all over again with a new zest. They find the old cases too big or too little, and down they go to the basement to remake them to suit new conditions. They never weary a minute, and have no time to quarrel, so that the task of managing them is reduced to a minimum. Today a new idea strikes them; can they find anything new down at the marsh? So, after dinner, we set out, myself, one boy aged ten, another aged six and a girl aged eight, with "Bobs"—a little rough-haired Scotch terrier—as attendant. The sun shines bright, the air is balmy and all around us the snow is disappearing in little streams of water, with here and there a pool. I say little, but trudge along, waiting for the questions to begin. As we get

near the marsh, the elder boy remarks, "Everything looks as if it were dead," but six-year-old chimes in, with a thoughtful voice, "It isn't, though, it is only sleeping, and when the warm days come again won't it be lovely!"

But stop, here is a frozen pool, with water on the top of the ice; let us look at it. "Why, I declare, there's a water scavenger swimming about as lively as can be," calls out the elder boy, and sure enough, there he is, and the little heads get together to watch his big hind legs kicking out vigorously. "Oh, look at that little black spider," is the next cry and we see him skimming about on the surface as if it were a balmy day in June, rather than a day in midwinter. But these heaps of dirt round about, what are they? I don't know, but again the authority, the ten-year-old, tells me it is the end of a turtle's burrow. Then there are the skeletons of crayfish everywhere, and of course their claws are examined. "Oh, look at the lumps on the big weeds; what makes them?" "Well, let's see." So out comes the pocketknife, one is opened up and a wriggling maggot is found inside. Half a dozen of the swellings are gathered to be taken home; it is things we are after, and so we cart home everything that interests us. Here is another lump, but of a different shape; is there a maggot in this? No, but we find a beautifully drilled hole, through which he escaped. He must have had a

very fine drilling device to get through such a hard lump.

This is an ideal time to find birds' nests, for the trees are bare of leaves, so in a few minutes three are added to our collection — one a peewee's, another a wild canary's, the third a catbird's. The two former, each in a little branch, we know will be welcome to the housekeeper, for they make pretty ornaments on the wall. But in toiling through the woods six-year-old slips and falls. He gets up with a shout of glee, for he finds the cause of his downfall is a beautifully green bit of moss. Ten-year-old informs us that seeds of all kinds are in that moss, and if we take it home and water it, we will get hepaticas, jacks-in-the-pulpit, violets and goodness knows what, one after another. So we add it to our pile.

We turn homeward, and find a pool in the middle of a bank. The melting snow is sending down little rivulets, and the young minds at once grasp the situation. That little elevation is a mountain, the decreasing wreath of snow is a glacier, the small rills are rivers, the pools are lakes, and so they see in an epitome what we older folks know is being done on the big scale of a continent.

But now Bobs meets with an accident. We have crossed ditch after ditch on the ice, paying no heed to the film of water on the surface, and neither does Bobs.

But he does not know enough, his experience is very limited, and so when he comes to a deepish one with water almost a foot deep, he plunges in, and in an instant his piteous yelps break forth. I hasten to him, catch him by the neck and fling him on the farther bank. For Bobs' sake we start for home at our fastest speed, he racing on in front ; but there are ditches ahead, some with ice only on them, some with a little water. But Bobs is no longer taking chances, so the moment he reaches one he runs back to me and meekly waits till I catch him up and lift him across. Bobs gets home first and when we arrive he is snugly ensconced under the cook stove for the double purpose of drying and warming up. We have been gone hardly two hours, but have had a grand time, seen some new things, added a little to our knowledge of nature, and got enough material to keep certain young folks' hands and thoughts busy for many days to come. Does anybody know a better way?

Compare this outing with the experience of one who first saw this world when the nineteenth century was young. Thomas Edwards, the famous Scotch naturalist, who earned his living to the very end of his days by patching shoes, was cruelly treated by parents, teachers, ministers and neighbors because he dared take any interest in "beasts." It was considered a sure sign of natural depravity and original sin, so every effort had

to be made to purge him of it, even by the violent laying on of hands. His life, like all those of his occupation in those days, was a continuous struggle with extreme poverty, yet just before his death he said, "I know of no other pursuit on earth, either for a living or a pastime, from which as much real pleasure, innocent delight and unalloyed happiness can be drawn as from the study of the works of the Almighty. It is ennobling and educating, too. Neither do I know of any other occupation that is, in one or other of its branches, so easy of access to every one, as that of nature." Again, after describing the tremendous disadvantages under which he had labored, he said, "With all the trouble and sacrifice, I must confess I have lived a very happy life."

Lived a very happy life! How many conquerors, statesmen, society leaders, millionaires, ministers, teachers, workmen, can look back and say they have lived a very happy life? Truly, Thomas Edwards was a most successful man, because he learned more of nature's facts and nature's laws than did others of equal brain power and in a similar environment. He fulfilled the purpose of his being, and was happy. When all humanity do likewise, I am convinced they will be equally fortunate.

Many times each year it is my good fortune to be privileged to go through some of the finest-equipped

factories in this country, and while I have seen much to marvel at and admire, one phase always seemed pathetic to me, and that was the dull, mechanical way in which the average boy and man fed the machines. I have often remarked to the proprietors that such occupation would drive me crazy, much as I love machinery, and wondered if the terrible monotony did not make them restive. In the majority of cases it does not, in fact they rather prefer it that way, but every employer I find is on the alert for the first sign of intelligence in any one of his help, and at once pushes him along, for he needs brains in his business.

But I have often tried to look a little beyond and wondered how such commonplace brains could find recreation in the hours of leisure. Not in study, not in admiring the works of nature, but at the saloon bar and in the cheap theater, listening to the rubbish served in the name of vaudeville. Had the youth in school spent as much time over nature's facts — the fads, as our wiseacres sneeringly call them — as he did over the dull, stupid stuff that was crammed into him in the sacred name of education, he would have learned to see many things in the material he handled and in the machine he controlled that were interesting. He would be able to tell why tools got blunt, why one lasted longer than another, how power was conveyed and utilized, and a thousand and one things would interest him

that today he neglects because he never sees. Alas, how few realize that we see in things only as much as our eyes bring to them. Outside the factory the world is full of mighty interesting things to the eyes that can see them, but our poor youth pass them by unheeding, because when we had the chance in school we never taught him to look for them. Do you think the saloons injurious to the morals of youth; do you believe the cheap theater to be detrimental? If you do, do not waste your time, energy and breath trying to suppress them, because you can not, for they exist in response to the law of supply and demand; but put — and do it quickly — something better in their place. And if you can find something better than what nature demands — a knowledge of her facts and laws — I will be more than surprised. Give up talking cant, which youth fresh from nature resents; leave mawkish sentimentality alone; accept the conditions as you find them; let nature be your teacher, and have the moral courage to follow her to the bitter end, and you will be surprised how efficient she is in all that concerns the good of humanity.

Speaking of the monotony of life as the young experience it, leads me to another thought. Living is arranged along very conventional lines, and the majority seem to drop into the routine after kicking over the traces once in a while. But there are certain natures

so constituted that they want to break the harness and run away. Ordinary routine is so dull that a more exciting life is craved, and the boy dreams of the sea, the cattle ranch or the mining camp. The young person is lucky to be a boy, because he can satisfy his longings and still be an honest, respected member of society. But if the young person be of the weaker sex, what then? If in comfortable circumstances, her vagaries for unconventionality can find vent in the stage, the music school, the art academy, the raising of pets, or cultivation of flowers — nay, a hundred ways. But in the lower social scale, the uninteresting home, the monotonous store or office, when it feels such, arouses cravings for the things that she sees higher people enjoy, and conceives to be their only interest, such as theaters and supper parties. Her means forbid the enjoyment; there is one way — you know the rest. This is a terrible blot on our civilization, and the brightest minds of our race have striven to find a remedy. If my diagnosis be correct, that it is a breaking away from the burden of the conventional, put a better interest in its place. Make everything interesting by teaching the eye and the brain what to look for and what to see, so that every occupation will provide something for the mind to linger on — and once again I must insist this can only be done by teaching nature's facts and nature's laws.

We all regret the overcrowding of our cities, and feel it would be better for the individuals and for the race if our population were more rural than urban. This concentration of humanity is largely due to the forces that demand the elimination of economic waste, but it is hastened by many mistaken ideas of the human race. Parents, anxious for the educational advancement of their children, push into the large cities, while the young folks migrate thither, as they believe there are greater opportunities there, or more variety and entertainment than is to be found in the country.

If my idea of man's mission be correct, that it is our duty to study nature and nature's laws, then the city is far inferior to the country, for the inhabitant of the latter has nature's book always open before him, and happy is he who can read therein. If parents, especially mothers, would talk more about subjects and less about people to their children, or to put it tersely, use the pronoun "it" more frequently, and the pronouns "he" and "she" less often, the young folks would develop an intelligence that would be surprising and see a thousand things of interest where before there was nothing but a bare prairie or a blank mountain side. When a child or youth finds country life uninteresting, the parents and teachers are the only ones to blame.

Young country people believe that folks of corre-

sponding age in the cities spend every spare hour of their evenings at theaters, balls or parties. Never was a greater delusion. Trudging along streets, hanging around the corners, or talking rubbish to each other is a truer statement of the case. All the supposedly ideal pleasures cost money, and the average young man and woman find it possibly harder, on the average, to make a decent living in the big city than in the small town or country district, and therefore he or she are not in a position to spend a few dollars a week on amusements. About all they know of the theater, plays and performers is from a study of the theatrical news in the evening paper, and that can be read just as comfortably a thousand miles away as in the street car on the way home: To the average young man from the country the big city is a rather lonely, uninteresting place when he tries to make a living in it, and were he not buoyed up by ambitions of some day making a pile of money, he would be apt to get out of it.

Let me conclude this chapter with a short account of one of my experiences, which at the time took my breath away. I was born in a little country village of perhaps four hundred population. When I reached the age of nine we left it and, after wandering from one little village to another, settled for five years in a town of five thousand. At eighteen I left home to make my start in the wide world alone, and of course went to

the big city. At twenty-seven I married, and at thirty-two I took a fancy to visit my birthplace. So, accompanied by my little boy, I set out. Reaching the village, I strolled up the short street, feeling myself a perfect stranger, and wondering if there were any there who remembered me and my people. The names on the stores were not as I knew them; but one arrested me. It was above the door of a general merchant, and was that of an old school-fellow whom I had encountered twice in the cities where I had lived. He had been in the hardware business, and I wondered if it could possibly be my old friend, whom I had not seen or heard of for many years. I stepped inside and sure enough it was he. After a few minutes' conversation, I jumped the question at him, "How could you be such a fool, Jim, to come back here after knowing what it was to live in a big city?" He looked at me quietly for a minute and then began: "I know what it is to live in the city. Your day is given up to working hard, and is lengthened out by the time you take going to your work and returning. When you get home your children are either in bed or are sent there shortly after, so that your only chance of companionship with them is on Sundays. You do not know your next-door neighbor; in fact, it is advisable not to know him, and for a certainty the people you are interested in live miles away, so you see them only occasionally. Of course,

wages are higher, but so are rents, and you must buy everything you use, so that when you get to the end of the month, the money is all spent, and so would more be if you had it. Now, here I am next door to my family all the day, and can see them as often as I feel like it. I know everybody in the village and their financial condition, thus I make no mistakes about the amount of credit each one gets. My hours are short, my work is easy, my running and living expenses low, so that at the end of each month I find I am a little more ahead, and I am free from worry. Honestly, who is the fool, you or I?"

He never got an answer, but his question has come back to me a thousand times, and the oftener it returns, the more I am inclined to suspect he was wise, especially if he took full advantage of his leisure and surroundings to fulfil the law of his being, but I am afraid he did not.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

Nature is a bountiful mother to us all. From every quarter she is pouring upon us with the most lavish profusion uncountable gifts that insure our bodily comfort, that delight our eyes and enchant our ears. Think of her generosity in providing us with plenty of nourishing food, warm clothing, coal to heat us, wood and stone with which to build our homes, iron for our tools and machinery, water with which to quench our thirst and work our engines, medicine to heal our hurts and alleviate our pains ; all these she gives us and much more that we too readily forget. Surely we ought to love her for her gracious goodness to us, but we take all the gifts as our right and neglect the giver. Yet our past experience ought to make us behave differently, for never once has man sincerely and earnestly asked her for anything that would tend to his bodily comfort, but she has lovingly responded. All that she asks is that we woo her assiduously and study her conscientiously.

She tempts us by every wile. Every minute of the

day she is decorating and adorning herself in a new garb to enchant our eyes. Now she decks herself in blazing sunshine, but in a few minutes she may lay aside all her gorgeousness and be as sad-eyed and demure as if weeping over our heedless indifference. Again she will clothe herself in a daring spectrum of colors, so resplendent but yet so beautifully harmonious that even a little child waxes enthusiastic over her gems, and rushes to gather them in handfuls; but we, older grown, look callously on; we have eyes, but we see not. Oh, the pity of it that a little child can see where we are blind!

Perhaps our ears are open to temptation. We can shut our eyes, but can not close our ears, so nature tunes a thousand pipes that discourse sweet melody from every bush and tree. Do we hear them? They are only birds, we say, and pass them by; the small voices of nature have no charms for us. Then she changes her mood, hushes the voice of the songsters, and roars with the thunder's voice. Now we hear her, but still neglect the call, and go on our way, piling up delusions about matters of which we know nothing, and neglecting every opportunity for betterment and lasting pleasure that lies right before us, so near that we stumble over them, yet never see them.

Nothing happens in this world by chance. There are a thousand forces at work and the summation of

their efforts produces a fact, something done. When we in our blindness fail to see the forces at work, we call the fact an accident, but we are learning by experience and gradually extending the list of what we call "preventable accidents" and correspondingly reducing the others. Nature is consistent in all her work; every one of her laws is absolute, and, willingly or unwillingly, we must study them and her and know her charms. She will brook no denial, no neglect; she must be wooed, and her behests must be obeyed.

What fools we mortals have been and are! We have dared to call nature a monster; we have vilified ourselves, her greatest achievement, by proclaiming that we came from her hands unutterably vile, conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, and so we have thwarted our kind mother at every turn. Wherever her finger pointed, that was the way we would not go, but she has lashed us with a thousand scourges, and now we see a glimmering of the light. Little by little it is dawning upon us that instead of trying to trammel the play of nature's forces, our policy should be to remove all obstructions and let the currents run freely.

Man is no degenerate. He is no descendant of a perfect being. He is at the present moment at his best, a wondrous advance upon the first of his race who appeared on this earth ages ago. Bit by bit he is renouncing the brutal parts of his origin, replacing

them with finer mental susceptibilities. Instinct he is replacing by reason, rage by indignation, sexual desire by love. Realizing his glorious progress in the past we can but wonder to what heights he will attain in the future. The same laws that have brought him to his present advancement are still at work, so his march will be onward and upward; the future progress will be tremendously accelerated, for we are just beginning to practice the doctrine I am trying to teach. True it is still experimental, but the elimination of religious instruction in our schools, the introduction in its place of science and manual training shows the trend of our thoughts. Practice always precedes theory; the former has begun; this book is an effort to set forth the theory on which it is based.

Honor to whom honor is due, and so I have to confess that these thoughts probably had their origin in the remark of a little boy made to me over a dozen years ago. He came dancing into my classroom one morning, bubbling over with glee. I asked him what made him so happy, and he told me it was his birthday, that he was now ten years old. I have always liked to put puzzling questions to children, and so I asked him why that made him so happy, in fact, what was the good of being born at all. He looked dumfounded for a minute, and then his face beamed. "Of course, it is worth being born, for, look at the lots of things I

know that I would not have known if I had not been born." If that boy be still alive, he is now a man, and I am certain that by this time his parents and teachers have educated him out of the knowledge he then possessed.

And that reminds me of another thought. Did you ever notice how wonderfully a young mind fresh from nature can leap like a young goat from pinnacle to pinnacle of knowledge, without bothering about all the details that lie between? The teacher drudges away his hours elucidating little point after little point and is so interested in them that he fails to catch the force of the great laws behind them. Then comes along a fresh, young mind, gives merely a passing glance at the other's results, and in a manner that is simply astounding proceeds to generalize upon the facts and to deduce the law.

One word more. I know you want to ask me two questions: "Why have we come here to learn?" and "What are we to do with our knowledge once we attain it?" I frankly confess I do not know. It is hard enough to reason upon the facts that are ever with us, therefore it is practically impossible to theorize when we have absolutely no data. From birth to death we can learn facts and study laws, and thence draw conclusions, but outside these two lines we know nothing.

Therefore, all we can do is to honestly strive to learn what we are here for, and then do it steadfastly. Knowledge did not work man's downfall, but has been the means of his advancement — will be the agent of his progression to a height to which there are no limits.

At the beginning of the first chapter I said we were either here for a purpose or we were not, and up to the present I have argued on the theory that we had a mission. It is time to consider the other proposition, that possibly we merely happen to be — that we live through our little day and depart. If this be true, then plain everyday common sense says let us understand the objects that surround and the forces that influence us, so that we may have the greatest pleasure in life.

So, whichever way we look at it, the beginning and possibly the end of wisdom for mortal man is to understand his environment — to know nature's facts and nature's laws.

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