

THE SEEKER FOR TRUTH

MY ESSENTIAL WORKS



JAMES ALLEN

EXTENDED ANNOTATED EDITION

The Seeker For Truth - My Essential Works

James Allen

Contents:

Out From The Heart

1. The Heart and The Life
2. The Nature and Power of Mind
3. Formation of Habit
4. Doing and Knowing
5. First Steps in The Higher Life
6. Mental Conditions and Their Effects
7. Exhortation

The Life Triumphant: Mastering The Heart and Mind

Foreword

1. Faith and Courage
2. Manliness, Womanliness and Sincerity
3. Energy and Power
4. Self-Control and Happiness
5. Simplicity and Freedom
6. Right Thinking and Repose
7. Calmness and Resource
8. Insight and Nobility
9. Man the Master
10. Knowledge and Victory

Man: king of mind, body, and circumstance

Foreword

1. The inner world of thoughts

2. The outer world of things
3. Habit: its slavery and its freedom
4. Bodily conditions
5. Poverty
6. Man's spiritual dominion
7. Conquest: not resignation

Foundation stones to happiness and success

Editor's preface

Foreword

1. Right principles
2. Sound methods
3. True actions
4. True speech
5. Equal-mindedness
6. Good results

The Way Of Peace

1. The power of meditation
- Star of wisdom
2. The two masters, self and truth
3. The acquirement of spiritual power
4. The realization of selfless love
5. Entering into the infinite
6. Saints, sages, and saviors: the law of service
7. The realization of perfect peace

Men And Systems

Introduction

1. Men and systems Their correlations and combined results
2. Work, wages, and well-being
3. The survival of the fittest as a divine law
4. Justice in evil
5. Justice and love
6. Self-protection: animal, human, and divine
7. Aviation and the new consciousness
8. The new courage

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James Allen: A Prophet of Meditation

Although the late James Allen, of Ilfracombe, is comparatively unknown, yet to thousands of seekers after truth, he has proved a guide, philosopher, and friend. One of his works, "As a Man Thinketh", has gone into no less than eleven editions; surely proof that he has a considerable vogue. The most casual reader of any of his works cannot fail to be impressed by the simplicity, cheerfulness, and benevolence which seem to radiate from the soul of the writer. We cannot place James Allen in any exclusive category, as he teaches so much that harmonizes with all the best thought of our age. Liberal Christians, Theosophists, and many other enlightened bodies of truth-seekers may claim him as an exponent of at least several of their distinctive views; be he was simply a strong, true,

individual man who wrote and spoke out of the depth of his own convictions, and never held himself bound to voice the peculiar tenets of any cult. Wide knowledge of the Scriptures of the world, professedly sacred and other, coupled with intense sympathy with all human causes have rendered his works a delight to the scholar, as well as an inspiration to the less cultured aspirant for instruction in that path of wisdom which inevitably leads to power and peace. His literary style is clear and simple, and in dealing with subjects that are often vague and illusory, he used language that made his meaning easily understood. James Allen disliked publicity, and, perhaps, it is because of his disregard of the uses of advertisement that he is not so well known as he might otherwise have been. After all, however, it is the man's message that matters, and he who runs may read in the James Allen Library the story of the spiritual life of the writer. The worship of the personality was a thing that he always guarded against, and for that reason his body was cremated and his ashes scattered to the four winds of Heaven, so that no man or woman in the future could make a place of pilgrimage of his grave, or say "the dust of James Allen lies here.": His books alone are monuments to his memory, and they are being sent with the utmost speed to all the corners of the earth, and are being translated into various languages. "The Eight Pillars of Prosperity" has just been published in the Spanish tongue.

James Allen was born in Leicester on November 28th, 1864. His father was at one time a very prosperous manufacturer, but evil days overtook him when James was about fifteen years of age. Nearly everything was lost, and Allen, senior, taking what money was left, went to America to make a new home for his wife and family, but within two days of his arrival in that country he met with an accident and died in a New York hospital. His empty pocket-book and an old silver watch were returned to the family as the

only things found upon him. James now found himself in his native town of Leicester, at the age of fifteen, with a mother and two younger brothers to support. He worked as many as fifteen hours a day in a factory, but never gave up his beloved books.

Mr. Allen states that at the age of seventeen, he found his father's Shakespeare, of which he became an ardent reader. "I read Shakespeare," he himself has said, "in the early morning, at breakfast time, in the dinner hour, and in the evening." He knew the whole of the plays by heart ultimately, and could lose himself in them when surrounded by hundreds of workmen and by the whir and thud of machinery.

Then came Emerson's Essays, calm and radiant, revealing to him a higher realm than that of the passions with their fleeting pleasures and certain pains. "Circles," "Compensation," "The Over-Soul," and "Self Reliance" were the essays which impressed him most, particularly "Self Reliance," which showed him the importance of conduct and the worth and dignity of character. It helped him to battle successfully with natural timidity, which put a check on initiative and originality.

Then, at age 23, he came across Sir Edwin Arnold's "The Light of Asia." Describing his sensations after reading it, he has said, "I could not stir from my seat till I read every word. When I did rise from the reading of this book, it was as though I had become a different man. A curtain seemed to have rolled back from the face of the Universe, and I saw the causes and meaning of things which had hitherto been dark mysteries. There was a revelation which was almost blending in its brilliance and suddenness, an exaltation which alarmed me while it transported me into a felicitous insight. The vision quickly faded, but its influence

remained, the memory of it saving me in many an hour of darkness and temptation, until that calmer time of meditation and knowledge, ten years later, when it returned never again to fade from the mind." In "The Light of Asia," Sir Edwin Arnold sought, by the medium of an imaginary Buddhist votary, to depict the life and character and indicate the philosophy of that noble hero and reformer, Prince Gautama of India, the founder of Buddhism. "More than a third of mankind owe their moral and religious ideas to this illustrious prince, whose personality, though imperfectly revealed in the existing sources of information, cannot but appear the highest, gentlest, holiest, and most beneficent, which one exception, in the history of Thought."

If ye lay bound upon the wheel of change,
And no way were of breaking from the chain,
The Heart of boundless Being is a curse,
The soul of thing fell pain.
Ye are not bound! The soul of things is sweet,
The heart of being is celestial rest;
Stronger than woe is will; that which was good
Doth pass to better -best.
I, Buddha, who wept with all my brother's tears,
Whose heart was broken by a whole world's woe,
Laugh and am glad, for there is liberty!
Ho! Ye who suffer! Know.
Ye suffer from yourselves. None else compels,
None other holds you that ye live and die,
And whirl upon the wheel, and hug and kiss
It spokes of agony.
Its tire of tears, its nave of nothingness,
Behold, I show you Truth! Lower than hell,
Higher than heaven, outside the utmost stars,
Farther than Brahm doth dwell.
Before beginning, and without an end,

As space eternal and as surety sure,
Is fixed a power divine which moves to good,
Only its laws endure.

From the date of reading "The Light of Asia" began James Allen's great search for truth.

At the age of 26 came "The Bhagavad Gita." There followed the books of the Chinese sages and the Gospel of Buddha by Paul Carus, Dr. Bucke's Cosmic Conservances also had an influence on him, inasmuch as it gave a scientific explanation of what had already been revealed inwardly.

When about the age of 25, James Allen left his native town and went to London, where he was for a time a private secretary, working from 9 to 6 o'clock, and using every moment out of office hours for writing his books. He afterwards founded "The Light of Reason," and gave up his time to the work of editing the magazine, at the same time carrying on a voluminous correspondence with searchers after truth all over the world. He met Mrs. Allen, who was a sister in an East End mission at the time, when he was 29 years of age. She proved a true mate, and now carries on the work which her husband inaugurated. Leaving London, they took up residence in beautiful Ilfracombe, where the remainder of James Allen's life was spent.

His first book was "From Poverty to Power," which is considered to be his best work. It has passed into many editions, and Mrs. Allen states that tens of thousands have been sold all over the world, both authorized and pirated editions. In this book he urges the reader to strive to realize, and merely hold as a theory, the evil is a passing phase, a self-created shadow; that all your pains, sorrows, and misfortunes have come to you by a process of

undeviating and absolutely perfect law; have come to you because you deserve and require them, and that by first enduring, and then understanding them, you may be made stronger, wiser, nobler. He says: "When you have fully entered into his realization, you will be in a position to mould your own circumstances, to transmute all evil into good, and to weave, with a master hand, the fabric of your destiny." Soon after the publication of "From Poverty to Power," came "All These Things Added," and then, "As a Man Thinketh." Other books followed such as "Above Life's Turmoil," "The Mastery of Destiny," "Byways of Blessedness," "The Life Triumphant," "Out From the Heart," "Through the Gate of Good," "From Passion to Peace," "Man: King of Mind, Body, and Circumstance," and "The Eight Pillars of Prosperity." James Allen took a keen interest in many scientific subjects, delighting in astronomy, geology, and botany, and might have written on a wide range of subjects had he chosen to do so. He was often asked for articles on many question outside his own particular work, but he refused to comply, concentrating his whole thought and effort on preaching the gospel of selflessness. After a short illness, he died on January 24th, 1912, in the forty-eighth year of his age. Six days later his remains were cremated at Leicester, and his ashes were devoutly scattered to the four winds with the following invocation, uttered audibly:

"As these ashes of James Allen are cast to the four winds of heaven, so may the truth he taught permeate to the four corners of the earth, carrying with it joy, peace, and consolation."

Although what James Allen taught may not be new -old truth in a new setting- yet the direct and forceful style in which he expressed his thoughts undoubtedly give him a special niche among ethical writers. His magazine, "The

Light of Reason," was founded in 1902. It took hold of a large number of the thinking public at once, and its usefulness was assured. Immediately upon its publication, letters began to pour in from all parts of the kingdom, from all sorts and conditions of men and women asking for advice, for spiritual help and guidance. Later, when the magazine found its way to America, New Zealand, India, and the Far East, the correspondence became so heavy that for hours every day Mr. Allen did nothing but answer letters. In 1905 he established The Brotherhood, or School of Virtue, the central doctrine of which is the renunciation of self for the good of the world, and necessarily its corollary, the practice of divine love towards all creatures and beings. The rules of the Brotherhood are those principles of truth which the seekers after righteousness in all ages have adopted. Religions change from age to age, but the principles of divine virtue are eternally the same, and these principles are embodied in the rules of the Brotherhood. In June, 1910, "The Epoch" was started. With it is incorporated "The Light of Reason." It is edited by Mrs. Allen, and has a large and increasing sale in all parts of the world.

I have called James Allen a prophet of meditation, because meditation was one of the chief things he emphasized in his writings. He always urged that each man must learn the truth for himself. Reading books and accepting what is said as you may accept the food that is before you, is not enough. He points out in his book, "The Mastery of Destiny," that aspiration must be united to concentration, the result being meditation. When a man intensely desires to reach and realize a higher, purer, and more radiant life than the merely worldly and pleasure-loving life, he engages in aspiration, and when he earnestly concentrates his thoughts upon the finding of that life, he practices meditation.

Without intense aspiration, there can be no meditation. The more intense nature of a man, the more readily will he practice it. The meditative life is a child of the East, and though both preached and practiced by the Master, it is made conspicuous to-day by its absence from the habit of the great majority of religious people. The men who have had most influence in the world have been the spiritually developed men, and, therefore, spiritual development ought to be our chief aim. Spiritual development can only be obtained by meditation, which consist in bringing the mind to a focus in its search for the Divine knowledge, the Divine life; the intense dwelling in thought on Truth. The object of mediation is Diving enlightenment, the attainment, of truth, and is, therefore, interwoven with practical purity and righteousness. Thus, while at first the time spent in actual meditation is short -perhaps only half-an-hour in the early morning -the knowledge gained in that half-hour of vivid aspiration and concentration though is embodied in practice during the whole day. In meditation, therefore, the entire life of a man is involved; and as he advances in practice he becomes more and more fitted to perform the duties of life in the circumstances in which he may be placed, for he becomes stronger, holier, calmer, and wiser.

Many people think they are meditating when they are simply indulging in reverie or a brown study. This is fatal error. James Allen points out that reverie is a loose dreaming into which a man falls: meditation is a strong, purposeful thinking into which a man rises. Reverie is easy and pleasurable; meditation is a first difficult and irksome. Reverie thrives in indolence and luxury; meditation arises from strenuousness and discipline. Reverie is first alluring, then sensuous, and then sensual. Meditation is first forbidding, then profitable, and then peaceful. Reverie is

dangerous, it undermines self-control. Meditation is protective, it establishes self-control.

Now, James Allen shows that there are certain signs by which one can know whether he is engaging in reverie or meditation, and I think these will prove of interest. The indications of reverie are: A desire to avoid exertion; a desire to experience the pleasure of dreaming; an increasing distaste for one's worldly duties; a desire to shirk one's worldly responsibilities; fear of consequences; a wish to get money with as little effort as possible; lack of self-control. The indications of meditation are: Increase of both physical and mental energy; a strenuous striving after wisdom; a decrease in irksomeness in the performance of duty; a fixed determination to fulfill faithfully all worldly responsibilities; freedom from fear; indifference to riches; possession of self-control.

Of course, meditation is not possible under certain circumstances. The time, places and conditions in which James Allen considered meditation impossible are as follow: At, or immediately after, meals; in paces of pleasure; in crowded places; while walking rapidly; while lying in bed in the morning; while smoking. Here is a list of times, places, and conditions in which meditation is difficult: At night; in a luxuriously furnished room; while sitting on a soft, yielding seat; while wearing gay apparel; when in company; when the body is weary; if the body is given too much food.

The times, places, and conditions in which it is best to meditate are: Very early in the morning; immediately before meals; in solitude, in the open air, or in a plainly furnished room; while sitting on a hard seat; when the body is strong and vigorous; when the body is modestly and plainly clothed. The difficulty, of course, with the beginner is how to set about the practice of meditation. He may get

up in the morning to meditate, but presently his mind drifts on to one thing and another. Aspiration can often best be aroused and the mind renewed in meditation by the mental repetition of a lofty precept, a beautiful sentence, or a verse of poetry. Indeed, the mind that is ready for meditation will instinctively adopt this practice.

Murdo S. Carruthers

From Herald of the Star, March 1916.

Out From The Heart

1. The Heart and The Life

AS THE HEART, SO IS THE LIFE. The within IS ceaselessly becoming the without. Nothing remains unrevealed. That which is hidden is but for a time; it ripens and comes forth at last. Seed, tree, blossom, and fruit are the fourfold order of the universe. From the state of a man's heart proceed the conditions of his life. His thoughts blossom into deeds; and his deeds bear the fruitage of character and destiny.

Life is ever unfolding from within, and revealing itself to the light, and thoughts engendered in the heart at last reveal themselves in words, actions, and things accomplished.

As the fountain from the hidden spring, so flows forth a man's life from the secret recesses of his heart. All that he is and does is generated there. All that he will be and do will take its rise there.

Sorrow and happiness, suffering and enjoyment, fear and hope, hatred and love, ignorance and enlightenment, are nowhere but in the heart. They are solely mental conditions.

Man is the keeper of his heart; the watcher of his mind; the solitary guard of his citadel of life. As such, he can be diligent or negligent. He can keep his heart more and more carefully. He can more strenuously watch and purify his mind; and he can guard against the thinking of unrighteous thoughts—this is the way of enlightenment and bliss.

On the other hand, he can live loosely and carelessly, neglecting the supreme task of rightfully ordering his life—this is the way of self-delusion and suffering.

Let a man realize that life in its totality proceeds from the mind, and lo, the way of blessedness is opened up to him! For he will then discover that he possesses the power to rule his mind, and to fashion it in accordance with his Ideal. So will he elect to strongly and steadfastly walk those pathways of thought and action which are altogether excellent. To him, life will become beautiful and sacred; and sooner or later, he will put to flight all evil, confusion, and suffering. For it is impossible for a man to fall short of liberation, enlightenment, and peace, who guards with unwearying diligence the gateway of his heart.

2. The Nature and Power of Mind

MIND IS THE ARBITER of life. It is the creator and shaper of conditions, and the recipient of its own results. It contains within itself both the power to create illusion and to perceive reality. Mind is the infallible weaver of destiny. Thought is the thread, good and evil deeds are the "warp

and woof" or foundation, and the web, woven upon the loom of life, is character. Mind clothes itself in garments of its own making.

Man, as a mental being, possesses all the powers of mind, and is furnished with unlimited choice. He learns by experience, and he can accelerate or retard his experience. He is not arbitrarily bound at any point, but he has bound himself at many points, and having bound himself he can, when he chooses, liberate himself.

He can become bestial or pure, ignorant or noble, foolish or wise, just as he chooses. He can, by reoccurring practice, form habits, and he can, by renewed effort, break them off. He can surround himself with illusions until Truth is completely lost, and he can destroy each of those illusions until Truth is entirely recovered. His possibilities are endless; his freedom is complete.

It is the nature of the mind to create its own conditions, and to choose the states in which it shall dwell. It also has the power to alter any condition, to abandon any state. This it is continually doing as it gathers knowledge of state after state by repeated choice and exhaustive experience.

Inward processes of thought make up the sum of character and life. Man can modify and alter these processes by bringing will and effort to bear upon them. The bonds of habit, impotence, and sin are self-made, and can only be destroyed by one's self. They exist nowhere but in one's mind, and although they are directly related to outward things, they have no real existence in those things.

The outer is molded and animated by the inner, and never the inner by the outer. Temptation does not arise in the outer object, but in the lust of the mind for that object. Nor

do sorrow and suffering belong by nature to the external things and happenings of life, but in an undisciplined attitude of mind toward those things and happenings.

The mind that is disciplined by Purity and fortified by Wisdom avoids all those lusts and desires which are inseparately bound up with affliction, and so arrives at enlightenment and peace.

To condemn others as evil, and to curse at outside conditions as the source of evil, increases and does not lessen, the world's suffering and unrest. The outer is but the shadow and effect of the inner, and when the heart is pure all outward things are pure.

All growth and life is from within outward; all decay and death is from without inward. This is the universal law. All evolution proceeds from within. All adjustment must take place within. He who ceases to strive against others, and employs his powers in the transformation, regeneration, and development of his own mind, conserves his energies and preserves himself. And as he succeeds in harmonizing his own mind, he leads others by consideration and charity into a like blessed state.

The way of enlightenment and peace is not gained by assuming authority and guidance over other minds, but by exercising a lawful authority over one's own mind, and by guiding one's self in pathways of steadfast and lofty virtue.

A man's life proceeds from his heart and his mind. He has compounded that mind by his own thoughts and deeds. It is within his power to refashion that mind by his choice of thought. In this manner he can transform his life. Let us see how this is to be done.

3. Formation of Habit

EVERY ESTABLISHED mental condition is an acquired habit, and it has become such by continuous repetition of thought. Despondency and cheerfulness, anger and calmness, covetousness and generosity—indeed, all states of mind—are habits built up by choice, until they have become automatic. A thought constantly repeated at last becomes a fixed habit of the mind, and from such habits proceeds one's life.

It is in the nature of the mind to acquire knowledge by the repetition of its experiences. A thought which is very difficult, at first, to hold and dwell upon, at last becomes, by constantly being held in the mind, a natural and habitual practice.

A boy, when commencing to learn a trade, cannot even handle his tools right, much less use them correctly, but after long repetition and practice, he plies them with perfect ease and consummate skill. Likewise, a state of mind, at first apparently incapable of realization, is, by perseverance and practice, at last acquired and built into the character as a natural and spontaneous condition.

In this power of the mind to form and reform its habits, its conditions, is contained the basis of a man's salvation. It is the open door to perfect liberty by the mastery of self. For as a man has the power to form harmful habits, so he equally has the same power to create habits that are essentially good. And here we come to a point which needs some clarifying, and which calls for deep and earnest thought on the part of my reader.

It is commonly said to be easier to do wrong than right, to sin than to be holy. Such a condition has come to be regarded, almost universally, as a self-evident truth.

No less a teacher than the Buddha has said: "Bad deeds, and deeds hurtful to ourselves, are easy to do; what is beneficial and good, that is very difficult to do."

And with regards to humanity generally, this is true, but it is only true as a passing experience, a fleeting factor in human evolution. It is not a fixed condition of things. It is not the nature of an eternal truth. It is easier for men to do wrong than right, because of the prevalence of ignorance, because the true nature of things, and the essence and meaning of life, are not understood.

When a child is learning to write, it is extremely easy to hold the pen wrongly, and to form his letters incorrectly, but it is painfully difficult to hold the pen and to write properly. This is because of the child's ignorance of the art of writing, which can only be dispelled by persistent effort and practice, until, at last, it becomes natural and easy to hold the pen correctly, and difficult, as well as altogether unnecessary, to do the wrong thing.

It is the same in the vital things of mind and life. To think and do rightly requires much practice and renewed effort. But the time comes at last when it becomes habitual and easy to think and do rightly, and difficult, as it is then seen to be altogether unnecessary, to do that which is wrong.

Just as an artisan becomes, by practice, accomplished in his craft, so you can become, by practice, accomplished in goodness. It is entirely a matter of forming new habits of thought. And he to whom right thoughts have become easy and natural, and wrong thoughts and acts difficult to do,

has attained to the highest virtue, to pure spiritual knowledge.

It is easy and natural for men to sin because they have formed by incessant repetition, harmful and unenlightened habits of thought. It is very difficult for the thief to refrain from stealing when the opportunity occurs, because he has lived so long in covetous and greedy thoughts.

But such difficulty does not exist for the honest man who has lived so long with upright and honest thoughts. He has thereby become so enlightened as to the wrong, folly, and fruitlessness of theft, that even the remotest idea of stealing does not enter his mind. The sin of theft is a very extreme one, and I have introduced it in order to more clearly illustrate the force and formation of habit. But all sins and virtues are formed in the same way.

Anger and impatience are natural and easy to thousands of people, because they are constantly repeating angry and impatient thoughts and acts. And with each repetition the habit is more firmly established and more deeply rooted.

Calmness and patience can become habitual in the same way—by first grasping through effort, a calm and patient thought, and then continuously thinking it, and living in it, until "use becomes second nature," and anger and impatience pass away forever. It is in this manner that every wrong thought may be expelled from the mind; that every untrue act may be destroyed; that every sin may be overcome.

4. Doing and Knowing

LET A MAN REALIZE that his life, in its totality, proceeds from his mind. Let him realize that the mind is a combination of habits which he can, by patient effort, modify to any extent, and over which he can thus gain complete ascendancy, mastery, and control. At once, he will have obtained possession of the key which shall open the door to his complete emancipation.

But freedom from the ills of life (which are the ills of one's mind) is a matter of steady growth from within, and not a sudden acquisition from without. Hourly and daily must the mind be trained to think stainless thoughts, and adapt right and dispassionate attitudes under those circumstances in which it is prone to fall into wrong and passion. Like the patient sculptor upon his marble, the aspirant to the Right Life must gradually work upon the crude material of his mind until he has wrought out of it the Ideal of his holiest dreams.

In working toward such supreme accomplishment, it is necessary to begin at the lowest and easiest steps, and proceed by natural, progressive stages to the higher and more difficult. This law of growth, progress, evolution, and unfoldment, by gradual and ever ascending stages, is absolute in every department of life, and in every human accomplishment. Where it is ignored, total failure will result.

In acquiring education, in learning a trade, or in pursuing a business, this law is fully recognized and minutely obeyed by all. But in acquiring Virtue, in learning Truth, and in pursuing the right conduct and knowledge of life, it is unrecognized and disobeyed by nearly all. Hence Virtue, Truth, and the Perfect Life remain unpracticed, unacquired, and unknown.

It is a common error to suppose that the Higher Life is a matter of reading, and the adoption of theological or metaphysical hypotheses, and that Spiritual Principles can be understood by this method. The Higher Life is higher living in thought, word, and deed, and the knowledge of those Spiritual Principles which are imminent in man and in the universe can only be acquired after long discipline in the pursuit and practice of Virtue.

The lesser must be thoroughly grasped and understood before the greater can be known. Practice always precedes real knowledge.

The schoolmaster never attempts to teach his pupils the abstract principles of mathematics at the start. He knows that such a method of teaching would be in vain, and learning impossible. He first places before them a simple sum, and, having explained it, leaves them to do it. When, after repeated failures and ever renewed effort, they have succeeded in doing it correctly, a more difficult task is set before them, and then another and another. It is not until the pupils have, through many years of diligent application, mastered all the lessons in arithmetic, that he attempts to unfold to them the underlying mathematical principles.

In learning a trade, say that of a mechanic, a boy is not at first taught the principles of mechanics, but a simple tool is put in his hand and he is told how rightly to use it. He is then left to do it by effort and practice. As he succeeds in plying his tools correctly, more and more difficult tasks are set before him, until after several years of successful practice, he is prepared to study and grasp the principles of mechanics.

In a properly governed household, the child is first taught to be obedient, and to conduct himself properly under all

circumstances. The child is not even told why he must do this, but is commanded to do it. Only after he has far succeeded in doing what is right and proper, is he told why he should do it. No father would attempt to teach his child the principles of ethics before exacting from him the practice of family duty and social virtue.

Thus practice ever precedes knowledge even in the ordinary things of the world, and in spiritual things, in the living of the Higher Life, this law is rigid in its demands.

Virtue can only be known by doing, and the knowledge of Truth can only be arrived at by perfecting oneself in the practice of Virtue. To be complete in the practice and acquisition of Virtue is to be complete in the knowledge of Truth.

Truth can only be arrived at by daily and hourly doing the lessons of Virtue, beginning with the simplest, and passing on to the more difficult. A child patiently and obediently learns his lessons at school by constantly practicing, ever exerting himself until all failures and difficulties are surmounted. Likewise does the child of Truth, undaunted by failure, and made stronger by difficulties, apply himself to rightdoing in thought and action. As he succeeds in acquiring Virtue, his mind unfolds itself in the knowledge of Truth, and it is a knowledge in which he can securely rest.

5. First Steps in The Higher Life

SEEING THAT THE PATH OF VIRTUE is the Path of Knowledge, and that before the all-embracing Principles of Truth can be comprehended, perfection in the more lowly steps must be acquired, how, then, shall a disciple of Truth begin?

How shall one who aspires to the righting of his mind and the purification of his heart—that heart which is the fountain and repository of all the issues of life—learn the lessons of Virtue? How does he thus build himself up in the strength of knowledge, destroying ignorance and the ills of life? What are the first lessons, the first steps? How are they learned? How are they practiced? How are they mastered and understood?

The first lessons consist in overcoming those wrong mental conditions which are most easily eradicated, and which are the common barriers to spiritual progress, as well as in practicing the simple domestic and social virtues. The reader will be better aided if I group and classify the first ten steps in three lessons as follows: Vices of the Body to be Overcome and Eradicated

(First Lesson: Discipline of the Body)

1st step: Idleness, Laziness or Indolence

2nd step: Self-Indulgence or Gluttony

(Second Lesson: Discipline of Speech)

3rd step: Slander

4th step: Gossip and Idle Conversation

5th step: Abusive and Unkind Speech

6th step: Frivolity or Irreverent Speech

7th step: Critical, Captious or Fault-finding Speech

(Third Lesson: Discipline of Tendencies)

8th step: Unselfish Performance of Duty

9th step: Unswerving Rectitude or Moral Integrity

10th step: Unlimited Forgiveness

The two vices of the body, and the five of the tongue, are so called because they are manifested in the body and tongue. Also, by so definitely classifying them, the mind of the reader will be better helped. But it must be clearly understood that these vices arise primarily in the mind, and are wrong conditions of the heart worked out in the body and the tongue.

The existence of such chaotic conditions is an indication that the mind is altogether unenlightened as to the real meaning and purpose of life, and their eradication is the beginning of a virtuous, steadfast, and enlightened life.

But how shall these vices be overcome and eradicated? By first, and at once, checking and controlling their outward manifestations and by suppressing the wrong act. This will stimulate the mind to watchfulness and reflection until, by repeated practice, it will come to perceive and understand the dark, wrong, and erroneous conditions of mind, out of which such acts spring. It will then abandon them entirely.

It will be seen that the first step in the discipline of the mind is the overcoming of indolence or laziness. This is the easiest step, and until it is perfectly accomplished, the other steps cannot be taken. The clinging to indolence constitutes a complete barrier to the Path of Truth. Indolence consists in giving the body more ease and sleep than it requires, in procrastinating, and in shirking and neglecting those things which should receive immediate attention.

This condition of laziness must be overcome by rousing up the body at an early hour, giving it just the amount of sleep it requires for complete recuperation, and by doing

promptly and vigorously, every task, every duty, no matter how small, as it comes along.

On no account should food or drink be taken in bed. And to lie in bed after one has awakened, indulging in ease and reverie, is a habit fatal to promptness and resolution of character, and purity of mind. Nor should one attempt to do his thinking at such a time. Strong, pure, and true thinking is impossible under such circumstances. A man should go to bed to sleep, not to think. He should get up to think and work, not to sleep.

The next step is the overcoming of self-indulgence or gluttony. The glutton is he who eats for animal gratification only, without considering the true end and object of eating. He eats more than his body requires, and is greedy after sweet things and rich dishes.

Such undisciplined desire can only be overcome by reducing the quantity of food eaten, and the number of meals per day, and by resorting to a simple and uninvolved diet. Regular hours should be set apart for meals, and eating at other times should be rigidly avoided. Suppers should be abolished, as they are altogether unnecessary, and promote heavy sleep and cloudiness of mind.

The pursuit of such a method of discipline will rapidly bring the once ungoverned appetite under control, and as the sensual sin of self-indulgence is taken out of the mind, the right selection of foods will be instinctively and infallibly adapted to the purified mental condition.

It should be well borne in mind that a change of heart is the needful thing, and that any change of diet which does not promote this end is futile. When one eats for

enjoyment, he is gluttonous. The heart must be purified of sensual craving and gustatory lust.

When the body is well controlled and firmly guided; when that which is to be done is done vigorously; when no task or duty is delayed; when early rising has become a delight; when frugality, simplicity, temperance, and abstinence are firmly established; when one is contented with the food which is put before him, no matter how scanty and plain, and the craving for gustatory pleasure is at an end—then the first two steps in the Higher Life are accomplished. Then is the first great lesson in Truth learned. Thus is established in the heart the foundation of a poised, self-governed, virtuous life.

The next lesson is the lesson of Virtuous Speech, in which there are five orderly steps. The first of these is overcoming the habit of slanderous speech. Slander consists of inventing or repeating unkind and evil reports about others, in exposing and magnifying the faults of others, or of absent friends, and in introducing unworthy insinuations. The elements of thoughtlessness, cruelty, insincerity, and untruthfulness enter into every slanderous act.

He who aims at the living of the right life will commence to check the cruel word of slander before it has gone forth from his lips. He will then check and eliminate the insincere thought which gave rise to it.

He will watch that he does not vilify or defame anyone. He will refrain from disparaging, defaming, and condemning the absent friend, whose face he has so recently smiled into or kissed, or whose hand he has shaken. He will not say of another that which he dare not say to his face. Thus, coming at last to think sacredly of the character and