

In brief, it will banish an altruism wrung from somber doctrines, from cheated hearts, and poverty-stricken lives. It will set forth, instead, that splendid altruism which overflows in the soul who has self-sought and self-earned an individual independence and an individually happy love life.

Happiness is the most irresistible teacher of goodness on earth or in heaven. The example of one rationally happy being is farther reaching and more enduring than volumes of precept. Such a man or woman is the most potent factor for healthful development to be found on earth.

As a man thinks, so is he, and so does he labor. The soul who has climbed to the summit, who has reached the goal, who has attained his heart's desire, is the one and only mortal properly equipped to teach the gospel of happiness to an ignorant and sorrowing world. He is the only individual rightly conditioned to furnish both example and precept.

Thus it is that only such as have reached the stage of an individual completion, are prepared to give themselves wholly and joyously to the task of teaching mankind. The man and woman who have together proved the law of love, and whose individual happiness is completed in each other, have no other will nor desire than Altruism.

Such a pair might well say, "Our mission is to teach the science of love as a law of fulfillment here and hereafter. Our pleasure is to present a philosophy of life, which, if accepted, shall hasten the fulfilling of the law in other lives. Our highest purpose and happiest occupation are to serve you and yours in this present earthly life, and also in the life to come."

TO KNOW, TO DARE, AND TO DO.

This philosophy of individual life is, therefore, something more than a compilation of scientific fact or an array of intellectual opinion, to be lightly scanned and soon forgotten. On the contrary, it is an array of fact and a declaration of principle which call for immediate investigation and immediate action.

This is a philosophy of action, as well as of introspection. It means the doing of that which is practical, as well as a contemplation of that which is ethical. It calls for the exercise of reason and the practice of principles, as well as the indulgence of the emotions and development of the æsthetic tastes. It looks to knowledge and goodness, as well as to culture and refinement. It means more than thinking or speculating or believing. It is living and learning and doing. It is a *life*, not a creed.

This philosophy is essentially a philosophy of this life, rather than of a life to come. It fixes upon a noble earthly life as the gateway to the splendors of a higher life. It includes a practical effort to refine the physical body and to control abnormal physical appetites and passions. It means cultivation of the spiritual faculties, opening to life a perception of the order and harmony and beauty of the spiritual side of Nature. It means psychical development, and equal and steady exercise of the intelligent soul in the acquirement of knowledge and the practices of love.

As previously explained, the philosophy here presented represents the modern masters of the law. It therefore stands for a later and larger interpretation of Nature, of life, of love and of duty.

This is not a philosophy of negation, of self-suppression, self-sacrifice, nor resignation. On the contrary, it is distinctly a philosophy of affirmation, self-development, self-importance and self-satisfaction. It is the philosophy of fulfillment and not of resignation.

This interpretation of man, of his relation to Nature, and to his fellow man, leaves no basis for stoicism. It removes all ground for extreme austerities and self-chastisement. Indeed, it teaches none of those sad and benumbing doctrines of the ancient East which belittle the importance of physical and material development, which renounce the sweetness of individual love, and point to an absorption in the universal intelligence as the final "Place of Peace."

The philosophy of this later time is, indeed, the dawning of a new day in the intellectual and ethical life of the world.

Later authorities wisely hold that stoicism and austerities, if ever necessary, belong to an age long past. Stoicism, indeed, is Will without Desire. It is courage without hope. It is learning without wisdom, sacrifice without purpose, effort without gain,—it is man without woman, and life without love.

Physical austerities are less important than the exercise of psychical powers. The refinement of the physical body is better achieved through the right activities of the soul than through processes of digestion. Rigid austerities have no place in the life whose rule and guide are temperance and self-control.

This philosophy accepts this earthly life, and this physical body with all of its functions, as a necessary, important and legitimate part of the destiny of the soul. It, therefore, enjoins an earthly life well sustained and well rounded in all of its activities and relations. The individual is not admonished to "lose himself in the Universal," but rather to find himself in a particular world of actualities. Earthly life is not presented here as an illusion of the senses, but as a very real and tangible opportunity for the intelligent soul.

Instead of stoicism it teaches courage. It inculcates unselfishness rather than sacrifice. It commands temperance and not asceticism. It enjoins patience instead of resignation; for true living is a state of progress and fulfillment, irrespective of the external conditions of this earthly life.

If this initial volume of the law seems to ignore ultimates, it is because those individual relations and activities this side of ultimates have been too much neglected. Where it fails to dwell upon a remote "Nirvana" it enlarges upon the immediate present. If it does not portray the final "Place of Peace," it does point to a present home of happiness. Earth life is a privilege and not a penalty. The purpose of earth life is not to find a heaven, but to make one. Religion is not a matter of duty to God, but of duty of man to himself and to his fellow man.

Whoever has the Intelligence to *know*, the Courage to *dare*, and the Perseverance to *do*, may understand, accept and prove this philosophy. To such an one the yoke is easy and the burden is light.

Such is the true philosophy of life, the philosophy of present action and of future hope. Nature thus interpreted and life thus lived, illuminate the word "evolution" with a new meaning and a new purpose.

Such a philosophy restores Nature to its true position as the Father-Mother of life, intelligence and love. It advances individual life to new and splendid possibilities. It looks to individual happiness as the normal destiny of the soul. It clears the mists from physical science, and unravels the confusion of a moral philosophy based upon physical materialism. It extends the limitations of Nature and of recognized science, from the physical to the spiritual planes of life and activity. It gives to science a motive for its knowledge and to religion a reason for its faith.

It extends the sphere of man from a world of physical functions and physical activities, to a world of spiritual functions and psychical activities. It extends individual destiny beyond a present contribution to species, or a future contribution to the soil of Mother Earth. It lays the terrors of loneliness and death. It banishes the shadow of annihilation. It opens to the soul unmeasured possibilities. It guarantees an individual completion through individual love, and a permanent happiness here and hereafter.

It makes of each individual man and woman a natural heir to all the beneficences of Nature and of Nature's God.

END OF VOLUME I.



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