Thoughts are Things

Essays Selected From
The White Cross Library

by

Prentice Mulford
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Thoughts are Things

by

Prentice Mulford
Go speed the stars of thought
On to their shining goals.
The sower scatters broad his seed,
The wheat thou strew'est, souls.

~ R.W. Emerson
Although Prentice Mulford was one of the earliest pioneers of the New Thought teaching, he is still comparatively little known or read in this country, chiefly on account of the high price of the six volumes known as "The White Cross Library," in which form his Essays are published in America; and it is hoped that this short selection of his Essays will be the means of bringing his teaching within the reach of those, especially, who are able to purchase only few, or inexpensive books.

The complete series contains seventy-two Essays treating, from various points of view, man's spiritual and physical life, and it has not been altogether easy to choose from such a wealth of original and suggestive thought, those essays which will best appeal to the average reader. The selection has been made with the view chiefly of presenting such as seen likely to be specially practical and helpful. The text is printed as it was left by the author, except for the alteration of some American expressions and a few awkward sentences, in which the meaning was obscure.

Readers who become interested in an author's writings naturally like to know the main facts of his life, so it may be briefly stated here that Prentice Mulford was born at Long Island, U.S.A, in 1834, and died in 1891. After a life, not without some adventures, during which he was engaged in such varied pursuits as mining, school-teaching and finally journalism, he retired from work with a scanty fortune. Five years afterwards, he passed peacefully away, without apparent illness or pain, having just started on a cruise alone in his canoe.

It was during these five years, that he concentrated his attention on the Spiritual Laws, and published his thoughts about
them. To many, these thoughts may seem dreams; to others, they are priceless truths. To criticize his ideas and assertions is not our wish here, though it would not be difficult to point out discrepancies and inconsistencies which, however, do not affect the value of his general teaching.

That he is a wise teacher and no dogmatist is apparent from his own words, "In the spiritual life, every person is his or her own discoverer, and you need not grieve, if your discoveries are not believed by others. It is your business to push on, find more, and increase individual happiness."

To him, at any rate, is due the credit of having been a pioneer in the thought which is now influencing people throughout the world - and his influence is very apparent in the writings of all teachers of the same school who followed him.

~ J.W.~
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There belongs to every human being a higher-self and a lower-self; a self or mind of the spirit, which has been growing for ages, and a self of the body, which is but a thing of yesterday. The higher-self is full of prompting idea, suggestion and aspiration. This, it receives of the Supreme Power. All this, the lower- or “animal-self” regards as wild and visionary. The higher-self argues possibilities and power for us greater than men and women now possess and enjoy. The lower-self says we can only live and exist as men and women have lived and existed before us. The higher-self craves freedom from the cumbrousness, the limitations, the pains and disabilities of the body. The lower-self says that we are born to them; born to ill, born to suffer and must suffer, as have so many before us. The higher-self wants a standard for right and wrong, of its own. The lower-self says we must accept a standard made for us by others - by general and long-held opinion, belief and prejudice.

"To thine own self be true" is an oft-uttered adage. But to which self? The higher or lower?

You have, in a sense, two minds - the mind of the body and the mind of the spirit.

Spirit is a force and a mystery. All we know or may ever know of it is that it exists and is ever working and producing all results in physical things, seen of physical sense - and many more not so seen.
~ Thoughts are Things ~

What is seen, of any object - a tree, an animal, a stone, a man - is only a part of that tree, animal, stone or man. There is a force which, for a time, binds such objects together in the form you see them. That force is always acting upon them, to a greater or lesser degree. It builds up the flower to its fullest maturity. Its cessation to act on the flower or tree causes what we call “decay.” It is constantly changing the shape of all forms of what are called “organized matter.” An animal, a plant, a human being are not in physical shape this month or this year what they will be next month or next year.

This ever-acting, ever-varying force, which lies behind and, in a sense, creates all forms of matter - we call, “spirit.”

To see, reason and judge of life and things in the knowledge of this force makes what is termed the “spiritual mind.”

We have, through knowledge, the wonderful power of using or directing this force, when we recognize it and know that it exists, so as to bring us health, happiness and eternal peace of mind. Composed as we are of this force, we are ever attracting more of it to us and making it a part of our being.

With more of this force must come more and more knowledge. At first in our physical existences, we allow it to work blindly. Then we are in the ignorance of that condition known as the material mind. But as mind, through its growth or increase of this power, becomes more and more awakened, it asks, “Why comes so much of pain, grief and disappointment in the physical life?” Why do we seem born to suffer and decay?”

That question is the first awakening cry of the spiritual mind - and an earnest question or demand for knowledge must, in time, be answered.

The material mind is a part of yourself, which has been appropriated by the body and educated by the body. It is as if you taught a child that the wheels of a steamboat made the boat move and said nothing of the steam, which gives the real power. Bred in such ignorance, the child, should the wheels stop moving, would look no farther for the cause of their stoppage than to try to find where to repair them, very much as now so many depend entirely on repair of the physical body to ensure its healthy, vigorous movement, never dreaming that the imperfection lies in the real motive power - the mind.

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The mind of the body (or material mind) sees, thinks and judges entirely from the material or physical standpoint. It sees in your own body all there is of you. The spiritual mind sees the body as an instrument for the mind or real-self to use in dealing with material things. The material mind sees, in the death of the body, an end of all there is of you. The spiritual mind sees, in the death of the body, only the falling off from the spirit of a worn-out instrument. It knows that you exist as before, only invisible to the physical eye. The material mind sees your physical strength as coming entirely from your muscles and sinews, and not from any source without your body. It sees in such, persuasive power, as you may have with tongue or pen, the only force you possess for dealing with people to accomplish results.

The spiritual mind will know, in time, that your thought influences people - for or against your interests - though their bodies are thousands of miles distant. The material mind does not regard its thought as an actual element, as real as air or water. The spiritual mind knows that every one of its thousand daily secret thoughts are real things, acting on the minds of the persons they are sent to. The spiritual mind knows that matter or the material is only an expression of spirit or force; that such matter is ever-changing, in accordance with the spirit that makes or externalizes itself in the form we call “matter” - and therefore, if the thought of health, strength and recuperation is constantly held to in the mind, such thought of health, strength and rejuvenation will express itself in the body, making maturity never-ceasing; vigor, never-ending; and the keenness of every physical sense, ever-increasing.

The material mind thinks matter, or that which is known by our physical senses, to be the largest part of what exists. The spiritual mind regards matter as the coarser or cruder expression of spirit and the smallest part of what really exists. The material mind is made sad at the contemplation of decay. The spiritual mind attaches little importance to decay, knowing in such decay that spirit, or the moving force in all things, is simply taking the dead body or the rotten tree to pieces and that it will build them up again as before, temporarily into some other new physical form of life and beauty. The mind of the body thinks that its physical senses of seeing, hearing and feeling constitute all the
senses you possess. The higher mind or mind of the spirit knows that it possesses other senses akin to those of physical sight and hearing, but more powerful and far-reaching.

The mind of the body has been variously termed the “material mind,” the “mortal mind” and the “carnal mind.” All these refer to the same mind or, in other words, to that part of your real self, which has been educated in error by the body.

If you had been born and bred entirely among people who believed that the earth was a flat surface and did not revolve around the sun, you would, in the earlier years of your physical growth, believe as they did. Exactly in such fashion do you, in your earlier years, absorb the thought and belief of those nearest you, who think that the body is all there is of them, and judge of everything by its physical interpretation to them. This makes your material mind.

The material mind, seeing what seems to it depth, dissolution and decay in all human organization, and ignorant of the fact that the real self or intelligence has, in such seeming death, only cast off a worn-out envelope, thinks that decay and death is the ultimate of all humanity. For such reason, it cannot avoid a gloom or sadness coming of such error, which now pervades so much of human life, at present. One result or reaction from such gloom born of hopelessness is a reckless spirit for getting every possible gratification and pleasure, regardless of right and justice, so long as the present body lasts.

This is a great mistake. All pleasure so gained cannot be lasting. It brings, besides, a hundred-fold more misery and disappointment.

The spiritual mind teaches that pleasure is the great aim of existence. But it points out ways and means for gaining lasting happiness, other than those coming of the teaching of the material mind. The spiritual mind, or mind opened to higher and newer forces of life, teaches that there is a law regulating the exercise of every physical sense. When we learn and follow this law, our gratifications and possessions do not prove sources of greater pain than happiness, as they do to so many.

By the spiritual mind is meant a clearer mental sight of things and forces existing both in us and the Universe, and of which the race, for the most part, has been in total ignorance. We have now

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but a glimpse of these forces, those of some being relatively a little clearer than those of others. But enough has been shown to convince a few that the real and existing causes for humanity's sickness, sorrow and disappointment have not, in the past, been seen at all. In other words, the race has been as children, fancying that the miller inside was turning the arms of the windmill, because some person had so told them. So taught, they would remain in total ignorance that the wind was the motive power.

This illustration is not at all an overdrawn picture of the existing ignorance, which rejects the idea that thought is an element all about us, as plentiful as air and that, as blindly directed by individuals and masses of individuals in the domain of material mind or ignorance, it is turning the windmill's arms, sometimes in one direction, sometimes in another; sometimes with good and sometimes with evil results.

A suit of clothes is not the body that wears such suit. Yet the material mind reasons very much in this way. It knows of no such thing as clothing for the spirit, for it does not know that body and spirit are two distinct things. It reasons that the suit of clothing (the body) is all there is of the man or woman. When that man or woman tumbles to pieces through weakness, it sees only the suit of clothes so going to pieces, and all its efforts to make that man or woman stronger are put on the suit, instead of making effort to reinforce the power within, which has made the suit.

There are probably no two individuals precisely alike, as regards the relative condition or action upon them of their material and spiritual minds. With some, the spiritual seems not at all awakened. With others, it has begun to stretch and rub its eyes, as a person does on physical awakening, when everything still appears vague and indistinct. Others are more fully awakened. They feel, to a greater or lesser extent, that there are forces belonging to them, before unthought of. It is with such that the struggle for mastery between the material and spiritual mind is likely to be most severe, and such struggle, for a time, is likely to be accompanied by physical disturbance, pain or lack of ease.

The material mind is, until won over and convinced of the truths constantly received by the spiritual mind, at war and in opposition to it. The ignorant part of yourself dislikes very much
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to give up its long-accustomed habits of thinking. It costs a struggle, in any case, at first, to own that we have been mistaken, and give up views long held-to.

The material mind wants to move on in a rut of life and idea, as it always has done and as thousands are now doing. It dislikes change, more and more, as the crust of the old thought held from year-to-year grows more thickly over it. It wants to live on and on in the house it has inhabited for years; dress in the fashion of the past; go to business, and return year in and year out, at precisely the same hour. It rejects and despises, after a certain age, the idea of learning any new accomplishments, such as painting or music, whose greatest use is to divert the mind, rest it and enable you to live in other departments of being; all this being apart from the pleasure also given you, as the mind or spirit teaches the body more and more skill and expertness in the art you pursue.

The material mind sees as the principal use of any art only a means to bring money and not, in such art, a means for giving variety to life, dispelling weariness, resting that portion of the mind devoted to other business, improving health and increasing vigor of mind and body. It holds to the idea of being "too old to learn."

This is the condition of so many persons who have arrived at or are past "middle age." They want to "settle down." They accept as inevitable the idea of "growing old." Their material mind tells them that their bodies must gradually weaken; shrink from the fullness and proportion of youth; decay and finally die.

Material minds say this always has been and therefore always must be. They accept the idea, wholly. They say, quite unconsciously, "It must be."

To say a thing must be is the very power that makes it. The material mind then sees the body ever as gradually decaying, even though it dislikes the picture and puts it out of sight, as much as possible. But the idea will recur, from time to time, as suggested by the death of their contemporaries, and as it does, they think, "must" - and that state of mind, indicated by the word "must," will inevitably bring material results in decay.

The spiritual or more enlightened mind says, "If you would help to drive away sickness, turn your thought, as much as you
can, on *health, strength and vigor* and on *strong, healthy, vigorous* material things, such as moving clouds, fresh breezes, the cascade, the ocean surge; on woodland scenes and growing healthy trees; on birds full of life and motion - for in so doing, you turn onto yourself a real current of this healthy life-giving thought, which is suggested and brought to you by the thought of such vigorous, strong material objects.

And above all, try to rely and trust that Supreme Power, which formed all these things and far more and which is the endless and inexhaustible part of your higher-self or spiritual mind; and as your faith increases in this Power, so will your own power ever increase.

“Nonsense!” says the ultra-material mind. “If my body is sick, I must have something done to cure that body, with things I can see and feel - and that is the only thing to be done. As for thinking, it makes no difference what I think - sick or well.”

At present, in such a case, a mind whose sense of these truths is new to it, has just commenced to be awakened and will, in many cases, allow itself to be, for a time, overpowered and ridiculed out of such an idea by its own material mind or uneducated part of itself; and in this, it is very likely to be assisted by other material minds, who have not woken up at all to these truths and who are, temporarily, all the stronger through the positiveness of ignorance. These are as people who cannot see as far ahead as one may with a telescope and who may be perfectly honest in their disbelief, regarding what the person with the telescope does see. Though such people do not speak a word or argue against the belief of the partly awakened mind, still their thought acts on such a mind as a bar or blind to these glimpses of the truth.

But when the spiritual mind has once commenced to awaken, nothing can stop its further waking, though the material may, for a time, retard it.

“Your real self may not, at times, be where your body is,” says the spiritual mind. It is where your *mind* is - in the store, the office, the workshop or with some person to whom you are strongly attached - and all of these may be in towns or cities far from the one your body resides in. Your real self moves with inconceivable rapidity, as your thought moves. “Nonsense,” says
your material mind. I, myself, am wherever my body is and nowhere else.”

Many a thought or idea that you reject as “visionary” or as a whim or fancy comes of the prompting of your spiritual mind. It is your material mind that rejects it.

No such idea comes but that there is a truth in it. But that truth, we may not be able to carry out to a relative perfection immediately. Two hundred years ago, some mind may have seen the use of steam as a motive power. But that motive power could not then have been carried out, as it is today. A certain previous growth was necessary - a growth and improvement in the manufacture of iron, in the construction of roads and in the needs of the people.

But the idea was a truth. Held to by various minds, it has brought steam, as a motive power, to its present relative perfection. It has struggled against and overcome every argument and obstacle placed in its way by dull, material, plodding minds. When you entertain any idea, and say to yourself, in substance, “Well, such-a-thing may be - though I cannot now see it,” you remove a great barrier to the carrying out and realization by yourself of the new and strange possibilities in store for you.

The spiritual mind today sees, belonging to itself, a power for accomplishing any and all results in the physical world, greater than the masses dream of. It sees that, as regards life's possibilities, we are still in dense ignorance. It sees, however, a few things - namely, perfect health; freedom from decay, weakness and death of the body; power of transit, travel and observation, independent of the body; and methods for obtaining all needful and desirable material things, through the action and working of silent mind or thought, either singly or in cooperation with others.

The condition of mind to be desired is the entire dominancy of the spiritual mind. But this does not imply dominancy or control in any sense of tyrannical mastership of the material mind by the spiritual mind. It does imply that the material mind will be swept away, so far as its stubborn resistance and opposition to the promptings of the spiritual are concerned. It implies that the body will become the willing servant, or rather assistant, of the spirit. It implies that the material mind will not endeavor to act
itself up as the superior, when it is only the inferior. It implies that state when the body will gladly lend its co-operation to all the desires of the spiritual mind.

Then all power can be given your spirit. Then no force need be expended in resisting the hostility of the material mind. Then all such force will be used to further our undertakings; to bring us material goods; to raise us higher and higher into realms of power, peace and happiness; to accomplish what now would be called “miracles.”

Neither the material mind nor the material body is to be won over and merged into the spiritual by any course of severe self-censure or self-denial; nor self-punishment, in expiation for sins committed; nor asceticism. That will only make you the more harsh, severe, bigoted and merciless, both to yourself and others. It is out of this perversion of the truth that have arisen such terms as “crucifying the body” and “subjugating the lower or animal mind.” It is from this perversion that have come orders and associations of men and women who, going to another extreme, seek holiness in self-denial and penance.

“Holiness” implies wholeness - or whole action of the spirit on the body, or perfect control by your spirit over a body, through knowledge and faith in our capacity to draw ever more and more from the Supreme Power.
Who Are Our Relations?

The man or woman who, if most like you in tastes, motives and habits of thought, and to whom you feel most attracted, may not be brother, sister, cousin or any physical relative, at all. But such person is - to you - a very near relation.

Your brothers or sisters may not be like you at all in mind, taste and inclination. You may associate with them, because they are members of the family, but were you not to know them as brothers, sisters or other relatives, or were you to see elsewhere their exact counterparts in character, you might not like such counterparts at all.

Physical or “blood relationship” has very little bearing on the real or mental relationship. It is possible for a brother or sister, a father or mother to be very closely allied to you in thought and sympathy. Again, it is possible for a father or mother, brother or sister, to be very remote from you in thought and sympathy and to live in a realm or atmosphere of thought very unlike yours.

You can live neither healthfully nor comfortably, unless with those whose thought-atmosphere (a literal emanation from them) is similar to your own. Physical relationship may or may not furnish such an atmosphere. Compel a laboring man, whose thought goes little beyond his eating, drinking and daily round of work,
to live exclusively with a company of artists and philosophers, seeing none of his own kind and order of thought, and that man's spirits would, in time, be depressed, and his health would suffer. The same law works when the superior mind is compelled to constant association with the inferior. Such may be your position among physical relatives.

Children live, thrive and are exhilarated by the thought-atmosphere emanating from their playmates. Cut them entirely off from such association, and they droop. As a child, you lived in this atmosphere of childhood; that is, you lived in the spiritual relationship of childhood, and regarding a certain playful thought-nutriment, received it and also gave it to your playmates. You may wonder now why you cannot arouse the old feeling and exhilaration coming either from the associations of childhood or youth. It is because your spirit requires another thought-food or atmosphere, which only another and probably higher order of mind can give. That received, and time would pass as quickly and pleasantly as it did with the associates of your earlier physical existence.

Those who can furnish it are your real relations. But such relationship cannot exist, unless you can furnish them with the same quality of thought, in return.

The real or spiritual relations of many merchants, mechanics and those of other callings are their brother merchants, mechanics or those of similar occupations. They prove this by their lives. They feel more at home with those whose business is like their own than they do in the places they may call home, to which they resort to eat, sleep, and spend often a tiresome Sunday, longing for Monday's coming and the more welcome life of the market-stall and store. Because there, they are amongst their real relations and are being literally led and stimulated by the thought-atmosphere furnished them by these relatives, which they also furnish, in turn.

Every order of mind or quality of thought must have association with a corresponding order of mind and quality of thought, or it will suffer. But blood relationship has little to do with furnishing such order of thought.

There is a vast amount of unconscious tyranny exercised through the ties of physical relationship. Children often, when
grown up, place the mothers or fathers in their minds in a sphere and method of life where they may or may not care to belong. Then thought - seldom if ever expressed - runs in substance, thus: "Mother is getting too old to wear bright colors. She must dress more subdued." "It is ridiculous for mother (if a widow) to marry again," (very hard cash reasons sometimes entering into this sentiment). "Mother, of course, does not want to enter into our gayer life, so she can stay at home, and take care of the children." or, "It is time father retired from business," or, "Father's idea of marrying again is ridiculous."

No force is more subtle in its workings, nor more powerful to bring results for good or ill, than the steady output of thought from one or several minds combined, on one person, to effect some desired result - and whether this is done intelligently and consciously or blindly, the force works the same result.

Now, a continual flow of this kind of thought, coming from possibly three or four minds, to whom "Mother" was instrumental in furnishing new bodies, and continually directed on "Mother," is a very powerful force, to direct and keep her exactly where the children find it most convenient to have her. The whole conventional current of thought also flows as an aid in this direction. "Mother," says this unspoken sentiment, "must, of course, grow old, retire gradually from a more active and gayer life, and retire, also, to a corner of the household, to associate with other shelved and declining parents, and be useful as a general upper-nurse, in times of sickness or other family emergency." Through the action upon her from these minds, many mothers cease to have any privileges as individuals, and eventually do exactly as their children desire.

Possibly, it is here remarked or thought, "But should I not go to my mother or other near relative with my cares and trials, and receive her help, as I have always been in the habit of doing? Ought not those of my own family, above all others, to help me in time of need?"

Certainly - if the mother or any of your physical relatives are glad and anxious so to do.

Certainly, if such service from a relative comes directly from the heart and is not impelled by the sentiment taking, sometimes, this form of unspoken expression, "I suppose I must do this, be-
cause it is my brother or my son (or other physical relative) who asks it.” *Asks* it? Many, many are these services, which are unconsciously *demanded*, rather than asked, in these cases.Loads are piled upon relatives, simply because they are relatives. Favors in money, in the endorsement of notes, are in a sense exacted through sympathy of relatives. Support, food, shelter, maintenance are *expected* from relatives, when it cannot be procured elsewhere. Hospitality is *expected* from relatives, when to expect hospitality is to make such entertainment the result of a *demand*. Presents are *expected* from relatives, when to expect a gift makes it rather an *extortion*.

Real gifts are always surprises. No one *expects* a surprise, since expectation destroys surprise.

Relatives visit and "camp down" on other relatives, simply because they are relatives, and a vast amount of grudging, grumbling but unspoken thought is always going out, when relatives use each other's houses to save hotel bills.

No real or lasting good comes of any gift bestowed on another, unless the heart goes with it, and its bestowal is, to the giver, an act of unalloyed pleasure. Because something *else* goes with the material gift - the food, the shelter, the loan - which, though not seen and little-known, is more important than the form, itself. That is the *thought which goes with it*. That thought strongly affects, for good or ill, the person who receives the gift.

If, as giving within your means, you bestow the merest trifle in money upon a person in need, and the thought that goes with it is not only the most sincere desire to help that person, but you feel a keen sense of pleasure in giving such help, then you throw upon that person a certain thought-element, which will never leave them, and benefit them eternally and in proportion to the quality, power and force of your thought. Then you do far more than relieve their present physical necessity. You give them a certain amount of *spiritual power*. Your wish that their power may be so developed and increased as to enable them to live above beggary, and draw to themselves the goods of this earth (as all will and must, when grown to a certain stature in spiritual power) is a great help for them, in time, to acquire such power. You have sent and sown in them a *seed of thought*, which will

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take root and bear fruit at some period of their real or spiritual existence.

But if you give grudgingly, if you give under any sort of compulsion - if you give food, shelter, clothing, money, anything, only because circumstances compel you so to do or because people might talk unfavorably of you for not giving, or because other people are so giving - then your gift does relatively little good, no matter upon whom bestowed, be it even mother, father, brother, sister, son or daughter.

You relieve, then, only a physical necessity - and that, only for a time. You may possibly feed a body, shelter it, clothe it. But you do not and cannot feed, properly, the spirit that uses that body, if the thought going with your gift is not that of the most perfect willingness and hearty pleasure in relieving that body's necessities. The grudging thought accompanying the gift - the thought common to that position, when the recipient of the gift (no matter how near the relationship) is endured, rather than enjoyed - the thought accompanying any gift to any person or relative that is given principally because custom and public opinion require it or because of the recipient's importunity - is a great damage, both to giver and taker. It is the sending to the one who receives a current of thought, evil in its character and result. It brings back to the giver, from the one who takes, a response in thought of like nature, and this also is harmful. Because, if you receive a gift which you have in any way extorted - your feeling for the giver is not that of warm, glowing gratitude, but something quite different.

The Christ of Judea, when commending the widow who cast her mite into the treasury, did so in our estimation and as seen in this light, not merely because she gave in proportion to her material means, but because he saw that her thought of desire to help in whatever way help was needed, going with that mite, was far more heartfelt and genuine than that of richer people, who cast in larger sums but cast in also with them a lower character of thought and motive. He saw, also, that the woman's thought was actually doing far more to help than that of the others, for it was purer, less mixed with lower motive and therefore far the stronger.
"Is it not my duty," some may ask, "to feed, clothe, shelter and support a very near relative or parent, if helpless, in their old age?"

The term "doing from a sense of duty" does not always imply that the thing done, be it the person helped or the patient nursed through sickness, is done from the impulse of love for that person or love for the doing. It is sometimes done mechanically or with dislike for the doing. It is sometimes a forced and painful performance. For such reason, little good is done, for if physical necessities are temporarily relieved, spiritual necessities are not; and unless the spiritual portion of our natures is fed, there can be no permanent relief or good done the physical.

Parents who, in old age, are supported by their children, merely from a sense of duty have, sometimes, their spirits wounded and starved - wounded, because they feel they are endured encumbrances; starved, because no real love goes with the gift or service done by these children.

Children who come into the world unwelcomed by the parent and are brought up only because custom, conventionality and public opinion demand their support from that parent are most unfortunate, and suffer from the blight and starvation thereby caused their spirits. Genuine heartfelt love is literally life-giving, and if received by the child is, for it, a source of cheer, health, strength and activity.

There is a certain trained conscience, whose basis of education is fear of public or private opinion. This sometimes really impels acts which are said to be done from a "sense of duty." If public opinion should suddenly change, and cast no censure at all on the person who refused to support very near relatives in want or old age, a proportion of such relatives would probably go to the poor-house, and the son or daughter who sent them there would be acting out their real natures and not feigning a sentiment they did not possess.

Mothers sometimes say, "I don't care what becomes of me, so that my children are well brought up and educated." A mother should care a great deal for her own cultivation. If her cultivation and growth in wisdom are checked, that of her children will be checked. It will be checked - if she sinks herself in her endeavor to favor her children. A genuine mother will continually
compel the *admiration* and *respect*, as well as *love*, of her children. Such admiration and respect can be compelled only by a woman who knows the world, has standing and position in it and is ever pushing forward to more commanding place and position.

Such admiration and respect from son or daughter cannot be compelled by the mother who retires to a household corner, becomes a cross between upper-nurse and governess, neglects her dress and personal appearance and teaches her children that she is at their disposal and use in all family emergencies, real or fancied. For this very reason are many mothers ignored, snubbed and ridiculed by their grown-up children.

If mothers so sink themselves, as they falsely imagine, to benefit their children, they pay, in cases, a terrible penalty. If you allow your will constantly to be overborne by another; if you give up your own preferences and inclinations, and become only another's echo; if you live just as others desire, you will lose more and more, for this existence, the power of self-assertion. You will absorb so much of the other mind and thought *about* you as to become a part of that mind, and so act in accordance even with its silent will and unspoken desire; you will fossilize, and sink into a hopeless servitude; you will lose more and more of both physical and mental power for doing *anything*; you will become the chimney-corner encumbrance, the senile parent, the helpless old man or woman - *endured*, rather than loved.

This, in many instances, has been the effect of the grown-up children's minds upon a parent.

It is the silent force of those minds, continually working on that of the parent, which helps to break the parent down physically, and the decay and mental weakness, commonly charged to "advancing years," is due, in part, to the injurious effect of a mind or group of minds seeking to usurp and overpower another. This evil is done unconsciously.

The son wishes to manage the farm. His *will* may be strong. He gains power, step-by-step. He takes as *rights* what, at first, he took only by the father's permission or as privileges. He goes on, step-by-step, having his way in all things, great and small, perhaps being aided by others of the children, using their silent force in the same direction. And this may be a *combined* force,
almost impossible for one person to withstand, if continually exposed to it. It is a steady, incessant pressure, all in one direction.

It works night and day. It works all the more efficaciously, because the parent so exposed to it is utterly ignorant of such a force and its operation upon him. He finds himself growing weak. He becomes inert. He lacks his old vigor and thinks it is through the approach of old age.

I knew a man over seventy years of age and as sound, active and vigorous in mind and body as one of forty. He had organized and built up a large business. His several children at last took it into their heads that it was time father retired from business. Henceforth, the thought, spoken and unspoken, bearing month in and month out upon father from the children, was this desire and demand that he should retire from business. Confiding his situation to a friend, he said, "Why should I retire from business? I live in it, I like it, and so far as I can see, am able to conduct it properly." But the persistent demand and force brought to bear upon him from these foes of his own blood and household were too great to withstand. He did retire. The sons and daughters were satisfied. The father soon commenced to decline in health. He lived about two years afterwards, and one of his last remarks was, "My children have killed me."

"Ought I not to love my children above all others?" asks one. The term "ought" has no application to the nature of love. Love goes where it will, and to whom it will, and where it is attracted. You cannot force yourself to love anything or anybody. There have been parents who had no real love for their children and children who had no real love for their parents. Neither party can be blamed for this. They were lacking in the capacity for loving. They were born so-lacking. They are no more to be censured for such deficiency than you would censure a person for being born blind or crippled.

Some parents fancy they love their children, yet do not. A father who loses his temper and beats his son does not really love that son. It would be better to say that he loved to beat him or tyrannize over him. Government in the family is necessary - but no sound, loving government is administered on a basis of anger and irascibility.
Parents sometimes interfere and seriously affect the future of a child by opposing its desires in the choice of a profession. The parent may be prejudiced against certain walks in life. The child may wish to follow one of these walks. It meets a bitter, uncompromising opposition on the parent's part. There is no reasoning, discussion or counseling in the matter - nothing but a stern, positive, "No." Such sentiment and act are not impelled by love for the child, on the parent's part. They are impelled by the parent's love for his or her own opinion and a love of tyranny.

Parents sometimes forget that, after the child emerges from the utter physical and mental helplessness of infancy, it is becoming more and more an individual. As an individual, it may show decided tastes, preferences and inclinations in some direction. No parent and no person can break or alter these tastes and preferences. No one can make that child's mind over into something else. For the child's mind, as we call it, is really a mind or spirit, which has lived other physical lives, from infancy to maturity, if not to old age. And as it comes into possession of its new body and acquires a relative control over that body, it will begin to act out the man or woman as it was in its former life - and that may be a man or woman very closely related to the parent or hardly related, at all. But in any event, the parent is dealing with an individual who is growing more and more into tastes, preferences and traits of character, which belong to and are a part of it. These must have expression. They will have expression in mind or spirit, whether allowed to, physically, or not.

If the boy is ever longing to go to sea, and the parent forbids, the boy is on the sea in mind; and if so in mind, it is far better that his body should follow, for there is only damage, when mind and body are not working in correspondence together. If the mother refuses to allow the boy to go to sea, because she fears its dangers for him, still she is loving her own fears and her own way, too, more than she does her son.

The parent sometimes usurps a complete tyranny, not only over the child's body, but over its mind. The child's tastes, inclination, tendencies and preferences are held as of no importance, whatever. If the boy wants to be a sailor, and the parent wants him something else, that something else, the parent may insist that he shall be - but does he succeed? Let the host of mediocrity
in all callings in the land answer. And “mediocrity” means the prominent or more opposed-to conventional ideas of propriety, than other habits, more tolerated and deemed reputable but which may be the subtle and, for the most part, unknown sources of as great ills as those condemned by society.

A son takes to drink or reckless associates and commits some crime. The parent condemns herself for not having looked more carefully after her boy. She may accuse herself as having been, through her neglect, the prime agency for her son's misdeeds.

Madame, you blame yourself far too much. You did not make that son or daughter's character. It was made long before that spirit had the use of its last new body. What traits, what imperfections were very prominent in its last existence, will appear in its next. If that was a thieving spirit *before*, it will probably show thieving tendencies *now*. If it was gross, animal and gluttonous, then similar tendencies will show themselves now.

You, if grown to a more refined plane of thought, may do much to modify and lessen these tendencies. But all that you will do, in this respect, will be done through the silent force and action of your superior thought on your child's mind. It will not be done through a great deal of verbal counsel or physical punishment or discipline.

Whatever a mind is, on entering on a new physical experience, whatever imperfection belongs to it, must appear and be acted out and beget pain and punishment of some kind, until that spirit sees clearly for itself how, through its errors, it brings these punishments onto itself. These lessons can only be learned when that person has full freedom, so far as parental control goes, to live as it pleases.

You may, for a time, control such a life, and make it externally live as you please. But such external life is only a veneer, if the mind be full of lower tastes and inclinations. The sooner these are lived out, the sooner will that person learn the real law, which inflicts pains and penalties for breaking its unchangeable rules; and the sooner will it know the happiness which comes of living in accordance with its rules. That, every spirit must do for him or herself.

A parent may mold a false character for a child. It may teach indirectly, through the effect of its own mental condition oper-
ating on the child, how to feign what the world calls “goodness” - how it may seem, as regards outward conduct, to be what it is not at all, in secret tendency and inclination - how, in brief, to be a hypocrite.

No person is really reformed by another, in the sense such a term is sometimes used. Reform must come from within. It must be self-sustaining. It must not depend wholly on another's presence or influence. If it does, it is only a temporary reform. It will fail, when the influence of the person upon whom it depends is removed.

We hear sometimes the assertion, "Such-and-such a person's wife has been the making of him," meaning the husband. (By the way - why do we never hear of the man's being the making of his wife?) A man may be prevented from intemperance, or he may continually be braced up to meet the world through his wife's influence and mental power. But if in such reform he relies entirely upon her - if he cannot sustain himself, without her continual presence and prompting - his is no lasting reformation, and he is also a very heavy and damaging load for her to carry. It is a one-sided piece of business, when one person must supply all the sustaining force for two - and if this is persisted in, the wife, or whoever so supplies it, will at last sink under such burden, and there will be two wrecked lives, instead of one.

No person can "make another," in the highest sense. But one person having the superior mind, can, if in a very close and long-continued association with one weaker, give temporarily to the weaker their very life and force - if their desire is very strong to help the weaker. If it be the husband who so receives of the wife and is so dependent upon the wife, then he does not represent any character of his own. He represents and is clothed temporarily with his wife's character, or as much of it as he can appropriate. If she dies or is removed from him, then he relapses and sinks into his real self, unless he is resolved to be self-sustaining, and evolve force out of himself, instead of using another's. If she continues to supply him, she is only sustaining his temporary character, which cannot last when its source of supply is removed - and in such continuance, she will certainly, in time, exhaust herself.
Parents often unconsciously teach their children to rely upon them; to depend upon them too long for moral support. The result of this error is that then the parent's life is dragged out, through carrying so heavy a load; the child ceases to have any genuine love for its parent. You may pity what is decrepit, weak and shattered. Love it, you cannot. Love is based on admiration - and admiration is not compelled by decay.

The tendency called “instinct,” which impels the mother bird to turn its young out of the nest, so soon as they have sufficient strength to fly, and the animal in weaning its young, to turn them adrift and leave them to shift for themselves, is founded on natural and divine laws. We may say it is the custom of the brutes and is, therefore, "brutal." But would it be a kindness for the bird to encourage the young to stay in the nest, where it could not gain strength and when a few weeks will bring the storms and severity of winter, which the parent bird, itself, cannot withstand?

Again, the parent - be it bird, animal or human mother - needs, after these periods of bringing their young into the world and rearing them, a season of entire rest and recuperation - and the duration of such resting season should be proportionate to the complexity of the organization and the force expended by such organization.

During such periods, the parent should be freed from any and all demands from the child. Birds and animals, in their natural or wild life, take such periods of rest. But thousands of human mothers are never free from the demands of their children, until worn out, they drop into their graves. They should be as free - so far as their children are concerned - as they were in girlhood and before they became mothers.

Motherhood is a most necessary and an indispensable phase of existence for ripening and developing qualities. But no one experience should be followed and dwelt in forever. Life in its more perfected state will be full of alterations - not a rut, into which, if you are once set, you must continually travel.

If human children remain with the mother for years after attaining what may be termed a responsible age; if they always look to her for aid, advice, sympathy and assistance; if the mother allows herself to become the family leaning-post, she may
also be repeating the one-sided business of supplying too much force to others and getting none back. She may be practicing a false and injurious species of motherhood, because it is exacted, begged or dragged from her. She may be robbing herself of the new life which awaits her, when the brood is reared, and their wings are self-sustaining. She is helping the children to make her a feeble, witless "old woman."

Perhaps one remarks, "If your suggestion was literally followed, the streets would be full of children turned by parents out of their homes and unable to provide for themselves."

So they would. I argue, here, no literal following of the example set by bird and beast. It would be a great injustice. No custom, when followed for ages, even if based in error, can be suddenly changed, without disturbance, injustice and wrong. Yet it is worth our while to study this principle that we find in nature, from the tree that casts adrift the ripe acorn to the bird or animal that casts adrift the relatively ripened young. Neither acorn, bird nor animal, when cast off or weaned, ever returns to the parent for self-sustaining power. Such power, in these cases, is only given by the parent until the new organization is strong enough to absorb and appropriate of the elements about it; absorb of earth and sunshine, or flesh or grain, the nourishment necessary to its support.

Are not our streets today full of grown-up children, quite unable to provide for themselves? Do not thousands leave parental homes with no self-sustaining power, who are all through life unable to feed, clothe and shelter themselves, save by long hours of drudging labor, at the lowest wages? Does not this life of drudgery exhaust and cut them off prematurely? Are there not thousands of daughters all over the land who will become "old maids" and whose parents will not permit them, were they so disposed, to go out in the world and take their chances?

These are the birds cuddled in the nest, until their wings, denied exercise, lose at last all power or prompting for flight; and whose mouths, though they become grown-up birds, are trained only to open and receive the morsels dropped into them.
We need to be careful of what we think and talk. Because thought runs in currents, as real as those of air and water. Of what we think and talk, we attract to us a like current of thought. This acts on mind or body - for good or ill.

If thought was visible to the physical eye, we should see its currents flowing to and from people. We should see that persons similar in temperament, character and motive are in the same literal current of thought. We should see that the person in a despondent and angry mood was in the same current with others despondent or angry, and that each one in such moods serves as an additional "battery" or "generator" of such thought and is strengthening that particular current. We should see these forces working in similar manner and connecting the hopeful, courageous and cheerful with all others hopeful, courageous and cheerful.

When you are in low spirits or "blue," you have, acting upon you, the thought-current coming from all others in low spirits. You are in oneness with the despondent order of thought. The mind is then sick. It can be cured, but a permanent cure cannot always come immediately, when one has long been in the habit of opening the mind to this current of thought.

In attracting to us the current of any kind of evil, we become, for a time, one with evil. In the thought-current of the Supreme Power for good, we may become more and more as one with that
power, or in Biblical phrase "one with God." That is the desirable thought-current for us to attract.

If a group of people talk of any form of disease or suffering; of death-bed scenes and dying agonies - if they cultivate this morbid taste for the unhealthy and ghastly, and it forms their staple topics of conversation - they bring to themselves a like current of thought, full of images of sickness, suffering and things revolting to a healthy mind. This current will act upon them and eventually bring them disease and suffering in some form.

If we are talking much of sick people or are much among them and thinking of them, be our motive what it may, we shall draw to ourselves a current of sickly thought, and its ill results will, in time, materialize itself in our bodies. We have far more to do to save ourselves than is now realized.

When men talk business together, they attract a "business-current" of idea and suggestion. The better they agree, the more of this thought-current do they attract and the more do they receive of idea and suggestion for improving and extending their business. In this way, does the conference or discussion among the leading members of the company or corporation create the force that carries their business ahead.

Travel in first-class style, put up at first-class hotels, and dress in apparel "as costly as your purse can buy," without running into the extreme of foppishness. In these things, you find aids to place you in a current of relative power and success. If your purse does not now warrant such expenditure, or you think it does not, you can commence so living in mind. This will make you take the first steps in this direction. Successful people in the domain of finance unconsciously live up to this law. Desire for show influences some to this course. But there is another force and factor which so impels them. That is a wisdom of which their material minds are scarcely conscious. It is the wisdom of the spirit telling them to get in the thought-current of the successful, and by such current, be borne to success. It is not a rounded-out success - but good, as far as it goes.

If our minds are, from what is falsely called "economy," ever set on the cheap - cheap lodgings, cheap food and cheap fares - we get in the thought-current of the cheap, the slavish and the
fearful. Our views of life and our plans will be influenced and warped by it. It paralyzes that courage and enterprise implied in the old adage, "Nothing ventured, nothing gained." Absorbed in this current and having it ever acting upon you, it is felt immediately, when you come into the presence of the successful and causes them to avoid you. They feel in you the absence of that element which brings them their relative success. It acts as a barrier, preventing the flow to you of their sympathy.

Sympathy is a most important factor in business. Despite opposition and competition, a certain thought-current of sympathy binds the most successful together. The mania for cheapness lies in the thought-current of fear and failure. The thought-current of fear and failure and the thought-current of dash, courage and success will not mingle nor bring together the individuals who are in these respective streams of thought. They antagonize, and between the two classes of mind is built a barrier more impenetrable than walls of stone.

Live altogether in any one idea, any one "reform," and you get into the thought-current of all other minds who are carrying that idea to extremes. There is no "reform" but what can be pushed too far. The harm of such extreme falls on the person who so pushes it. It warps mind, judgment and reason all on one side. It makes fanatics, bigots, cranks and lunatics, whether the idea involves an art or study, a science, a "reform" or a "movement." It connects the extremists of all people in such order and current of mind, no matter what their specialties may be. Such people often end up becoming furious haters of all who differ with them and in so hating, expend their force in tearing themselves to pieces. The safe side lies in calling daily for the thought-current of wisdom from the Infinite Mind.

When that wisdom is more invoked, our "reforms" and organizations "for the good of the whole" will not run into internal wrangles, almost as soon as they organize. As now conducted, the thought-current of hatred of and antagonism toward the "oppressor" and monopolist is admitted at their birth. This very force breeds quarrels and dissensions among the members. It is force used to tear down, instead of build up. It is like taking the fire used to generate steam in the boilers and scattering it throughout the building.
When people come together and in any way talk out their ill-will towards others, they are drawing to themselves, with ten-fold power, an injurious thought-current, because the more minds are united on any purpose, the more power do they attract to effect that purpose. The thought-current so attracted by those chronic complainers, grumblers and scandal-mongers will injure their bodies, because whatever thought is most held in mind is most materialized in the body. If we are always thinking and talking of people's imperfections, we are drawing to us ever of that thought-current and thereby incorporating into ourselves those very imperfections.

We have said in previous books that "talk creates force" and that the more who talk in sympathy, the greater is the volume and power of the thought-current generated and attracted - for good or ill. A group of gossips who can never put their heads together without raking over the faults of the absent are unconsciously working a law with terrible results to themselves.

Gossip is fascinating. There is an exhilaration in scandal, and the raking-over of our friend's or neighbor's or enemy's faults is almost equal to that produced by champagne. But in the end, we pay dearly for these pleasures.

If but two people were to meet at regular intervals and talk of health, strength and vigor of body and mind, at the same time opening their minds to receive of the Supreme, the best idea as to the ways and means for securing these blessings, they would attract to themselves a thought-current of such idea. If these two people or more kept up these conversations on these subjects at a regular time and place and found pleasure in such communings, and they were not forced or stilted - if they could carry them on without controversy, and enter into them without preconceived idea and not allow any shade of tattle or tale-bearing or censure of others to drift into their talk - they would be astonished at the year's end at the beneficial results to mind and body. Because, in so doing and coming together with a silent demand of the Supreme to get the best idea, they would attract to themselves a current of life-giving force.

Let two so commence, rather than more. For even two persons in the proper agreement and accord to bring the desired results
are not easy to find. The desire for such meetings must be spontaneous, and any other motive will bar out the highest thought-current for good.

The old-fashioned revival meeting or camp meeting, through the combined action and desire of a number of minds, brought a thought-current, causing for the time the ecstasy, fervor and enthusiasm which characterized those gatherings. The North American Indian worked himself into the frenzy of his war dance by a similar law. He brought to himself, by force of united desire, a thought element and current, which stimulated and even intoxicated him. His sole desire was to bring onto himself this mental intoxication. The more minds so working in the same vein, the quicker came the desired result.

The real orator in his effort draws to himself a current of thought which, as sent again from him to his audience, thrills them. So does the inspired actor or actress. They bring a higher and more powerful element of thought to themselves, first - and this, flowing through them, acts upon the audience, afterwards.

If you dwell a great deal on your own faults, you will, by the same laws, attract more and more of their thought-current, and so increase those faults. It is enough that you recognize in yourself those faults. Don't be always saying of yourself, "I am weak or cowardly or ill-tempered or imprudent." Draw to yourself, rather, the thought-current of strength, courage, even-temper, prudence and all other good qualities. Keep the image of these qualities in mind, and you make them a part of yourself.

You have sometimes been beset, absorbed and even annoyed for days in the thought of the suit of clothes you wanted to buy; the cut, color and fashion of a dress; the selection of a bonnet or cravat, until you were nothing in thought but clothes, hat, bonnet, dress, cravat or some other detail of life. You may not have been able to make up your mind what you should buy and have then possibly been tossed about mentally on the billows of indecision for days. You have then gotten into the thought-current of thousands of other minds, continually in this mood of thought.

The surest way for a young woman to become ugly is to be discontented, peevish, cross, complaining and envious of others. Because, in these states of mind, she is drawing to herself the invisible substance of thought, which acts upon and injures her
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body. It ruins the complexion, makes lines and creases in the face, sharpens the nose and transforms the face of youth into that of the shrew, in very quick time.

I am not moralizing here or saying, "You ought not to do thus-and-so." It is simply cause and result. Put your face in the fire, and it is scarred and disfigured, because of an element acting upon it. Put your mind in the fire of ill-will, envy or jealousy, and it is also scarred, seared and disfigured, because of an element as real as fire, though invisible, acting upon it.

All things that are evil and imperfect, such as disagreeable traits of character in others - things unpleasant to hear or look upon - should be gotten out of our minds, as quickly as possible. Otherwise, if dwelt upon, they attract to themselves of their thought-current. They will then become permanent spiritual fixtures, and these will, in time, materialize themselves into corresponding physical fixtures. If we are always keeping in mind the person doing some wrong thing, we are the more apt to do that very thing, ourselves.

Let us endeavor, then, with the help of the Supreme Power, to get into the thought-current of things that are healthy, natural, strong and beautiful. Let us try to avoid thoughts of disease, of suffering, of deformity, of faultiness.

A field of waving grain or the rolling surf is better to contemplate than to pour over the horrors of a railway accident. We do not realize how much we are depressed, physically and mentally, by the incessant feast of horrors prepared for us by the daily press. We invoke in their perusal a thought-current, filled with things and images of horror and suffering. We bring ourselves, in this way, in connection and oneness with all other morbid and diseased minds, which live and revel in this current. It leads not to life - but to disease and death. Neither others, nor yourself, are one particle aided by your knowing of every fire, explosion, murder, theft or crime which the newspapers chronicle every twenty-fours hours.

If we read books written by cynical, sarcastic minds, who are so warped as to be able to see only the faults of others - at last, unable to see good anywhere - we bring into ourselves their unhealthy thought-current and are one with it. The arrow always tipped with ill-nature and sarcasm is deadliest to him who sends
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it. In other words, the man who is ever inviting and cultivating this thought-current is inviting the unrest, disease and misfortune it will assuredly bring to him - and when we get too much into his mind, we invite similar results.

You may be neat, careful and methodical in your habits, exact and elaborate in your work, yet if you associate closely with those who are careless and slovenly, you may find in yourself a tendency to be also careless and slovenly and have difficulty in resuming and carrying out your former neat, methodical and orderly methods. Because you have not only *absorbed* of the careless mind (or the mind lacking patience to do anything reposefully) - but the fragment of such mind so absorbed is acting as a magnet in attracting to you its like thought-current.

When an evil is *known*, it is half-cured. Bear in mind, when you are in any unpleasant frame of mind, that a thought-current of such disagreeable mood is acting upon you. Bear in mind that you are then one in a sort of electrical connection with many other sickly and morbid minds, all generating and sending unpleasant thought to each other. The next thing to be done is to pray or demand to get out of this current of evil thought. You cannot do this wholly of your own, individual effort. You must demand of the Supreme Power to *divert it from you*.

We can, more and more, invite the thought-current of things that are *lively, sprightly and amusing*. Life should be full of *playfulness*. Continued seriousness is but a few degrees removed from gloom and melancholy. Thousands live too much in the thought-current of seriousness. Faces which wear a smiling expression are scarce. Some never smile at all. Some have forgotten how to smile, and it actually hurts them to smile or to see others do so. Sickness and disease are nursed into fresher and fresher activity by the serious mood of mind. Habit continually strengthens the sad capacity of dwelling on the malady, which may be the merest trifle, at first. People get so much in this current that woeful diseases are manufactured out of some trifling irritation in some part of the body.

Many material things are helps to divert a thought-current acting disagreeably upon you. You may have, daily, a set of disagreeable symptoms. They may seem to come as adjuncts to the daily routine of life. The breakfast table, the furniture, the
conversation and even the persons immediately about you seem to recall them. Travel sometimes banishes them entirely. The sight of different surroundings diverts that particular thought-current. Material remedies may temporarily effect the same result. So may any sudden change of life or occupation. But all these are secondary aids to the Supreme Power.

The thought-current of fear is everywhere. All humanity fears something - disease, death, loss of fortune, loss of friends, loss of something. Everyone has his or her pet fear. It extends to the most trivial details of life. The streets are full of people who, if fearing nothing else, fear they won't catch a train or the next street-car.

The more sensitive you are to the impress of thought, the more liable are you to be affected by this thought-current of fear - until your spirit, by constant demand of the Supreme Power, builds up for itself an armor of thought, positive to this current, and one which will deny it access. You can commence this building by saying, whenever you are affected in the way above-mentioned or in any disagreeable fashion, "I refuse to accept this thought and the mental condition it has brought upon me, which affects my body." You commence, then, to turn aside the thought-current of evil.

Everyone has some pet fear - some disease they may never have had but always dreaded; something they are in special fear of losing. Some trifle - even but a word or sentence uttered by another - brings this pet fear to the mind. Instantly, through long habit, the mind reverts to this fear. Instantly, it opens to it, and the whole thought, volume and current rushes to and acts upon it. It acts and vibrates on that particular chord of your nature, which for years has sounded your pet weakness.

Then, in some way, the body is affected disagreeably. There are myriads of different symptoms. The body may become weak and tremulous. There may be loss of appetite, a dry tongue, a bad taste in the mouth, weakness in the joints, drowsiness, difficulty of concentrating the mind on your business and many other disagreeable sensations.

Such symptoms are often classed as "malaria." In a sense, the name is a correct one. Only, in very many of these cases, it is a bad atmosphere or current of thought, which is acting upon our
minds, instead of the fancied bad *material* atmosphere. Unquestionably, an atmosphere full of vegetable or animal decomposition will affect many people. But some live for years in the midst of stagnant pools and swamps, who never have malaria. Others, far removed from such locations, on high and dry ground, *do* have it. They have taken on a thought-current of fear.

Place yourself in a house where there has recently been a panic or scare, though you may know nothing of it. You were well and strong, the day before. You arise in the morning, and soon this whole train of disagreeable sensations affects you, because the house or place is saturated with a thought-current of fear. Put a fear on city, town or country of some deadly epidemic or some great calamity, and hundreds of the more sensitive, who may have no fear of that epidemic or calamity, are still affected by it disagreeably. That thought-current affects them in their particular weak spot.

A fanatic predicts some great catastrophe. The sensational newspapers take up the topic, ventilate it - affect to ridicule - but still write about it. This sets more minds to thinking and more people to talking. The more talk, the more of this injurious force is generated. As a result, thousands of people are affected by it unpleasantly, some in one way, some in another, because the whole force of that volume of fear is let loose upon them. Some are killed outright. Entirely unaware of the cause, they open their minds more and more to it, dwell on it in secret, put out no resisting thought - until at last, the spirit, unable no longer to carry such a load, snaps the link which connects it with the body.

The more impressionable you are to the thought about you, the more are you liable to be thus affected. But you can train your mind to *shut out this thought*. You can gradually train it to bar tightly this door to weakness, and keep open only the one to strength. You can do this by cultivating the mood of drawing to yourself and keeping in the mood and current of thought coming of God or the Supreme Power for good.

Impressionability or capacity to receive thought is a source either of strength or weakness. Fine-grained, sensitive, highly developed minds today often carry the weakest bodies, because, through ignorance, they are always inviting some of these thought-currents of evil, without any knowledge of their exist-
ence or the means of throwing them off. They are ignorantly either courting or exposing themselves to such current. *Improper individual association is one chief source of such exposure.*

The finer feminine organization is more sensitive to every shade and ray of thought about it, good or bad. Men, absorbed in their business, generate for a time a certain positiveness, which throws off the fear-current. But this positiveness cannot always last. Women, from this cause, often suffer a thousand-fold more in the privacy of their homes, than men are aware of. The average man defines it as "woman's way," and wonders why she is so full of "nervousness," "vapors," "notions" and ill-health.

As you place your reliance upon the Infinite Mind to bring you out of all these agencies for ill - that Mind, in some way, will bring many material aids to help you out. That Mind will suggest medicines and foods and surroundings and changes, not only to help you temporarily, but permanently, so that when you are cured, you are cured for all time. A cheerful, buoyant, hopeful mind - and no mind is cheerful, hopeful and buoyant, without being nearer the Infinite than one that is depressed, sour and gloomy, be that the mind of your doctor or your friend - will help you to get out of the injurious thought-current. Regard such mind as a help from the Infinite. But don't put your whole trust in that individual. Put the greater trust in the Supreme Power, which has sent to you the individual as a temporary aid or crutch, until your spiritual limbs are strong enough to bear you.

The more you get into the thought-current coming from the Infinite Mind, making yourself more and more a part of that Mind (exactly as you may become a part of *any* vein of low, morbid, unhealthy mind, in opening yourself to that current), the quicker are you freshened and renewed, physically and mentally. You become, continually, a newer being. Changes for the better come quicker and quicker. Your power increases to bring results. You lose, gradually, all fear, as it is proven more and more to you that, when you are in the thought-current of Infinite good, there is nothing to fear.

You realize more and more clearly that there is a great power and force which cares for you. You are wonder-struck at the fact that, when your mind is set in the right direction, all material things come to you, with very little physical or external effort.
You wonder, then, at man's toiling and striving, fagging himself literally to death when, through such excess of effort, he actually drives from himself the rounded-out good of health, happiness and material prosperity, all combined.

You will see in this demand for the highest good that you are growing to power greater than you ever dreamed of. It will dawn on you that the real life destined for the awakened few now, and the many in the future, is a dazzling dream - a permanent realization that it is a happiness to exist; a serenity and contentment, without abatement; a transition from pleasure to pleasure and from the great to the greater pleasure.

You find, as you get more and more into the current of the Infinite Mind, that exhausting toil is not required of you but that, when you commit yourself in trust to this current and let it bear you where it will, all things needful will come to you.

When you are getting into the right thought-current, you may, for a time, experience more of uneasiness, physical and mental, than ever. This is because the new element acting upon you makes you more sensitive to the presence of evil. The new is driving the old out. The new thought-current searches and detects every little error in your mind, before unnoticed, and repels it. This causes a struggle, and mind and body are, for a time, unpleasantly affected by it. It is like house-cleaning - a process usually involving a good deal of dust and disturbance. The new spirit you call to yourself is cleaning your spiritual house.

There is no limit to the power of the thought-current you can attract to yourself, nor limit to the things that can be done through the individual by it. In the future, some people will draw so much of the higher quality of thought to themselves that, by it, they will accomplish what some would call miracles. In this capacity of the human mind for drawing a thought-current, ever increasing in fineness of quality and power, lies the secret of what has been called magic.