M.A. SECTION

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Some sections of this book, in a modified form, have appeared in *The Evening Standard*; but the whole book was written as a book, at one time, with unbroken continuity of thought.

The author desires to thank the Editor of *The Evening Standard* for the hospitality of his columns.

LIFE:
A Study of Self

Books by the same Author

NOVELS

Fernande
Elaine at the Gates
Spinster of this Parish
A Remedy against Sin
A Man and His Lesson
The Mirror and the Lamp
The Devil's Garden
General Mallock's Shadow
In Cotton Wool
Mrs. Thompson
The Rest Cure
Seymour Charlton
Hill Rise
The Guarded Flame
Vivien
The Ragged Messenger
The Countess of Maybury

SHORT STORIES

Children of the Night
The Great Interruption
Odd Lengths
Fabulous Fancies

A MORALITY

A Little More

LIFE

A STUDY OF SELF

By

W. B. MAXWELL

"Life is the only thing that matters. And the only real crime is not to live to the full."

THORNTON BUTTERWORTH LTD.
15 BEDFORD STREET, LONDON

First Published 1926

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

I

LAST Christmas Day at church I saw a very weak and bent old man come in, leaning on two sticks, with just strength to drag himself to his pew. He sat there, frail, breathless, exhausted by his effort, while the rest of the congregation stood up and the choir sang its song of life—of the life that had been born into the world ; and I could not help thinking that to this worn-out, crippled old fellow life had become so poor a thing that he would almost welcome death in exchange.

But, no. That was a blasphemous thought—blasphemous anywhere, but most of all in this place, at this hour. And as the song of joy rose higher, spread wider, filled the church, I had an illusion that the old man was speaking to me, or at least prompting me with ordinary words to express the vague thoughts that all of us feel.

Life is the only thing that matters. And the

only real crime is not to live to the full—with a fullness that shall be attained not in the vicious sense of excesses, or by satisfactions of base cravings, or the frenzied glutting of desires transmitted to us by dim fierce ancestors who were still brute-like and obscene, but by being keenly conscious of one's life and resolutely refusing to allow it to pass away as a dream.

It is absurd to speak of the inequality of fortune as cruel when you think of the cruelty of nature in her unequal dole of life to different individuals —some so strong, some so feeble—long lives, short lives—lives that can be opulent with use and happiness, poor frustrated lives that are empty except that they hold a thousand vain regrets.

It is absurd for rich people to cry out when their riches are taken from them, to groan under the burden of a new taxation and crave pity because they are threatened with the ultimate loss of all. No western state, no responsible socialist or communist within a state, as yet has threatened to take life from them.

It is absurd for the labouring classes to talk of the right to work, the right to earn a generous wage, the right to secure decent shelter, leisure, or repose. They are alive, and therefore have

no true grievance. The real unemployed are the *dead*. Think of them. If they came out to march the streets in procession ! Those are the people I pity—and I pity no other.

The priceless boon of life ! Look at it how you will, whatever your religious faith, whatever your scientific theories or instinctive beliefs, you must see it as the glory and the flower, the wondrous spark of light leaping upward in the eternal darkness. Millions and millions of ages have gone to the making of it ; the worlds have grown hot and cold; a chaos of dust followed a chaos of whirling fire, gases became liquid, that which was liquid grew solid ; beaten tracks were made in the pathless void, rhythm and swinging gait were given to the unimaginable number of the stars—and still the reign of nothingness continued. Life had not come. But now at last—at long, long last—it is suddenly here.

Suddenly and now—for, in comparison with the unmeasured preceding blankness of time, all its record is as yesterday, as a moment ago—it is here with us, in us. Life !

Oh, never blaspheme against life. Never say life is ugly. Even in old, old people life is still sacred and beautiful. The bodily ruin, that out-

ourselves, if we tamely submit and surrender, if we cease to struggle and fight, this death that is attacking us has not even a tragic beauty ; nor will its inevitableness give it dignity or make it sublime by reason of those recently acquired notions that now hang like coloured fringes about the black shapeless vesture with which men first clothed the revolting inhuman idea or conception of finality. It will come not as the rending and shattering of battle-fields, a pang of fiery anguish, a last flash of nobly acquiescent thought, and then extinction, but as a disgusting loathsome disease of darkness that begins to invade us when we are no more than adolescent, or scarcely yet mature, with a slow decay of the body and a deepening twilight of the mind. It will come like the dusk that creeps across the world from east to west, so that when we turn towards where the dawn has been our long shadows stretch out before us to embrace the gloom of approaching night.

My first thought of the common and irrevocable doom came to me when I was quite young. I had read of somebody condemned to death

committing suicide in his cell, and I tried to think out what was the state of mind of this man.

It seemed that he must have said to himself, "Why wait, since I am condemned? To-day or to-morrow! What can I do in the little time that remains available? Something so small that it is not worth doing."

Then I had the old thought, the thought that is as old as thought itself. "We are all condemned to death. To-day or to-morrow. For all of us our time is so pitifully short. What can we do with it?"

Well, at least we can live.

Since then I do not think I have ever feared death; but I have feared (and, oh, how I fear it still!) what for want of a better name I must call death-in-life—that death which overwhelms us before the appointed date, which we bring upon ourselves, which dulls our faculties, steals our joy; that blunting of perception, fading of imaginative thought, dimming and obliterating of use, kindness, and altruistic aim;—that death-in-life which makes us no more than moving corpses while we are still permitted to linger in the sunshine and the air.

II

A THING may be absolutely trite and yet well worth saying. Indeed readers of books as a rule are much fonder of any short generalization of an obvious truth than they are of the wittiest and most sparkling kind of epigram. The verbal fireworks merely make them laugh or admire ; whereas the other thing sometimes shows them their own half-conscious thought, opens the closed doors of their secret hearts, and lets the light through so that they look right into themselves.

Thus, in a book of mine, I happened to say, " If one does not know one is in prison, one is free," and, although nothing could be more obvious, this had sufficient effect to make a few readers undergo the trouble of sitting down and writing to me.

The gist of the letters was that I had for once " hit the target," and that truly the world contains an enormous number of prisoners who are not at all aware that they are in prison. And the

sadness comes—as my correspondents told me —with the *awakening*; when for the first time one bumps one's head against the prison walls, hears the clank of the chain, or feels the iron galling one's wrists and ankles.

Here is an instance, from my letters. A girl employed in a London office had a sweetheart who was ill at a distance from her, and she wanted to go to him—wanted very badly. But she could not afford the money for the journey. Till then she had felt so proud, so full of independence; thinking of it perhaps vaguely, but always being sustained by the thought that she had taken destiny into her own hands and achieved complete freedom. Now in a moment she felt herself a failure. She went to her work dully and dejectedly. "As you said, Mr. Maxwell, I was in prison."

I do not altogether agree with her estimate of the situation. Nor do I consider the case typical. Anyhow, here is another case.

A really successful business man, a friend of mine in the United States, had a chance of going to South America under very delightful conditions and there opening out for himself a new and interesting career. Being only in middle life and with unexhausted energy, he wished to take

the chance ; but when he went to his partners or board of directors they would not let him go. It was not fair, they said, appealing to his sense of honour or generosity—"Don't desert us. Don't let us down now, after doing so much for us in the past." They refused to be moved by his arguments. Vainly he urged that no one is really necessary, that a substitute could easily be found, that it was a concern so well started that it would run by itself. . . . "I realized then," he wrote, "that those men were my jailers. It took me four years to get out of prison. But at last the morning came when I was able to say, 'Now, gentlemen, I am going to Peru—and you may all go to Hell.'"

A third case is more delicate and subtle. A well-to-do but not wealthy woman of thirty-five told me that between her and her husband there had subsisted since marriage unbroken confidence and affection. She had always felt—like the ground beneath her feet—his solid trust in her. Then all at once he objected to her friendship with a man who was not only much older than herself, but also a long-tried friend of her family. This elderly companion was intelligent, amiable, pleasant, and she went with him occasionally to plays and concerts, had a game of golf with

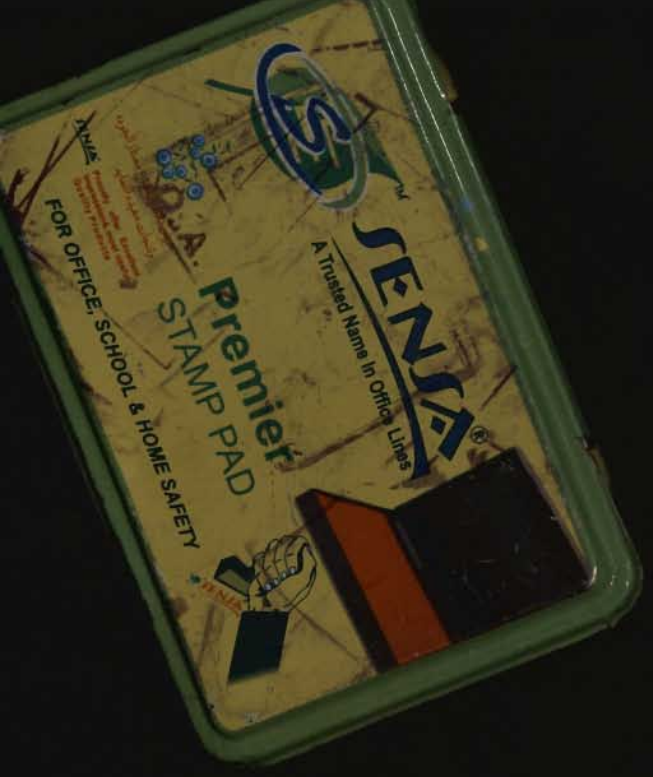
him (when her husband was engrossed in business), or took a little walk with him on fine afternoons. She told me at this point that she was not attractive or fascinating "in *any* way," but as she omitted to send a photograph I am naturally rather sceptical as to the total absence of external charms.

"You may think I am old-fashioned," said the husband, forbidding this acquaintanceship.

"I don't think you're old-fashioned," she replied. "I think you're utterly absurd"; and she asked if he no longer trusted her.

He said that he trusted her implicitly.

Then she asked, "Do you mean to say you are jealous?" And she explained to me that if he had been jealous she would have felt pleased. But he was not jealous either. He said he objected to her having this man friend or any other man friend because it derogated from his personal dignity. She belonged to him; and he could not allow the world to see anybody else enjoying her society, even though unable himself to use it at the moment. He would not allow such a liberty to be taken with his property—any more than he would allow the motor-car to be driven out by any elderly gentleman who had not a car of his own, or his books to be borrowed



behind his back, or his favourite arm-chair sat in.

Then for the first time she realized that she was a prisoner. He could not have made her understand the fact more clearly if he had compelled her to take off her pretty evening frock (Paris model) and put on a pair of knickerbockers marked all over with broad arrows. If the maid had brought her skilly instead of a cup of early morning tea, she could not have felt more abjectly, more humiliatingly, that she was in prison.

Yet till then she had believed that her life was her own.

For a further illustration I am forced to speak of myself. I live in England, in London ; and England is so small that one is apt to feel one may fall over the edge of it, while London is thronged with so many people that sometimes it seems to be a crowded room in which one cannot find a chair. When those sensations come upon me with strength I announce to my wife and family that I am going right away—for months, for a year. I say I cannot any longer put up with them and metropolitan domesticity, I must have relief—and I glare at them.

They say, " What a good idea ! " They applaud the sudden decision, and before my face they talk about it, confessing to each other that

for a long time they have seen how much I needed change.

They are playing a game with me. They make a joke of it behind my back. They tell all our friends that I am just off. I overhear them saying to uninterested visitors, "This may be the last time you'll see Daddy—because he is just starting on his wanderings. He will probably go round the world more than once before he returns to us."

Well, of course I never go. But mark the point. If they had shown the slightest opposition, if they had said I was pledged to dine with the Browns or the Jones's, if they had reminded me of business engagements that I could not possibly break, I would have become violent and brutal to them. I would have been gone as soon as I could pack my trunks.

By their immediate acquiescence they gave me the sensation of freedom, and that was all I really wanted.

With us of the Anglo-Saxon race the love of freedom is no doubt bred into our blood and bones. It was the refusal to submit to unjust restraint, and the almost passionate desire for movement and adventure, that in the past made first the

British Empire and then the United States of America. And in the hearts of Britons and Americans these feelings are perhaps as strong to-day as they were a hundred years ago, although both having achieved freedom, probably neither of them take much advantage of it. Nevertheless it is there, a theoretical possession if not an actual one ; deprived of the thing itself, or the illusion as to their ownership of the thing, they would go mad. They would never cease from tumultuous movement and frantic effort until the cherished phantom had been given back to them.

But among the more intelligent citizens of these and other lands the barriers that we wish to break, the journeys of adventure that we sigh for, are nearly always impalpable and invisible ; they belong to the realm of the spirit. Our need is for spiritual freedom rather than material freedom. We crave not so much for unimpeded action as for unfettered thought.

I believe, if we were able or willing to recognize the facts of the case, we should see that the occasional longing for escape, for distant wandering, for solitude, difficulty, and even what is called danger, is but an instinctively wise revolt of self. It is the struggle of self in presence of

the slow insidious influences that are destroying it. It is the just claim of self for the rights of self. One's deepest innermost self, speaking to us in the only voice it can use, the instinctive or subconscious one, cries to us for pity and help, claiming its right to live and imploring us not to continue killing it.

"Take me away," it says, "while there is still time. Take me through strange scenes and along untried paths, so that the stimulus of freshness, novelty, wonder may pour into me again as it used to do when we were children together. Then when I have eaten the new spiritual food and rested my eyes after the long abomination of sameness and monotony, when I have restored my strength and renewed my hope, then put me in some lonely place and let me *think*. Because, for life thought is needed. We die if we do not think."

And we must think our own thoughts.

In these dim, cold northern cities like London it is not so much the crowd of other people that numbs and oppresses the spirit as the dead thoughts that are persistently carried about with them. They pick them up and bring them to you. Like dead leaves in autumn the dead

thoughts blow through the streets ; like a fine and poisonous dust they hang in the atmosphere of comfortable well-warmed rooms, making one choke with weariness or faint from disgust ; they are everywhere, the stale, ridiculous misinterpretations of life, the worn-out and slowly rotting ideas about ethics, politics, business affairs—everywhere, in palaces, assembly houses, churches, theatres, newspapers, and books ; unscavenged, never swept away, never flooded down large-mouthed sewers of oblivion with a healthy stream of new and vigorous ideas. When the new ideas come they are like the poor little crocuses and snowdrops in the public parks at spring-time struggling through the sooty deposits of many yesterdays, into an air that has been breathed too often, towards a sunlight that cannot pierce the overhanging fog.

Is it odd that one should want to get away ?

We ought to be clearly aware of the need for spiritual freedom in others, even when it is no more than a vague sensation of discomfort in ourselves. Affectionate solicitude may soon develop into tyranny, and it is terribly easy to make prisons for those we love. One should not say "Don't do this. Don't do that" ; one should

remember that "Don't do so" can nearly always be translated into "Don't think so." Old people used to be the worst sort of jailers; but now that the years have told their tale to me I seem to see that the young can be rather merciless too. Smiling girls and genial lads are more than prompt with the chains and manacles, and surprisingly quick to lock the door on one—for one's own good.

"Jack, that seemed rather unkind." One can hear their youthful voices on the other side of the locked door. "No, Pamela, he needs restraint, at *his* age."

And they laugh.

It has been truly said that the intricate conveniences of modern existence, the complicated aids of our materially expanding civilization, give us freedom with one hand and take it away with the other. Rapid communications by land and sea, flying mails, wireless words, broadcasting sounds, and the rest of the bag of tricks, bring the other side of the world to one's front door but banish peace and repose from one's fireside. Indeed, how can an Englishman's house now be his castle when messages from outside creep into it as irresistibly as microbes enter through the broken gates of a diseased body?

Only by a stern effort of will-power may one secure an uninterrupted hour of real freedom.

A friend of mine (like myself a writer) says that his telephone bell is always ringing, and that when he answers the call what he hears is like the voice of his own conscience, like the voice of temptation, or like a voice that is merely mocking and deriding him. He gets (on the wire) wonderful offers and invitations, chances he cannot take, suggestions and advice that he cannot follow, and afterwards he is uncomfortable or discontented. The telephone upsets him. He dreads and hates the telephone, and yet he has not the moral courage to get it cut off for ever. He is miserable with it, but he dares not be without it.

"Are you there? . . . Cell Number 5504? . . . Listen. . . . Here's a real chance." And as he stands with the receiver at his ear, he sees in imagination what is being offered to him on this dull winter day—the white sunlit deck of a yacht; orange trees in fruit and flower, with a little sandy bay and a fringe of foam on the harmless tideless sea; old Nile; or whatever it may happen to be. "Now, won't you come?" . . .

"No, old boy. But I would love to—truly I would—if I were free."

"Why aren't you free? Dash it, don't pretend you're as important as all that. Your family can spare you—and the public won't miss you."

"No, I know they won't. Public miss me! What a preposterous notion! Nevertheless, at the moment, I am by way of writing a book."

"Knock off your book. Burn your book."

"I'm afraid I can't do that. I'm afraid I must forgo the pleasure. No. My answer really must be no."

Of course some of us build our own prisons and keep the key ourselves.

III

WHY cannot we still be young?

Many years ago a brilliantly clever woman startled me by saying that it is my sex and not hers that suffers most when youth begins to fade. I wonder if she was right or wrong.

Perhaps with men the regret is more material than with women. Men suffer when they find they cannot *do* the things they used to do, when hard games become dangerous and soft games difficult, when a lumpish horse that pulls makes their arms ache and a nimble sprightly thoroughbred sets them puffing and blowing. They sullenly recognize the encroachments of bodily fatigue and the inhibitions of advancing time, but being vain, proud creatures, they are generally able to conceal their pain.

And vain as men are, I think that extraordinarily few of them experience any mortification when they find that the years have mysteriously robbed them of all interest in the eyes of women, when not even a glance of curiosity meets them, when

they plainly understand that no miracle could now gain them those explicit manifestations of regard which were vouchsafed such a short while ago. But perhaps it is again self-conceit that gives them this immunity from distress under a special form of neglect. Certainly men as a rule are unconscious of the devastation wrought by time in their outward aspect ; if they see change at all, they see also what is akin to improvement—they see and feel that white hair has brought them dignity, they like the *majesticness* of their adipose increase, they believe that there is an added air of distinction from their particular style of baldness.

It would seem that the same looking-glass which is pitiless in its refusal to deceive a woman will never permit itself to tell the truth to a man. For this reason men are much fonder of being photographed than are women ; and to them the day never comes when they timidly shirk the camera's inquisitorial lens. Men, large dilapidated men, showing you their old photographs, never point out any differences, unless it be in regard to some trifling alteration of their personal habits, when they will say with a granite complacency, "Yes, I once used to wear a beard," or, "At that period for a little

while I parted my hair in the middle." Whereas women allowing you to see old portraits of themselves have a gentle deprecating tone in the voice, and give you almost pathetic little glances, as they murmur, "Of course that wasn't taken yesterday. No, it was quite a long time ago."

I never knew a man ask to have his photograph removed from a prominent position in the home; and yet such requests are frequent on the lips of women.

"Yes, *please*, as a favour to me."

And if you ask her why, she will perhaps say she has grown weary of perpetually seeing the old-fashioned dress in the picture; she hates to remember that she ever wore such silly things, that she ever looked like this. But only the last words are true. If you press her further she will generally confess it is not the costume but the *face* in the picture that she wishes to forget. What she dreads and is weary of is the enforced comparison between yesterday and to-day.

A woman, one may surmise, suffers when of a sudden she experiences a sense of immaterial widespread loss. She regrets not the loss of her beauty or charm but the loss of its influence. Unlike the man, she does not want the power of doing things herself, she wants the power of

making other people do things for her. She feels the loss when she can no longer draw people, guide them, and to a certain extent govern them. She feels the loss when she hands to some male person a cup of tea, and sees that instead of its seeming to him an intoxicating draught in a magic goblet—it is only a cup of tea.

And, women being more conscientious than men, she probably feels something of remorse too. If in the beginning she was pretty as well as intelligent she realizes that she sat down to the game of life with all the good cards in her hand, and now that the game is nearly over she wonders why there are so few counters on the table in front of her. She asks herself remorsefully what use she made of the gifts that the fairies gave her at her christening.

I have always loved that allegorical notion of the visit of the fairies to infants whether male or female ; and lately I have thought that the fairies come in this manner once only for men, but that they come again and again for women; with new gifts or the offer of gifts—the good fairies and the bad fairies—allowing a free choice of the gifts, a full competence to accept or to reject.

I believe they come to every well-to-do bride

on her wedding-day, during those few waiting minutes that provide her last chance of quiet maiden thought, when she is dressed and ready, when both her hair and her veil are properly arranged for the ceremonial, but it is not yet time to start for the church. They announce their gifts and ask her to choose.

"Admiration and social success. . . . Peace at the modest hearth. . . . A husband's material prosperity. . . . The scrape of violins, the mingled crash of cymbals and drum, the noise of gliding feet on polished floors ; or the sound of children's voices with the pains of motherhood." These things are to take or leave. What does she really want ?

I think they come again about fifteen years after marriage, or at sight of the first grey hair in the hand-mirror, to offer such things as sacrifice of ease for a boy's education, or the latest model motor-car and summer holidays with appropriate costumes at Trouville and Dieppe. . . . Cold baths, fast walking, and Swedish exercises, or tighter abdominal belts, soft chairs, and cocktails. . . . The loss of a friend to gain a lover at the eleventh hour ; or the loyalty that costs torture, a faith that is kept in secret and never praised by mortal tongue.

And most certainly they come once again at the silver wedding, to see what has been done with their best gifts and offer the little that is left in the fairy store. They offer, one may guess, mental discipline as preparation for the end ; immolation of self by self on an altar perhaps stained already with heart's blood ; sparse nourishment, light sleep, and pure thoughts ; then a patient folding of the hands and a word of love in the last fluttered breath. Or another time-defying set of false teeth, the pleasures of spiced food, the fiery glow of strong drink ; the glamour and excitement of card-tables ; dyed eyebrows, coloured wigs, carmine and rouge for the pale lips and cheeks and so on and so forth ; some paragraphs in the newspapers about a well-known figure of society, with finally a nice genteel paralytic stroke at a ducal dinner-party.

In regard to preservation of self, I suppose the only safe attitude towards old age is that of supreme hostility. We should plant our feet and stand firm as it approaches, and when it draws near we should give voice to a contemptuous challenge, saying, " I recognize you as the sneaking lieutenant of the grim commander-in-chief, with whom I will have neither parley nor truce,

against whom I have fought always and will continue fighting to the bitter end."

But the battle should be waged in the realm of the spirit, not of the flesh. Not, if you are an old woman, will you triumph by wearing low-necked frocks or marrying a boy young enough to be your grandson; nor, if you are an old man, can you hope for victory by buying coloured socks and ties, running to catch trains, or dancing all night with flappers. The battle-field must be the mind. Then you may so order it as to be able to say with truth, "There is no thought that I have ever thought that I cannot think again, no childlike fancy that I cannot evoke; no high emotion, generous wish, and burning enthusiasm that I cannot now feel as strongly as I ever felt it." For mentally it is possible to remain young all one's life.

I saw three charming old ladies in Kensington Gardens, each one of the three at least seventy years old if not more. Although it was one of those glorious warm days of late autumn that are given to us as souvenirs of spring-like hopes and summer fulfilments, the gardens were almost empty, and these three came along the path that

leads to the refreshment kiosk talking volubly, excitedly, with a blending of joy and anxiety in their rather shrill voices. I heard what they said. "Afraid it is too late. . . . The season for them over. . . . Oh, I wonder if there are any still. . . . Yes, there are!"—This last with a joyous cry. "I see the board. The board is up. . . . 'Ices.'" And they hurried, they almost ran.

They were going to have ices. They were children. It was not greed or silliness in them. It was the indestructible *youth* in them; and alone with the trees, the golden light, and the scampering leaves, with no one to mock at them or caution them, they gave this unchecked manifestation of it. I believe if I had stepped forward, dressed in the livery of fifty years, and said, "Now, girls, this is *my* treat. Put back your purses. You have plenty to do with your poor little pocket-money. It is the privilege of staid old fellows like me to pay,"—I believe they would have let me do it. They were too young to contest the point.

I wanted to—but did not dare.

IV

WHY cannot we do more?

William James once wrote: "Every one knows on any given day that there are energies slumbering in him which the excitements of that day don't call forth, but which he might display if these were greater. Compared with what we ought to be, we are only half awake—our fires are damped—our draughts are checked—we make use of only a small part of our possible mental and physical resources."

This was written many years ago, but ever since then the feeling it described has been deepening and becoming more widely recognized. Nowadays the feeling is very strong indeed. Analysing it we all seem to see solid truth behind it; for nobody reaches the age of twenty-five without having been surprised at least once or twice by sudden unexpected glimpses of his latent powers. But with this force in us, why do we seem so easily tired, so slowly refreshed, so feeble, half awake, and half dead? We had

the glimpse of that higher level of our intellectual power, and then the fog again descended. In other words, we performed prodigies but omitted to make a habit of performing them. We rose to the occasion, but we do not compel occasions to rise to us.

It is such thoughts as these that are making people of the present time snatch with so great an eagerness at new religions and new philosophies, at the wildest systems of untested thought, even at the most vulgar and cheapest sort of quackery. Something is wanted, something is offered; and we snatch at it hoping for salvation. Indeed the proposals of the quack doctor in mentality are to-day as certain of ready response as were those more old-fashioned offers of physical strength, personal beauty, or business capacity. "Do you really *wish* to be a weak person? Because you may be a strong one if you please. Cut out this advertisement and send for our pamphlet. . . . Look at these two pictures and read the attested statement of how an ugly woman became a pretty one in six months by following our treatment. . . . Why continue in a subordinate position when leadership is open to you?" The up-to-date offer of the new philosophers, new doctors, and new religionists is essentially the

same in all cases—that is, they offer to pull out the fettered self for us, to make it bigger and grander, to give it the fuller life of which it is capable. And deep in ourselves we feel a stir that makes us respond ; we hear the voice of the inward agonized self clamouring in new hope, saying, "Listen. Give me my chance. Believe in me ; don't doubt me."

We cannot safely refuse to listen. We dare not ignore the loud advertising of help. For behind all the ill-considered nonsense and the gross charlatanism there lies an unchanging truth. In sober fact we all of us possess vast reservoirs of energy on which in ordinary circumstances we never draw.

Year after year the War proved this fact. Highly trained men were always dying, and untrained men were always taking up the vacated posts and adequately filling them. At first one felt a perpetual wonder at the unexpected capability of everybody. Then one ceased to wonder, and because it was necessary to act as though one so believed, one did in truth believe that anybody could do anything. The strongest and best passed away, until, with the war itself always growing harder and more terrific, the human material sank so low in quality that one was deal-

ing with people who during years of peace would have been classed as the physically unfit and mentally deficient. Yet these, too, answered the call, lifted themselves as if miraculously to the height of the tremendous situation.

This was very noticeable in a quite humble and untheatrical manner among the infantry. As well as fighting, infantry in war have to work very hard for other arms, digging, carrying everything conceivable, constructing everything conceivable ; but although they do so much for other people, inclusive of dying, very little is done for them. It could not be otherwise. In the last and most modern of wars infantry remained what they have always been, food for cannon ; but as the cannon eat in different places and must not be kept waiting when hungry, their provender has to be moved rapidly to meet the demand for it. So the chief and highest attribute of good infantry is mobility. If you gave infantry comforts in camp or bivouac, you might spoil them by rendering them less mobile. As soon as they felt comfortably supplied with all they needed, there would be a tendency on their part to take root. Thus, although an infantry battalion has many horses (or mules) and limbered wagons, it is not allowed a blacksmith or an

anvil, not to mention a wheelwright and a saddler; although it is always constructing things, it has no regular labourers or artificers or mechanics. In peace time there are usually to be found in its ranks some such people, called technically "tradesmen"; in the great emergency of the War, however, such people were rarely forthcoming, because whole battalions were hastily composed and often drawn from the unhandy middle classes. Nevertheless, the difficulty was met. Bank clerks, auctioneers' assistants, or schoolmasters converted themselves, at a word of command, into "tradesmen."

Say that the last of the carpenters was killed and one wanted a carpenter. One sent for a man—any man who could be spared—and said, brutally, "Private Tomkins, you are appointed carpenter." He would very likely say, "I beg pardon, sir, I'm not a carpenter. I've never done any carpentering in my life." "Then," one said, "you will begin now. I want a little house built at once, to keep the small arms ammunition dry. You understand—brick floor, wooden shelves, and a stout roof. Stick it up by that bank beyond the dug-outs." Then the poor wretch asked for materials. But there were no materials, except any absurd odds and ends

that he could discover for himself. Heavy of heart was Private Tomkins as he saluted and turned on his heel.

Then, after forgetting all about it, one met him two or three days later looking fairly cheerful, and he said, "I'm getting on nicely with that house, sir, but my great difficulty is the roof. You don't think you could let me have a few sheets of corrugated iron?" On which one spoke more brutally than ever—perhaps, too, with a scornful laugh. "No, I don't carry corrugated sheeting in my pocket. Get it yourself, or get a substitute. Use your intelligence, and don't stand talking." And one forgot him again. Then the next day or the day after, if one met him, he would say, "I'd like you to inspect that house, sir. It's all finished, and the sergeant-major's very pleased with it." And it *was* finished; an excellent rain-proof house; just what one wanted. Private Tomkins was proud of it, but perhaps a little apologetic for not having put in electric bells and carpets.

Almost anybody can do almost anything, if driven to it in that manner. We habitually live on the outermost margins of the spiritual strength and energy that we possess. We are like people with an immense locked-up capital—millions

sterling,—and we muddle along, spending about five hundred a year.

How are we to release our energy? As all the little handbooks tell us, we should at once increase our efficiency if we stopped waste and directed effort; and without doubt the incessant waste of energy is terrible.

To take only the tritest instances! Consider how one goes on saying, "I really must write to Aunt Jane. The dear old thing will be offended if she does not hear from me. Yes, I must write to Aunt Jane." We write her a hundred letters in our head before we get one into the letter-box. That is of course profligate waste. Brooding on the weakness of my own class, literary people, I am ashamed when I think of the time one wastes in *starting* work,—the time wasted in reading the newspaper to its smallest idiotic paragraph, in warming oneself at the fire, in vacuously dreaming. Then, when at last we are started, we rage against interruptions; but, what is so curious, we really and truly invite them. We succumb to the fascination of any business that is not our own business. We energize in all directions except the right one. Moreover, our procrastination is monumental.

Take the common and recurrent trouble of getting up in the morning. The servant comes in and out of the room, and one keeps asking what o'clock it is. Twenty minutes to eight, a quarter to, five minutes to ; and one thinks almost with amazement, " But I was to get up at half-past seven, and yet here I lie. Why didn't I get up ? Why don't I get up ? " Then what seems a miracle happens. One is up and dressing. It is as if some purest accident had made the reservoir of energy brim over, giving one a drop or two. Otherwise one might have lain there for ever.

So much for waste and economy. But we want something bigger than mere saving. It is the spending we want to set free. We want to smash down the impalpable barriers and get at our real self.

Personally I think we are wrong in neglecting to employ our emotional impulses as feeders or releasers of energy. With regard to the use we make of our lives, there is a vague but noble and fiery emotion that seems to be the birthright of all human kind ; qualitatively it is the same in all of us, only quantitatively is it different ; and intellectually we get something that corresponds or reflects the emotional glow every time

that we feel it. When we are suddenly stirred by something beautiful in nature, something fine in a book, above all by the sound of music, great and wonderful thoughts seem to arise in us—ambitions, altruistic schemes, ideas of making or moulding destinies. These thoughts are extremely vague, but while they last we have the sensation of power and creative force ; and then nothing happens—nothing whatever. Yet, as I believe, these transient and vague feelings of power are not quite illusory ; they are, rather, the essential beginning of better things. But we allow the impulse to fade so swiftly into timid doubt. We think it presumptuous to entertain such an idea. "It would be quite beyond me. I should be laughed at for trying it." And in so thinking we block the outlet, we close down the channel through which energy was coming to us. This is wrong. The thoughts that seem to have power in them should have been used by us as a starting impetus, and we ought to start at once. The more we act on such thoughts, the more freely will energy pour forth to support them. We should do *something* and not merely *nothing*, after being stirred like that.

Suppose that in these vague aspirations or

inspirations we feel that we could be Napoleons or Joans of Arc, I do not mean that it is open to us to go out and shake the world as they did, but I do mean that it is open to us to do things almost fantastically quicker and better than our normal low average; and that if we could keep continuously acting on such aspirations, we should all of us rise to a height of splendid mediocrity that nowadays would be more remunerative and desirable than genius.

Referring to the case of my symbolic infantryman, I said that the sergeant-major was pleased with the newly erected shelter for the ammunition and that Private Tomkins was proud of it. But Tomkins felt more than pride, he felt joy—the splendid, calmly fierce joy of creation. In his humble way Tomkins had performed the godlike task of creating something out of nothing. He had dreamed and his dream had come true. For days, perhaps for weeks, the tyrannical picture of the house that *had* to be built was all that he could see or think about. It was his ideal, and eventually he realized it. By no matter what intolerable labour he collected the materials, toiling like a sleepless ant in a world of chaos,

the fabric of the dream changed to the solid visible reality. The house stood there at last, an indisputable fact. Spirit had triumphed over matter; as it always will do when you smash the outer door, make clear the way, and strike off the chains.

I shall venture to return later on to the deep joy of Private Tomkins.

Meanwhile let me say that this at least is certain with regard to the results of energetic effort. For full accomplishment one must have some sort of clear vision of the unseen. The surest way, perhaps the only way, to achieve things is first of all to imagine the end as successfully reached. No matter what one is trying to do, one should see it ideally as the completed whole and keep the ideal resolutely before one throughout the long or short progress of the actual work. This rule applies to everything worth attempting—whether it is the writing of a book, the driving of a golf ball, the making of a complicated invention, a system of art, an organization of a business enterprise; it applies even if the thing aimed at is merely an attitude towards life.

But I have used that phrase "an attitude towards life" with insufficient respect. For indeed

an attitude towards life, if strenuously and undeviatingly maintained, may of itself win more than half the battle for us. We must modify our natural attitude to bear with ease the pressures that surround us, and correct it to control adverse tendencies and overcome unexpected resistances. And if (as often happens) we have no natural attitude in the beginning, then we must adopt that attitude which seems to us most ideally propitious. Unendowed with any characteristic attributes, we must pretend they are there and act their external manifestations.

As an example, suppose I am a feeble, vacillating, procrastinating, fussy sort of creature, but I want to turn over a new leaf. My best chance is to imagine a calm, strong, decisive, punctual person of just my height and build, and then simply to pretend to be that person. I must *act* the ideal personage exactly as if it was a part dealt out to me in the theatre of life. Just acting the part, I spring out of bed of a morning ; with firm unhurried strides I go to the railway station and catch the train in nice time. In the train I sit calmly reading the newspaper, seizing on important facts, disregarding fiddle-faddle ; and all day long at the office I act calmness, strength,

and luminous common sense. And the plain truth is that *if I can only go on acting that part long enough I become the estimable character himself*. I realize my ideal.

V

LOVE is the strongest support of Life, the most untiring foe to Death. But big as a man's life can be made, it is never big enough to hold safely the love of more than one woman. Further, he who marries and lives faithfully with his wife learns more about women, gets more of all that women can give, than the wildest Don Juan through whose days and nights there passes a phantasmagoria of half-known faces and unfamiliar shapes.

This is a great truth that indurated bachelors cannot and never will understand ; for marriage, like freemasonry, remains a mystery to all but the initiated.

Every adult male who values self, wishes to live, and dislikes death, ought to marry and be a faithful husband. Thus the best common-sense piece of advice one can offer to any fully developed young man in whom one feels interest is, " Find your woman and stick to her."

One may add as encouragement to the unfortu-

nate that often a man marries the woman he did not want and obtains in her a better bargain than the woman he could not get. If fate has not permitted him to choose, he can wisely consent to be chosen. Then on the altar he has built to fancy there may be lit for him the lamp of steadfast truth. For marriage itself will create love between any two normal and not mutually repulsive people.

Once more let me say it, we cannot live fully without love. And this love or passionate regard that is a necessity to us men and women, and that finds peace in a union intended to last to the end of our days, should be like a deep and narrow stream with strong banks, flowing steadily, and able to carry on it and with it all the great purposes of existence, work, dreams, hopes. Whereas with the other thing, the promiscuous occasional satisfaction of the need, it is as though the banks were broken and the waters had spread far and wide in a shallow flood ; and when these subside, as they must in time, nothing is left but stranded rubbish, slime, and nastiness.

In the wisdom of all literatures and all ages you will see the law plainly stated, that the love of strange women is at once intoxicating, enervating, and death-dealing ; and never was the law so

rigorously enforced as it is to-day when the calls upon men's nervous energy and spiritual resources are so enormously greater than in the past history of the world. The untried lips of each new love rob a man of strength and purpose even while they seem to be stinging him to an expanded imagination and irritating him to a greater effort. The pride of each successful pursuit, the triumphant bliss in each fresh surrender, the delicious illusion of enhanced personal power that comes to a much-favoured man in the possession of the craved-for novelty, are not only weakening him and deteriorating him, but planting in his heart the seeds of vain regret and preparing his very soul for the poisonous taste of essential and irreparable failure. This must infallibly be so, assuming that in such intercourse there enters something that is spiritual, as there surely does even in the lightest loves of intelligent people. Only the stupid men-animals, temporarily appeasing a recurrent appetite, are able to conduct the traffic of the sexes on a solely physiological basis and thus perhaps escape the punishment that the rest suffer. But among ordinarily active-brained people more than this is required, a solace that renews itself as well as a fire that fades, and for these one may safely say that a man can only find

comfort and repose in the arms of an old love, and that he who defies this plain law of Life is taking Death by the hand and making himself the meek ally of our great and implacable enemy.

Contrary to the general belief, the sacredness and inviolability of the marriage bond have been strengthened in every decade of the last few hundred years, because throughout this time men and women have been advancing mentally, discarding gross material notions, and in all communion with their kind (including this, the most intimate of communions) seeking the joy of the spirit instead of the pleasure of the senses. To-day, proportionately to our population, there are more happy marriages (marriages that give happiness in the mysterious manner understood by married people) than there have ever been before, and immensely more than is generally believed. As a rule nowadays fairly intelligent people are always happy in marriage ; it is the stupid brainless people who are not. And this is true of all ranks of society. If you analyse the cause of the failures, if you investigate divorce cases, you will get quite extraordinarily clear proof of it. Of a hundred divorce cases, you will find that ninety per cent. at least show it, on one side or on both sides—empty-

headedness, mental deficiency, sheer foolishness.

The failures are recorded, the number of divorce suits counted ; and because as a nation we love talking nonsense and hate solid facts we cry out against the appalling licentiousness of the present generation. We say that the collapse of marriage is appalling. People sit at tea shocking themselves about it, journalists write about it, clergymen preach about it. Have you heard ? That the Browns are separated, that the Smiths are going to have a fearful smash, that the Thompsons have filed cross petitions ? "Upon my word, half the people one knows are in the divorce court." But nobody ever sits down to count the happy marriages. It would be too dull, and the enumeration might prove endless, if we began to put on record the perfect untroubled unions of our doctor, vicar, and milkman, of the lady's maid and the ex-butler, of every couple in our capacious square or busy street.

Here in England there are only two tragedies in this relation—the cruel unreformed laws that refuse to grant relief in a few desperately unhappy marriages, and the terrible fact that owing to the numerical inequality of the sexes there are many thousands of women who have no chance of marriage at all.

If for no other reason than this husbands and wives should be faithful. Certainly, in view of the shortage of men and the enforced spinsterhood that results therefrom, every unfaithful wife at the present time is guilty of a monstrous wrong against the multitude of her sisters who cannot find mates. Also each time she remarries she is cheating one of these starvelings. Conditions being as they are, it is an egoistic wickedness when a woman takes more than one husband. Personally I never had any patience with those pretty little heart-broken war widows who consoled themselves with a second ill-fated soldier before the war was over and then perhaps married a civilian soon after the Armistice. But far worse than the taking of husbands is the taking of lovers. In these unsanctified unions, repeated and repeated while beauty lasts or the arts of experience are still sufficient to aid the natural lures, an attractive woman will squander many men, spoiling them for marriage, and ruining them as possible enjoyers of a peaceful domestic existence. It seems to me that if you look at it from this common-sense standpoint the selfish unpaid harlotry of charming well-bred women is uglier than when you consider and condemn it from the standpoint of religion and morality. It is ethically

a far greater sin than it is morally. If you think of the others, the robbed maidens, and of the shadowland of unfulfilled possibilities in which lie all those homes that might have been, those children that should have laughed and danced in the sunlight, that should have *lived*, you will see that one may as justly say of the wanton woman as of the sweetheart-hunting man : They have made themselves the friends of Death and are traitorously aiding the Powers of Darkness.

Even the beautiful friendship of the old-established married lady and her bachelor friend, although condoned by every one, including the husband, is logically indefensible to-day. Yet, as about much else, we grow feebly sentimental as we speak of it, warning each other to respect it, explaining to friends as yet unaware of its beautifulness that of course if dear Mabel is asked to a week-end party, her Mr. Jones must be asked too.

Her Mr. Jones ! But she had her Mr. Brown first, that discreetly tolerant husband. It is all very well, but Mr. Jones is one too many. Somewhere there is a frustrated Mrs. Jones, the woman he might have married. He is *her* Mr. Jones, really.

Fidelity is the basis, the fundamental requirement of the marriage partnership ; and as another instance of the fantastic nonsense which we orally exchange, that counterfeit coin which is always debasing the currency of our ideas, one may mention the commonly echoed statement that modern wives are content to give their husbands a wider licence in all such matters than were their mothers and grandmothers. The reverse of this is the truth. The modern woman's method of thought is higher and clearer ; she stands out for the essential spirit of the bargain, saying in effect, " It is of no consequence to me whether or not you have qualified yourself technically for the divorce court. What I am concerned with is that you have given another woman some of the affection and regard that belong to me ; you have lowered me in her eyes by doing so ; you have also lowered yourself in my eyes, because after trusting you I find you are a thief and a traitor."

Not for a moment do I mean that wives under certain conditions will not forgive infidelity once in a way. But I believe that the ordinary self-respecting wife of to-day will more readily overlook what can be described as an accident with a visitor at a seaside hotel than the long trailing

intrigue that never gets beyond the apparently innocent zone of cut flowers and whispered compliments. Thus, in those many cases where one is told that it has been agreed between a man and wife that the man may do as he pleases, but they will continue to live happily together because the wife well understands that she still has the best part of her husband's love, that she is still on a pedestal and so forth, I believe that in fact this marriage is utterly and damnably finished. They are no longer man and wife. They keep together only for the sake of appearances, convenience, or necessity ; for the sake of their children, their public, or their banking account.

The modern woman being far more spiritual than old-fashioned women wants all of her husband's love or none of it ; and nowadays a husband may be sure that a ready forgiveness for repeated wrong-doing implies either a confession of precisely similar failure or a slowly acquired but now complete indifference.

Just now I spoke of a faithful married man learning to know more of women than the faithless wanderer, but I did not mean that even then he would know very much. Perhaps I need

not add that I do not pretend to know much myself. Some of my literary contemporaries are styled " feminists " and they have become famous for their insight into woman's nature. Indeed I think that one or two of them have even written a careful narration of their own successful amours, with a neat character sketch and psychological study of each of their many victims or accomplices. But these writings do not convince.

It may be that men are not intended to understand women. Perhaps after all there is not such a great deal to know about them, and some of that may not be worth knowing. Obviously they do not fully understand themselves.

Compared with men, women are self-reliant, self-contained ; and there are few things we can do for them that are of any real use to them. Perhaps the only certain thing is being kind to them.

On the rare occasions when they seem to ask for help, one should abandon any other task or thought and spring to help them. It is unkind to suppose that any labour of your own can be more important.

I once wrote a little fable about a half-cracked old fellow who bored everybody at the club by his trick of muttering to himself. " Do it now,"

the members used to hear him saying. "Yes, I'll do it now. Do it now." The reason of it was that many years ago when his adored young wife was starting on a small expedition he omitted to do some trifling thing that she had asked him to do. Very busy at the moment, he had said he would do it, but later on, after she had gone. Then she was killed in a street accident between the house and the railway station. She was gone, but it was too late to do the thing.

The fact is one should not delay in doing kind things. There is always danger if you delay. So "Do it now" is a good rule.

And *Say it now* is but an expansion of the rule.

When the woman you love comes into your carefully guarded library say at once that she is lovely and lovable. Don't merely think it and take for granted that she knows what you are thinking. Tell her of your love—tell her now. When you are away from her, write and tell her how deeply you love her, and how immense is your gratitude to her. Tell her what you feel about it—lengthily. Don't just note it briefly in your diary—"Have been married five years to the dearest, sweetest wife a man ever had. Bless her true and loyal heart"—and then leave

in him, and by her belief will save him from the immense danger of losing faith in himself. She can keep him alive when the whole world thinks him dead.

VI

"THAT man stands strongest who stands quite alone."

Of course the reverse of this is the truth. The men who feel and are the strongest are those who if they fall will bring down hundreds of other men with them. Then they dare not fall. The way to make a man walk through life steadily and straightly is to put burdens on his back. He may groan but he will keep his balance.

The groans are loud nowadays. Members of every social class complain of a hundred profitless duties that they are forced to fulfil. They say they wake to a day that is already mortgaged to duty and they lie down at night with arrears of debt, to be roused untimely on the morrow by duty's inappeasable demands. The postal delivery—that stimulus to life which should properly be welcome and health-giving at all ages, as well to the old man of business as to the innocent birthday-keeping child—is for them

only a dreaded recurrent depression of the soul. The district messenger coming down the street is like a bugler blowing the call to duty ; the newspaper shouts of duty, with its charitable appeals, its political manifestos, its requests for public-spirited assistants in all fields of activity ; the telephone every hour clamours "Duty, duty, duty."

For the trouble is, you cannot evade duties. If you could really and permanently forget that you had failed to perform the duties it would be all right. But you cannot. The memory of each unanswered letter, of each disregarded but valid claim, rankles and festers. Memories of unfulfilled duties, if many, although quite small, are like injurious microbes in one's bodily system ; they must be got out somehow or serious disease may ensue.

Thus, and for these reasons, a considerable number of people at the present time attack the duties themselves and try to abolish them for good and all.

They get rid of everything troublesome, lands, houses, belongings ; troublesome tenants or landlords, troublesome servants, friends, and relations, all things animate or inanimate that can suggest a duty ; and they go about the world

staying in hotels, with no fixed address, no letter-box, no telephone number. In a word, they try to stand alone.

Personally I think I can recognize them by their unsubstantialness and vagueness. They appear to me like luminous shadows dancing before the solid, the actual people. Their individuality has deserted them ; their lack of dignity is amazing ; and with apparently nothing to worry them they are often anxious and perturbed, as if for every solid care from which they have won freedom they were compelled to invent and construct a dozen trumpery little cares for themselves—new cares that they recognize as unimportant, but nevertheless exalt and magnify in an intuitive horror of their own loss of importance and weight.

The vapid and the trivial must be always assailing them with increased force. Their aims and desires being of no interest except to themselves, they pursue them unaided and with despairing strength—as, for instance, to secure the hotel apartment that they occupied last year, to get their old table in the coffee-room, to come out from dinner while their favourite corner in " the lounge " still remains unoccupied. They stay a week longer than they intended at Bath because

the hotel-manager at Bournemouth cannot assure them that the weather is yet settled. And, strangely, incredibly, in the midst of this moving emptiness they often keep diaries.

What can be the entries under the succeeding dates? I have sometimes amused myself in imagining.

. . . "Refused to give anything to the waiter who upset the coffee last Monday. I did this on principle and I know I was right. . . . The noise made by the lift, beginning as early as seven o'clock in the morning, still continues. My husband again protested strongly. . . . To-day we left Hove. The Jones's came out on the steps to wave us their adieux. They were nice civil folk, but I don't suppose we shall ever meet again. I purposely avoided saying good-bye to that elderly man and his good-looking niece. On the whole I now believe the alleged relationship to be genuine, but my doubt as to their *bona fides* has worried me horribly through-out my visit to Hove." And so on and so forth.

What else can they have to record?

While I have been observing these dutiless, house-free people, it has happened that a solid slave of duty has passed by and I have noticed

at once all the difference. The man who still holds such realities as factories, quarries, harbours has no time to spare for long twaddling talks with the head-waiter or querulous complaints to the hotel-manager. At any moment a telegram may cut short his holiday. He fills the hours, he walks briskly, he gives orders firmly; he is infinitely more substantial, more alive than the dispossessed and disconnected wanderers.

That expression "real property" is very significant. A wood on the side of a hill, a farmyard with a stone bridge over a stream in a valley, even a row of stucco-fronted houses with a view of a football ground and a gas-works—all these things are real property because they themselves are real, and they help to maintain the sense of reality in the person who possesses them. And as a sense of reality is one of the most important matters in life I feel that people are nowadays ill-advised to be in such a hurry to sell their realities. You cannot sell them without diminishing yourself, both in your personal sensations and the sensations of others. Loungers in the street say, "There goes the man that owns Lennox Gardens." But no one ever says,

"There goes the man who keeps his bearer securities at the Pont Street Bank."

A friend of mine, a man that I know well, went rather deeply into his experiences with regard to this particular sort of injury to the sensational self. He had disposed of most of his estate, but he still owned the house in which he lived, a fine Georgian house on the outskirts of London ; and he described to me how, one winter evening when his family were all away, he came into the house. He came through the stable-yard, and standing on the dark threshold of the house itself he saw a lighted window blind on the upper floor of his coachman's house ; in the corridor by the kitchen and offices he heard women's voices singing, and had a glimpse of two maidservants busily cutting out a garment on a table ; he passed the open door of a sort of pantry and saw two of his most faithful servants, an old man and an old woman, seated in front of a fire with their hands on their knees in an attitude of patience and contentment that struck him as pathetic ; then he went into his own comfortable library and turned on the lights. And standing there he had a sense not only of the solid house and the outbuildings, but also of the coachman's children going to bed, of the

horses in the stable, of the surrounding gardens with their big bare trees, winter strewn borders, and earth-covered lawns. He felt, too, all the empty rooms, from the cellars to the roof—felt that they were not truly empty but full of kindly traditions and pleasant memories, for it was a family house. And all these people and things belonging to him, depending on him, seemed to make him big, strong, and comfortable ; so that he made a vow that whatever happened he would never part with this house.

Then almost immediately his circumstances changed, and he was obliged to sell it. He came to live in London, and he assured me that he suffered greatly from a sense of smallness. He seemed to have shrunk to nothing. As he walked through the streets he felt more than insignificant, unsubstantial, unreal. Nobody knew him, nobody cared about him, and he went along the crowded pavements as if invisible ; lost sometimes in day-dreams, going back to the house and passing from room to room, apologizing to them each in turn for betraying them into the hands of strangers, begging them to forgive him since in parting with them he had hurt himself more than he had hurt them.

This may appear fantastic, but I quite

understood my friend's feelings and I believe that a useful truth lies behind them. The people who come bothering you at inopportune moments and make you do your duty to them are really helping to keep you alive. It is annoying to have to pay wages, to attend to old servants when they are ill, to be told by them that the rain has come through the roof of one's dear old house or that the pipes have burst in its grand old cellars ; but the annoyance at least aids in fighting one's dreams and in holding close bonds with reality. Even the people who touch their hats to you as you pass, who either know who you are or remember that they saw you yesterday, enhance your faith in the fact that you are alive. By their belief in you they sustain your own belief.

One cannot stand alone. But, obviously, the nearer one approaches to the untenable position the nearer one draws towards that great danger of mankind, loneliness.

Loneliness is of course a spiritual word, whereas solitude is purely material. To be alone is not necessarily to be lonely (oh, far from it !), and we may wisely seek solitude for the comfort or development of self, but that deep instinct which makes us shrink from true loneliness as the most

terrible affliction has been implanted in us for our security. I never see without pity, I never think of without pain, the peculiar form of loneliness that sometimes befalls old men when all chance of home has gone from them and they are thrown back on what has been erroneously called club life.

For everybody who knows, club life is of course a contradiction in terms. It ought to be called club death. All people who use their clubs regularly are practising the art of dying, and preparing themselves for the mental atmosphere of the grave. It will be remembered that Thackeray, the justice of whose nomenclature can still delight, called his old-established club "the Mausoleum." In a good select London club one rarely hears a noble utterance, even as a quotation, and there is no higher aim to observe than a patient, whole-hearted attentiveness to the processes of digestion. Nobody really cares for anybody else. So far as the intercourse of the members is concerned, it is in the highest sense immoral and deadening. It is a close acquaintanceship that never ripens into friendship. In its strongest instances it is intimacy without affection.

There is a horrible legend about one of the

best clubs in Pall Mall that has always frightened me. On a Christmas night a very old member —Colonel So-and-so—came into the vast empty coffee-room and ordered dinner. He was the only member there. After giving his orders, as if automatically, he sat staring. Then he began to make a noise, calling to the waiters to shut the doors and keep out all these people ; saying first that it was Mafeking night, saying afterwards that this intrusive crowd was composed of the ghosts of the people to whom he had failed to do his duty, saying the oddest, queerest things. The coffee-room steward thought he was ill, presently went down the stairs with him, and wished to get a taxi-cab. But he drifted out through the great swing doors and disappeared.

Then for some reason they looked for his name in the current list of members. It was not in the list—nor in the list of the year before. Colonel So-and-so had in fact been dead for several years without being aware of it. No change in his mental condition suggested to him that the greatest of all changes had at last occurred.

VII

R. L. STEVENSON spoke of adjectives as the remorseless foes to nouns ; and yet how one of them will now and then make a much-used serviceable noun seem to flame out at you with fresh strength, new meaning ! It is like a molecular marriage ; as if there must be something chemical in the sudden fusion of sense and the explosive amplification of associated ideas. For instance, that adjective and substantive—the undying past.

I think it was Weininger who first said of geniuses that their past is always alive, always susceptible to voluntary recall. Nothing of it dies ; it is there in its vast entirety—not displaying itself in peeps as the doors of memory are jolted open by accident or pushed ajar after laborious effort ; not there merely subconsciously, to be sought for with the aid of abnormal mental states, or during sleep to rise like mud from the bottom of a vase and darken the changing surface of a dream ; but accessible, *available* to its

possessor,—clear and bright as sunshine, solid as marble.

But although in the case of geniuses it may continue to live, with most of us the past has a tendency to fade if we allow the fading. Much of it will die unless we keep all of it alive. We cannot pick and choose, retaining the big events and discarding the apparently trivial details. We must hold the past or let it go. Moreover, in its greatest function each item has as high a value as any other, unless it be that the slightest and least salient facts are the most important of all. For when we keep the past alive, the past makes us go on living too.

This is so little understood that both men and women will sometimes boast of the facility with which they can bury the past ; but I must confess that, professionally and privately, I have never been able to avoid contempt for seemingly intellectual people in whose minds the tablets of reminiscence are like the blackboard in a schoolroom over which a sponge regularly passes, wiping out the lesson of yesterday and making space for the chalk-marks of to-day,—people who not only forget names, telephone numbers, and so on, but matters significant to themselves ; who, after the manner of dogs, need the stimulus

of external impression before they can revive any past at all ; who, so to speak, have to go to Brighton, smell the salt breeze, hear the loud band, and see the bright crisp vulgarity of the long sea-front, in order to remember that they met their first love at a dance at the Pavilion during Goodwood week.

We ought to keep our past alive by every means in our power, systematically, unremittingly struggling against its rapid or gradual extinction. To this end those people are wise who carefully preserve records of the past, such as pictures of the houses they have lived in, the countries they have visited, the friends with whom they have associated ; and they should be applauded rather than laughed at when they show you one of those naïve family albums in which are pasted such incongruous things as engraved invitations, autographed letters, menu cards, dried flowers and ferns, the coloured ribbon from a ball programme, the feather from a bird's wing, together with innumerable snap-shot photographs and accompanying dates—" Maisie and Dick on the sands at Boulogne, 1912 " ; " Tom's first ride on the shelty, Nairn, 1908 " ; " Myself, Edith, and Grace at the Tennis Club, 1907." You have

but to look at the faces of these simple ones, as they turn the thick pages and examine the written dates, to see the past rising for them, bringing them back not only visual images but thoughts and sensations, driving away their languor or inertness, giving them life. For although I spoke of them as showing the book to us, they are soon frankly showing it to themselves only. And this they cannot do too often for their spiritual welfare.

Obviously it is not only outward circumstances, but inward conditions as well, that we need to restore to us. We should remember states of mind and be able to re-establish them at will. We should be able to feel again all that we have once felt strongly. Otherwise we are not fully alive ; we are already dying while we eat, drink, and make merry.

Even without a thought of religious or moral duty, from the bold standpoint of self, one should treasure one's nobler thoughts and recall one's highest aspirations. One should do it as a precautionary measure, merely taking care of one's self just as a doctor takes care of a patient. For this pathological reason, as a treatment of the case, one should keep active one's reverence, one's power to admire, one's faculty of hero-worship.

The more things one can believe in the more one is alive. Disbelief, the cynical attitude, destructive criticism, are all deadening factors. They are the enemies of our past, because they are always destroying and tearing down those pedestals which support a symbolic greatness and round which we have hung our wreaths of imagination, our garlands of generous thought.

The loss of respect and veneration in those who have once been influenced if not governed by them is far worse for self than the scoffing or belittling spirit which is but an expression of congenital obtuseness. It is like an unnatural dusk coming before sundown. It creates a sort of twilight of the mind rather resembling the dimness that is produced in a room when you prematurely draw the window blinds and curtains.

How complete the loss may be is often shown in a startling way when people speak grossly of the most sacred things. I mean things that were once sacred to themselves. They startle one, because they give such conclusive proof that their past is in truth dead. As, for instance, when a man with his mouth half full of food asks one across the dinner-table a comic riddle about

Christ the Redeemer of Mankind ; or, maundering over the dessert, describes without the slightest real tenderness and compunction how his mother died of cancer—" Three operations. What that poor woman went through. And the expense of it ! "

At one time, when I heard this sort of gross utterance, I used to show that I was shocked and disgusted, that I considered the total disregard of ordinary susceptibilities as an insult, or at best as an outrage against good manners. But this was wrong. One should be merely a little sad and sorry, but no more excited than when a funeral passes one in the street, or when one hears the organ at a requiem mass, or reads the obituary notice of a stranger. Indeed a man must have died a thousand deaths before he can speak like that.

Imagine him in his past, in the past that has gone from him for ever. Think of him as a boy of fourteen going with his mother, in the freshness of early morning, to a first communion. Faith and love mingled in him ; his thoughts were tender prayers ; and in his vivid awareness of outward objects, the dew-drops on waking flowers, the long slanted sunbeams, the high pure sky, he was like a glass screen through which

all the beauties of the universe are shining. Then think of him as he is now.

The great interruption of the War attacked our past, and in many cases permanently effaced it. I think all people had a sense of loss as the cruel overwhelming present began to shake and rend the past for us ; but afterwards, as the horrible ordeal dragged on, the process of disintegration became slower and less easily recognizable. We found, when questioned, that we were not sure if we had or had not read certain books ; groups of people, series of events, and plans for life, grew faint and fainter in our recollection ; letters from home told us that the Browns or the Jones's sent their kindest regards, with reminders of happy times at Como, Venice, or Florence. But we could not remember the happy times ; we could not even remember the Jones's themselves. Yet evidently these people were real friends, since they sent us such kind messages. Moreover, the mental pictures of the bridged canals, the broad smooth lake, and the grey old palace walls, that should at once have shown themselves bright and strong at the mere mention of those loved Italian towns, came but slowly and dully. Our past was going, our

past was dying. But of course the War *was* death, and nothing else, even if one survived in it from day to day. It was death of the spirit ; Death triumphant, Death reigning over the world, destroying and obliterating.

But even in normal times the past will not live strongly if you neglect the people who figure in it. If through your own carelessness you let them die, your past will begin to die too. Even when they are but dust, or names on crumbling stone, you must keep alive the memory of them. For these reasons, and again as a precautionary measure, one should be tolerant of the weariness caused by a wide-stretching family and numberless connections in marriage. Cousins, though a hundred times removed, should receive a cordial invitation instead of a mendacious excuse when, surging up out of the past, they write to say they would be pleased to come and stay with you for a few days in London. Remember that they will bring your past with them. These people who remind you of your youth, who carry in their bonnets and gauze streamers a little of your native air, who repeat the oft-told tale of your nursery days and school days, are useful, perhaps invaluable assistants in the conservation of the past. Be patient with them. Take

them to the Tower, the British Museum, the National Gallery, or even to the Zoological Gardens, if they wish to go there. As a child you went there with them, or with their mother or their great-aunts, and you enjoyed yourself. Go there again now, and resolutely drag out of the past the childish emotion of the earlier visit. You felt it once ; you can feel it again—if you are still alive.

People are wise to attach themselves to places and things. At this moment as I write the very piece of furniture in the corner of the room (brought there from a house where I lived for many years) is asking me not to forget, is reminding me of a hundred different things. We should go back again and again to the loved spot ; we should revisit the scenes of our youth, hold fast to the loved house, re-read the loved books, and above all revive the old emotions.

Down in Hampshire years ago when one of our young squires married a girl of the neighbourhood, the country folk used to say, " I'm glad he have drawed and found his fox in the home coverts " ; or, " 'Tis best not to go away and fetch a furriner " ; or, " I hear say they have allus been like brother and sister, and 'twunt be no

shake-up fer 'em to change into husband and wife"—these friendly comments all meaning the same thing, that a man ought to have some solid acquaintanceship with his wife before he marries her. And one may perhaps safely add that the more he knows about her the greater will be his chances of happiness.

In this respect I have often thought that one inestimable advantage in a marriage of two people who have been friends since childhood is that each can help to keep the other's past alive. They share the past together. They own a common past instead of two separate pasts, and thus have half the work to do and twice as much power for doing it. But indeed, however we are situated, we need all the help we can get in this essentially important task.

Look at it how I may, it seems to me of paramount importance if we are striving for the welfare of everything that makes up self. All that is to come is built upon what went before. If you utterly lose yesterday you cannot find a complete to-morrow. Logically, the man or woman who has no past has no future either.

VIII

BUT what is this self about which we all talk and write so freely?

It is the one thing to which we hold fast; the thing in which we really believe, with a belief immeasurably stronger and more complete than any belief we are able to evoke in regard to anything else. "I think; therefore I exist." We said this hundreds of years ago, and we say it more forcibly to-day. I believe that I am myself; and I give myself certain inalienable attributes, such as containment, identity, and continuity. I am, if you like, no more than the stream of consciousness on which I hurry or glide through life. But if that is I, it is I all the time from the beginning to the end.

So unshakable is this notion of continuity in the innermost unchanging self that an immortality during which it would not persist is distasteful and unacceptable to us. Often one is full of disgust for one's self, one scorns and loathes one's self for its aimless blunderings, its

stupidities and ineptitudes; one may even despair of its future, seeing that one cannot trust it either to resist temptation staunchly or to sin bravely; it shames one, it betrays one, it tires one, and yet at the mere thought of having it permanently altered one feels an invincible recoil. We feel like a castle during an earthquake, with vibrations of fear in its lowest rock-girt crypts; there is a commotion from the highest centres of the brain to our deepest viscera; we avert our mental eyes as from a vision of the monstrous and impossible. Heart-sick at one's infirmities and failures, one prays to be made a better man; but one never prays to be made *another* man.

We might consent to change the outer case, but not the mechanism within. With all his faults we cling to the individual that we know, we want his memories as well as his hopes, we want his persistent recognizable individuality, and a life everlasting in which these had gone would be scarcely preferable to everlasting death.

Thus when a spiritualists' medium not long since made the world laugh by promising us whiskies and sodas in heaven she was only answering a fundamental craving of mankind to the best of her vulgar lights. She understood that to make heaven attractive we must be assured

of the continued possession of most of our earthly desires. If I am Jones, Esq., down here I want to be Angel Jones up there. Again I feel that intellectual and organic recoil when told that the attachments of worldly existence will fall away from me, that my soul will be absorbed into the soul of the universe, that my loves and desires will be higher and grander, and that since all will be known to me I shall not consider anything worth particular attention. It is very fine, but no use to me. I am Jones—and if I go to heaven I want to feel the touch of a vanished hand and to hear the sound of a voice that is still. Far rather would I return to the death out of which I was born than ever grow too big to remember past kindness, too good to be moved by the face of a woman who once loved me.

All these thoughts naturally increase our belief in the reality of self ; and we take little concern in the speculative arguments of philosophy or the painful researches of science which show how unsubstantial are the grounds of our belief. Even for the personal unity and sameness of self, for the unceasing thinker and abiding principle in us, many investigators can find no proof. To them it is a proofless assumption ;

a common-sense assumption, but no more. In what seems to be the unbroken stream of our consciousness we *know* only that there are passing states of consciousness ; in each small fraction of a second each one of these is with us and then is irrecoverably gone. From the philosophical standpoint it is as though there were an endless succession of thinkers, every one of whom gets his fugitive glimpse, rather than a single thinker who holds the whole thing together with his memories of the past and his forecasts of the future. The conception of identity may furnish a useful workable explanation of the facts, but it is not truly a logical deduction from the facts themselves.

Again, with regard to identity itself in its more general sense, the old metaphysical psychologists used to remind us that we possessed many selfs, and mostly extraneous to ourselves. There was the self loved or adhered to by those nearest and dearest to us ; there was the self of our fame or familiar repute, the self constructed by hostile eyes and unfriendly thoughts, the self that we honestly wished to be but were not, the self that we might have been, and so on. Mr. Jones, then, walking along the pavement, was not a solitary figure, but a sort of guide with a

little crowd of excursionists to whom he was showing the sights of the town. Only if you examined the group closely would you see that they were all Mr. Jones's and that first one and then another acted as guide, taking the lead and marshalling the rest of them. Now, at the present time, the new psychologists tell us of internal desires (the urges and the repressed cravings of the unconscious) strong enough to seem like separate personages, so that the visible outward Mr. Jones going through the street is not unlike a prison van with a lot of unruly jail-birds locked inside it. Also, while holding more firmly than ever to our belief in the continuous identity of self, we are confronted with the amazing phenomena of dual personalities, of multiple personalities ; of a Mr. Jones who apparently of his own accord becomes in a moment Mr. Brown, and who under the subjugation of an hypnotic or other abnormal state can be forced to render himself into gentlemen with surnames of all the letters in the alphabet.

But we accept all these as symbolized possibilities of our veritable self ; we interpret the confusion and warfare inside us as evidence of the *power* within us ; in spite of the attacks

upon it, in spite of the disintegrating tendency of nearly all modern theories, we stand fast in our elemental maintenance of the self-idea. We say, when confronted with Berkeley's grand old alternative tricked out in modern dress, "Take away the whole external universe if you must, but leave me in possession of myself."

Probably we feel our own existence so much more strongly than we did because we think so much more than we used to think. Of course we still think very little, and our thought is pitiably feeble; but it would be almost impossible to exaggerate the extent of the immense advance in the habit of thought that has been made during the last twenty or thirty years. All those young men going to their work on omnibuses and all those young women standing behind shop counters are active volcanoes of thought when compared with their passive befogged fathers and mothers.

The thought of the man who cuts your hair sweeps round the world and back again while he runs the clipping machine for a moment across your neck, whereas the man who "waited on" your defunct male parent in the same shop nourished no more than a sort of animal craving

to sell him a pot of cream and a vague unanalysed dread that it wouldn't be bought this morning. The youthful mechanic and his assistant, the labourer and his mate, the busman and his conductor, maidservants, typewriters, girl-messengers, chauffeurs, hall-porters, warehouse hands, the people of the factories, the people of the mines, even the toilers of the open field—all these, if you judge them by the standard of ancient dullness and mental vacuity, are the containers of deep floods of tumultuous thought instead of what was but a muddy stagnant rivulet. Nor is the thought, although weak when measured by what it might be and what it will be, poor in its essential quality. They think in the manner of the highest intelligences of a past age. They philosophize among themselves, they love generalizations, they talk of the abstract rather than the particular. They turn inquisitive eyes on surrounding nature and question its scope and mystery ; they turn their eyes into themselves and quiver at the wonders that are disclosed to them. There is nothing without or within that they do not interrogate. They demand answers, even to the unanswerable.

They think boldly and as a rule modestly ; they want to learn, and they listen to all who

undertake to teach them. In their anxiety to learn they will listen with an unexpected patience, but they do not accept what they are told without first brooding over it. They think for themselves.

This is especially true of the young girls of to-day. Because for obvious reasons their thoughts are not always communicable girls exchange thoughts much less than boys do ; they worry out most of them by themselves unaided, and thus get a habit of self-reliance both in conjecture and judgment sooner than it is acquired by boys. Moreover, their thought is operative at an earlier age. Adolescent boys live in a thraldom of games as well as of work ; physical fatigue keeps the mental side in a contented slumber while their girl friends are already racked with the growing pains of intelligence. Thus in the companionship of a normal boy and girl, it is the girl who is always the thought leader. The boy follows her through the years, walking behind her with a peaceful but rather oafish gallantry of the mind, saying little more than "Just so. Exactly. Well, indeed. You surprise me, Mary." By the time, however, that they are both twenty-five he is side by side with her ; and thence onwards it is probably

he who leads and she who follows and says " Just so."

Doubtless much of a girl's first thoughts deals with the tender passion. She says, in effect, after marking the passage in the anthology that was given to her by her godfather :

> O let the solid ground
> Not fail beneath my feet
> Before my life has found
> What some have found so sweet.

But soon the thought widens : she thinks more of herself. What am I to do with myself, what am I to *make* of myself ? Girls wonder about themselves. They think about their own thought. The marvellous character of their thought almost overwhelms them.

Take an intelligent shop-girl of twenty-one summers standing behind a counter and selling ribbons. The customer wants a green one, and, except for an occasional swift glance at the distant figure of the shop-walker, the girl seems all attention. Indeed, her state seems to be more than attentive ; she is concentrated on the task in hand.

" Green, and two inches wide. Yes, madam."

As she says this she has thought of how just

a week ago she slapped a man's face, and two days later let a man kiss her, and has asked herself why. Why? She was not really offended with the first man and, on the other hand, she was rather disgusted with the second man. She turns to bring down the box of ribbons, and she is thinking: "Damn this new elastic corset that I was fool enough to buy. It's hurting me like hell! Ah! That's better. I suppose I must just get used to it, as one has to get used to everything in this funny old world."

Then, as she opens the box and begins to show the ribbons, she thinks, "Stays! Yes, they wore *some* stays in the time of Queen Elizabeth." She thinks of Anne Boleyn, Sir Walter Raleigh, Drake, the Spanish Armada, and simultaneously sees pictures of Hampton Court Palace, as seen by her last Bank Holiday, the omnibus, the train, the tea-shop; with one most vivid picture that shows Raleigh spread his rich cloak in a dirty puddle and Elizabeth step across it, smiling at him in spite of her stays. And somehow behind all this there hangs with increasing weight her determination to buy a ticket in that lottery she heard of yesterday, while right in front of everything, bright and absorbing as the surface thoughts seem to be, there is the business

on which she is engaged. She has issued a fiat (and the fiat will not be disobeyed) to sell green ribbons without cessation.

"Two inches wide. Isn't that wide enough, madam? Of course it will look wider made up."

And just as this typical girl is astounded when she thinks about her thoughts, she is bewildered when she recognizes the unexpectedness of the actions that result from thought. Her vagaries of conduct are absolutely disconcerting. Scarcely ever does anything come off quite according to plan. As, for instance, her quarrel with her friend Maude, the girl at the end of the counter. In regard to the dastardly behaviour of Maude, Maude's infamous treatment of herself, Maude's insolence, her treachery, both of the brazen and the underhand kind, she had not the slightest doubt. She had looked at it from a hundred points of view and it was always black. She was not hasty in the matter, but when she had determined to give Maude such a piece of her mind as would never be forgotten, it had seemed that nothing could avert the explosive force of righteous indignation, and the utter overthrow and confusion of the culprit. She began the thing as planned. They were alone

in the bedroom. Nobody there to interfere. But in less than a minute she and Maude were locked in each other's arms and weeping on each other's necks. How, and why? Something in the tone of Maude's voice, as of mingled anguish and horror; a sort of desolate gesture made by Maude—as if Maude had been saying to herself: "Then the whole world has gone from me. My one friend has turned against me,"—together with a sudden belief or intuitive knowledge that Maude's affection was unchanged, that she had sinned unconsciously, that Maude had not meant anything at all.

Again her unexpected change of attitude when she was summoned before the manager of the firm to receive that well-merited rebuke. She intended to take it meekly but instead, she "went off the deep end," brandishing her arms, shouting, denouncing the rotten management. She frightened them. The manager said her grievance should have attention and begged her not to upset the others by speaking of it. All very odd. As in a dream she heard her own voice, loud and vindictive.

But further than this, she is moved to wonder, a more solemn kind of wonder, by the revelation of the existence of other and deeper mysteries.

She gets what I have described as glimpses of latent power. She seems to see in a flash that enormously more than she has ever used lies waiting for use within her. On occasions when her sympathy has been unusually stimulated she seems to have the gift of divination. She knows what is going to be said before the actual utterance.

Then, too, the sensation experienced several times since her eighteenth birthday, of suddenly rising high above herself. For instance, when that middle-aged man came and told her he was meditating suicide. After the shock of surprise and horror she rose to the occasion. All recollection of sex and age was banished. They were two souls ; one suffering and the other meaning to comfort, if she could. She wrestled with his doubts ; she fought with his fears ; and all through it she had that feeling of power, of dreamlike superhuman power. Then at the end she kissed him, as a sister kisses a brother, or as a mother kisses a son, and said : " Now, old chap, pull yourself together and never think of such a wicked thing again." The words were so ordinary, so trite, and yet they sounded beautiful ; and at that moment she felt, she knew with absolute certainty, that she was giving him courage as well as giving him hope, that strength

was going out of her into him. He said : " I'll try. I'll try. I won't be cowardly. Bless you, bless you." And he went away hurriedly and huskily.

There is nothing new in the synoptic result of my shop-girl's reveries. Although she thinks so much quicker than they did, her parents and grandparents and great-grandparents were aware of the range of human thought and the incongruities of human action. What is new is the habit of analysis, the strenuous personal effort to understand or explain. The older generations, too, had their dim peering recognition of inward power. Fifty years ago quite ordinary people were not only saying (as they say now), " I am the oddest, queerest kind of creature," but saying also, " I sometimes firmly believe I could have done anything if I tried."

But they left it at that.

Men and women look into themselves to-day not cursorily or amusedly, but steadfastly and solemnly ; not as passers-by in darkness before a locked door that has cracks or rents in it through which a light may chance to shine, but as astronomers of old patiently scrutinizing the sky for the advent of a long-prophesied star.

The shop-girl (with everybody else) having those glimpses of hidden potency and untested capacity, and saying, "There is more in me than other people think: there is infinitely more in me than I thought myself," says in addition, "Are these gifts to be wasted?" She broods upon that uplift of nobility which came in the conversation with the would-be suicide. Surely it indicated something of supreme value to others, if not to herself. Is that, too, to be left in its incomplete accidentally available condition only? With these thoughts she has a sense of sacred duty to a self that is fitfully capable of such achievement, and that perhaps might be capable of performing the highest work that can be done on earth; and at this point she and the other self-students say in effect:

"If I go through life without finding a propitious outlet for the spiritual energies with which I am endowed, I might as well be dead."

All over the civilized world people are feeling the call for fulfilment of duty to self, and the necessity of a rationalized egotism. In this sense we cannot consent to remain slaves; we must all be rulers. The urge of individualism is probably the strongest world force at the present

moment. Paradoxical as it may sound, any strength in the appeal to intelligent minds that issues from the creed or effort of modern socialism, communism, even of anarchism of the milder sort, is (if you analyse it) a revolt against the herd instinct and can be plainly traced to the struggle of the individual to establish his right to individuality. To these, the intelligent, it seems that the true aim is not to make men all alike, but to give them liberty to become unlike one another.

They demand freedom and liberty for self. They desire to express themselves. They believe that life (real life) in contradistinction to death is impossible without expressing oneself. They accept the formula that Life is expression.

And I do not think it is as yet clearly enough understood that all this applies to what used to be termed the humblest walks of society as well as to the highest. These very ordinary people now have the feelings that once were appropriate only to artists. They, too, desire to give outward form to the creative thought within them. They wish to make a mark by the weight of their individuality. They desire to impose on the world their personal opinion, such as it is, just as surely as does the poet, the painter, the sculptor. They

know that when they look at the universe they see what no other eyes can see, and they, too, desire to raise a monument, however small, as record and memorial of what they have seen ; and they must do it if they are to remain contented. The bulk of them have lost the thought-soothing solace of strong drink ; they have passed beyond bread and meat ; they do not mistake the glow of digestion for happiness.

The ancient beliefs in complete and unlimited self-sacrifice are more than doomed. They are dead. We have scarce patience to think of the obliteration of self that once was considered so meritorious : of the destruction of all that makes up personal life in the lives led by monks in their cloisters, nuns in their convents, or even by dim-eyed students who remained in closed rooms and slowly wore themselves out with a vain search for knowledge. Obliteration of self is odious to us. We cannot even endure it on the sentimental side. The once popular drama of renunciation would break the strongest theatrical syndicate. We shut with a bang books that contain those fantastic old tales in which one meets a hero who refuses to open his mouth to clear his character, who abandons wife, family,

friends, and with a parade of imbecile nobility goes forth to serve a long sentence in prison as punishment for somebody else's crime. We no longer pity the people who submit to injustice ; we are angry with them. We used to slobber over the meek daughters who sacrifice their lives to exacting old mothers, the sons who toil for ungrateful fathers, or the fathers and mothers who ruin themselves for voracious children ; now we say they are fools.

The only consummation of sacrifice we can tolerate is where the greatness of what is gained seems to render small in its aspect that which has been lost. As, for instance, when one soldier dies to save a whole regiment ; when a doctor, knowing the full hazard of the task, labours to obtain a mastery over the germs of some virulent disease, and on behalf of mankind kills himself with that in which he works ; when, as in the case of Macdougall King, the Canadian, a man attacked with an advancing paralysis and warned that he can only prolong life by abstention from all intellectual effort, decides to make the last flame of the lamp burn bright and fast instead of flickering slowly, in order that he may leave behind him a noble useful book.

We permit too, because we cannot withhold

the permission, that one may throw away one's life for the sake of good manners—as when one remains in a plague-infested city from which a precipitate flight would seem ungraceful to those who could not go ; when one jumps into the sea to fish out a stranger ; or when one gets in front of a train to help a passenger who has annoyingly fallen on the line. But this is merely the *beau geste* enforced upon us by the ethics of our class or race. We die for a convention while perhaps despising it.

One of the enemies to self is the dream. Occasionally friendly, it is habitually hostile, and in its inimical character it should be fought with resolution.

Although dreams may once in a way lift us they in general keep us on a low level. They retain us in a childlike and credulous condition. Moreover, by their capricious choice of material they confuse things and rob them of due proportionate values. They blunt the sharp impressions of daylight hours. They familiarize us with thoughts and acts that we began by wisely shrinking away from. They make us discontented with the real, the possible, the attainable, by giving us pictures of supernatural beauty and

illusions of paradisaic delight. And worse than all this, they tend to establish timidities.

It is now believed by many people that for the fabrication of our dreams we have accessible to us as material not only the memories of our life-time but the memories of our race. We weave the dream-pattern with strands composed of the records of external impressions, recollected organic sensations and mental processes that are our very own, but also with many threads of similar stuff that belong not to ourselves but to men and women who were long since dead. In other words, we dreamers can, and often do, plunge down through personal experience, whether of the recognizing or unconscious self, to far lower depths, to a dark reservoir of primeval fear.

The early dreams of man were probably nearly all of them nightmares. His cave or his tree afforded him no really comfortable sleeping-place, he lay there often unhappy and always insecure; in sleep he suffered from internal physical discomforts of which not the least, as we are told, was the strain and stress of an as yet incomplete visceral adjustment to the recently acquired erect attitude of the body, and mentally he was oppressed by the blank ferociousness of inanimate forces and haunted by the remorseless intentional

cruelty of the living foes that surrounded him. This was the simple but grievous matter out of which his dreams were constructed. He dreamed of falling from a height, of being pursued and being unable to run away, of those protracted and tremendous combats with wild beasts so splendidly described by Monsieur J. H. Rosny in his last book on *La Préhistoire*.

Especially of the cave man can it be said that awake or asleep he had good cause for fear. He had made the cave a shelter, but he could never make it an impregnable fortress. There must be some aperture or orifice to it, he was obliged to have a way into and out of the cave, and doubtless the ideal cave, the one he sought for, was like a large house with an absurdly small front door—a front door just big enough to admit the owner but not nearly big enough to allow of intrusion by vast sabre-toothed tigers or giant bears. When the entrance was naturally large he blocked it with stones and fallen trees. This barricade he pulled down and rebuilt in the morning when he went out and in the evening when he came in, he and his wife wrestling with the tree-trunks, perspiring over the great stones as they laboriously moved them ; a pitiful task added to the arduousness of the day's routine.

Sometimes when he returned at night his wife, inside the cave, refused to give assistance, shouted to him that he was to remain outside, implored him to go away. The mammoth bears had been nosing about the door during his absence.

Those mammoth bears were horrible. They would pull down any barricade that man could construct. They would wait for their prey.

It is a gruesome subject, resembling many other gruesome subjects that we should avoid dwelling on either in our waking or dreaming state ; and yet one cannot help cursorily imagining the tumult of anguish, horror, and despair that burst through the minds of such a man and woman as they lay huddled and clinging to each other in the darkness of their cave. They have heard sounds which startled them, affrighted, from sleep, and they listen quaking. Then they hear the sounds again, sounds as if made by movement and disruption of the precarious safety screen at the cave entrance. Hark. There it is once more. Probably the man, with the manlike instinct of postponement, the recoil from recognition of the inevitable, the overwhelming distaste for the word "now" that he has transmitted to us through the ages, whispers to his mate—exactly

after the style of the modern householder whispering mice when burglars are suspected—that it may not be what they dread, it may be nothing at all. "And at any rate keep quiet." But the woman, with the almost brutal readiness to acknowledge facts however hideous that woman still display, cries shrilly, "Rubbish. It is the bears. And it doesn't matter what noise we make. They know we're here."

It is the bears all right; and if that entrance is large they will tear away all obstructions and come inside, or if it is small they will sit down and wait outside. They will wait, ruthless as Time, patient as Destiny, for their victims to come out and be killed or to perish within from hunger and thirst. Truly a diabolical dilemma this that those two unfortunate ancestors of ours had to face; and a very nasty thing for them or their descendants to dream about!

If only because of the tainted source of dreams, because of the fear that lies in dreams, those who are seeking to develop self should fight against the dreaming habit. Fear is of course mortally destructive of self. It annihilates individuality. It makes all human beings alike, and in its extreme manifestations it reduces man, the lord of creation, to the level of the meanest of his subject animals.

Dreams, then, are deadly and dangerous when they heighten our susceptibility to fear.

And it should be further noted that an insidious harm can be wrought in self as well by the dreams that we forget as by those that we remember.

On the other hand, since nothing in the universe is all good or all bad, there is no doubt that among memorable dreams there are some few that give transitory aid or permanent enlightenment to self. Even at the worst they may serve as proofs of our capacity to feel and to enjoy ; while at the best they may give us as clearly as life itself glimpses of inherent nobilities, of impulses towards high deeds, of a splendour of conduct that might in reality be ours, as well as picturing the glory that we may not ever find. These latter are the uplifting dreams of which I spoke. Also, as has been pointed out by Tridon and so far as I know by nobody else, there are certain epoch-making dreams. "They are milestones," he says, "in the development of character, which lead the individual to typical life-adjustments or to typical reactions."

I believe there is considerable truth in this. Such epoch-making dreams may reveal sometimes to the dreamer an unknown weakness or an un-

known strength, or they force him to recognize a truth in regard to himself, or they remove a difficulty or take off an inhibition. On other occasions they sum up and symbolize the principal danger of his future life.

I believe that a particular type of this dream comes to the majority of adolescents at some period of their development. Young girls not infrequently have a dream in which certain repugnances are overcome and they accept the laws of nature and society with all their accompanying strangeness. It is, so to speak, an acceptance of life. And afterwards the girl thinks in a new way of duty, marriage, motherhood, the domination of the male, and much else, shrugging her shoulders and saying to herself, "I suppose it's all right. Anyhow, I shall take things as they come." In the case of boys the dream is a little different. It is a breaking down of shynesses rather than repugnances. It is, so to speak, an acceptance of death. After it he thinks, for the first time, "If I face things boldly nothing is going to hurt me—not even death"; and he goes on meditating: "If a man insults me I'll fight him, no matter what his size. I'll just go for him—even though he knocks me out or kills me before we've done."

Thus the boy and the girl are both changed by the dream (or more properly speaking, they are both changed at the date of the dream), and they will never again be what they were before the dream. But in their acquiescence there is no surrender. Death and life have been faced and the terrors of each have been at least partially vanquished. In both cases self has been strengthened, not weakened.

The dream, of course, has kept pace with the heightening power of thought. It now has for its materials literature, art, the imagination of our strongest contemporaries; our personal smattering of science, our muddled understanding of marvellous inventions, our varied experience of movement by earth, water, and air; together with our increased perception of surrounding space and our vague guesses as to undiscovered dimensional influences. Thus modern dreams are rich in texture and infinitely complicated in pattern. The dream of prehistoric ages was comparatively very simple; and yet, simple as it was, it had already begun to impinge upon life. It had found the night not big enough for it and had boldly invaded the day. Dreamers confounded the events of dreams with actual

occurrences. They narrated their dreams, they embellished them with additions, they made legends of them. They paused on the jungle track or on the rock ledge, to dwell again for a few moments amidst the unsubstantial shapes and luminous shadows that had bewitched them ; and in those moments perhaps were pounced upon and devoured by a stark reality.

But, symbolically, this is happening all round us at the present time. The dreamer is being destroyed by reality. There are many thousands of people who are completely subjugated by the habit of day-dreaming ; and all who indulge in day-dreams tend to lose the power of prompt and efficient action. They may lose it partially or completely ; but from the very beginning of the habit, when the thing to be done loses its sharp imperative aspect in a cloud of fantastic thought as to other and less forbidding things that might have stood where it stands, they are allowing the dream to impinge upon life perilously ; they are inviting an eventual state of mind when the actual shall be to them as nothing in comparison with the imagined. Thus statesmen and politicians instead of taking steps to avert a disaster dream that it is not going to happen ; thus the lover dreams his triumphant courtship of the beloved object

and in fact omits to woo her at all ; thus semi-insolvent traders, incipiently fraudulent trustees, rash and unsuccessful speculators, dream of the lucky chance or caprice of fate that will bring safety when they might still perhaps save themselves and spare much of the loss of their victims by resolute personal action, a confession of wrong-doing, or an appeal for help from those who, if deceived to the last moment, will prove implacable.

When the habit of day-dreaming becomes entirely dominant, one may say that unreality has flooded into life and almost filled it. Perhaps the most typical of such excessive dreamers nowadays are to be found among the men and women for whom life has been made too easy and those for whom it has been made too difficult; also the physically incompetent drudges in whose blank black days there can be no light except an artificial one ; also the feebler children of successful business men, the second generation of an exhausted energy, weak fruit of sturdy trees that have borne too well and been trenched too often ; people who have had fortune by birth and been pushed into place by tradition ; those who, as l'Abbé Roux described, suffer because they have been elevated to great positions while knowing

that they can only walk safely on low ground and those who are repressed and kept down, yet know themselves worthy of elevation; those who come from the dark shadows of a wasted and frustrated youth and emerge too late into the dazzling sunshine of opportunity. But no matter whence they all come, there can be no doubt whither they are all going. They are marked one and all with the stigmata of the self-destroyer. They are, unless rescued from the dream, merely vessels for a purposeless and never completed volume of chances and choices ; they will become passive as the polished stone that catches the glitter of a sunset sky, and inert and unresponsive as the cobweb that lights up with the dawn and grows grey as the sun rises higher; they are already but the ghosts of the active living men and women that they might have been. Is this an exaggeration ? I do not think so. Ask the wives of persistently dreaming men. Ask the nurses, warders, doctors, and chaplains of asylums. For what we call insanity is but a dream from which the dreamer cannot wake.

As to the arbitrary interpretations of dreams and their application to life for guidance I really cannot understand how any sensible person can attach value to them, whether these are made by

dark and sinister priests of dead religions, by the black-coated gentleman who drives up to the door in his motor-car and styles himself a psycho-analyst, or by an automatic penny-in-the-slot machine on the platform of a railway station.

All things considered, it appears to me that we cannot even accept the dream as "the universal consolation of mankind" without risks to the active living self. If it compensates for the pain of life it renders us unfit to bear pain. It takes from us far more than it gives. Even the artist's dreams are valueless until "they are made concrete by the pen, the chisel, or the brush." And no people are more miserable than the singer who has never sung and the poet of a million unwritten lines.

No, visions, and not dreams, are what we want, visions of that which can be and shall be, visions of a future that is to be fulfilled by our own strenuous effort; and if now and then a dream seems to show us the lofty goal and the pathway that leads to it we may rest assured that we, our very self, first showed them to the dream.

I have spoken of the desire for self-expression as a world-force. Is that another exaggeration? Once more I do not think so.

In this relation passages in books that at a comparatively recent date struck strangely on the ear and left the discomfort of a mental shock now seem to us trite and familiar, so obvious as scarcely to be worth saying. "Life is expression," said Edward Carpenter, the thinker. "If you think of it you will see more and more that it is a movement from within outwards—an unfolding, a development. To obtain a place, a free field, a harmonious expansion for your activities, your tasks, your feelings, your personality, yourself, in fact, is to Live." Henri Bergson, the analyser, said that although Society "cannot exist unless it subordinates the individual, it cannot progress unless it allows the individual to do whatever he pleases." Walter Page, the man of action, said that above all else men need to give voice to themselves—to say their say, if it is only a "yennop."

Yesterday such sayings seemed bold. To-day they affect us only as old friends giving us the commonplace encouragement of a passing greeting. When we come to the plain and unhesitating statements of the up-to-date psychologists, reckless as they would have seemed a little while ago, they now seem merely the quiet reflection in the mirror of our own ordinary thoughts.

These writers point out that men are increasingly difficult to lead except in the direction they have chosen for themselves, and that statesmen and politicians all over the civilized world will have further sad awakenings if they ignore this fact. What le Bon called the soul of the crowd is a more transient and untrustworthy apparition than it used to be ; it has lost confidence, it knows that it will be torn to pieces directly by the widely divergent movements of all the individual souls. The material crowd itself (as the Metropolitan Police have observed with pleasure) disperses far more swiftly than it used to do. In a minute we grow tired of thinking the same thing that is being thought by a lot of people all round us. The mob-leader as he leads must continually look over his shoulder to see that he is being followed. Even the great thinker of to-day (himself a type of the highest individual development), full of a noble altruism, unflinchingly sure of the rightness of his thought and its power to bring salvation to the rest of humanity, must try to make converts one by one, and not altogether, *en masse*, unless he would find himself in the predicament so beautifully described by Dante Gabriel Rossetti and be forced to utter that deep lamentation : "I am as one who,

through the whole night, holding his way diligently, hath smitten the steel into the flint, to lead some whom he knew darkling ; who hath kept his eyes always on the sparks that himself made lest they should fail ; and who, towards dawn, turning to bid them that he had guided God-speed, sees the wet grass untrodden except by his own feet."

Using words from which once upon a time we shrank, André Tridon (up-to-date among the up-to-datish) says : " The continual development of the ego urge from century to century has created an attitude of mind which is not favourable to the autocratic domination of prophets and leaders. . . . The conscious egotist whose ego urge tends to make him constantly seek a new and higher level, is not over-anxious to be ' uplifted ' by anyone. If some one, however, presents to him convincing reasons of a scientific nature for a mode of behaviour promoting his ego's progress and rise, he will undoubtedly secure a hearing."

A cognizance of the craving for self-expression shows in the current literature of all countries, whether of the solid or lighter form. In the novel which admittedly attempts to note and typify the thought of the passing hour it has become an almost wearisome iteration. Half of our English

novels now are the story of a semi-educated person bound down and nearly crushed by the dead force of surrounding monotony and similarity, yet still bravely struggling for a rich, full, individual existence. It shows again in the novels that take love for their main theme and try faithfully to portray the intercourse of the sexes as it is to-day; for the fictional woman, once a passive receptacle of tender bliss, now gets restive in her ecstasies if they threaten entirely to absorb her, and she will emerge hard and resolute as a rock rather than allow the broad tide of love to swamp personality and at last submerge self. Even in the flimsy serial of the newspapers the poor journeyman author, feeling the million-beating pulse of his public, knows that the saucy little typist cannot nowadays satisfactorily marry the rich duke (in spite of all the material advantages of the match) unless it is made clear that the dully splendid life of a duchess will never rob her of her character, her idiosyncrasies, her sauce.

Ethically considered, the universal desire receives its sanction. Day by day it is given acknowledgment and support in stronger and stronger language. To quote yet again from the up-to-date moralist, "The new ethics will

bear in mind that life is meant to be lived fully and joyfully, . . . and is not a preparation for death but an aim or end in itself. . . . Man's duty in the future will be represented by one word : Health,—health which will mean mental and physical efficiency."

And if, as André Tridon says, the egotist in the modern sense exhibits no anxiety to be uplifted, it is because he does his own uplifting. He trusts to self. We have found our star, and we mean to follow it.

IX

TO develop self is a duty that we owe not only to one's own self, but to the rest of mankind also. Nevertheless, all being agreed as to this, it is by no means easy to set about one's life-task. Indeed it is very difficult. The more we ponder the question, the more we look into self for direction, the vaguer and less substantial become those rules of conduct which in a shadowy form have seemed to need only close scrutiny, a stylographic pen, and a bit of paper, for reduction to plain handwriting and thence to the greater clearness of print.

To obliterate self is a wicked deed, whether done by others or by oneself to one's self. But care of self, even in the highest sense, must not become preoccupation with self. Although the self-destroyer is contemptible, the thoroughly selfish person is no less contemptible. Self-centred people are dreadful, and because of our dread of them they tend towards isolation, and, deprived of the spiritual support of others, they

may fall into a loneliness akin to death—admittedly the worst thing that can happen to self. We cannot therefore act on some such simple formula as "Number One first and the rest nowhere." We are bound to society. To use a physiological simile, we are each of us but one cell in a large body, and it is through the medium or with the assistance of the myriad other cells that we draw nourishment and vital force. There is a law of universal service, too, that we cannot evade. We must serve. Truly we are sometimes terrified by the thought that there may perhaps be no limits to the law, and that we are called upon to be the servant of all the world in order to become master of oneself. In fact we require a rationalized altruism as much as a rationalized egotism.

Moreover, one is confronted with a great paradox. What is really cultivation of self often seems like suppression of self. There are things that you forfeit as soon as you forget about them—such as umbrellas, your favourite chair at the club, that girl who became so affectionate last Thursday and who is now wondering why you haven't written to her. But one can cease thinking of self without losing it. As a tree grows while its owner sleeps, so self can strengthen and develop during periods when we are utterly

oblivious to it. Preoccupation about self is weakening and paralysing. When tinged with emotion it breaks up all proper sequence of associated ideas. In extreme cases it leads, if allowed its full destructive course, to the disease of melancholia, when the victim of unceasing introspection can do nothing whatever beyond brooding, when power of action has gone, and self has shrunk first to the dimensions of a four-walled room, then to the smaller prison of the human frame, and then to a mere pin-point of distressful perception.

Perhaps the safest rudimentary rule one can make is to think about oneself as rarely as possible, but to think very hard while one is doing it.

During hours of concentrated work and supreme effort one should be quite unconscious of self. In the great and splendid passion of love one must largely forget oneself, and a full and rich perception of self with all its varied attributes, its hopes, its fears, is an infallible proof that the love is both poor in quality and deficient in strength. As one approaches the highest joys that love can give, all personal feeling—such as pride, triumph, gratification in a success

that should cause envy—drops away from one. The thought of our unworthiness when compared with the almost divine creature who has deigned to love us goes too. Even in obtaining for self what is perhaps no more than a passive state of pleasure and contentment unconsciousness of self often seems to be advisable if not altogether necessary.

In France during the war I had a personal experience that I found on inquiry to be common and usual. But the first time it happened I was puzzled. The morning was fine, and my general gave me a message and I galloped away with it ; and as I went I thought, " What is the matter with me ? " Then I understood that I was perfectly, flawlessly happy. Of course the fact that I had turned my back on the enemy and was going fast in the opposite direction was in itself a source of happiness, but it was not enough to account for my sublime condition. I did not care which way I was going. I had no anxieties, no preoccupations. I had lost myself. In the vastness of the war, the stretch of the desolate landscape, the wide dome of the sky, I was a thing so small, so insignificant, that I was not worth thinking about—even by myself.

Then, on talking to other men, I found that

they, too, had this recurrent blissful state, and that we were all asking ourselves the same question. "Is it not wicked to be happy in the midst of this world-wide misery? Ought I not to be fretting about my family at home, the probability of our all being in the workhouse when peace is declared, and so on?" But deep voices seemed to answer: "No, it is as it should be. You cannot help, you cannot hinder. Carry on."

We ceased to think, and we were happy again. Perhaps it has never yet been plainly shown that the ordinary soldier in the war had nothing whatever to worry about. He might be killed at any moment, but life while it lasted was full of peace, and to very many men the sensation of having become a part of a machine was pleasant and soothing. It was, so to speak, a long holiday from the arduousness of individualism. The comradeship which all enjoyed was based upon a cessation of any special care about oneself.

Thus, as I say, we were happy in not thinking of ourselves; but of course this oblivion was rendered easy by reason of the activity and fatigue of life out there. Whereas, unfortunately, during inactive hours it may often be that the only way

to stop thinking about oneself is to think about other people.

Again, with all the will in the world to do the best for self, we so often appear to be less efficient in this direction, the main highway, than when we wander off down by-roads or round the corners of a no-thoroughfare. In fact a very little reflection on past experience will show us this startling truth. Nearly all our higher achievements have been attained when we were engaged on other people's business. As soon as we take up work for another person and honestly attack it the level of our power at once rises. We begin to think more clearly and strongly ; we find our judgment firmer. The gang of jail-birds that we carry with us cease to rave and shout in their moving prison ; that tangle of contradictory impulses, that forest of doubt through which we are trying to cut a pathway to some small perch or lodgment of safety, has vanished; we stand on an open plain with mountain-tops shimmering in the sunlight all round its confines ; we have but to orient ourselves, to choose a direction, and then follow it with scarce an impediment in the way. All the emotional trouble has gone too, our thoughts are no longer confused

with sensations ; for, whether we care to admit it or not, the pity and the noble indignation aroused in us by the sufferings of our friends are but pallid flames if compared with the raging fire that consumes us when we concentrate sense and intellect in thoughts of our own misfortunes. Finally, *Attention*, the gentle handmaid of all successful labour, holds the back of our head like one of those contrivances in a photographer's studio, so that we shall not turn our eyes but keep them looking straight in front of us.

In my own poor trade of authorship it soon becomes painfully evident that we write best when we write for other people. On the face of it, perhaps, it would seem that we always do this, since we hope that other people will read our books : but what I mean is, our work becomes better as well as easier when we cease to strive for fame, for profit, or even for the recognition of the talented few ; when we are not trying to be clever, but are resolutely saying the things that other people want to hear—rejecting, of course, all that we do not sincerely believe will not only please but help them, and be good for them. And this is something more than the losing of oneself in one's work, of which I have just spoken. It would seem that it is the change of aim rather

than the relief from an obsession that gives us a new energy. We are not only temporarily forgetting self but wilfully subordinating it. Anyhow, at such times (as I believe the majority of professional writers would agree) our pen becomes like a generous well-bred horse galloping with long, free strides, instead of being that sorry jade which required so much whip and spur, which shied at a mere bit of paper, and floundered along the faintly traced lines as if they had been the furrows of a deeply ploughed field.

Whatever our trade, it is with a perceptible effort sometimes that we resign the unprofitable and turn back to the useful and normal. A zest or flavour that was making work like play is gone ; the dust and ashes from the eruption of altruistic energy now darken our mental atmosphere ; in the daily round, the common task, there is a nasty smell of stale duty. We should not foster these fancies. For obviously one's own work must rank as of first importance. It must not be neglected. The work of a man or woman, the life-task, is also the *raison d'être*. In it and through it existence is justified and death kept at a respectful distance. Yet here comes another problem. In the lives of many men and women there is an unceasing conflict, an immense difficulty in

striking a proper balance between the claims of one's self and the claims of the outside world. Those we love will not usually be content that we work for them, make money for them, and give them all the money ; they ask for the time, too, that enables us to earn the money, and deep in ourselves we know that if we refuse it the loss eventually will be ours, not theirs. But they seem inappeasable in their demands ; the more they love us the more they will take—beyond our time they want our thoughts, cherished opinions, taste, discrimination, our individual preferences. They will, if we allow it, take the space we have enclosed for quiet meditation and make it their noisy playground. They will find a way into our secret sanctuary and carry off the lamp and vase from the altar to use as a light in the night nursery and a receptacle for the flowers they have bought in the open market. They will do all this if we permit them. How much are we to give, and how much to withhold ? It is not easy to decide. I believe that most of us stretch the thing as far as we can in the direction of giving, and I believe we are wise to do so. There is guidance in that deep-seated instinct that tells us we may be in danger of losing when we seem to gain.

Beyond a man's actual work there are often subsidiary engagements or occupations that seem necessary for the support and advancement of the work. And here the narrow limits of available time and the large demands made by affection clash once more. For material success it may be advisable to do extra jobs, take up side enterprises, to work regularly after office hours, though the man thus robs himself of many hours of home life or ordinary social intercourse. How is he to adjust the matter? Is he to forgo some of the material success in exchange for the spiritual comfort that he will derive from its abandonment?

Consider the case of Mr. Jones, the happy, prosperous husband and the affectionate father of a family. He is going to take the children to a pantomime on an evening towards the end of the Christmas holidays. He has booked the four seats—for himself, his wife, and the innocent son and daughter. It is to be a great treat for all four of them. But on that same evening he is invited to go to the first performance of a new play—one of those first nights that are usually described as important, meaning not so much that the author and the drama are really important but that very important people will be present,

just the sort of people with whom it is advisable that a person like Jones, himself growing in importance, should mix with and be seen to mix with. His wife understands this at once, and with no more than a quiver of the lip and a break in the voice tells him that he must certainly go to the fashionable and important first night. The children, however, are less easy to manage when he assures them that they will not miss him, that Miss Taylor, their governess, will occupy his vacated place, that they are fond of Miss Taylor, and that it will give them pleasure to witness her pleasure. No, they cannot really miss him. It is their mother who stifles their outcry, saying that Daddy has no choice ; he must desert them on this occasion. He is doing it for their sake, not for his own. And then, perhaps, at the new play he stupidly broods over it all instead of attending to the important audience. He said that those young people at the pantomime would not miss him; but is it not rather as if he were teaching them not to miss him, training them to cool a warm regard, the warmth of which he values very much indeed ? He would not wish them to grow fonder of Miss Taylor than they are of him. These thoughts are not good for self. They may spoil everything, materially as well

as spiritually, rendering him less ingratiating to his important friends and even making him tread on somebody's important corns.

Or suppose that our Mr. Jones received an invitation to dinner from a potentate, say the Prime Minister, on the very evening for which he has a previous dinner engagement with a poor relation in the suburbs. The old suburban relative has been sick and now thinks himself well. It is his birthday ; he desires to make merry, and the affectionate creature has said that he craves for the presence of Mr. Jones at his modest merrymaking. He admires and believes in Mr. Jones. Mr. Jones is to him as big a figure as the Prime Minister is to Mr. Jones. One should keep one's engagements with humble people of that sort ; yet, on the other hand, one cannot afford to slight a Prime Minister; one cannot reject unanticipated and gratifying compliments. If one wants to get on in the world one cannot go by train to Putney when one ought to take a taxi-cab to Downing Street.

This happened a long time ago to a man I knew. He was torn in both directions—almost torn in half,—but he decided in the end to throw over his convalescent relative. "Very sorry—unavoidably prevented—but hope to be given

a later date." Then the spurious convalescent died ; he was not as well as he thought he was, and he had no more birthdays. It worried my friend afterwards. And worry is bad for self.

Many fortunate and successful Mr. Jones's feel (beyond these sudden dilemmas) a constant disappointment that is caused by their failure to adjust satisfactorily a balance of values as between their main purpose, their work, and the calls or demands of affection, friendliness, congenial acquaintanceship. When they are outwardly adamant they soften inwardly, and the work is interfered with by a running sore of memory that irritates the mind and distracts the attention during the very bit of time that they have fought for and obtained. They feel as if they have renounced something imperishable each time that they stand on their rights and secure something concrete, finite, strictly utilitarian. They are haunted with a vague regret for missed chances. They think of those years while their children were still young and still loved them as only the young love. They think of the hours, days, weeks, the long stretch of time if you added all the lost minutes together, when they and their

Mrs. Jones might have travelled, walked over sunlit hills and through shadowy groves, when they might have stored themselves with wonder, beauty, gentle emotion, shared in common. Soon it will be too late. Such regrets are enfeebling to self.

We want to do what is right. It would be foolish to jeopardize a career and the material comfort of one's family by yielding to what may be, after all, a subtle temptation to immediate ease at the cost of future security. Yet which is right, which is wrong? I think one can but refer the question to the sensational or even the emotional self. Examine the state of self after the decision has been made and the line of conduct followed. If self seems to have shrunk, to have grown smaller or meaner, we have done wrong; if we have a sensation of enhanced strength or expanded life, then we have done right.

Self can express itself in many ways; perhaps as much by what it forgoes as by what it grasps at boldly and holds firmly.

Women's need for self-expression is greater than that of men. We should always remember

this. We should be quick to discern their effort to express self, however carefully concealed it may be, and, if we can possibly avoid doing so, we should never thwart it.

Among women fortunate enough to possess sufficient means expression is found not only in the manner of their lives, the friends they frequent, the more serious forms of amusement that they seek,—not only in the garments they wear, the particular books they read and talk of, those pretty little things to which I have already ventured an allusion as shining or glittering on their toilet tables,—but also in the way they decorate their own or their relatives' rooms and houses. For whereas it is a common and foolish observation nowadays that our modern women care little for home and the aspect of home, they are in fact as fond as they ever were of making a home, or, if the home is offered to them ready made, of altering it. It is true that they have not the old house-pride of the Anglo-Saxon races, the gratification felt by ancient house-ladies in the spick-and-spanness of the entire domestic realm, the brightness of pots and pans in the kitchen, the cleanness of the stone or boards in basement passages and on the back stairs ; they concentrate their attention rather upon their usual surroundings,

upon such parts of the house as form their frame or setting ; but they extract a great and strengthening joy in rendering these harmonious to what they consider to be their real self. Indeed into this, the modern feeling of cultivated women with regard to the rooms they occupy, there has come the definite ego urge that can be discerned in almost all modes of thought and relations of life. Nowadays a woman cannot be quite happy in her home, whether large or small, until it is recognizably stamped with her own individuality. If you listen to a hostess talking as she shows you a newly decorated room, you can—unless you are the dullest and most blundering male visitor that ever paid an afternoon call—at once detect her special satisfaction in the purely personal achievement. "Yes, directly I had decided for a black carpet I said I *would* have an orange wall-paper. And I stuck to it through thick and thin. They all wanted me to have green. They implored me to have green, because green's so fashionable. But I said, 'No. Orange.' Don't you think I was right ? I wanted it to be *my* room. I felt that with green the room would not really be me." And the man, making himself sycophantically pleasant to a charming woman who doesn't care twopence for his opinion, will say,

"Of course you were right. You have hit the nail bang on the head. Your orange is A 1. Topping!"

Yet, strangely, if the woman belongs to him or is in essentials dependent on him, the man will sometimes permit himself far different language. He will say green every time she says orange. Perhaps the most baleful masculine tyranny that is still able to prevail lies in the gross and stupid interference with woman's taste, inclination, individualistic preference as to the furnishings and decorations of her home. The tyrant himself may perhaps have no tastes; his strongest feeling in the matter may be no more than the masculine horror of change of which I have spoken; yet dully, blindly, he thwarts and represses; he batters and overbears the quick intense wishes that live beside him, he insults a more vivid imaginative self than he possesses, and outrages humanity by denying an outlet for active thought, an overflow for emotion. Again I seem to drift into language too strong for an ordinary subject. But men should be made clearly to understand that in the home life of a sensitive woman an oil painting over the chimney-piece can be as irritating as a mustard plaster, a pair of window curtains worse than a night-and-

day hair-shirt, and that when you won't allow her to change the position of the grand piano, you make of her drawing-room a torture chamber, a little-ease, in which spiritually she can neither stand up nor lie down with comfort. Large, opulent, elderly widowers who marry young wives are especially addicted to this sort of repressive tyranny. Such a person sometimes gives a second wife everything she can reasonably ask for except the right of self-expression. But that *is* everything. He will tell her that she has a fine house, and she is not likely to improve it by alterations. It has been good enough for him for a number of years, and it ought to be good enough for her. Many of the objects in it, he will remind her, are sacred to him. The clock and candelabra that belonged to his father were in one of the Paris exhibitions ; the ormolu cabinets were knocked down to him at a famous sale ; he bought the moiré antique sofa himself in the Tottenham Court Road ; and so on. He ought to understand, but he does not, that such treatment of this representative of a new generation is deadly and dangerous. I have no patience with him, and if, when he returns home unexpectedly, he finds her seated with a lover on the moiré antique sofa that he bought in the Totten-

ham Court Road, he will be getting no more than he deserves.

In walks of society where money is less plentiful and the home is at best a shelter rather than a museum, women suffer from the repressiveness not of the husband but of a destiny which perhaps will permit them no larger self-expression than may be attained by keeping a pot plant in the front window, using frequently one picturesque or forcible phrase, adopting a certain attitude of scorn or admiration for a particular family among their neighbours. In this latter case if the street condemns, they praise. If the street grovels, they walk erect with tilted nose. But it is essentially the same effort to express themselves that impels them. At least they will escape from resemblance to every other person in the street. Further than this, among those who are wives of faithful hard-working men and mothers of children there is frequently a sublimation of self, or its transfer to the young lives that have sprung from their own life. Perhaps, more correctly speaking, one should say they seek for means of expression through the only channel that appears available ; the forms, feelings, and desires of their offspring. The extremest manifestation of this transference

may be noted in the otherwise inexplicable toleration of wrong-doing with which a virtuous mother will sometimes treat a very badly behaved adult daughter. Clergymen and district visitors are perplexed by these mothers who seem to condone and connive, to be set on pushing their girls over the brink instead of snatching them from danger ; but in fact it means only that the transference of self has been so completely made that the parent is feeling what her child feels. " If in no other way let me express myself this way. If virtue has become like death to me, give me vice and life. Let the heavens fall, let us all be covered with confusion and disgrace, but let my self rise above the ruin as something real and alive."

A higher, better, and much more frequent condition of self-transference is shown by the sacrifices or deprivations voluntarily accepted by mothers for the aggrandisement of their children in the good opinions of other people. If you go round any poor neighbourhood at the time that Sunday afternoon school is about to begin you will see, repeated in road after road, a sight that should touch the heart if you can comprehend all its inward meaning. At the gate or doorway the mother stands, following with her eyes the

child or children that she has just despatched, all in best clothes, washed, and brushed, to join the other children at the school. Sometimes the contrast is violent between the little chubby boy in his blue necktie and Eton collar, the graceful little girl tricked out like a fairy in muslin and ribbons, and the grubby slatternly woman who stands there and watches with swelling pride and melting emotion. You can hardly believe that this small prince and princess have in truth issued from her dismal abode. And the hoarse, tired voice may shock you as the proud creator of these splendours shouts her last warnings. "Doris, if you fall down and dirty your dress, you'll get such a smacking as you've never had, my lady. . . . Bobbie, you be careful too. I tell you straight, you'll catch it, sir, if you mess yourself up with those blackguardly boys at the rec'ration ground." She had a soft, rather a pretty voice once, but it has grown hard in the struggle that she has undergone for the sake of those small ones. She stands there threatening them and yearning after them. She has sent them forth to give expression to all that she has lost. Spiritually she is with them as they make their triumphant entry at the school ; they are at once her escape from despair, her protest

against death, her song of life ; they are her very self.

Lastly, in regard to particular forms that the craving for self-expression may assume in women, one should be careful not to repress that which may seem merely eccentricity but which perhaps is considerably more. Girls as they pass over the threshold that leads to womanhood not infrequently surprise their parents and guardians by adopting new queer habits, tricks of speech, attitudes of mind ; and those who boast themselves on being older and wiser should be very gentle in their treatment of an offender whose essential offence is a disregard of their own laws and conventions. The more marked the eccentricity the more careful one should be. If the eccentricity indicates even a slight alteration of nature or temperament—as when a naturally shy retiring girl seems to seek adventures and escapades—it is almost certainly due to an imperative need for self-expression. If the change seems far less important its cause may be the same. And in neither case will " For goodness' sake drop it. . . . You don't know how foolish you are making yourself. . . . I'm positively ashamed of you," or any other protest of that sort, effect a cure.

The girl at the moment you upbraid her may be in the throes of a life and death struggle; she may be fighting hard for the ultimate peace of her soul; she may be resolutely striving to bring about some accord or adjustment between the overpowering sensation of being alive and the horrible fear that no adequate place has been reserved for her in life. She may have said to herself in effect, "God has not been kind to me. He has denied me the pretty face and graceful figure of Mary Jones. He has given me none of the fascination of many of my other friends. He has not endowed me with wit, high intelligence, or unusual strength of purpose. It is as if God did not care for me and had tried to lose me in the dull, mediocre, unrecognizable crowd of girls for whom life is like a journey on the tube railway—a series of dark tunnels with one's own thoughts instead of electric lamps to light them, and then that completely dark tunnel when the lights have gone out, the thoughts have ceased, and the journey is done. But something God *has* put into me, whether He meant to or not, that would differentiate me now and for ever from all those other millions of girl-travellers, if only I could get it out."

So she parts her hair at the side instead of

on top, annoyingly buys a monocle and sticks it in her eye, or says she hopes a Labour Government will be given power again when her father is aching to get back the Conservatives. She is eccentric. The signs of eccentricity are not great but they are enough to indicate the existence of hidden trouble. A lazy little puff of smoke is sometimes the first sign of a whole ship being on fire.

Self cannot rise except with the aid of the intellect as a constant and increasing reinforcement of innate desires and more recently developed emotional impulses. Nourishment of the intellect is a permanent duty. We are starving that side of self when we do not read and think, when we treat the world as a playground instead of a school, when we prematurely cease to think in the widest manner of which we are capable. We must read, study, and learn to the very end of life.

But as soon as we consider the necessity of purposive self-uplifting thought we become aware of another conflict, a still older clash. Worse than this struggle between the interests or welfare of one's self and one's partners in life are the

discrepant requirements of thought and action. On the one side there is the open world, on the other there is the study door. Which should we choose? Which is the right side of the door, which the wrong side? Walter Scott said, were he offered the cruel alternative of perpetual society or perpetual solitary confinement, he would not hesitate a moment; he would say, "Jailer, lock me in."

We are not truly faced with so brutal a choice. We can go in and out as we please. Obviously ours is only one more case of striking a correct balance, of coming to terms, of making a common-sense bargain between ourselves and the external universe.

But it is not easy. If we think too long and too much we deteriorate in our power of action; if we are too active we lose the power of thought. Action should be the result of thought. We cannot impress this on ourselves too carefully. We ought to think quietly until we have made our decisions, and having made them we ought to act on them. Unfortunately the vast majority of us do not think in this manner; our decisions are made at the last moment, are really left to make themselves, fortuitously, emotionally, or desperately—as when one tosses a coin and says

"Heads or tails." Too many of our actions are merely reactions. If we have made plans by thought they are destroyed by accident. We let them go. External life takes hold of us, making us helpless ; and I believe that to-day there is deep trouble, confusion, distress, because intelligent men and women all over the world feel that in these respects they should be lords of themselves and they are not. They know that they ought to control all life by thought, and they realize too well that they are not doing it. It is outward tumultuous life that controls, sweeps them on, and carries them away.

They know that it is so in small things, they dread that it may become so in big things.

And beyond the kind of thought about which I speak—the thought that lays the train which is to explode in action,—there is the higher and quite as necessary kind of thought which is merely meditative and reflective : quiet bouts of thought which lead only to an improved faculty of thinking —in fact to self-improvement,—periods during which we should, so to speak, take stock of our mental possessions, get rid of some perhaps, and put the rest in order, simply tidying the mind. "Give me time to think," is a universal cry. Time is needed.

But to-day the zone of external activity seems unwilling to give one the time. In the hurry and muddle of the hours we are always behindhand, never ahead. Life itself forces us to proclaim our thoughts before they are ready. "Come now. What do you think about it?" Important people like Prime Ministers and Leader-writers in the big daily newspapers frequently suffer this coercion. Physicians, lawyers, political economists are often not allowed to hesitate before they speak. It makes them very uncomfortable.

Worse still, the pressure is sometimes so great that we are compelled to take other people's thoughts. That is wrong. As we all admit, we ought to think our own thoughts. The other thing has always the sound of an echo; there lies in it the essential feebleness of plagiarism; it has the uncertainty, the lack of grip, that one observes in the laborious copy of an original picture. Real experts at once can detect the hollow sham.

All this is especially painful if you have been labelled a thinker—as is the case more or less with all well-known writers, be they poets, historians, or novelists. Any person who writes books is supposed to be a thinker; indeed, whether

he wishes it or not, there is an implicit understanding or contract between him and his readers that the thoughts he puts before them shall be his own thoughts, and, moreover, that they shall be his best thoughts, worked out arduously and slowly, or if they have come to him in a flash, then afterwards carefully considered and pondered over. Every writer who has gained a public feels this obligation, and it is to him like a breach of faith if he fails. When he does fail, it makes him wretchedly uncomfortable.

In this regard I am inclined to think that authors are the most unfortunate of all people. They are so completely beaten by time—or by the want of time.

If you analyse a writer's task it is : Looking at Life, thinking about what you have seen, and then recording what you have seen. But even so we are haunted by the necessity of taking second looks—we are obliged if we are conscientious to *verify*. Suppose one of my poor heroines is due at Waterloo station and I want to describe in a few words the crowded platform. Waterloo is the London terminus with which I am best acquainted, but I *know* that if I am to do that tiny bit of description conscientiously I must go across to Waterloo and have another look at it. Sup-

pose I make my young lady walk with her lover in St. James's Park and feed the ducks and admire the towers of Westminster Abbey showing above the summer foliage of the trees. I am immediately seized with a conscientious qualm, and I am forced to go myself to St. James's Park to make sure that there are in fact some ducks and that Westminster Abbey is visible from the brink of the pond. It all takes time.

Consider the writer with a large aim who wishes to give the very spirit of the age. London, big as it is, will not suffice him. As well as passing days and nights in restaurants, theatres, dancing clubs, and so on, in scraping acquaintance and talking with all sorts of people, on the tops of omnibuses, in railway trains, or lounging at public-house corners, he ought to go round all the great provincial cities. He ought to listen to the views of men and women in factories, coal-mines, ship-building yards. In point of fact there seems no limit to the time an author may spend in equipping himself for his task. He should travel, he should take long sea voyages, he should explore the sky in flying machines, and plunge beneath the waves in submarines. A few perilous adventures in strange lands will help him. He ought to study cosmopolitan society

in all the great capitals of the world. He should be familiar with the heights of pleasure and the depths of pain. He ought to consort a little with princes and sojourn in palaces, and he should certainly go to prison now and then. In a word, so as to see fully he should live actively.

Meanwhile his time, not merely a portion of it, but the whole of it, is rigorously required for the perfection of mere craftsmanship. He ought to write every day and write hard. Balzac puts this very strongly. He says: "Great artists and complete poets await neither orders nor customers: they produce to-day, to-morrow, always. From this results that habit of labour, that continual familiarity with difficulties which keeps them in alliance with their Muse, with her creative power." And in another passage he speaks again of the practice required to give an author the necessary power of expression, so that he may wrestle untrammelled with his thought itself. It is painfully true. In the case of many very successful and admired authors this remains to the end a supreme difficulty. They feel after writing twenty or thirty books that their means of expression are as feeble and uncertain as when they sat down to write their first book.

I believe that a few contemporary writers

resolutely divide their year, giving Thought so many months and the world the rest. When they have finished a book they wash the inkstains from their fingers and go right away. They live and cease to think. They forget everything until it is time to begin work again, and when restarted they allow the world to go by the window without ever raising their heads or turning their eyes. One may admire this resoluteness, but few of us can emulate it.

In the world as now constituted it would seem, then, that the principal dangers to self are want of time for development, the inexorable and inappeasable demands made upon us by those we love, the repressive influences that are exercised by the rest of mankind and that unceasingly combat our chance of individualistic expression —the first of these conceivably leading one to despair, the second to blank renunciation, and the third to a loss of all grip on life and a numbness that is like a foretaste of death.

Personally, however, I am persuaded that large as these perils may be, they are always far less so than we dread. We are haunted by a dead thought. Half our fear can be traced to a

fallacy ; the erroneous notion, embalmed in all the old literatures and religions, that life is short. On the contrary, it is immensely long, almost limitless if you measure it by its possibilities. Only empty lives are short. The more you fill a life the longer it stretches out.

But the vast majority of people are too timid really to live their lives. They are absurdly apprehensive of breaking down the delicate framework of mind and body if they give it much to carry or much to do. They ignore the evidence that constantly proves how use tends to increase power rather than to deplete it.

Time is not truly scarce ; it is ours in rich abundance. We need not fear. As with spiritual energy, we possess infinitely more of it than we ever use. If we ceased to waste time we should come into a large fortune of it each day of our lives. We waste time even when using it. If we concentrated our minds instead of giving but a vagrant or an intermittent attentiveness, the time required for small tasks would be greatly reduced and for big ones cut down in a manner that might at first appear to us supernatural. Ordinarily when working we are like those old-fashioned, badly-constructed engines that consumed the maximum of fuel for the mini-

mum of power. While we puff and blow, time is streaming through us as if it were exhaust steam. In long inactive periods when we ought to be noticing what surrounds us, when we ought to be seeing, reading, thinking, we allow time to go as if it were water ; we waste it in high soaring fountains compared with which the famous *jets d'eau* of Versailles or Rome are but trumpery leakages.

Of course absolutely idle people never have a moment to spare for anybody but themselves ; and this is so well understood in the realm of business men that if one is compelled to ask for some time one always makes the request to an apparently well-occupied person. Thus in appointing trustees, executors, and so forth it is always wise (as one's solicitor will tell one) to choose very busy people for the task.

Again let me repeat. It is the emptiness of life, not its fullness, that robs us of time.

As to our sensation or recognition of the passage of Time, fullness not only directs, it decides. In plain opposition to an oddly prevailing belief, time goes fast in monotony and slowly amongst changing scenes and varied activities. We all know a common illusion of holiday-time. The first two or three days of our holiday seem enor-

mous, and then the whole thing goes rapidly. We get the illusion in a stronger form when we set out on a continental tour. There is so much experience and so closely packed : train, boat, train again, with innumerable incidents or episodes of the journey ; a night in the wagon-lit, morning coffee at Lucerne, the panorama of Switzerland unfolding itself, now the train climbing mountain walls and leaping deep ravines, now grinding through the tunnelled Alps, now twisting and winding downwards like a serpent with the warm sunshine on its metal scales. That same afternoon we are comfortably established in an hotel on the shore of one of the Italian lakes ; we have taken a stroll and had tea in the garden there ; after tea we have been for a long exploring walk ; and dressing for dinner we think suddenly, " Can it be possible that it is only thirty-four hours since we left London ? " We seem to have been away for weeks.

Guy de Maupassant in his first sketch of the unacting, patiently suffering woman that he later developed into the principal character of his novel *Une Vie*, makes her say : " How short is the thing that we call a life ! Above all, those lives that are entirely passed in the same place. To be born, to live, and to die in the same place ! "

This is very true in regard to sameness and monotony ; but it does not invalidate the advice to retain the house we love, the house that helps to keep the past alive for us. We need a home —a stronghold—a permanent base. We must have it always if we are to avoid the weakening and fading of an uprooted self. But of course we should not stay always in it. We should be absent from it and return to it. We should use it spiritually when we are thousands of miles away from it.

Again, the people who give most time to others have most time for themselves. It is as though in self-defence they had mastered the art of *making* time ; and in this necessarily acquired mastery perhaps may be found a partial explanation for a startling but undeniable fact : namely, that sometimes those who appear to live almost entirely for others, who push altruism far further than would seem right or wise, nevertheless exhibit the strongest individuality, the most marked signs of an expanded self. They have characteristics, mannerisms, even idiosyncrasies ; neither in thought nor aspect do they consent to wear the dull similarity that a conventional world prescribes for its multitudes. Indeed, after observing such men

and women, one is tempted to say that we need never fear obliteration in working, thinking, and spending for others, since those who give themselves most freely to others are also those who prove most powerful and unyielding in their assertion of the individualistic self. They give, but they take too.

The grandeur of lives that have been led by noble altruistic women has become proverbial, at any rate in England, and probably most of us have met Elizabeth Frys, Florence Nightingales, and Edith Cavells in the unrecorded pages of actual commonplace existence—women in whose lives there has been a reversal of nature's rôles; women who have taken up all the burdens that are normally carried by men; women who have made prodigious and successful efforts on behalf of other people, who have triumphed over all difficulties and impediments in an amazing, a nearly incredible manner. And with all such women (as I believe every careful observer will agree) self becomes very strong. One can see it growing and developing before one's eyes.

Personally I have known and venerated many of these women, and I think I could describe them closely ; but I will only venture to give a slight sketch of one. I will call her Lisa Dane.

Lisa Dane was about thirty-three when I first saw her. She came to my parents' house with her old father and mother, and a middle-aged, taciturn, rather patronizing brother; and we young people understood—I suppose from preliminary chatter of friends—that Miss Dane had been too much petted or encouraged by the silly old people. They had encouraged her to believe in her singing voice and to hope for fame in grand opera; but now some adverse verdicts had wiped out the encouragement and hope, and the father and mother and brother treated poor Lisa as a duly ticketed failure, and Lisa herself, very shy and deprecating with regard to the matter, was giving music lessons in a feeble amateurish way. I think that this was why she had been brought to see us. Somebody was to have lessons from Lisa. Her people had some small means, but were not quite sufficiently well off.

Those hateful words "not quite" suggested themselves as fatally appropriate to thirty-three-years-old Lisa Dane. My first impression of her aspect is still clear, although there was something essentially vague about her herself as she withdrew her tall figure, dark hair, darkish eyes, into the background of our big room, and then, smiling vaguely, seemed almost to fade and

disappear while the elders talked about her. She was not quite young enough, not quite good-looking enough ; her voice was not quite fine enough to attract the public ; even in this quiet room her entire personality was not quite strong enough to hold one's attention for more than a minute or two.

Soon her mother died ; and a little while afterwards her foolish old father and her solemn idiot of a brother put their heads together, embarked on a rash speculation, and lost every penny of the family money. They were ruined, as people in the first or second chapter of a novel are ruined. The old father had to say to Lisa in effect : "We are homeless, helpless, stripped naked to the winds of adversity, and you, my unfortunate child, must go out into the world and earn your daily bread."

Then, metaphorically speaking, Lisa picked up those two men, put them on her back, and thenceforth carried them. She earned her own bread and theirs too. Drawing on her latent powers, tapping deep stores of spiritual energy, she worked for them in the most prodigious fashion, and, never looking behind her, always looking straight ahead, she prospered exceedingly. She became known as a singing mistress

of the highest repute, ruling large classes and having the daughters of princesses and other potentates for private tuition ; she composed the music of popular songs that had a great vogue ; she arranged concerts that became the concerts of the year, with Patti, Melba, de Reszke, and all the big fixed stars shining in her programmes.

Very soon she had established her father and brother in a comfortable house at Chelsea, where she entertained large numbers of friends most hospitably. Then it was discovered that the air of Chelsea did not suit the old man ; so she moved him to a bigger and better house, a house with a garden in the Regent's Park, where he dwelt in a comfort that approached splendour. The old man was wonderful in his prosperity—or rather in his daughter's prosperity. He had a little coupé and a chestnut horse ; beautifully dressed, with Lisa's money, he would drive about the town calling on young ladies and giving them flowers or sweetmeats that he had bought for them, with Lisa's money. He was an old beau and fop, bowing and twaddling, rather Dickensonian in style—a dreadful old bore. The brother remained sombre, and still had his patronizing air. He, too, dressed well. He went to his club,

collected porcelain, and contributed an occasional article to the heavy reviews.

At the end of seven years Lisa was really a big figure in the artistic society of those days. Young people, old people, all people sought her company. She gave supper parties at the Regent's Park house that were talked about for weeks. One met at them those big musical stars that have already been mentioned, also the parental potentates to whom reference has been made, together with great actors, actresses, painters, sculptors, authors. If any really distinguished foreigner was in London she gave a special supper party for him. There was a murmur all through the stalls of theatres on first nights when Lisa came in, and the few who did not recognize her asked who she was. When she entered an ordinary room there was a silence as everybody in the room turned to look at her. And they could not look away again. She was remarkable, startling, not like anybody else.

For, more astounding than all the toil and the success, was the manner in which Lisa herself had developed. It was almost miraculous. Physically she had become a bigger woman, with magnificent shoulders that she displayed in a

nakedness considered very daring at that period; her darkish hair had become black, her eyes were full of smoky fire; her smile, that once had been vague, was like a sunburst in a southern land, waking one with a jump, taking one's breath away, making one's heart beat. Everything about her was strong and daring, but yet not defiant. She wore daring frocks of daring colours. She could sing now—if not well enough for grand opera, in a magnificent knock-you-down fashion that swept vast audiences of honest ignoramuses to their feet and kept them on their feet cheering and stamping wildly. And in private life she could talk and laugh. Better than her singing was her talking, and best of all her laughing. That strong, sweet, deep-toned laugh was so characteristic, so individualistic, that it seemed to *be* Lisa. She could enjoy. She enjoyed existence with a keenness and strength of pleasure that put every languid egotist to shame and confusion. She seemed so much, so very much alive that life issued from her She gave other people some of her life, freely without hesitation, just as she gave her money.

It will be understood that instead of "not quite," the words for Lisa now were "so very";

and it may be surmised that being so very handsome, so very sweet, yet so very brilliant and clever, she had many proposals of marriage. I know as a fact that she had one proposal from a young man of eighteen upon whom she had smiled vaguely when he was eleven, and to whom she had been kind ever since, and whose passion was merely inflamed by the discrepancy of twenty-two years between their ages. She refused him, and laughed. Then she smoothed his hair with her firm kind hand, kissed him on both cheeks, and took him out to supper at a restaurant. And although he was so young she behaved to him in one respect as if he had been a grown-up man. She paid the restaurant bill. Lisa always paid for her men.

She married eventually a delicate refined sort of person who painted miniatures. It was only another man to keep. She made light of the transaction, although I believe she truly adored her feeble penniless artist.

But now these three imbecile drones, the father, the brother, the husband, became active in vain efforts to make money for themselves. They plotted together, led by the brother, and agreed that it would be nice to be rich instead of living altogether on Lisa's bounty. Also, as they were

genuinely fond of her, it irked them to see her working so hard. Thus they plunged into absurd business enterprises—a bonnet shop, a coal agency, a suburban theatre, what not. Again and again they found "an opening" for a little capital and went to Lisa for the capital. She laughed and gave it to them. She worked harder, made more money to meet the new call. She became partner with a famous impresario, organized concerts all over the kingdom, made much, much money.

And all the while she continued to develop. She found time to write some good ambitious music as well as her popular profitable songs. She wrote a play, she wrote poetry, she wrote a life of Mozart. She read everything that everybody else wrote. She learned new languages. She sat up late, she got up early, she lived.

The men died one after another, and she grieved and mourned for each in turn. She would have knocked you down if you had hinted even of the father (who had become very troublesome with his young ladies) that the death was a happy release for her. But nothing could really touch her ; not grief or pain, not time. She went on growing, expanding, living. She protected poor

young women, taught them to sing, gave them her money, set them up in life.

Last time I saw her was in Paris. Her hair was snow-white and her dark eyes blazed in darkened orbits. She was old, but it made no difference to her herself. She was still almost terrifically alive. She had crossed the Channel to see a new play at the Odéon and she was going back to London early next day. We had supper together after the play and sat talking of old times till three in the morning.

I wonder if anybody will recognize this portrait. I have given it because Lisa was an instance of a person who would have remained nothing at all but for the altruistic stimulus. She found her self in working for other people.[1]

On the whole, as I have said, with such women as Lisa in my mind, I am inclined to think that the fear of altruism as an obliterating or destructive force is baseless. Our great mistake and worst peril is our timidity, that persistent doubt of our own powers. Big as the claims of others may seem, they can all be met, handsomely met ;

[1] The author is now engaged upon a full life of this lady.

and as soon as we recognize that no real expansion and glorification of self is possible without incessantly helping others and incessantly deriving help from them we shall no more fret and worry.

X

ONCE more—can we safely make any rules of behaviour? If I now attempt them, I hope it will be understood that they are intended to have the one direct aim—enlargement and enhancement of self. I am not trying to administer medicine in an envelope of bon-bons. I am not preaching altruism dressed in the disguise of selfishness. Taking into account the whole tangle of our desires and necessities, together with our plain duty to maintain life against all external pressure, including the great advancing pressure of death, I have striven to be entirely practical and business-like, even when I may seem to be almost childishly sentimental in the instances I cite and the illustrations I offer. And in regard to those abused words, sentiment and sentimental, I would plead that their disrepute has grown from careless use, and was not there originally. Sentiment means feeling. Obviously to be thoroughly alive we must be able to feel. The more we feel, the more alive we are.

Dead people have no sentiments—they feel nothing.

Be kind. Be kind to lonely people and to unhappy people. Be very kind, too, to innocently joyous people. You can sometimes kill joy with a single unsympathetic word. Joy is expansive, and all that is expansive needs sympathy. Answer the need. Understand that it is another self growing and developing beside you. Do as you would be done to, or you may remember your neglect afterwards, and it will bring a sense of personal failure and lost chances ; and then your own self will suffer.

Be kind to all sorts and conditions of people. Do it for the best of all reasons—because, at our present point of mental development, unkindness has become troublesome and thought-absorbing. We forget the kind things we have done, whereas we remember all our unkind actions in a bothering, worrying manner. Men and women nowadays are meant to be kind, and they know it really. Except in anger and under loss of self-control, it requires an effort to be unkind. There is difficulty, even if not perceived at the moment, in bringing out an abrupt and firm No instead of

the naturally easier Yes. A coldly neglectful turning away of the head from a glance of appeal or an aspect of vague yet convincing distress, demands great and sustained effort. We are conscious of the strain, of the energy expended in completing the repression and holding a natural impulse inoperative. And afterwards the thing *has* to be forgotten. But it is with a shaken hand that we pull at the dark curtains of oblivion. All this is coarsening, atrophying for self. Thus were we to embark on a planned course of unkindnesses, we should in other words be voluntarily attempting, in this direction at least, to obliterate self by forcing it to undergo almost incessant repressions and calling upon it to overcome frequent strong resistances ; and self could successfully obey us only by cutting off its quick sensibility and deadening all its power of response.

There is, of course, immensely more kindness in the world than is commonly supposed. It is there for the asking. It is given without asking.

Among the well-to-do, opportunities for the manifestations of unusual kindness are perhaps rare, and one will often hear it spoken of with something of surprise—as when an elderly man

at his club says, "I never knew how kind people were till I was in trouble"; or an elderly lady at a seaside hotel, "The kindness of people during my illness surpassed belief." Again, sometimes men or women of extreme social importance will find, if stricken with a grief big enough to bridge all distances, that among their innumerable obliging acquaintances they have many real friends. In those newspaper advertisements through which such sorrowful hearts nowadays make their first utterance, you can often hear the echo of a new recognition. "The Duchess of Honiton begs to thank all those good kind friends who wrote to her and by their kindness and sympathy helped her to bear her affliction. She wishes them all to accept her grateful thanks for their kindness and hopes later on to write personally to each."

The repetition of the word kindness is inelegant from the point of view of literary composition, but it has a touching significance in the circumstances.

As has been often observed, the poor never offer thanks for kindness; and once I used to think it terrible, this absence of spoken gratitude, but now it seems to me rather splendid. They

are not surprised by kindness ; they expect it. They themselves never look for thanks.

In truth the kindness of poor people among themselves is amazing. It is the first salient fact recorded by all those who attempt charitable or benevolent enterprise in really poor neighbourhoods. Sickness, sorrow, want are claims on generosity that are never challenged by the very people who have the most exhausting claims to meet and the smallest means for meeting them. East-end clergymen, panel doctors, parish nurses, all who have knowledge and experience of the very poor, will tell you this. There is not a district visitor who cannot give you many illustrations of it—as, for example, how men and women after their own work go and work for feeble neighbours, how half a dozen will band together to fulfil a sick comrade's duties, how young girls and their sweethearts will deny themselves the pleasure of happy evenings at the cinema palace and carry the threepences saved to some friends who have fallen into temporary indigence. Sometimes a factory girl will almost adopt a semi-bedridden old woman, going every evening to clean her room, going regularly twice a week in the early morning to do washing for her, going once a week in the mid-day interval of her own

work to write letters for her. This is not an invention but a common case. The old woman does not thank her for her service and aid. On the contrary, she will rate the girl for any supposed negligence or failure, as though addressing a paid servant. She will storm with indignation if the girl arrives late. "Where you been, I'd like to know? What d'you mean by it, keepin' me waitin'? Been after the boys I s'pose. You girls are all the same—none o' you to be trusted —pack o' minxes." In a similar manner strong hearty lads will help shaky broken old men, however crusty, querulous, and unpleasant these may be. When the old man is changing his place of abode, the boys bring a hand-cart that they have borrowed, pack all his household goods and personal effects, and push the whole load through the streets for him. They get no thanks. The old fellow shambles along beside the cart grumbling. "Now then, here we are at last. Look alive. Take them heavy boxes in first. And mind what you're doing." Again, as one can observe for oneself, all the small kindnesses or civilities of the busy street are performed without earning or seeming to require thanks. The tail-board of a wagon comes down and the things in the wagon are likely to fall out.

Everybody shouts, the police stop the traffic, finally the driver pulls up his horses. Then willing hands reinstate the tail-board, while the driver issues orders. "Shove the chain well through. Stick the bolt in. . . . Right"; and he drives on without another word—least of all, the word Thank-you. One person by accident renders himself troublesome to six persons, a hundred persons, and as if automatically the work of the entire thoroughfare ceases and is suspended until his misfortune is remedied; and nobody among all those who have been inconvenienced either wonders or complains.

I saw a queer little instance of this only the other day in an omnibus between Victoria Station and Sloane Street, when the hat of a woman on top of the bus flew off. I had observed the hat as it went up the stairs, not the small fashionable hat of London, but a large seasonably autumnal "confection" from the country, full of artificial flowers and fruit, like part of a harvest festival, obviously such a thing as a country woman would value; and so, seeing it now pass away in a flash, I was quick to lead the general cry of "Hat gone." The owner came down the stairs carrying hand luggage with her; but the bus ere it could be stopped had gone a couple of

hundred yards from the actual scene of the disaster ; towards which she began to run, after depositing her luggage on the pavement. The hat itself had first occupied the middle of the roadway ; then, stirred by the breeze, it kept changing its position from side to side, and with every change it nearly caused an accident because all the traffic was avoiding it. Every human voice was shouting, " Mind the hat. . . . Keep wide." . . . Great cumbrous lorries, swift light cars, omnibus after omnibus swept round it in giddily perilous curves. Then a man seized the hat, rescued it.

Meanwhile our bus had pulled in to the kerb, our conductor stood waiting on the pavement, and we passengers, strangers till then, all talked to one another, drawn into a sympathy that was like friendship by the hopes and fears that we were sharing in common. " Her hat blew off," we related again and again, although we knew it so well. " Her hat blew off. . . . I saw it go. . . . Yes, I saw it was a hat." . . . The tenseness of our anxiety, the loss of all irrelevant thought, our patience since we recognized that we could not actively aid, resembled in a lesser degree what is experienced when a great Atlantic liner slows down and stops because there is a

man overboard. Not our driver, our conductor, or we ourselves thought for a moment of abandoning the hatless person.

Then at last the hat, the man, and the woman came back to us ; and one heard those two talking together, both of them a little out of breath.

" I can't see it's injured."

" You were clever to grab it before it was run over."

" Yes, I was afraid of getting run over myself."

" Well, I'm glad to have it on my head again."

" Yes, and don't you let it go again. You hold it with your hand."

" So I will. I'll hold it with my hand."

The conductor put back her luggage and we resumed our journey. She had not said Thank-you to the rescuer or anybody else. It went without saying.

Another little instance of unrequited aid struck me greatly. Small as it is, I am not sure that it does not contain more than you will find in the whole plot or fable of many modern novels. A young and good-looking married woman with a baby was thrown on her own resources by reason of her husband's conviction for crime and sentence to a long term of imprisonment ; and a youngish unmarried man helped her in a very chivalrous

fashion. They belonged to Bethnal Green, and she set up as a laundress in a ground-floor room that was of course laundry, bedroom, sitting-room, and everything else. The man acted for her as carrier ; then he learned how to wash and iron ; he worked for her regularly in all his spare time, and " with him at her back " she prospered. At first she was uneasy, thinking that he loved her, and after he had begun to do a great deal for her she asked him to stop. Then, when he would go on working for her, she tackled him as women will on such occasions, saying to him with strong feeling, " It would be too mean of me if I allowed there to be any misunderstanding. I've nothing to give you, Jack—and I never shall have. I'm straight, you know."

" Yes, I know you're straight," he said simply. " I shouldn't bother about you if you weren't. If you were the other thing, my dear, you wouldn't need me. Not much. Every one would want to help you."

So he went on working for her. It seemed to him the kind and proper thing to do.

Be kind spiritually as well as materially.

We ought to have been kinder to our domestic servants.

This may sound absurd at a time when half the people one meets are lamenting the cruel unkindness of servants to us, and not for a moment would I seem to belittle the discomfort and pain that servants make us suffer. They flit in and out of our houses, cooks, parlourmaids, housemaids, the manservant without footmen under him, the footman or valet with no butler over him, the lady's maid, the nurse ; they are here to-day and gone to-morrow ; silent, inscrutable, often deadly, they can poison life for us, making wealth seem useless, dividing husband from wife, sending our children prematurely into the world, wrecking the happy home. And nothing one can do softens them or in any way binds them to us. Quiet, respectful, but implacable, these modern servants leave us after the first month or after the third year in exactly the same manner. We never really know why they are leaving, and they never tell us. They were here and they are gone—these strangers within our gates.

But we employers are reaping as we have sown. We ought to have been kinder. In the happy days when those dear old-fashioned servants (of whom we speak with such yearning regret) showed

us faithfulness and affection we took everything from them and gave nothing in exchange. We let them sacrifice long laborious lives on the altar of our personal comfort ; we dealt with them as people who had no past except toil, no future except want. We treated them as inferiors, as well-fed slaves, as creatures made of coarse and common clay ; we mocked at them with our comic literature ; we handed them over to the parish union or put them in an almshouse when they could serve us no more ; we broke their hearts. There were shining exceptions, but this was the rule of conduct.

Nor were we quick, in our own interests, to see that the old servants had disappeared and that we should learn to understand the new ones. These people of to-day are of course totally different from their mothers and grandmothers. Our kitchen-maids are not what they used to be, dull-witted, ignorant ; they are educated ; they are readers, dreamers of dreams, with a mental life that is active, that craves for communion with other minds. They could talk to us quite well if we had tried to make them. We never did. And out of this failure of ours there has come infallibly the reticence, the want of confidence on their side. We are to blame and not they for

the creation of this immoral relationship—this bond that is no bond, this familiarity with outward aspect and complete ignorance of inward feelings ; this bartering of material reward for material aid, and the absence of any offers, or the rejection if offered, of all that is spiritual.

Consider the sort of thing one reads as the report of an inquest when a maidservant commits suicide. The coroner asks her mistress if the girl was happy, and the mistress replies yes, so far as she could judge.

CORONER. You are not aware of her having anything on her mind ?

MRS. JONES. No.

CORONER. Did she appear to you cheerful and contented ?

MRS. JONES. Yes. But of course I only saw her at her work.

CORONER. Just so. I mean you are not aware of anything that might have upset her ?

MRS. JONES. Not so far as her duties were concerned. I knew nothing of her private affairs, naturally.

CORONER. No, naturally.

But is it natural ? It seems to me wickedly unnatural. It is *usual*, but it should not be so. It cannot be good for you, it must be injurious

to self, if you are a married woman of forty-five (like Mrs. Jones), to have an unmarried girl of twenty-three in the same house with you, waiting upon you, being with you hour after hour, day after day, and yet never to care if she is inwardly bleeding from a disappointed love affair, if she is cold with fear because her brother has got into trouble, or as miserable as Hamlet because she has received a letter to say that her widowed mother is about to make an unworthy second marriage—to keep in your place and watch her keeping in hers,—to say good-evening to her in a corridor and not know that it is her last night on earth. There should not be such strangers within the gate.

The first move must come from us. They will never make it. And much, much kindness will now be needed. But somehow we must smash the barriers and get at them. We are not going to be comfortable until we are able to say to them : " I am prepared to give you your own way in most things ; but on this one thing I insist. So long as the same roof covers us both, you and I are to act to each other as friends."

Indisputably it is against those laws of society that lead to progress, as well as against the instinc-

tive impulses towards sympathy that have been implanted in us by nature, to live in close proximity to human beings and yet let them remain to us as closed books or mechanical contrivances of which we hold no key. The mistress was not responsible for the girl's death, so probably could not have averted it ; but it is a horrible thought that she just conceivably might have done so. At any rate, there was no chance if those two never spoke to each other except on business. Rescue must be impossible under the conditions that prevail to-day. The servant shrinking back as the lady passed along the corridor could not imaginably say : " Oh, Mrs. Jones, do stop a minute. I am so dreadfully unhappy, and I want to tell you about it."

Again, our still persisting assumption that we, the employers, are essentially superior ! That must be wrong, as well as being unkind and ridiculous. It is not good for us to think such nonsense, and it must be very hateful to the persons thought about. Is it not time to cease condescending, to cease treating servants as fair game for satire in novels, plays, and illustrated newspapers ? Is it not time to cease from smiling indulgently because maidservants dress, talk, and act like ladies ?

In speaking of Mrs. Jones, ladies's maids, and valets, I have put myself in the position of the affluent, who at least are considerate materially with regard to those they employ ; but it should be remembered that the vast majority of servants as a class work for humbler people, and that numbers of them are in households "where only one is kept." Many of them are still very badly treated. Moreover, their spiritual loneliness is greater. Think of the lonely hearts of young girls, little more than children, taken from home and put out in service ; scarcely spoken to all day by the family, crying themselves to sleep at night, and being sharply reproved if caught gossiping with the butcher's boy next morning.

At the Sunday evening service of the Baptists' church at Folkestone a girl pushed against me very rudely. After the blessing there had been a meditative pause with music. Then, the moment the congregation stirred, this young woman sprang up and forcibly thrust past everybody, saying, "Excuse me—excuse me," as if the devil was driving her.

She was obviously a domestic servant, of a lodging-house probably. She would race back, tear off her hat, and get to work with the Sunday

supper. "Late again, Mary—disgracefully late. And no excuse to offer!"

In imagination I followed her. She waits at table, flushed, silent, only breathing rather hard. She humbly ministers to the wants of people as unsympathetic as savages, and little by little there fades out of her mind the mingled impression of music, lights, and hopeful words; out of her blood goes the sustaining warmth, out of her heart the peace of God.

"No, ma'am," she says to an obdurately unkind mistress, "it shan't occur again. . . . Yes, ma'am, the coffee's all ready. I'm getting it as fast as I can."

So one might say she couldn't help pushing rather rudely just now, because the devil *was* driving her.

Beware of the Great Betrayal—that is, when you fail in regard to those you have taught to love you and trust you. Betrayals of those who love us are really betrayals of ourselves, for we never recover from them. The injury to us at least is permanent, ineffaceable, deadly. In the consummation of the treachery, even when it is not premeditated, has never till then been thought of,

seems to possess the qualities of an accident, self receives a wound for which there is no cure.

Indeed the essence of the betrayal is the unexpected change in self, the self that those others have learned to know and rely upon ; but that is, or should be, where reciprocal love has subsisted, largely our very self. If we kill it for them, something of death enters into us ; something of that eternal coldness has made its lodgment, and thence will spread a chilling apathy to render numb and senseless much of all that which still remains alive to us. We could escape the penalty only by forgetting, and this we cannot do. Never is forgotten the look of unutterable reproach in the faithful woman's face when the man she loves says something cruel to her ; always, while his narrowed life continues, he will hear the little cry that she gave ; always he must recall her forlorn gesture when, under the shock of his unkindness, she felt as if her universe was tumbling about her in ruins.

We betray the old who have loved us and cherished us while we were weak when we allow them to understand that in our thoughts they are no longer strong and capable of giving protection. We betray the young when we measure their

faults by the standards of age and punish them as if they were themselves old. We betray when we are suddenly mean with those we have accustomed to generosity. We betray if we are silent when a word of praise is confidently looked for ; we betray if we refuse to laugh with those we have trained to laughing ; we betray if we mock and deride the sacred things of others when those others have believed that the things are sacred to us too. We betray each time that we are unkind to one we have systematically led to expect kindness.

We betray when we let fall the humblest person who is dependent on us for support. We betray when we are absent from the place we have long filled in another life, when anxious eyes seek us vainly, when arms that have once clasped us stretch forth towards us seeking the old embrace and close on emptiness. We betray women more often than men because a woman's need for kindness and support is so much greater than a man's. Never believe the rubbish and twaddle that you hear about the woman of to-day being emancipated, independent, able to stand alone. In these respects the woman of to-day is the woman of a hundred thousand years ago. People are thinking of the things of substance, of the out-

ward life, when they speak thus ; they mean that the property of women is secured to them and cannot legally be stolen from them by men, that the professions have been opened to them, that they keep shops, do well in business, ride astride, and drive a long ball at golf. They are thinking of paint-pots, lip-sticks, half-clothed bodies ; they are thinking of things physical, material, perishable, when they speak of the heightened charm, the overwhelmingly increased fascination of the modern woman that has given her the upper hand of man. Perhaps women may have the upper hand, for a little while—until love steals from them all their weapons both of offence and defence. But when a woman has lived with a man for years and gone on loving him all the time, she is defenceless, she is utterly at his mercy.

That is why the infidelity of long-married husbands is so supreme an unkindness. Always we should remind ourselves that it is the faithlessness of the faithful which wounds, tears, and rends. The last sin of the sinner is the one that causes least harm, but the first sin of virtue can be greater in the effect of the evil wrought than the sum-total of a thousand habitual misdeeds. If you must break the marriage vow, do it soon.

Don't wait. It were infinitely kinder to revert to the custom of our ancestors, those fine gentlemen of the eighteenth century who were neither gentlemen nor fine, and commit the fault while your wife is having her first baby, or in the second year recommend your mistress as lady's maid and companion, than to preserve the unsullied partnership of marriage until to the other partner it has grown as seemingly permanent as the bricks and stones of the house she calls home, and then tardily betray her. If in the later days of marriage either must betray the other, let it be the woman. For shame's sake, for God's sake, for self's sake, don't let it be the man. For the sake of all we have respected or revered, for the records of clean youth and the hopes of a clean old age, in the name of decency and sense, by our loyalty to thinking life and our hatred of sightless, senseless, unfeeling death, don't let the strong thing smash the weak ; don't let the thing that still warmly loves and remembers be destroyed by the thing that should never have grown cold.

We ought to be kind to women on a small scale as on a large scale, because their need for kindness as well as being great is unceasing ; and we should be careful not to mistake the large

for the small. Certain expressions have immensely more significance on the lips of women than when they are employed by men. For instance, men frequently speak of their fatigue after exercise or work, but a woman scarcely ever says she is tired. Even the women who lie on their beds every afternoon say they do so in order to rest, not because they are tired. They seem instinctively to avoid the use of the word as though there went with it an implication of failure or an admission of defeat. So a quick understanding ear should catch its underlying pathos. The rareness alone should make a wise man treat it as a danger signal ; he should spring to life at the sound of it and do his best to help, instead of smiling in dull sympathy. When a woman says she is tired it is scarcely ever a little thing. It may mean a great deal. It may mean as big a thing as despair.

It comes into nearly all the letters that women leave behind them when they kill themselves. "I can't help it, I'm tired. . . . Kiss George and ask him to forgive, and tell him I would have gone back to him and tried to begin again, but I'm too tired. . . . Oh, mother, I'm so tired, so tired."

Be kind. Are there any limits to this rule of kindness? I confess I do not see them. If asked to re-state the rule, I could but amplify it. I should have to say: Be kind to people, and then be kinder still. Do all that you can for lonely people, for neglected people, for people who have loved you or trusted you; and then when you have done all that you possibly could, do a little more.

XI

WHEN we look back at our lives, we recall emotions rather than events. It is what we felt, not what we saw or did, that we remember most clearly. You will observe this in everyday speech and in what people say when they are writing their autobiographies. As, for instance : "I can assure you I felt very happy and proud as I walked to the city that cold January morning forty years ago" ; or "When I think of Naples I remember the happiness of my mind the day I first saw it" ; or "I was feeling too sad to enjoy those gay sights." In fact, without emotion these outward sights scarcely exist for us. They are real to us in proportion to the emotional feeling we bring to bear on them. It has been said that all true literature is emotion. In a large sense, if not completely, life is emotion.

Then another unquestionably safe rule may run as follows : Cultivate your emotions. Maintain your emotions. Utilize your emotions.

We British people habitually ignore the value of emotion. By custom and tradition we repress all outward signs of emotion. We regard the full expression of emotion as indicative of weakness, lack of dignity, even of bad breeding. This is wrong and absurd. At least we should differentiate between good and bad emotions.

Suppose I am feeling a very noble sorrow, an intense sorrow into which nothing personal, mean, or unworthy enters however slightly, why may not I shed tears in my sorrow? In fact I *must* shed them if the intensity of my sorrow is to be preserved. For here we have one of the few really solid psychological laws that the last sixty years have produced. The law is that the emotion and the expression of the emotion are necessarily all one process. Inevitably when expression ceases emotion wanes. I feel sad and I cry. It may be a debatable point whether I am feeling sad because I am crying, or crying because I am sad, but the crying and the sadness together make up the emotion. I cannot cry in that manner unless I am sad, and I could not be so sad without the tears.

It seems to me a pity that we do not think more clearly with regard to these matters, and that as a nation our respect for the nationally admirable

qualities of calmness, fortitude, ability to bear pain, and so on, should have led us to be suspicious, if not abhorrent, of any disclosure of that which the inward man is undergoing. Rightly no doubt we condemn the surface emotional displays of some other nations, the pantomime of gesture, the vocal noise, the childlike excitement, that among some of the Latin races appear after trifling or insufficient causes ; but in the light of the law to which reference has been made I think we should recognize that complete outward passivity both implies and entails the total absence of inward commotion.

As an example—Some of us worldly conventional men go to the funeral of a dear old friend, and returning to the club for a sandwich and a whisky and soda, tell one another of the magnificent behaviour of the principal mourner. We praise Jones, the grief-stricken widower, for being so entirely master of himself, for giving no slightest sign of woe, for standing as if carved in stone, for not betraying by so much as the flicker of an eyelid or the twitch of a lip how much he was feeling. But if indeed that is true, if in sober fact he succeeded in suppressing every sign that an ordinary intelligent eye could read,

then Jones was feeling less than much. Jones was feeling nothing. For the time he had become vacant and unfeeling ; he had put the grief outside the zone of his consciousness. I think we ought to understand this simple irrefutable fact ; but I do not mean that it was wrong of Jones thus temporarily to suppress the grief during that brief yet terrible ordeal of the grave-side ceremony. He may have had the best and noblest reasons. He may have known that if he began any external demonstration, the demonstration would become too tremendous ; he may have known that, grief being very contagious, it would spread all through the cemetery and perhaps prove fatal to some feeble aged person there present; or he may have done it only for us, the little group from the club, not wishing to upset us.

Yet, leaving poor Jones out of consideration, I am persuaded that as to us others, we did not gain, we lost. Strictly speaking, at a funeral the only person who should be unmoved is the corpse ; and the less the others feel and show, the nearer they are approaching the condition of that unhappy occupant of the coffin. Death, not life, is controlling them. No, in the best interests of self, I am sure that we should not

contract a habit of attending funerals without emotion.

To speak of the law again and for the last time, it is the signs of bad emotions that we should suppress, because thus we fight the emotions themselves. Indeed there is no better way of fighting a bad emotion than denying it all expression. Suppose that I want to obliterate cowardice, superstitious fear, unworthy shyness, how else or more efficaciously can I set about it than by refusing to permit any recognizable manifestation? When I have stood fast instead of running away, ceased to tremble at the hat and coat that looked like a ghost, prevented myself blushing if unexpectedly addressed by a beautiful lady, I shall have triumphed almost over these emotions.

The first time that we deny our emotion normal outlet in expressive words, signs, and actions we are conscious that we have also denied ourselves a relief from tension for which we were instinctively craving, and we feel discomfort; the second, third, fourth time we do it the discomfort is lessening, and if we go on doing it a sufficient number of times all sensation of struggle disappears, and finally the emotion itself can no longer

find place or sustainment in us. We have rendered ourselves either immune against its intrusion or irresponsive to every impulse it evokes. Thus, returning to the well-trodden ground, we can see how truly unwise and unsafe it is to live with people that we love and not tell them very often that we love them, to wish the welfare of others and say no word and do no deed to further it, to yearn with pity over the stranger fallen by the roadside but go on our way without checking our pace, and after merely a thought or two about the efficiency of the police, the convenience of motor-ambulances, the comfort of public hospitals, dismiss him altogether from our minds.

Even love, the greatest of human emotions, and the power to love, the strongest and most productive of human powers, may both perish if refused their manifestation in the realm of externals.

Obviously, in the term expression of an emotion can be included all the widespread and far-reaching or the swift direct action that occurs as its consequence. It is a characteristic of strong emotion that it urgently demands action, and when the emotion is of a noble altruistic kind it admits of delayed action only when we recognize that all the faculties of the intellect must

be called upon for aid to render the action effective. Strong men who have been moved by emotion sometimes make a vow to enter on a course of action that will require all the rest of their lives for fulfilment. But they set about the task at once. If without haste also without pause they advance, although perhaps but inch by inch, towards the appointed goal; they perform the perhaps infinitely small acts of the initial stages that are to be followed later on by the great acts of final achievement. If they intend to drain the ocean dry when they have constructed the marvellous pumping machine of their invention, they take a spoon and get out some spoonfuls *now*. This, roughly, is what I meant when, speaking of spiritual energy, I said: Do something. Don't merely do nothing after being emotionally stirred.

Perhaps it may be remembered, too, that I spoke of the heightened power which is displayed in all action that has come from an emotional impulse. This is what I mean by *utilizing* one's emotions.

Almost as much as our love, we should nourish hospitably those pale cousins of love, our likes. Our likes and dislikes might be described perhaps

as hybrids, born in the marriage of instinct and intelligence, not entirely resembling either parent, but deriving all their strength and vividness from their common ancestor, emotion. We should keep both alive. It is as necessary to dislike as to like.

Dislike, of course, is the basis of all taste and judgment. Without it we cannot discriminate or differentiate. It forms the groundwork of artistic creeds, the measure of our common sense of right and wrong, the guide to our whole aptitude in selection. It links itself in the closest manner to that " Eternal No " that was so highly praised by Carlyle. This thing I accept ; this other thing I reject. This thing I will hold to my heart ; this other I will spurn and trample on. It is the dislike that supports the like. As an extreme instance, I cannot properly like virtue, or at least I cannot adequately know why I like it, unless at the same time I warmly dislike vice. Indeed a purely intellectual judgment, because it can have little dislike in it, leaves one open to further argument on the matter, leaves one willing to try the case again. Something emotional, unreasoning, instinctive is required to maintain this judging state of mind as with all other states of mind that are either useful or

valuable. Remember, death has no dislikes. Death pardons all things.

One should further note that it is far better to have a lot of silly inexplicable dislikes than no dislikes at all.

I have noticed with regret that in myself the faculty of disliking has considerably weakened. Of all the days of the week I used to dislike Thursday. When I was quite a child Thursday associated itself in my mind, for no traceable reason, with twilight rooms, funerals (civilian, not military), disappointments, headaches, and a worrying dream of impossible mathematical calculation. When I was older, yet still young, I used particularly to dislike a certain kind of flavourless batter pudding that one met at hotels, served in a sauce of flour and butter ; and I linked this early aversion to a strong distaste for large insipid flaxen-haired men and women with floury complexions and placid self-satisfied manners. These also one met at hotels and rarely anywhere else. I disliked, too, large rich ripe young women with purple lips and a lot of blood under their dark skins. They reminded me of mulberries, an overflavoured too mellow fruit that made me uncomfortable even to think about. Now these foolish dislikes have gone

from me. Thursday and the other days are all the same ; there is scarcely a sweet or a fruit that I could not eat if I wanted to do so ; when people have been kind enough to talk to me at hotels I should sometimes be unable to say afterwards what was the colour of their hair or the tints of their complexion. In all this I may have grown more sensible, but I am certainly less alive than I was many years ago. With the loss of fanciful dislikings there has come no gain of enthusiastic likings.

XII

SEEK joy rather than happiness.

Bergson, in one of his noble, almost transcendental passages, says that joy has been given to us human beings as a sure indication that man has fulfilled his destiny. I confess that, while admiring, I have never quite understood this ; for it would seem that the illustrious thinker should have said that man may accept joy as an indication not that he has fulfilled, but that he is beginning to fulfil his destiny, that he is progressing and expanding. Bergson goes on to say that joy always announces that life has succeeded, that life has gained ground, that life has carried off a victory ; and there can be no doubt as to his meaning in this profoundly wise message of hope. He adds : " Every great joy has a tone of triumph in its voice."

No philosopher has ever had a good word for pleasure. Pleasure is, of course, as everybody knows, like a fruit that quenches the thirst and immediately afterwards makes one more thirsty

than before. Pleasure has something ordinary, mediocre, second-rate in its very essence ; it is subordinate, artificial in character, as loosely joined to the realm of reality as are the games that are games but not sports, the contests and pageantries that simulate the actual events of life but are not life. Moreover, to refined and cultivated people, to anyone who in any way claims to belong to the aristocracy of intellect, pleasure has a very plain suggestion of much that is common, if not vulgar. One thinks of pleasure-seekers as in a crowd, a none too well-mannered crowd, filling excursion trains, waiting for doors to open at a prize-fight, or elbowing through turnstiles on suburban race-courses. One thinks of tavern-keepers whose female companions are women of pleasure ; of horrid seaside places that advertise themselves as pleasure resorts, of Bank-holidays and pleasure trips on steamers. The word has ugly associations—as in that terrible and nearly obsolete phrase, " the pleasures of the table." At the best it is a weak word. At the best it expresses a weak thing. On the other hand, happiness has received the unmeasured praise of the centuries, and is still held in the highest repute. Many indeed place it as the greatest blessing attainable by mankind. Yet

I cannot but think that the qualification of happiness as an aim or purpose of existence is grotesquely false. Happiness has in it too many characteristics that resemble death. It is nearly always quiet, very often silent, and it shades off into blank abstraction and nothingness. Whereas joy is more than an aid to life, it *is* life. In its attributes it is godlike, glorious. It may be taken (as I believe Bergson intends to imply that it should be taken) as a sign or token of something implanted in us by God, by the creator of the universe, by nature, or by whatever force controls and started the life of the spirit. It contains a certain sign of its origin, because it is closely linked with the sense of creation. It comes with the accomplishment of the creative task, the wresting of light from darkness, the making of something actual and visible and palpable where there was void and vagueness. All creators feel it.

I said I would venture to refer again to a creator on a small scale, namely Private Tomkins, who built a shelter for ammunition behind the trenches in France ; and I further venture to recall my description of the phases of happiness experienced by many of us during the War on the French front. A peaceful quiet contentment used to flood our

hearts ; we left off thinking or worrying ; we were just deliciously, passively happy. But when one looks back at those periods of happiness they appear strangely blank, they contain nothing that one remembers definitely, they seem in retrospect more like arrests of feeling than any feeling that can be described or analysed. They were sometimes long, but they seem to have been short. One might almost say that only the word itself remains with us—happiness. What one remembers still, clearly and strongly, were hours, half-hours, minutes, during which one did things or thought things—perhaps merely some small task that in spite of difficulty one had been able to perform or some success or achievement of one's unit, division, or whole army-corps—and on reflection one sees that each of these vividly remembered spaces of time, big or small, was tinged with joy. Those moments live because of the joy ; those other hours have gone dull and cold because mere happiness is not enough for life. Such a moment of unfading life was given to Tomkins when he stood before the house that he had built, with his slave-driving officer, the company sergeant-major, the quartermaster-sergeant, inspecting it and praising it. Their praise meant little to him ; it was only a slight

surface gratification as compared with his deep yet expansive joy, the joy that made his eyes glow almost fiercely, the joy that sounded the Bergsonesque note of triumph in his unusually firm voice. Praise and blame could not touch or change the true and wonderful creation of him, Tomkins: this miraculous achievement of reality in the whirl and chaos of ugly nightmare dreams, this house that he had caused to rise out of nothingness and challenge all things, unseen, unknown, and unknowable, with its solid walls and rainproof roofing. Again now, after the years, the house has returned to nothingness; French peasants took the woodwork to relight their first fires; not a stick or stone, not a morsel of iron was left of it; the charlock and nettles grew over it and hid its very place. At last the plough came, and the green corn and the ripe. If Tomkins paid a pious visit to the battle-fields he would not be able to find the bank against which it nestled, itself a shelter but seeking shelter; he could scarcely locate the position of his battalion; those men who praised it have become ghosts and the words they spoke are ghostly. But in the mind of the surviving Tomkins his house stands firm and can never fall; it is sacred and beautiful, a temple that he built with his hands under mys-

terious, perhaps divine guidance, a temple of joy. The very self of Tomkins must hold it firm and secure while thought lasts, while life lasts, till death swallows all.

And it should be noted that Tomkins built the house originally not for his own occupation, but for the use and convenience of others.

Here we come once more to the unavoidable necessity of admitting a certain (or uncertain) amount of altruism into the scheme of our lives. For the fact is that all creative work is done for others. Indeed the use made of it by others is the very proof of its existence, and without that use we cannot be fully satisfied. Without it there would be bitterness of the spirit instead of joyous pride in the making of fruitful fields where there was forest or marsh, in setting up large factories, building bridges, railways, ships, or in writing books or painting pictures. Suppose one were given godlike powers and tomorrow built a perfect city, but then were denied any inhabitants for it, one would know that one had been cruelly cheated. The useless perfection of one's city would become odious to one. It would break one's heart. And probably where the work is most completely for others,

the joy is most complete. It is significant that altruistic men constantly employ the word. You will notice the word in all the books they write —these people who start schools for waifs and strays, who rescue men and women from slavery, who carry the comforts of Christianity into savage lands. They say, "Remembering all that the poor souls had suffered and seeing them now in security, in comfort and warmth, Oh, the joy I felt!" Under such conditions men of this high type of mind never say, "It gave me pleasure," or "I felt a happiness at sight of it." Instinctively and infallibly they employ the only right word—joy. They know that one "has the pleasure" to accept Mr. and Mrs. Jones's invitation to dinner; one is "happy to inform" a customer that the boots he has ordered will be ready on Monday; but when men who have given their existence to a noble cause see the cause succeed, when men leading men to the relief of a besieged fortress see their flag still flying, when men who have worked out a curative treatment for a hitherto incurable disease see a returning flush on a child's face and know that a life has been saved—then these feel joy, abounding, glorious joy.

But joy comes out of one's self; one must

attain it oneself. We may try to give people pleasure, or to make them happy, but we cannot hope to endow them with joy.

It is strange how little this is understood in the management of children, although children so plainly show one the fact. People continue to make the old mistakes with their children ; saying, " I do not like to deny them pleasure," buying toys in endless succession, although each time they must see how brief is the pleasure, how dull its taste ; or they say, " I was determined to make my children happy, because I had not much happiness in my own childhood." That means giving them ponies to ride, little guns to shoot with, and so on. Then, after all these efforts on their behalf, if you observe the children, perhaps with other children in a garden, you will see them of a sudden racing round it, jumping, calling, without any toys or anything else ; you will see that, abandoning all extraneous aids, they have drawn something out of themselves—Joy.

XIII

IT is an axiom among players of card games that a bad winner is worse than a bad loser. But in the larger game of life, where ordinarily the stakes are material success and failure, bad winners are few. Men accommodate themselves to good fortune with surprising swiftness—indeed only a shade less swiftly than do women. Their manners improve rather than deteriorate ; they become pleasanter companions, more optimistic, and better able to support without twinges of envy the success of other people, even if these be their relations by blood or marriage. Physiologically it is said, too, that they expand ; they breathe deeper, and fill their lungs more completely with each breath. People rarely die of the shock of happy tidings, whereas again and again bad news have caused death. However, I am inclined to think that what kills such victims is not the shock of the unexpected, but rather the dead weight of the long anticipated. Failure has enfeebled them ; too often they have hoped

and been disappointed ; so many times they have called upon their lessening powers of resistance to withstand the assaults of misfortune that this last ring at the front-door bell with the yellow telegram envelope that comes upstairs on the salver from the hall-table proves too much for them in their weakened condition. For sustained failure is like a long disease, lowering one's vitality, poisoning one's blood, robbing one of all strength. Indeed in its worst manifestations failure is very like death. Because of it one is forgotten ; the world passes away from one while one is still titularly alive.

Men and women fail from innumerable causes. It is perhaps needless to add that they never fail if they achieve spiritual contentment, and that without this achievement all success is the most bitter and worst kind of failure ; for obviously it is as true to-day as ever it was that if one were to win the whole world and lose one's soul, one would be bankrupt on balancing the account. They fail by underrating themselves as much as by overrating themselves. People who are naturally gifted sometimes do not aim high enough, and then, attaining more than they hoped for in the beginning, nevertheless fall short of a possible height and suffer discomfort in consequence.

They get the glimpse of their own powers not sufficiently early—as, for instance, when chance or accident thrusts a man temporarily into a position of importance ; in an emergency he has been called upon to take another man's place, he fills it, he acquits himself of the new strange task admirably ; but then, with the emergency past, he is pushed back into the subordinate rank that he has too long occupied. He himself has affixed to himself the second-class label, and the world, accustomed to it, never thinks of altering the label for him. Shy retiring people fail sometimes by suddenly craving for the things they have scorned and avoided. A man who for years has been content to do good work humbly and unobtrusively, without a thought of praise, recognition, or honorary rewards, will, to the surprise of his friends, become bold and vulgar in a tardy effort to secure a place in the public eye and will put forward exaggerated claims to the gratitude of mankind. Again, the man who has sought the middle of life's stage and the strongest beams of its limelight will occasionally fail, through a disastrous loss of nerve, at the very moment that the curtain rises on him and his opportunity. In the sudden arrest of thought and sense, in his tremulous dismay of mind and

body, he realizes that he was not intended by nature for this undue prominence, and that for him happiness and comfort were only attainable among the dimly illuminated crowd in the background.

Hence it is wise to formulate to oneself early in life what one is desiring and trying for, what one really wants ; and then one should adopt the attitude of mind that best suits the aim, and hold fast to it ever afterwards.

" Failure," said Ruskin, " is as a rule less attributable to insufficiency of means or impatience of labour than to a confused understanding of the thing actually to be done."

It is not failure, but the sense of failure that injures and depresses self. If you fail and do not know you have failed, you remain untouched. Thus many a man has gone on failing all through his life without experiencing the slightest sense of failure. His obtuseness, the kindness of protecting friends, or the truly British habit of condoning all blunders that are not caused by want of heart, prevent him from ever seeing his career as what it really is; or that " confused understanding " which wrecks the peace of those following a mistaken road may in his case be so complete that he does not even know that there

is a choice of roads and that he has not followed any of them. In other words, the only people who support failure well are those who are unconscious of it.

There is a noble sense of failure and a mean and unworthy one. The latter form is very plainly to be observed nowadays in a still chaotic world where things go upside down rapidly and men who have been prominent and held great power drop of a sudden to insignificance and impotence. Among statesmen, generals of armies, leaders of public movements, the fall is usually reparable, the eclipse temporary; and they themselves say this loudly enough, but they do not always *act* as if they believed what they said. They should stand aside and wait patiently. But sometimes they cannot wait. The bitter taste of failure is upon them, they quarrel with destiny, they become fretful and egotistically mad.

A noble, although an abiding sense of failure is that which afflicts men whose aims are so lofty that they know they can never realize them. With these there is never any compromise; they could not if they would curtail the aim to the measure of possible achievement. No matter

how great their success may appear to others, to them it must always be failure. The remorseless critic that they carry inside them is never appeased, never satisfied.

This is noticeable among painters, sculptors, authors of all kinds—that is, if they are worth anything ; and I myself have been amused to notice that when one of these speaks with unguarded frankness of his own much praised work, a common remark of polite listeners is : " Oh, but Mr. Jones, you are too modest." . . . They do not dimly guess what the more or less illustrious Mr. Jones means. If they knew, if he told them, they would probably think him the most arrogant creature that ever lived. For he would have to say in effect, " I readily admit that my stuff is better than the trash all round me. But I was not making so ridiculous a comparison. I have, in fact, the very poorest opinion of most of the work of my contemporaries. I take as my standard and test the finest productions of the greatest masters of the art I am following, and to my sorrow I find that, no matter how strenuous my endeavours, I fall far short of those productions."

In regard to authors especially there is a lesser sense of failure that is akin to the anguish of

loneliness. This comes to them with the neglect and inattention of the world. When that which we writers have tried to communicate is finally rejected, half our life is taken out of us. People have heard us and not listened ; we had some sort of message that in our opinion must prove valuable, and we are left alone with our opinion. The loneliness of a writer without readers is dreadful.

As R. L. Stevenson said, " The devil in these trades of pleasing is to fail to please. . . . The poor Daughter of Joy, carrying her smiles and finery quite unregarded through the crowd, makes a figure which it is impossible to recall without a wounding pity. She is the type of the unsuccessful artist. The actor, the dancer, and the singer must appear like her in person, and drain publicly the cup of failure. But though the rest of us escape this crowning bitterness of the pillory, we all court in essence the same humiliation. We all profess to be able to delight. And how few of us are ! We all pledge ourselves to be able to continue to delight. And the day will come to each, and even to the most admired, when the ardour shall have declined and the cunning shall be lost, and he shall sit by his deserted booth ashamed."

For these various reasons another wise rule might be stated in two words.

Avoid failure.

The word "compromise," which I used a moment ago, at once suggested still another rule :

Avoid compromise.

Faced with that phantom or symbolic beast that men have created for their torment and named the Dilemma, most of us either run away or throw ourselves into what we call a compromise. There never was a real dilemma. Except that it has two horns instead of one, it is in this regard just like the unicorn ; but whereas we know that the heraldic animal is non-existent, we still firmly believe in the dilemma.

Walk boldly up to a dilemma and it vanishes ; or if it seems for a little while to stand firm, you will find that between the peaks of the two horns you can see a wide expanse of open country with paths leading in all directions. In other words a thousand choices lie between the extremes of choice ; and it will often become apparent that the only choices we do not possess are those two at the far outside. For to render the alternative between the two extremes complete it must be

very violent, and the more violent it is, the plainer and easier becomes one's correct decision. One cannot but observe this fact if one attempts to invent up-to-date rational dilemmas for oneself. I defy anybody to make a dilemma of everyday life that will bear logical examination or defeat the most ordinary intelligence. Personally I have tried hard to do so and have failed. As for instance : You want a man's money and you can only get it by robbing him, and your dilemma is that you must either be a thief or starve. But there is a loophole for escape there. You may beg or borrow from him. Or I am in this dilemma : I cannot marry again without poisoning my wife. But there is no true necessity to do either. Although our fear of the fantastic thing is real, we use the name of it with lightness sometimes, and then probably we are at the moment aware of our folly—as when a distressed old friend writes to me asking for the loan of twenty pounds and I write back saying, " You have placed me in somewhat of a dilemma. . . . I cannot do what you wish, but I enclose this trifle." And I send him thirty shillings or two-pounds-ten, because, feebly and timidly, I have sprung for safety from the straight up and down road into the dense thickets of compromise. I

was not man enough to give or man enough to refuse. I had neither the generosity to say yes nor the courage to say no.

I believe our innate shrinking from yes and no, when affirmative and negative seem alike unpleasurable, is, if you analyse the matter, the basis of our superstitious fear of dilemmas and our dangerous love of compromises.

Compromise runs like a thread of weakness through the whole fabric of modern life. Europe has been governed by compromise ; religions have become compromises ; here in England our methods of taxation, business affairs, public entertainments, are devised and fostered with compromise. We compromise in our aims and hopes, and loves and hates, our feelings for beauty and ugliness, our judgments of refinement and vulgarity ; we compromise even in our decisions as to right and wrong.

Not a word of praise ever given to compromise is other than false and misleading. That belauded middle course is nearly always the worst course one can follow ; in its most propitious aspect it deserves no better credit than to be termed the line of least resistance ; it is often merely the splitting of differences when to split at all is fatal ; and in its appeal to dull mediocre minds

it is no higher or better than a plebeian's offer to toss you heads or tails, or go double or quits. If you *care* about a thing, you *cannot* compromise. In this connection I have no words of contempt sufficiently strong for the class of people who supplement their invitation to compromise by reminding one of the proverb about half a loaf. Half a loaf is better than no bread! Yes, but in a compromise we do not get any portion of a loaf. We do not get bread at all. We get something essentially different from what we asked for—a worthless and indigestible food that is swallowed with disgust by both parties. Read the definitive words of any dictionary. Dictionaries are often enlightening. I open the first I can find. Compromise, says my dictionary, is "a combination of rival systems, principles, etc., in which something of each is sacrificed to make the combination possible." Something is sacrificed always, and generally it is everything.

A large part of the work nowadays being done at board meetings, committees, and in both Houses of Parliament, is the destroying, by this sacrificial combination, of noble altruistic effort, wisely devised schemes, and long delayed betterments of the conditions under which we are all living.

Each of us knowing this should understand that compromise must be shunned and not wooed. The adoption of compromise as a habit is destructive to individuality ; it should be recognized as one of the lesser enemies to the developing and expanding self.

XIV

ANOTHER rule should be : Go on hoping. In one of his earlier books Arnold Bennett (who says wise things as if unconsciously, or as if he could not help doing it) has some admirable words that I always remember. Speaking of his young heroine, he says : " She was almost afraid of her happiness. She had not yet learnt that in life nothing is too good to be true."

We should learn to hope boldly, and then having acquired the hoping habit we should practise it to the end of our days. It is a pity that of late all the horrid little psychological handbooks with which libraries and shops abound on both sides of the Atlantic have brought into disrepute that useful phrase, "A sane optimism." To be sanely optimistic is exactly what should be our aim ; since the little books are at least strictly correct when they tell us, as they all do, that if we walk briskly with the head carried high and a genial smile ornamenting our lips, if we maintain a

cheerful frame of mind and consistently look for the best rather than the worst as likely to happen, we shall not only digest our food better, but live longer and be happier all the time.

Personally I hate the *temperamental* optimist. Nothing can be more annoying to one than silly optimistic friends who, bearing the misfortunes of others with a radiant equanimity, tell us that the portmanteau left behind on the platform of a seaside station may perhaps come on by another and faster train and be waiting for us when we get to Victoria.

I hate too, and worse, the optimist who has taken up optimism as a stock-in-trade, who begs one not to cry over spilt milk, who himself ostentatiously smiles and rubs his hands while others weep, who will assure a man stricken to death that things are never quite as bad as they seem and that every cloud has a silver lining. This optimistic disregard of stern facts and the cheerful embrace of the impossible are more particularly distasteful when, as I say, they form part of an attitude that has been adopted professionally or that in any way receives a regular money payment. I have observed something of this quite dreadful jollity about strong health-exuberant people who dwell among the sickly and unfortunate to whom

they act as salaried guardians and protectors. One meets it in hospitals, asylums, and prisons. It was very noticeable here at home during the War in important railway transport officers, chairmen of recruiting committees, and other patriotic helpers doing all they could for the great cause except fight, who usually had a jolly cheering word for the actual combatants. It could be seen even in France, as near the front line as one could go without danger, at points, let us say for example, where the mounted military police would encourage any straggling infantrymen to hurry on their way to the trenches with a joke and a laugh, sanguinely predicting for these overladen plodders glory rather than death.

In regard to public affairs, when we begin to think patriotically, we are as a nation always optimistic ; whereas those who govern us clothe themselves almost invariably in the darkest raiment of pessimism. We hope—we hope to muddle through, to turn the ugly corner, to come out on top somehow or other, while our teachers, preachers, and rulers continue to tell us that there is the gravest cause for fear. We know that these forebodings of public men are a tradition ; we are so well accustomed to them that they cannot

trouble us. To take a dark view of the future has been half the equipment of every British politician seeking distinction during the last hundred years ; each plan of fresh statesmanship has been heralded with warnings, it has been the offer of a remedy rather than the promise of an improvement ; all the greatest and most eloquent passages of orations in the Houses of Parliament or at historic public meetings have been evoked by the orator's clear vision of the writing on wall, the sands running through the glass, or the beginning of the end. Even in the periodic episode of a general election, which should surely have something of carnival time about it, since sounds and signs of gaiety are still permissible, and flags, brass-bands, and fireworks are scarcely out of place, even then the uttermost that ordinary candidates for our suffrages can say is, " Vote for me and help to avert the impending doom," or " Follow me and I will try to save you from the long-postponed disaster." The same sombre note is struck by the best of our public writers on social and economic matters. In their last chapter, after the full survey of the existing state of England and a restatement of the principal overwhelmingly crushing perils with which it is threatened, they scarcely ever fail to

say that they wish they could indicate some few reasons for hope, but they find themselves conscientiously unable to do so.

It is amazing to examine the record of these dismal prognostications, from the days of Burke and Pitt and Gibbon and Hume to yesterday, and then to reflect that all the while the world has gone on much in the old style, that dark clouds have been rolling away and the sun shining again, that innumerable ugly corners have in fact been turned—to reflect that England, the poor old totterer, still totters on the brink of the precipice and miraculously omits to fall into the abyss; England, the sick patient with so many despairing doctors in attendance, stubbornly refuses to die.

One would think that our modern pessimists in high places might at least have the saving grace of those grumbling old ladies of the past who used to wind up their laments by saying with a sigh, "I know I have much to be thankful for." Surely, as a nation, we have much to be thankful for.

When we were children we often amused ourselves by a careful consideration of the things we would ask for if a good fairy suddenly appeared to us. Suppose that good fairies had come, say in the blackest years of the War, what could we

have asked for that has not been given to us? Presumably we should have begun by asking for victory. We should then have begged for strength to survive the exhaustion that was inevitable after our supreme efforts; we should have prayed for strength to struggle through a long period of domestic distress resulting from the chaos of normal industry, commerce, and finance; we should have prayed that we might surmount the appalling difficulties of a war-wasted world. Lastly, if we were bold enough to formulate the prayer, we should have petitioned that in our own generation we might see a renewal of ordinary life, with our credit restored, our annual budgets balancing themselves. And all, all this has been granted us.

In truth, except for the two great and pressing evils of unemployment and shortage of housing, each as terrible in its destructive effect spiritually as it is from the material point of view,—except for these two evils, which cannot, which must not be permanent, it is impossible to discover anything radically wrong with this country that we love and live in. On the contrary, everything that challenges observation seems to give forth a message of hope. In spite of deplorably high taxation, people somehow have money to spend;

shops are busy ; restaurants and places of entertainment are full ; all holiday trains are crowded ; every room at every " pleasure resort " is engaged throughout the pleasure season and often at intermediate seasons too. Men, women, and children are better clothed, better behaved ; and they look happy. It does not appear possible that these signs and indications should, as our pessimists pretend, be interpreted in a sense opposite to the obvious one. Surely it cannot be that there is any solid ground for the pessimistic notion that these signs of material prosperity are in truth signs of spiritual decay, that the state of England is little different from the state of the Roman Empire before its fall, that the good temper is but recklessness, that in all the faces one should read not happiness but despair.

On the spiritual side it seems to me almost wicked to doubt the progress that has been made in the last twenty years. Suppose anyone had uttered the most optimistic prophecies at the beginning of that period, have they not all been surpassed in the fulfilment of the present hour ? Or, to put it another way, suppose that one sought to paint a sketch of the possibilities of rapid and splendid advance from bad old conditions, could one do it better than by recording the actual

undeniable facts, more especially if one looked for the facts in the achievement and promise of the younger generation ?

Our young people of all ranks of society are gloriously sufficient to give one hope. In what used to be termed the lower ranks—that is, in the bulk of the population,—there is an astounding improvement of diction, voice, manners, and there is also a very much higher method of thought. I do not say that they are well educated ; but their imaginations are awakened, their range of intellect has been widened. Their brains as instruments are immeasurably finer and more adaptable than were those of preceding generations. Mentally they are alive and alert. More and more they seek the life of the mind ; less and less are they thralls to the life of the body. They amuse themselves without vice, they make themselves joyous without drink, they have self-respect without a denial of respect to others. At the risk of wearying by repetition, or of saying with fresh words what I have said in effect already, these people have *risen*. The housemaid and carpenter's assistant of to-day are spiritually the superiors of many great ladies and gentlemen of sixty years ago. These people are willing to serve, eager to learn, full of sym-

pathies and generosities. Those other people (in spite of certain trained powers, tricks of speech, and graces of manner) were essentially ignorant, habitually prejudiced, often unkind and unfeeling in regard to all but their own class, with a quite inhuman pride, and a snobbishness that knew neither pity nor remorse. I do not mean any reproach to them. They could not be otherwise. They belonged to their time, and our time is a far better one. Just as they deserve no blame, we perhaps deserve no credit. I am merely trying to enforce a plain irrefutable truth, because I think that notwithstanding its obviousness it is still frequently ignored.

And if, as I firmly believe, this spiritual advance is theirs, all, all of it has been gained without the slightest loss of those great qualities or characteristics proper to our British people, such as strength, fortitude, patience. Are there not grounds, then, when we think of England, for a quite sane optimism? Nationally, may we not safely go on hoping?

Fear is, of course, the normal and ever-active foe to hope, and the omission to hope for the best with regard to ourselves individually is as a rule due to those almost ineradicable timidities of

which I have spoken so often. Men and women nowadays suffer largely from a state of mind which, strictly speaking, cannot be described as pessimistic, since pessimism is a growth of thought and reflection, although the resultant ideas may be entirely false, but which is tinged through and through with fear. They dread the future. They say to themselves, "Things are all right at the moment, but how do I know what things are coming to me?" They feel as individuals that they are in the circumstances attributed by politicians to their country; they seem to be standing on the edge of a precipice over which the slightest accident or misfortune may push them.

This weakness or discomfort is different from the sense of failure, for the sufferer may be and often is a successful and prosperous person; but then he has nevertheless, and in spite of all his success, a deep-seated sense of inferiority. An unreasoning sense of inferiority is a widespread and subtly destructive malady of the spirit; it attacks highly intelligent, richly endowed people and sometimes brings them down to the level of the mediocre and inadequately equipped; it prevents continuity of effort, lessens productiveness, shortens aim and purpose. Fear flows

from it. Afflicted thus, we feel that our good luck cannot last ; we feel that hitherto we have been too fortunate, our rewards have been too widely bigger than our own personal merits deserved, but soon now a horrid crisis or test will supervene when fate will set before us tasks the fulfilment of which would demand gifts and qualities much greater than any we possess. With a shudder we remember warnings of the sages—such as the hateful warning to successful people that was uttered by Walt Whitman : " It is provided in the essence of things that from any fruition of success, no matter what, shall come forth something to make a greater struggle necessary," and we quail again at the thought that in our case when the fresh struggle comes we shall be exposed as the sham that we are, and the world will see us then as we see ourselves during these dark distressful hours—not capable or responsible, not worthy of praise or payment, not superior but inferior. In other words, we play false to self. We cease to believe in our self and the power that it contains. Illogically, unworthily, we fear.

This much too common state is often called " the anxiety neurosis," but call it what you will, it is undoubtedly a predisposing cause of that

sudden foolishness or lack of judgment in apparently sensible people who blindly accept—as many thousands of them do—fantastic or mystical beliefs, together with the unsubstantial pretensions of quack scientists, and the farrago of childish nonsense offered by our most recently modernized religions.

In this connection William James, when speaking a long while ago of "New Thought," "Christian Science," "Metaphysical Healing," and other forms of spiritual philosophy, said: "The common feature of these optimistic faiths is that they all tend to the suppression of what Mr. Horace Fletcher calls 'fear-thought.' Fear-thought he defines as the 'self-suggestion of inferiority'; so that one may say these symptoms will operate by the suggestion of power. And the power, small or great, comes in various shapes to the individual,—power, as he will tell you, not to 'mind' things that used to vex him, power to concentrate his mind, good cheer, good temper—in short, to put it mildly, a firmer, more elastic moral tone."

That is all very well in its way; but we should ourselves fight our fear-thought, we should be able to recover tone without external aid. It is wrong and dangerous to allow hired strangers

to make incantations over us, to lean for support on a doctor with a weekly dose of psychological chatter or a priest who puts intelligence still further out of action by pronouncements of mystic signification or promises of preposterously exaggerated benefits. Just as we should think our own thoughts, we should do our own hoping. No sane adult man or woman should become like a clock on a mantelpiece which will run down in eight days or so unless somebody comes into the room and winds it up.

Congenital cripples and weaklings are proverbially optimists, and it would seem that theirs is the sanest of all optimisms. It is based on the fact that they have boldly faced one of the greatest problems, and after considering the for and against, they have decided that life is worth living. They have said to themselves, "With all my terrible disabilities, with the prospect of unceasing renunciations, with the certain loss of so much that is desirable, would I rather be dead?" And they have seen plainly and understood clearly that they would rather be alive.

We should remember that. We are alive. So long as we live we can continue to hope that we may live a little longer.

XV

TO summarize these tentative suggestions as to the behaviour that is most conducive to the welfare of self :

We should recognize that our duty is to Life, to the life that has been entrusted to us with power to contract or expand it at will, with power to nourish it or destroy it as we please, and that this being our duty, we must have no traffic or dalliance with Death. Death is the implacable enemy, and even in our passing thoughts to trifle with the enemy is wrong and wicked. We must fight death without a moment's armistice. We must fight it, hate it, and yet not fear it.

We should fear nothing—not even a graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, for Fear is another and a very subtle persisting lieutenant of the grim commander. By fear the life is taken out of mankind while they still live ; by fear, if they yield to it, all living creatures can be made

to dress themselves in the livery of death, to bow down and worship before the dark tent of the eternal conqueror—as when a civilized man moving to the succour of a friend stops and stands still, arrested by thoughts of danger, or when a wild animal instead of fighting or fleeing crouches motionless and pretends already to be dead.

We should not fear small things or big things —not loss of life, nor loss of time, nor loss of inclination. We should not fear our manifold duties to other people. Duties are necessary. It is as if self totters when relieved of its normal load of duty. The emancipated self becomes so light that it is blown hither and thither by the capricious little storms of existence ; and if a tempest arise, it will certainly be sent headlong into the nearest abyss.

Up to a point altruism nourishes self, just as selfishness kills self. Altruism increases individuality ; preoccupation about self tends to lessen it.

The danger of losing one's self in the higher concentration that we seem to obtain when working for others has been and is greatly exaggerated. When we seem to lose self in more passive states, such as the contentment and blank happiness of

which I have several times spoken, nothing happens to self. At the end of the state we are much the same as we were before it began. It has been a rest, a time of repose, and no more. And the uttermost we can expect as gain from it is the sort of refreshment that comes from physical or mental quietude after fatigue. But during the periods of forgetting self that have been spent in purposive creative altruistic work, self is truly expanding. After such lapses one is immensely more conscious of self than one was before. As we look at it now, it comes towards us bigger for its apparently unrecorded experiences ; it whispers to us of the past effort, and promises us still more power in the future. It says to us, "You have trusted me without anxious supervision, and I have not failed you. Trust me again, and I will work still better."

From the metaphysical point of view, the ideal self—the self we might have been—remains with us always, even in our lowest degradations and defaultings. Thus "even the despairer need not despair." It is never too late. Something of that nobler self of our initial possibilities survives all sordid experiences, and can be seen beckoning to us through veils of tears, through the obscuring smoke of burnt-out passions,

through the darker curtains of the falling night. To the very last we can draw a little nearer to it.

Everybody with practical knowledge will tell you this—jailers, missionaries, the women who toil in rescuing other women, the men who stand at prison gates to stretch out their hands and give still one more chance to other men. It is at once forced upon their observation. It was forced upon me directly I attempted to make studies of criminal mentality for the purposes of my trade. No one who looks crime and sin in the face or tries to take them by the hand can fail to see it—that better self which nothing can kill except death. It shows amazingly in imperishable ideals carried not unconsciously but consciously through and amidst the most dreadful scenes and sufferings ; it shows in friendships that neither bribes nor threats can break, in the protection of the weak by the strong, and in a grander and more touching manner in the protection of the strong by the weak ; it shows itself in loyalty, faith, and kindness—in kindness and such heroic acts of kindness as might almost surpass human belief. The first note that I made on this subject concerned two girls who had maintained a companionship during which each in turn had forgone the opportunity of

escape from the miseries and hardships of their existence because the opportunity was offered only to one and not to the two of them. I noted it as " another instance of the staunch fidelities that are met with again and again among these unhappy people, the law-breakers, offenders against morality, fallen women, seemingly conscienceless backsliders, and other rejected of polite mankind—fidelities that remain sacred and intact in spite of a thousand circumstances which one would suppose must inevitably destroy them, and that are cherished as the innermost heart's possession when all else has long since gone."

With such examples in one's mind one may well say again Beware of betrayal, and Remember always that our power to injure people is exactly proportionate to the measure of their love for us, and that in this respect at least the harm done by the naturally good and kind, when these turn traitor to their own past and pull down the ideal self which they have long sustained, is a thousandfold greater than the shameful deeds of those wicked ones of whom nothing is expected or hoped for except wickedness. Go on being kind. Go on hoping. Go on learning, go on studying, go on improving yourself to the very end. Almost the cruellest nonsense ever let loose in a none

too easy world was that stuff (encouraged by bad old materialistic psychologists) telling us that we cannot learn after a certain time in life. We can learn as well as young children for just as long as we continue able to have our interest awakened and our attention held ; or in other words, we can learn so long as we keep ourselves really alive. Retain your elemental youth. Go on being young. Remember those three girls of seventy in Kensington Gardens.

Avoid stale thoughts, dead thoughts. Avoid other people's thoughts when duty and self-respect call upon you to have your own thoughts. And while you yourself are honestly trying to think, be bold, and bold, and bold ; break the chains of tradition, habit, and fashion ; smash the walls that dead men have built to keep you in prison, smash all that impedes or controls, till the way is clear and open for your spirit to emerge and rise.

I should not have used such a word as " rules " in regard to conduct or behaviour. Self is the only judge of self, and its only law-maker. It is self that tells us, if we listen, that we are weakening when we lean too much on other people's judgments. It is by following the guidance of self that we know the necessity of ourselves

thinking, and of thinking boldly. We know too, by the peace or uneasiness of self, that when we act as the result of thought our action must be bold, very bold ; that only ourselves can justify our action, and that therefore we should not quail or grow cold before external blame, nor glow with undue warmness under the sunshine of external praise. In our actions we should be self-governed but not self-conscious—self-consciousness being, so far as acting is implied, merely consciousness of other people. If then, to use once more the well-worn similes, we sometimes take the centre of the stage, we should while we remain there think only of the part we have to play and have no thought of the limelight, or the critics in the orchestra stalls, or the august visitors in the royal box. Above all, on or off the stage, we should resist the temptation of acting to the gallery. For, as Joseph Conrad reminded us, " there are on earth no actors so humble and obscure as not to have a gallery ; that gallery which envenoms the play by stealthy jeers, counsels of anger, amused comments or words of perfidious compassion."

It may perhaps seem that hitherto I have taken too much the attitude of the intellectually gifted,

and put myself too often at the standpoint of the fortunate, the affluent, even of the highly-placed, and that so, ignoring the difficulties under which the mass of the population labour, the handicap of humble birth or hereditary restrictions of opportunity, the blighting influences of unintelligent environment, the hunger and starvation of minds that can discover no other minds with which to communicate, I have written as if the highest and most important things lie within the range of everybody's possibilities. I have not intended to do this. Indeed I especially wished to avoid sounding any echo of the modern applications of psychology to everyday life which are to be found in those handbooks at which I have more than once mocked, a psychology that now always seems cheap when it is not nasty, and that, grossly confusing the terms of the spiritual and material, tells young people who wish to rise from the position of office-boys to that of prime ministers how to sublimate their natural desire and render it innocuous, or answers the craving for loftiness of one's very soul with a promise of exaltation the value of which can be estimated only by pounds, shillings, and pence. One's place in society, one's fame or success, one's rank or fortune, of course have no true relation

to the state of one's self. Nor is anyone either important or unimportant, except when considered as a progressing or deteriorating self. In regard to these transcendently important matters of self, life, and death, there are no upper classes or lower classes. We are all on one level.

"There is not," said Maeterlinck in *Wisdom and Destiny*, "an act of beauty or nobility whereof man is capable, but can find complete expression in the simplest, most ordinary life; and all that cannot be expressed therein must of necessity belong to the falsehoods of vanity, ignorance, and sloth."

But if there are no universally applicable laws of conduct, there is at least one certain infallible test of conduct, and one that applies to every action, thought, or vague meditating reflection of self. It is the test of life and death. Life is good for us, death is bad for us. All that resembles life should be sought; all that is in any way like death should be shunned.

When we think of the dead we can know by their qualities and attributes what is wrong; when we turn to the living, when we look at young strong living things, when we look at the things that are fullest of life, we may know what is

right. Thus the pitiless stare of a marble face and the unstirred pulse of the supine form are wrong when even an unworthy sufferer cries to us for help, or when the trumpet calls and men begin to march towards the arbitrament of a quarrel, though the quarrel is not ours but theirs and the bond between us and them is only a common humanity. Emotionless breasts, unchanging attitudes, eyes that continue closed, deaf ears, are wrong when the world is up and moving, when there is noble work to be done, or even when by quickness of apprehension and completeness of sympathy a trifling unrecorded, unnoticed act of kindness can be performed. All this belongs to the behaviour of dead men, whom nothing makes angry or sad, whom nothing stirs ever so faintly. Assuredly we are not fighting death when we ape the manners of the dead.

Fight death with acts and thoughts. Fight death with hope. Fight death with joy. Fight death with love. Love much. Love greatly and nobly, wisely and successfully, if you can; but if this is denied you, love hopelessly and unhappily. Do not believe the written words of buried fools or the lying traditions of the ages. No man or woman ever died of love. No man

or woman ever lived who was not the better and the stronger for loving.

"Love is a fire that glows and enlarges, until it warms and beams upon multitudes, upon the universal heart of all, and so lights up the whole world and all nature with its generous flames."

And why need we fear? Let me say it once more. Let me say at the end of this book what I said at the beginning. It is death in life, not death after life, that we should fear. The spirit is ours, the tiny flash in the measureless never-to-be plumbed darkness over which that other, the enemy, reigns and is sovereign. In this sense life and death are in our own hands. It is we who kill, not *death*. It is we who kill, prematurely, wantonly, all that has been put into our care, all that is of value, all that because of its beauty and its power seems to us to deserve a life everlasting; while death, material death, kills only at the appointed time. Death, the Lord of matter, is slow, patient, very tolerant of delay. It has no jealousies, no dreads, since it knows its overwhelming force. Seated or recumbent in its immensities it watches the suns fade and the planets grow cold, and in that long, that eternal passionless watching, the lifetime of a man is a small thing.

Why should we fear? If we are true to our task as lamp-bearers, if we carry the lamp faithfully, if we follow the guidance of an unfettered self, we can say to self, the self of selfs, "I trust you." We can say to self, with no irreverence, no blasphemous disrespect of all that is greater than self,—we can say, in those pretty words that most of us used as children, "Teach me to live that I may dread the grave as little as my bed."

Printed in Great Britain by
Butler & Tanner Ltd.,
Frome and London