

# Thoughts and Glimpses

**SOME** think it presumption to believe in a special Providence or to look upon oneself as an instrument in the hands of God, but I find that every man has a special Providence and I see that God uses the mattock of the labourer and babbles in the mouth of a little child.

Providence is not only that which saves me from the shipwreck in which everybody else has foundered. Providence is also that which, while all others are saved, snatches away my last plank of safety and drowns me in the solitary ocean.

The delight of victory is sometimes less than the attraction of struggle and suffering; nevertheless the laurel and not the cross should be the aim of the conquering human soul.

Souls that do not aspire are God's failures; but Nature is pleased and loves to multiply them because they assure her of stability and prolong her empire.

Those who are poor, ignorant, ill-born or ill-bred are not the common herd; the common herd are all who are satisfied with pettiness and an average humanity.

Help men, but do not pauperise them of their energy; lead and instruct men, but see that their initiative and originality remain intact; take others into thyself, but give them in return the full godhead of their nature. He who can do this is the leader and the *guru*.

God has made the world a field of battle and filled it with the trampling of combatants and the cries of a great wrestle and struggle. Would you filch His peace without paying the price He has fixed for it?

Distrust a perfect-seeming success, but when having succeeded thou findest still much to do, rejoice and go forward; for the labour is long before the real perfection.

There is no more benumbing error than to mistake a stage for the goal or to linger too long in a resting place.

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Wherever thou seest a great end, be sure of a great beginning. Where a monstrous and painful destruction appals thy mind, console it with the certainty of a large and great creation. God is there not only in the still small voice, but in the fire and in the whirlwind.

The greater the destruction, the freer the chances of creation; but the destruction is often long, slow and oppressive, the creation tardy in its coming or interrupted in its triumph. The night returns again and again and the day lingers or seems even to have been a false dawning. Despair not therefore but watch and work. Those who hope violently, despair swiftly: neither hope nor fear, but be sure of God's purpose and thy will to accomplish.

The hand of the divine Artist works often as if it were unsure of its genius and its material. It seems to touch and test and leave, to pick up and throw away and pick up again, to labour and fail and botch and repiece together. Surprises and disappointments are the order of his work before all things are ready. What was selected, is cast away into the abyss of reprobation; what was rejected, becomes the corner-stone of a mighty edifice. But behind all this is the sure eye of a knowledge which surpasses our reason and the slow smile of an infinite ability.

God has all time before him and does not need to be always in a hurry. He is sure of his aim and success and cares not if he break his work a hundred times to bring it nearer perfection. Patience is our first great necessary lesson, but not the dull slow-

ness to move of the timid, the sceptical, the weary, the slothful, the unambitious or the weakling; a patience full of a calm and gathering strength which watches and prepares itself for the hour of swift great strokes, few but enough to change destiny.

Wherefore God hammers so fiercely at his world, tramples and kneads it like dough, casts it so often into the blood-bath and the red hell-heat of the furnace? Because humanity in the mass is still a hard, crude and vile ore which will not otherwise be smelted and shaped; as is his material, so is his method. Let it help to transmute itself into nobler and purer metal, his ways with it will be gentler and sweeter, much loftier and fairer its uses.

Wherefore he selected or made such a material, when he had all infinite possibility to choose from? Because of his divine Idea which saw before it not only beauty and sweetness and purity, but also force and will and greatness. Despise not force, nor hate it for the ugliness of some of its faces, nor think that love only is God. All perfect perfection must have something in it of the stuff of the hero and even of the Titan. But the greatest force is born out of the greatest difficulty.

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All would change if man could once consent to be spiritualised; but his nature, mental and vital and physical, is rebellious to the higher law. He loves his imperfection.

The Spirit is the truth of our being; mind and life and body in their imperfection are its masks, but in their perfection should be its moulds. To be spiritual only is not enough; that prepares a number of souls for heaven, but leaves the earth very much where it was. Neither is a compromise the way of salvation.

The world knows three kinds of revolution. The material has strong results, the moral and intellectual are infinitely larger in their scope and richer in their fruits, but the spiritual are the great sowings.

If the triple change could coincide in a perfect correspondence, a faultless work would be done; but the mind and body of mankind cannot hold perfectly a strong spiritual inrush: most is spilt, much of the rest is corrupted. Many intellectual and physical upturnings of our soil are needed to work out a little result from a large spiritual sowing.

Each religion has helped mankind. Paganism increased in man the light of beauty, the largeness and height of his life, his aim at a many-sided perfection; Christianity gave him some vision of divine love and charity; Buddhism has shown him a noble way to be wiser, gentler, purer; Judaism and Islam how to be religiously faithful in action and zealously devoted to God; Hinduism has opened to him the largest and profoundest spiritual possibilities. A great thing would be done if all these God-visions could embrace and cast themselves into each other; but intellectual dogma and cult-egoism stand in the way.

All religions have saved a number of souls, but none yet has been able to spiritualise mankind. For that there is needed not cult and creed, but a sustained and all-comprehending effort at spiritual self-evolution.

The changes we see in the world today are intellectual, moral, physical in their ideal and intention: the spiritual revolution waits for its hour and throws up meanwhile its waves here and there. Until it comes the sense of the others cannot be understood and till then all interpretations of present happening and forecast of man's future are vain things. For its nature, power, event are that which will determine the next cycle of our humanity.