

THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY.

VOL. I.

MARCH, 1921.

No. 3.

New Thought.

PROF. TH. GRAEBNER, St. Louis, Mo.

"We are not of the earth, earthy, but gods from heaven, for we have always been in heaven and can never get out of heaven. . . . My democracy is the democracy of divinity, for I recognize each human being as a fellow-god. . . . And, my beloved gods and goddesses, we were all there before the earth and before matter, for we are the creators and the originators and operators of this mental universe."

This is New Thought speaking through one of its prophets in *The Nautilus* of December, 1917. (pp. 23—25.) New Thought does many things. It cures a baby of constipation when you say to it, for three days, "You are no longer constipated — you are a perfect being." (p. 37.) It overcomes appendicitis without recourse to the knife. (p. 38.) By speaking "helpful little phrases" before falling into slumber at night, one devotee has become successful in business. (p. 47.) New Thought is just the thing to help one become a successful poultry-raiser (p. 49), and by "investing in an annual subscription to this unparalleled monthly" (*The Nautilus*), the mind is renewed along the line of St. Paul's counsel to "be transformed by the renewing of mind." (p. 52.) But, above all, it assures its believers of their essential identity with the Godhead; not union, but identity. "We are not of the earth, earthy, but gods from heaven." Ralph Waldo Trine, one of its high priests, writes: "Man is god incarnate."

At present there are, if their statistics can be relied upon, about five million gods and goddesses in the world. Of these the greater number are said to live in what has been called the "pay-streak of our civilization," — the band of population stretching along the forty-first degree of latitude. From New York City the cult reports 700,000 adherents, from Pittsburgh 350,000, from

The Road to Success, or Self-Improvement.

REV. F. E. PASCHE, Morris, Minn.

(Continued from the *Theological Quarterly*.)

Cheerfulness and humor give brightness to the face, sunshine to the eyes, relieve the high tension of an argument or oration, and illuminate thought with their light and splendor. Draw up the blinds of your thoughts, open the windows of your heart, and glorify your life with sunshine. Banish all unpleasant thoughts. Be always in a happy, cheerful mood. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine," says Solomon. Tune your mind to harmony for sleep. Clear up that cloudy countenance! Refresh, renew, rejuvenate yourself. Never go to sleep without erasing every unfortunate impression, every disagreeable experience, every unkind thought, from the mind. "Where care watches, sleep will never lie." (Shakespeare.) Imagine that the words "Good Cheer" are written all over your sleeping-room in letters of light.

Let the bright sunlight shine into your daily life. The oil of gladness makes smoother all the pathways of life. Do not permit worry to overshadow your vocation. We often see nothing but dark clouds floating overhead; but behind them is the glory of the sun. If at times it seems as if God were burdening us too much, as though the affliction lasted too long, there being seemingly no end, that finally we must succumb to it—nevertheless persevere, for God knows how much His child can bear. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Cor. 10, 13. As a wise mariner never overloads his ship, lest it sink, so God never overburdens His child, lest it succumb. So, then, be of good cheer, have patience and say, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair." 2 Cor. 4, 8. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." John 16, 33. "Ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." John 16, 20. "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." Phil. 4, 4.

Worry is a black monster, which has made many a man a physical wreck—a victim of nerves and moods; it has dwarfed them mentally and morally, and robbed them of the spontaneity and elasticity of youth; it has deprived them of needed rest and recreation, or amusement of any kind; it has made them brutes in their homes and a nuisance to their fellow-men by nervous irritability; it has hardened their sympathies, blighted their aspira-

tions, and crushed their hopes; it has sapped their courage, their self-respect, and their self-control; it shows us the specter of poverty, danger, failure, and shame.

Is this what the Creator has intended for us? Shall we sit in deepest gloom, mourn over departed joys, tremble, and despair? Decidedly not. He bids the sad-hearted rejoice. The Creator has bidden every man look up, not down. Religion casts about one an atmosphere of sunshine. The habit of looking down, talking down, is fatal to advancement. The Creator made us to climb, not to grovel. He is able to furnish enough for all. There is an abundance of food here, that will serve us all plentifully. There is plenty for everybody. And all who perceive and acknowledge this, pray, praise, and give thanks. They exclaim: "O may this bounteous God through all our life be with us, and cheer us with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace, and keep us in His grace, guide us when perplexed, and free us from all ills."

But, alas! most men are ungrateful; they wickedly forget the divine benefits, which is indeed very shameful; and properly is such an ungrateful soul reprimanded, "Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise?" Deut. 32, 6. Ingratitude is a boisterous wind that dries up the dew of divine grace. Whosoever is ungrateful for what he has received is not worthy to receive more. Yea, great afflictions and punishments must come down upon those who are ungrateful to the Most High, and there will be no end of trouble and worrying for them. But he who shows gratitude for blessings received moves God to bestow still greater blessings upon him, and this will be to him the richest source of happiness and cheerfulness.

Something must be wrong when those who have inherited infinite supply are worrying about their daily bread, are dogged by fear and anxiety so that they cannot take any peace; that their lives are one battle with want; that they are always under the harrow of worry, always anxious. There is something wrong when people are so worried and absorbed mentally by a poverty-stricken attitude that it drives away all their happiness. God is not to blame. He is not dead. He has not withdrawn His hand from this world. He has not forsaken His work, as the architect leaves the house when it is finished, but He preserves all things and governs them by His paternal providence. God is not unconcerned about the affairs on earth. Of His government of the world the Psalmist says: "The Lord looketh from heaven; He beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of His habitation He looketh

upon all the inhabitants of the earth. He fashioneth their hearts alike; He considereth all their works." All things and all the affairs of men are in His hands, subject to His control and direction. Even to the smallest and most trifling matters does His government extend. God cares for the sparrows; one of them shall not fall to the ground without His permission. If He cares for the meanest of His creatures, will He not care for us, His children, whom He has bought with a most precious price? Why, "the very hairs of your head are all numbered." And though troubles and afflictions may assail us, yet there shall not be a real evil in them, for they come from the loving hand of God, our heavenly Father, and are not sent for our hurt, but for our good. He overrules the evil designs of our enemies and turns them into good for us, as Joseph spoke to his brothers: "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good." Not only did Joseph become a great man, but through him God saved much people alive. In brief, God is not dead, but He lives and cares for us. We Christians know that our heavenly Father is good to His children. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Hence we are exhorted: "Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass."

We were made for happiness, to express joy and gladness, to be prosperous and cheerful. The trouble with us is that we do not trust God as we should, and consequently do not pray to Him so that His abundance can flow to us. In other words, we keep our minds so pinched, and our faith in our heavenly Father, who daily and richly provides for all, is so small, so narrow, that we strangle the inflow of supply. Murmuring people have a very sad, gray world. The trouble is not in the supply. God's bounty is as boundless as the sea, His love as deep. There is abundance awaiting every one on the globe. "Ask, and it shall be given you." Matt. 7, 7. Have we trials and temptations? Do troubles and cares cumber us like a load? Are we weak and discouraged? Let us take it to the Lord in prayer. We do not ask half enough, hence the meagerness. We are content with too little of the things worth while. It was intended that we should have plenty of everything that is good for us. No one was meant to live in poverty and wretchedness.

Grateful hearts see bounty everywhere. "Having nothing, yet possessing all things," sang the Apostle Paul. If one hope fails, that is not the end of hope; if one door closes, many others will open. Believe firmly that God will provide you with all that you

need to support your body and life, and that He will defend you against all danger, guard and protect you from all evil. Every evening lay down your head with the assuring thought: God's holy angel is near me; I need not fear my enemies, for He protects me; my faithful Guide will never leave me; I may dwell in peace and safety.

Erase, therefore, all the doubts and fears of evil, of danger, of poverty, and all the shadows of failure and shame from your mind, and do not worry. Smile and look happy, as you go about your work; carry sunshine. "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy." John 16, 20. The April showers are to bring May flowers. Worrying means discouragement, fear, doubt, lack of confidence in God's power to help, distrusting God; but these are the germs which have killed the prosperity and happiness of tens of thousands. Be, therefore, delightful and pleasurable. Let everything about you seem to rejoice in the light of your countenance.

A beautiful, sunny temper is no sign of weakness, as many suppose, but of strength and harmony of character. It shows that there is a power seated at the center of the being that knows how to administer the government. A cheerful temper is like the genial sun, in whose warm rays all men love to bask. We read Neh. 8, 10: "Neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength." Joy, gladness, is twice blessed; it blesses him who is glad, doing him good like medicine, and it has the quality of contagion, communicating itself to others. Some company is cold and frigid. Bright, cheerful company irradiates warmth to everybody; the winter is past, and the birds of good spirits begin to sing!

True, there is much suffering in the world. We live in a vale of tears. A Christian, too, has to suffer. How may this stream of woe be stopped? Whoever would stop this stream must stop the source; he must overcome sin. We can overcome sin only by believing in the divine Redeemer who has redeemed us from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil. He is the only physician who can help you. Of Him you can take remedies for all ills and every suffering; with Him you can rejoice and say, "My heart beats with joy and cannot be depressed." Jesus can free us from worry and make our hearts truly cheerful.

Jesus will not fail me,
 Foes who would assail me
 Cannot reach me here;
 Though the earth be shaking,
 Every heart be quaking,
 Jesus calms my fear.

(To be continued.)