

1.

The eyes
of this humanity
are closed as yet.
It is only a glimmer,
now here,
now there,
of the truth
that reaches the outer world.
These glimpses
are priceless,
and the fact
that there are those who catch them
shows the great advance
of the whole.
Once the man
who hungers
for spiritual knowledge
learns that there are
in the world
teachers of Occultism,
Masters of Wisdom,
there springs up in his breast
a fervent longing
to come under
their personal notice,
to receive
their teachings.

2.

But
many such aspirants
mistake
the force generated
by the longing
for the recognition
of spiritual teachers
for worthiness
to become a disciple.
Some have fancied
that to attain
spiritual wisdom
it is necessary
to forsake the world,
renounce all outer activity,
becoming like
the mystic of the Orient,
immured in some dark forest,
his mind absorbed
in some vague reverie,
ever seeking absorption
into the Supreme.
Such dreamy mysticism
is one extreme of life,
the feverish activity
of Western civilization
the other;
and in neither
of the two extremes
can the true path
be found.

3.

The character
of the Yogi of the East,
vast, imaginative, loving,
with his constant effort
to lose himself
in the whole,
must lie
in the West-wind
and receive
the call to action,
devotion to that whole
in its most microscopical portion.
The two characters,
that of the East
and that of the West,
must be fused,
and the dross
burned from each.

4.

If we are to give a form,
either to government,
ethics or religion,
we must become
masters of that form
and not its trembling slaves,
fearing that
we are doing it a wrong.
We must be able
to transmute
and absorb it
into our own essence,
lay the lines
and send the force
over these lines
to and fro—
in other words,
become one with it.

5.

Outer work,
work for this
tortured,
tried humanity,
is necessary—
more necessary
than many know;
for it must give the impulse
to the great current
that on the physical plane
is lifting the world
as it sweeps around
the lowest arc
of the cycle.
But outer work
is selfish and useless
unless
the torch of love and wisdom
in the heart of each
has been lighted
from the great flame,
the flame that burns
without wick or oil.
The watchers of that flame
blow it in certain directions;
those catch it who can,
that is,
those
whose torches
are trimmed.

6.

Many of us are children yet,
grasping at imaginary flame,
but woe be to those
to whom it has been given
to pass on the fire
and who may have kept it
for their own special purpose,
whether they call that purpose
work for humanity
or self aggrandizement.

7.

Thus it has ever been
with those
who seek ambitiously
to become leaders,
guides
on the path
their own feet
have never trod,
teachers of the science of life
before they have learned
the first elements
of right living.
Playing upon
the selfish tendencies
of their followers,
by subtle touches of flattery
they bring them at last
into abject servitude.
Even the sincere and worthy student
may become the prey
of such false teachers,
following them until he finds,
as inevitably he must,
that his aspirations
have been travestied,
his inner life desecrated.

8.

Do not put the treasures
of your inmost heart
into the keeping
of another human being,
however high.
They will come back to you
freighted with the tears
of those who have suffered,
as you too have suffered,
in order to learn there is
only one sure refuge,
your own soul.

9.

Yet every failure
has a lesson to teach;
and even mistaken efforts
are not fruitless
when a true motive actuates them.
But it usually happens that
in any misguided attempt
one injures his fellows;
and we naturally learn
to hate those
we have wronged.
Now,
one of the strongest tests
of true spiritual advance
is to know
one loves the persons
one has injured most.

10.

Jesus of Nazareth
solved the great riddle
of spiritual progress for the world
in His words:

“Her sins are forgiven,
for she loved much.”
He perfectly understood
that the woman who had
sinned through love
held in her soul
the germs of a spiritual love
that would render
absolute self-sacrifice,
the power to
stand still
in the furnace
until the dross
was all burned away.

11.

No effort for good
is ever wasted.
It disappears from your view,
but only to fall
into the world of causes,
into the soil of wisdom,
to be watered by love
and again
brought forth
to bloom.

12.

Religion
is too much occupied
with the fate
of man after death,
and concerns itself too little
with our immediate life.
Learn to live;
trust God for dying.
The latter is His business,
the former is yours.
To eat, drink and sleep,
to be merry or sad,
is not life.
Life is the intense,
pulsating,
vibratory acme
of knowledge,
truth,
love,
beauty
and faith.
Reach out
and breathe it
into your own soul,
as a famishing man
reaches for bread
to sustain his fainting body.

13.

Self-abasement,
false humility,
is erroneously supposed
by some
to be an
essentially religious
attitude of mind.
Learn to
merge yourself
in the whole,
and from the standpoint
of that whole,
judge
your own personality.
You will then find
that personality
to be
no better,
no worse
than those with whom
you are closely associated;
the varnish is spread
more thickly on the parts
that seem better
than your associates;
it has not been well done
on the parts
where you seem worse.
Could you see
beneath the surface,
you would find
but little difference.

14.

The good,
the Godlike,
lies in the law,
the power,
that is raising
the Son of God
from the tomb.

15.

Do not look too far
for the thing
you are
seeking most earnestly.
You will generally find it
close to you.
The very longing
has brought it.
This is due
to the law of
supply and demand.
Uncover the crust
of the personality
nearest you,
the one
who loves you
most unselfishly,
and you will
generally
find it.

16.

There are sterile bits
of bleak wilderness
in almost all lives.
Sometimes
we pass them in youth,
sometimes later in life;
but pass them
at one time or another
we all must,
and with parched lips
and weary limbs.
But thanks be to God
for the oasis
on the other side of
each barren stretch,
and for the waters of life
that renew our strength
for another trial.

17.

To the last hour
of our mortal life
the memories of
those terrible struggles,
battles with
the powers of darkness,
remain with us
and pass on with us
into the Silence.
We look back
on those hours
with an involuntary
shiver of the heart,
as we think of the
somber desolation,
the isolation,
the unapproachable loneliness
of those great altitudes
where man first comes
face to face
with his own soul
and in his mad,
unreasoning terror
of its own greatness,
turns about
to flee away,
and finds that
he cannot flee
from himself,
for he is everywhere.

18.

Material existence
is one of darkness,
bleak darkness,
thick and cold,
and shrouded
by a pall of
loneliness unutterable,
through which the soul,
the tender nursling,
blind,
helpless
as a little child,
totters on and on,
in search of
that sweet voice
it once has heard
and never can forget.
Hell,
ay,
hell indeed,
thou mystery of life!
The body's anguish
is a hell,
but
beside the anguish
in the hell
of its own longing
that the starving soul creates,
the body's hell
is joy.

'Twill pass,
ay,
pass it must,
or the soul,
undying as it is,
would wither
in the furnace
of that outer fire;
and there will fall
a peace,
hard won,
the peace
of the great
brotherhood of souls.
Therefore,
learn to wait.
Life holds
no harder lesson.

19.

The soul of man
is like
the soul in a tree,
awaiting the death
that is to give it life:
its branches swaying in the wind,
its head towards heaven,
its roots in miry clay.
Steadily
through the long years
it stands,
bearing the storms
that sweep over it,
bending toward the earth
but never breaking,
waiting,
always waiting
the woodman's ax,
the turning-lathe,
the careful hands
of the human creator
and the Master hand
that will bring it to life
in harmonious rhythm,
low and passionate,
loud and inspiring,
tones that cause
a nation to weep
and rouse an army
to patriotism.

20.

In its earth-life,
performing
its natural functions
in its own place,
could the tree
dream
of its inherent
possibilities?
Are we any wiser as a rule?
The hand
of the Creator
is upon us,
the loose strings
of our human nature
are being stretched
and tuned.
Now here,
now there,
in the great workshop
we catch a few notes
from a
nearly finished instrument;
occasionally
an octave of melody
sweeps around the world
from a few strings
that have been attuned;
and the leader
of the great orchestra,
the Master,
is still waiting,
waiting
for the full number
with which the paean
of universal praise
may be sounded.