

of our imagination and impart more reality than before to our effort to restore the broken connection. And thus the finds of science become supports to our piety. They help us to hearken unto God, and our prayer, "O Lord, give heed to me and hear the voice of my supplication," borrows strength from them in our approach to the throne of grace.

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"THAT WHICH I SEE NOT, TEACH
THOU ME."

The knowledge that we have of ourselves differs according to its source. We have acquired a part of it ourselves, another part we have received from God. When it is asked in what particular these two parts of self-knowledge differ, call to mind that as a rule we faithfully record the good there is in us, while for the most part we must have the evil that is in us pointed out to us and brought to our remembrance by God.

A child can understand this. When praise is offered, it is readily accepted. But a child resists blame. He is not conscious of wrong and lightly passes it by. And he continues in this course until the conscience is awakened and God teaches him to become humble.

In later life this goes on more covertly. In reality, however, conditions remain the same. The heart is not carried on the sleeve as in childhood years. Some people succeed in hiding their inner life from the eyes of others. No sooner, however, is the personal life disclosed to the ear of a friend but the same result follows. A part of our self-knowledge we have acquired ourselves. The other

part we have ignored, until through bitter experience it has been taught us by God. This difference is at times strikingly evident. For, as a rule, we do not only fail of seeking instruction in matters of conscience, but resist the same when it is offered, and only consent to it when in the providence of God it is forced upon us. In many instances God is obliged—we say it reverently—to force this self-knowledge upon people all their lives. They simply will not learn it and in every way they seek to forget what God shows them of themselves.

But there are men and women who in all honesty seek a clear knowledge of themselves and who desire nothing more earnestly than to know the truth regarding themselves. Nathaniels, who do not invite but shun flattery; who despise the false image which they see of themselves in the glass, and who can not rest until they know themselves as they truly are. When God speaks to them in the conscience they lend him a willing ear. They realize that God's lesson in the conscience is a warning, and they do not fail to profit by it. Now let higher, spiritual grace be added to this, and the gains will still be greater. Not only will they lend willing ears to listen when God speaks, but they will also study the lessons which God tries to impart to the conscience and attain the high, spiritual level of the pregnant prayer: "That which I do not see and discover in myself, teach Thou me, O my God" (Job 34:32).

These two parts of human knowledge are abroad everywhere. All through life there is a part of knowledge which we acquire ourselves and a part which God brings us. To see is to observe, and

ordinarily we call the first part of our knowledge that which is acquired by observation. By the side of this there is another part of knowledge which man would never have acquired of himself, and which God has taught him. This characterizes human knowledge in general. Everywhere and in all ages man observes, gains experience, investigates and enlarges the scope of his finds, and in this way, among all nations, arrives at certain knowledge of nature and of life, and turns it into profit. In this process one nation excels another in keener sight and finer hearing, in greater powers of invention and perseverance, and consequently makes greater strides in development. But in the main all knowledge is alike. It is founded upon that what man sees. It is acquired by observation. It is developed by studious thought. Such is the case with the great inventions, in which there is always something mysterious; inventions which, though no one surmises it at first, disclose to us almost entirely new domains of knowledge, which unbelief attributes to chance, but which he who believes gratefully interprets from the Divine appointment. Thus aside from the knowledge that is obtained through what we see, another knowledge comes to us because God imparts it to us.

High ideals, moreover, whether in individuals or nations, form the strongest possible motives that inspire the search after knowledge and truth. He who has no sense of ideals may seek material knowledge, but the knowledge of higher things in human life leaves him cold and indifferent. A money-wolf is an adept in the knowledge that promises gain, but what does he care for the

higher knowledge of the nobler elements of human life? Just as little as a deaf man cares for a Bach, or a blind man for the works of art by a Raphael or Rembrandt. And what applies to individuals applies to nations. When nations fail of ideals, they degenerate into materialism and sensualism, and shut themselves off from the higher life. They make no progress themselves and can not influence other nations for the better. Indeed, they retrograde and drag other nations down with themselves. This can differ in one age from another with the same people. In the sixteenth century the Netherlands fostered high ideals, and exerted noble and inspiring influences upon all of Western Europe. In the eighteenth century they degenerated and carried no blessing to other nations in any sense.

And whether a nation is swayed by high ideals, depends on God. When he sends forth the breath of nobler aims and purposes upon a people, desires are quickened after the higher ends of life, and people are lifted up by the knowledge of nobler human existence. When he takes that breath away, the understanding is dulled, and all nobler knowledge fails. In an ideal sense God can draw a people to himself and impart something of his own Divine life to it. And He can withdraw and leave a people alone to its own hurt. In the latter case the loss of higher and nobler knowledge is inexorable. And so we arrive at the same result. By seeing and observing, a part of our knowledge is in our own power. But the part of higher and nobler knowledge God alone can impart.

As we apply this to ourselves we see at once that this Divinely-imparted knowledge comes by

no means exclusively through the conscience. Upon a far broader scale some of it comes from the Divine counsel, and some from the relation which he establishes between himself and us. We are born of our parents and we find many things in ourselves that remind us of them. But the formation of our person, disposition, temper and leading inclination are his work. When we discover in ourselves a thirst after higher knowledge, and a susceptibility to nobler ends, the impulse born from this is a work of the Holy Ghost in the soul. The results of the knowledge which we have thus acquired are not obtained by observation, but by virtue of the higher impulse which he quickens and maintains in us.

Circumstances play a part in this. We may have a friend whose nobleness of character becomes an inspiration. We may go through certain experiences, and meet cultivated and interesting people who stimulate us to court higher lines of thought. We may have important duties laid upon us, high responsibilities, or bitter griefs, which advance us to more than ordinary heights. And again, it is God alone who disposes all these things in our behalf. But above everything else we can feel the beginnings of a strong drawing of God in our hearts when he leaves us no rest and weans us from earthly vanities, and mystically inspires us with a sense of necessity which compels us to take deeper interests in the higher things of life and makes us grow and expand in them with continual refreshings. And if this is so, it is not we who have raised ourselves up to God, but it is God who has raised us up to heavenly places with himself. This mercy may have been shown to us

and not to some others. And why? This is a mystery which we can not grasp. But the fact remains. We have two kinds of knowledge. Aside from that which is acquired by sight and observation, there is that other and higher knowledge which comes to us from God.

This knowledge unfolds most beautifully in the soul that is subject to grace. Not every regenerate child of God advances to great heights of learning. Some devout souls lack almost every power of entering into the mysteries of the higher life. Some cultivate mysticism along emotional lines, but continue devoid of knowledge. Others learn a great deal of the way of salvation, but cultivate little interest in the higher and nobler knowledge of human life. There are still others, and this is most glorious, who are warm of heart and of a deep mystical nature, and of clear insight into the way of Salvation, who, in addition to all this, reach the inner unfoldings, by which their knowledge is extended to those nobler parts of human understanding, which make them not merely deeply religious, but men of high ideals.

Such people stand on the top of the mountain of God's holiness. A light above the light of the sun dawns on their horizon. Their knowledge becomes that of the saints made perfect. They are most deeply conscious of their entire dependence upon God and of their longing for ever larger knowledge of him and of themselves. And this, their thirst, can only express itself in the prayer: O my God, aside from what I see and discover myself, teach Thou me. Instruct me ever more in holy fellowship with Thee.

“SONGS IN THE NIGHT.”

Night is a mystery. For most people sleep is a going out from life, in order, in the course of seven or eight hours, to come back to it. When they fall asleep, they are gone. And when the hour-hand on the dial points, say some seven or more hours further on, they arise and resume their part in life. There is at most an occasional remembrance of a dream, but for the rest it is all a blank. A third part of life is spent in sleep. At thirty years of age a man has practically lived but twenty. The remaining ten years have passed away in unconsciousness.

But sleep serves a purpose. We retire weary in body and mind and with new strength we arise. As far as we know, we were inactive in sleep. We did not think, nor observe, nor will, nor work. This entire cessation of activity is the real ordinance of night. As long as we are in health and in full possession of our powers, and not overburdened with cares, we sleep, undisturbed by outward things, in this way and in no other.

Why this has been so ordained, we do not know. For though we say that we become weary through work, that our strength is exhausted and demands rest to recuperate, it means nothing. For at once we ask: Why this exhaustion of strength? He, after whose Image we are created, never wearies. The heavenly hosts of angels do not sleep. Of the new Jerusalem we read: “There shall be no more night.” We can imagine a being, who does not exhaust his strength and therefore needs no sleep. Why God appointed life for us with the