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WHENCE COMES POWER?

There are things in this world that are not yet revealed to the minds of men, notwithstanding the diligent attempts to lift Nature's veil that have continued now for untold centuries. As each human being is an entity in many ways different from his fellows, to be understood he must reveal himself as he really is; he must lift his own veil, throw aside his mask, that he may be seen as he was truly created. Fear holds many of us in check and prevents us from doing our best work—we dread ridicule; confidence we withhold for fear others, not understanding, will think us foolish. This fear of criticism is a weakness that paradoxically is powerful enough to cast us on the rocks and wreck us and leave us victims of blasted hopes and stifled aspirations.

How foolish it is on the part of any of us that we should hesitate to engage in anything that will bring us satisfaction, so long as it is a respectable avocation or pursuit, and injures no-one. Each one of us who is of sane mind holds within himself "that something," which, if nourished, may amaze its possessor and even electrify the world. Cultivate your gifts, your talents, for in reality they are precious possessions and they alone are truly yours—a part of your very being. In all ages of human life no-one before has ever possessed gifts from the Creator just exactly on the same pattern or in the same measure as those with which you are endowed. In the truest sense in the world these gifts are your all—all that you alone can ever really possess. Use them—do not stifle them with false apprehensions or the frivolities of the day.

We, one and all, are possessed of potential powers that if rightly used will prove of value to ourselves and a blessing to mankind. We have within us a mysterious force the extent of which we seldom realize, but this force if rightly used makes achievement possible. What is this power? From whence does it come and why is it? We do not know, but we feel certain that it is a God-given faculty for the accomplishment of good if we will use it for its true purpose. It has been said that "barriers have not been erected that say to man thus far and no farther." Our goal, or our mission, is limited only by our vision and our will to carry on. "Unwearied pursuit" of a given thing is certain to bring astonishing and commendable results. While we may not fully understand the source of our power, nevertheless we have it and should use it.

We are impelled to give our readers one of Schopenhauer's "parables," the one entitled "The Young Oak," as it gives some idea of that unknown force, "that something." Here it is:

"Once, as I was botanizing under an oak, I found among a number of other plants of similar height one that was dark of color, with tightly closed leaves and a stalk that was straight and stiff. When I touched it, it said to me in firm tones: 'Let me alone; I am not for your collection, like these plants to which nature has given only a single year of life. I am a little oak.'

"So it is with man whose influence is to last for hundreds of years. As a child, as a youth, often even as a full-grown man, nay, his whole life long, he goes among his fellows, looking like them and seemingly as unimportant. But let him alone; he will not die. Time will come and bring those who know how to value him."

Does not the above parable ring true? What a lesson for all of us! We are going to give you another story in an attempt to show the importance of "that something" in the lives of men; it is a little classic from the pen of Olive Schreiner entitled "The Artist's Secret," and is as follows:

"There was an artist once, and he painted a picture. Other artists had colors richer and rarer, and painted more notable pictures. He painted his with one color; there was a wonderful red glow on it; and the people went up and down, saying, 'We like the picture, we like the glow.'

"The other artists came and said: 'Where does he get his color from?' They asked him; and he smiled and said: 'I cannot tell you;' and worked on with his head bent low.

"And one went to the far East and bought costly pigments, and made a rare color and painted, but after a time the picture faded. Another read in the old books, and made a color rich and rare, but when he put it on the pattern it was dead.

"But the artist painted on. Always the work got redder and redder, and the artist grew whiter and whiter. At last one day they found him dead before his picture, and they took him up to bury him. The other men looked about in all the pots and crucibles, but they found nothing they had not.

"And when at last they undressed him and put his graveclothes on him, they found above his left breast the mark of a wound—it was an old, old wound, that must have been there all his life, for the edges were old and hardened; but Death, who seals all things, had drawn the edges together, and closed it up.

"And they buried him. And still the people went about saying: 'Where did he find his color?'

"And it came to pass that after a while the artist was forgotten—but the work lived."

We wonder what it is all about, but we know that right is right, and wrong is wrong; that there is a purpose back of life, that there is a force, a power, a mysterious "something" in each of us and that each must work out his own problems.