

SPIRITUAL INQUIRY

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Spiritual Inquiry

by

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This Instruction is not a method, but a message.

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THIS INQUIRY IS DEDICATED
TO
MY FATHER AND MOTHER,
GEORGE EDWIN BURNELL
AND
MARY LAMOREAUX BURNELL
IN LOVE AND GRATITUDE
FOR THE TEACHINGS OF THIS
INSTRUCTION
RECEIVED FROM THEM.

Why Spiritual Inquiry?

If human beings were absolutely satisfied with their experience of living in this world, there would be no need for an instruction in truth such as this, nor would there be need for any instruction in truth. Instruction is really for the purpose of arriving at satisfaction of life—not the fleeting surface satisfaction of transient enjoyments, but the deep, everlasting, unshakeable joy and happiness and satisfaction that is rooted only in immutable truth, the undiluted ultimate good.

When we become aware of the dissatisfaction, frustration, and bafflement of life in the world as we find it, we search for something “practical” that we may apply to patch up the places of dissatisfaction. We will try anything that offers relief—perhaps a little medicine to

relieve poor health, a little more money to relieve our financial pressures, a little more success in our endeavors, or a little more admiration in our social environment. "Specifics" for the relief of our most pressing dissatisfactions is all we ask for—something practical that we can apply. But after countless trials we find that as soon as one patch is applied, another place in our fabric of life wears thin; and we hunt for another patch and another and another—an endless activity of frustration.

We are so fixed in our minds, we are so sure that we know exactly what is needed to fill our life with satisfaction, that when the really practical is offered, we reject it as being theoretical and useless to us in our daily life.

This is because we are blindly unaware that the real vitality and governing power in our lives is not confined within the boundaries of the world as we see it, but is inconceivably greater. A child sees his reflection in a mirror and tries futilely to touch it. Repulsed by his inability to contact the child in the mirror, he reacts emotionally to his bafflement with anger

and tears.

We grownups are pitifully confident of the evidence of our own senses, and we say we know a thing because we see it ourselves. What we see may not be where we think we see it, and may not be what we see at all. But if we try to reach it where we think it is, either to grasp or to adjust it more to our liking, we can only meet with frustration.

Instruction is for the purpose of pointing out reality where it is. To follow instruction we must use the only instrument we have for knowing anything—our mind. And if we are to know anything correctly through the instrument called the mind, we must understand the nature, abilities, and limitations of that mind; it must be turned upon itself to understand itself. This is the work of rational instruction.

Rational instruction does not set forth arbitrary facts for acceptance or rejection; it is designed to draw forth from the individual the truth within him which he has not been aware of nor in command of—the ultimate, *inevitable conclusion* which admits of no other conclusion.

Then when the truth comes to that rational ground of the individual, it is not something borrowed or superimposed or "other," but is actual identification of the individual with truth itself.

There is a truth about ourselves *independent* of our thinking. There is something to be found out that is true before, during, and after the time of our finding out—or whether we ever find it out or not. Our misconceptions do not touch the way it is, but merely leave us bogged down in an erroneous belief. Instruction is for the purpose of uncovering the way it is. Instruction is not an addition to one's stockpile of information; it is the uncovering of the truth, the husking of the misinformation we have accumulated. When the mind stands clean and free of its accumulation of wrong knowledge, it becomes a true, uninfluenced instrument for the perception of reality.

As long as the mind reports favorable appearances, one does not usually search for the underlying truth. But when the little gratifications of the world wear thin, and we find the

"seamy" side coming through in a disconcerting way, then the way it "seems" is no longer acceptable; so we begin our search for truth—for *the way it is*.

It takes no art or skill or nobility to follow the reports of the mind as to appearances of things, but it takes heroic self-control and the help of heaven itself to stand in the face of convincing appearances and, in spite of them, to hold to the truth of unchanging reality.

Classic stories of the delusions the human mind labors under are numbered by the hundreds, but we will cite only one. It is the story of the boy who went to the theatre for entertainment, and in the course of the performance was hypnotized. He went fishing in the orchestra pit and had great satisfaction in a wonderful catch; then he cooked the fish (using a chair as a stove), and he and his family ate a fine fish dinner. During the dinner someone suggested going to the theatre. They took their seats in the theatre, and the boy suddenly returned to reality. He had, of course, never gone fishing; nor had he eaten a dinner nor left the

theatre at all. It had been only a mental excursion.

It is said that at some point along the line of instruction we will encounter a perception that will release us from the creativeness of our own mind, and we will find ourselves free from delusion about our world and our self. Notice particularly that we do not say that you will be free from your world, but that you will be free from delusion about your world—and yourself!

An important point is that no amount of investigation of the delusion itself can ever free us—no amount of trying to manipulate the image in the mirror, no attempt of the hypnotized boy to change his situation by following out a method in the delusion, could ever bring release. Truth could never be constructed out of the details of a delusion.

Through instruction, wrong ideas about yourself, your world, truth, are corrected and become right ideas. But at this point something tremendous happens, for you are not left holding right ideas; because they are right ideas about truth, they do not stay *ideas* but are

found to be truth itself. The saltus from the perception of right ideas lands us in another dimension. We are no longer in the realm of mentality, but by means of the vehicle of mind we have experienced transmission into reality, into the vital, living, radiant truth itself.

The mind must go through the discipline of rational instruction, for man is a rational animal. Rationality is not an activity of the mind, but the discovery of the nothingness of the creations of the mind. It is not that we deny creation, for all that was created was created by God and was pronounced by Him "good." Creation as it really is, is meant to be enjoyed; but it is meant that we remember the Creator, and not be deluded into thinking the things of creation are anything in themselves without Him. An Oriental sage said it something like this: I wish to experience the same enjoyment which deluded men have in creation, but without the delusion.

What we find out is the nothingness of our mind's creations; and from that revelation we move into a life of triumph over dry, dead

ideas, into vital communion with reality. Life cannot be trapped into ensubstancing mind's ideas. Instead, it offers us BEING—the refreshment of living breath, of vital reality.

Dissatisfaction is at the root of every movement in the world that attempts to pull down traditional societies and supplant them with something—anything—new and untried. But every such movement—every “ism”—is destined to failure and utter disintegration because it deals with the manipulation of things (whether material objects or material minds) entirely within the realm of the things. Such a movement never even approaches the governing power of those things; for the governing power is not in the things themselves, separated from their Creator.

Truth is truth; it is the only power in every dimension and is the same truth throughout all dimensions. A dimension is a reference frame which forms outlines within which truth is seen according to the limitations of that framework, but the truth has in no way been manipulated or adjusted. Truth is in this world;

but it is not confined within the limits of this world, nor is it manipulated from within this world.

Contact with truth results in complete, utter, absolute satisfaction in every department of our lives—not alone in our daily experiences of family and business life, of health, prosperity, and of all our activities, but in those deeper wellsprings of the soul. Truth is the foundation of our lives—mental, physical, spiritual; if any one of these is deprived of contact with truth, then there is dissatisfaction no matter how much material success and prosperity may be evident.

This Instruction is not an investigation of appearances; it is an inquiry into truth. This Instruction is not a method of attaining truth through some prolonged and difficult journey. This Instruction is a message of how it is with you right now. You are the Being who is eternally free—now!

The Message of Spiritual Instruction

There is a basic need for truth in every man. Irrational creatures instinctually accept truth which fulfills the purpose of being and is an absolute necessity to life; but the human being, due to his mental complexity, must ever find himself inquiring into the nature itself of truth. This inquiry can either be his curse or his blessing, his frustration or his ultimate fulfillment.

The purpose of this Instruction is to enable you to attain fulfillment by the uncovering of the truth of every truth. The simple word "truth" may in itself be a stumbling block because no word symbol has been more abused in application in the modern so-called religious thought. But we hope to show that we do not need to coin new words; rather, we enlighten authoritative words by discovering their real

meanings. The word "truth" is well rooted in authoritative ground and has always been stimulating to inquiry. At His trial before Pilate, Jesus said, *Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. And Pilate inquired, What is truth? The race of man has been putting the same question ever since, for the intellect of man is so constructed that it seeks the understanding of truth as the way of its perfection. All the education of the world is developed from this principle—the search for truth in one field of knowledge or another.

Jesus said, speaking of the subsisting Word of God which He was, **I am the way, the truth, and the life.

The plan of this Instruction is to distinguish what is properly meant by "the way, the truth, and the life" in such a fashion that the three will no longer be separated but will unite in one perfect and comprehensive vision.

The way is, technically speaking, one of knowledge. However, because the mind in seek-

*Cf. St. John 18:37, 38

** St. John 14:6

ing knowledge has the misfortune to be easily deceived, the real student has become distrustful of information even regarding truth. "Know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" has been an admonition so thrown about by the average cultus of metaphysics that it bounces off the mind, landing anywhere, like a rubber ball without a string to pull it back. The diverting action is in that the emphasis is placed on the *knowledge* of truth rather than on the truth itself; and thus the acquiring of knowledge becomes a method to achieve freedom rather than a message announcing freedom. Knowledge seems to degenerate so easily into human conjecture and slip off into unordered freedom of thought which cannot be other than a provocation to deception.

The more we seek after anything, the more convinced we are that we do not have it. My grandmother searched all over the house for her spectacles and could not find them because they were carried with her, on top of her head!

False convictions follow belief that we have to get truth by some device. The actual prin-

ciple of education is to draw knowledge out, rather than to grasp after outside knowledge. Knowledge is the correspondence of the within and the without. Until one has uncovered truth within, he can never find it without; but once the infinite well of living water is touched within, the awareness of spirituality is recognized everywhere. It is as though one's eyes were truly opened to a reality previously unobserved. A sense of new appreciation is felt for everything, because literally the whole world is seen in an understanding light. "In thy light we shall see light" is a statement of fact.

In the introductory page of the "Summa Theologica" of Saint Thomas Aquinas, Volume 1, these words give us a key to the importance of an instruction never deviating from truth:

*Man, whom truth had set free, was to be kept safe by the truth. Indeed, the fruits of heavenly doctrine, by which salvation was gained for man, could not have endured for long unless Christ our Lord had set up

*The "Summa Theologica" of St. Thomas Aquinas, Volume 1, Part 1, page ix.

a perpetual teaching authority (*magisterium*) for the instruction of souls in the faith.

Although we refer to the message elucidated in this Instruction as "The Instruction," we do not specify it as the instruction in any specific instruction, but rather it includes philosophy, metaphysics, theology, and devotional religion. The radiance in these various rays emanating from truth is followed back to the source where they are all discovered to meet in the true substance of absolute and authoritative being—God, that of which none greater can be thought, felt, or inferred.

Man, unknown to himself, is on the magnificent and universal search for God. Nothing can be so false and so narrow as the opinion that there is an antithesis between science and religion. The conflict on these two fronts of the search for truth is seeming only; they are not in any real sense contradictory. When one is able to distinguish the value of each department of knowledge, then he finds that they are united on the common basis of truth.

Let your mind range through the scope of human sciences one after the other, and you will be amazed to discover how each opens out into mysterious horizons revealing vestiges of universal truth. It is as though the mind, going as far as it can, comes out of its own limitations to face a mirror in which is reflected the prime magnificence of absolute Reality. There are many different provinces and departments of knowledge; but whatever value there is in any of them must be the core of truth, which, when the investigation is pressed to its utmost, is found within.

The realm of science deals mostly with the world of sense and matter; religion deals with the invisible mysteries. Actually, God is the source of both; therefore we need only to distinguish in order that we may unite them. Inasmuch as the knowledge is true, no matter what branch of knowledge it is, there can be no real contradiction between them. Conflict arises only when the material scientist tries to turn theologian or the theologian begins to depend on science to prove the mysteries of God.

So, actually, the conflict is not so much between the departments of knowledge as it is between the men who pursue special branches of study to the exclusion of others. The confusion and so-called conflict is the result of not being able to distinguish between secondary and primary causes. When these are distinguished, it is found that recognition of the First Cause, divine Truth, throws unlimited light on secondary causes. In other words, nothing has to be eliminated, but all has to be illuminated by the full light of supreme truth. What is really important is to discover what it is that science really proves and what it is that religion really teaches. It is a recognized fact that those who have found truth in either field are not in opposition to each other.

This fact of unity is also true in regard to religion itself. There seem to be many branches of religion; there are the Jews and the Gentiles, each with their religious belief; there are the Protestants, and the Catholics, each thinking their belief is in conflict with the other; there are the Mohammedans, and the Buddhists, each

insisting that their religion is different. But under all of this seeming opposition, the real meaning of religion remains the same. In its widest sense religion means union of man with God. The only difference in religions is in the manner or way of attaining this union. The incomplete doctrines and precepts dictated by the various branches of religion provide the only conflict.

Many people spend their lives searching out truth in some branch of science; but it is not really the branch of science that is the goal; rather, it is the subsisting truth that is sought.

Science, philosophy, metaphysics, religion—any of these may be the road the seeker travels; but it is truth he wants, for only truth can satisfy man's innate craving. Truth itself is the aim of this Instruction—truth which is behind science, philosophy, metaphysics, and religion.

Actually, true science and true religion can never be at war with each other, nor can true religion of any denomination really conflict with any other religion which is true. The great secret is to find Truth in whatever is presented,

for in this way there is a constant enrichment from interminable contributing sources.

There is a universal truth, an Absolute truth by which all ways and means derive authority. The great need is to keep this truth so pure that no external difference of opinion can divert the seeker. Saint Augustine, in his "Confessions," says:

*If we both see that what you say is true, and if we both see that what I say is true, where do we both see this, I pray? Neither do I see it in you, nor do you see it in me; but we both see it in the unchangeable Truth, which is above our minds.

It is a much quoted statement that he who cannot see God everywhere sees Him nowhere.

Our world of knowledge seems to have mapped out a pattern of divided sciences, each opening a way to deeper investigation. Yet actually any one of these sciences, if followed through by one who holds in his mind the overall perception of universal truth, will be found to be, not diverted from, but directed

*Cf. The Confessions of St. Augustine, Book XII, par. [xxv], page 307

towards the real world. When this real world is discovered, it is found to be the abode of all truth, scientific, philosophic, and spiritual. The regions of mystery remain unexplored, but are actually full of God.

There is available to everyone a full treasury of perceptions of the omnipresence of divinity. The world is like an open book to those who seek to find the spirit rather than to remain in the dead letter. When the perception of the spirit of the word is reached, we let the letters go. God, the divine Author of all things, has expressed Himself in interminable ways. Like a true author, He has made this book of the universe to be read. The manifestation of love, wisdom, power, are on every page and in every sentence and letter which He has inscribed in the visible universe. To be more exact, the visible world is but the transparent envelope containing the invisible mysteries.

Philosophy, metaphysics, and religion should and do really complement each other—a fact that needs to be uncovered. It is the sameness that one must discover, otherwise he will fall

into confusion because of the different terms for the same idea, used in the respective branches of inquiry.

Even in the single branch called religion we have confusion of meaning. For example, Catholic devotion gives full recognition to the Mother of God, showing reverence to her by many spiritual feasts. The Protestants so far have not become fully aware of her importance; yet if they accept the divinity of our Lord Jesus, they must give recognition to His Mother.

In terms of religion the church is constantly referred to as the mother of the members. Christian Scientists make much of their Mother Church, without realizing that they have unconsciously formed a point of agreement with the Catholic faith. This is a wonderful illustration of the way two forms of faith agree on the very points upon which they claim to disagree. The confusion is simply a failure to define their terms and thereby neither of the viewpoints is clarified.

Every aspect of spiritual thought has its negative and its positive pole, often referred to as

feminine and masculine. Philosophy, for example, is called the handmaid of religious wisdom; for without the nurturing of philosophy, religion would feel itself greatly orphaned. In philosophy (which studies the principles that cause and control, and explains facts and events) nature is the mothering knowledge. In metaphysics (that branch of philosophy dealing with the nature, character, and causes of being and knowing) the feminine is referred to as negation or the "nothing," as the material source of existence. These seemingly distinct terms really converge in the *Mater Virgo* or virgin matter, which is the root meaning. Also, the Oriental religions and philosophies incorporate the feminine element.

Philosophically speaking we consider God as having masculine characteristics; and yet a purely masculine deity, without the congruous feminine receptivity, seems cold and inflexible.

By not eliminating any of the perfection granted to the many aspects of religious perception, but instead, by illuminating them all, there is synthesized a spiritual sense of what God

really means to man; and although we cannot grasp what He is, we know that there is none greater. Saint Thomas Aquinas says that by the word *God* we understand a thing greater than which cannot be thought.

If our minds could grasp the full concept of God, the Absolute, mirrored in the virgin nature or nothingness wherein is revealed His infinite love, we might have some vague glimpse of the magnificence of true spiritual life. The Mosaic definition of God describes Him as One Whose center is omnipresent and His circumference nowhere. Then again, in the Kabbalah Unveiled there is presented the symbolic description of Deity (the All) carving out—that is hollowing out, as it were—a place of nothingness into which He might flow.

We must not construe this nothingness as establishing a duality, but rather as proving the nonexistence of all but God. The double aspect of the presentation is but a symbol of non-duality.

So, whether we talk about Nature, Pure Negation, the Perfect Mirror of God, or the Vir-

gin Mother who announced, "My soul doth magnify the Lord," the seeming difference is entirely a matter of terminology, a distinction without a difference. When we are able to establish the true synthesis of all varied terminology, light is reflected from the manifold facets of spiritual wisdom.

Instead of finding contradiction in the sacred writings of all religions, each is seen to complement and throw light on the other. No one word can ever convey the true meaning of a spiritual mystery; therefore, by the recognition of sameness in manifold terms, fuller and deeper interpretations are obtained. The natural world of separate things is always the seeming division of the spiritual, which, however, must remain eternally one.

Let us imagine a great wheel—and this example is not without authority, for Oriental philosophy refers to the Wheel of the Law; and the prophet Ezekiel gives us his vision of the concentric wheels. So let us imagine a great wheel with spokes going from the center to the circumference. Around the circumference, the

spokes all seem far apart, widely separated from each other and quite independent of each other; but if you follow the spokes from the circumference to the center, you will discover that they unite and become one. This illustrates how knowledge has, at its core, truth. When people view their branches of learning from the standpoint of the circumference, there must always be a sense of separation. From this separate viewpoint there arises conflict of thought, and more than likely, from the thought conflict arises actual contension because each is trying to find the reasons why he disagrees with his neighbors' ideas. Actually the more neighborly attitude would be to see in what points there is agreement, and then work these points back to the center of truth where each would discover that what he sees as true in the other is really not in the other at all, but in truth itself.

Language seems to be most confusing, and yet it is our only means of communication in our search for this truth of very truth. The science of semantics has become a very im-

portant part in the education of those who wish to experience a well adjusted life, in this complex age. Dr. Wendell Johnson shows, in his book "People in Quandaries," how symbols can either conceal or reveal basic principles; and S. I. Hayakawa begins his book "Language in Action" with a story showing that agreement rests upon understanding the meaning of our terms. If we are to arrive at a basis of universal understanding, we must receive the gift of penetrating and unifying spiritual vision. Otherwise we are bound to fall into the disintegrating confusion that destroyed the Tower of Babel.

The world seems to be suffering from the Babel influence in the search for heaven, in the search to establish a living experience, mentally and physically, in reality. The Tower of Babel is the symbolic example of man's search for truth throughout the maze of culture. Who has ever been able to build his tower of stone to reach into heaven? Who has ever been able to create an ideal life situation in the world? Unfailingly, the moment must arrive when

these intellectual and technical methods become useless, and people can no longer understand each other. This is the confusion of tongues. Each wants to carry out his own ideas, each wants to fulfill his own plan, and each wants all the others to go along with his ideas. Lack of understanding leads to discord, which in turn provokes hostility and eventual struggle.

The same tragic disintegration that faces humanity as a whole, faces this Tower-of-Babel course, faces each individual person. Each one of us erects his own tower of Babel out of personal aims and ambitions in life. Man, as an individual, goes along through life living in a little world of his own ideas, hopes, and beliefs. But there comes an inevitable moment when something happens that shakes his sense of security in his little self-made tower, and he is left facing the ruin of his own attainments. Yet if man but realized it, this very break up in the false security which he has depended upon is the threshold of real security. At the very place where man gives up his mythical tower, real security is exposed.

Spiritual *semasiology has been historically recorded in the New Testament (Acts 2: 1-8) as taking place on the Day of Pentecost when the Spirit gave the disciples utterance; and every man in the audience—although from a different foreign land—heard in his own language. Of course this seems quite impossible to the modern mind; but actually, in our international meeting places, we have mechanical devices which obtain somewhat similar results. In these buildings, by dialing a transmitter, you may hear, in the language you are most familiar with, the speaker's words, almost instantly translated. If this science of mechanics can be made to provide translations almost instantaneously, how much more may the Spirit of Truth provide for each person who has ears to hear with and an intellect to translate with, a power of understanding.

It is this that our Instruction aims to provide: Jew or Gentile, Catholic or Protestant, Chris-

*Semasiology: Science of the signification and sense development of words. College Edition, Winston Simplified Dictionary.

tian or Oriental—to each a universal basis of understanding. Actually each has the same God, but the confusion of language keeps them all apart and makes conflicting differences out of what are actually sameness. Fundamentally, the language of truth is spoken in all tongues.

This Instruction does not propose a tower of Babel, but, rather, the spirit of understanding whereby the meanings of all the manifold terms are synthesized into a *gestalt* perception. *Gestalt* psychology is of German origin, yet the instruction gathered from its presentation is of universal importance. The application of this psychology to the subject at hand is this: The term *gestalt* means form, figure, or shape; as a psychology it implies and emphasizes the theory that the whole of the content of any perception is essentially a unit—whether simple or complex—which cannot be expressed in terms of the parts which it may seem to contain. The secret is that when once the whole is discovered and the parts seen in relation to the unit whole, greater value is recognized for each seemingly separate part. As for example:

A watch has many parts, but the watch itself is greater than the sum of the various parts; for the configuration which the maker has bestowed upon the parts has obtained, out of the disassociated wheels and springs, a device by which a man may read time which is over and above the nature of any of the separate parts or even of the total of the parts without the configuration.

This illustration is most applicable because, with the spirit of understanding, a *gestalt* perception is obtained by which every term of religion, theology, philosophy, and even of metaphysics, is provided a greater value in relation to the unit—truth. What happens is that all the separate forms of expression used in following these seemingly individual courses of thought, take on new life and greater meaning. No longer does the letter kill the meaning, but instead, the spirit makes even the letter alive. Each branch of knowledge, when united to the whole, complements every other branch and throws greater light on the whole. As a diamond has many facets, so Truth radi-

ates out in manifold forms of brilliance; yet without the diamond there could be no radiance, and without truth there could be nothing true.

Truth itself is utterly simple. The words we must use in approaching it (no matter what language we use) are complex. The mind with which we must try to understand, is yet more complex and acts to conceal simplicity under a complexity of symbols. Every effort of man to build organizations to attain to God, has come to inevitable failure in a tower of Babel which ultimately falls.

We do not create the reality of Being, but we do need to uncover what real Being is. The Tower of Babel can never reach reality, nor can any device of thinking secure it; yet it is available. And find it we must or die in the attempt—civilization along with us.

If truth were not in each person waiting to be discovered, no one could ever find a way to it. But because truth is the very first principle of all being, it can be uncovered if we dig deep enough below the surface appear-

ances. Truth must be all pervading. We need to find it below the surface of experience.

The story of the Children of Isreal, led into the desert by Moses, is the prefiguring of man's search into the wilderness of his own mind. These thirsty wanderers were supplied with water out of the rock, by means of the intercession of Moses; and it is to be remembered that even though Moses' own faith momentarily failed, the children were still provided with water.

Can you visualize a moving-picture screen made of water, and on the screen, projected, a motion picture story of a caravan of weary, thirsty, and miserable wanderers plodding through the barren wastes of sand, dying of thirst? Mirage after mirage lures them on—always within the surface dimension of the picture. Then there comes a place where the picture thins out so that the screen of water shows through, and they find an oasis in the picture and are refreshed. The screen has not actually made a motion in another direction to give refreshment to the caravan, nor has the

caravan made a motion in a direction other than its two-dimensional picture; but the thinning of the picture has let the underlying reality show through. The source of the water is not found in the desert picture, yet the water is all-pervading as the river is the very ground of the picture. Psalm forty-six, verse four, tells us: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God."

Jesus said, Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness; that is, after truth. He would not have said this and added the promise of reward, if truth were not available. We must, however, know how and where to look for truth. The pilgrims in the picture remain thirsty and follow out their drama of existence until they are willing to abandon their preconceived ideas of ways and means.

Saint Thomas Aquinas says that the end precedes the way to it; therefore if we can keep our eyes on the end, our goal—that is, Truth Itself—will be available, also. Truth in the mind is knowing truth; it is not accepting unreality as truth, nor is it being unaware of

reality when it is present. F. J. Sheed makes it quite clear in his "Theology and Sanity," that our need is to live physically and mentally in the real world. To live mentally as well as physically in a real world, implies two very definite perceptive operations—first, to be able to recognize what is, and second, to be able to discern what is not—both without confusion. The inability to operate the mind correctly in this twofold perceptive manner, leads to what Mr. Sheed calls a double darkness—a mental derangement of not seeing what is here, and worse still, of seeing what is not here.

Knowing truth, then, is being free from the double darkness which hides from us the absolute world of reality. Our mind does not create reality, rather it discovers it; and this discovery enables us to live physically in the presence of truth.

Truth is defined as the quality of being according to fact or, more simply stated, "that which is." As that which is not is nothing, that which is must be all. This is a completely logical statement of fact. Truth is not what

you think does or does not exist; it is what is real and actual regardless of thinking or seeing or knowing. Truth is being according to fact, even though what the nature of truth is may never be factually proved to the mind.

Because of an inclination of the mind to deception, this Instruction puts its emphasis on Truth Itself. As an end must provide its own way of knowledge, so truth includes the channel for knowing itself. It is possible for a human mind to have a false opinion of truth but quite impossible for a false opinion to be the outcome of truth.

It is not knowledge itself, but *what* we have knowledge of, that is so important; it is also important that our knowledge should lead in the right direction. It is not sufficient merely to know about something, but also we must know rightly about what we know. Knowledge of a circle applied to a square would be most misleading to the understanding. Therefore the technique regarding the *way* of knowing is more important than appears on the surface. The knowledge of truth consists in the mind's

correspondence with Truth Itself; consequently so-called wrong knowledge about truth is more dangerous than merely not knowing anything. Actually our mind attains truth when we recognize as existing, what does exist; and as not existing, what does not exist. Our mind errs when it either does not know what truth is or when it accepts what is not real as truth.

Truth is always available. We may not be aware of what truth is or where it is or how we may reach it. Too often the so-called way, when it is persistently aimed in the wrong direction, obscures rather than reveals the truth we seek. A person may die of his very seeking when he becomes caught in the trap of conventional thinking. A hardy, old, desert prospector told of coming upon dried skeletons of those who had died of thirst in the desert sands. They had been seeking for water, but had expected to find it in an oasis or waterhole. He said that if they had merely dug down a few feet into the sand they were standing on, soon the hole would have become a pool of water because the underlying sand contained a

great deal of water. He has built a desert resort—with plenty of water for swimming pools—on the spot where others perished of thirst.

It is much the same with those who seek truth according to the mind's conventional direction. To be caught in one particular dimension of thought is usually fatal. Jesus said, Judge not according to appearances but judge righteous judgment. Appearances are too often like a mirage leading us on to frustration when, by simply turning away from appearances and opening a new dimension of awareness in the mind, a primal truth may be revealed whereby right judgment may be made even of the appearances covering the surface.

This primal Being by which all that exists has its being, is the universal and true center. When the heart reaches out into the unknown realm of wisdom, if it always returns for confirmation to the rational center, there is no wandering away into the mazes of human conjecture.

The wandering of the mind which is influ-

enced by the currents of thought, results in great mental confusion and entanglement. When the mind becomes lost in the comparison of relativities, judging one form of knowledge by another, one denomination in religion by another, one philosophy by another, and judging all by metaphysics, Christian religion by Oriental philosophy—then all that one has is the maze of conflicting knowledge.

There is a place for all knowledge. Nothing has to be eliminated, but all must be illuminated. This is the work of true and authoritative instruction.

Because there is nothing true except truth, this Instruction seeks the *gestalt* unit of all truth and aims to bring all branches of knowledge into proper relationship with each other. That this may be satisfactorily accomplished, reason and faith are found to be one and not two separate functions. For actually these two great factors in understanding can never be separated. There are those who might suppose that reason would lessen the power and merit of faith; but the fact is that unless faith is also

reasonable, there could be no order in any instruction.

It is not that one has to have a reason for what he believes; but rather, when he believes truth, what he may have faith in will transcend reason but will not be unreasonable. In other words, he believes in order to understand, as those of authoritative wisdom tell us.

The mind questions: Is it reasonable to believe in mysteries we cannot understand? We must remember that the less knowledge a person has, the more faith he needs. And if we are sane human beings, we are expected to believe only in that which is in itself rational, even though the mystery may seem above reason until our minds have attained a superrationality. It is amazing how much we constantly accept on faith because we understand so little. For example, we eat a meal without understanding or directing the processes of digestion; and these processes go on much better without any attempt on our part to interfere. We eat and have faith that the food will be taken care of. Much of our world around us is a

total mystery, and yet we participate in the advantages of these many mysterious things which we could not by any means explain. These things are mysteries, but are not irrational. If we were to believe in things that of themselves are irrational, we would either be irrational ourselves, or gullible.

So we must see that reason and faith are in actual nature compatible. Faith enhances the powers of reason even as a telescope increases the natural power of the organic eyes, but what is seen by the telescope does not in any way contradict the vision of the natural eye. In much the same manner faith enlarges to horizons unattainable by reason; yet it is the rational faculty that opens the way for faith. Reason removes the obstacles that prevent faith; for when we can rationally see what truth is not, then what truth *is* becomes a revelation to faith.

It is rationality that enables us to reach out through faith to realms of perception as yet unexplored. But reason must always keep us true to the universal and unchangeable truth.

From all this skirmishing in the realm of rationality, it is self-evident that truth itself must be absolute even though the approach to it may be relative. In other words, truth, wherever found, must be the truth in spite of the manifold channels of discovery available to the mind.

Truth is the universal standard of authoritative reality. Any teaching or science that deviates from truth is inevitably self-destructive. That we may be able to form clear judgments—judgments not based on appearances but judgments based on reality itself—we must seek the universal truth by which even the relative appearances in the world may be discovered to be in accordance with fact.

The teaching provided in this Instruction begins with a rational foundation, referred to as the Axioms—that is, self-evident statements of truth. These are unfolded into the actual consideration of the visible laws and principles of creation in an exhaustive presentation of Aphorisms, through which instruction the invisible mysteries are glimpsed. Then, ulti-

mately, the mysteries themselves, as presented in the Christian doctrine, dawn upon the perceptual horizons, illuminating all else in their transcendental light. In the rational training of the Axioms, and the philosophical training of the Aphorisms, truth is illuminated in increasing stages, but nothing is eliminated; for we are informed that "In thy light we shall see light." In all this unfoldment of insight, truth never changes, for Primal Truth is unchangeable truth.

In a general sense the existence of truth is self-evident, for it is axiomatic that truth is that which is. But the first truth—that by which whatever is, is truth—may not be self-evident to us. Consequently we need to study and investigate in order to uncover the universal principle of being which is concealed beneath the surface covering of variety and multiplicity. This study and investigation takes the form of husking off the obscurations, digging down to a reality as yet unexplored. It is not until we can come mentally and physically to the heart of existence that we can sense at all what truth

oil transport truck; then, as you came nearer still, you might find that it was a double trailer with a truck ahead. There would be no change in the fact; but as your vision became more comprehensive, you would be aware of more and more, until the total would be comprehended.

There is in true instruction a final truth which does not become more complete; although, as instruction progresses, the language becomes more and more precise and perceptions more acute.

The science of knowledge is the uncovering of the correspondence of the within and the without; therefore the more instruction a person has, the more he discovers illumination in his world. Truth itself is eternal, but the eternal and the infinite are revealed to the time-and-space-bound mind of man as an evolution of perception. As an example of this fact, the Axioms of this Instruction (which are self-evident principles of faith secured by firm steps of reason), although new to this time, give certain revelation of a universal truth press-

ing to be born into a world thirsting for rationality. As a confirmation of their living authority we cite the fact that many years after the little book of *Axioms was published by my father, George Edwin Burnell, The "Summa Theologica" of Saint Thomas Aquinas was translated and made available in this country; and it became apparent that the first volume of the work of this great doctor of theology was an entire verification of the Axioms basic to this Instruction. This is undeniable proof of the authority pervading this teaching—the fact that the same formula of rationality had been uncovered independently by two observers at different times and places. On the first page of the Axiom book is the statement: There is no doubt in this book. As Saint Thomas Aquinas reinstated the authority of reason in his time, as the precursor of faith, so this Instruction has given a rational foundation to the spiritual teachings presented in the Christian mysteries.

This has been called the Age of Religion,

*AXIOMS: Book of Health,
by George Edwin Burnell

but it is not so much the Age of Religion as it is the Age of true Substance. Theories fall by the wayside, for Life Itself is the substance and rejects the mind's attempted imposition of ideas about Being. What everyone really thirsts after is the conversion of his life into a strong, vital radiance. He wants the transubstantiation of his being—not as a ritual, but as a personal and vital communion with Reality. He wants to touch the Living Substance and experience the overflowing richness of Reality in his personal awareness of the vigor of incorruption. This union with Life Itself, the acceptance of total existence, becomes to each the fertile center of all spiritual creativeness. This is no mental creativeness that ends in frustration and disillusionment, but it is an authoritative unfoldment of what man really is as God sees and knows him to be. When this breath of life enters into your very organic being, dead ideas slough off; and there is triumphant generation of substantial reality that delivers your hopes and fears from their tug of war and provides, instead, a fulfillment of

Life Itself. This fulfillment is the eternal Now of all truth. You may doubt the existence of this fact; but the doubt is not in the truth of fulfillment, but rather in your lack of acceptance of what is.

This Instruction is not a method by which you are to attain fulfillment of life; it is a message which unfolds to you the eternal fact of your perfection now.

GENEVIEVE BURNELL ROBINSON

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