

The Law of Growth

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A correct understanding of the law of growth is of the highest importance to the student of Mental Science. The great fact to be realized regarding Nature is that it is natural. We may pervert the order of Nature, but it will prevail in the long run, returning, as Horace says, by the back door even though we drive it out with a pitchfork; and the beginning, the middle, and the end of the law of Nature is the principle of growth from a vitality inherent in the entity itself. If we realize this from the outset we shall not undo our own work by endeavouring to force things to become that which by their own nature they are not. For this reason when the Bible says that "he who believeth shall not make haste," it is enunciating a great natural principle that success depends on our using, and not opposing, the universal law of growth. No doubt the greater the vitality we put into the germ, which we have agreed to call the spiritual prototype, the quicker it will germinate; but this is simply because by a more realizing conception we put more growing power into the seed than we do by a feebler conception. Our mistakes always eventually resolve themselves into distrusting the law of growth. Either we fancy we can hasten it by some exertion of our own from without, and are thus led into hurry and anxiety, not to say sometimes into the employment of grievously wrong methods; or else we give up all hope and so deny the germinating power of the seed we have planted. The result in either case is the same, for in either case we are in effect forming a fresh spiritual prototype of an opposite character to our desire, which therefore neutralizes the one first formed, and disintegrates it and usurps its place. The law is always the same, that our Thought forms a spiritual prototype which, if left undisturbed, will reproduce itself in external circumstances; the only difference is in the sort of prototype we form, and thus evil is brought to us by precisely the same law as good.

These considerations will greatly simplify our ideas of life. We have no longer to consider two forces, but only one, as being the cause of all things; the difference between good and evil resulting simply from the direction in which this force is made to flow. It is a universal law that if we

reverse the action of a cause we at the same time reverse the effect. With the same apparatus we can commence by mechanical motion which will generate electricity, or we can commence with electricity which will generate mechanical motion; or to take a simple arithmetical instance: if $10 \div 2 = 5$, then $10 \div 5 = 2$; and therefore if we once recognize the power of thought to produce any results at all, we shall see that the law by which negative thought produces negative results is the same by which positive thought produces positive results. Therefore all our distrust of the law of growth, whether shown in the anxious endeavour to bring pressure to bear from without, or in allowing despair to take the place of cheerful expectation, is reversing the action of the original cause and consequently reversing the nature of the results. It is for this reason that the Bible, which is the most deeply occult of all books, continually lays so much stress upon the efficiency of faith and the destructive influence of unbelief; and in like manner, all books on every branch of spiritual science emphatically warn us against the admission of doubt or fear. They are the inversion of the principle which builds up, and they are therefore the principle which pulls down; but the Law itself never changes, and it is on the unchangeableness of the law that all Mental Science is founded. We are accustomed to realize the unchangeableness of natural law in our every day life, and it should therefore not be difficult to realize that the same unchangeableness of law which obtains on the visible side of nature obtains on the invisible side as well. The variable factor is, not the law, but our own volition; and it is by combining this variable factor with the invariable one that we can produce the various results we desire. The principle of growth is that of inherent vitality in the seed itself, and the operations of the gardener have their exact analogue in Mental Science. We do not put the self-expansive vitality into the seed, but we must sow it, and we may also, so to speak, water it by quiet concentrated contemplation of our desire as an actually accomplished fact. But we must carefully remove from such contemplation any idea of a strenuous effort on our part to make the seed grow. Its efficacy is in helping to keep out those negative thoughts of doubt which would plant tares among our wheat, and therefore, instead of anything of effort, such contemplation should be accompanied by a feeling of pleasure and restfulness in foreseeing the certain accomplishment of our desires. This is that making our requests known to God with thanksgiving which St. Paul recommends, and it has its reason in that perfect wholeness of the Law of Being which only needs our recognition of it to be used by us to any extent we wish.

Some people possess the power of visualization, or making mental pictures of things, in a greater degree than others, and by such this faculty may advantageously be employed to facilitate their realization of the working of the Law. But those who do not possess this faculty in any marked degree, need not be discouraged by their want of it, for visualization is not the only way of realizing that the law is at work on the invisible plane. Those whose mental bias is towards physical science should realize this Law of Growth as the creative force throughout all nature; and those who have a mathematical turn of mind may reflect that all solids are generated from the movement of a point, which, as our old friend Euclid tells us, is that which has no parts nor magnitude, and is therefore as complete an abstraction as any spiritual nucleus could be. To use the apostolic words, we are dealing with the substance of things not seen, and we have to attain that habit of mind by which we shall see its reality and feel that we are mentally manipulating the only substance there ultimately is, and of which all visible things are only different modes. We must therefore regard our mental creations as spiritual realities and then implicitly trust the Law of Growth to do the rest.