AS IT SEEMS TO ME

BY A PRISONER OF HOPE

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A fire-mist and a planet,
A crystal and a cell,
A jellyfish and a saurian,
A cave where cave-men dwell
Then, a sense of law and beauty,
A face turned from the clod:
Some call it—Evolution,
And others call it—God.

Like tides on a crescent sea beach,
When the moon is new and full,
Into our hearts high aspirations
Come swelling and surge in
Come from a mystic ocean
Whose rim no foot hath trod,
Some of us call it yearning,
And others call it God.

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The world has always been hard upon its pathfinders. We are always suspicious of Truth-seekers. The man who lives in advance of his age must be misunderstood. When he does he must wait till his proper place in the procession of the ancients is assigned him—till he falls into line along the point that he helped to lead—the place which he and his fellows helped to make ready for the embodiment.

Such a man has arrived when he brings something the world is prepared—or, rather, ready, for him. He has leaped far ahead of his fellows, walk slowly. He seems to be creeping along in the rear. When his soul-fellows arrive they are astonished to find that side of Truth was so far in advance. For leaders begins to be understood.

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"Revere the man, whoever, Pilgrim, clears the road
And guides the progress of the soul to God."

Whatever is "progressive" must have its leaders, its pathfinders, its frontiersmen, its advance guard, if you please. The animal that laughs and that likes to watch its fellows feed," the "creature that kindles a fire," is ahead of a species a little nearer ultimate perfection. And the stronger, finer specimens of the kind are far in advance of the common herd."

Upon these the retrograde herd pounces every time. We always fight them, so jealous are we of the little we think we know. So determined that when we die wisdom shall die with us.

A searcher after Truth is nearly always without honor in the generation where he happens to appear. Afterward when he and they have passed on, those who come see dimly what he tried to make clear and understand vaguely what he endeavored to teach. The world reanoints that a great man lived and labored afterward.

But the great ones are not disturbed by the buzzing all about them. They are too busy—finding out things. They just sort of touch the earth in the high places. They are among us, but not of us.

The world need to rid itself of its troublesome helpers. The hemlock, the cross, the stake, the axe. But notwithstanding this, the heaping has made us better. We only persecute them now, stopping just short of bloodshed. Some there are who follow, lame'y limping, perhaps, half-heartedly groping, it may be, but nevertheless, making a sort of advance at the heels of those who go joyously. But it is a move Truthward.

"Some call it evolution,
And others call it God."

And who not? This is the light and that is the sun. Are they two? The sunshine—creates light, but there is a process of creation, though it seems instantaneous. Light, the scientists tell us, is produced by certain vibrations in a medium called ether. Vibrations—little steps along the way, little stakes in the swift journey. Shall we separate the light from the sun, or think of it as an independent entity apart from its source?

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To find an ounce of gold men dig, sometimes tons of earth to the grain of it; stores in a cloud of error as glorious as a star (when only one is in the sky). From looking downward to new earth we can turn and catch a gleam of the glory.

But the finder, who revealed the gleam is lost in the cloud of error. It takes a great man to work out that while the dear souls of earth revile or scolds, or notes, knows no one at all.

The great man may be buffeted in the uproar, and despairing, at times, feeling himself quite alone and discouraged. It is the time when he needs the people that he serves.

To him the earth is a place for an exercise of faith. It gives him with the [illegible] It is a sort of [illegible] can stand [illegible] work. Or perhaps he [illegible] made laboratory [illegible] cisely the [illegible] a treasure [illegible] he is after Truth.

And so the [illegible] pigmies [illegible] and measure [illegible] courses of [illegible] understanding [illegible] clare the [illegible]

In the [illegible] ob. having [illegible] of interest [illegible] up [illegible] never [illegible] with him. If [illegible] we are [illegible] ing the [illegible] forces [illegible] and an[illegible]

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It is [illegible] since [illegible] pathfinders [illegible] Origin of [illegible] trodden paths [illegible] hint of [illegible] wonder stuff [illegible] a second [illegible] as a grain [illegible] but may [illegible] tions were [illegible] lation [illegible] rubbed [illegible] violent [illegible]

It was also [illegible] after the [illegible] be unhinged [illegible] found in the [illegible] safe browsing [illegible] obliged to [illegible] of not only a [illegible] "If a Creator [illegible] with another [illegible] Law-maker, a Preservator—an Father?"

Nobody laughs at the tadpole and money theory now. We look it into the same pigeon-hole the [illegible] "Water Babies" and the old, old stories of Transmigration and wonder and—just keep on wandering.

Perhaps the ancient seers and the modern scientists are not so far apart after all. Maybe one emphasized the Soul, the other the body. One thought of continuous life, the other of its form or expression—its vibrations, if you like.

It is all a halting, blundering, journey Truthward. Now and then somebody catches a glimpse of something and those who are peering behind see "as through a glass, darkly."

Nobody minds wandering about the edges of wonderful theories any more. If birds were evolved from fishes, and the human species from lower forms of life, it is all right.

The leaders of the Children of Israel, along with the faith of the Hebrews, were in the learning of the Egyptians, inspired by the spirit of Truth, wrote, "In the beginning God created."

Thousands of years after, the great scientist who believed that he was able to trace out dimly the process of evolution or progressive creation, carried his wonderful theory back to a definite stopping place. "In the beginning God created."

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Suppose we had never found the proofs that everybody imagined things about it and guessed that it must be somewhere. One can fancy the searcher for it tireless. He notes that a mighty body of water exists not far away.

Some of us would be indifferent, because we didn't care for that sort of thing, some of us would be impatient to have we would think the Infinite ought to be doing really practical and useful things that nobody could help hearing a little about the search.

If it were like this, one man might find a broad river flowing west, another would discover a mighty stream moving southward, still another would follow an eastbound current. And each might feel sure that he alone was moving in the right direction, since the others, not being with him, must be wrong.

Certainly, we who sit to one side, waiting, would select one as being right and condemn the others. For how can all these directions lead to the truth? And that would settle it for us. And we should be just as smugly comfortable as if we were right instead of wrong.

One searcher might come to a great bay and believe that his journey had ended in success. Another would be equally sure of his splendid gulf, and the last satisfy his soul with perhaps a sound on an inlet or a half-hidden grave. Each would believe that he had come to the end of all wisdom. But all the while just beyond them lies the ocean. They are all right and all wrong. But the progress is Truthward.

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The great questions, "What are we? Who are we? How did we come to be—just here?" These, and all the others are answered by all sorts of theories, and perhaps each theory is an inlet reaching this way from the great ocean of Truth, a river whose waters empty there.

It seems to me that we might regard the truth-seeker as an earnest soul, single-minded and loyal to the Truth itself, and not circumscribed to the limit of his own theory. If he should outgrow the theory and cast it as a small snail sheds its shell because a larger one is needed, must we believe that he is not getting on at all?

Perhaps in his vision of Truth the great seeker sees "men as trees walking." But if his sight grows clearer shall he insist upon his grotesque shapes and keep them before us, hiding the newer conception lest hearing of both we accept neither?

A little learning is a dangerous thing, they say, and may be it is, but at least it is safer than narrowness, the boast of two exes.

We would have to fill human minds as we do little pink and blue pasteboard boxes with just what we think nice and neat and proper and pretty. We would like to choke them carefully when we have them just sufficiently filled, label correctly, tie securely and put them away carefully where nothing can disturb or tumble, or upset them.

But somehow the nice, smooth ribbon as well work loose, the contents will get tangled or escape and when we examine the well-regulated minds that we took such pains with we find that a whole lot of new and strange and "undesirable" stuff has slipped in while we were feeling so secure and so praiseworthy.

It is then that we wring our helpless hands and grieve over our precious keepsake-notions and beautiful cast-iron opinions.

Truth is too big a thing to get lost in such fashion. Besides it cannot be shut in boxes, or minds or words or "beliefs." It is all where. And the wonderful unfolding of it is expressed in the Life and Law manifested everywhere.

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Even those of us who are most set and conservative and remote are now having escape the outer waves of the great commotion that is stirring the thought world in these last gold days. The secrets of material formation of mind power and even the occult science of the East are yielding themselves to the searcher that must know.

Asylums and hospitals are won[illegible] Nature takes into her confidence and teaches her secrets to her enthusiastic devotees.

Here in this city, these we have the great Emmanuel Movement—the healing of mind with mind, and farther up the range Christian Science, and all other roads pressing Truthward. Is it not time? May be not.

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It seems to me that is a narrow view and set to be afraid any thing new and strange. The new thought is truth. The old thought is truth. The sum of truth is Him.

[illegible] pathfinders [illegible] Origin of [illegible] Master of life who said, "I am troubled in spirit." Philosophy is an abstract [illegible] There can be no wonder stuff. It works. It is like