

Pittsfield, Mass. Sept. 20 '08.

Subject,---Faith in Life.

By virtue of the nature of our being we are possessed with an irrepressible instinct to live. This we share in common with all animal life. What that power, that force within us is we know not. We only know that it is. From the first convulsive ~~XXXX~~ efforts human embryo to the last dying gasp of the man who has lived the full allotment of life we are in the power and the grasp of this mysterious and powerful instinct to live and to grow, to fulfill the functions of our being. This is an ultimate fact of the mystery of being.

But in the hands of intelligent beings such as men are this instinct to live takes unto itself

various characteristics which do not appear in the lower forms of life. In the course of the evolution of man from the instinct serving animal to the ideal serving human being, this instinct to live becomes transformed into a faith in life. So far as we know the jelly fish simply responds to this natural instinct and lives the life of <sup>its kind.</sup> ~~the jelly fish~~. So also with each form of life; it ~~obeys~~ the instinct to life and conforms to the limitations of its kind. The tree lives the life of the tree; the dog lives the life of the dog.

But in man by virtue of the fact that he can remember, can reason, can formulate plans, and carry his plans into execution if they ~~are~~ conform to the laws of being, we are presented with another aspect

of this instinct. So far as man continues to live he is true to the animal type. But when he comes to ask himself, "What kind of a life shall I live." What kind of a man shall I become ? , he is no longer a blind and obedient servant of the primal laws of his animal nature, but he takes those very laws into his grasp and makes them serve the ideals of the life that he strives to live and makes them contribute to the development of the kind of a man that he wishes to become. That is the deeper meaning of that statement made by Jesus I came not to destroy but to fulfill. We are shot through and through with ~~instinct~~ instincts, so powerful, so pervading, so irrepressible that we cannot escape them if we would. There they s

are whether we like them or not. We may become their servile and humble slaves, or we may become their regu<sup>l</sup>ating masters. We may become the slave of our instinct to love, follow like a servile cur wherever that powerfull master may lead us, and finally enjoy the bitterness of being thrown upon the rocks alone bruised and scarred by the rough and cruel ~~XXXXXXXX~~ handling that we have received from the master to whom we sold ourselves. On the other hand we may assert our rihgt to rule; we may become master and command our primal instinct to do our bidding and it becomes a great and glorious force in our life. ~~XXXXXX~~ Aarron's rod so long as he held it in his hand and under his control, was a rod of gold. But as soon as he threw it down, gave up his power over

it, the rod becomes transformed into a hideous <sup>-5-</sup>~~XXXXX~~  
serpent. These instincts which we have, so long as  
we are master of them, so long as they serve our bid,  
are the sources of power by which we live. But once  
we let go the lever of control, and we become the  
~~shuttle cocks~~ <sup>follow steel</sup> of their tremendous <sup>force</sup> ~~power~~, to be cast  
here and there like a frail canoe in an angry storm.  
The same is true of the great and all inclusive in-  
stinct to live. As its servants we must obey its im-  
perative commands and follow blindly wheresoever it  
may lead us. As its masters, by the aid of our knowl-  
edge and understanding, by the force of our will, we  
may transform this primal instinct into a faith in  
life such as will fulfill a great and commanding pur-  
pose.

But just because we are men , just because we have ~~x~~ some little knowledge gained through experience and preserved in memory, just because enough of the infinite will has been breathed into our being to enable us to say , "I Will" , we know longer deal with the plain instinct to live . You have watched the child as he begins to assert his personality, and begins to show his will power. You are witnessing the development of the supreme force of the universe. Just because man is man he does not deal with the simple instinct , but has to do with some kind of a faith in life. ~~The question is what shall be that faith .~~

So the question is , What Shall be our faith in life" What kind of a life shall we have faith in ? What shall be that ideal that we see constantly before us,-

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that cloud by day and that pillar of fire by night,  
that shall lead us through the pleasant fields, that  
shall accompany us beside the still waters, that ~~KK~~  
shall descend with us into the dark valleys, that  
shall go with us onto the high and rugged mountains?  
What shall be the guiding principle for us in those  
moments when we are brought face to face with some  
great problem in which we are called upon to decide  
between a selfish interest and a public duty? What  
kind of a picture is it that we have hidden away ~~KK~~  
somewhere in the secret vaults of our personality  
which is the image of the God that we have painted  
for the God of things as they are. ? What is the  
nature, what is the quality, of that faith in life in  
into which we have transformed that primal instinct

to live.

To speak broadly there are three kinds or  
in life  
qualities of faith/that <sup>we</sup> you may have before <sup>us</sup> you as  
the guiding principle of your <sup>own</sup> conduct. Into which  
one of these classecifications <sup>we</sup> you may find <sup>ours</sup> yourself <sup>ours</sup>  
determines the totality of ~~your~~ character.

The first kind of faith that one may choose,  
the one that is nearest to servile obedience to the  
animal instinct, is faith in the life of pleasure or  
or the pursuit of happiness. This does not of neces-  
ity mean that the end to which one devotes himself  
is the satisfaction of the baser sort of animal pas-  
sions, although such, even in their lowest examples  
are pleasure seekers. But it means that attitude ~~XX~~  
towards life that assumes that the fulfillment of



desire and the satisfaction of appetites, the feeding of the hungry body, the feeding of the hungry mind, is the end and aim of all life.

~~"XXX"~~

"Heav'n but the Vision of fulfilled desire,

And hell the shadow from a soul on fire

Cast on the darkness into which ourselves , so late emerged from , shall so soon expire. "

It matters not whether we find this kind of faith in the life of the sensualist of the most gross type, or in the person who seeks pleasure in world of high thought, fine arts, music , the point of view is the same. It has no active creative purpose, it is simply a dead sea into which the world pours the best as well as the foulest of the waters

of human life, and from which it receives nothing in return. To what ever situation such a person may be presented , the first question to be asked is , " What pleasure, what fun shall I get out of it ? Such ~~XXXXX~~ people, if necessity compels them to work, do their work simply that they may provide the means of satisfying their faith in life. At whatever cost to others, in moral degradation, in physical want , in mental suffering, these seekers of pleasure go in and out among us , grasping, reaching out, forever receiving, never giving, never contributing, never forgetting their own desires. "Eat , drink, and be merry for to -morrow we die," is the popular maxim for this ~~XXXX~~ quality of faith in life. But deeper and truer are the lines of Rubaiyat,--

" yesterday This Day's Madness did prepare;

To-morrows Silence, Triumph, of Despaire;

Drink, for you know not whence you came nor why:

Drink, for you know not why you go , nor where."

By no more subtle tie is the chasm ~~XXXXXX~~  
that apparently separates the degraded outcast  
who stands on the street corner waiting for some  
chance passer by to give him a dime with which to  
feed his diseased craving for ~~a stimulating~~ excite-  
ment, from the servile slave of luxery who waits for  
some chance excitement to arouse him from his dead  
sea of selfishness, <sup>ridged</sup> than by this tie of a common faith  
in life.

But just as there is no sharp dividing line be-  
tween the bottom of the valley and the mountain side

so there is no sharp dividing line between this kind of a faith in life, and the faith in life that takes <sup>us</sup> into the world of creative activity. But when you ~~X~~ are once out of the one grade of life and fairly ~~XX~~ well into the other, you feel as if you had come ~~X~~ into a new heaven and a new earth. The air is more stimulating, you breathe more freely, you feel the ~~XX~~ subtle influence of an invigorating atmosphere ~~XXXX~~ t about you. You have come into the world of those who believe in a life of accomplishment. They have the faith in a life of achievement. Their instinct to live has been transformed into a faith of creative activity.

Here you come into that great company of men and women who have done the world's work, who ~~XXXXX~~ thru

the infinite powers at their disposal, have made the world that we live in what it is. Here are those who have searched out the secrets of nature, those who with unspeakable labor have gained the mastery of the great forces, and the natural resources with which the earth is laden, and made them serve the needs of human life. Such as these have chained the mountain stream, and made it do the work of man. such as these have explored the lands and the seas stamping upon the whole earth the imprint of the ~~fi~~ working genius of the human soul. In the record of their lives and in the unwritten record of the ~~XXXX~~ countless millions who <sup>are</sup> forgotten except for the imprint that their work has made upon the accomplishments of a civilized world, is written a large part

of the glorious history of the ascent of man. It is a glorious picture, full of inspiring incident, and rich in uplifting activity. Such has been accomplished by those who have made their faith in life, the faith of an active achievement, the faith of ambition, the faith of a creative contribution to the work of the world.

But even this is not the highest kind of a faith in life. To one who reads more carefully the record of the faith of ambition, this faith that impells the man to do something, to make something of himself, to stand for some creative work, for some tangible power in the world,-- to one who reads this record carefully, there is many a dark and cruel

page. Many even would say~~X~~ that it is a history written in blood , that it is the picture rather of a powerfull and victorious army that has fought its way through tremendous armies of opposition. Many would say that this faith in a life of real<sup>ize</sup> - ing an ambition, has been but a bloody warfare in which might has made right, and strnngth has prayed upon weakness. It is a plain statement of fact thā in this record of a cheivment, a selfish creative activity has ~~XXXX~~ worked a tremen dous havoc, has caused an unmentionable amount of pain and cruel suffering. It is not a faith that fulfills the complete requirments of a noble life. It is a faith that is rich in results but defective in purpose, and the defect in purpose has left its imprint upon its ~~XXXX~~

history. The deeper nature of man demands something more. It is not satisfied with the plain flat accomplishment and a cheivment . The full faith in life not only asks what you are doing, and for ~~XXX~~ what end ~~XXX~~ you are doing it , but it goes even deeper than that down to the very roots of moral purpose and asks,-- For <sup>whom</sup> are you doing it ?

As ~~ye~~ are able to answer this in the deeper purposes of our life, do we declare our relationship to the highest moral idealism. The transition from the faith of acheivment to the complete faith in the complete life is not great in itself, but it changes the whole nature and the aim of life. To the man who is accomplishing great things, this ~~XXX~~ faith in the complete life says ,-- For whom are you



working . If the man replies for the purpose of expressing what is in me, for the purpose of satisfying my creative and productive impulses, the complete faith says , - You have not seen , you have not heard , neither has been revealed to you the glory that awaits those who love life. If again the man replies, -- I do this that I may become a famous and distinguished man, that My name may go down to posterity as one who has accomplished great things. " " Again says the Complete faith , - You know me not. Or if the man replies that he does it that he may amass wealth , and gratify his love for power, or minister unto his friends, the complete faith says ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ You have not stracheived the great and

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supreme faith in human life. How clearly we feel  
in our own deepest nature, even though we do not our-  
selves rise to the height of that faith, that any  
great hero, anyone who in his life transcends the  
common level must rise to the height of self-  
forgetfulness, must submerge himself and his interests  
in the great, broad glorious interests of man. We  
deprecate that in the public man. How quickly would  
our respect in Lincoln fall to the very dust, if we  
imagined that in him was the secret purpose behind  
all that ~~we~~ did for this nation of so imprinting his  
name and his influence upon our ~~XXX~~ national life  
that we should forever regard him as the great pres-  
ident of the American nation. ? Much rather do we  
like to think of him dropping on his knees in silent

prayer , preparing to take the next step forward  
caring not for himself, but caring only for the  
great principle of life and government to the cause  
of which he had long since given him self. To the ~~the~~  
complete faith in life we demand that the man shall  
not only do , and accomplish, but that the supreme  
aim and purpose of his work shall be its ministering  
influence upon the wellbeing of man kind. We demand  
the purity of purpose. That this supreme heroism ,  
this noble consecration of man to the great princip-  
ples of life and the great interests of man has been  
and is to-day the living faith of many noble men and  
women is the basis of our assurance that through the  
harsh noises of the day a low swwet prelude finds its  
way. More and more we are coming to estimate the life

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of man by the contribution that it makes to the common good , by the persistancy with which it adheres to the principles of noble living that assure us of the coming of the kingdom. Not in obedience to the law but in fulfillment of the law is there life. We are coming to see that we are not here for the purpose of selfsatisfaction, nor indeed for the purpose of self expression, but that we may through the growing years of life become the revealing channels of infinite truth in doing the world's work and in realizing that which is at once the aim of the great Good Will and the life of man.

That I may make more clear just what this complete faith in life is , and just how it works under concrete conditions , let me call to you

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a incident in the life of Jesus, the one which I  
read for a scripture lesson. As Jesus had grown from  
childhood to man hood he had dreamed the dreams that  
young men dream. With a keenness that sees to the x  
very bottom of things he had watched the formal rel-  
igions of his time, he had observed the kind of lives  
that men live, and the cruelties and the viciousness  
of the selfish pleasure seekers, and the men of ambi-  
tion. He had come to feel that he and indeed each man  
had a mission to perform in life, a truth to which he  
must bear witness; that the great purpose and aim of  
life was to love the truth of the living God and to  
love men in whom that truth was expressing itself.  
To do this was his faith in life, it was his life it  
self. As soon as he was relieved somewhat of the res-

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sponsibility of caring for his mother and his ~~broth-~~  
ers and sisters, as soon as he felt that he was free  
to do so, he went among the people of palestine,  
teaching and preaching the glory of the life that he  
was living and persuading people to accept the comp-  
le e faith in life such as he had. . He found a res-  
ponse in the heart of the common people , for the x  
faith that he ~~had~~ had was the faith that they wished.  
They welcomed the man who could speak with the auth-  
ority of the living God in the living soul. Then the  
multitudes came to him and listened , and were refr-  
freshed and strengthened, and went away healed in ~~h~~  
body and spirit. But in time there arose ~~XXXXXXXX~~  
murmurings of discontent against him because he did  
teach and preach ~~XXX~~ as did the scribes. In course

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of the months, this feeling of opposition became ~~so~~ strong, and so bitter, that Jesus felt that he must in time come face to face with it. The incident which I have read to you is the incident in which the consciousness of ~~XXXX~~ result of this meeting dawns upon him. He and his disciples had been away upon a tour in the region about Jerusalem. They were now coming back. Jesus tells them that he must face this opposition, that it will doubtless mean his death. But that was right for it was in obedience to his principle of life. But Peter, who was an impulsive, warm hearted, generous kind of a person could not stand the thought of Jesus dying in this way for the principles which they had been teaching. Rather Peter was anxious that he should live for them. He did not

realize as did Jesus that there ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ are  
times when the only thing that can be done is to die  
for a principle. So peter said to Jesus,--Far be it  
from thee , Lord, this shall never be unto thee."  
But jesus turned ~~XXXX~~ <sup>on</sup> Peter, and said to him,-Get  
thee behind me satan; thou art a stumbling block ~~u~~  
unto me; for thou mindest not the things of God , but  
the things of men." Then Jesus turned to his ~~XXXXXX~~  
disciples ~~XXXXXXXX~~ uttered one of the most majestic  
principles of human life,) If any man would ~~XXXXXX~~ come  
after me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow  
me. For who soever would save his life , shall lose it,  
and whosoever shall lose his life for mysake , shall find it.  
For what shall ~~XXX~~ a man be profited , if he shall ~~g~~  
gain the whole world, and forfeit his life ? or what



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shall ~~XXXX~~ a man give in exchange for his life ?  
What a noble and majestic faith in life ? How it  
transcends the faith in life as a series of dis-  
connected events of pleasure, or the faith in life as  
as fulfillment of an ambition at any cost. To have  
the faith that your life and mine is somehow a thing  
of importance to human life. ; that we are the bearers  
of a message of infinite worth ~~XX~~ from the source  
of all truth to the finite life of man? to feel that  
it is our work, our joy and our fulfillment of life  
to deliver that message to man through noble living  
or if need be through noble death,- that is the complete  
faith in the complete life. In some unspeakable  
way we feel that that is the deeper significance of  
human life, that it is the faith unto which we would

attain.

Why cannot we get up onto the mountain top of a faith in a life of service and contribution? Why cannot we build there the fires of an unquenchable faith in the worth of human life, and let the flames from these fires mount higher and higher until they become a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night that shall guide those who are still on the rugged mountain side of a cheivment, and those who are in the deep gulfs of pleasure seeking up into the clear open heights where life becomes life. More than that with the beacon lights burning upon the mountain top of your idealism, leave the heights of transfiguration, go down the mountain side to the world of ambition, go down into the very deepest valleys of selfishness

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where the mountain top is hidden by the thicket and  
 the underbrush , and beginning there clear the way to  
 the top, and lead men into the way and the truth and  
 the light. Carry them by the very strength of your  
 understanding heart, by the force of your mighty pur-  
 pose, and the power of your indomitable will, up the  
 rugged mountain side of ambition until the very summit  
 is reached, and the things that are seen lose ~~themselves~~  
 themselves in the unseen, and the finite feels itself  
 calling unto the deep of the infinite with the voice  
 of the eternal truth.

Have you that complete faith in life. Do  
 you want it ? It is yours for the asking/ but you must  
 ask in the language of the whole soul.