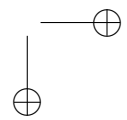
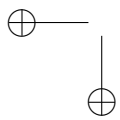
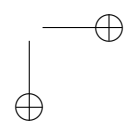
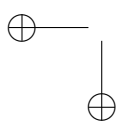
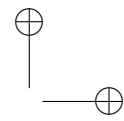
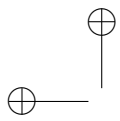
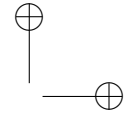
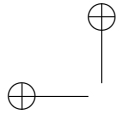


Meditations in Wall Street







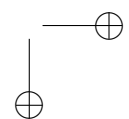
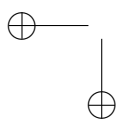
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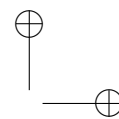
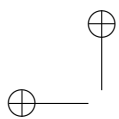
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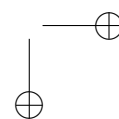
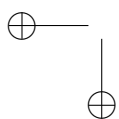
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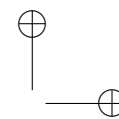
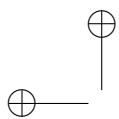




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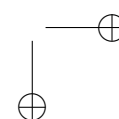
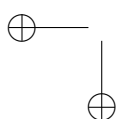
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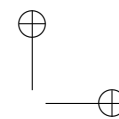
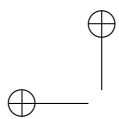




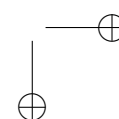
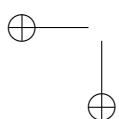
CONTENTS

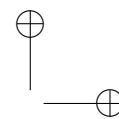
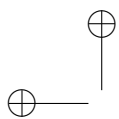
<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Time and Change</i>	19
<i>Gifts of the Gods</i>	21
<i>Superstition</i>	22
<i>Conscience</i>	23
<i>Religion and Dogma</i>	24
<i>Eden's Curse</i>	28
<i>Life's Resources</i>	29
<i>The Ancient Virtues</i>	32
<i>Adversity</i>	36
<i>Memory</i>	38
<i>New England's Accents</i>	39
<i>Freedom</i>	43
<i>La Comédie Humaine</i>	44
<i>Things Foreordained</i>	53
<i>Friendship</i>	54



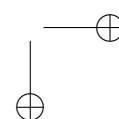
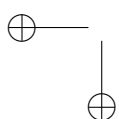


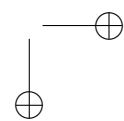
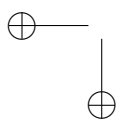
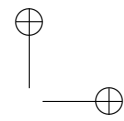
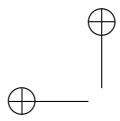
<i>Thought</i>	55
<i>Cœlum non Animam</i>	59
<i>The Eternal Balance</i>	60
<i>De Senectute</i>	62
<i>“Three-fourths of Life”</i>	65
<i>Carpe Diem</i>	70
<i>Advice and Counsel</i>	71
<i>Love and Marriage</i>	72
<i>Res Fragilis Mulier</i>	74
<i>Prudence</i>	76
<i>Wisdom and Knowledge</i>	77
<i>The Order of Nature</i>	81
<i>Calidus Iuventa</i>	83
<i>Symbols</i>	84
<i>The Emotions</i>	85
<i>Habit and Association</i>	89
<i>The Power of Words</i>	90
<i>Vox Populi</i>	92
<i>Human Judgment</i>	93
<i>Luck and Chance</i>	97
<i>Happiness</i>	99
<i>Imagination</i>	101
<i>Truth</i>	103
<i>La Vie Brève</i>	106





<i>The Silent Majority</i>	109
<i>Metapsychics</i>	111
<i>Apophthegms</i>	116
<i>Revisions</i>	121
<i>Marginalia</i>	126



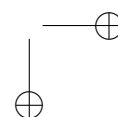




INTRODUCTION

The source of this book makes it somewhat of a literary curiosity; we do not as a rule associate work of this character with the activities which go on in a great financial centre. In the last generation of American letters, Wall Street produced an excellent poet and critic in Mr. Stedman; his treatise on the theory and practice of poetry is a classic of American criticism. Walter Bagehot, who flourished in the same period as one of England's notable men of letters, was a banker; one wishes mightily that those who have the political control of our financial and fiscal systems could be induced to read his essay called *Lombard Street*, and could be gifted with the ability to understand it.

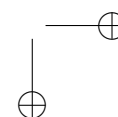
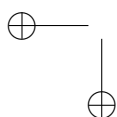
The late Mr. Leaf, chairman of the great Westminster Bank, was a poet of considerable merit, and was one of the best Greek scholars in England. Sir Edgar Speyer, who for years operated as a banker in London and was himself a highly accomplished man, once told me that his most satisfactory cultural associations in England were with certain members of the Stock Exchange. Thus it might seem that a career in finance is not wholly disabling to the intellectual life, or even too seriously inimical to some proficiency in it. Nevertheless one does not





instinctively turn to Wall Street as repository of purely reflective thought; and all the less perhaps because, as Mr. Butler, the president of Columbia University, was saying not long ago, the practice of reflective thought has virtually ceased from among us. The whole current of modern life is against it. It is a difficult practice at best; few are able to do it, few have ever been able to do it; and hence it is heavily disparaged by a society whose development is directed and controlled by the disabled masses of mankind. Therefore when a flowering of purely reflective thought blooms out from roots which are set in Wall Street – and in my judgment a highly remarkable and attractive flowering – it may fairly take title as a literary curiosity.

The history of this exhibit, or rather of my connexion with it, may be found interesting. Some years ago, I have forgotten how many – doubtless more than I should guess, since they pass so rapidly – I met A.B., the author of these *Meditations*, in his office. Some small circumstance had prompted him to write to me; his letter ended with the suggestion that I should drop by and see him when I was passing his way. I had no thought of doing it, and dismissed the matter from my mind; not that I was apprehensive, for since I had no money or the prospect of any, like Juvenal's tramp, I would have been as much at ease among the bulls and bears as in any other kind of company – *cantabit vacuus*. I had simply put the invitation down as more or less a routine gesture of civility, polite and pleasant enough, but not to be taken too seriously. The general tone of A.B.'s letter, however, had somehow impressed me; it was quite unusual; and being in the neighbourhood one day long afterward, I

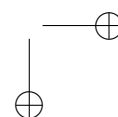




remembered it and yielded to a sudden impulse towards his office-door. He gave me a cordial hail, pushed aside the papers on his desk, and settled himself for a long talk. He had a great deal to say, I had nothing; I was studying him and his conversation with fascinated attention; and it took me no time to discover that I was in the presence of one of the most acute, powerful, original and interesting minds that I had ever encountered.

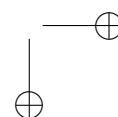
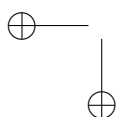
In this way began an odd kind of acquaintance; no, perhaps not odd, but unusual; odd only in the sense of unusualness. Looking back over it, I am interested and pleased to recall how little there ever was in it of the commonplace, conventional and adventitious sort of accessory which ordinary acquaintance appears to need in order to keep itself going. I am sure, and I think he would have been sure, that it is the incuriousness and indifference of both of us towards all this kind of ancillary lumber which speaks best for the quality of our acquaintance. As I knew him, A.B. might have stood with Mark Twain as a man devoid of prejudice or of interest in the subject-matter of prejudice. "I can stand any kind of society," Mark Twain said. "All I care to know is that a man is a human being – that is enough for me; he can't be any worse."

So, well as I knew A.B., my knowledge was wholly on the side of intellect and character. I may say that what I knew, and know now, *about* A.B. comes virtually to nothing. I never so much as knew, nor do I now know, what his occupation was; I have heard him spoken of vaguely as "a Wall-Streeter," for whatever that may mean. I should suppose that the differentiation of function in Wall Street is pretty much what it is elsewhere; but I





do not know whether or not this is so; and if it be so, still less do I know what A.B.'s function was. Sometimes when I thought his mind was wholly absorbed in the development of some philosophical point, he would break off in the middle of a sentence, call up someone on the telephone, and talk about certain industrial and commercial properties in technical language which I did not understand. What interested me on these occasions was, first, his quick transition from an easy and copious conversational flow to the hard-boiled barking accents of business; and second, his evident ability to keep the run of two wholly different lines of thought at the same time, and the electric swiftness and accuracy with which his mind passed from the one to the other; for when he resumed his talk with me, he always finished the broken sentence without repetition, and went on as if no actual shift in his course of thought had taken place. Whenever this occurred I was reminded of a similarly neat performance in linguistics which I saw in the smoking-room of a steamship twenty years ago, when two Danes, a Swedish engineer, a Norwegian industrialist, a German operatic soprano and I were sitting together at a table one evening after dinner. One of the Danes kept a conversation going for a full hour among all of us, switching instantly from one of the three Scandinavian tongues into another, and then into German for Miss Hempel and me. Probably almost anyone could have made these shifts with a second or so for headway, if he knew the languages well enough, but to do it on the instant, and at the same time keep an accurate run of a desultory conversation among four persons, is an interesting feat;

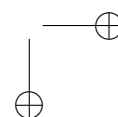
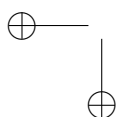




at least, it interested me with much the same order of interest which the movements of A.B.'s mind aroused.

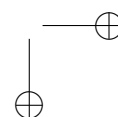
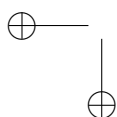
A.B. was a New Englander of the deepest dye. He once mentioned his origin to me; as I remember, it was Maine or Vermont; I think the former. If he had never spoken of it, however, five minutes with him or with his writings would show beyond the faintest chance of doubt that he was not only typically an American, but also typical of the very best that America has so far been able to produce. All his integrities, his force of character, his modes of thought and expression, have the mark of a New England which for generations had been sequestered, tenaciously clinging to its isolation, jealously preserving its virtues and its native sense of virtue from any contaminating contact with alien codes and practices. One would never have taken A.B. for a Bostonian, or for a product of any of Connecticut's industrial towns; the most casual glance at his writings is enough to show that their spirit is persistently rural. Their background is set in the hard, dry, brilliant sunshine of a New England landscape. One looks beyond them and sees a white wooden farmhouse with green shutters, set high on a windswept hill.

I know nothing of A.B.'s ancestry, almost nothing of his immediate family or his general entourage. It should be said that circumstances limited my social opportunities even where A.B. himself was concerned. I was out of this country during most of the time covered by our acquaintance, and when here I was almost never in New York for more than a day or two at a time; so I actually saw far less of A.B. than the length of our acquaintance might reasonably imply, and far less than





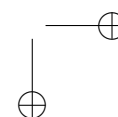
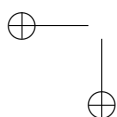
I would have wished. I met his wife on two or three occasions, none of which was of a character permitting me to learn more than that she was an unusually attractive and charming person; one could perceive that at once. Now and then he made some casual mention of his children, none of whom I know; I once met a son, but our acquaintance amounted only to looking at each other occasionally across a dinner-table. A.B. always spoke briefly of his intimates and with great reserve, which was thoroughly characteristic; rural New England is extremely chary about exhibiting its emotions, and makes a kind of principle of distrusting the weaker brethren who wear their hearts on their sleeves. Nevertheless, the few indications he permitted himself showed plainly how devoted his affections and loyalties were, and how thoroughly admirable. I had casual meetings with several men in his entourage; they may have been business associates of one kind or another, or perhaps merely friends. Two of them impressed me particularly; I was sorry not to know them better. One was something in the stock-brokerage way, I believe, an accomplished and attractive man whose manner bespoke very sound and fine taste; and as much might be said for the other, who appeared to be managing an industrial enterprise, but whether as a producer or promoter I do not know. Both were remarkable men, especially as taken in their setting, and as I said, I have often wished that life's changes and chances had not swung me quite so abruptly away from them.





II

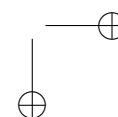
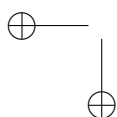
My chief satisfaction in recalling my conversations with A.B. is in the consciousness that never were they trivial; never did they concern themselves with matters of the passing moment, with the day's news, with public affairs, nor with wars or rumours of wars, with personalities, politics, the probable course and prospects of business – none of these things did we ever mention. Nor did we deliberately avoid them; we simply had on our minds too much else which seemed more important to talk about. Nor, again, did A.B.'s conversations exhale the fetor of self-consciousness and snuffiness which seems inevitably to arise from the lucubrations of our modernist "groups of serious thinkers." The sound Pantagruelist knows how and when to treat grave subjects lightly in order to establish a clearer sense of their relative importance and a proportionate respect for their seriousness, never misappraising the one, or misapplying the other; the attainment of this knowledge is indeed perhaps the prime object and intention of the Pantagruelian philosophy. A.B. had all of New England's native instinct for measure, balance and proportion, which supplies a good conduit for this philosophy, and he had great store and abundance of New England's characteristic humour, which greatly facilitates its take. Thus naturally, after the fashion of Molière's hero, A.B.'s attitude towards human life had already advanced him several stages on the way to the goal of Pantagruelism long before he knew what Pantagruelism is, or had even ever heard of it, for he came to a study of Rabelais and Montaigne only late in life. His conversation on the weightiest subjects reflected





this progression; and I, who had come by harder means to some acquaintance with the great Pantagruelian doctrine, was able to penetrate his witty camouflage at once, and to appreciate its adornment of the particular weighty truth to which it was applied.

The case of intellectually self-made men always prompts the inquiry whether or not their development would have been bettered by educational discipline. Any attempt to answer that question would of course be made under the proviso that everything must depend on what kind of discipline is meant; yet even so, probably no satisfactory answer can be given. As far as formative education was concerned – education in the true sense of the word – A.B.’s mind apparently had been pretty well left to itself. He once mentioned having attended some college, but I fancy he got little out of it. At the time when I knew him he was a diligent reader, and I think had always been, but he showed an undisciplined mind’s fumbling uncertainty about the purpose which should guide reading, and a corresponding uncertainty about the benefits which reading confers. Thus he had fallen into the bad habit, which latterly he tried with fair success to give up, of reading for corroboration of some view or position of his own, instead of reading for what the author had to give him; and this habit led him often to over-disparage an author who had failed him on some point, usually one which was relatively trivial. In this way he lost incalculably; he threw out a great many babies with the bathwater, as the Germans say. His readings of Plato, for example, brought him something, no doubt, but what they brought was by no manner of means what they should have brought, because a lack



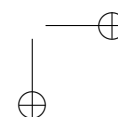


of formative discipline had left him not only unsure of what specific benefit to look for, but also unsure of its being actually a benefit if it were pointed out to him as such. It is true, as Joubert says, that Plato tells us nothing; and from an author who tells us nothing an undisciplined mind would expect little and get less; but

he brings brightness with him; he gives light to our eyes, and fills us with a clarity whereby all things afterwards become luminous. He teaches us nothing, but he prepares us, shapes us, gets us ready, to learn everything.

A gift of this order is pre-eminently one which an undisciplined mind might be expected to nibble at, if at all, with the long teeth of uncertainty and doubt; yet it is precisely the gift which Plato has to give to those prepared to seek it. No other writer gives it as he does, in full abundance of perfection; he stands alone. It is a gift moreover so invaluable, so impossible of commutation or offset by other gifts, that the hardships of a discipline leading to its intelligent and grateful acceptance seem inconsiderable.

A.B. knew his books so well, however, that though he may not have got all they had to give him, he nevertheless got much; and what he got he loved so sincerely that he kept the sources of it always under his hand at both termini of his daily course. Behind a curtain in his office, sifted in among technical works on industry, commerce and science, side by side with trade-journals, bulletins, and the like, I saw translations of Xenophon, Juvenal, Homer, Lucretius, Montaigne, Plato, Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, Pascal, Rabelais; with volumes of

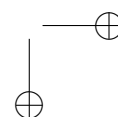




Pater, Arnold, Swift, Emerson, Ruskin – and turning to his window, a pistol-shot away from the counterpart of Tourgueniev’s “senseless motley Bourse,” I wondered at the fine resolution which kept them there to turn to for strengthening and refreshment at odd moments. I wondered also how many similar collections were kept in use to steady and compose the thousands of preoccupied spirits who were busy in the prodigious anthill that I was surveying; and then I thought of the historic dateline, abrupt and terrible in its significance, *Among the Quadi at the Granua*, which ends the First Book of the great emperor’s *Meditations*.

III

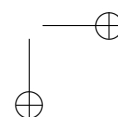
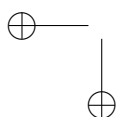
A.B. had a philosophy which, in his desultory presentations of it, was “a thing of shreds and patches,” but in essence it appeared to be a distinctively American and purely secular form of Quietism; it might have come straight down, without his being at all aware of its provenance, from the reactionary Spanish and French movement of the seventeenth century. Indeed, like the Quietists, A.B. may have owed his first impulse towards system-building to one of the strong reactions, not uncommon in the days of his youth, against the arbitrary pronouncements of a theological bureaucracy. Plausible evidence of something like this might be found in his violent resentment of any pretence to a factitious spiritual authority, whether in religion or in philosophy. This trait in him was very marked, indeed exaggerated, for it sometimes led him to suspect such pretence where none existed. But however his turn for philosophy may have





originated, his constructions were the same precisely on the secular side as those of the seventeenth-century Quietists on the religious side. If Falconi, Molinos and Fénelon had examined A.B.'s fundamental positions side by side with their own, they would not have found a single secular counterpart missing.

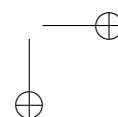
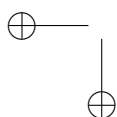
Again A.B.'s spiritual experience with his constructions was exactly that of the Quietists with theirs. Their philosophy being reactionary, it was purely negative, static; so was A.B.'s. They were dissatisfied with this limitation and chafed under it; so did A.B. They tried by every means in their power to import into it an element that should be positive, dynamic, practical; so did A.B. They wished to make the fruits of their labour available to all men; A.B. was motivated solely by the same desire. They succeeded only in devising a sort of spiritual luxury-product, quite beyond the competence of all but a very few; and whether A.B., working on a secular adaptation of their doctrine, has made any actual advance beyond this, or has ever gone as far, is something which remains to be seen. All I know at present is that his dissatisfaction and desire led him into various adventures in metapsychics, various attempts to express the inexpressible, which seemed to me unsuccessful for his purpose, since they were couched not only "in a language not understood of the people," as the Thirty-nine Articles say, but largely in a language not understood of anybody. In making these attempts it seemed to me that he was considerably hamstrung by his indiscriminating repugnance to the idea of authority; it interfered with a due regard for order and method, causing him to proceed by a series of literary fits and starts. A study of the





Quietists, for example, might have enabled him to shape a logical course for himself, at least through most of his preliminaries; but I am sure that sheer impatience with their modes of expression alone would have estopped him from making the necessary adaptations. I well remember how he burned with indignation at Goethe's saying that "man is born, not to solve the problems of the universe, but to find out where the problems begin, and then to restrain himself within the limits of the comprehensible." Instead of taking this simply as a useful and competent registration of human experience up to the present time – for it assigns no limits to the comprehensible – A.B. was put off by what struck him as a strong papal flavour in the utterance, and he would have none of it. What was a German theatre-manager, forsooth, that he should say what man is and is not born for? Resistance to authority should be sturdy – one wishes there were more of it exhibited in every relation of modern life – but it should also be intelligent. The careful drawing of distinctions, accurate discrimination, and careful assessment of values – this remains always the philosopher's first care; many babies have been thrown out with the bathwater through disregard of it.

A.B. once suggested that I should look over some jottings that he had made, and in course of time a considerable parcel found its way into my hands. It lay a great while neglected for one reason or another; I was under pressure of more urgent matters for a year or so, and this was followed by another prolonged absence from the country. Finally I looked the collection over, and found it mainly consisting of some *disjecta membra* of his philosophy. I thought that something might be

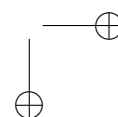
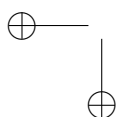




made of these, but a cursory examination was all I could give them at the moment, so I put them aside where they have lain ever since. To my great astonishment, however, I then came on a mass of jottings of an entirely different order; these were brief, succinct reflections on almost every aspect of human life. A.B. had evidently become conscious of a gift for aphoristic utterance; had observed it in his conversation, but never thought of seeing it appear in his writings. There it was, however, expressing itself with a clarity, brevity and simplicity worthy of Franklin. I saw at once the possibility of what I then believed, and now quite as firmly believe, to be not only an interesting literary curiosity, but also a worthy, unusual and original contribution to American letters. I asked whether it would be permissible to publish these reflections, and after some consultation with his family it was agreed that if they could appear anonymously, and if I would stand in *loco parentis* for them, as I am now doing, I might do what I liked with them. What I have done is almost purely clerical work. I have picked out those which best exhibit the remarkable scope and range of the author's observations; they are no more than one in five of the entire lot; and these I have shuffled loosely into a few categories, for the reader's convenience.

IV

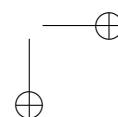
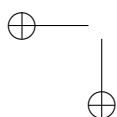
A.B.'s sententious utterances have a peculiar interest, not only because they are addressed to reflective thought, but also because they give so largely the impression of being addressed to himself, rather than to some other person or to the world at large. This takes them out of the





category of maxims, adages, proverbs; it redeems them from the commonplace, and relieves them of the dryness and vapidness which pervade the usual run of moralistic aphorisms; it divests them of a copybook character. If the term *memoranda* had not been preempted into a special and prosaic use, it would fit them exactly as a general title. In general, a memorandum is a note one makes of something which one should remember for one's own good, remember because one would lose by forgetting it; and that is precisely what these notes give the impression of being. The special significance of the word *memoranda*, however, is so firmly fixed by common usage that it has become exclusive, and an attempt to extend it would be misleading. I have therefore given this work the general title of *Meditations* as being equally descriptive, for with scarcely an exception each of these notes is addressed to a subject of purely reflective thought.

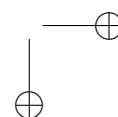
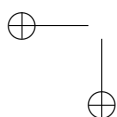
Not only so, but it is addressed in such a way, by such a turn of phrase, as to throw an air of freshness and vivacity around even the most hackneyed subjects, and thereby powerfully to stimulate reflective thought. Often this happy effect is produced by using terms which point to a new and unusual line of approach, as for example in the brief note, not included in this collection, which says, *If your present chief interest needs your interest, climb higher to one which does not.* This view of human ambition has been often enough presented, and everything worth saying about it has no doubt been said; but when the point is put in this way, the new manner of approach releases a powerful incentive to re-examine one's own criteria of the worthiness of one's interests, and to make sure that they are competent. In almost all





– I think quite all – the notes bearing on conduct, which the great English critic so well defined as “three-fourths of life,” some such new and freshening turn of expression will be found to lift them out of the commonplace and to restore all the power of attraction and persuasion which their subjects originally possessed, and which has been weakened by long familiarity with a more conventional treatment.

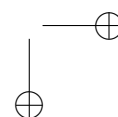
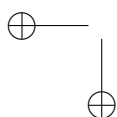
To take another example, the present state of public affairs shows clearly enough that the State is the poorest instrument imaginable for improving human society, and that confidence in political institutions and political nostrums is ludicrously misplaced. Social philosophers in every age have been strenuously insisting that all this sort of fatuity is simply putting the cart before the horse; that society cannot be moralized and improved unless and until the individual is moralized and improved. Jesus insisted on this; it is the fundamental principle of Christian social philosophy. Pagan sages, ancient sages, modern sages, a whole apostolic succession running all the way from Confucius and Epictetus down to Nietzsche, Ibsen, William Penn and Herbert Spencer – all these have insisted on it. At this time, then, especially, when everyone is looking to the State as a kind of beneficent thaumaturge, how salutary it is to come upon a warning *to be wary of pillmongers. If their medicine has not cured you, it will not cure a village, a state or a nation.* This puts the whole substance of the matter in two dozen words. If any and all political nostrums have not cured you of your meanness, low-mindedness, covetousness, greediness, they will not cure a society of the same disorders. Herbert Spencer puts it with equal force and





accuracy that there is no political alchemy by which you can get golden conduct out of leaden instincts; yet in its pungent originality, how much fresher and more thought-provoking is A.B.'s expression of the same profound truth.

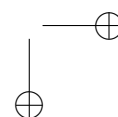
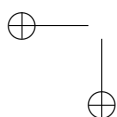
Finally, A.B.'s notes run by preference, whenever possible, to a cryptic reserve and understatement which is of the very essence of New England. *Ants and bees are social animals, so there is more to it than that* – this is precisely as the local sage might have phrased it from his seat on the cracker-barrel, after reading the county weekly's report of some great new enterprise in "economic planning," "social security," or whatnot. Just what the more-to-it is, he would not say, or need to say; his audience assembled around the rusty base-burner would resent particularity – they could think it out for themselves. A careless reader can easily pass over a number of A.B.'s gnomic utterances as having little or no meaning; for example, his observation that *if you do your rolling uphill you will gather some moss*. Looked at twice, however, and recognized as a gloss on an old and rather stupid proverb, this is found able to bear a great deal of rumination. So are statements like *Man is sadly retarded by allowable imperfections; Thoughts left unsaid are never wasted; Whether it is a parable or a fable depends on oneself; Mediocrity adds two to two, and gets only four; Public opinion is a boarding-house manager; It is only an uncivilized world which would worship civilization*. The abrupt entry, *A graduated series of ideals, each put within the one next larger*, gives a fairly complete design for orderly human endeavour,

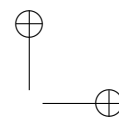
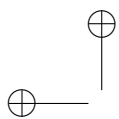




but its very abruptness calls for a careful eye to see how nearly complete the design is.

Sayings like these have something of A.B.'s native granite in them; one has to put some work on them to get them into serviceable shape. Thoughtlessness can easily find them refractory. On the other hand, many are so simple and direct as to leave little excuse for either neglect or misinterpretation. All of them, however, offer scope for reflective thought, and invite it; and for that reason I am glad to do what little I can towards making their value known. In my opinion, their value is more than that of a mere guidebook through the adventure of living. They have that value, of course, but they have more. As our author says (and this is another thoroughly characteristic jotting which I could not find room for in this collection), *It is the lungs which do the breathing, not the breath; it is the brain which does the thinking, not the thought; it is the soul which moves us forward, not ourself.* The work of the author, taken as a whole, is to me, at least, a strong and pleasing reminder of the part played by the Not-ourselves in the direction of human life and function; all the stronger and more pleasing for its homely simplicity. To some of us, deep in our workaday preoccupations, such a reminder may not be unwelcome. If it be strange that this reminder should have come to us out of a great financial centre's spiritual atmosphere – or what we think to be its atmosphere – we may take this as a further reminder that such apparent anomalies seem to be quite in the order of nature. Epictetus was born in slavery, and did a slave's work; Marcus Aurelius ruled the greatest of empires, and did a ruler's work. At one point of time and place or at another, amid the

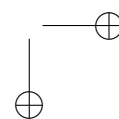
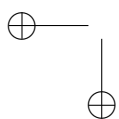




most discouraging circumstances and under utterly alien conditions, the Talmudic Oversoul will come back; it comes back unaccountably by any reason we can find for it to do so, but back it does come.

ALBERT JAY NOCK

Canaan, Conn.
1 December, 1939





TIME AND CHANGE

Yesterday came at some authoritative request, and surely should be let lie in peace, no matter how much of a failure it was.

Early civilizations complained about still earlier ones, much as we do about both.

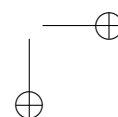
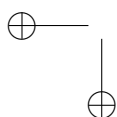
Sometimes you see little changes fluttering their pennons to show you that a great change is on its way.

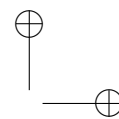
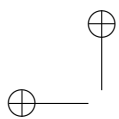
There is a time for everything except Time, which monopolizes the show from the rising of the curtain to its fall.

We laugh indulgently at our outgrown beliefs which gave us much happiness when they were having their day, and by dying fertilized our present beliefs which were once their seedlings.

There is no such thing as a contemporary. Some of our associates are living in the early part of the fourteenth century, and some in the year 2536 A.D.

Fluctuations in fortune have a way of turning out to be transitions between stages of development.

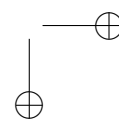
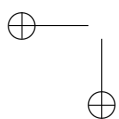




It is the destiny of some men to be cotton one day, silk-and-wool the next day, and all-silk the day after that.

From generation to generation footprints may be partly filled or over-filled, but not exactly filled.

Being ephemeral brings the privilege of change.





GIFTS OF THE GODS

Blind eyes sometimes see the most; Milton had a good pair.

It is impossible to share what fundamentally belongs to us.

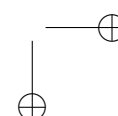
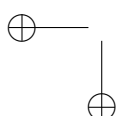
The hidden fire may be said to smoulder, but it can burn one full of blisters.

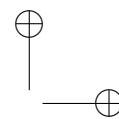
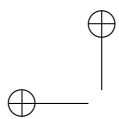
Time teaches its lessons to most of us, but when a genius descends to earth his pre-natal lessons taught by the gods come along with him.

A man of worth, who is also rich, shows what lavish spenders the gods sometimes are.

The person who asks the gods for special protection is a racketeer by nature.

Through millenniums of human evolution and suffering, ours was the immunity of not having been born. To pay for this by a short lifetime of hazards does not seem extortionate.





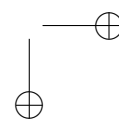
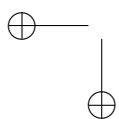
SUPERSTITION

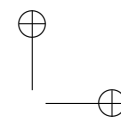
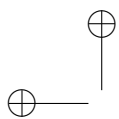
Established laws and customs are worth cross-examining thus: "What deference would I show you if you were only one day old?"

One look around us ought to show that all our arbitrary measures and bounds have been clamped on us by mankind.

Superstition would have a hard time to keep going if things which may be made to encourage it were not continually happening.

Half-a-dozen superstitious terrors have saved many a cash-drawer.





CONSCIENCE

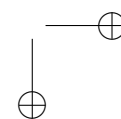
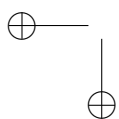
Our conscience is a writ issued by a superior court, and directed to the inferior tribunal – our thinking mind.

The tongues of conscience need a conscience of their own to keep them from speaking before they know what they are talking about.

We are inclined to so many more sins than we do that we may hope the undone ones will be checked up carefully by the statistical gods.

Nothing is better than frustration for waking up the conscience.

No conscience which is a palimpsest of the consciences of others is a safe guide.





RELIGION AND DOGMA

In a well managed orthodoxy, with every fifty rites you get a free devotion.

Avoid membership in a body of persons pledged to only one side of anything.

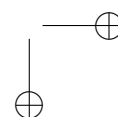
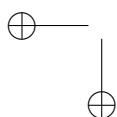
Pagan worship was at least worship.

One man is helped by a series of events; another man is harmed by the same events. The first man calls the events Good, the second man calls them Evil. Circumstances put the men in each other's place; their Good and Evil also at once exchange places. This has been a common experience for Good and Evil ever since man began to give names and ratings to matters beyond his knowledge.

Let any who may aspire to the various sorts of martyrdom, remember the number of causes which have deserted their martyrs.

A religious system is an assemblage of guesses.

The term *Godhead* undertakes to display the Final Cause on an anatomical chart.





Why waste theological systems on an effort to unite the divine and human natures which were One to begin with?

A significant fact is that all heretics have disagreed with a majority.

It takes centuries to recover a people from its prophets' false pretences.

Many a man becomes skeptical in his utterances when he finds belief eating at his heart.

If we exiled our sins, our virtues would get lonely without their old sparring partners bleeding their noses every now and then.

Dogs which have edged away from a saint will instinctively run to certain sinners.

Kneeling in prayer involves more than the physics of muscular action.

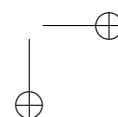
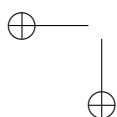
Leave your prayers to themselves, and they will come home dragging your objectives behind them.

Clay pigeons make fascinating targets for theologians.

Thus far, the brooding, tender love of the gods which poets write of, is pure gammon. Break any of their laws, and find out for yourself.

A man never can tell when he is within fourteen prayers of their answer.

If a profound gulf separates my neighbor's belief from mine, there is always the golden bridge of tolerance.





It must be tiresome and pulling for the gods to listen to prayers which need not be offered if those offering them had faith.

The infidels you hear about are beyond counting; the infidels you meet may be one or two or three. Few have ever attempted the struggle of becoming a bona fide infidel.

Being good the way another person thinks you should be has its inconvenient side; he might go away, be sick, or have some sinning of his own to do.

Fiends have been so interestingly set forth in religious literature it would be a treat to meet a first-class one in real life, and study his technique.

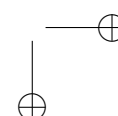
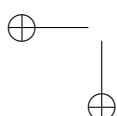
Absurd representations of the gods take a long time to laugh down; for instance, the one with cloven hoofs and a forked tail.

We would need to get beyond temporal consciousness not to pray for death under a régime of glory everlasting.

Religion is constantly being restored by change.

The good we think that we voluntarily perform we could not help doing if we tried. Determinism, perhaps, but if Bentham and Calvin are suspected witnesses, take it out on St. Augustine.

For us, the ancient gods had barbarous faces. What will the countenances of our gods look like to succeeding generations?





A skeptic who turns dogmatist has decided it is high time to take it easy.

Divine grace with fixed modes of objectification and chosen vehicles for manifestation, is unthinkable to the unsuperstitious.

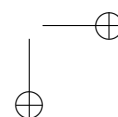
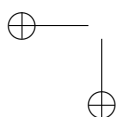
There are far more idolatries than there are first-class gods.

Strangeness keeps us polite to the gods more than their benefactions do.

With as many gods as there are people in the world, we must avoid stepping on the millions of toes which extend in all directions.

The idea of playing a harp eternally has lost caste without leaving a popular substitute.

Begging the pardon of rhapsodists, nature conceals infinitely more of God than it reveals.





EDEN'S CURSE

Despite the attributed lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life, etc, man somehow gets through an enormous amount of grinding toil.

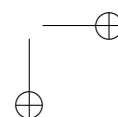
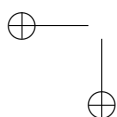
It is easier to admire hard work if you don't do it.

Weariness has no pain equal to being all rested up with nothing to do.

When study becomes labor, we had better change the subject-matter as quickly as possible.

Never a word of excuse from the grindstones with millions of noses pressed to them!

We could sail farther and freer if we didn't have to dredge our own channel.





LIFE'S RESOURCES

We turn the free gifts of life away by battling for them.

What use to them is wealth, whose purses hold back from spending?

If people did not prefer reaping to sowing, there would not be a hungry person in the land.

Like mignonette with its gift of fragrance, seemliness flavors life.

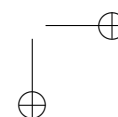
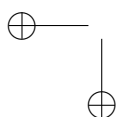
Life dwindles to cakes and ale for an inconsiderable personality which may be ready to spring into glorious adventure when glorious adventure becomes available like cakes and ale.

We are instruments for measuring the extent of our own fearlessness.

No sap rises in the bare tree, yet it awaits leafing with certainty.

Only occasional hours meet our full requirements.

Nature, like mankind, has its anomalies with no harm done, but only great good.





Life is a chain of poems with enough prose intermingled to keep it from becoming mawkish.

If you obtain provision for yourself of spiritual abundance, don't throw the surplus at people's heads; feed it back into your own industry as capital for the production of more abundance.

Our memory is not nobler than our deeds, our deeds than our expectations, our expectations than our faith.

A rose's secret is not its scent, but the thrilling tales of hidden life its roots could tell.

Humanity would be in a sad way if it hadn't something bigger than memory to hold its experiences in.

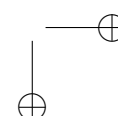
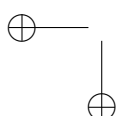
A baton is a cudgel for hitting Gluck, Mozart, Weber, Rossini, Beethoven, Wagner, Debussy, Strauss, Bach, Handel and others over the head, and making them repeat their communications from the gods.

Winter knows the value of its ice and snowfalls, as springtime attests. Life knows the value of its pains and frustrations, as man's evolution attests.

Prayers, silent or spoken, have such beneficiaries outside of those praying, and so many, that if they were gathered to witness they would proclaim mankind sublimely unselfish.

There is not an ounce of our former strength which is not doing some sort of job, right now.

Our increase from year to year owes much to old faiths often forgotten.





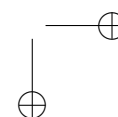
Many lost arts appear to prove that what has once been done nevertheless cannot be done again; so it does not pay to take our eyes altogether off the past.

Our portion of life is the whole thing for us.

Destruction, father of change and grandfather of transformation, is not to be dismissed with a curse.

Thieves cannot see why it is that their efforts to equalize distribution from the gods should raise such a disturbance.

The ones whose needs are met with superfluous supply are in apparent debt to something, somewhere. Any bright young thinker will analyze the “apparent debt,” the “something” and the “somewhere” for you as glibly as you please.





THE ANCIENT VIRTUES

Thrift builds a fortune where improvidence once had its altar until the gods beckoned the wreckers to clear the site.

Modesty is most effective when its lowered lashes intimate that it has other moments.

Desire for security keeps littleness little and threatens the great with smallness.

No man is contented until at least one person knows how dangerous he is.

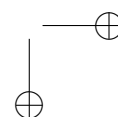
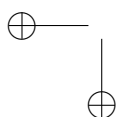
Merit can afford to be patient, but what more is it waiting for?

The dangerous percentage of delay is ten-tenths of it, since there are so few cases where the late bird catches the worm.

When a thing is not worth overdoing, leave it alone!

Blushes are still seen.

If you sense a falling off of self-glorification, make a clean job and push your self-pity after it. When they





have reached the destined place, they can help each other find a cooler spot.

There are some sweet voices which mean just what they say.

If we do not put on a good appearance before ourselves, what is the use of trying to impress the neighbors or the gods, until we do?

Being just a little bad is the best fun in the world until somebody you respect and fear takes one shrewd look at you.

Pleasures soon exhaust their resources, turning to asceticism for the loan of its treasures, or to debauchery for forgetfulness of their poverty.

The strong man asks himself all his questions.

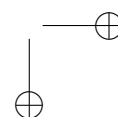
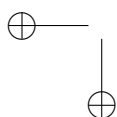
Virtue is already tainted that awaits a higher bidder.

Being contented today must precede being satisfied tomorrow.

The one who is surfeited with idleness is liable any time to yawn, stretch mightily, shake his head like a lion, then lie back exhausted, and idle some more.

True honor is self-perpetuating; no one has to die to preserve it.

The world is said to exist in order to instruct man of the gods. If the gods are sagacious, they are profiting from an example of independence and courage on the part of man who is fighting his way through, without the inside information which the gods keep from him.





A shelter which conceals a man from observation works both ways.

We never quite succeed in concealing ourselves from ourselves by means of our own disguises.

What gentleness lacks in noise it makes up in perseverance.

Your candid person speaks according to what he thinks is truth and justice; an enormous assumption.

Faults are whetstones for wisdom and insight.

Before a diamond shows brilliancy and prismatic colors it has to stand a deal of cutting and smoothing.

Our good impulses are allusions to divinity.

The pure do not worry about chastity; their minds are on something else.

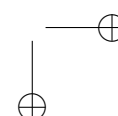
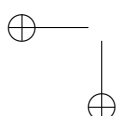
A really pure mind does not know enough about dirt to venture at scrubbing other minds.

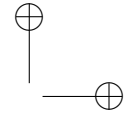
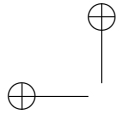
When necessity is made into a virtue it is always under a slight suspicion, besides hurting virtue's reputation as a good chooser.

Noble acts are such a commonplace that the world dotes on news of ignoble acts.

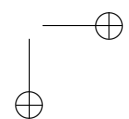
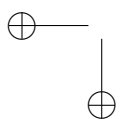
It is more difficult not to want to be tempted than it is to refrain from yielding.

Daydreams are the gaseous decomposition of true purpose.





We would not think of opposing an honest man's honesty; yet we deny the eccentric man the eccentricities which are his honesty.





ADVERSITY

Proud souls in the true sense are never humbled by adversity.

Martyrdom might butter a good many parsnips if it weren't so shocking painful.

The cares of gain are threefold: the struggle of getting; the frenzy of increasing; the horror of losing.

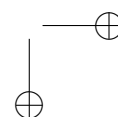
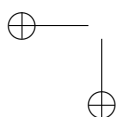
There is nothing more disappointing than failing to accomplish a thing, unless it is to see somebody else accomplish it.

Man's dignity consists of having any left, considering how he is kicked around so unmercifully.

We infrequently bestow envy where it would help us most; on pain.

The only suffering which meets our need is painstakingly arranged by ourselves, albeit unconsciously.

It is as hard not to weep over a joy taken away from us as it is for an infant not to wail at the loss of its rattle; the difference being in the size and sort of rattle.





Being of the same family as errors of the trial-and-error way of finding things out – which has made science what it is – blunders can lead to discoveries through avoidance of earlier blunders. They are experience's righthand men when used in this way.

Men starved for a crumb of success would not believe what distress and suffering come from a stomach that is bloated with it; and how every waking minute is spent wondering how, in spite of the pain, to supply that wretched belly with some more bloat.

There is no weight so vast but seems like the weight of a feather to the cosmic strength that carries it; so there is no burden put on a man's shoulders which does not seem light to a sound practical faith.

Some have narrowness thrust upon them through too few temptations being sent their way.

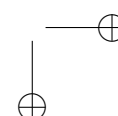
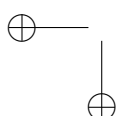
When it comes to a knockdown struggle with adversity, it is a question of how many last gasps we can gasp.

Impediments are baby barriers, waiting to grow up and block the road.

Life's failures, which do practically all the ennobling, save it from becoming contemptible.

There is nothing in the outward appearance of a shoe to show where it pinches.

All the defeats ever inflicted were somebody's victories.





MEMORY

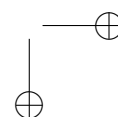
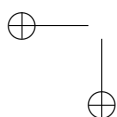
Remembrance of hopes that were silly has an especial tenderness, for much of their silliness came from a thoughtless credulity which we would be glad to have back again.

The only live things in memory are sentiments whose working days are over.

If you want to enjoy good music, watch the faces of those who are listening to it, and try to compute the thousands of memories that never ride anything but sound waves.

If we turn to the past for some useful detail, we must not stir it up with too much remembrance.

We have short memories for the many dangerous storms before which we sailed without taking harm.





NEW ENGLAND'S ACCENTS

Simple and hardy virtues would not much mind a touch of complicated life and having their simplicity and hardihood expanded by the complications.

Diligence is the next best thing to having Saturday afternoon off.

Many an honest politician is hunting high and low for a chance to offload his honesty profitably.

Satan is such a wily old seducer that he is not recognized as Satan more than three times in a hundred appearances.

Many a man's profanity has saved him from a nervous breakdown.

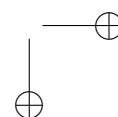
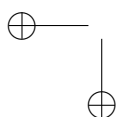
Sweets to the sweet have made much business for dentists and apothecaries.

Avoid the man who will forgive anything but larceny.

Excuses are reasons with a streak of jaundice.

The echoes *have* to applaud.

Some go so far as to juggle their juggling.





When worst comes to worst there must be a great comparing of notes.

We can get on with attendant evils if we keep them that way.

Weariness of the spirit towards the body is an enormous occupancy-tax.

There would be some satisfaction in leaving a name behind us if *behind us* would only stay put.

Purposes fail which demand more distance of a road than they have footsteps to cover.

Usually the man who lands in destruction soared too high for safety at the outset.

It is good practice to reflect on the small percentage of one's bulk which rises above sea-level.

Most of our problems are test questions.

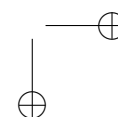
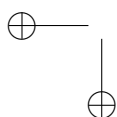
When someone sets up a great splashing he is in shoal water.

Keep a close watch of your privileges; they have a strain of license in their blood.

If you are in clover make the most of it; the best varieties are cut down once a season.

Dive where the water is deep.

The person whose life is notorious for its many windings gets in a lot of sightseeing nevertheless.





The pulpiteer who succeeds in convincing intelligent listeners that his doctrine has defined the undefinable should switch to rabbits and hats.

The man who proclaims his own wisdom sometimes has a great deal of it.

Whistling to keep up courage is good practice for whistling.

The man who has a dogmatic creed has more time left for his business.

On their way to being exalted, the humble usually resign themselves comfortably to seeing the proud humbled.

The precepts of the good make fine sales-talk for evil-doers.

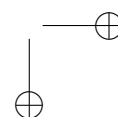
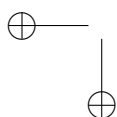
Only the bravest of stay-at-homes asks the ticklish question: "Did anybody ask where I was?"

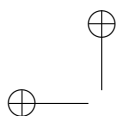
There is a great deal of forgiving done by very human people, and it is good sound forgiveness, too. The gods may have a better brand, but one is not so sure.

We sin grievously against ourselves when we get somebody to do something for us which we could do.

With natural law on the alert to crush anybody or anything that gets in its way, how does Providence manage to get itself called merciful?

The place that awaits us does the same amount of waiting that we do, and knows its business better than we do, besides.





Heaven appears to have ordained a great many things which it is supposed to disapprove of.

There can be no return to common sense, for no one has ever been there.

A formula is something that worked once, and keeps trying to do it again.

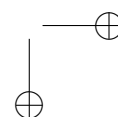
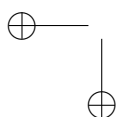
Spirit and flesh would have a hard time untangling if they were put to it.

When the gods are on "our side" in two opposing armies at the same time, there must be a great scratching of heads among them.

Much more is known about the stars than about rheumatism.

Hope must feel that the human breast is amazingly tolerant.

How hard posterity would try to change us if it could get its hands on us!





FREEDOM

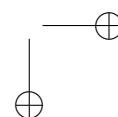
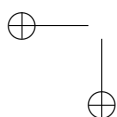
We seek freedom in our thoughts among the stars;
themselves equally slaves of law.

We hold fast to liberties which are secretly our jailers.

Deport your fears and you will live in a free country.

Much ingratitude is instinctively caused by the insult
which communicated benefit is to any man, for because
of this he is stricken with dependence, as blighting to the
spirit as leprosy, syphilis and smallpox are to the flesh.

It would be as natural for a full grown tiger to mew
as for a man released from the slavery of imitation ever
to go back to his neighbor again with: "What do you
think of this? What do you advise about that?"





LA COMÉDIE HUMAINE

Alexander and Cæsar join bones in a dance when nations go to war.

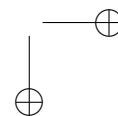
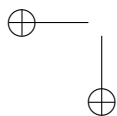
As soon as we have worked life to a smoothness, we yearn for something to come along and roughen it for us again.

A man tries to give equal thanks to two people for equal benefits, but never succeeds; he is bound to resent one's help more than the other's.

If you want to stir up a commotion, let one of your virtues tell a neighbor's virtue where to put the brakes on.

If our imperfections suddenly landed on our heads, some would complain of falling leaves and others of bricks.

If we dropped our stratagems for six months, our growing-pains would become so acute that we could hardly walk.





Often beggared, *description* still holds its own, keeps on exaggerating, and sits at the top of the steps in most conversations.

Self-condemnation is an upside-down form of applause; it assures us of an audience of one, with hisses better than nothing.

Those who are sly try to slink behind honor, calling on wisdom to fight for deceit.

Man's grave-toned promise, *without fail*, sends the gods off into conniptions of Homeric laughter.

Man, the reasonable being, totally unable to state a case based on events that are a matter of record, nimbly hops to what would have been the case if events had been different from what they were.

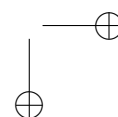
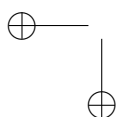
No punishment of the unrighteous has ever been too severe in the eyes of the righteous.

Work up a blazing headline story and you serve the masses who have not had a new thrill for over six hours.

Belonging to an imperial race is a proud thing until after a shipwreck, and you start going down for the third time.

The world swings back and forth between more madness and less madness. Meanwhile daisies, parsnips and politicians grow serenely where planted; politicians with their parsnips buttered.

Having supplied them with names, *omnipotence, justice, knowledge, Providence*, – what are they?





The public is a handy term for excluding ourselves from our sweeping disparagements.

The human mind must believe in something, so why not let it believe what it does believe?

We spare no effort to escape our doubts, though they offer a strengthening companionship.

Being similar is the affectation of some who at length surrender to eccentricity, and are last seen carrying a banner marked *Queer*, hoping thereby to be ranked with the geniuses; who on the contrary, and on the whole, are an extremely well-balanced breed of men.

What if the roles in real life, off the stage and outside the covers of books, depended for continuance on the verdict of ignorant or dyspeptic critics!

Like merry-andrews we ape today the tricks we did the day before.

Some men's chief betrayal is of themselves.

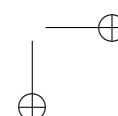
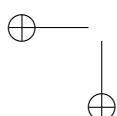
Routine fights life with lead soldiers.

Like a child with a flashlight, we turn life on and off, hardly believing it is true.

Though we may shake our finger reprovably at them, we have great tenderness toward our vagrant desires.

Proud science gets on its knees to a molecule, and begs just one little word of encouragement from an atom.

If your mood is too florid for good taste, do not be anxious; bad taste is always somewhere to be found.





A city is worth going to see for its large number of metropolitan rustics.

Today's news was published by word of mouth in the streets of ancient Athens.

An extra wee nip swallowed by a Pericles might speak in phrases which would lead to war – many lives ended and history revised by two fluid ounces!

How many of the onward-moving banners, floating over the heads of the mass, are not emblems of servility?

When we catch up with something final, it asks us the way to the next stopping-place.

The public is damned, but it attends to the matter itself.

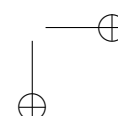
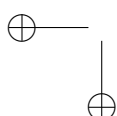
Paltry things have their mission of paltriness for little men, which is as necessary as the mission of significant things to big men.

When a man gets wind of the fact that his is more than a moderate degree of excellence, watch the excellence dwindle!

If a man, seeing his own follies, corrected them, how his entertainment-value would decline for the rest of us!

Studying history warns against making it.

There never is any diminution of the vast majority, indifferent to what they are, whence they came, and whither they go, who rush from business to pastime, and from pastime back to business, leaving no vacancy





into which the unknown might slip a little experimental greatness.

Ignorance is a confident lady; she can afford to be. If we escape her on the north, she catches us on the south. If we wear our cap and gown toward the east, she trips us up on the west. Then as we grow old and forgetful, she gets the upper hand of us at all points of the compass.

Many of the things we are struggling to do would be much obliged to us if we took our minds off them.

When playing humanity's favorite game of Simpleton we use odd names for ourselves, like *wise man*, *learned man*, *good man*, etc., etc.

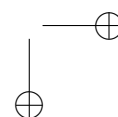
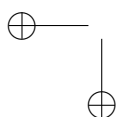
The blind alley: trying to escape our surroundings by exchanging them for other surroundings still our own.

Read the following, and sing "Three Cheers for the Red, White and Blue!" with all your might:

The vassal, or tenant, kneeling, ungirt,
uncovered, and holding up his hands
between those of his lord, professed that
he did become his man from that day
forth. – Blackstone.

Can one find the man of any age who does not play the game of blindman's buff?

Twenty is in hot haste to become a year older and cast its first vote, which Forty will know was cast like the legendary pearls.





By careful calculation, a point of view consists of five hundred and thirty-five prejudices agglomerated for convenience in handling.

Rival philosophers, rival skeptics, rival dogmatists, blinded by competition, rush to disprove their own truth in the other's mouth.

Envy has stimulated many a man to go the other man one or two or ninety-five better; whereupon envy is escorted to the baptismal font and re-christened *Friendly Rivalry*.

Faultlessness has been aimed at by all people in every age, though no bull's-eyes have been made; but there is plenty of fun in the bent bow and the flying arrow, and in meditating on eternity (wherein faultlessness has been achieved) as the champion bore.

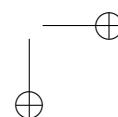
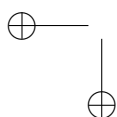
Progress is the great paved highway from ancient Rome through Capua into tomorrow's first editions.

We "establish" man's position in the universe without so much as a hint from the universe that we are even here.

Millions of automobiles are straining the speed-laws to reach some lack of objective.

With magnetism, power of uncondensed steam, gravitation, radiant energy of electric waves, equilibrium, and the activity of atoms, all inscrutable to human eyes, man still cries, "I believe only what I can see."

Our descendants mysteriously roaming around inside us must be well fed up on our personality, and likely





enough swearing they will renounce us as soon as they can live.

It is just as easy for an ebony tree to grow hard wood that will take a high polish, as it is for a white pine to grow soft wood that will not. So much for the idea that all men are created equal.

Command your conscience to quit annoying you until it has reconciled one honest man's blameworthy being another equally honest man's praiseworthy.

Give Nonsense a good head-start with Tradition and Habit cheering it from the sidelines, and if you think that Reform can catch up with it inside of two or three thousand years or more, your opinion is contrary to experience.

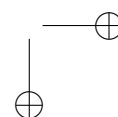
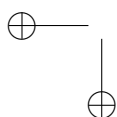
Heaven is still above us, but nobody looks at it much.

We surround ourselves with arbitrary and artificial limitations, and then blame them on the gods.

Were the time saved during one day which is misspent in examining and criticizing trifles, on the following day man would squander the saving on doing the same thing.

We might appropriately be called the creatures of a day if we were not essentially the spit-and-image of every human being gone before.

We worry about forms of government, not yet having discovered what it is that government is supposed to govern.





When we consider that men are all blockheads now and then, with the now and the then not so far apart, we gain an idea of the extent to which this old earth is running itself without much assistance from us.

Some great philosophers and religionists have had the wildest little passions; and the moralists – their own wildness tamed for the occasion – have raised their hands in horror.

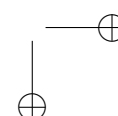
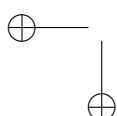
It is a real trial to turn around and find that Socrates is nowhere to be seen.

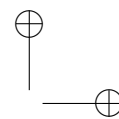
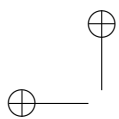
A deep breath taken under the right circumstances can send the blood rushing through our veins faster and sweeter than the highest highball ever poured. The joker, of course, is that each man must work up the right circumstances; or get them gratis, which, thanks to the indulgent gods, frequently happens. On the highball side, the same good old gods supply alcohol in its infinite variety.

Endowments of colleges and of cats have their similarities, when the colleges purr over humbugging methods of education, and scratch up a heap of nonsense to hide what they have done.

The evening star, following its strict business of shining, would be amazed to know that our speck of dust boasts beings of atomic stature who call it sublime, sweet and holy.

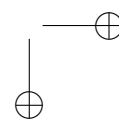
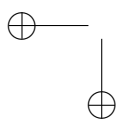
The heart is incapable of knowing what is really what, so we turn to it when we seek a type of happiness which is never to be found save in self deception.





If we should put more wit into our heads, where would the stupidity move? – not to our hearts, already crowded with indiscretions.

To find a man in public office who is not unfit for it is one with finding a white blackbird.





THINGS FOREORDAINED

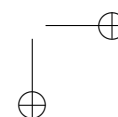
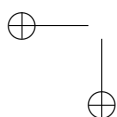
Hewing our path through life sounds heroic until we discover that we are following a path which was waiting for us from the beginning.

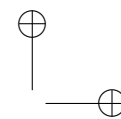
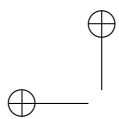
Spontaneous actions can be computed as having made their start more centuries ago than we have fingers and toes to count them.

We build better than we know when most of our structure is handed to us prefabricated by the gods.

If you do not like your own character there may be a new one readymade and waiting for you. The snake sheds its skin with impunity, relying on the same nature which you rely on.

We foist the authorship of many undesirable deeds upon ourselves, the origination of which antedates our birth.



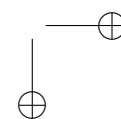
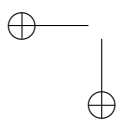


FRIENDSHIP

Friendship is blessed, not so much for the friends it makes for us, which has an element of gain, but the friend it makes of us, which has the element of giving.

Contracting a real friendship is one of the most completely involuntary things a man can do.

When you see interest grow in exact proportion to acquaintance, a friendship or a wedding is in the offing.





THOUGHT

The impact of a great man's thinking would dash out a little man's brains.

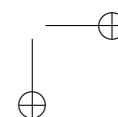
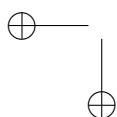
Some brains are made for thinking, some for thinking they think. Every man-jack and woman-jill of us will swear ours is the first kind.

It is a bad business when a large ambition gets into the head that is used only to little thoughts. This is observable when big responsibilities are laid in the lap of politicians.

The brain that bubbles with phrases has hard work to collect its thoughts.

A thoughtful man who is never made aware that his being has vasty deeps somewhere within it is exceptional. What the deeps consist of, and how he can get at them as a source of help to him on his way and a means of toning up his personal life, is something which cannot be told, even by the man who is doing it and doing it first-rate.

Every man has special thoughts of his own, rivalling the best literature of any nation.





Thoughts left unsaid are never wasted.

The obscure man's reflections may be as wise as the rich cheese-makers, on everything but cheese.

There is not a thought in our heads which hasn't been worn shiny by other brains.

It is our irrational vagrant thoughts that get our votes; real thinking is an unquiet and laborious business and we prefer to take it easy, and let rationality go hang.

Only those well accustomed to thinking are not disturbed by the passage of thoughts.

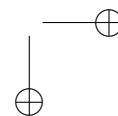
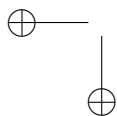
Treat the other man's faith gently; it is all he has to believe with. His mind was created for his own thoughts, not yours or mine.

In the United States, hens average to lay forty eight eggs a year each. How many reproductive bodies of thought does *homo sapiens* average to produce in the twelvemonth?

Refrain from uprooting your thoughts and flinging them into language; let be, they may grow fruit.

When our affairs are succeeding beyond expectation, when we are being benefited by our foresight and contrivance, and apparently are becoming a considerable person, a mean little thought bares its teeth and says: "Watch yourself! This is not going to last."

There are thoughts of a certain superior quality which are advantageous and not difficult to mind. Each individual is aware of the identity of these thoughts in his





particular case, and can gain gladness and profit from voluntary association with them.

Thinking things has been done through the ages; knowing things remains to be done.

Old-timers for thirty centuries had things all to themselves, taking words out of our mouths and really original ideas out of our heads.

When one becomes infatuated with an idea the time has arrived to remain silent.

Do not glean any thoughts which you have not brought from seed to maturity in your own mind.

Follies of the unthinking are meat for the long-headed formalist.

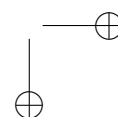
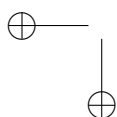
The best mind might be the wisest mind if it were mind alone that produces wisdom.

It is the honest lies we tell – statements factually correct and essentially deceiving – which debauch our manhood and stunt our growth.

We must not keep the furniture in our heads occupied by former thoughts. Each day there are new visitors who, finding the chairs filled on account of Old Home Week, will depart elsewhere.

It takes an emergency, a sudden danger, to show how profitless our habitual thoughts are, and how close to revelation their immediate successors come.

Study which fails to inspire pauses for reflection is drudgery which dulls the mind.





Many a thought on its way to us has stopped in dismay at our unpreparedness.

If it were not for the Shakespeares, Cervanteses, Rabelaises, Marcus Aureliuses, Platos, Socrateses and Homers to furnish contrast to average thinking, this globe would be inches deep with peacock's feathers.

Mean little thoughts are right for mean little minds. Putting a full-sized good thought into one of them would start an earthquake.

Some have half-baked ideas because their ideals are not heated up enough.

Eyes telegraph with the speed of lightning to things of any size, "Come on in!", with the poor brain left to sort out the oversizes and undersizes, as best it can.

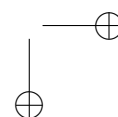
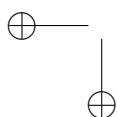
Many a superior brain is blockaded by inferior thoughts.

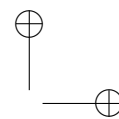
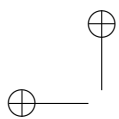
Among ideas which attain the highest class are many which were hatched in an immature and helpless condition.

Vacant minds must have their uses, yet it seems a pity to waste first-class bodies on them.

You know from the eyes of some that their thoughts are dressed for a feast.

Oh, sweet and vacant minds are those which watch Life roll by, content if now and then they can thumb a ride on somebody's hobby!

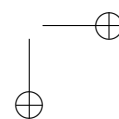
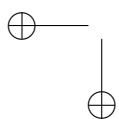




CÆLUM NON ANIMAM

The majority-instinct of sightseeing leaves the way wide open for the few discoverers.

The unfortunate who has to travel for amusement lacks capacity for amusement.





THE ETERNAL BALANCE

We must banish our faults with hesitation. Some of them might tear conjoined virtues in half, leaving the other half incapable of carrying on until pieced out by a new virtue or by a new fault, neither of which is easy to acquire.

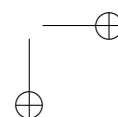
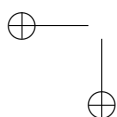
Hunting for favorable aspects takes us away from the ill-favored ones, the beauties of which are not disclosed until their deceptive appearances are done away with by our insistent research and commanding faith.

When a quarrel approaches, examine it closely before refusing it. Behind its ugly appearance may be found reconciliation, with power to bestow godhood on the reconciled.

There is nothing pleasanter than harming ourselves when it feels good.

No trifle is so unconsidered that it fails its niche, more than a mountain fails its foundation or an ocean its bed.

The sun never stands in a shadow, nor faith in the darkness of fear.





The earth is both shone upon and shining. The sun and the stars arch their vast resources of light above it, while out of it proceeds illumination from millions of eyes made bright by hate or love.

The great evil fallen to the lot of man is his not knowing much of anything about anything. The great good is the unbeatable spirit bequeathed to him which attacks all mysteries and glories in defeat.

Capability of being greater and capability of being less travel together in the same man; when either prevails, the other bides its time.

The result sought – that may be among the missing. Even so, the unexpected will stand in its place, ready to quicken us into new understanding.

Brighter the sun, more dazzled the eyes!

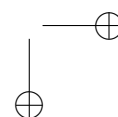
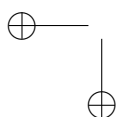
Do not dwell on your sins. David killed Uriah the Hittite for the sake of stealing his wife, had Solomon by her, and everything went well.

Study any confusion and you find it is peace in an early stage.

The earth is sliced into furrows that seeds may burst with life; even thus with our wounds.

Sometimes good sops itself in evil, while at other times evil sops itself in good, thus maintaining our sustenance on a mixed diet.

Plodders are as sick of steady steps and slow as poets are of the swift feet of the Muse.





DE SENECTUTE

Age withers only the outside.

Youth looks at fruitful old age and pities it its burden of years, forgetting that old age also has had youth, while youth has still to attain old age; to the fruitfulness of which the years interpose considerable barriers, sometimes even death.

Aged ears are partial to inner voices.

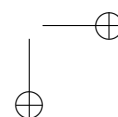
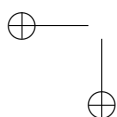
The man who is too old to learn was probably always too old to learn.

If you ask a man about today, which is one of the “better days” he will look back at from the far future, as like as not he will answer that it is not very good.

Nature gives the superlative facial treatment – crow’s-feet around the corners of kindly old eyes.

Each one must make his choice between ageing and evolving.

It is the daft old brain that really knows how to dream.





As the way grows longer, we resign ourselves to remedies; we who once demanded cures.

We should have a care about laying a thing aside because it is old, though it be true that sometimes old things are found to have turned sour in ageing – often through neglect. But others have ripened into giving forth such a fragrance that the mere scent of it raises one to new heights.

Old age looks like no privilege at all to those who haven't it.

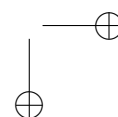
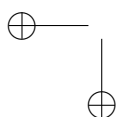
Bent backs, near the end of the long road, remember without triumph the straight backs that broke half-way along it.

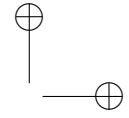
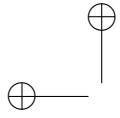
The excitement of youth is perpetual; that of middle age is interrupted by reflection and anticipation. To old age, that form of excitement is best which youth calls an old man's reflection and middle age calls an old man's anticipation, but which old age knows to be the deep satisfaction of living a life which has at last been emptied of much stupid sinning.

Thoughts grope back for our childhood, partly lost to memory. Yet that childhood, no experience lacking, watches while we work, smiles when we play, laughs when we dream, its hand holding ours no matter what our age.

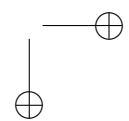
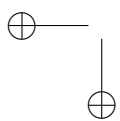
Do not lay the old aside until you have had plenty of time to lay the new aside.

The blessed memories of old age are as likely to be middle-aged as youthful.





Only towards the end do we know playthings as they are: compensations for immaturity at any age.





“THREE-FOURTHS OF LIFE”

Speak low if you speak at all; creation is listening.

The moment we hope someone will construe what we say into meaning something else, we defile a large area of character.

Some talk in quarto volumes and act in pamphlets.

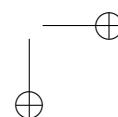
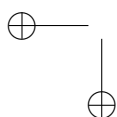
So far as you are concerned, keep mechanical energy where it belongs, among machines.

Make a party over your negative thoughts, assuring them that they are the safest, the most cautious, company you ever kept. At first they will swallow your flattery, but then suddenly, stricken with shame, and knowing themselves for the impostors that they are, out and off they will go.

A stiff attitude is one of the phenomena of rigor montis.

People who permit themselves to be pushed from place to place learn to move like stuffed animals.

Once we are in the habit of filtering what we want to believe through a sieve, disbelief after disbelief splashes back in our face.





Panic at the thought of doing a thing is a challenge to do it.

Much of our conduct is true to our environment, but false to our essential nature; yet our essential nature is life at first hand for us, while environment is a leftover from the conduct of others.

As long as we still remain improvable and adjustable, we have not yet blundered irretrievably.

You can do a neat job with existent material and still put your head in a cloud.

The more one divests the world of strangeness the more elbow-room one makes for oneself.

Make no mistake: every man is assigned to his proper class. His next step is to outclass that class.

A graduated series of ideals, each put inside the one next larger!

What we are doing at the moment is more than just one thing added to the rest; it is a memoir.

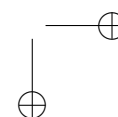
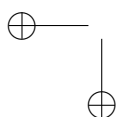
Nobody is an unemployed man.

If an amendment safeguards you, oppose it.

Resist defiantly the need to be brave.

We cannot be too earnest, too persistent, too determined, about living superior to the herd-instinct.

The road under our feet either leads to the one we should be on, or it is that road itself.





Getting a thing at any cost leaves footprints of the jungle behind.

We discover we overvalue reading when we turn to a character in fiction for an example of what to do.

Sometimes a man's weakness is limited to being small and mean in personal matters, leaving his greatness free and unhampered for noble service on a large scale to mankind, which buries him with every honor.

Our success or our failure remains approximate until we rise to the one or fall to the other.

We lose our best moods by hoarding them instead of turning them over to action.

Exceeding the need which confronts us bequeathes a surplus to the next need to follow.

Really practical purposes ignore temporary conditions.

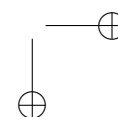
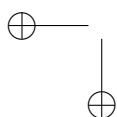
Clinging to the knees of circumstances, demanding their reasons, keeps them from moving around and doing something for us.

Men do desperate things when their desperation threatens to run away from them.

Let the gods do it is back of a shocking number of frustrations.

Many of our intentions die after we have put their harness on.

Leaden-stepping hours are worse than lazy about it – they are sullen over our listless cooperation.





The darkness surrounding us might somewhat light up if we would first practice using the light we have on the place we are.

The gods have given us more performance to achieve than ability to achieve it; were it otherwise, ability would run to fat.

When the Book of Life is opened we must not be found to have lain between the same two pages.

When we get to be our own hobby, riding the thing presents great difficulties.

The way to get the most out of a victory is to follow it up with another which makes it look small.

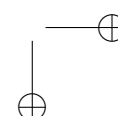
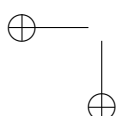
Take note that when you have work of real importance to do, interferences which are numberless in every busy life roll over and play dead while you are doing that work. If by any chance this does not happen, it is a good plan to investigate the real importance of the work.

New conduct attracts followers by its novelty. There was conduct in Nazareth which has not been equalled yet, though its witnesses prophesied that greater human conduct would follow.

Ten thousand times a day superb probabilities fail to survive ignorant and careless usage.

Man's will power is piled high with the remains of his good resolutions.

A soul which is truly in earnest is not above disabling the body to discourage dangerous competition.





To rise to an occasion, if we are prepared to sink with it, is worth nothing.

When you start to indulge yourself, remember it is what they do with invalids and children.

The only meekness which is not a high explosive comes from self-mastery.

Many of us are impersonations of what we know we ought to be.

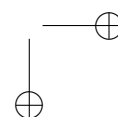
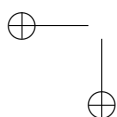
When you have successfully adjusted yourself in conformity with some standard, search out another one to take its place.

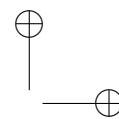
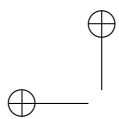
Codes of honor become traditional, holding many generations to noble conduct. Such a code, invaluable to humanity, had its beginning in some single act of inspired manhood or womanhood in high places or in low places.

Be a sincere effort never so misguided, to laugh at it is a breach of faith with decency.

We demand about everything of ourselves but discrimination in what we demand.

Ugly facts are a challenge to beautify them.

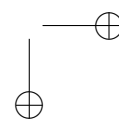
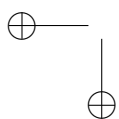


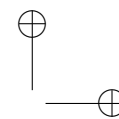
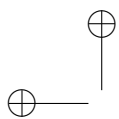


CARPE DIEM

Inspirations are hot-headed and hot-footed, so take them or leave them, but be quick about it.

Wherever you see happiness let loose, you are an invited person.





ADVICE AND COUNSEL

Do not offer advice which has not been seasoned by your own performance.

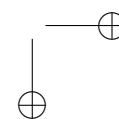
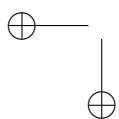
Taking counsel is worthwhile; not for the sake of the counsel, which is not worth a button to you in any case, but for the sake of seeing in your counselor's eyes the flame of gladness at being important to somebody.

The time to stop talking is when the other person nods his head affirmatively but says nothing.

Whoever undertakes to rectify error must have done much erring to be good at it.

There is little serenity comparable to the serenity of the inexperienced giving advice to the experienced.

What can it be that the pedagogic mind believes is capable of transference to another mind?





LOVE AND MARRIAGE

Love is a transitive verb.

How much farther might not life carry us if the first two decades ceased to be a scramble for love-charms!

If men did not put their responsibilities above everything else, the bulk of lovemaking would not be done at night.

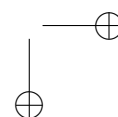
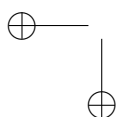
There is nothing lovelier to love as repenting.

The real solemnization of matrimony is in the divorce-court.

Marvels which are marvels because seen for the first time seldom keep their rating when the novelty has left them; but a lasting marvel is love-light in the eyes of eighty-two and eighty-eight.

Valor is a second prize. The first prize is her hearing about it.

Oh, the white breast where your child's head rested! After one eternity has been piled on another eternity, it will still be yours.





Marriage is a noose often endured around the neck,
but seldom endured around the feet.

Love picks out the personal allegiances which belong
to us.

Urging love, already proved, to do some extra proving,
is never to be recommended except with reservations, in
regard to the risk of nullifying its original proofs.

The wretched part of it is that we can't love frivolously
if we mean it.

Love has intercourses of all kinds.

There is any quantity of married happiness in spite of
marriage.

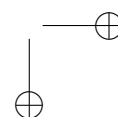
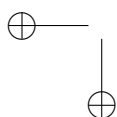
Many a wife since Xanthippe has given her husband
excuse for classing himself with Socrates.

The voyage of love is all the sweeter for an outside
stateroom and a seat at the captain's table.

Love which has been wounded looks up and takes
notice when there is hope of another wound.

Young lovers are made the more delightful by their
smugness.

Thoughtful girls should be sorted on steadfast men.





RES FRAGILIS MULIER

The person who gets what she's after is the one who spreads the idea that she asks very little.

If a man hears much that a woman says, she is not beautiful.

Even among ladies of militant virtue, something which seems insulting when it comes from scragginess and spots without feathers, is worth thinking over when proposed by plumpness and feathers.

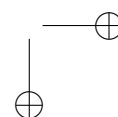
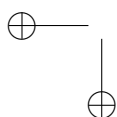
Lightning is slow compared to the darting of a woman's eye toward a possible glance of appraisal.

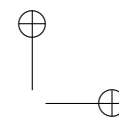
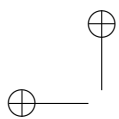
Milady's reproaches are expressed in allegories and euphemisms to her courtly spouse; Bridget spits in Pat's face; at heart the same injustice!

For a woman, the wrong side of forty is thirty five.

Beauty should know better than to divert Milady from gaining a reasonable amount of intelligence.

There are large-brained women, but most of women's largeness runs to their hearts.



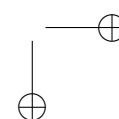
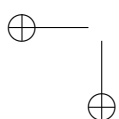


Milady who does not tell a secret confided to her under solemn oath, does not feel she is doing her best to keep life interesting.

On the whole, women pretty well resist the temptation to tempt.

Woman has her divine way of rendering man oblivious to the difference between their brains; but as a rule, between man and man, brains require an approximate equality.

The courage befitting a man works very well for a woman.





PRUDENCE

Haughtiness becomes gallant enough when it finds that it is getting in its own way.

Immunity is unsurpassed for shutting a man off from improvement.

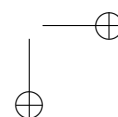
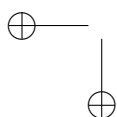
The making of covenants has been one of mankind's most hamstringing experiences.

Fools who rush in are alarmed at first to find they are on ground where angels fear to tread; but when they have begun to reckon up the net availables, they are more alarmed at spying some devils getting ready to rush in with a little brisk competition.

Parsimony is the greatest of extravagances, for it wastes good reputation.

If mediocrity would reject the flattery of people who have axes to grind, it might recover its balance and find usefulness where only mediocrity can serve.

If we thatch ourselves too thickly from winter, we miss all the music of storms.





WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE

The eyes, ears, nose, taste and touch are the only parts of our equipment that we cannot rely on for complete and accurate information.

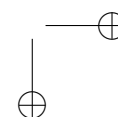
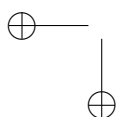
Practical observation commonly consists of collecting a few facts and loading them with guesses.

There are many branches of learning, but only the one solid tree-trunk of wisdom.

Some are universal without breadth; some are insular with it.

Only a reckless man would decide on a list of people he was going to lock his door on. Adults of ripe age and balanced judgment would tell him that such action would shut out some who later might hate him enough, and others who might become friendly enough, to make locking the door a calamity of the first importance.

The art of a pedant is to divert his pupils from noticing the smallness of his puddle, and to make them attribute his apparent size to his being a really big toad.





It is not so much tutoring that the mind needs, but clearer recognition and better use of what it already knows.

It is the semi-learned who scorn the ignorant; the learned know too much about them for that.

It is difficult to trust ourself today to know as much as we did yesterday.

Inasmuch as the hard job before us is getting acquainted with ourselves, why all the looking around?

If we do not keep reason and intuition travelling abreast it is only a question of time before an overburdened intuition will balk and leave us stuck.

North, south, east, west, in the four quarters of the globe – nowhere is there a known why or an understood wherefore.

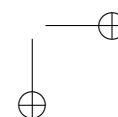
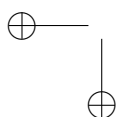
Many profound morals masquerade as light jests.

The highest grades of humanity have passed through the millstones more than once.

Speculation may be ever so logical and profound, but it never hits on any more reassuring name for itself.

Man is liberated from his illusions to make room for a fresh set.

Analysis and synthesis ordinarily clarify matters for us about as much as taking a Swiss watch apart and dumping its wheels, springs, hands, threads, pivots, screws and gears into a layman's hands for reassembling, clarifies a watch for the layman.





Opinions have their upsets, and all is well. But once a cataclysm takes place among a man's convictions, the outcome is more than well – it is a supreme experience.

Those only are convinced of a thing who have dismissed it from their arguments.

Why do we say that we are seeking light, when we have only the vaguest notion of what we mean by *light*? We make use of set expressions, imitate set ambitions, borrow set opinions, and make set acceptance of traditional rubbish that has been dumped into our lives, and call this seeking light.

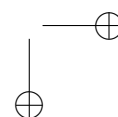
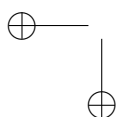
Arguments perforce are feeble. Man, knowing practically nothing beyond superficial appearances, accepts from those appearances evidences gathered by his fallible senses, on which to base conclusions drawn by the comparatively unevolved human mind. These conclusions he offers in argument against conclusions reached by a fallible opponent who duplicated his own fallible processes to arrive at them.

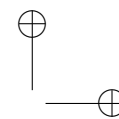
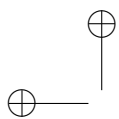
Deep treatment of light subjects is one of the major impertinences.

The rare individual who has learned to govern himself is too fed up with the labor of it to want to govern anybody else.

Academic questions are interlopers in a world where so few of the real ones have been answered.

Experience handicaps knowing everything about anything.





It is when we start to discipline our minds that we discover how many undisclosed relationships it already has.

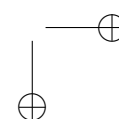
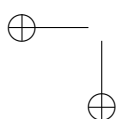
Sedate ignorance is the last stage of deterioration.

Dross is treasure for the one who has not learned what treasure is.

There is more excitement in being a knave, and more contentment in being a fool.

For a man never to be guilty of stupidity would be like living with the eyelids removed.

When we listen to a greatly-learned man there is a source of comfort for us in our small knowledge; he too can go only just so far.





THE ORDER OF NATURE

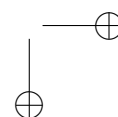
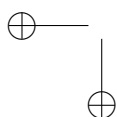
As the sea billows and roars with the same water that lies smooth when the wind is asleep, so our lives billow and roar with the same lifestream that flows smooth when our fears are asleep.

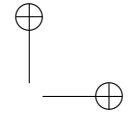
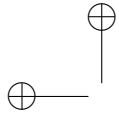
Nature shows her disposition toward variety and individualism by bestowing a different pattern of face and fingerprints on each of us.

The universe has our softest whisper in its ear, our greatest good beneath its watchfulness.

Imitation can acquire pretty much everything but the power which created the thing imitated.

In the sight of adventurous spirits, conventional lives are out of step with progress; they are lives narrowed by fear; they are lives dragooned into submission by arguments for safety. In the sight of conventional lives, adventurous spirits are subjected to the ups and downs of joy displacing woe, and woe dethroning joy; to change without progress; to tyrannies of impatience. The gods smile upon all this, well knowing that unconventional lives and conventional lives have each their adventures

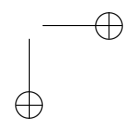
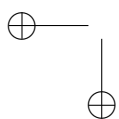




of action and their adventures of peace; each of them reaching a roughly-identical total of satisfaction in a world where the average seems destined always to prevail.

It is the barely visible stars which sharpen our eyesight.

Compared to chaos pictured by man for the universe outside his portion, the order inside that portion is marvelous indeed, and is most marvelously taken for granted by the aforesaid biped.





CALIDUS IUVENTA

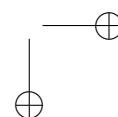
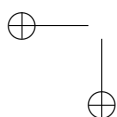
Old heads on young shoulders must have many laughs
at young heads on old shoulders.

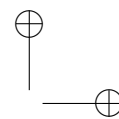
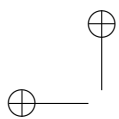
Youth is the quickest to pronounce judgment on sub-
jects where only experience can make any kind of judg-
ment even probable.

Youth lasts long enough to store up exaggerations for
a lifetime.

To get along best there must be two of us: ourself,
and ourself younger than ourself.

Looking back at our youth, we wonder what our brains
were doing when we should have been thinking.

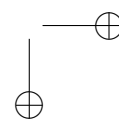
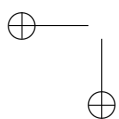




SYMBOLS

A symbol is a representation of something which, continuing its career of change, leaves the representation mouldering and obsolete.

Symbols have a trick of stealing the show away from the thing they stand for.





THE EMOTIONS

Fear met by hope, makes full glad surrender, and dreams of the day when faith will render the meeting fruitful.

Rancor runs in thin streams which eat their own channels.

Caprices once motivated make grand little workers.

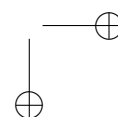
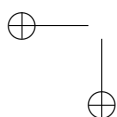
It is a great feeling, though it comes but once in an age, to experience respect and awe for oneself.

If our sympathies are grouped geographically, it is time for use to reconsider them.

Compliments have lost their lure by the time a man does not have to fish for them.

Serenity has to be three-quarters hard work to be worth having.

Expletives serve opinions well which are not sure enough of themselves to risk expression in restrained language.





No one has yet computed how many imaginary triumphs are silently celebrated by people each year to keep up their courage.

Being maudlin once a year or once every two months, according to one's capacity, is likely to sweeten seriousness for the balance of the year.

Enthusiasm finds the opportunities, and energy makes the most of them.

We demand that an instinct shall function before equipping it for functioning properly; that is, by harmonizing it with its correlatives of mind and will.

It is remarkable, what a flavor we can still get out of an Attic feast.

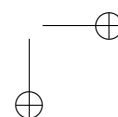
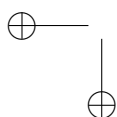
Having climbed to a height, it is easier to slip from it than to stay there after the zest of striving is removed.

Our gentle senses are all set to lead us into trouble the moment we have a little overconfidence in them.

To take an insult from a weaker person without retaliation or resentment is one of the demonstrations of precocity on the part of our immature divinity.

Wise men act the fool with refreshing abandon, having hung up their reserve with their wisdom and their overcoat, on the way in.

If emotion were not always playing at ins-and-outs, alternating between fits of dreadful baseness and fits of great nobleness, it might make a superb working combination with reason and imagination; but imagination





has been pretty well scarred-up by it, while reason feels cold toward it, so the suggestion is probably premature.

When you think of one individual of a race – a race you don't fancy when war is on – who himself is superb, like a man who has made a fine success in spite of St. Vitus's dance, or has out-discovered old discoveries, you find yourself revering his whole race for an instant or two.

The truly rich man lives in careless security, backed by his deposits of indifference.

It is strange that we do not temper our resentment of criticism with a thought for our many faults which have escaped detection.

Many who have no aptitude for indifference are mistaken for impatient people.

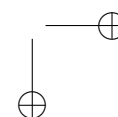
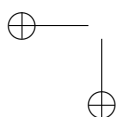
We should train our desires to show the way to our dreams.

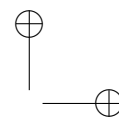
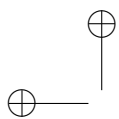
Bad temper is sometimes shot by its own explosion to an altitude where only good temper can breathe.

We should shed a tear for our poor old desires which have tried to do so much for us.

Every time we ask an emotion to decide something, we revert to our infancy.

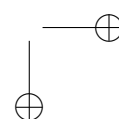
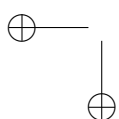
Minor indifferences are often laziness with a touch of hauteur.





The man who feels that he must be hopeful and cheerful to get along ignores the careers of some pretty successful misanthropes.

While a doubtful authority in many respects, the emotions show the way to a heap of fun, with some of it harmless.





HABIT AND ASSOCIATION

Habits keep breeding, to give us plenty to pick from.

We go on our way, doubtful that that is what it is.

Contentment has been worn as a crown by no end of sleepy heads.

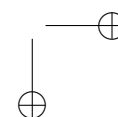
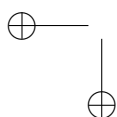
If we will journey comradely with the best that our inspiration supplies, inspiration will expand to the companionship.

When a man's success becomes commonplace to him, it is his success no longer.

We have to serve ourself many years before we gain our own confidence.

The ranking mystery is how we manage to get along with each other as well as we do when each of us speaks a different language.

Each of us has two or three cherished bigotries; tender associations of the past forbid throwing them away. Like our corduroy pants of ancient cut, our aged straw hat and our ten-year-old slippers, our bigotries have become part of us; harmless because they too are of antiquated style and all worn out.





THE POWER OF WORDS

Rude speech is martial music, after rank upon rank of soft phrases have passed in review.

It requires almost unhopd-for genius to say what you don't mean, and actually deceive anybody.

If we reviewed from all its angles every sentence we are inclined to speak, we would be virtually dumb.

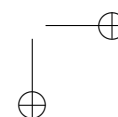
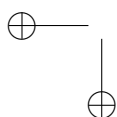
Whatever can be stated in good set terms is only a semblance of the truth which fled our snare of words.

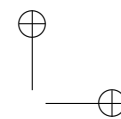
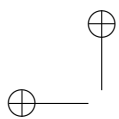
One of several things which appear to be constitutionally denied to professional critics is a light and sure touch.

Terminology takes the mind off divinity.

Words are peculiar for their effrontery. They assure us that they are of no account; then in the next breath they melt our hearts or lift us to hitherto unimagined heights.

Admirable is a loose term: nothing is all of that when contrasted with what it might have been.



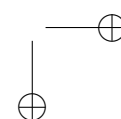
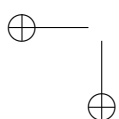


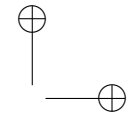
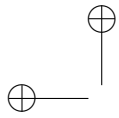
When words move slowly, they may either be self-befuddled or deserted by cogent thought. In either case they should ask the way to the nearest silence where they may rest.

Improper use of words is forgivable, compared to improper use of their meaning.

Watch what you say; the finest philosophy can be made to sound like tradesmen's cant.

When you think of the silly things people have said to you which have stopped you from saying the same silly things, you simply can't do justice to your gratitude.





VOX POPULI

The deadliest contagion is majority opinion.

With general opinion on any subject split about even,
events keep half of the I-told-you-so's in good voice.

Popular opinion is a boardinghouse manager.

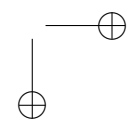
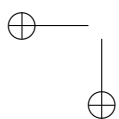
Where men congregate, all but their silence is gathered.

Let the public stew in its tranquillity; yours is an
insurrection.

Popular reasons are jack-o'lanterns floating above the
secret reasons of the few.

Tradition is a prison with majority-opinion the modern
jailer.

The tumult and shouting does not die before it has
made a fool of itself.





HUMAN JUDGMENT

Immature judgment contrasted with mature judgment is but a few shades greener.

It shocks the man with his feet on the ground to see a man with his head in the clouds pay a big income-tax.

An ounce of spurning is at first worth anything it cost, but in no time it begins to make us feel cheap, and we wonder whether an apology would work.

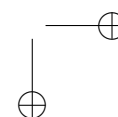
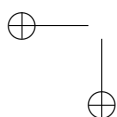
By an unfailing coincidence, the man who wrongs us is a villain, and the man who does us a kindness is a saint.

A man who asks for the benefit of another's convictions, may be bald as Time, but he is still pulling at his forelock.

If we miraculously became the people we hate, how lovable we would find ourselves!

Whys and wherefores have borne each other out in every sort of deception.

With few exceptions, it is the appeal of a thing rather than our need for it which governs our choices, without which saving trait life would be odious.





Mistakes fail in their mission of helping the person who blames them on the other fellow.

The first locomotive we saw as children still looks ten times as big in memory as the modern locomotive which is ten times bigger than it. The persistence of beliefs which are lodged in tradition – memories accumulated like a rolling snowball – may sometimes be accounted for in this way.

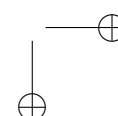
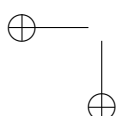
Low men must have been judged by high men in order to get the name of being low. High men – all men being under judgment – must have their judges because they are not higher high men. Somebody, again, has to judge the judges of the insufficiently high men. It is at this point that the gods swing into action, begging the low men to help them, due to their high experience-value of having been low.

Not a little of our condemnation of the acts of others is spillage from our own condemnation of our own acts.

Consider the advice that has been offered you, and check up on its general worthlessness. Nothing is better than a survey like that for discouraging the surveyor's giving of advice.

When you get to matching rules and statutes against laws, give up; you have no chance.

Once a believer in the perfectibility of human society, always an idealist.





Acting as your own sovereign power, grant yourself oblivion for your past offences and you will be surprised, delightfully and constructively surprised.

Do not scorn particulars; they are universals made easy.

The world is getting better because it has always seemed so bad to the people in it.

Stand aloof from your own opinions; they seek to lure you with an illusive certainty.

He who longs for the faraway proves thereby that he has corrupted the near-at-hand with an unappraising familiarity.

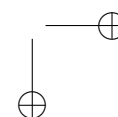
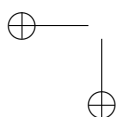
Many a man ends in failure because he forces himself to explain to himself in advance just what it is he is going to do to win success.

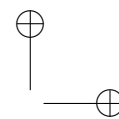
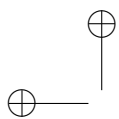
Both sides of a question do not belong to the poor old question at all, but to the opposing views which bedevil it.

If the innocence of others is as pure as we think it, how comes it that we are as black as our black moods paint us?

The reward which often comes for withholding judgment is in learning not long afterward how stupidly wrong our judgment would have been. No greater reward could be asked.

We have not enough data, and apparently never will have, to decide when justice is just and when it is unjust.



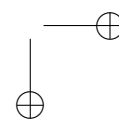
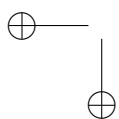


Judging would be only too simple if perspective would obey the commands of the will.

There is nothing for it but to judge ourselves as we are, as soon as we discover what our *as we are* is.

Our final opinion is often our worst because we are tired; our first one is often the worst from lack of facts; our middle opinion is often worst because of prejudice. On the whole, opinions are of little value.

No censure can be wise enough to be censure.





LUCK AND CHANCE

Fortune's finger having pointed the way, it joins the other four fingers and gives a helping hand, if it doesn't clench with them and smite us.

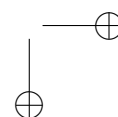
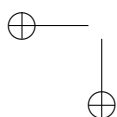
It would take battalions of angels to protect us from our dreaded dangers, though in a long lifetime few of the dangers come to anything.

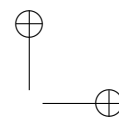
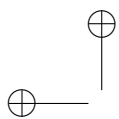
A new and inspiring desire within you may be the same thing as another man's despair in his search for better chances than have hitherto been dealt him.

Our lucky star is the one that happens to be in sight when we are having a bit of luck.

Making good requires so many things besides hard work that chance has to scare up enough other things to round out making good. Successful men pretend this is not true; that they are the ones who do the whole thing, practically unaided; which is all and sundry fiddlesticks.

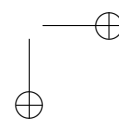
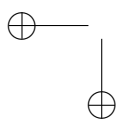
Wounds land on a saint or a snake impartially, willing to be healed if the saint or snake is up to it. When either recovers, he has been made a wiser, abler saint or snake because of the wound.





Chance is the main chance.

It is a lucky means to an end which can get within hailing distance of the end.





HAPPINESS

Felicity is Happiness with its hair combed straight.

Merriment comes in sparks, joy in flashes, and happiness in lightnings.

Almost any event will put on a new face when received with cheerful acceptance, and no questions asked.

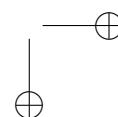
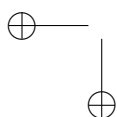
The nearsighted man scowls; never the blind man; for the blind man has adapted himself to inward vision.

Few shoes into which envious men would step indicate how hot and hurt are their wearer's feet.

Though the fool is to be pitied, still he is spared watching spurious wisdom turn to ashes in his head.

A distant destination austere reached rarely compensates for a loved starting-point forever lost.

Take lead dioxide straight, and you will be ill all night; yet on decomposition, it yields ozone. So with one's worries; the thing is to outlast them.





We fall short when we ascribe all the modes of happiness to walking in paths of rectitude. There are joys which only tramps and thieves know.

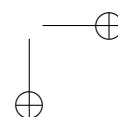
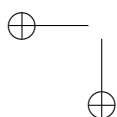
When we give with the intent of getting something back, sometimes it works as if nature were backing the transaction; oftener-times, not.

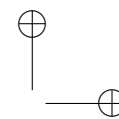
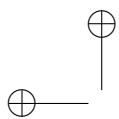
Our restless feet take us from place to place on the chase after benefits which, if they are intended for us, choose to do all the chasing.

A still and quiet conscience is often less peaceful than one worn out by rebuffs.

Not fully do we believe that delights which fill us with rapture have thrilled the human race since man began to experience pleasure. Ours always seems the best gift, the ever-new; and ours seems the first happiness which has been carried to the utmost.

With some whose nerves have a deep covering of fat, happiness is less of a problem than it is an accident of anatomy.





IMAGINATION

When thoughts fail of words, they find imagination waiting at their elbow to teach a new language without words.

It is no trouble at all for a man with real imagination to hold the rest of the world in his arms.

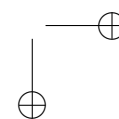
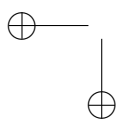
If imagination would disentangle itself from absurdities, soon we should have it harnessed to reason, pulling the same plough.

If we could assemble the people of our lifelong dreams, how fair a company it would be!

Imagination is a pontoon bridge making way for the timid feet of reason.

Imagination often has a wondrous story to relate, as the first step towards its coming true.

Our reason has nowhere to find a premise but in what we know; our imagination makes its informing fictions into what we do not know. The right course appears to be to persuade reason to take occasional rides on imagination's back.





When reason finds a thing is refractory, the imaginative touch makes it plastic, tempting reason to try again.

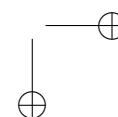
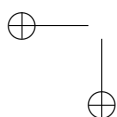
Our fancies are believed to have no reason, but one may be not so sure of that.

If one wants a constructive relaxation at the end of a hard day, nothing is better than conjecture about what is beyond one's knowledge. Conjecture is on terms with imagination, and imagination is friends with anything one can name.

Where you find imagination tracing the outlines and reason filling in the details, there you have a man.

Some great businesses and industries are guided by one man whose imagination, vision and unfailing inspiration are what Michelangelo's were in his art.

Imagination is at home on heights where reason dares not soar.





TRUTH

It is stiff work for truth to reach a journey's end with lies interposing detours.

Skepticism which seeks without cessation, serves truth more acceptably by far than easy belief that takes its breakfast in bed, and lets hearsay speak for truth.

Truth appears naked to but few, if any. Most of us assume truth's presence though it is deeply concealed beneath innumerable garments.

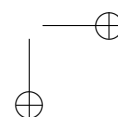
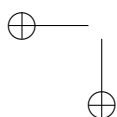
Truth should indeed be naked, having had her garments rent and torn by so much snatching.

All fabulous things are not falsehoods.

Whether it is a parable or a fable depends on oneself.

Some live lies who won't tell them; some tell them who won't live them.

The truth would become more popular if it were not always stating ugly facts.





Telling miscellaneous lies at inappropriate moments impairs the value of worthwhile and helpful lies when such are needed for their honorable tasks.

Friendship and motherhood are the only wines in which vows, once made, always stay true.

Deceiving someone for his own good is a responsibility which should be shouldered only by the gods.

A thoughtful man is loth to tell the truth in plain language; first, because he does not know what the truth is; and, second, because essential truth is not a matter for words.

The gods established truth, then equipped us with a propensity for making errors to prove it with.

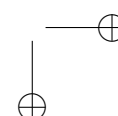
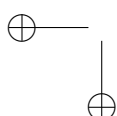
The only truth we can get at is mixed up with falsehood, evil and incompleteness, the last being to blame for the other two.

If someone offers to furnish a sure test, ask what the test was which made the sure test sure.

To say that any one remedy will cure every ill is as idle as to say that there is only one ill.

No tongue is truer than the mind behind it.

As between the sun and some of the stars which it is supposed to outshine, it is the star that does the outshining; which shows we should keep our comparisons within the limits of fact.





For truth to be truth often requires that one of the two halves of the apple must look as if it were made of orange.

A slander by itself is bad enough, but it whelps little slanders which soon get as big as the slut, and numerous moreover.

When light proves painful to any darkness within us, that is the time to walk straight into it.

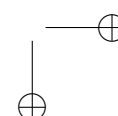
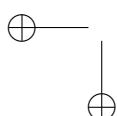
Few tales speed that carry a load of honesty.

When fact and fancy wed, truth gives the bride away with imagination acting as best man.

Having parted truth from error, as soon as your back is turned the pair dances away hand-in-hand.

The truths of part of mankind give the lie to what is true for the other part.

A maxim has the advantage of being true and untrue at one and the same time, which is equally so of the truth or untruth behind it.





LA VIE BRÈVE

Coming hither and going hence would be easier to see as parts of the same adventure, if Life, in between the two, did not addle our brains with so many kinds of joy and woe.

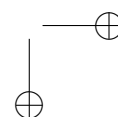
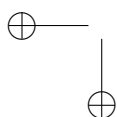
Is humanity a traveler's tale left unfinished by an Author off on a sabbatical?

We arrive in life, take a look around; then depart. The degree of comprehensiveness of the look-around determines the degree of our finiteness, which in a few cases inches on infinity.

We take a garland to bed with us, blooming; how withered it looks at daybreak! It is not envious time that has undermined its beauty, but the inherent frailty of garlands.

Struggle against it as ambitiously as we know how, our life seems to be restricted to an anteroom.

Even a garden ends, though the enchantments of its colors and fragrance persuade our fancies that it stretches from our door to Eden.





Round pink faces on the flow-tide, thin grey faces on the ebb-tide. Between are lashing and fury of waves, the sun rising to set again, the moon waxing to wane again, hails and farewells; the farewells glad or sad at the ebb-tide's ending. Taken all in all, one sees no way to improve on it for a net amount of happiness for almost everybody!

Man contemplates the adverse evidence, then sticks to his belief that he is to live forever.

Why struggle to make a name for oneself when monuments crumble and eternal lights fade out?

Many results are assumed to be correct because nobody lives long enough to see them through to the end.

We are interpreters of immortality, with little enough time to waste.

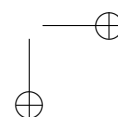
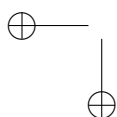
Life is a struggle to reduce the percentage which the worms are going to eat.

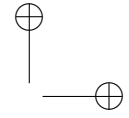
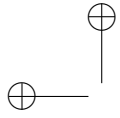
We had best not take too much time about realizing ourselves, for who knows but that we are living our terrestrial life on an experimental permit?

The truest monumental inscription would be *Nameless*, which in time all men become.

At length the dead cities, Troy, Mycenæ, Argos, Amphipolis, Corinth, Sparta, will do a *danse macabre* with New York, Berlin, London, Paris.

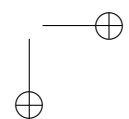
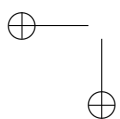
After we pass, the sand says, "Ah, one more footprint."





How gaily a man wakes in the morning to watch himself
keep on dying!

Glory lies in the estimation of lookers-on. When
lookers-on perish, as countless generations have done,
glory perishes as countless glories have done.





THE SILENT MAJORITY

The fear of death is one good riddance when a man dies.

By the time we get into them, our graves are beautiful and green with the hopes we have strewn there.

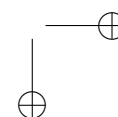
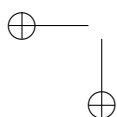
If we are worth our salt, some people are going to be pleased when we die. Shall we strive to be worth more salt, or strive to shorten the list of pleased people?

Why death is secretive to such an extraordinary degree is not obvious. Life is open and aboveboard about its benefits and penalties, so why should not death follow suit, and stop holding its assets and liabilities so close to its chest?

The death of death will be greeted by eternal applause.

After many a good time driving nails into our own coffins, we are carted off to the crematory.

Shall it be said of us, wherever planted, that we impoverish the soil?





To those for whom death is not a full stop, it is rhythmic life choosing a new metrical structure for a continuous narrative.

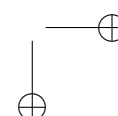
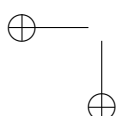
What must good honest granite think of being hewn out of a million-year sleep to guard the grave of a nincompoop!

Death, the commonest of occurrences, is the one with the most news-value.

The ugliness of dying means chiefly the ugliness of our advance rehearsals of it in imagination.

Much will sleep with us in the grave, if it will only sleep.

When we consider those of the past who still affect our laws, our customs, our philosophy and our morals, though centuries intervene between them and us; when we think of the forgotten people whose influences are too obscure to be traced, how can we ever say of anybody, "The man is dead"?





METAPSYCHICS

Personality is but the faint light thrown by your star.

Mate with yourself, and then breed.

True intensity has no emotions.

If you listen to your mind, you will dream through to the end.

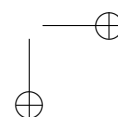
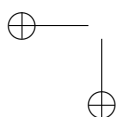
Work on your updrafts as escape from a heaven above your head which is under foot for the Australian anteater.

There are no details, technique or principles of the fine art of blanking the mind.

The wonder “everywhere lying close on us” releases our wonderment when its companionship becomes our identity.

Our stupefactions are of our own making, praise be! for then is their unmaking our own.

Man’s opaqueness partially surrenders to the fluoroscope. Will any further equipment for the eyes lay naked the organizing principle of the physical universe?





We see people quitting their own perceptions, and with specious promise of good to themselves being carried along by the common stream. All the while there abides in them the power which made them. And if so it be that they turn their reverence to this power instead of to the herd-instinct which permeates and actuates the masses, they are rewarded by impulses and instincts and cumulative inspiration which individualizes them and leads them forward to a special destiny. Nothing is truer than this, yet nothing is less generally accepted, believed, and turned to profitable account.

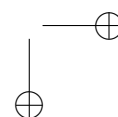
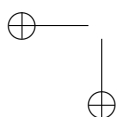
A religion which is not selected by the heart has a short career.

Instinctive reasoning requires a long courtship, nor has it been won in many cases; but it has been won.

Something tells me needs only decent attention and confidence to tell much more.

Among countless unexplained phenomena, man plods on with his small fivefold equipment, stubbornly dreaming dreams of a coming day when a sixth sense – precursor of additional senses to follow – will explain him to himself.

The Castle of Dreams has an ever-open door leading to undimensional dreams which may be had for the dreaming. Were this not so, how many of today's wonders of science might not still be their own ancestral impossibilities in the opinion of undreaming common sense!





We should watch closely for an increase in the number, duration and strength of our instinctive apprehensions.

If reason will yield itself prisoner to intuition even for a brief time, after its release from a happy bondage it will remain forever farther-sighted.

We all have some power of perception, greater or less, that is not on terms with eyesight.

Known principles are the barbed-wire entanglements around the detention-camps where our intuitions are restrained from going into warfare.

The common mind reasons incorrectly from principles known to it, while genius reasons correctly from principles unknown to it.

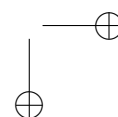
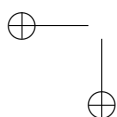
Eyes and ears which realize that sight and hearing are the least of it are the ones seeing true visions and hearing true communications.

Man reserves his utmost indifferences for the things within himself, which yet concern him the most profoundly.

Many rising suns shine on black problems that have been rightly solved by instinct working as we slept; yet the plain suggestion in this is not often followed.

Inspiration speaks the gentle commands of our internal dictatorship.

Our watches and clocks imitate our heartbeats, and not a jeweler knows whence the ticking comes. To say that it comes through the action of a steel spring merely





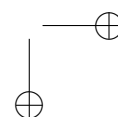
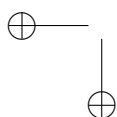
moves the problem one step backward. Another step brings it to the fingers of the winder, and from there it soon reaches to the silent and invisible wall of mystery. Back of that wall is the Power which winds clocks and watches.

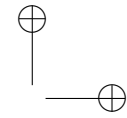
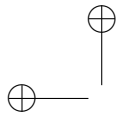
Whatever has not been, and is not, may be the transcending *is* of the future. For instance, imagine a human being with six, seven, ten or a dozen senses, and with involuntary executive processes developed to match!

Many of us look forward to the time when faith, as described in Paul's great words, will be an everyday power in men's activities. But faith being the evidence of things not seen, how can it be looked for to originate where things *are* seen? Something beyond acceptance of its possibilities is required to set it to work in our daily affairs. Any who are not able to meet the requirements stretching far beyond a believing consideration of faith's possibilities, – doing so by means of inner contact with the life-principle (which has various names, such as God, Jahweh, Jupiter, Zeus), – are like people unable to plug into a baseboard for light; thereby being thrown back to their beliefs for such illumination as they get.

When our wit brightens, it may be the effect of cocktails; sometimes it flares up at another's challenge; again it may be fired from a flame of incalculable distance and unknowable source.

The great idealists learned the trick of being in a certain place and elsewhere, at one and the same time.





The inward light is forever striving to gather enough additional light to penetrate the fog of our senses.

What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.

As soon try to play with the stars as to undertake to pull our godhood down to the level of our personality.

Be assured that your faculties are so banded together as best to protect the special shrine committed to your care.

Who can define our powers; who can set us straight in our labyrinth from the mazes of his own?

Discoverable existence has man's physical endowment as means for recognition; undiscoverable existence has faith as its outlet into human minds.

Faith brings the invisible into action, but never into visibility.

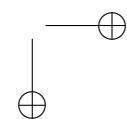
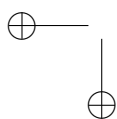
What we call the actual world is least so.

Our most perfect knowledge comes from our vividest intuitions.

True sight does not follow the direction of the eyes.

The man who turns inspiration to his own account is embezzling his cargo.

We are only as intimately ourselves as our sifting of outer influences makes possible.





APOPHTHEGMS

Most of our suspicions of others are aroused by what we know about ourselves.

It is getting what we started to get, not the thing got, which spells success.

The man who has seen better days makes them better by seeing them better.

Most of our escapes have to be made uphill.

Periods are arbitrary; only the present moment is eternal.

Progress is retarded by everybody's half-sensing the same half.

Despair is a sluice for sewage.

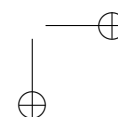
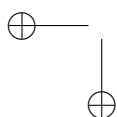
Unspoken censure is the most terrifying judgment.

Ease is the sluggard's dream of peace.

Much venom has been spit out in overly loud huzzas.

Conclusions are usually consolidated guesses.

Few heads are sensitive to coals of fire.





Our acts are an abridged edition of our possibilities.

How many noisy ages have left only silence behind them!

When we let puny matters deal us great woe, we lessen our power to do the suffering required by great matters.

The successful man hopes against hope to spare his sons his own growing-pains.

Those get most to whom the feeling of need is unendurable.

We are no more alike under the skin than we are on top of it.

Most of our quenched fires are only banked.

The passion for uniformity is the road-master of a single-track mind.

Tradition supplants inspiration with the warmed-over article.

To win a victory by threatening, defeats the victor.

Nothing happens from saying so.

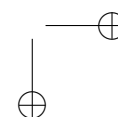
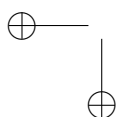
Gloom is a hankering after pain.

Mental pleasures are usually underwritten by the emotions.

Little fears love to walk on stilts.

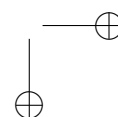
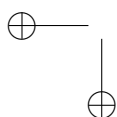
Warm emotions are never sensible, but they are warm.

Forgiveness's divinity lies in complete forgetfulness.



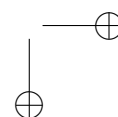
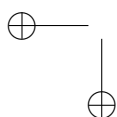


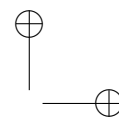
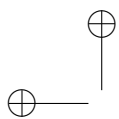
Vast though art is, it has been built brain by brain.
We condemn a sin before we have even tried it.
Many preachers should be silenced for conformity.
Initiative is our irrevocable power-of-attorney.
Proximity between people is often the name of an ocean.
Suspicion makes a morgue of the mind.
Perspective is a device for pushing unwelcome facts off the doorstep.
Good behavior is the last refuge of mediocrity.
Normal is the wrong name often used for *average*.
Weeping puts tears ahead of grief.
The choicest epitaphs have poor memories.
Conversation with oneself is worth many years of preparation.
Dogmatism has the brazenness of street-walkers.
To fish in troubled waters, cast in any direction.
Philosophy loses its influence when it turns revivalist.
Dying, even for our country, is once too often.
Shifting fancies give off less warmth than fireflies.
The only leaning which does not weaken us is on ourself.
Regrets last longer than repentances.



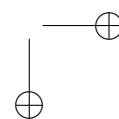
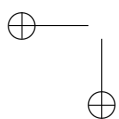


Harm has extraordinary initiative.
The logic of appearances is no deeper.
As sure as I'm alive is a presumptuous premise for
some of us.
A word to the wise is enough only when the word is
wise.
Discontent follows ambition like a shadow.
Even logical consequences just happen.
Unasked advice is a trespass on sacred privacy.
A despicable distance: *at arm's length*.
All solid facts were originally mist.
Life furnishes the stage, and we set the scene.
Toneless echoes come from hollow talk.
He who is put to silence fills it with resentment.
There are even domesticated destinies.
Only darkness can unbar the gates of light.
Shadows are not the sun's fault.
It is something to be capable of perplexity.
All swords are jealous.
Inquisitiveness has few real interests.
Disappointments should be cremated, not embalmed.
Many torches flicker out between hand and hand.





Everywhere is the country of our birth.
Maturity is its own greatest excellence.
Envy's special aversion is successful covetousness.
Working for worthy objects enlists both bores and saints.
Good taste belongs to the beatitudes.





REVISIONS

Written proofs are dead – embalmed for the record. *Proving* is a live activity, a present participle of human life, and available only to each individual separately for his private use.

How often our bosom swells and our temples throb to a thought which proves itself not to be worth anything but for the exaltation we feel while the swelling and the throbbing are going on, which after all is something.

It is the difference between man's leaps and bounds and nature's orderly movements that all the world's higgledy-piggledy is about.

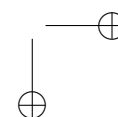
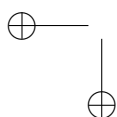
Motives, like eggs, lose their fertility when hardboiled.

Divided duties are seldom split in the middle.

Those of us who formerly were on our way to heaven or hell are now at a loss where to go.

The things we counterfeit are not worth the trouble of falling into disgrace with ourselves.

Divinity will tell. All but a handful of people feel guiltier than their deeds.





The tale that *thereby hangs* drops easily off the gossip's tongue.

Crotchets become some exceptional people's most attractive possession.

Being a minute too late has led to some bright careers.

Broken hearts are sometimes put on ice to keep until the next time.

We are heirs of eternity who have not an idea in the world what the terms of the will are.

Apollo's lute wouldn't believe its senses if it witnessed a strong-armed organist tearing music to pieces in a motion-picture palace.

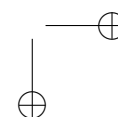
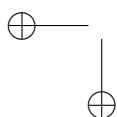
The best thing for an argument is not words and ideas, but to stop arguing.

Many heart's desires leave the heart out of the matter entirely.

Give and *take* sound offhand enough, yet between the two a thousand armies have crimsoned their battlefields.

Many a man gets weary of clamping down on his rough impulses, which if given occasional release would encourage the living of a lie with salt in it in place of dust.

The taints of vice and corruption hold essences of good in suspension, ready to complete the chemistry required when vice and corruption are no longer needed to strengthen virtue and honesty by their counter-action.





Surety scorns doubt, though it is the stay-at-home of the two, and is deficient in doubt's travel knowledge.

An absent-minded smile turned in our general direction is worse than no smile at all.

Hatred would starve to death if it did not have unjust suspicions served to it.

Graciousness is selfishness in its most attractive disguise.

Courtesies are equally the language of frozen and melted hearts.

Reason is a fair-weather friend.

Enmity is the greatest flattery.

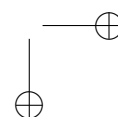
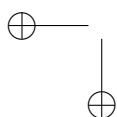
Angry passions clear up many misunderstandings. Why should anybody suppose that the gods furnish them as equipment for no purpose?

Blessings have to fall gently on heads unhardened by familiarity with them, or there would be danger of a concussion.

Focus hard enough and admiring enough on your aptitudes of mind, and you won't have any.

Ants and bees are social animals, so there is more to it than that.

The man who interferes with another's habits has the worst one.





Taking the bitter with the sweet would be a different affair if the whole mixture did not immediately turn bitter when the bitter is added.

Slumber, which has been glorified by every poet, isn't above a little bribe of two sleeping-tablets.

Vices are benefactors; they teach by example how good good is.

Convictions are opinions which circumstances have temporarily backed.

Remorse is the thing we ought to feel, and don't.

No one who has not tried, knows how uplifting it is to go astray.

It is great fun occasionally to exhume the old Adam and let him go his own gait; but Pandora's box was nothing compared to his coffin when we get fed up on his doings.

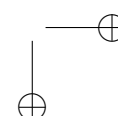
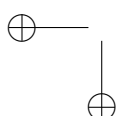
Sin is often a breather for virtue which is wearied by dogmas.

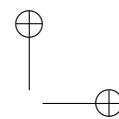
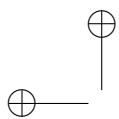
The shadows of coming events fit perfectly the events already here.

Don't refuse to go on an occasional wild-geese chase; that is what wild geese are made for.

Do not overstay fighting under one set of colors when there is an endless number to choose from.

The vice we embrace seems at least a cousin to virtue.





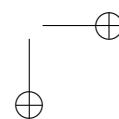
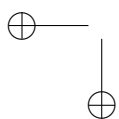
Character is the mathematical outcome of a countless ancestry.

There is nothing like a little relapse, or a large one if the individuality is big enough to carry it, to make goodness worth going back to with a broader understanding.

If virtue is its own reward, who blames man for wandering farther afield?

Something that is never in the wind is how it got to be the wind, and what it did before it was there.

Even the more obvious proprieties find it so hard to maintain themselves that they are likely to weaken and be let in for a little compensating temptation.





MARGINALIA

From highest to lowest, men are instruments for measuring the wonderful depths of human fearlessness.

The greatest masterpieces were once only pigments on a palette.

When children begin to view parents collectively, their parents may look to their laurels.

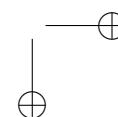
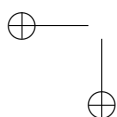
It is an unpalatable fact that a poor home is not cultured unless somebody has been comfortably circumstanced within three or four genealogical stone's-throws of it.

Anthologies contain the choice bits which head us off from making their truths our own discoveries.

Think of the distance friars have walked which they could have saved by not being friars!

We need only begin to notice something to discover how noticeable it was from the start.

To be really shameless requires a great deal of being worked-up-to.





For a competent audience, uncommon men must have other uncommon men.

The world's most abhorred vacuum is in the pocket-book.

An impossibility does not disturb us until its accomplishment shows what fools we were.

Preparations always have a certain hush about them, no matter how noisy their actual activities.

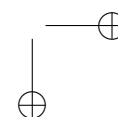
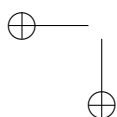
When a ship is sinking, any amount of gold in her hold has no interest for those who are aboard. This fact conveys an excellent moral if one can make it out.

If a story is good enough to tell, it is too good to need a prologue.

The man who is called a good example is no more an example than an old-fashioned milepost is. Both show the direction to take, but neither shows how you are going to get to your destination or how fit you are for the journey. The man of good example may think he knows, but he is only repeating what he himself did on the same journey, which does not apply to your separate and acutely-personal fitnesses, disabilities, and special blendings of the two in your capacity as a traveller.

The *much* which in anticipation seemed better than the *little* often has a hard time explaining unexpected shortcomings after the bustle of arrival is over.

It is not necessary to have wealth or position to be a nobody. Many who peddle gum out of cigar-boxes are nobodies, though not all. Being a nobody confers no





class-distinction. It is a quality common to the many if not the most, and is obvious to those who take the trouble to notice it.

At the end of the day flattery and censure never know which has done the most harm.

Little stars sometimes hide their rays behind big stars, hoping that onlookers will confuse the two.

Has anyone ever seen a genuine solitary who was lonesome?

Mankind will probably continue to fight for permanent importance until evolution gives in and humors him.

Table-talk has become a contest to see who can say least loudest.

Be wary of pill-mongers. If their medicine does not cure you, it will not cure a village, a state, or a nation.

Many modern copies of early traditions are reproduced in an extremely inferior manner.

Perfection is the greatest flirt of them all.

