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Some Thoughts on Buoyancy

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Akin to the priceless sense of humor is the Christly quality of buoyancy; akin, for both are a spontaneous outburst against the absurdly false claims of evil to existence, presence, and power. Buoyancy may be viewed as that "garment of praise" which Isaiah declared should replace "the spirit of heaviness." This "spirit of heaviness" is a descriptive term for the effects of depression and the aftermath of all phases of animal magnetism. What time error is stimulating, that exhilaration is but depression in the making. Evil is never satisfying when played out. The stimulus of materiality has its sequel in reaction. Followed through, animal magnetism is always "the spirit of heaviness."

It is natural for children to be buoyant. And if adults were as uninstructed in error, as unmarred by sinful experiences, as uncalled by familiarity with evil, they too would be spontaneously buoyant. Indeed, the need to cultivate buoyancy is thus all the greater with adults.

Let us bear in mind that this "garment of praise" really belongs to man; and we can always find it, and find that it fits. It is a garment bespoke for man. It was made also for the lesser ideas, for buoyancy is natural for man in all respects. Once a Christian Scientist serving as a nurse became so tired, worn, and disheartened by the tenacity of the error in the case that "the spirit of heaviness" descended upon her, and so engulfed her that she fled the bedside and the house of gloom to the garden, where she slumped dejectedly upon a bench under a great tree. The burden of the weight of forebodings and depression was so heavy upon her that her downcast eyes saw only the darkness and the dankness of the soil beneath her feet. Then suddenly her ears caught the indescribably cheerful sound of a song, so clear and clean and good as to lift her eyes to the branches of the tree.

There she saw a wren poised on a twig and telling the world how perfectly all right everything was. Intrigued, the nurse watched the bird, which presently darted down and picked up a stick from the ground, then flew to the box someone had thoughtfully fastened to the tree trunk. Now a wren

box, as you know, has a very little hole for a front door, to prevent the intrusion of larger birds. So when our little friend attempted to take the material for her nest into the hole with her, she found she could not because she had grasped the stick exactly in the middle. Frustrated, she let go the stick and flew to the top of the house, where she considered the problem for a time. Then she lifted up her head and sang.

It sounded to the nurse very like a psalm of gratitude, and it cut through the gloom in her heart like a thanksgiving. She felt "the spirit of heaviness" lifting, and the "garment of praise" descending upon her and enveloping her. Suddenly the bird finished her song, and, dropping to the ground, picked up the stick again; but this time she grasped it at the very end. Flying straight to the box, she disappeared inside, the twig following her with perfect ease. And the nurse breathed, "Thank you, God." Her buoyancy recovered, she went straight to that bedside, and saw, with tears of joy, the coming of gladness where was the shadow of sorrowing, perfect healing where only mourning had been forecast.

Buoyancy is the quality that enables one to rise to the top or to remain there, in whatever adverse circumstance. In "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" (p. 167), Mary Baker Eddy has put this quality into these words: "We apprehend Life in divine Science only as we live above corporeal sense and correct it."

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