

## SYMPATHY, KNOWLEDGE AND POISE.

Sympathy, Knowledge and Poise seem to be the three ingredients that are most needed in forming the Gentle Man. I place these elements according to their value. No man is great who does not have Sympathy plus, and the greatness of men can be safely gauged by their sympathies. Sympathy and imagination are twin sisters. Your heart must go out to all men, the high, the low, the rich, the poor, the learned, the unlearned, the good, the bad, the wise and the foolish it is necessary to be one with them all, else you can never comprehend them. Sympathy! it is the touchstone to every secret, the key to all knowledge, the open sesame of all hearts. Put yourself in the other man's place and then you will know why he thinks certain things and does certain deeds. Put yourself in his place and your blame will dissolve itself into pity, and your tears will wipe out the record of his misdeeds. The saviors of the world have simply been men with wondrous sympathy.

But Knowledge must go with Sympathy, else the emotions will become maudlin and pity may be wasted on a poodle instead of a child; on a field-mouse instead of a human soul. Knowledge in use is wisdom, and wisdom implies a sense of values you know a big thing from a little one, a valuable fact from a trivial one. Tragedy and comedy are simply questions of value: a little misfit in life makes us laugh, a great one is tragedy and cause for expression of grief.

Poise is the strength of body and strength of mind to control your Sympathy and your Knowledge. Unless you control your emotions they run over and you stand in the mire. Sympathy must not run riot, or it is valueless and tokens weakness instead of strength. In every hospital for nervous disorders are to be found many instances of this loss of control. The individual has Sympathy but not Poise, and therefore his life is worthless to himself and to the world.

He symbols inefficiency and not helpfulness. Poise reveals itself more in voice than it does in words; more in thought than in action; more in atmosphere than in conscious life. It is a spiritual quality, and is felt more than it is seen. It is not a matter of bodily size, nor of bodily attitude, nor attire, nor of personal comeliness: it is a state of inward being, and of knowing your cause is just. And so you see it is a great and profound subject after all, great in its ramifications, limitless in extent, implying the entire science of right living. I once met a man who was deformed in body and little more than a dwarf, but who had such Spiritual Gravity such Poise that to enter a room where he was, was to feel his presence and acknowledge his superiority. To allow Sympathy to waste itself on unworthy objects is to deplete one's life forces. To conserve is the part of wisdom, and reserve is a necessary element in all good literature, as well as in everything else.

Poise being the control of our Sympathy and Knowledge, it implies a possession of these attributes, for without having Sympathy and Knowledge you have nothing to control but your physical body. To practise Poise as a mere gymnastic exercise, or study in etiquette, is to be self-conscious, stiff, preposterous and ridiculous. Those who cut such fantastic tricks before high heaven as make angels weep, are men void of Sympathy and Knowledge trying to cultivate Poise. Their science is a mere matter of what to do with arms and legs. Poise is a question of spirit controlling flesh, heart controlling attitude.

Get Knowledge by coming close to Nature. That man is the greatest who best serves his kind. Sympathy and Knowledge are for use you acquire that you may give out; you accumulate that you may bestow. And as God has given unto you the sublime blessings of Sympathy and Knowledge, there will come to you the wish to reveal your gratitude by giving them out again; for the wise man is aware that we retain spiritual qualities only as we give them away. Let your light shine. To him that hath shall be given. The exercise of wisdom brings wisdom; and at the last the infinitesimal quantity of man's knowledge, compared with the Infinite, and the smallness of man's Sympathy when compared with the source from which ours is absorbed, will evolve an abnegation and a humility that will lend a perfect Poise. The Gentleman is a man with perfect Sympathy, Knowledge, and Poise.