

**THE KINGSHIP OF SELF-
CONTROL.
INDIVIDUAL PROBLEMS
AND POSSIBILITIES**

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The kingship of self-control. Individual Problems and Possibilities by William George Jordan

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WILLIAM GEORGE JORDAN

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Individual Problems
and Possibilities . . .

BY
William George Jordon

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The Kingship of Self-Control

MAN has two creators,—his God and himself. His first creator furnishes him the raw material of his life and the laws in conformity with which he can make that life what he will. His second creator,—himself,—has marvellous powers he rarely realizes. It is what a man makes of himself that counts.

When a man fails in life he usually says, "I am as God made me." When he succeeds he proudly proclaims himself a "self-made man." Man is placed into this world not as a finality,—but as a possibility. Man's greatest enemy is,—himself. Man in his weakness is the creature of circumstances; man in his strength is the creator of circumstances. Whether he be victim or victor depends largely on himself.

Man is never truly great merely for what he *is*, but ever for what he may become. Until man be truly filled with the knowledge of the majesty of his possibility, until there come to him the glow of realization of his privilege to live the life committed to him, as an individual

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life for which he is individually responsible, he is merely groping through the years.

To see his life as he might make it, man must go up alone into the mountains of spiritual thought as Christ went alone into the Garden, leaving the world to get strength to live in the world. He must there breathe the fresh, pure air of recognition of his divine importance as an individual, and with mind purified and tingling with new strength he must approach the problems of his daily living.

Man needs less of the "I am a feeble worm of the dust" idea in his theology, and more of the conception "I am a great human soul with marvellous possibilities" as a vital element in his daily, working religion. With this broadening, stimulating view of life, he sees how he may attain his kingship through self-control. And the self-control that is seen in the most spectacular instances in history, and in the simplest phases of daily life is precisely the same in kind and in quality, differing only in degree. This control man can attain, if he only will; it is but a matter of paying the price.

The power of self-control is one of the great qualities that differentiates man from the lower animals. He is the only animal capable of a moral struggle or a moral conquest.

Every step in the progress of the world has been a new "control." It has been escaping from the tyranny of a fact, to the understanding and mastery of that fact. For ages man looked

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in terror at the lightning flash; to-day he has begun to understand it as electricity, a force he has mastered and made his slave. The million phases of electrical invention are but manifestations of our control over a great force. But the greatest of all "control" is self-control.

At each moment of man's life he is either a King or a slave. As he surrenders to a wrong appetite, to any human weakness; as he falls prostrate in hopeless subjection to any condition, to any environment, to any failure, he is a slave. As he day by day crushes out human weakness, masters opposing elements within him, and day by day re-creates a new self from the sin and folly of his past,—then he is a King. He is a King ruling with wisdom over himself. Alexander conquered the whole world except,—Alexander. Emperor of the earth, he was the servile slave of his own passions.

We look with envy upon the possessions of others and wish they were our own. Sometimes we feel this in a vague, dreamy way with no thought of real attainment, as when we wish we had Queen Victoria's crown, or Emperor William's self-satisfaction. Sometimes, however, we grow bitter, storm at the wrong distribution of the good things of life, and then relapse into a hopeless fatalistic acceptance of our condition.

We envy the success of others, when we should emulate the process by which that success came. We see the splendid physical development of Sandow, yet we forget that as a