

**REGENERATION:
THE GATE
OF HEAVEN**

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Regeneration: The Gate of Heaven by Kenneth Sylvan Guthrie

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KENNETH SYLVAN GUTHRIE

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OF HEAVEN**

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REGENERATION.

CHAPTER I.

REGENERATION IN CONDUCT.

1. *Specialism.*—It is hard to realize that during the last hundred years more progress has been made in the arts of civilization than during the many thousand years since the first anthropoid appeared on the earth. The marvels of the steam engine, the telegraph, and the printing-machine are so familiar to the rising generation that they seem nothing extraordinary. When the thousands of years of the life of mankind within the light of history, within which so little real advance was made in scientific research, are considered, it seems little short of a miracle that within a century science should have suddenly arisen, that connection should have been established between the most remote corners of the globe, and that race, nation, and class distinctions should suddenly begin to crumble, leaving each man, in the words of Shelley:

"Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man:
Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,
Exempt from awe, worship, and degree, the king
Over himself; just, gentle, wise: but man."

The main characteristic of the new civilization, which has so wonderfully hastened human development, is specialism. Each man becomes an expert in his field of activity. By this division of labor so much of the unnecessary routine of life is saved that the results amount to an aggregate almost a hundred times as large as would have been possible under the old system of universal genius.

2. *Specialism in Education.*—With the increased sum of knowledge, has come a radical change in education. Whereas it was possible, a hundred years ago, to master all fields of knowledge, in a "classical" education, the field of study has been broken up into so many technical courses, which become day by day more exclusive the one of the other. Colleges have been forced to provide courses in science, as well as in arts. The momentous choice of professions, which came to man after he had finished his college education, in the days when there existed only a single course in arts, now faces the boy before he enters college. He must decide what course he will elect, to fit him for his future

career, before he has become a youth, and has begun his higher education. The most wonderful genius can only hope to be great in some one single field, or more often, in some part of it. Medical science has already progressed so far, that no physician can hope to succeed in all branches of his profession. If he is successful at all, he will have chosen some specialty, surgery, general practice, diseases of the ear, eye, throat, or nervous system. Even during his medical course the student must in these latter days devote himself to his specialty.

The result of this marvelous increase of knowledge, and of this specialization of education, is that each man's life tends more than ever to become different from that of his neighbor, the most successful man being he who has carried this specialization so far as to have become almost individual in knowledge and attainment. The social organism is becoming more and more differentiated, and some day it will have attained that perfection of specialization which is revealed in the structure of the human organism, where each function is part of the whole, but nevertheless so unlike every other as to be unable, to a certain degree, of supplying its place. For example, the undifferentiated protoplasm develops pseudopodia that serve as means both of locomotion and assimilation, and which, if destroyed, can be reproduced immediately. But in the highly differentiated organism of man the legs and the arms are so distinct that if either is destroyed it cannot be replaced. The lives of the locomotive engineer, and of the mill-worker, respectively belonging to the feet and hands of the social organism, are daily becoming more different. New types of life will be evolved in each of them, although the unity of manhood will remain the same in both.

3. *Specialization in Avocation.*—The result of this increase of attainment in every several field of activity will be the distinctive development of every art and technique. From being means of livelihood, every field of activity will become a profession, a calling, demanding the devotion and skill of the whole life. Even to-day the man without a trade or function in the social organism, is at any moment liable to starve; much more so will he be in the future, when years of training will be requisite to fit a man for the most humble avocation.

The barber in mediæval times was also the village physician and dentist. To-day, on the contrary, not only are each of these three avocations the objects of different careers, but each of them has become differentiated in several manners, even the barber's avocation. It is no wonder then that even to enumerate the different avocations and professions of the present day is an infinite labor. Photographing has become an art. Music was, years ago, a field in which a man might be an universal genius; now the technique of the piano, the voice, the violin, the violoncello, the wind instruments has been added to so much that a single one of these departments is as much as a man may hope to master. Painting also has extended its domain. Water colors, oils, pastel, drawing, sketching, china, glass, and sepia paint-

ings are separate departments, offering to the expert an illimitable field of labor.

4. *Specialism in Culture.*—Even external avocations, however, have increased. Whereas, in the middle ages, oratory was an intellectual study, and religion a mere matter of assent to some doctrine, personal culture has, in these latter days, become bewilderingly complicated. Physical culture, once the name of a certain development of muscles and grace of deportment, is the genius of which many well-known and differing systems of personal development are the species. Innumerable are the Christian Science, and other latter-day doctrines and practices of healing, restoring, and altering the conditions of the body. Schools of oratory have as many systems almost as text-books, and independent religious leaders and teachers of the spiritual life abound in every city. Every man is his own prophet and Levite, and each uses a different vocabulary, conceptions and methods. It appears almost as if specialization in all these fields was running fast to its extreme limit, every man for himself, with the exception of those men and women who by nature were designed to be dupes or followers.

5. *Specialism Demands an Architectonic Art.*—At first sight, it would seem almost ridiculous, in view of all this development in knowledge and skill, to ask whether all this increase be a gain on the whole. It appears to have by magical means increased the value of each life to itself and to others, until the value of the whole had become multiplied almost indefinitely. But careful consideration shows that the gain is not so great as it appeared. The law of Conservation of Energy obtains in such a manner as that even if every part of the life is made more useful and available, yet the sum of the life-force remains the same. There is only a certain amount of life, which cannot increase, even if its functions be changed. The shallow river is wide, and as the river-bed becomes deeper, the banks approach. What is gained in intensity is lost in extension.

The expert becomes more narrow than the universal genius. Concentration of attention on one narrow field loosens the mental grasp of the inter-relation of everything else, even in spite of popular instruction in other departments of knowledge. In the midst of the din of the forge is lost the subtle harmony of the spheres, and in the excitement of the Stock Exchange is forgotten the kingdom within. In the midst of the confusing number of arts and sciences, men lose sight, or rather, are in danger of losing sight, of the art of conducting the whole life harmoniously; in the contemplation of parts of human life men forget and injure their eternal destiny, and sell the lasting inheritance of the kingdom for the temporary satisfaction of the mess of pottage. The things that are, in the long run, least important, take up most of a man's time; and the most vital things, namely, honesty, virtue, and purity, become dim, vague, and hypothetical.

The Art of Life consists in preserving the due proportion between the interest of the present moment, and that of the future