

**THE TURN OF THE
CURRENT: A STUDY OF THE
NEW CONSCIOUSNESS, PP.
1-244**

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The Turn of the Current: A Study of the New Consciousness, pp. 1-244 by Mary Rosalie Alling Wood

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MARY ROSALIE ALLING WOOD

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*A STUDY OF THE
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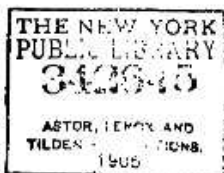
BY
MARY ROSALIE ALLING WOOD
AUTHOR OF
"SOULS" AND
"AN EXPERIMENT IN EDUCATION"

"But look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill."

—*Horatio, in Hamlet, Act 1, Scene 1*

WASHINGTON
M. R. A. WOOD

1904



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The Turn of the Current

CHAPTER I

THE GREAT AMBITION

Leon Gustaberg was a student at Heidelberg. His doctor's thesis was nearly finished. He leaned his elbow on the table and looked across it at his sister.

"Emma."

"Yes, Leon," without raising her eyes from the sewing which occupied her.

"Emma."

Emma looked up. "What is it, Leon?"

"Tell me now about mother."

"When your preparation for your profession is completed; not before."

"It only remains to hand this in," laying his hand on the manuscript before him.

"Is it finished?"

"All but the last page."

"And why not that? A week ago you said the same."

"I cannot surm it up until I know."

"Know what?"

"The cause of mother's death."

A silence followed, while a deep flush suffused Emma's face, and she moved uneasily in her chair, but did not look at Leon, who regarded her intently.

"Emma, tell me."

Emma rose, drew herself up and said slowly, "I will not—not yet—there can be no possible relation between any—any past in our family history and your doctor's thesis." With that she gathered her sewing and left the room.

Leon paced the room, to and fro, several times; and then, reseating himself, took a pen and wrote rapidly:

"The range of a man's consciousness is the measure of his capacity; the use he makes of it, the test of his worth. Few there be who dare believe all it presents; fewer still whose acts are its co-ordinated expression; and none who can so overcome fear as to welcome one phase of it as readily as another.

"The history of man is the record of the changes in his consciousness. And why does it change? Is the cosmic mind—so much of it as is in a race, a nation, a planet—like a man's mind,—its attention must be concentrated to be effective? And like a man's mind in growing out of one phase into another? As man has a memory of the principal phases of his consciousness from childhood up, so must a people, a planet, a universe, have a memory.

"As every cell of a man's body is nourished from the same source and one brain determines the conduct of the whole organism, and if, as has already been shown, atoms have consciousness,—there is no limit to the consciousness of any cell or of any combinations of atoms or of cells in a man's substance but the man himself: it follows that a man, as a cosmic cell, is not limited save by the cosmos itself.

"Consciousness is one thing, conduct another. Conduct is limited to the amount of consciousness that may be held in one focus of attention and so brought to bear at a given point of time or condition. And this differentiates men, one from another,—the amount of consciousness focused in a given instant of time.

"Man seems to add to the field of this focus point by action only, as though doing were the occasion of all consciousness. When man has liberated himself from this slavery to action, and can hold his focus point steady while he enlarges its field, he ought to become possessor of the consciousness of a race, a planet, a solar system, a universe.

"These are the undiscovered worlds to which man is now beckoned, and in these explorations neither sex nor age are disabilities."

As Leon finished writing, a finger reached out and touched his last words, and Emma said scornfully:

"More trash about women."