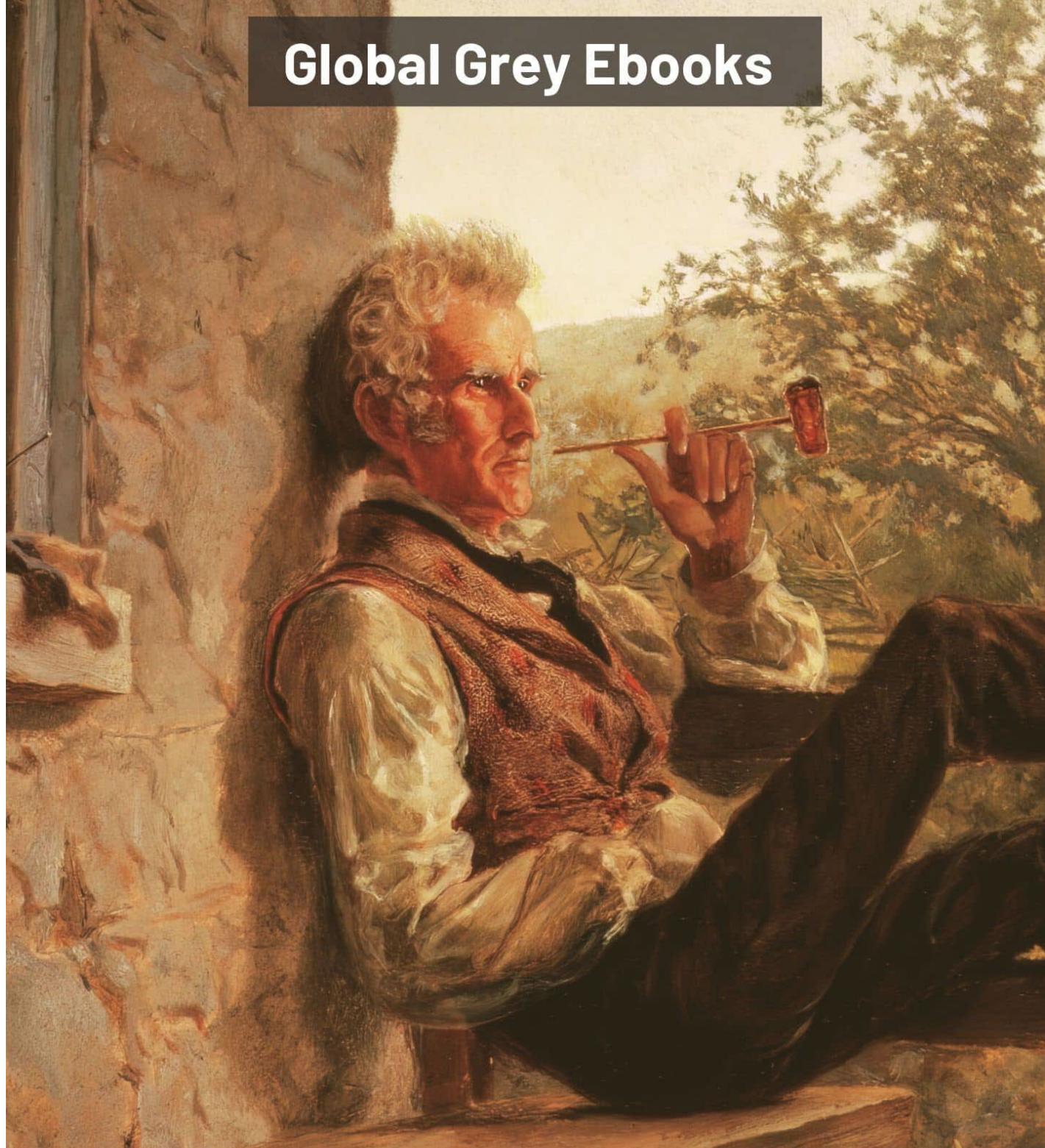


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BOOK OF MEDITATIONS FOR EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR

JAMES ALLEN

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January First.

FREQUENTLY the man of passion is most eager to put others right; but the man of wisdom puts himself right. If one is anxious to reform the world, let him begin by reforming himself. The reformation of self does not end with the elimination of the sensual elements only; that is its beginning. It ends only when every vain thought and selfish aim is overcome. Short of perfect purity and wisdom, there is still some form of self-slavery or folly which needs to be conquered.

On the wings of aspiration man rises from earth to heaven, from ignorance to knowledge, from the under darkness to the upper light. Without it he remains a grovelling animal, earthly, sensual, unenlightened, and uninspired.

Aspiration is the longing for heavenly things.

Where is peace to be found! Where is the hiding-place of truth!

January Second.

LET first things be put first; work before play; duty before enjoyment; and others before self: this is an excellent rule which cannot lead astray. To make a right beginning is halfway to victory. The athlete who makes a bad start may lose his prize; the merchant who makes a false start may lose his reputation; and the Truth-seeker who makes a wrong start may forego the crown of Righteousness. To begin with pure thoughts, sterling rectitude, unselfish purpose, noble aims, and an incorruptible conscience—this is to start right - this it is to put first things first, so that all other things will follow in harmonious order, making life simple, beautiful, successful, and peaceful.

The soul will cry out for its lost heritage.

If one would find peace, he must come out of passion.

January Third.

SO long as animal conditions taste sweet to a man, he cannot aspire: he is so far satisfied; but when their sweetness turns to bitterness, then in his sorrow he thinks of nobler things. When he is deprived of earthly joy, he aspires to the joy which is heavenly. It is when impurity turns to suffering that purity is sought. Truly aspiration rises, phoenixlike, from the dead ashes of repentance, but on its powerful pinions man can reach the heaven of heavens.

The man of aspiration has entered the way which leads to peace; and surely he will reach that end if he stays not nor turns back. If he constantly renews his mind with glimpses of the heavenly vision, he will reach the heavenly state.

That which can be conceived can be achieved.

Our life is what we make it by our own thoughts and deeds.

January Fourth.

MAN attains in the measure that he aspires. His longing to be is the gauge of what he can be. To fix the mind is to fore-ordain the achievement. As man can experience and know all low things, so he can experience and know all high things. As he has become human, so he can

deserve and require them, and that by first enduring, and then understanding them, you may be made stronger, wiser, nobler. When you have fully entered into this realisation, you will be in a position to mould your own circumstances, to transmute all evil into good, and to weave, with a master hand, the fabric of your destiny.

Cease to be a disobedient child in the school of experience, and begin to learn, with humility and patience, the lessons that are set for your ultimate perfection.

Mediation centred upon divine realities is the very essence and soul of prayer.

January Thirtieth.

TELL me what that is upon which you most frequently and intensely think, that to which, in your silent hours, your soul most naturally turns, and I will tell you to what place of pain or peace you are travelling, and whether you are growing into the likeness of the divine or the bestial. There is an unavoidable tendency to become literally the embodiment of that quality upon which one most constantly thinks. Let, therefore, the object of your meditation be above and not below, so that every time that you revert to it in thought you will be lifted up; let it be pure and unmixed with any selfish element; so shall your heart become purified and drawn nearer to Truth, and not defiled and dragged more hopelessly into error.

Meditation is the secret of all growth in spiritual life and knowledge.

If you ceaselessly think upon that which is pure and unselfish, you will surely become pure and unselfish.

January Thirty-first.

IF you are daily praying for wisdom, for peace, for loftier purity, and a fuller realisation of Truth, and that for which you pray is still far from you, it means that you are praying for one thing, whilst living out in thought and act another. If you will cease from such waywardness, taking your mind off those things, the selfish clinging to which debars you from the possession of the stainless realities for which you pray; if you will no longer ask God to grant you that which you do not deserve, or to bestow upon you that love and compassion which you refuse to bestow upon others, but will commence to think and act in the spirit of Truth, you will day by day be growing into those realities, so that ultimately you will become one with them.

Enter the path of Meditation, and let the supreme object of your meditation be Truth.

Unrest and pain and sorrow are the shadows of life.