

VOLUME ONE  
NUMBER TWO

JANUARY, FEBRUARY,  
MARCH, 1916

# The CHANNEL

An International Quarterly of Occultism,  
Spiritual Philosophy of Life, and the  
Science of Superphysical Facts

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EDITOR - - MARIE RUSSAK

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**The Living Dead Man**

Elsa Barker

**Reincarnation**

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

**The New Race**

Vance Thompson

**Hypnotism, Suggestionism**

Marie Russak

*For full Contents, see inside cover*

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# The CHANNEL

EDITOR  
MARIE RUSSAK

*This is a magazine of occultism, spiritual philosophy of life, and the science of superphysical facts. It has no official connection with any sect, society or creed. Its aim is to present truth and its hope is to collaborate with serious investigators in all domains of thought.*

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## My Experience With the Living Dead Man

By Elsa Barker

Had anyone told me a few years ago that I should ever publish over my own signature two books of communications from a disembodied entity, I should have said that the prophet was complimenting my courage at the expense of my discretion. So thick is the veil that shuts the future from even the eyes of occult students! Only a glimpse can we get now and then, and the meaning of that glimpse we often misinterpret.

I have been asked to write an account of my experiences, both earthly and posthumous, with Judge David P. Hatch of Los Angeles, the "X" of the two books, *Letters From a Living Dead Man* and *War Letters From the Living Dead Man*. Believing that some additional light may thus be thrown on the method of communication between the two worlds, I accede to that request.

The narrative will necessarily be personal; but even a little of such personal testimony from one whose trend of thought is extremely critical and whose habit of observa-

tion of phenomena is minute, may be more valuable than any mere profession of unsupported faith, however eloquent.

We will begin at the beginning.

In the summer of 1906 soon after I began writing *The Son of Mary Bethel*, a novel which has been called by some reviewers the story of a modern Jesus, I saw in the New York Times an advertisement of a book called *The Twentieth Century Christ*. This advertisement troubled me, for I supposed that some other writer had forestalled me in the treatment of my chosen theme.

I immediately ordered the book, and was glad to find that it was a series of essays, not a work of fiction. But as I read page after page my gladness was lost in wonder; for the unknown writer had based his conclusions on that same "Law of Contraries" which I had discovered some time before in the sayings of Jesus, Lao-tsze and others, and which I had traced as a working law through the events of my own life and to some degree through history, and with which I was already beginning to experiment practically, to demonstrate as a working hypothesis.

*The Twentieth Century Christ* was signed Paul Karishka, and it was copyrighted by David P. Hatch. To Paul Karishka I wrote, as one explorer may write to another—for were we not exploring the same Law?—a more fascinating field for the intrepid mind than the wilds of Africa or the ice-bound North.

David P. Hatch answered my letter. Then one by one he sent to me, as I read and reported on them, several anonymous books bearing interior evidence of having been written by the same hand, and at last his own signed book, now out of print, called *Scientific Occultism*.

More fascinating, more romantic than my first journey to Europe in youth, was my progress through those books. It was not their literary style but their content which absorbed me. Style may be the man, but thought is of the spirit—or as near to the spirit as we can get, perhaps, while in our normal consciousness.

Besides sending me books Judge Hatch wrote me letters, luminous letters, answering patiently my innumerable questions. I have had several occult and philosophic teachers, but from none of them have I learned more than from David P. Hatch.

At the time of which I am writing I had no idea whether he was thirty years of age or eighty. To me he was simply the man who was experimenting with the Law of Contraries. None of his letters related to postmortem conditions.

And now the supernormal, the psychic element, begins to enter the story.

As in the case of most occult students who have not yet learned to master conditions and to use them, my life and my thought at that time were full of problems which seemed serious. (Remember that this was nine years ago, and we were all younger then.) Though it took about five days for a letter to come from Los Angeles to New York, whenever I was more gravely puzzled than usual or more profoundly troubled, without fail a letter would arrive within a few hours from the Judge, containing a philosophic solution for my problem. I do not remember a case in which he failed to send, five days beforehand, the solution of a difficulty which was not to arise until some five days after the dispatch.

Whose prevision timed the sending of those communications? When I asked him the question years afterwards, he only smiled. I doubt if he knew himself. He may have had a theory, as I also have; but this is a record of experience, not of theories.

And it is a personal record, so I shall not hesitate now to tell something very personal.

In the year 1907 all my plans for the present and the future seemed tottering to a fall. Life was an expert chess-game and I a bad amateur. One day I had an hour of weakness, of cowardice. Looking back now, from the tragic height of this universal war, the practical and psychological difficulties of that time seem not so wide as a church door nor so deep as a well, but they served.

During my cowardly hour a large oblong envelope arrived by the hand of the postman. As it was stamped "Los Angeles" I opened it immediately, and a face looked out at me, the strongest, bravest, kindest face I ever saw—the face of David P. Hatch, until then unknown to me.

The effect was electrical. I stood up suddenly, with the courage of ten armies—if I may be allowed so large a simile. I do not remember that there was a word of writing with the photograph except the name on the back.

And I do not know whether the event that unexpectedly solved all my problems a few hours later, without any action whatever on my part, was caused by the subconscious "magic" of the original of that portrait three thousand miles away, *who knew nothing of the circumstances*; or whether the electrical effect of the photograph upon me attracted that result. We will leave the question to the mental scientists. But when I say that Judge Hatch was not an ordinary man, I am not merely uttering a banality.

It was not until the Autumn of 1908 that I met my friend face to face, after more than two years of constant correspondence. He was in New York on some law business, I believe, and called on me at my flat. He was then sixty-two years of age, but he came up my four flights of stairs as quickly as a youth.

We talked of philosophy, of Adepts and Masters, of sibyls, of life—but not of death. Only once did he ever speak of death, so far as I remember, and that was briefly and in answer to a question about a suicide.

Life was his great study. Perhaps that is why he is so alive to-day, as others also can testify, others who have felt his living presence while he was dictating those letters from the other world.

I remember saying to him that first day that I believed he had been my father in some other incarnation, and then feeling myself blush at the tactless reminder of his age; but he did not seem to notice it. He only smiled and said, "Maybe." There will be many who remember the smile and the "maybe" of Judge Hatch. After the humourless *ex-cathedra* assertions of former relationships with me which I had listened to for years, it was refreshing.

But he had profound convictions. His belief in Masters, in supermen who have transcended rhythm and who play with laws by the Law of them, was the keystone which perfected the arch of my own belief. Before my talk with Judge Hatch that day I had accepted the idea of Masters as I had accepted the idea of personal immortality, as a working hypothesis. But though I had had visions of Masters years before, and other supernormal experiences, with the natural carefulness of the analytical mind, I set over against such visions the possibility of hallucination, and over against the other experiences the possible activity

of the subconscious self. The memory of two fevers, during which I had also "seen things," was the palladium which guarded the capitol of my mind from hysterical nonsense. Even a Master had to prove himself before I was willing to make positive assertions regarding him. The proof to us of a Master's mastership lies in his demonstration of it, not in our vision of his face. And I am certain that any real Master would approve that statement.

Judge Hatch, who was a great psychologist, proved to me by logical arguments that afternoon that Masters *could* exist. Saturnine reason is a healthy balance for a Mercurial imagination. He had probably seen from my letters that I preferred to drive those mental faculties in double harness rather than tandem, though I learned later, in going through the dizzy passes of superphysical investigation, that the image-making faculty is a good leader, when it is guided by the Higher Ego.

Then we talked about sibyls—those "sensitives" whom Masters use to speak and write through. I remember his saying that the sibyl was as necessary as the Master, if the Master was to work unseen and unknown, as most of them prefer to work.

He made one statement which I questioned then, and still question: that a sibyl could never become a Master. One is positive, the other negative in manifestation; but as a man may choose between the two poles of his psychological being, and may shift his consciousness from one to the other, I still hold that a sibyl could become a Master, by the very law of opposites and by the exercise of positive will, by shifting to the positive pole of being. I should like to see it demonstrated. If the Masters can get our thoughts at a distance, then they are themselves negative and sibylline at the moment of such reception. They must be both positive and negative; otherwise they are not perfect beings.

Judge Hatch put his philosophy to the test of life. He even made a sojourn of some years in the wilderness of the Northwest. He retired from the world, then returned to teach the world—or so much of it as he could reach. There are not many busy and famous corporation lawyers who would follow the star of their faith to such a length.

He was never more interesting than when he talked about will. I am sure that in his thoughts he always spelled

it with a capital letter. His eyes were like dark flames when he spoke of will.

He declared that afternoon that a Hermetic philosopher could always be recognized by the eyes.

"I could have picked you out of a great crowd," he said, "as one of us."

I asked him to describe the Hermetic eye, and he said that it was indescribable, but easily recognized by one who knew. At that time I did not understand exactly what he meant, but have since learned.

What is a Hermetic, in the Hatch sense? One who has grasped and *uses* the Law of Opposites. He who has merely grasped it with the mind and does not use it is merely a theorist. The Hermetic philosophy can be demonstrated. He who fails in the demonstration had better re-examine either his philosophy or himself.

Yes, the seed is in the Emerald Tablet of Hermes. It is in the Tao-te-King. It is in the Kabala, in the Divine Pymander, and in the words of Jesus.

I have often been asked to write a book on the Hermetic Philosophy, as understood by Judge Hatch, and I here record the promise that I will—some day. But of course the book will not contain one line from the letters which he sent me. I shall merely take the principle which he taught in some degree to the few whom he found teachable, and develop them in my own way. He always declared that those principles were not original with him. Of course not. They were familiar to the architect of the Sphinx.

I asked him that afternoon why he did not elaborate his philosophy into a system, and he said that he would leave that for others to do. He also said that he knew two of the four persons who would continue the work from the point where he should some day leave it. Naturally my discretion did not permit me to ask who they were. Somehow, one never wanted to ask personal questions of Judge Hatch. He did not state that I was one of those four persons.

Though I seemed to know him as well as I ever knew anybody, looking back upon those years now it surprises me to realize how few personal interviews I ever had with him. He came to New York only occasionally, and I doubt if I ever spent sixty hours, all told, in his society. The

great Teachers are not always at the elbow of their pupils.

The last time I saw him on the earth was early in 1910, a few months before I left America and went to live in Paris. He was intensely interested in my plans for living in Europe, and told me that he hoped soon to make the journey himself, visiting not only the principal countries of Europe, but Egypt and the Holy Land. He wanted most to go to Damascus. His eyes glowed whenever he spoke of it. He advised me to go to India. Like so many others, he felt that I belonged there.

Our last hour together was at the luncheon table. On a former visit he had recommended to me a form of psychological discipline, and at luncheon that day I told him that I had practised it diligently for a year or two, and asked that he give me another.

"The one you have will last you for some years yet," he said.

It has.

Though I do not feel at liberty to print his confidential formulas, I may say that only during the last sixteen months of war has that master-formula been grounded in my consciousness. Now I do not believe that the earthquakes of reincarnation and karma could ever tear it out.

As many persons who read this article may not have read the *Letters From a Living Dead Man*, I will repeat a few statements which I made in the introduction to that book.

On night early in 1912, in Paris, I was strongly impelled to take a pencil and write, though what I was to write about I did not know. My hand seemed to be seized from the outside, and a remarkable message of a personal nature came, followed by the signature "X." The following day I showed this writing to an American friend from Los Angeles, asking her if she had any idea as to the identity of "X."

"Why," she said, "don't you know that that is what we always call Judge Hatch?"

I had not known it. She seemed surprised, for, as she then told me, the members of a certain group in Los Angeles hardly ever called him anything else.

I had never been interested in what is called "spiritualism," and it did not even then occur to me that Judge Hatch was probably dead.

But a day or two later I received a letter from a friend in New York, stating that the Judge had passed out in Los Angeles some days before I received in Paris the automatic writing signed "X."

Even a mind as cautious as my own could hardly fail to be impressed by this extraordinary happening.

At the earnest request of my Los Angeles friend in Paris, I let "X" write again and again. Though I had periods of revolt against acting as a "medium" even for so great an ego as Judge Hatch, I was too much interested in his communications to refuse to lend him my hand. A few of the letters were written in the home of my friend, but generally "X" came to my own flat. Sometimes the friend was present, oftener I was alone. The work had been going on for several months before I realized that the letters were intended for a book.

My invisible correspondent often mentioned personal affairs of Judge Hatch which were unknown to me; he made many quotations which I afterwards learned were among his favorite quotations; he referred to books which I did not know that he had even read, but which others had read and discussed with him; he alluded to several former incarnations of his which he had confided to others during life—never to me. With me he had not talked about his former incarnations. In New York one day some years before, he had told me smilingly that I was not credulous enough. I wish now that I had been more credulous. I might have heard things worth listening to.

Looking back upon the months during which that first book was written, they seem like pages from a romance. There was no war then in France, and Paris was still a playground for "good Americans" who had anticipated the fruits of the old promise by going there before they died.

Much of my time was occupied with other and literary work; but on my long walks through the old historic quarters of Paris I was often conscious of the intangible presence of Judge Hatch. A favorite *rendezvous* of his was the left bank of the Seine opposite *Notre Dame*. Perhaps he had lived there in a former life, when the city was smaller than it is now. Accompanied by him I found an old, old street and an old, old house, which he seemed to claim as his own. I must have grown more credulous since the philosophic

talks that the Judge and I used to have in America, for I am willing to say that I believe he had once lived there in that house.

In a book on old Paris I studied the history of the neighborhood. Those streets around the church of *St. Julien le Pauvre* are extremely ancient, and some of the houses still standing there are many hundreds of years old. The Church was there when Dante was in Paris!

Who knows? "X" may long ago have walked and talked there with the great Florentine, with him who went living into the circles of the dead and returned to tell the world a story which it accepted as the imaginings of a poet. Before my astral experiences during this war I also had supposed that the *Inferno* was a dark flower of the imagination.

Many interesting things happened in connection with the work. A friend of ours in America, who did not know at first that I was writing for "X," had a vision of him sitting with us in a room which he described quite accurately, even to the piano behind the Judge's back, as he sat in the carved Italian doge's chair which I sometimes used to place for him, as a little mark of respect, when we were working together.

My friend in Paris, who was even more interested than I in the "X" correspondence, would often write down questions unknown to me, in her home some three miles from mine, and the answers would be given by the disembodied Judge in my home when she was not present.

Now I wish to relate a little incident which those who are familiar with the astral plane will understand, but which may seem fantastic to those who are unfamiliar with that plane.

In one of the letters "X" invited me to meet him that night in the tenuous world. I expected to see him, if at all, "in his habit as he lived;" but no. He came down the spaces of the fourth dimension behind my closed eyelids dressed in a light-coloured toga, much younger than I had ever known him, and standing on a self-propelling Roman chariot covered with flowers. He looked at me, nodded smilingly, and passed on with his chariot into the invisible. As I state it, it sounds like a dream; but I was as wide awake as at this moment. Having been rather an active dreamer

in the past, I know the difference between a dream and an astral vision or experience.

Some readers may think that I should have seen him off somewhere in space; but the most reliable visions do not come to me in that way. I have those visions also, but always take them with the proverbial grain of salt. They are not unfailingly reliable nor accurately prophetic, while the visions which I personally have seen behind closed eyelids have never been *proven* false, though many of them, like the one above, are unverifiable.

It is much easier for independent astral entities, who may wish to influence our action, to draw pictures for us in the ether outside our microcosm than it is for them to draw those pictures inside our microcosm. I do not think that the latter can be done to me, though the former has been. With my eyes closed I see things as they are. I could fill a book with the record of astral and mental visions which have been verified. But until we know more about the "fourth dimension" it is not well to dogmatize. And I hope the reader will bear in mind that what I say represents my point of view at the present stage of my development. In later years, and with greater knowledge, I may extend the range of my absolute assertions. Of course I am familiar with the theosophical and oriental theories regarding the astral and mental worlds; but a theory to me is only something to be verified.

I would not advise those who cannot *isolate themselves astrally* to place absolute reliance even on what they see behind their closed eyelids; for it is not only possible to be deceived by independent astral beings, but it is easy to deceive oneself when either desire or prejudice has too strong a hold upon the mind.

One of the best safeguards against astral self-deception is absolute truthfulness in daily life and conversation. The subconscious mind easily forms habits, like the objective mind. It can be educated in reporting accurately. The mind that instinctively says of anything, "Oh, I don't want to believe that!" had better abandon occult investigation. Its imagination will please it with false pictures, objectivized day-dreams, flattering panoramas that correspond to nothing real. As there is no religion higher than truth, so there is no beauty, no sentiment, no preconceived idea higher than truth.

The astral plane is said to be the plane of illusion, partly because its matter is so plastic, partly because in certain layers of it things are often seen reversed as in a mirror, while under other astral conditions things are seen and felt as from their own inside. Only great experience, and great care, and the scientific spirit of accuracy in observation, and above all the insistence on demonstration before unqualified belief, can make the investigator safe from delusion.

Some students whom I know, excited by their first astral seeing, and neglecting the warnings of more experienced investigators, have been tragically misled not only by obsessing entities, but by that subtle conjurer—their fancy. Until I had verified the accuracy of my interior sight year after year, I would not trust it as a basis for action, and I only trust it now because I have thoroughly proved it. But that does not necessarily mean that I am any more spiritual or any better than those who have misleading visions. It proves nothing except that the faculty of clairvoyance can be trained to a point where it may be put to practical use, as the pianist trains his fingers or the microscopist his eye.

Here is one very crude and simple illustration of prophetic vision: After I had finished writing *The Son of Mary Bethel*, in 1908, I gave it to a literary agent to place for me, without any suggestion as to the publisher to whom he should offer it. That night I asked my “subconscious mind,” as I called it then, who would publish the book. Behind my closed eyelids I saw a square tree hanging with fruit. I did not know what it meant; but when the agent wrote me that Duffield & Company were going to publish the book, I remembered that vision, and going to the bookcase took down a book which they had published for a friend of mine, and on the title page was the firm’s trademark—a square tree hanging with fruit. Until the agent wrote me I had not thought of Duffield in connection with my book, and as it had been rejected by two or three other publishers (as our first books generally are) there was a considerable period between the vision and its verification. This is only one illustration out of many hundreds.

Judge Hatch was much interested in these experiments of mine, but he did not teach me how to make them.

Parenthetically I may say that the subjective mind,

or whatever is the source of those visions, has apparently no sense of absurdity or even of propriety, for the answer may come in the form of a picture the name for which is a pun on the word which answers the question. Anything will serve its purpose which can get its meaning through to the dull physical mind. Is that all-wise source the Master of the pupil? Perhaps. Is it the reincarnating ego? Perhaps. Is it Buddhi? Perhaps. Some years hence I may venture an opinion and state the reasons for my belief. It is said that prevision belongs to the buddhic plane, where time and space are not. But Buddhi is formless arupa.

Of course the faculty for supernormal sight, whether etheric, astral or mental, is quite distinct from the faculty for automatic writing. One might be developed to a high degree without the other.

Then again we have "inspiration" and "intuition," quite different modes of perception, too complex to analyze within the limits of this article.

What I always urge upon students who consult me regarding these things is minute accuracy of observation, and "scientific skepticism," as to results, until the substance of the communications has been proven beyond the possibility of doubt—not once but hundreds of times. Then, and then only, can one safely put those faculties to practical use.

Many of us have friends who are always seeing and hearing things which are not true, and some of them when advised to adopt a scientific method of training seem almost hurt that one should think they need it.

One cannot state too emphatically that astral sight is entirely different from the sight of fancy and imagination. Astral sight is apparently as objective as physical sight, and much more distinct. The person who sees in the astral *seems to be* seeing with the physical eyes.

A friend of mine who had been telling me for years that she "saw" this and that, suddenly one night really saw for the first time on the astral plane! "Why, it is utterly different from what I had supposed!" she exclaimed. "Why haven't you told me?" My reply was, "I have told you forty times, but it made no impression on you."

There are certain yoga practices which develop all these

faculties, sometimes to a marvellous degree; but as they cannot safely be undertaken without the guidance of an experienced teacher, we will not discuss them here—save to say that the most daring of them is certainly a shortcut to the arupa levels of the mental plane.

Let us return to the first "X" book.

In November, 1912, I was obliged to go to London for a time, and wondered if the Judge would follow me there and continue the writing. He did, coming first to a boarding-house in Bloomsbury and later to a hotel in the Strand. Once in the former place I saw him externally with my physical eyes open, though I do not consider that form of seeing so important as the other. In my experience it is generally less clear.

"X" followed me back to Paris in December, and at the New Year back again to London, where the book was finished. On the last day he wrote there he was again visible to my wide-open physical eyes.

Then came the task of editing the book.

Everything in those writings which Judge Hatch's family or friends could object to I left out when I prepared the manuscript for publication, and I did not state in the Introduction who "X" was. That public statement came first from Mr. Bruce Hatch, Judge Hatch's elder son, whom I wish to thank for all his courtesy and kindness in regard to both these books. Though I did not meet him until about eight months after the first letters were published, his frank acknowledgment of his belief in the genuineness of the communications was a great help to me personally, both in Europe and in America.

The immediate success of the book astonished me. The most conservative old English newspapers treated it with respect, and I was flooded with letters from all parts of the world. Already arrangements have been made for its translation into five languages, the Dutch translator, Dr. Frederick Van Eeden, being the most famous writer in Holland. I have been told that Henri Bergson expressed great interest in the Letters. An English publisher asked me to write a book on the Hermetic Philosophy, as understood by Judge Hatch, and I should have done so last year had the war not broken out.

Many of the letters which I received were pathetic in

their gratitude. Several persons have told me that the book saved the life or the reason of some friend. For months I did practically no work but answering letters; but it has now become impossible to reply to all. Wherever I went during that last London season I was surrounded by people who wanted to ask about "X" and the book. One Sunday four lecturers talked about it for an hour or two from London platforms, and I was constantly invited to lecture about the book myself, but declined always, nor did I attend any of the lectures given.

I had not anticipated that anything would come to me from the book except the censure of the conservatives. Its publication was a confession of faith, and I stood ready to accept the consequences, whatever they were. I evidently underestimated the seriousness and generosity of mankind.

In my Introduction of the first "X" book I stated that I made no scientific claims for it, as science demands tests and proofs. We will let that stand. But before and during writing of the second book, *War Letters From the Living Dead Man*, I had experiences which are as clearly evidential for the reality of "travelling in the astral body" as would be the testimony of the man in the street that he had seen a street accident.

In the pages of a Review like *The Channel* I may say things which I hesitated to say in the Introduction to the second book addressed to the general reading public. The evil forces behind this war certainly served notice on me that extraordinary events were taking place in the invisible world.

Toward the end of June, 1914, I arrived in Scandinavia. All was apparently quiet, within and without. Then the journals came containing the news of the murder of the Austrian Archduke. The tragedy did not profoundly impress me. I had never been in Austria or in Serbia. An important man had been killed; that was about all it meant to me.

But when I closed my eyes that night the psychic pandemonium began. I saw worse devils than any of those described by "X" in the *War Letters*. And they attacked me, murderously.

So far as I now remember, in all my astral visions theretofore I had never seen anything really menacing

(leaving out of account certain fever visions which I should never think of considering as evidence of anything except fever, though of course admitting that they may have been genuinely astral.)

Those horrors of sight, sound and physical violence continued for days. I had no rest, practically no sleep, for whenever I was about to doze off I would begin to see those menacing and truly horrible figures. I did not know what it all meant. It bewildered me, and made me ill.

At that time there was no talk of a possible great war; but considering the long proven verity of my astral sight, I felt justified in assuming that those new and frightful visions had objective as well as subjective meaning.

It was borne in upon me that I must get back to London at once, that I must change my environment. I was afraid—and not afraid to admit my fear.

I hoped that in recrossing the North Sea I should leave those astral horrors behind; but they were not left behind. They followed me to London, they followed me down into Surrey, and back again to London.

Then the general war broke out, and I understood.

Though the visions continued, I had no more anxiety about myself; but realized that the astral door which I had opened in writing *Letters From a Living Dead Man*, and in training my interior sight, was not to be closed so easily as the theorists may think it ought to be. Here again, experience is more valuable than theory. I have now learned how to shut that door and to bar it; but I shall never urge anyone to “cultivate the psychic powers latent in man,” unless I am convinced that he or she has nerves at least as steady as my own. The fear of the supernatural has no longer any meaning for me. It has been left behind—with many other things—in this war.

Doubtless the more practical among my friends, were they consulted, would advise me against presenting the above data to a skeptical world. But it is precisely because the world is skeptical of spiritual realities that I present it. When I published the first book of Judge Hatch's posthumous revelations, I definitely cast in my lot with the acknowledged investigators of the invisible world, and I see no reason for drawing the line at my own premonitory clairvoyance regarding this world-catastrophe, for fear that some self-satisfied materialist may call me fantastic.

There are many investigators of the invisible who have pretty well proved their practical efficiency in the practical world. Sir Oliver Lodge has. Judge Hatch had.

Dante was a statesman, what we should call a practical politician. In view of all that I have seen since June, 1914, I am willing to state my belief that the *Divine Comedy* is a record of actual experiences in the astral and devachanic worlds. The Doré drawings are no worse than the animated pictures I have seen. I could almost accept the statement of the women of one of those petty courts where the poet sojourned during his exile, that the beard of the great Florentine showed marks of singeing.

And doubtless Dante had wise friends who shook their heads and warned him that the publication of the *Inferno* would injure his reputation.

It is written in my Introduction to the *War Letters*: "I was a wide-awake astral participant in the first action in which the British army was engaged on the continent, and related the experience to a British officer in England before it was reported there, my narrative being verified the following day by a French newspaper brought over from Paris by a friend." Here are some of the unwritten details.

Lying wide-awake in my bed in London, I suddenly found myself on a dimly-lighted battlefield, strewn with the bodies of men dressed in the British khaki. Some of them were still, and some were—not so still. They were wounded, and no help was near. The face of one splendid fellow I shall never forget. He was lying on his face when I touched him. He turned and raised himself on his elbow, asking me for water. I went to a neighboring stream, and as I supposed filled my hands with water (as a cup) and returned to give him drink; but when he bent his lips—there was nothing in my hands. Evidently my astral hands could not carry water that would quench the thirst of a wounded soldier. He looked at me in wonder, then he fell back on his face and *stretched himself out*.

Other wounded soldiers followed me with their eyes. Some looked right through me apparently without seeing me. I heard their groans, and the words they said to themselves in their agony.

Suddenly I was back in my bed in London. I got up, turned on the electric light and walked the floor for an hour.

I had experienced war as fully as one can without being oneself wounded.

The skeptical reader will say I dreamed it. I say that I was wide awake all the time. But even assuming that I do not know whether I am awake or asleep, assuming that it was a dream, it would be equally unexplainable by any other than the astral hypothesis, because the British army had really been in battle that day for the first time, and the public in England *did not know that the British army was on the Continent at all*, as their going over had not been reported in the newspapers.

The verification was rather dramatic. I had just related the story to a British Colonel and his wife the following day, when a friend of theirs, who had arrived that afternoon from France, came in with the *Journal de Paris*, containing an account of the battle and the part which had been played by the British army. I do not think it was ever mentioned in the English newspapers. The British censor must have been born with Saturn on the ascendant.

In November I returned to America, but the visions of the war still continued nearly every night, and I followed many a soul into conditions far more terrible than any described later by "X." My cicerone, if I had one, was less considerate of my feelings than "X" was of the feelings of his readers. The narratives of "X" are mild.

I wish now that I had kept a complete record of my experiences, with the dates, for they might have been scientifically valuable some day. I was astrally present at the shelling of Scarborough on the morning of December 16th, (three in the morning in New York, corresponding to eight in England) and related the experience to a friend some hours before the account was printed in the evening papers, though I did not know the name of the English coast town where I had seen the bombardment until I learned it from the newspapers.

The skeptic may say that the *War Letters* dictated later by "X" are merely a record of my own visions, but they are not. I do not recall one instance in which "X" describes anything which I had myself seen before. His stories, written down as fast as the pencil could fly over the paper, were as new to me as to the reader. In my normal state I am a very slow writer.

During those months I was living an active social life, and only to a few confidential friends did I even briefly mention my astral experiences. Who could have understood them? New Yorkers seemed hardly to realize that there was a war; they danced and dined and tead as usual, and to keep myself normal I dined and tead with them. But my heart was not in it.

Many of my friends commented on what they called my "strange poise;" but it did not seem necessary to explain to them that daily readjustment between one plane of being and another produces poise—when it does not produce the opposite. There are certain inner experiences which help one to face without over-excitement the ephemeral conditions of the external world. The life of the re-incarnating Ego is long. If we can hold that consciousness, we can "adjust to environment," as "X" used to say when he was with us on the solid earth.

Strange to say, I saw almost nothing of him during this time. If the reader asks why, I can only answer, "I do not know." Perhaps he had more urgent things to do than acting as guide to a tyro from the sunlighted world. Perhaps I could not travel at his rate of speed.

One day in February he appeared and wrote:

"When I come back and tell you the story of this war, as seen from the other side, you will know more than all the Chancelleries of the nations."

But he did not come back for nearly a month and I was rather appalled at the prospect of writing another book for "X." However willing the mind may be, the instinct of the physical rebels against the loosening of the tie between the vehicles of the spirit. It is not a shrinking from the dead; I do not feel that. Perhaps it is merely a blind instinct, given for our protection against the rush of invisible forces which otherwise might be able to separate us permanently from our physical bodies.

Any producer of genuine phenomena will understand what I mean. It is not like travelling in the astral or mental bodies; that becomes with practice almost as easy as going through a door. But the yielding of the physical mechanism to a disembodied entity, however deeply respected that entity may be, involves suffering. It is not like writing for an embodied Master, who brings his own dynamics with him.

Mr. and Mrs. Vance Thompson were then living in New York, and I took them into my confidence. It was arranged that they should sit with me occasionally to make a better "focus," and the writing of the second book began in March, in their house. My gratitude to them is immense. The burden of such a secret is less when it is shared with sympathetic friends, and the responsibility is less crushing. That is the crux of the matter: Suppose one should make a mistake, and mislead the souls that trust one!

But I believe that Mr. and Mrs. Thompson were as convinced of the reality of our visitor as I was. At least one-third of the first half of the book was written in their house; the other letters were written in my apartment in Twenty-seventh street, save one which was dictated on a hill in Connecticut.

Soon after I began the second book three occult students, widely separated, wrote me that they felt that "X" had returned to the world and wanted to write with me again. One of these was the friend who was with me in Paris when the first series of letters began.

One day a young girl visitor was smoothing her hair before my mirror, when she turned suddenly with a startled exclamation. On my asking what was the matter, she said that she had seen reflected in the mirror a tall man looking over her shoulder. A moment before I had been conscious that "X" stood there. This may be a trifling incident, but it was very real to my little friend. It seems to have been a case of genuine astral sight, for there was nothing in our casual conversation which could have suggested such a thing, and her back was turned toward me.

One day a theosophical friend of mine called, and after a few moments said, "Judge Hatch is writing with you again." I asked, "What makes you think so?" "Because the room is full of him," he answered. This friend had known the Judge in life.

Some readers may ask how I know that "X" is present. In answering that question may I quote from the Introduction to the *War Letters*?

"If the reader will imagine a well-known friend of vivid personality present with him, then subtract from that impression the seeing of the physical eye, leaving only the subtle vibration of the actual thinking and feeling presence,

then add the indescribable 'inner sight,' he may begin to realize how I know that 'X' is in the room. It is probable that Helen Keller knows when her friends are near her, though she is deaf and blind.

"When made aware of the presence of 'X,' I take a pencil and a note-book, as any other amanuensis would, and by an effort of will, now easy from long practice, I still the activity of my objective mind, until there is no thought or shadow of a thought in it. Then into *the brain itself* come the words, which flow out without conscious effort at the point of the pencil. It is exactly as if I heard the dictation with a single auditory instrument, like a small and very sensitive sphere, in the centre of the brain.

"I never know at the beginning of a sentence how it will end. I never know whether the sentence I am writing will be the last or if two thousand words will follow it. I simply write on, in a state of voluntary negativity, until the impression of personality described above leaves suddenly. Then no more words come. The writing is at an end for that time."

That represents the third and perfected method of communication. In the beginning of the first book the writing was almost violently automatic, the hand and arm only being seized as if from outside. The second method, which was only used a few times and then dropped, was like a complete "possession" of the personality and involved a slight clouding of my consciousness. "X" may have been instructed by his own Teacher that that was not good for me, for he then adopted the present method of reaching my consciousness from the outside, through that sensitive auditory sphere in the centre of the brain.

The content of the second book is quite different from that of the first. Our disembodied friend seems to have widely increased the range of his investigations during his two year's absence from my neighborhood. What seems to interest him most just now are the great problems of the war, good and evil, the brotherhood of man, and the coming Sixth Race, which he also says will incarnate chiefly in the United States of America. I do not know what his plans are for the future. It may be that by his unseen influence on the souls of the children he will have much to do with the moulding and guiding of the new race. Perhaps he will

reincarnate, and work for that new race as a man among men. He seems to be very strong now, almost like an Adept.

"X" says that Germany will lose this war. I accept his statement, and consequently am not over-troubled by the pushing back of the Russians nor by the recent German *coup* in the Balkans. Nor was I made anxious by hearing recently that Dr. Rudolf Steiner had predicted the triumph of Germany, though the occult writings of Dr. Steiner command my profound respect. Time will determine which is right, he or Judge Hatch—if indeed Dr. Steiner really made the prediction quoted. (Personally I could better afford to be mistaken than he could. I am a private student; he is the leader of thousands in many lands, who take his lightest word as Gospel.) The reason for my belief in the success of the Allies is the statement of "X". While the writing was going on, I would not ask the question of the source of my hypnogogic visions, for fear I might see something which would make me less negative in the reception of the Letters; and now—I refrain from asking as a discipline of the will.

We shall see.

Meanwhile, on whichever side our sympathies lie, let us try to love our enemies and to understand their point of view; and then when the final Answer comes, let us be generous in triumph or courageous in defeat.

If we, and Judge Hatch, and the Gypsy woman who in 1849 foretold to Prince William of Prussia, later William the First, the fall of the German Empire about 1913, the Prophet of Mayence, Frater Johannes, Madame de Thèbes and others, shall all be proved wrong, let us not lose faith in the possibility of man's development of reliable super-normal powers. Let it only make us a little more critical of what we see on the astral and mental planes, a little more accurate in recording our observations, a little slower and more scientific in our deductions.

If, on the other hand, the occultists of Germany shall be proved mistaken in their predictions, and we shall be proved right, let us admit that we also have misinterpreted sometimes our visions of the inner worlds.

We who call ourselves occult students are working with laws which we know but imperfectly, working in four-

dimensional regions for which our mere scholastic knowledge has not fitted us. Though one or all of us may make mistakes, the work which has been put on record by occult investigators during the last forty years will not be lost. It will form a part of the inheritance of the Sixth Race, and when we reincarnate the next time we shall find it waiting for us.

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those of Norway and Sweden]*

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## A Statement By Vance Thompson

It was my original intention to publish this magazine—or one with the same title—in Switzerland. A chance visit to California renewed my acquaintance with Mrs. Rusak, whose career as an international lecturer and as a student of metapsychics and kindred subjects has made her name widely known. I was glad to meet her suggestion that *The Channel* be published here.

The first number of the magazine was welcomed by many readers and an exceptionally larger number of subscribers gave their adhesion to it.

Other interests in other lands impel me to resign my position as one of the editors of *The Channel*. So here it should be stated that I have now no further financial, editorial or literary responsibility of any kind in connection with the magazine or its publication.

It may be some of the subscribers were less interested in my editorial function—which is a dull, obscure kind of work—than in the articles I contributed to *The Channel*, under my own name or that of my friend, the mythical Cuthbert Tunstall. At all events in the two succeeding numbers of *The Channel*—completing the year for which subscriptions have been received—there will appear articles signed by the hand which signs this statement.

It remains for me to express my best wishes for the success and good influence of this magazine; and in addition to thank most sincerely those two admirable contributors to this number—Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox and Mrs. Elsa Barker.

—VANCE THOMPSON.

## Reincarnation

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By Ella Wheeler Wilcox

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He slept as weary toilers do,  
She gazed up at the moon.  
He stirred and said, "Wife, come to bed;"  
She answered, "Soon, full soon."  
(Oh! that strange mystery of the dead moon's face.)

Her cheek was wan, her wistful mouth  
Was lifted like a cup,  
The moonful night dripped liquid light:  
She seemed to quaff it up.  
(Oh! that unburied corpse that lies in space.)

Her life had held but drudgery—  
She spelled her Bible thro';  
Of books and lore she knew no more  
Than little children do.  
(Oh, the weird wonder of that pallid sphere.)

Her youth had been a loveless waste,  
Starred by no holiday.  
And she had wed for roof, and bread;  
She gave her work in pay.  
(Oh! the moon-memories, vague and strange and dear.)

She drank the night's insidious wine,  
And saw another scene;  
A stately room—rare flowers in bloom,  
Herself in silken sheen.  
(Oh! vast the chambers of the moon, and wide.)

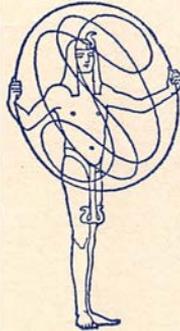
A step drew near, a curtain stirred;  
She shook with sweet alarms.  
Oh! splendid face; oh! manly grace;  
Oh! strong impassioned arms.  
(Oh! silent moon, what secrets do you hide!)

The warm red lips of thirsting love  
 On cheek and brows were pressed;  
 As the bees know where honeys grow,  
 They sought her mouth, her breast.  
 (Oh! the dead moon holds many a dead delight.)

The speaker stirred and gruffly spake,  
 "Come, wife, where have you been?"  
 She whispered low, "Dear God, I go—  
 But 'tis the seventh sin."  
 (Oh! the sad secrets of that orb of white.)

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### The Magic Lines of Three



A magic line is that endless line formed by following the numbers of a magic square in their natural sequence from cell to cell and returning to the point of departure. Because most magic squares are developed by arranging the numbers in their natural order in the form of a square and then subjecting them to certain rotations, the whole thing may be compared to the formation of string figures—the cat's cradle of one's childhood—in which a loop of string is made to assume various intricate and often amazing patterns—magic lines in space.

C. B.

# The Occultism of Music and Painting

By Marie Ruskak

The study of structural values of the world in general, and in particular, is most fascinating to the student of occultism, especially the place of vibration, sound and color. His ideal of unifying himself with all that is akin to spiritual poise and rhythm makes a strong appeal for a deeper understanding of beauty and harmony in whatever form it may exist; the perfection for which he strives is thus the more swiftly attained. To understand nature and to work with her is the endeavor of the occultist and by obedience to it the student gains greater knowledge of himself. There are no more fruitful and delightful realms to investigate than the laws which are related to music and painting.

The truths of demonstrated science are invaluable; they assist the precipitation of the abstract to concrete levels and whether they show a universe made of atoms, grains or electrons, the student endeavors to understand himself as related to and constructed of these particles. He studies their constitution. The phenomena of vibration reveal a world of wonders, even in the experiments described by scientists. Argyll in the *Unity of Nature* tells of the remarkable adjustment of the retina of the eye, which measures and distinguishes between vibrations differing only a few millionths of an inch; yet this difference is registered and shown in the sensations of color. The same adjustment is true of the structure of the ear and its registering sound, as also with other organs in the manifold language of sensation spoken by vibration.

Tyndall in his *Lectures on Light* relates how the pitch of sound is wholly determined by the rapidity of vibration, as is the intensity by the amplitude. What pitch is to the ear, color is to the eye. In the study of science the student's reverence towards nature and her laws grows apace, and he differs from Burke who states that it is our ignorance of natural things that causes all our admiration.

The deductions of metaphysics and psychology are no less an absorbing study than demonstrated science, and the

occult student keeps in touch with the opinions of the more serious of their philosophers.

He is delighted with the appeal of Flammarion as he describes the harmonies of vibration and sound in "the ethereal regions of the ideal where we forget the fetters of matter. Now, all in nature is motion, vibration, harmony. When the martial tones of the *Marseillaise* are borne in the heat of the conflict to the excited battalions, or when, under the Gothic vault, the sad *Stabat Mater* pours out its mournful notes, it is the vibration which affects us by speaking a mysterious language. The flowers of the garden sing, and the effects which they produce depend on the number and agreement of their vibrations relatively to those which emanate from surrounding Nature. . . . . O folly of terrestrial manikins! Folly of busy merchants, folly of the miser, folly of the suitor, folly of the pilgrim to Mecca or to Lourdes, folly of the blind! When shall the inhabitant of the earth open his eyes to see where he is, to live the life of the mind—and to free himself from the fetters of flesh and soar in the heights of knowledge?"

But to the occultist the truths of his philosophy are his 'treasures in heaven;' they too are governed by laws which are eternal. He strives to delve even deeper into nature's mysteries by the aid of the spiritual instruments of extended vision and augmented hearing, and the following is what they disclose, as confirmations and additions to the discoveries and opinions of scientists, metaphysicians and psychologists.

Three creative outpourings of the Supreme took place 'in the beginning,' and through aeons of time have been *scintillating* in activity, *pulsating* with life and *weaving* with intent, as they built all that is within a universe. They have made form, life and consciousness possible to all kingdoms of nature. As the form has evolved, made active by the life, consciousness has unfolded proportionately. All this has been taking place as we have lain embedded in space, through which have been playing constantly the seven cosmic forces governing all creative essence. The qualities in essence are closely related in structural values to those in the medium of space and to their laws. Some of the general essence has become particularized in mineral, plant, animal, man and all other

existing kingdoms of evolution. Other parts of it have become the seven different cosmic planes of nature where the particularized essence dwells; each plane varies in rate of vibration. The atoms of particularized essence are constantly in vibratory relationship with those in general of the surrounding planes.

Let us briefly examine an atom so that we may the better understand the nature of the essence without and within ourselves; and so we can better comprehend the place of vibration, sound and color in music and painting, the relation which each person bears to them and they to him. An atom discloses to the inner vision ten threads of force running spirally through it as little lines of light in a crystal sphere. Seven of these are alike in general appearance, yet when active each one has a different vibration, sound and color peculiar to itself. Even in molecular division and complexity, as the essence becomes substance, these peculiarities obtain. Upon the impulse behind the vibration, and the plane on which it acts, depend the power and velocity of its wave-length, the duration and strength of the sound, and the persistence and quality of the color. When there is no impulse to action, all vibrations are one in stability, the seven notes become one in the dominant, and the seven colors in unity become the white. This is purposely a very incomplete sketch of the atom and relates only to what is apposite to our subject.

The constitution of man also shows form, life and consciousness. These expressions are made possible by masses of the essence described, which are vibrating, sounding and coloring in him. He understands and contacts the physical plane by his physical senses. If he be an occultist he will also contact them on the subtler planes by his keener senses; then the magnetic affinity of the vibrations, sounds, and colors within himself, to those without himself, will become a most interesting and instructive study.

There are certain vital centres in various parts of the physical body, each with its own dominant rate of vibration, sound and color. These centres give off various tints of red, green, orange, yellow and blue, each having its own shade. In the subtler vehicles of emotion and thought surrounding and interpenetrating the physical body there

are also found centres which are magnetically related to the physical ones.

In the unevolved man the vibrations of these centres are heavy, sounds are dull and the colors are dense. In the more evolved and refined person the rates of vibration are higher, the sounds are clearer and the colors are purer and more delicate. Long stages of evolution slowly bring about the experience necessary to the refining process, until the time when man, possessing sufficient knowledge, can hasten his growth by conscious obedience to nature while working with her—the stage of unconscious growth being past. He uses his will to assist him in the deliberate refining, spiritualizing process within himself. With it he purifies, governs and harmonizes his vehicles of thought, emotion and action. He finds that their own inherent vibrations, sounds and colors are vitally related to those in all things outside himself as well; so he seeks the aid of exterior refining agencies, previously unsuspected as such, and the place of music, painting and other arts is gratefully acknowledged. The occult effect of painting was first witnessed by me in Dresden about twelve years ago.

In one of the separated rooms of the Museum of Arts there hung a copy of Raphael's Madonna and Child. All day, streams of visitors, admirers, worshippers were passing in and out of the room. After a time one could not help but be impressed by its very marked effect on the beholders. It was truly hypnotic. Watching it upon several occasions some interesting facts disclosed themselves. Observing the picture closely, the beautiful blue tints in it did not stop where the canvas ended but extended an astonishing distance from it—above, below and through it—like a great aura. Towards the middle of this form of color another tint of soft rose mixed with it and formed a violet centre. After wondering over this phenomenon for a little time, the attention was attracted to a monk who, oblivious to his surroundings, was praying to the Virgin in a rhythmic monotone. From his aura there rose and passed to the cloud-form of the picture, oddly shaped blue clouds and along their vibrations there returned and passed into him some of the blue from around the picture; but the latter was so much stronger in its quality, because of the cumulative force from the many beholders, that it returned to

him and gave him a real benediction. Every person who felt devotion and love for the objects in the picture, poured streams of blue and rose upon it and this had gone on for long years; it made the picture a veritable fountain of devotion and strength for all who had thus placed themselves in sympathetic relationship with it. As the monk passed from the room a little later, he turned at the door for a last look at the picture; his aura was illumined by a joyful radiance that shone from his face and he seemed a totally different person from the one who entered. This effect upon the aura of those who viewed the painting was shown in varying degrees, depending upon their receptivity.

When the feelings of devotion arose in the monk, as they answered to his religious emotion, they caused special vibrations in one of the seven lines (the blue one) in the globules of essence above described, and these vibrations, in their turn, set in motion all the blue lines of other globules in the mass of essence around him, as like responded to like; finally they penetrated to the globules vibrating blue around the picture. The monk gave his mite of devotion and thus made a connecting bridge of lines of force with the painting's great cloud-form of devotion and it poured its power into him.

Studying for some time on this phenomenon in other rooms of the Museum and with different paintings, the results were most instructive. If by accident or deliberately, the artist had clothed his picture in the color which fitted into its intent, the effect of its influence was very far reaching and could not avoid suggestionizing more or less, those who observed it with any interest. The investigations made of the influence of color extended even to the environment of the home and unquestionably proved what potent harmonizing factors are paintings, colored objects, windows, carpets, clothing, etc., Such things may seem inactive but they are not so except to the ordinary vision.

If a person is furnishing a home and understands his greatest need physically, morally and spiritually, he can make the environment of color suggest his ideals. If he is irritable and bad tempered, fiery red should be avoided and blues substituted. If he needs strength and courage, then fiery reds vibrate them. If there is a sensual disturbance, brick reds, muddy crimsons or red browns are bad. Blues

and yellows are good. Greys are akin to depression. Black is seldom desirable as it seems to inhibit all the rays of light, but one understands that it must sometimes be used for convention's or economy's sake. If sympathy is lacking, a beautiful lettuce green throws off its corresponding vibration. If there is an absence of tenderness and affection, rose tints are helpful. Even one beautiful painting of an altar with draperies in violet tints of spirituality, is a strong influence against materiality. If a person is temperamentally depressed, let him hang joyous pictures in his home.

It is difficult to realize that the vibrations thus set free on the physical, penetrate to the plane of the emotions and the thoughts. As students we should remember that such physical efforts to use color and art are not the only crutches upon which we can lean while the spirit endeavors to make rapid moral strides at the stage when the flesh is weak. There are also emotional and thought planes which must be aided. If lacking in sympathy, it is not alone sufficient to have the beautiful color of green near to rouse in the physical the vibrations of this virtue; we must bring about every opportunity of acting sympathetically, of *feeling* it and dwelling in *thought* upon it. We should will to live the virtues which are being suggestionized by the colors, and in so doing we deliberately build into ourselves the potencies that strengthen them on all planes.

We are in an age of large values and such aids may be scorned or doubted by some persons as too insignificant in their importance. But do not let their hasty deductions influence our efforts. We should add the will to live and practice the virtues suggestionized by the colors we are using, as said above.

Music has also a very beneficial effect, especially upon the emotions. It has been shown how closely sound is linked to color in the vibrations of seven of the threads within the globules of essence. If the vibration of a blue color meeting the eye stimulates devotion in us, should not the vibration of a corresponding sound do the same thing? 'Hearing color' has been the subject of some very interesting experiments in Paris. Madame de Stael said that architecture is frozen music; we might say that music is melted painting.

Trace in imagination the occult effect of the creation of a note on the violin by the friction of the bow. Suppose the keynote of the piece to be played is 'g', and that it is the first note to be sounded. The color blue rises in response to the vibration made on the strings by the bow. It starts all the sympathetic vibrations in the particles of the player's own aura (particularized essence) and that around him (general essence) and one sees a perfect cloud of beautiful tints playing in and around a dominant cloud of blue. If there are listeners they will feel the harmonizing effect. The oftener the keynote is sounded, the stronger will become the power. It is said that each person has his own organic note. This is partially true; it would be more correct to say that he is a chord. If one 'listens' to the predominant sounds of the organism there is one note stronger than the rest on the physical plane, one on the emotional and one on the mental, and so on. If these three vehicles are well harmonized and poised, the notes sound like a chord of thirds—in harmony; vibrating around and through them will be overtones and minor notes that make the whole resound like an aeolian harp. But if the emotions of the person are uncontrolled and unequal, or if the mind is undeveloped, or narrow and full of prejudices, there will be inharmonious sounds and broken sequences—discords.

The vibrations, sounds and colors of music, being in nature rhythmical and harmonious, transmit these beautiful qualities to the particles they contact, especially if the creator of the music is a harmonious channel. The vibrations, thoughts and emotions of the performer can be added to those natural to the music and enormously increase its effectiveness.

It was known that at the end of the eighteenth century, when one of the greatest of the world's occultists intended to teach a certain truth to his pupils or listeners, he would often first play the violin or piano to them. He knew in advance the virtue he desired to inculcate, so he would choose the proper keynote—the vibration, sound and color of the virtue—and would play until he felt that the vehicles of those present were sufficiently attuned and equalized to receive his message; then he would begin his discourse.

What a fine opportunity a singer possesses, if he would only understand that his voice can be made the channel of

vibrations of lofty thoughts and emotions. For instance, in a religious song; if behind the sacred words there were the singer's deliberate intent to pour forth spiritual thoughts and feelings expressing his own religious ideals, and the song were also in the correct key, the good accomplished could hardly be estimated. Let each singer who hears these occult facts for the first time, pause and ask himself: "What is my voice doing to help others? Am I feeding the ideals of others? or only their passions? Do I desire admiration, or the opportunity to stimulate what is spiritual in those who need harmony and exaltation in their discordant lives to help them come nearer to the rhythm of the Supreme?"

If a clergyman in choosing the virtue of his text would request the organist to select music of a corresponding key and if the congregation would sing hymns and responses in the same tone, the value to the unifying and impressive power of a service would be enormously increased.

The appealing power of a village church bell to the inhabitants was once observed. If its note was the same as that of the emotional body of the one who heard it, its repeated sound sent forth sympathetic vibrations and caused that person to feel uplifted and attracted to the church. Its appeal was secondary to those whose emotional note was different from its own. Does this not explain why a complete chime of seven bells is the more effective agent in a parish, since it would appeal to all?

It was most interesting in India to watch the effects of a chanted mantram upon the aura. The average person, hearing a Hindu sing a single phrase over perhaps twenty-five times before his meditation begins, might scorn such a proceeding as ridiculous or needless. Not so if the occult effects were known. Before coming into the place of worship from the outer world of business, strife, excitement and such things, a Hindu bathes and changes his raiment, if possible. Then he seats himself and begins his mantram. In a very little time the subtler vehicles have become harmonized to a great extent and the previous signs of those outer unpleasant influences have disappeared. The worldly thoughts and emotions are no longer there—they have been forced out by equalizing vibrations, the personality is attuned and the higher self is free to worship and think divine

thoughts. At some future time the worshiper will be able to equalize his vehicles by a single effort of the will; but until that time there is no more potent means than music to a harmonizing end.

Other investigations into the hidden effects of music made some years ago while attending a series of performances in Dresden of Richard Wagner's operas may be timely. This opportunity was seized to watch the effect of the music upon the subtler bodies of some of the persons present. It was a perfectly legitimate thing to do as the people were strangers to me and the investigations were made with the motive of gaining knowledge, not out of curiosity.

At one of the performances mentioned I noticed particularly three people who sat in front of me. A young lady aged about seventeen; a gentleman about sixty, evidently her father; and a gentleman of about thirty-five.

Case. 1. The young lady.—Before the performance began she seemed rather listless and indifferent. The physical vehicle showed signs of delicate health; the emotional was full of the usual colors, with signs here and there of irritation—probably from the excitement incidental to the preparations for such an evening. Her mental body was replete with thought-forms of music, and it later developed that she was a musical student who had spent the afternoon studying the score of the opera to be given in the evening. (Note this fact specially).

Towards the middle of the first act, a great difference in her health aura was noticed. The vibrations of the music had reached it and it now glowed and scintillated with new vigor; it seemed to have been stimulated to a sufficiently high rate of vibration, and at a psychological moment, responded to an inner vitality or force which rushed in and filled it with new strength. (Later investigations have verified this psychological point of vibration in emotional and mental vehicles.)

Some curious phenomena in the aura of the young lady now presented themselves. There were streams of light playing in her mental vehicle like long thick waving tentacles; at the end of each was a spinning thought-form similar to a whirlpool in water. As some familiar *motif* floated up from the general vibrations of the music (coupled

with the forms which were caused on the mental and emotional plane in general in the room) these tentacles in her mental body drew the vibration into themselves in large proportions; they seemed to recognize and to become a part of each other. The mental vehicle of others near the young lady had few or none of these tentacles; therefore the effect on their mental vehicles was far less marked and their response to the vibrations of the music was more emotional than mental.

As her mental vehicle thus drank in the thought-forms of the music, the effect on it was most beautiful. Thought-forms already there, resulting from the previous study of the music, were strengthened until they filled the body with opalescent light. It seemed to relate her to the deep pulsations of the universal law of rhythm and the experience made the separating walls (the vibratory difference) between the lower and the higher vehicles disappear, and the ego was able to approach nearer to the personality and to impress upon it its lofty vibrations as well. What was the effect on her emotional body?

As the emotion caused by her comprehension of the music and the appreciation of its beauty grew upon her mentally, the vibrations penetrated deeply to the emotional body; it soon became a great pulsating mass of beautiful color—a mighty, many hued bird, beating its wings against a cramped cage as though attempting to escape. Some of the vibrating colors *did* escape, and spread out in all directions like clouds of colored vapor; but there were other forces which seemed to be prisoners within the periphery of the emotional vehicle; it beat against its confines until it, too, finally reached an outlet; it found its way of the least resistance to the physical plane and expressed itself as tears. This force in most people—those who have no lower channels into which it can penetrate as it endeavors to escape—makes them either laugh or cry. The young girl wept violently for a while, until some of the pressure of its power was exhausted; then she grew calm for the rest of the evening and was benefited. The harmonious vibrations in her vehicles (even if she added none such for many days to come) would continue to persist, unless some violent mental or emotional disturbance of another sort was experienced. Before leaving this case I should like to men-

tion that if persons interested in the conservation of energy could see the amount of physical force that is wasted in tears, they might be less prone to shed them. They are a little more depleting than thoughtless whistling, unnecessary movements, strumming with the hands, jiggling feet, etc., which are bad enough.

Case II.—A gentleman of about sixty years—evidently the young lady's father.

His physical aura seemed normal; the emotional vehicle was not unusual. He was a religious man, as there was a strong thought-form about him of the crucifix, and later in the evening I saw that a small gold cross hung from his watch chain. His appreciation of the opera expressed itself mentally in admiration for the form, the colors, the scenes. The emotional effect exhausted itself along his line of least resistance, which was his love for his daughter. As the music continued, great clouds of radiant pinks and blues went out from him and wound themselves around her. He finally closed his eyes and clasped his hands, as though in prayer, and the beautiful waves of color, especially blue, now wrapped themselves around the thought-form of the crucifix, showing that he was also religiously exalted as he listened to the closing orchestration. When he rose from his seat to leave the theatre, his face was aglow with happiness as he said in charming simple faith to his daughter: "How wonderfully kind is our God to give us such enjoyment."

Case. III. That of a middle-aged man and not such a happy one to describe. His physical aura showed him to be in good health. Emotionally he left much to be desired, and the three lower sub-divisions of that body were over-developed by excesses of many kinds. There was much depression and irritability in evidence. In his mental vehicle there was a strong picture of a woman—I afterwards recognized it as a likeness of one of the leading singers of the evening. When the opera progressed the changes in his bodies and the effect upon them were very marked. The first of these changes was on the emotions, and the vibrations of the music seemed to irritate him; he became very restless and the depression deepened. This continued until the lady in whom he was interested appeared on the stage; then his thought-form of her grew clearer and clearer

and the woman and music were blended in him in a great sweep of red vibration, almost wholly of a lower emotional kind, and extremely detrimental to her. The clouds of color expressing his passion and selfishness were most unpleasant to behold, and as the way of least resistance for his feelings was along the line of excesses, he really seemed the victim of his lower nature. At the end of the first act he was forced to go out for some strong drink, which perhaps he thought would help him, but it only made matters worse for some time. By the end of the opera, however, the vibrations had penetrated deeply and the emotion had somewhat worn itself out. His aura looked clearer; but his emotional excitement was followed by a strong physical reaction of exhaustion. One wondered after all if he were not to derive some good from the beautiful vibrations of the music, and by witnessing such art. Observing the higher vehicles, they showed that there had been, even in his case, beneficial results on the plane of his higher self, to which the vibrations had penetrated. They had produced the effect of bringing about a closer, more harmonious relationship between the ego and the vehicles of the personality, leaving a possibility of his experiencing *consciously*, at some time in the future, a quicker response to the wonderful vibrations of rhythm. This event had deposited a seed of harmony, as it were, and this sowing takes place each time one is in the midst of powerful vibrations arising from such music. Later experiments have proven that in about seven cases out of ten the effects of music are very beneficial, and that its immediate results depend entirely upon the condition of the vehicles it contacts—the *temperament* of the person.\*

The purpose of this article is to assist in emphasizing the occult value in the environment, of painting and music. On another page there are some facts about architecture also; but in such short notes one cannot more than touch

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\*If I do not sound a note of warning I shall have an avalanche of letters asking me to find the writers' keynotes. Each one can find it for himself. Try the different notes on an instrument, play them over and over singly and also with chords. It will not be long ere you will feel the sympathetic answer—then you will know. You can then use it in any of the ways suggested. The much despised science of astrology is also an unfailing aid, (if you know your birth hour) as it can show the various notes, colors and virtues related to the character. Those who use astrology for fortune-telling degrade a dignified science.

upon suggestious for general application. However, in the April Channel, I shall begin a series of articles on the vehicles of action, emotion and thought, in which we shall study at some length their particular relation to the occult forces of nature and the practical necessity for their training.



### A Problem

A Point moving generates a line.  
 A Line moving generates a surface.  
 A Surface moving generates a solid.  
 A Solid moving generates a Fourth Dimensional figure.  
 Therefore dimension is evolved by motion.

A Fourth Dimensional figure may move into a solid by diminution.

A Solid may move into a surface by diminution.

A Surface may move into a line by diminution.

A Line may move into a point by diminution.

Therefore diminishing motion tends to inertia and annihilation.

Conclusion:

Positive motion creates dimension.

Negative motion destroys dimension.

For Meditation:

A point moving in one direction generates a line, which has one dimension.

A line moving in one direction at any angle to its direction of length generates a surface, which has two dimensions.

A point moving in all directions simultaneously generates a sphere, which has three dimensions.

A sphere moving in all directions simultaneously at any angle to its volume generates. . . . . What?

—G. H. Grinnell.

## There is No Death

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(Written in verse from paragraphs on Evolution from  
"In His Name" by C. Jinarajadasa.)

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There is no death. Why mourn and sigh?  
There is no death, 'tis life to die!  
The form moves through the open door  
That life may live as ne'er before.

The consciousness that held the sod  
Persists through death, its roots in God.  
All Nature swells the joyous cry  
There is no death, 'tis life to die!

The withered rose of summer's day  
But drops its petals to enrich the clay.  
Send out the cry o'er land and sea  
Fear not the life that is to be.

Dread not the parting of the way  
From earth's dull clouds to life's fair day.  
The universe His life doth show  
That men may live and love and know.

Reveal that life, thy brothers show  
There is no death for those who grow.  
Fling out all fear; rejoice and cry,  
There is no death, 'tis life to die!

—A. M. Trippett.

## The New Race in the West

Of course the completest account of the Coming Race is to be found in "Man: Whence, How and Whither," that book of amazing clairvoyant researches by Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater. There you may read how the "Sixth Race" humanity which is to inhabit California will live, love, labor, worship and achieve. Nothing, I think, can be added to that picture. But here (and for the moment) my interest lies in the scientific investigations, which are confirming the prevision of Mr. Leadbeater and Mrs. Besant.

*All scientific truths are provisional approaches toward the occult truth.*

The French astronomers (notably Camille Flammarion) the French occultists (notably Pierre Piobb) have touched the edge of the same truth, in their study of the astronomic movement of civilization on the globe's surface. One fact is incontestable: If you go back to the historic origins of humanity you see that the evolution of humanity has been an evolution *in space*. And if you trace on a map, or on a planisphere, the course of this evolution you are struck by two phenomena.

First: The strongholds of civilization have always been in the northern hemisphere;

Second: They are found in the temperate region, which lies in the zone comprised between 28 degrees 40 minutes and 52 degrees 31 minutes of latitude north. And this zone offers the further peculiarity of not being parallel to the terrestrial equator.

Recorded history gives us a tolerably exact notion of the trend of our civilization. We can plot its curve. We can see enough of the cycle to predict its future tendency. The diverse civilizations which form the high points of our cycle have had a double progress—social and geographical. In other words each civilization, as it rose, excelled in one way or another its predecessor and spread over a wider area. Now historical records show that each of the great civilizations had a centre—usually a great city—whence progress rayed out like the light from a star. Equally true it is that these centres had but an ephemeral existence. Each of these

centres attained a maximum of civilizing power, fell into decadence and perished—perished, often, so completely that the archeologist working, for example, in Mesopotamia finds hardly a vestige of the splendor past and gone. They of Asia built immense cities, founded mighty empires, wrote stately annals—and all is dust. They of the West took up the work. From East to West. (I do not wish to debate the question of the geographic birth-place of our humanity; Dr. Encausse has destroyed the old legend.) Bluntly it may be said that our civilization has passed over the surface of the earth in a retrograde movement—that is to say in a direction opposite to that generally adopted by the celestial bodies of our system. It has gone from the East to the West, through a northern zone about ten degrees in width and parallel to the plane of the ecliptic.

Up to the present there have been three principal centres of civilization: Asia, the Mediterranean and Western Europe. If the curve of progress has been exactly plotted the next great halting-place will be in North America.

Seven great cities mark the progress of humanity in its journey over the surface of the earth:

I.	Chinese civilization,	capitol	Nankin,	32° 5' Lat. N.
II.	Hindoo	“	“	Lahore 31° 50' Lat. N.
III.	Chaldean	“	“	Babylon 32° 30' Lat. N.
IV.	Egyptian	“	“	Memphis 30° Lat. N.
V.	Greek	“	“	Athens 37° 58' Lat. N.
VI.	Latin	“	“	Rome 41° 6' Lat. N.
VII.	Modern	“	“	Paris 48° 50' Lat. N.

It is evident that these cities are dotted along a curve which descends toward the equator, from Nankin to Lahore and then rises from Lahore to Paris. (At one point only the curve dips slightly, where in order to touch Memphis it descends about two degrees; this is no mere chance, though I shall not, in this article, touch upon the ethnographic and geographic reasons for the slight oscillation, as it does not effect the validity of the general law.)

At Paris, the curve attains its most northerly point. Once more it must dip down again toward the equator, and, inevitably, traverse America from New York (40° 42' Lat. N.) to San Francisco (37° 47' Lat. N.).

These two future capitols of our civilization occupy

relatively—it should be pointed out—the position of Rome and Athens in regard to the equator. (A deflection of a few degrees to Los Angeles is possible.)

Of course the seven great cities I have named were not created one after the other—the one rising in due order upon the decadence of its predecessor. Seen from afar in time the line of progress is clearly defined. Seen in closer detail it is neither orderly nor regular—it is progress, to be sure, but progress by shocks and violence. One formidable truth history iterates and reiterates: *The evolution of nations is accomplished by revolutions and that of humanity by wars.*

Always the shock and the violence, but always the forward thrust of progress.

From Nankin civilization spread feebly, following the mighty waters of the Yang-Tse-Kiang and the Hoang-Ho. Lahore lighted the fires of Amritsar, Multan, Delhi. The civilization of Babylon raised the subsidiary civilization of Ninevah, as Memphis awakened Thebes—projected (toward the East) the secondary civilization of the Hebrews and gave life to Athens. And Athens, which lent its civilization to the Ionian Isles, had also its easterly projection in Phoenicia and Persia. The law is plain: *Each civilization is awakened by the people situate to the East of it; then it develops, first in its own civic centre; next it creates secondary and subsidiary cities—always casting one or two of them back toward the parent East; and lastly it wakens, toward the West, the civilization which is to succeed it.* But mark one thing: These secondary cities act precisely like the capitol city; they project themselves toward the East, destroying the older civilizations, raising up new races which turn upon the parent capitol and drive out the first civilizers. And so, in shock and violence, progress goes its way. It is the history of Rome, which conquered Greece, Egypt, Chaldea, India and—throwing out as a sort of projection the city of Byzance—attracted the barbarous, who put an end to Latin civilization.

Paris was wakened by Rome; and if the law of the movement of civilization has not been modified by modern humanity, Paris should do to Rome what Rome did to Athens, what Athens did to her predecessors. Side by side with Paris you find London, a child of the same evolu-

tionary development. And (as always) to the East Paris has created a secondary and subsidiary civilization—that of Berlin; in which there are the evident seeds of shock and violence. Thus Paris and London, which are sister cities like Babylon and Ninevah, have created a minor but destructive civilization to the East of them; it is an unfailling law. It is equally a part of the law that to the West they should have awakened the great American civilization, which is destined to engulf and replace them. It is destiny; it is the law of the flux and reflux of humanity. (Can anything stay the operation of this law? Can it be stopped by the love that binds these three nations? Nothing has ever stayed the law or stopped it.)

The movement is ever toward the West; the tendency is permanent. Now this movement—this tendency—is the contrary of that of the celestial bodies. It is indeed the same as the movement of the magnetic terrestrial pole. Bruck, the Belgian savant, pointed this out two generations ago. He built up a theory of the movement of civilization across the globe in accord with terrestrial magnetism, but the entire credit of working out the theory is due to Pierre Piobb. And to him we owe the further development of the theory that civilization follows, in a measure, the *precession of the Equinoxes*—that is the retrogradation of the zodiacal point at which the sun is found at the moment of the spring equinox. (This point of course is the zero degree of the sign of Aries, at which the sun cuts the equator in March.) Now the procession of the equinoxes is at the rate of about fifty seconds a year. But the ecliptic, as has been said, appears to play a significant part in the evolution of civilization upon the surface of the globe, by reason of the fact that the line of the plane of the ecliptic is parallel to the zone of civilization. And, this granted, M. Piobb is not too bold in affirming that the displacement *toward the West* of the vernal point corresponds to the Westerly march of civilization.

What was it I said?

All scientific truths are provisional approaches toward the occult truth.

—Vance Thompson.

## Color Language and the Nations

This war will divide the destiny of the little nations. In the highest sense it is a war for the liberation of subjugated races. Indeed France, almost officially, has declared: "This a war for the liberation of the shackled nationalities of Europe—for all nations, great or small, strong or feeble, old or young; we shall strike the shackles off the wrists of Pole and Serb, Slovak and Alsatian, and not willingly will we see them fastened on the Belgian." And it is certain that no peace settlement will endure for a year if it is not based upon freedom and enfranchisement for the subjugated races—for the new frontiers must be linguistic and racial; they must follow the natural curve of race and kin, and the spoken word. For these reasons the Great Powers have instructed their geographers and map-makers to draw up new maps, linguistic and ethnographic, based on the latest and most exactly determined facts. The United States (perhaps unreasonably) looks forward to participating in the final adjustment. And there has been prepared for the Department of State a complete set of maps, showing the linguistic areas in Europe, their boundaries and political significance. This work has been done, in a most scholarly manner by Mr. Leon Dominian of the American Geographical Society. His study, historical, ethnographic and political, which accompanies the maps is admirable for its broadness of view and exactness of statement. I am tempted to quote the grave and thoughtful words of his conclusion:

"The history of Europe during the 19th century shows clearly that modern reconstruction of nationalities is based on language. Practically all the wars of this period are the outcome of three great constructive movements which led to the unification of Germany and of Italy as well as to the disentanglement of Balkan nationalities. These were outward and visible signs of the progress of democratic ideals. The congress of Vienna failed to provide Europe with political stability because popular claims were ignored during the deliberations. At present inhabitants of linguistic areas under alien rule are clamoring for the right to govern themselves. The carrying out of plebiscites under international supervision can be relied upon to satisfy their aspirations and serve as a guide to frontier rearrangements.

"All told, the growing coincidence of linguistic and political boundaries must be regarded as a normal development. It is a form of order evolved out of the chaos characterizing the origin of human

institutions. The delineation of international frontiers is as necessary as the determination of administrative boundaries or city lines. Human organization requires it and there is no reason why it should not be undertaken with a fair sense of the wishes and the feelings of all affected."

This is a plain fact, plainly stated. The political significance of race is trifling. It is by the progress of nationality that civilization has been developed; and nationality has been consolidated by identity of speech—a truth both historical and occult. Nations are built upon the spoken word. It is by the alchemy of English speech that the United States has synthesized into a nation, the forty tribes, races, nationalities that swarm across her lands.

Over the din of the war, with its ambitions of greed and dynasty, you hear the cry of the subjugated races—voices of the sad and tormented Italians of Trentina and Trieste, voices of the subject and harried Slavs, of Czechs and Serbs. Take the Slavs; in Europe there are 55,000,000 of them subjected to the rigor of alien Germanic rule. (The figures are those of Professor Lubor Niederle, of the University of Prague.) Darkest of all is the case of the Poles; as Professor Niederle says: "The Poles were not wholly at their ease in Russia, but Russia had never taken measures so violent and so subtle in their cruelty as those imagined by the Prussians. That which no nation had ever dared to undertake against another nation, Germany did in Poland," and he describes the laws of expropriations, the savage measures of industrial repression, but lays (rightly) the greatest emphasis upon the harsh attempts to destroy the Polish language in home and school and church. This is the very essence of nation-murder, for speech and nationality are one.

Speech and nationality are one. Religion is the impulse by which the human race has most often manifested its ideal, but its impulse to perfect itself on this plane has always been through nationality of which—and this is important—the shaping and perfecting part is speech. And so long as these national forms fulfil nature's occult purpose they cannot be broken. They are held together by speech-vibrations even as the visible and evident rock is held together by an interwoven system of quivering atomic oscillations. I have referred to the law of graceful atomic movement merely by way of illustration; and as a better il-

lustration of the synthesizing power of speech, I might have taken from the psychological clinic. You are familiar with the recent experiments in color-music made by Russian artists and French scientists, and with the earlier color poems of Rimbaud and Marie Krasinsky. It is Marinresco, who has made the most suggestive investigation of colored hearing—*l'audition coloré*. (The best account in English you will find in Coriat's *Abnormal Psychology*.) Now it has been discovered that not only has the vowel a color of its own—that not only has the word a color—but, as well, each language is of a definite and individual color.

If you rise in a balloon over the city of Paris you will hear the synthesized voice of the city; it will come to you as one deep note in which are blended all the multiple noises, voices, cries, clangors, tintinnabulations of the fair city; and this note differs from that of mighty London, from that of Rome, and notably from that of Berlin. In much the same way, the color-hearer will tell you, there may be perceived the essential color of a language. Thus in certain languages certain colors predominate. For instance the more prominent color—the resultant color, you might almost say—in French is yellowish-white; in English it is yellow; in German it is black; in Romanian it is rose. These data are from Marinresco and are quoted in Coriat's book, to which I refer you. They are not, I should say, wholly correct. Indeed they are of interest chiefly as showing how the modern psychologists are groping—sincerely and patiently—amid difficult experiments for the old occult law which underlies both color and speech. They are doing admirable work; and they have touched the edge of the great truth.

Speech and nationality are one, and language is not a dead thing. It lives with a vibration essentially its own. It is stained with color, individual as that of a flower or the eyes of a woman. It is the blood of national life—and its flag. It is the national life. And the greatest infamy of the tyrant is the violation of a nation's speech. It is the crime without palliation or pardon. And there can be no peace—no permanent peace—which is not based upon the freedom of nationalities defined by language. The only neutral frontiers are linguistic and they are the only logical wardens of peace. Political aggregations have

no importance—only the spoken word matters; and upon this occult law, Europe—if there is to be peace—must be reconstructed.

—Cuthbert Tunstall.

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### Freud and Dreams

In his summary and interesting article on Dreams, which appeared in the autumn number of this Quarterly, Mr. Cuthbert Tunstall lent his approval to the over-advertised theories of Dr. Freud of Vienna. Mr. Tunstall is a distinguished scholar and a writer who has both charm and veracity. I have long been one of his sincerest admirers. And therefore it is only natural that I should hesitate to disagree with him as bluntly as I am forced to do in this instance. He is *omnifariam doctus*; but he will pardon me for hinting that in the Dream article his learning was spread a trifle thin. Freud is the best advertised charlatan in the pseudo-scientific world; and Mr. Tunstall, I fear, was caught by this false glamor of reputation. He will pardon me, I trust, for trying to set the matter right. He may even be glad to learn that Freud's scientific repute—never very stable—has in the last few years crumbled like bad mortar. This is the truth. And what is greatest—*et quod gravissimum*, dear doctor—is that his whole theory of psycho-analysis has also fallen into dust.

In its hey-day the Freud theory was looked upon as a natural outcome of the Teutonic theories of the subconscious; and it was so draped and furbelowed in pompous, quasi-scientific terminology that it had—for a moment—the air of being something new. The most casual examination showed it was merely the old dog in a new doublet. It has long been an ascertained fact that the subconscious part of our mentality is infinitely vaster than the conscious part. Equally within the realm of common knowledge is the manifestation of the sex-instinct—its many strange manifestations, which link mysticism and sensuality in an unholy bond, which transfigure arts and religions. It is a commonplace that where this instinct is accentuated or perverted it belongs to the pathologist; and for thousands (not hundreds) of years the men of medical science have studied the dreams and "fixed ideas" and monomanias of

these unhappy folk, cursed with perverted instincts and *religiosa insania*.

An old way of thought—and tempting to a certain kind of mind. It was natural, then, for Dr. Freud to see in every manifestation of thought and fancy the dominance of sex-instinct. It became a mania—a mania at once cold and unclean—with the man; and the horrible thing is that he sought for it everywhere and found it, as a maniac finds persecution, everywhere about him. It is an exact fact that this man found sexuality everywhere; in the child at its mother's breast, in the baby who sucks his thumb, "in most of the sensorial acquisitions, in the functioning of the epidermis." All this is the perverted imagination of a man, who should be cared for, who should be isolated, treated and studied by pathologists learned in his malady. It is not difficult to diagnose his too common kind of perversion. What is most curious is the subconscious mentality of the Austrian "doctor." Once he had dipped into that—gone beneath his fluctuant sex-obsessions—he discovered the wild and active advertising mind of Barnum. And forthwith, he began an advertising campaign that is without parallel even in the trumpeting world of modern science. It is of passing interest that he took—with charlatanic contempt for originality—his cap and bells and spangled gown from a popular novel of the day, *Imago*, by Carl Spitteler. This was a charming love-story, sentimental in a Swiss way, which had an immense vogue a few years ago. It was a story of first love; and the hero all his life long loved the girl of his youth—her memory ruled his actions and his thoughts—though she was not, of course, at all like the peerless sweetheart of his visions and his dreams. Freud leaped on this novel like a dog on a bone. He had already announced his theory that all maladies originate in perverted sexual instinct and that when this instinct is known and traced, a cure may be effected; but no one paid much heed to the announcement. This book awoke the Barnum in him. He declared it was the most extraordinary case that ever psycho-analysis had discovered. He went barnstorming over Germany and Switzerland lecturing on that harmless little love-story, injecting into it all his own sex-obsessions which are (as has been said) both cold and unclean. When he founded a publication to "boom" his

theory—a mania which is now catalogued as the *folie sexuelle*—he could find no better name for it than the name of Spitteler's novel: *Imago*.

And there you have the man—the unclean Barnum of coldly insane sex-perversion. That he was ever taken seriously by such distinguished American scholars and masters of psychology as Dr. Morton Prince, Dr. Isador H. Coriat and Cuthbert Tunstall Ph. D., is one of the amazing things of the hour. But an *idée fixe*—even a sad and dirty one—when it is dressed up in pompous phraseology and “boomed” by an unflinching Barnum is liable to go a long way.

—V.T.

### Cecidit Ut Flos

#### DAY

*If I be vision, brute or brain,  
If I be clay or phantasy,  
I know not. This I know: In me  
'Tis nature passes—I remain.*

#### SUNSET

*And overhead the flight of wings is past;  
On the dim sands the racing tides efface  
The mystery of foot-prints; fast and fast,  
Derisive, hideous, with mocking screams  
The satyrs vanish in the woodland space;  
And, dolorous, the dark earth drinks the blood of  
dreams.*

#### NIGHT

*Undiademmed the night sprawls mute  
And monstrous. And if I be brute,  
If I be vision, soul or brain,  
In me God passes—I remain.*

#### THE ROSE

*O rosa mysticissima, O Thou  
The fleeting and eternal—flower and star!  
For thou art white as lunar lilies now,  
In chill, inviolate pallor; then afar  
The high winds blow thy petals (far abroad)  
Incarnate flame and perfume—thou symbol of our God.*

—Vance Thompson.

# Science of Occult Healing

By Marie Ruskak

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## CHAPTER II.

### Mesmerism, Hypnotism, Suggestionism

There is so much misconception of the various methods of psycho-therapeutics that it is my intention briefly to explain each as I continue to narrate personal experiences while studying occult healing. It is advisable that students have in mind a clear idea of the points of difference in each method, as some do not seem to realize that such diversities exist, or that they ought to be well understood for purposes of study and analysis.

About the year 1775, Mesmer founded the healing art which bears his name. He met with considerable success, and his work attracted a great deal of attention for many years; but finally he became a martyr to persecution and condemnation, which is often the fate of pioneers and which usually results from ignorance and prejudice. The basic principle of his method was the use of what he termed 'animal magnetism.' He believed that there was a mysterious, invisible force or fluid which pervaded everything in nature, including man, and that he could accumulate stores of it by the use of will power while magnetizing metals and other objects. With their assistance he projected the force upon his subjects, directly or indirectly, as a remedial agent in disease, and there resulted some very remarkable cures. In the same manner he produced different stages of unnatural sleep, coma and trance. The rationale of his method was little understood. In his earlier efforts, the charging of objects with 'animal magnetism' was used almost exclusively; it resembled the ancient mode of curing diseases by magnetizing water, talismans and other things. Mesmer's later method with his patients, especially at the time of his demonstrations in Paris, seemed more sensational than his earlier ones, since he added the personal elements of touch, passes, manipulation, force of gaze, etc., to his former magnetization of objects.

Unquestionably Mesmer was serious and conscientious

in his work, and his only crime, so far as we can judge, was that he did not sufficiently explain the mechanism of the forces he used; and since both method and results were so uncommon, and in a sense uncanny, he naturally aroused much opposition. He sometimes deemed it necessary to place his patient in enclosures resembling iron-bound chests, previously arranged in a circle by his assistants. Mysterious hidden music added to the solemnity and weird character of the scene and then he himself would enter, clad in an unusual robe (described by some as the robe of a magician). He moved from one to the other, making strange passes over or in front of them, touching some with his hands or with magnetized objects, while uttering strange words. Some of the patients were cured; others became hysterical and screamed; some fainted; and others would fall into various somatic conditions. Was it any wonder that he was misunderstood? Undoubtedly he performed many remarkable cures in this manner, but he also attracted so much attention, and there was so much commotion and criticism about his method, that a committee of the Faculty of Medicine in Paris was finally commissioned to examine and report upon his work. They did not understand what was taking place any more than Mesmer did himself; they judged from appearances and were also much influenced by their own medical prejudices, so they condemned him.

How impossible it is for anyone to impress even the obvious truths of his teachings or system, when the minds of those called upon to judge, or accept it, are so completely dominated by prejudice and selfish motives! What a world-wide debt of evil has that blinding monster prejudice to pay! And how helpless is truth in the earlier stages of the progress of humanity, when such evil things must obtain, existing as subtle unsuspected balances in which from time to time the justice of men's minds and hearts is weighed and tested.

So the medical commission, in ignorance of the methods they judged, blinded by their professional jealousy and prejudice, weighed the fate of a genius and pronounced him a charlatan.

The saner, more enlightened scientists of Mesmer's time and later years knew that he was nothing of the sort. He came as a pioneer with a message, before the world was ripe

to understand it, and pioneers are generally martyrs. Paracelsus and Agrippa, as well as others, are examples. Some of Mesmer's followers helped to preserve his work at the time of his fall, and some used his methods a little later, notably the Marquis de Puységur, who did some creditable healing work about the year 1784. In France and Germany a number of doctors continued to use 'animal magnetism' for healing purposes in spite of the prejudice against the practice.

The cloud of misunderstanding and condemnation which finally settled upon the subject of psycho-therapeutics as a result of Mesmer's fall, hid it from public interest for about a half century, especially from the scientific world. It was in the year 1813, after the French Revolution, that we find it once more timidly raising its much bruised head above the horizon of the time and trying to win recognition for itself in several countries. In spite of the efforts of Elliotson and others, it remained for Dr. Braid, a surgeon of Manchester, England, genuinely to revive the subject in 1843, which was the beginning of its life in modern times. He demonstrated a process which he called 'hypnotism,' and proved conclusively to many members of the medical fraternity of England and France that it could be made an important part of medical practice, especially if there were added to it a manipulation of the diseased part. He used hypnotic sleep as a practical anesthetic in surgery. This latter practice resembled mesmerism, because it demonstrated the practicability of applied magnetic force to heal disease; but Dr. Braid objected seriously to some of Mesmer's ideas.

In 1860 Dr. Liébault of Nancy, France, established definitely the Nancy clinique of hypnotic suggestion. In 1886 he published a monumental book called *Du Sommeil* which placed hypnotic-suggestion on a scientific basis. He has even been called the father of the modern school of psycho-therapy. I found him a man highly respected, of brilliant mind, noble ideals and charming personality, and his patients and pupils were devoted to him.

As said above, there has been so much misunderstanding concerning the differences between mesmerism, hypnotic-suggestion, etc., even among the early practitioners themselves, that at this point I desire to explain terms and to

define as clearly as possible the exoteric *modus operandi* of each. We shall study later the esoteric side. Ignorance has also led people to believe that these methods are a part of spiritualistic phenomena. Even though some of the somatic conditions resulting from them resemble trance-mediumship and obsession, they are neither synonymous nor even analogous. Suggestion has also been much misunderstood and thought to be inseparable from hypnotism. Since this misapprehension exists I shall hereafter, in my explanations and work, call suggestion 'suggestionism.' I earnestly request my readers to note this, and to distinguish it from hypnotic-suggestion, otherwise confusion may arise in our study together. There is no reason why it should not be called 'suggestionism.' Even though it is much used conjointly with hypnosis, it is in itself a distinct method, in the same sense that mesmerism and hypnotism are such. Let us therefore at this point clearly define each of the psycho-therapeutical methods which we shall study.

*Mesmerism:* (It suffices for the moment to give Mesmer's own explanation of his science.) The deliberate effort of an operator to impart to the organism of a subject, as a remedial agent, an invisible force or fluid called 'animal magnetism.'

When Mesmer practised his art and a patient took upon himself a somatic condition as a result, it was called mesmeric-trance. This sleep was not necessarily a part of mesmerism, and since the word 'trance' is usually understood as describing a spiritistic phenomenon, I shall not use it in connection with mesmerism. Such sleep is better defined by the word hypnotic. Mesmerism, correctly speaking, has to do with the application of the magnetic fluid or force called, as above stated, 'animal magnetism.' I shall use the word mesmerism in that sense alone.

*Suggestionism:* A process by which the operator conveys his intent to the consciousness of the subject, by means of signs, expressions of the face, written and spoken words, emotion, or by the thought alone, both persons being in full waking-consciousness. (Its use can be either intentional or unintentional.)

*Hypnotic-suggestion:* A process by which an operator deliberately imposes his will upon the organism of his subject, bringing it into complete subjugation and inducing

somatic conditions, such as unnatural sleep, coma, trance, cataleptic and other suspensions of animation.

*Post-hypnotic-suggestion:* 1. A process resulting from a suggestion given to the subject while in hypnotic sleep but operative after the hypnotic sleep is passed. 2. Hypnotic-suggestion is always intentional at first on the part of the operator, but as the subject grows more habituated to the somatic conditions produced, he is sometimes thrown into what is called a post-hypnotic condition, even without the direct suggestion of the operator. It is caused sometimes by a thought, or by seeing an object associated with hypnotism. 3. Under this heading are to be placed also the cases in which, through repeated experience in hypnotic-suggestion, things previously suggested do not disappear entirely; but remain and become latent tendencies in the subject and live and express themselves in him, in many ways not intended by the operator and in varying periods of time after somatic sleep and its attendant suggestions have been removed.

*Auto-suggestionism:* A process by which a person produces psycho-therapeutical results in his own organism by his own intent. It can be either intentional or unintentional.

By careful study it will not be difficult for the student to discriminate among these methods as to which are legitimate and which are not. The true occultist recognizes the phenomena accompanying each, but knows that trance-mediumship and hypnotism are fraught with dangers and objectionable features, therefore he does not advocate their use, nor practice either. Knowledge of them is necessary so that he may understand and avoid them, as also to warn others of their dangers.

Among the most devoted of the followers of Dr. Liébault of Nancy, was Dr. Bernheim, who came to him as a complete skeptic and, in time, not only became convinced of the genuineness of hypnotic-suggestion, but after a brief period also became the head of the Nancy clinique. Dr. Liébault wished to withdraw from the strenuous life which he had hitherto led and so decided to retire into private practice; Dr. Bernheim took his place. There was abundant interest in the subject, and scientists and students came from many parts of the world to investigate the miracles of healing about which they had heard. I was one of those who

made the pilgrimage, as mentioned in the last chapter. I was even ready to qualify as a physician if it were necessary and if I found the methods reliable and practical; but I did not; I turned my attention to music instead, and as time went on, healing became a study of secondary importance for some years. What I shall now proceed to relate will cover a period of about fifteen years.

Dr. Bernheim, as well as Dr. Liébault, employed their medical knowledge with or without hypnotic-suggestion. The former generally used medicines first and hypnotic-suggestion when his medical knowledge failed to cure. One could easily observe that since hypnotism was as yet so little understood, he much desired, if other methods sufficed, to resort to it as little as possible until it should be in more general use. He believed in psychism; in fact he described hypnotic sleep as a psychic condition by which the faculty of receiving suggestions was greatly improved.

Three rules obtained in the Nancy clinique and were made necessary to assist as much as possible in protecting psycho-therapeutics from ridicule and desecration.

1. Always secure the permission of the patient. If it is a child, obtain the parents' consent and, if possible, always have them present at the treatment.

2. Have a witness to the treatment, to render assistance if necessary and to testify in cases of complication.

3. Use hypnotic-suggestion and suggestionism only as remedial agents.

The third rule was necessary to check promiscuous practice in ways foreign to their demonstration and application in the alleviation of disease. The public presentations of them, in Paris especially, were much overdone and were often illustrated by using subjects who were not ill, simply to gratify the morbid curiosity of a gaping public. Subjects who were found to be very susceptible to hypnotic influence were made to perform the most astonishing feats, ranging from drinking imaginary poison, to committing imaginary murder. They would suffer the keenest agony after swallowing a mixture of vinegar, cod-liver oil and kerosene, while under the suggestive impression that it was poison. Unfortunately, in spite of the dose being imaginary poison, the suffering was in no sense

less real and the subject suffered tortures; this agony continued until the hypnotizer removed the impression of poison and substituted a suggestion that he should eject the dose from the stomach. Men, women, and children of all ages were allowed to witness the entire procedure. A person hypnotized was suggestionized to commit foul crimes of all descriptions, being armed with unloaded pistols, tin knives and other such implements. These same subjects almost invariably suffered from the most unpleasant after-effects even for some days.

Such demonstrations, as well as some other points of difference, caused a great deal of friction between the Nancy clinique and that of Dr. Charcot in Paris. At one time the latter did not object so much to these sensational public proceedings and the whole conduct of his school was less dignified than that of Nancy. To be quite fair, one witnessed serious and earnest endeavors and no end of miraculous cures at both clinics. The difference can best be described by the comparison of a beautiful dignified church service with an emotional religious revival. I should not wish to give the impression that Dr. Charcot was not honestly endeavoring to further the science of hypnotic-suggestion or was insincere in his efforts; but in the earlier years of his practice, he and his assistants seemed to be greatly influenced by their emotions, as they witnessed the remarkable phenomena which resulted from their efforts. This marred their judgment and poise, so that at times they lost sight of the necessity for maintaining a dignified scientific presentation of their work.

On one public occasion when I was present, after witnessing the subject swallow a tablespoonful of quinine, at the same time smacking his lips in ecstatic delight (he had been suggestionized that it was ice-cream) the operator examined him to see if the medicinal effect of such an overdose had taken place. Finding it absent he jumped to his feet and waved his arms above his head, shouting: "*Mon Dieu! qu'est-ce que c'est cette mystère diabolique?*" The operator then threw the subject into a cataleptic condition. They placed him face upwards on the backs of two chairs, one at the back of the neck, the other under the ankles. Then as many as three of the men climbed upon the suspended body trying to bend it, but all to no purpose. They

took a surgeon's needle and thread and taking up the flesh of the cheek, thrust it through and pulled the thread back and forth; then it was withdrawn and there was no blood or trace of the piercing of the needle in the cheek. After putting the subject through the most astonishing, as well as some of the most revolting demonstrations, they wakened the poor man. For a considerable time he looked dazed and sat apart in a huddled-up condition without any vitality left. The next day he was too fatigued to return to the clinique. The French physicians were not long in recognizing and repudiating such sensational public demonstrations. They passed the following resolution, among others, at a Congress held in Paris in 1889, but it was not until some years later that its effect was very noticeable.

“Public exhibitions of hypnotism and magnetism should be forbidden by the administrative authorities in the interests of public hygiene and public morals.”

Another use of hypnotism which attracted considerable attention in Paris at this time was demonstrated by a Dr. Luys, head physician in the Charity Hospital. Its wisdom was seriously questioned by other physicians. Even though Dr. Luys was conscientiously performing many cures which were unquestionably of great benefit, not many other physicians practiced it themselves, and the method did not meet with general favor. I myself did not have the opportunity of witnessing a demonstration by Dr. Luys himself, but by one of his assistants. Since I have heard recently that there are at present some students of hypnotism in America who are secretly experimenting with this method, it should be mentioned here. It will receive analysis in reference to its occult legitimacy in a later chapter when the other methods mentioned will also be considered from that viewpoint.

Dr. Luys secured subjects in robust health who were especially sensitive to hypnotic influence; after placing them in profound somatic conditions he used them as mediums through which to transfer health to those who were ill and suffering. (The word medium is not used here in the sense given it in spiritism.) The method of procedure was as follows. After the subject was hypnotized, the doctor would seat him in a chair and place opposite to him the

person who was ill; the medium and the subject were directed to clasp hands. Then the physician took a bar of steel and passed it over the surface of the medium's body and on over that of the patient; he continued this for some time, back and forth, pausing here and there over some of the organs of the bodies of each. He thus endeavored to convey the magnetism of the healthy body into the one that was ill. The medium for a time seemed to take on the pains of the patient, but later, on being suggestionized that he was well, and then awakened, he appeared no worse for his contribution of magnetism and was pleased to perform the service, for which he was paid. Dr. Luys certainly succeeded in curing many people in this manner, and physicians who visited him could but acknowledge that as a remedial agent it was undoubtedly successful; but it did not make a sympathetic appeal to them and many felt that there were subtle objectionable features to the method, including that of the danger of infection.

Let us consider some of the reasons for the enthusiasm prevailing at this time about mesmerism and hypnotic-suggestion. Turn in imagination to even a few hours at the clinique at Nancy. See the many sufferers each awaiting his turn; watch them enter the consulting room with haggard suffering faces—some carried in, groaning with pain. Watch the doctor seat them in a chair and speak to them about their trouble; see his gentle passes in front of the eyes which are gazing at him; observe the lids begin to droop, and finally the patient sink into a gentle slumber. Then with a strong commanding voice hear the doctor utter a few words of firm denial of the power of the disease and suggest other conditions of health to enter the body. Then observe that he blows on the eyes, or gently taps the patient on the cheek, or makes a few passes in the opposite direction to the ones formerly made, as he tells him to waken. The eyes open upon a new world free from suffering. Watch the patient wondering if he is cured and his countenance growing radiant with smiles or pale with wonder; joyful tears often streaming down the cheeks or cries of delight bursting from the lips as he 'hears' no answer to his 'listening' for the presence of the former pain. See again and again the patients throw their arms around the neck of the doctor, their gladness knowing no bounds; or fall upon their knees ut-

tering words of reverent thankfulness, as they find themselves free from pain that perhaps had been unceasing for years. Do you wonder that students were enthusiastic over such methods and benefactors? Do you understand how completely former theories of the fatality of disease, of medicines and their cures, of religious intervention, all seemed cast into a whirlpool of disruption, when such instances as these and the following were taking place among thousands of others of a similar kind, not alone in France but in many other countries as well?

A little girl of six who had been carried by her mother into the clinique with a disease which we might call hysterical-palsy or complete subjugation of the body to an acute Saint Vitus's dance. A beautiful child, except for the fact that the legs and arms were practically skin and bone and were twitching and moving about in a manner which made them almost useless. The doctor received the child in his arms, seated himself and whispered to her words we could not hear, as he gently stroked her forehead and put her to sleep. He laid her on a couch and left her there as he performed several other cures of varying interest. After about an hour he returned to the little one and wakened her. She sat up; the strained look was gone from her pale face and the twitching in the body had entirely ceased. The little bony arms curled round the doctor's neck—the same jerking arms of an hour ago, now steady and quiet. As she smiled up into his face he asked her if she suffered; she answered no. He then took her from the couch and placed her on the floor; the same jerking limbs of an hour ago were now quiet and held her up as she tested her ability to stand. The mother, waiting near the door in an agony of suspense, fell upon her knees where she stood and with a joyous cry uttered the little one's name: "Berthe!" The child turned towards her mother, rather uncertain of her steps at first, but in the last few yards, hurried into the waiting arms—the first time it had walked in over a year and a half.

I questioned the doctor: "Since I did not hear you use the usual commanding words, did you pray silently for her when you held her in your arms?" He laughed (knowing that I was interested in faith-cure) and replied that he had not prayed but had instead told her a fairy story as he put her to sleep. He then explained that all that had been re-

quired in her case was to place her in a hypnotic condition and to keep her very near him, but that he had not felt it necessary to suggestionize her in any way. "Then how are we to understand that such cures are accomplished, Doctor?" "I do not understand the mystery myself, child." How well I remember going out of his office in a sort of stupefying wonderment; joyful, yet sad, and feeling what a pity it was that we possessed so little understanding of such miracles.

Hundreds of cases of dipsomania were being cured, but the following one is not only interesting, but impressed me more than the rest, as it was that of the husband of the *concierge* in the house where I lived. This woman's husband for many years had been in the habit of indulging in drunken debauches at frequent intervals, usually about the time of the approaching full moon of each month. At such times he would be very cruel, beat his wife and children, besides again and again forfeiting lucrative positions. The suffering of the family was very pitiable. Someone advised the husband to try hypnotic-suggestion. He did so and received a few treatments. He was cured, and upon my return to Paris some years later, I learned he had never returned to his former habit, and that even though he had not seen the doctor for some years, he still continued to cherish the first suggestionized repulsion for liquor.

I could not help contrasting this cure for drunkenness with a case which my father once related to me of a personal friend of his.

A young man of about twenty years was a hopeless dipsomaniac. His family was one highly respected and of cultured people; naturally the son was a great sorrow and shame to them. He adored his mother and she alone possessed sufficient influence to prevail upon him to leave his club and return home when intoxicated. She was compelled to do this often and on one such occasion while getting out of the carriage, the son fell heavily against her, throwing her to the pavement. She sustained severe internal injuries from which she died a few days later.

The son was heartbroken, knowing that his vice had been the cause of her death; so he took counsel with his father as to the way to find some sure means of cure for it. The latter suggested that he might take a voyage in a sailing vessel around the world as upon most of them liquor was not

permitted; its prohibition would mean compulsory abstinence on the long voyage. The son consented to start a few days later.

That night he dreamed of his mother and recalled upon awakening that she had not seemed enthusiastic about his contemplated voyage. She asked him if he did not feel that he was running away from temptation and stooping to the acknowledgment that his weakness was greater than his own strength of manhood. He recounted his dream to his father and said that he felt positive he had seen his mother and was impressed with the truth of what she had said. He unfolded another plan to his father and the voyage was abandoned.

A short time after this, the young man's friends were astonished to see him as a bar-keeper in a large hotel, the owner of which was a friend and sympathetic with his plan. After some months had passed he had entirely conquered the habit, overcoming it in the face of constant temptation. The admiration, confidence and respect of his relations and friends were regained. His cure was permanent.

Let me give another case. It did not occur until some years later, after I had left Paris, and is not that of a dipsomaniac, but of one possessed with the delusion of having committed a crime and determined to commit suicide. It is used because it emphasizes some important deductions which we shall bring into our study of healing. At the time of the earthquake of Messina a young gentleman and his wife were buried in the ruins. A heavy stone step fell on his chest and pinned him to the ground. His wife was thrown some feet away from him and, if I remember correctly, her right leg was broken. She crawled to her husband and tried to lift the very heavy stone from his breast. She was so maimed that she could only raise it sufficiently to permit him to breathe. She was rapidly growing weaker when a rescue party attracted by her cries went in search of them. Just as the men reached the spot, her strength failed completely and she dropped the stone she had been supporting. In falling back again upon her husband's breast it killed him.

The poor woman was distracted with grief and after a short time was overcome by melancholia. She determined to starve herself to death, and the efforts of relations,

friends and doctors to aid her were of no avail. She refused to eat, affirming constantly that she had killed her husband and wished to die. At last the physicians decided that hypnotic-suggestion was the only hope of assistance for the unhappy sufferer. It was given her. She was suggestionized that she would be well when she awakened, that she had never been married or in an earthquake and was to be quite happy. Upon awakening, the doctors found that she answered perfectly to the treatment. In a short time she was completely well and there was no trace of any memory of the tragedy of her life.

All went well for a time; then the young woman fell in love and her hand was sought in marriage. This caused consternation in the family. The doctors said that the suggestion was likely to pass away at any time and that she might return to her former memory. If this occurred after marriage it might cause complications. The parents did not know whether they were wrong or merciful by keeping the knowledge from the young man. The question was widely discussed but I have never heard what course was finally decided upon. The case is authentic and serves as an apposite illustration of some occult truths which we are to consider later; therefore I have recorded it here.

In order to formulate theories and conclusions and to analyze the benefits which came from the use of mesmerism, hypnotism, hypnotic-suggestion and suggestionism, it was necessary to separate the legitimate practices from those which were objectionable. A number of serious practitioners brought the entire content of their experience and knowledge as qualified physicians and scientists to the assistance of the cases they attempted to heal, and a large proportion of them were successful and the cures were permanent.

Hypnosis, or hypnotic-suggestion, was found to be most effective in cases of hysterical-insanity, chlorosis, neurasthenia, dipsomania and epilepsy. Bad habits such as those of morphia, kleptomania, sex, etc., were easily ameliorated. Melancholia was relieved almost unfailingly where the cause was an emotional one. But it was interesting to note that melancholia and other diseases resulting from 'fixed ideas' were almost impossible to cure. Nor was it an easy task to hypnotize an insane person if

the cause of his dementia was mental, not emotional or physical. When the patient opposed the will of the operator, it was seldom possible to induce hypnotic sleep. Troubles of a purely *physical* nature, such as functional or nutritional disturbances, responded readily to medicines, hypnotic-suggestions and suggestionism, when used separately or conjointly. In diseases resulting from *emotional* causes, hypnotic-suggestion and suggestionism were very effective, but medicines availed little or nothing. When illnesses were the effect of *mental* causes (excessive study, fixed ideas, evil thoughts, cunning, etc.,) especially when insanity revealed these mental causes, *medicines failed entirely to cure*, and hypnotic-suggestion and suggestionism were helpful only in a minority of cases. The latter was sometimes successful, particularly if the patient co-operated with the physician as he suggestionized him.

In mesmerism and hypnotic-suggestion there were, of course, many failures, but the successes were far more numerous than those resulting from our efforts as faith-curists in America; and the practitioners of the former, being scientists and qualified physicians, they won serious consideration for themselves and their methods.

About this time I became much more deeply interested in the philosophy of the spiritual progress of humanity. From that viewpoint there arose serious doubts in my mind concerning the morality of some of the practices above described. Compare the two cases of dipsomania mentioned. The man hypnotized seemed to be living on the moral strength of the hypnotist instead of his own. Was there a 'moral' magnetism of health that could be transferred to a patient in some mysterious manner akin to the way Dr. Luys with a steel rod transferred physical magnetism of health? Was not the cure in the second instance much the wiser and more permanent? Would the man in the first instance be able to absorb some of the moral strength of the hypnotist and make it an inherent part of himself? As for the case of the woman whose husband had been killed in the earthquake; were the physicians justified in suggestionizing her with untruth and making her life totally false? It has been proven that people who at first had been very reluctant to receive a suggested idea, later, after many treatments, not only accepted the same idea very quickly,

but, at unexpected moments, without the knowledge or intention of the operator, would carry into effect unsuspected remnants of formerly-given suggestions. Was there not the possibility of these repeated suggestions gradually implanting similar tendencies in some cases? Was it right to suggestionize them to commit crime? Could not a tendency to commit those acts remain in some inexplicable way? Was it right to make the will of another such a slave to one's own? Was not the will weakened by such subserviency? Many were the perplexing questions which thus demanded recognition and consideration.

For a few years after these investigations in France I was travelling in many countries. Here and there I came into touch personally with practitioners and students, but the greater part of the time I was forced to content my hungry mind with the printed reports of Commissions and Congresses, notably those of the Societe d'Hypnologie et de Psychologie; the Munich Congress of Psychology in 1896 and the British Medical Association 1898, and reports from the Nancy, Charcot and Birillion clinics.

It was Mr. Frederick W. Myers who first awakened keen interest in the importance of the realm of psychiatry and its relation to hypnotic-suggestion. His deductions were so convincing, one could but feel that he was correct in associating its phenomena with superphysical facts. The results of his researches, coupled with the cases I myself had witnessed and studied, convinced me more than ever that hypnotism and hypnotic-suggestion were dangerous. That part of Mesmer's method which applied magnetism pure and simple seemed harmless; suggestionism appealed most of all because it was practiced with the co-operation of the patient, when both were in full waking-consciousness. But, as stated in a previous chapter, at one time I abandoned the practice of mental therapeutics in America because I did not understand their rationale; my experience and study abroad in no sense lessened the former problems. On the contrary it increased them, especially when I became convinced of how great a part psychism played in the phenomena. So I adhered more strongly than ever to my resolve not to practice without the more definite knowledge for which I had so long sought and hoped with ever-

increasing enthusiasm and determination, and which I found some years later.

In the next chapter some of the methods of other schools of healing will be described; then the study and analysis of the various methods, past and present, will be begun from the occult viewpoint.



### Laws of Health and Beauty

You are every day thinking yourself into some phase of character and facial expression, good or bad. If your thoughts are permanently cheerful, your face will look cheerful.

If most of the time you are in a complaining, peevish, quarrelsome mood, this kind of thought will put ugly lines on your face; they will poison your blood, make you dyspeptic, and ruin your complexion; because then you are in your own unseen laboratory of mind, generating an unseen and poisonous element, your thought; and as you put it out or think it, by the inevitable law of nature, it attracts to it the same kind of thought-element from others. You think or open your mind to the mood of despondency or irritability, and you draw more or less of the same thought-element from every despondent or irritable man or woman in your town or city. You are then charging your magnet, your mind, with its electric thought-current of destructive tendency, and the law and property of thought connects all the other thought-currents of despondency or irritability with your mental battery, your mind. If we think murder or theft, we bring ourselves by this law into spiritual relationship and rapport with every thief or murderer in the world.

—Prentice Mulford.



# The Plotinus of MacKenna

By Vance Thompson

One of the books I love most, and the one I have oftenest read, is a brochure of thirty-five pages, bound in a green linen cover with brass clamps. It is Stephen MacKenna's translation of the sixth treatise of the first Ennead—the wonderful work of Plotinus "Of the Beautiful." Years ago he gave it to me when we walked one night—under a low winter sky—in a garden in Paris and talked of such things. The translation is a masterpiece. It is one of the few perfect translations into English of Greek prose, for singular though it be the Greek poets have fared better in English than the prose writers. That so accomplished a Greek scholar as Mr. MacKenna should have made an exact and literal translation is a matter of course; but there is something miraculous in the beauty of his prose—a beauty like that of medieval tapestry, close-woven, colorful, making visible the mystery of invisible things. Here are a few pages—for I know I have his permission—from the introductory note on Plotinus and Neo-Platonism:

'Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Proclus—the very names of the cardinal Neo-Platonists have come to carry in the vague popular mind a suggestion of hierophancy rather than philosophy; and a suspicion of thaumaturgy, of magic white or black is not far off. Here, with some truth, there is much injustice, the injustice of fragmentary knowledge. Iamblichus may perhaps be given over, with however some reservation, to the mirth of the many. But Plotinus creating, Porphyry contributing, promulgating, commenting, Proclus reforming, developing, subtilising are metaphysicians and dialecticians first, moralists of the most exacting, mystics only by grace of stern thought, the mystic liberty a culmination not a preliminary.

'Neo-Platonism, mysticism in its end, is—whether in Plotinus or in Proclus—passionless cogitation till the abyss is reached. Profiting immeasurably by Aristotle in its interpretation and development of Plato, it takes account and use also of Stoicism, of the later-day Pythagoreanism, of Pyrrhonism, accepting, rejecting, adapting. It absorbs, hellenising, much of Oriental thought, whether diffused in

the variegated Alexandria and Rome of the Third century (and even in the re-Platonising Athens of the Fifth) or doctrinally present in the hellenised Judaism of Philo and in the mingled—Egyptian, Syrian, Persian—tradition of Gnosticism, with which last it has yet direct quarrel. And it proceeds not by any capricious eclecticism but by a fusing, much as the finer essence of itself passes, through the Fathers and through medieval thinkers into the mystic theology of Christianity and so into the universal body of belief tacit or expressed.

‘Plato’s Dialectic, fearlessly followed by minds of the later Graeco-Oriental strain, led further than Plato dared, or saw, to go. Plotinus has been called the apostle of intellectual suicide; if he be so, it is as a sternly intellectual apostle, and, that the point might be reached at which reason gave itself over to intuition and ecstasy, reason had toiled terribly.

‘The issue is a system which if it cannot wholly explain itself, yet with a singular reasonableness explains almost everything else. The Theology, Cosmogony, Psychology, Ethic of the Enneads of Plotinus are as entirely consistent as they are ingenious and illuminative. It is scarcely possible to resist these magnificent deductions if only one can accept the fundamental position, that of an all-containing Unity, the “Above-Being,” in Which inheres, as the product of consecutive, necessary Emanation, the universe of Intelligible and Sensible Being, to Which all tends in an eternal Conversion to its source. This comprehensive Unity—dimly, hesitatingly present to Plato’s Dialectic, the cornerstone of Neo-Platonism—is the determinant and justification of all the mysticism of the Enneads; it is the warrant even of the thaumaturgy of Iamblichus—though an intellectual warrant only, for the Enneads do not deal in magic and their noble ethic would repel any care for curiosities profitless to the one end, the Conversion by virtue to the Divine.’

Never, I think, was a man’s life told in so strange a way as MacKenna has told the life-story of Plotinus. He has pictured it in mosaic-work, as the Venetian artist pictured the life of that saint who was buried by lions in the desert. He will pardon me—but I cannot resist the temptation to reset a page or two of it in the framework of this magazine:

“Plotinus, the philosopher born to our times, seemed to be ashamed to be in body.” Thus Porphyry, the Tyrian, begins his *Life of his Master*, and advances innumerable illustrations. Plotinus was all a soul struggling for freedom. He deprecated perpetuation by picture or bust: “Shall we leave after us the image of an image?” Sickly all his life he revolted from the baseness of certain medical treatment and so suffered agony; voice and sight failed; hands and feet were covered with ulcers. He ate little, never of flesh, “often not even of bread.” His sleep was scant, “he never rested from his internal intention of spirit.” There is a curious history of massages, in lieu of baths, intermitted, finally ceasing. He never declared his birthday, though on the birthdays of Plato and Socrates he sacrificed and spread a feast for his friends, expecting them to read Platonising treatises or verse. His age was made out only by toilsome deductions. In fact, he was born, in Lycopolis in Egypt, in A. D. 204, Septimus Severus Emperor; he died—in Rome—in A. D. 270, Cladius Emperor. Dying, he said to Eustochius, “I have been waiting for you; I am struggling to send forth the Divine in me to the Divine in the All.”

It is singular that he did not take to philosophy till he was twenty-eight. Then, in Alexandria, he beat at all the doors; but the sages disappointed him. He came from the lecture-halls “full of grief.” A friend sent him to the conferences of the street-porter, Ammonius Saccas, disciple of Numenius: “This is the man I was seeking,” he cried and he heard Ammonius for eleven years, Longinus, the Critic, with him.

In his thirty-ninth year, “Longing to know the Wisdom of the Persians and Indians,” he attached himself to the army or person of the Emperor Gordian, in the disastrous expedition which ended in the death of the Prince in Mesopotamia. Then he came to Rome and gathered round him a mingled circle of enquirers and disciples; there were Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, Syrians, Arabs; and they were Poets, Critics, Rhetoricians, Doctors, Senators. Later he became a friend of Galienus, Emperor, Debauchee and Mystic, who at one time was disposed to grant a deserted city of the Campagna which was to be “Platonopolis,” administered by Plotinus and his sages in accordance with the “Republic” and “The Laws.” Court envy strangled the plan.

'In the circle all extant philosophies were sifted. The members wrote to each other treatises, even elaborate books, of doubts, refutations, expositions, retractations, Plotinus pleasantly guiding all.'

' "A timid awkward man" . . . "who blushed at the least embarrassment" and who persistently mispronounced his Greek (and perhaps his any language) yet "when he spoke, the light of his intellect shone on his face. Always pleasant to look upon, then he was nobly beautiful. Mildness and intent firmness beamed from him. He delighted in being questioned." '

\* \* \* \* \*

'He was not observant of the feast days or cult of the minor, the official, Gods; "It is for them to come to me, not for me to go to them," he said, and "We did not dare ask him what this proud word might mean."

He was honored in Rome; people dying left widows, children and goods in his hands; and he managed all wisely and carefully, even the property;" Until the children become philosophers we must keep them their possessions and profits safe and sound." The "house was full" of these strange companions and Plotinus would even hear the children recite their verse. "He was arbiter of many quarrels, yet never made an enemy." He disapproved of the political life, and Rogatianus, Praetor, freed his slaves, renounced his pomp and office, commenced philosopher, ate once a day, slept anywhere, "so cured himself of gout and grew as strong as a day-laborer." It is a pity that Plotinus once had a slave beaten, but then the man was a thief, detected, we note, by a feat of clairvoyance. A better use of the faculty was when he discerned suicidal melancholy in Porphyry and ordered him off to Sicily for a cure.

'It is certain that Plotinus had no thought for beauty in his writing, but the beauty is there, all but unfailingly, in the burning passion, the straining spirituality, the fervent rhythm and in a penetrating good sense that sparkles and delights.

'Porphyry edited the fifty-four treatises that contain all the system, arranging them "in honor of the perfect numbers, six and nine" into six books of nine treatises, the six wonderful Enneads, primarily philosophical, incidentally mystic and mystagogue, finally (and everywhere) of a moral-

ity in whose detail there is no flaw or failure; happy the man who from any impulse shall keep this high law.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Plotinus was good and mild and engaging, intent, pure of heart, ever hastening towards the Divine, which he loved with all his soul. . . . a God-like man” says Porphyry, relating that with this Divine the Master had attained four times in life the ecstatic union to which we are bidden here.

Longinus, who did not accept the teaching, praises highly “the philosophic method, the close-packed thought” and even that style which at first had confounded him: “In all these Plotinus is of the order of the most illustrious.”

The Greek Fathers borrowed largely from Plotinus—Basil, Clement, Gregory, Augustine honored him and climbed to Christianity by the Alexandrian Dialectic. Medieval mysticism drank generously of his spirit—Bernard, Scotus Erigena, Anselm, Hugues le Lorrain, even Aristotelian Averroes, even the simple monk of the *De Imitatione*. Plotinus is a light in the Renaissance and Petrarch is “half an Alexandrian;” the great Elizabethan age and the Cambridge Platonists are deeply Plotinians. In our own day Plotinus begins to come into his own again: “*Le grand Plotin, qui de toutes les intelligences que je connais est celle qui s’approcha le plus près de la Divinité*” Maeterlinck writes. It is impossible to be moderate of eulogy when one has dwelt with this great thought.

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I have given you merely a few fragments of Stephen MacKenna’s introduction to his new translation of the first and most strictly Platonic of all the treatises of Plotinus—that “Of the Beautiful.” I have placed them here as signposts—to point you the way to the book.



## The First Tolstoist

It was years ago—so many years ago that it seems part of another life—that I climbed the steep path to the grey and sombre city of Assisi. Night had fallen, a sudden, opaque Italian night, blotting the stars. A high wind, dust-laden and hot, rode down the abrupt hill. Here and there a light shone through narrow windows, coldly and without invitation. I shall never forget this first impression of Assisi, wind-swept, grey, desolate. In other days I saw it bathed in immitigable sunlight. The green hillside was jocund with the laughter of children. The tripartite church which burrows into the hill, and houses such marvellous Cimabues, shone with splendid summer. But the first impression was true.

Assisi is old, inexorably old, hopelessly old; a grey and visionary city of the past.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have always loved Saint Francis of Assisi—this vagabond saint, tender, mystic, fantastic. He preferred music to philosophy. *Et moi, aussi.* He conversed with birds. He was a socialist and the first Tolstoist. There in the village square he gave his cloak to a beggar man, who was cold; and a little farther on, in divine self-forgetfulness, he gave his other garments to other cold beggar men, until he stood quite naked to the winter air. He was a gentleman by birth and a loyal aristocrat. Therefore he stripped himself for the sake of the beggar men. A man of the people could not have done this thing. . . . He had no passion for political economy. My admiration for Saint Francis of Assisi is without reserve. He was a perfect saint. And to him the wild birds whistled confidences. When Bartholomew of Pisa passed the wild birds were morose.

\* \* \* \* \*

“He defied the world and even his father for love of this woman, against whom, as against death, we do all shut the door;—and despite the spiritual court and his father, he did wed her truly, and then from day to day did love her more;—and she, widowed of her first husband for eleven hundred years and more, forsaken, obscure, had waited unsought of anyone until he came.”

And this true bride was Poverty, widowed of Christ eleven hundred years and more. Day by day Saint Francis did love her more, because to her lovers she gives the pleasures which are eternal. . . . He had no passion for political economy.

\* \* \* \* \*

He hated sadness, which is an invention of the devil. The gifts his bride brought to him were the pleasures which are eternal because they are real—the sweetness, charm, and tranquil beauty of life. The chief enemies of poverty are property and intelligence. On these Saint Francis waged unceasing war. He recognized that these were the begetters of sadness, which is the Babylonian evil.

To possess nothing, to learn nothing—this is the infallible rule of happiness. The good saint took from the rich and gave to the poor, but he did not ask permission of the rich. He said that money belonged of right to the devil, and it was the duty of every good Christian to let it go to the devil. He had no love for science or intelligence. He who pardoned all, who fed the savage highwaymen and blessed his unkindest enemies, had no pity for Pietro Staccia, doctor of laws. Said he to the doctor of laws: "Suppose that you have wit enough and memory enough to apprehend everything; that you know all languages, the course of the stars and all the rest; what reason have you for boasting? One little, minor devil knows more than all men put together. There is, however, one thing of which this devil is incapable and which is the glory of man—that is, to be good and obey Jesus. Go away."

And the doctor of laws went away.

\* \* \* \* \*

Another time he said: "Man, man, what would you with books, when your heart is within you and about you are stars and flowers and birds!"

When his order was ten years old it possessed but one book, the New Testament. One day there came a beggar woman to him, and since he had nothing else he gave her the book and bade her sell it and get bread. . . . About him were the stars and flowers and birds.

\* \* \* \* \*

He was a sculptor, a scavenger, a wandering singer.

He held that it was man's duty to be gay and that gaiety may be attained only by living for others.

He is dead, long dead.

For six hundred years and more his divine mistress, Poverty, has been a widow, obscure and desolate, and no man finds her beautiful as to be desired.

\* \* \* \* \*

(Tolstoi looked at her wistfully, but from afar.)

\* \* \* \* \*

He wandered over the white roads of Italy, a strolling saint and singer. He played with the grey wolves. To his friends, the birds, he recited naive legends which he had invented to please them. He had white and subtle intimacies with nature. . . . He preferred music to philosophy.

\* \* \* \* \*

The immitigable sunlight falls on Assisi, all gold, but the splendor passes and opaque night blots the stars. Then you see that this is a grey and naked city, desolate, obscure, empty—

Not a city, but a symbol.

—V. T.

### “Stranger Than Fiction”

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is one of those men who, living in a blaze of publicity, are virtually unknown. Even his best fiction—and at its best his fiction is of a very high order—has been obscured by his frivolous detective stories. And Doyle is a historian who has seen the history of his own times in a sane and illuminative way. Withal he is a trained and competent man of science.

What is least known is that he has long been a student of occult matters and that he was one of the first members of the Society for Psychical Research. Perhaps he himself is responsible for the secrecy in which this side of his life has been enwrapped. Few men of importance are willing to lay that side of their lives open to the public view. Indeed this is the confession Sir Arthur makes in the remarkable article he has printed in *Collier's Weekly*, for November 27.

"All the really very serious things in my life—the things which have been stamped deep into me and left their impress forever—are things of which I could never possibly bring myself to speak," he writes, "and yet it is within the compass of just these intimate and vital things that one perceives strange forces to be moving, and is conscious of vague and wonderful compulsions and directions which are, I think, the innermost facts of life. Personally I am always conscious of the latent powers of the human spirit and of the direct intervention into human life of outside forces, which mold and modify our actions. They are usually too subtle for direct definition, but occasionally they become so crude one cannot overlook them."

This is a frank and admirable statement, but Sir Arthur goes much further and his article in *Collier's* is a tolerably frank confession of his *credo*—though you will observe that he halted on the edge of the promised initiation.

The following quotations are made, one and all, from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's article in *Colliers*:

'I have studied the occult for thirty years, and it seems strange to me to listen to the confident opinions, generally negative ones, which are expressed upon the subject by people who have not given it really serious thought for as many minutes. This is not the time or place for me to give my views, which are still those of a student rather than of a dogmatist. But I have had one or two experiences which are a little outside the usual range of seances or manifestations, and also outside the range of what one could render credible in fiction. In one of these affairs I seemed to brush very close to something really remarkable, unless deception on one side and coincidence upon the other have established a strange working partnership.

'I was living in the country at the time, and formed an acquaintance with a small doctor—small physically and also in professional practice—who lived hard by. He was a student of the occult, and my curiosity was aroused by learning that he had one room in his house which no one entered except himself, as it was reserved for mystic and philosophic purposes. Finding that I was interested in such subjects, Dr. Brown, as I will call him, suggested one day that I should join a secret society of esoteric students.

The invitation had been led up to by a good deal of preparatory inquiry. The dialogue between us ran somewhat thus:

"What shall I get from it?"

"In time you will get powers."

"What sort of powers?"

"They are powers which people would call supernatural. They are perfectly natural, but they are got by knowledge of deeper forces of nature."

"If they are good, why should not everyone know them?"

"They would be capable of great abuse in the wrong hands."

"How can you prevent their getting into wrong hands?"

"By carefully examining our initiates."

"Should I be examined?"

"Certainly."

"By whom?"

"The people would be in London."

"Should I have to present myself?"

"No, no; they would do it without your knowledge."

"And after that?"

"You would then have to study."

"Study what?"

"You would have to learn by heart a considerable mass of material. That would be the first thing."

"If this material is in print, why does it not become public property?"

"It is not in print. It is in manuscript. Each manuscript is carefully numbered and trusted to the honor of a passed initiate. We have never had a case of one going wrong."

"Well," said I, "it is very interesting and you can go ahead with the next step, whatever it may be."

Some little time later—it may have been a week—I woke in the very early morning with a most extraordinary sensation. It was not a nightmare or any prank of a dream. It was quite different from that, for it persisted after I was wide-awake. I can only describe it by saying that I was tingling all over. It was not painful, but it was queer and disagreeable, as a mild electric shock would be. I thought at once of the little doctor.

"In a few days I had a visit from him. "You have been examined and you have passed," said he with a smile. "Now you must say definitely whether you will go on with it. You can't take it up and drop it. It is serious, and you must leave it alone or go forward with a whole heart."

"It began to dawn upon me that it was really serious—so serious that there seemed no possible space for it in my very crowded and preoccupied life. I said as much and he took it in very good part. "Very well," said he, "we won't talk of it any more unless you change your mind."

"There was a sequel to the story. A month or two later, on a pouring wet day, the little doctor called bringing with him another medical man whose name was familiar to me in connection with exploration and tropical service. They sat together beside my study fire and talked. One could not but observe that the famous and much-traveled man was very deferential to the little country surgeon, who was the younger of the two.

"He is one of my initiates," said the latter to me. "You know," he continued, turning to his companion, "Doyle nearly joined us once." The other looked at me with great interest and then at once plunged into a conversation with his mentor as to the wonders he had seen and, as I understood, actually done. I listened amazed. It sounded like the talk of two lunatics. One phrase stuck in my memory.

"When first you took me up with you," said he, "and we were hovering over the town I used to live in Central Africa, I was able for the first time to see the islands out in the lake. I always knew they were there, but they were too far off to be seen from the shore. Was it not extraordinary that I should first see them when I was living in England?"

"There were other remarks as wonderful. "A conspiracy to impress a simpleton," says the skeptic. Well, we will leave it at that, if the skeptic so wills, but I am under the impression that I have brushed against something strange. This is one of the stories with an untidy, ragged ending such as the editor abhors. One more queer experience which will bear telling. I volunteered once to sleep in a haunted house at Charmouth in Dorchester. Two other investigators went with me. We were a deputation from the Psychological Research Society—of which, by the way, I am almost an

original member. It took us the whole railroad journey to read up the evidence as to the senseless noises which had made life unendurable for the occupants, who were tied by a lease and could not get away. We sat up there two nights. On the first nothing occurred. On the second, one of our party left us and I sat up with the late Mr. Podmore, a well-known student of these things. We had, of course, taken every precaution to checkmate fraud, putting worsted threads across the stairs, and so on.

‘In the middle of the night a fearsome uproar broke out. It was like some one belaboring a resounding table with a heavy cudgel. It was not an accidental creaking of wood or anything of that sort, but a deafening row. We had all doors open, so we rushed at once into the kitchen, from which the sound had surely come. There was nothing there—doors were all locked, windows barred, and threads unbroken. Podmore took away the light and pretended that we had both returned to our sitting room while I waited in the dark in the hope of a return of the disturbance. None came, or ever did come. What occasioned it we never knew. It was of the same character as all the other disturbances we had read about, but shorter in time. In this case there was a sequel to the story. Some years later the house was burned down, which may or may not have had a bearing upon the spirit which seemed to haunt it, but a more suggestive thing is that the skeleton of a child about ten years old was dug up in the garden. This I give on the authority of a relation of the family who were so plagued. The suggestion was that the child had been done to death there, and that the subsequent phenomena of which we had one small sample were in some way a sequence to this tragedy.

‘There is a theory that a young life cut short in sudden and unnatural fashion may leave, as it were, a store of unused vitality which may be put to strange uses. But here again we are drifting into regions which are stranger than fiction.’

Sir Arthur has gone too far in the way of confession not to go further. One has almost the right to demand from him a fuller account of his adventures—more important than those of Sherlock Holmes—in the twilight world of the occult.

—C. T.

# Bureau of Correspondence

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By The Editor

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## Notes, Comments, Letters

About two years ago I gave a lecture in New York city in which I emphasized that all of us who desired to serve the cause of truth should hold the ideal of being proper *channels* for it, consecrating life and purpose unselfishly.

In my audience was Mr. Vance Thompson and as he intended a little time later to start a magazine in Switzerland, he decided to call it *The Channel*. A chain of circumstances later brought him to Hollywood where he decided to take up his residence. We renewed our acquaintanceship and resolved to start *The Channel* together. At the time of its birth he urged me to be sole editor, promising the same literary support whether or not his name appeared as an editor; but at my earnest request he finally consented to place it upon the cover with mine as co-editor.

It sometimes happens that a chain of circumstances will change the best of well laid plans and Mr. Thompson finds now that he must live abroad—as he has stated on another page. I am therefore compelled, much to my regret, to assume the full responsibility as sole editor of *The Channel*. It is a very heavy task which is thus unexpectedly placed upon me, but I am sustained by the success of the first number, the many offers of friendly assistance, and by the fact that Mr. Thompson will still continue to write for the magazine. I esteem his work very highly, and I know that many of the readers of *The Channel* value it also from the letters of appreciation I have received. He has generously given me the benefit of his experience and contributed articles without remuneration. I wish to take this means of thanking him publicly. The magazine, in spite of the splendid success attending it, will probably be a gratuitous work on the part of all connected with it for a long time to come; but service in the endeavor to spread the light of truth is joyously and freely given. We shall try to hold the magazine to the high standards

and lofty ideals of its original purpose. Suggestions from any readers will be gladly welcomed and I solicit their sympathetic understanding in our work.

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My esteemed friend Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox has sent several beautiful poems, for which I am deeply grateful, and which will appear in *The Channel* from time to time. Mere words fail to convey the gratitude felt also for Mrs. Barker's article, *My Experiences With The Living Dead Man*. Her investigations, related with so much courage and frankness, are very valuable. I am happy to lend my testimony to the truth of such experiences, if any reader is skeptical. It will give me pleasure to publish the experiences and investigations of others and to include some of my own on this general subject in future numbers of the magazine. They help to impress the truths of the reality of the subtler worlds and the life after death.

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It is interesting to watch the signs of the times as they signal day by day the gradual passing of the barriers still existing between us and the realization of the ideals of brotherhood. There have been Metaphysical and New Thought congresses in Los Angeles, Long Beach and Hollywood. On these occasions representatives of other philosophical and advanced thought societies have been asked to speak and there has been a drawing together in mutual consideration and understanding.

I am in communication with some of the leaders and have been promised articles by them on the ideals and work of the various philosophies they are teaching. These will be published in *The Channel*, as I should like its readers to understand the work of different movements. No person can speak with authority of the merits of the philosophy which he believes until he is well read on others also and can answer arguments by facts and not hearsay. To reject anything before understanding it, is the method of the prejudiced and ignorant. To show respect and consideration for all sects does not mean that one cannot cherish the ideals of one or other for himself specially. Our hearts should be so full of rejoicing that very many men and women are reaching out for the higher ideals of religious

and philosophic truth, that there should be no room in our minds for unkind criticism or condemnation because they choose this or that religion or philosophy different from our own. Let us sympathize, encourage and give them our understanding instead. Let us draw together in the things we mutually believe, of which there are rich stores, and not permit the differences to separate us or sully the ideals of brotherhood.

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A number of letters received from students of the occult have described psychic experiences and asked their explanation. Some of them are interesting and unusual and might be helpful to other students. Therefore, in future numbers of *The Channel* we shall set aside one department in which we shall print psychic experiences and also give elucidation of what actually occurred.

Our readers are invited to send us such, but they must give their names in full. They should also mention the names of any persons who can bear witness to the authenticity of the experience or to whom it was related at the time it occurred. These names will not necessarily be printed but should be recorded with us for reference and corroborative purposes.

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### Question

I am told that Goethe believed in reincarnation. Can you give me a reference where he expressed such a belief in his poetical works?

### Answer

I have not a reference by me from his poetry, but in his letters to Frau Stein he says: "How good it is that man dies, precisely to extinguish the impressions, and comes back bathed. . . . Ah, in times past thou usest to be my sister or my wife, usest to know every feature of my character. . . ."

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### Question

My wife and I are called upon to solve a problem and would greatly appreciate the advice which we think you as an occultist could give us. We are communicants of dif-

ferent churches, but it has never been a source of inharmony. We visit each other's church from time to time and give each to the other full religious liberty. Our daughter Ruth, aged fourteen, has attended church and Sunday-school with us both but we think she ought to choose and join one or the other church. She refuses, as she says she does not want to be a member of any church. As she possesses a strong will and a keen mind, it is difficult to know what to do, especially since she grows unhappy when we try to persuade her. If she were your child what would you do?

George M.

### Answer

Since you have asked my personal opinion to be given as though your daughter Ruth were my own child, it makes it easier to answer your question; the reason being that it is against my principles to make hard and fast rules for people to follow. Each person must eventually settle things for himself. A friend can only give such advice, when asked, as he hopes may be of service; but to coerce another is to insult his reason and to cause him to become a mere automaton.

Truly your problem is a difficult one but you are evidently broadminded, with admirable religious tolerance, since you are happy to have your wife worship her Creator in the way her devotion turns. So long as a person worships Him in 'spirit and in truth,' what matters the form in which the worship is given? Adults should choose this for themselves. Instead of trying to force upon another a certain form or creed, let us try to make the love and worship already in the soul, stronger in the ways it feels the happiest and for which it yearns as the embodiment of its expression.

Even though this same principle of religious liberty holds good in the case of a child, it should be impressed in a different way. The religious morals of any standard church to which a father or mother belongs are all that is required for the child's early training, during the years when its mind is immature. Religion should be made joyous and appealing to the child's happiness and interest, not full of fear or superstition. Divinity is so often held over a child as a punishing agent or one of fear. It was such a dread

that spoke from the lips of a child, when he was told that God was constantly watching and would punish him if he did wrong. He said to his little dog, trotting at his heels: "Go away Fido, it is bad enough to have God following me about all the time without your doing it too."

If a parent wants to make a child love a hero or reformer as an example, he does not proceed to make that person out as severe, revengeful or punitive.

But to speak of your daughter Ruth. You say that she has a strong will and a good mind and does not feel drawn to religious worship of either denomination. As she has attended school in each church and does not wish to join either, I should give her a course of training in simple moral philosophy and a few years later in comparative religion. Do this yourself and begin with very elementary books. If you try to coerce or force her to join a church now, she may be repelled by her emotions instead of being led by her intelligence. They say that a mystic experiences God through the heart to the mind; the occultist through the mind to the heart. Ruth is of the latter type, and will in time choose for herself the religious philosophy which most appeals to her reason. At present your part will be to hold her close to the most spiritual ideals possible while she, of herself, weaves the textures of the garment in which she will later clothe herself as she worships.

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¶ Why should the forces of uplift, the lovers of humanity, the strivers for better things be divided on any pretense? We may be apart on a thousand little shades of belief. What do they matter? Are we together on the main question of God against mammon? If so, let us join hands. For the time is come when we are needed to render service with the living hosts of light.

—James Arthur Edgerton.



## Reviews

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### War Letters From the Living Dead Man

It must have required no little courage on the part of an author like Elsa Barker to publish that first book of "Letters from a Living Dead Man." She had built up a high and serene reputation. "The Son of Mary Bethel" is one of the few great American novels of the last generation—a book that only Hawthorne could fitly praise. Above all Elsa Barker is a poet—a poet as truly inspired as Blake, though her most lawless lyric impulses are guided by a Greek sense of beauty. She has a rare and perfect mastery of the poet's art. It is a temple whitely beautiful, where one might seek the frozen grail; but when you enter there are wild and visionary lights, fierce perfumes and the crash of music.

And so one day to this poet and author, who had a high sane place in the world's regard, there came strange, impossible messages from another world; and she was told to print them that they might be read by those who run and read and laugh. It was to give her reputation to the scorners. It was to call down upon herself the thick-witted irony of the professional psychologists, who hide their learned ignorance in a mist of Greek terminology.

And this thing she did—triumphantly.

The result was unexpected. The book ran across the world like fire in the stubble. It was translated and retranslated. In scores of ways and places the truth of the letters was affirmed by those who knew "X"—the mysterious writer—when he was Judge David Patterson Hatch of this world. A new generation was ready for new truths. The close and bounded intellectual horizon of the last, bad century had been lifted. Men were no longer content to march, wearily, in a parched and materialistic desert. Once more mankind felt the impulse to perfect itself, which is the essence of all religion, and the messages of "X" were read as one reads the reports of a traveller in lands as strange to him who writes as to those who read.

How these messages were received and how they were written I need not relate, for in this number of The Chan-

nel, Elsa Barker gives a full account of the inception and perfection of that book and of the new volume "War Letters from the Living Dead Man," (Mitchell Kennerly, publisher, New York). Therefore I shall not discuss the authenticity of the letters, or play with the pseudo scientific arguments of the subliminal self, of telepathy and the other fashionable explanations of automatic writing. Mrs. Barker has said all that needs to be said. Her sincerity is not to be questioned and the book itself is its own evidence of authenticity. I may say that I was present when the first part—less than a third perhaps—was written. On another occasion I shall print an account of this remarkable phenomenon of inter-communication between two planes of life, as seen by one who stood aside and watched. Here and now I wish to introduce you to the Living Dead Man's war correspondence. This is indeed the story of the war, "as seen from the other side" and he who reads it will know more than all the chancelleries of the nations. It is a tale of blood and broken bodies and the filth of the grave; unquestionably; but it is also a tale of heroism and sacrifice and love—a tale of new horizons and mighty forces, veiled in darkness or in light, battling for humanity and proclaiming the high destinies of man. As "X" said in the very first letter: "This war is more than a war of men; it is more than a war of the angels. Its roots are in necessity itself. A new race has to be born, and races, like men, are born in the pain and blood of their predecessors. And from "the other side" he sees that the race is passing through a rite of initiation, that more love has been born of this war than the earth has known in all the two thousand years of Christianity.

There is a strange realism about the letters, and though the story is told in a fragmentary way—as a correspondent who should visit many points of tragic interest, would write of the immediate thing—yet in the end the picture is complete. You see the German Emperor "hesitating to touch the spring which should open the doors of hell;" his eyes were wet in the night and he prayed to the Force he calls his God. Again you meet the confused ghost of that unhappy archduke, whose murder was the pretext for loosing war on Europe. You stand, with the Living and the Living Dead Man, in Potsdam and the Wilhelmstrasse and hear

the clamor of the warlords. Then you are taken to Belgium:

"With and behind the invading Germans, urging them on to murder, pillage and destruction, rape and burning, were not only the devils from the outer vast, whose time for activity had come; but with and behind the German army was a horde of undeveloped and earth-bound spirits who had suffered in the Congo. Karma, always Karma! . . . . .

"I have seen men, women and little children murdered in cold blood. I have witnessed the soul of a murdered man tearing at a soldier who was violating the murdered man's wife. I have seen the soul of a mother wringing her hands as she would have wrung them on earth when her little daughter was being maltreated by brutes who were blind with madness. An old man out here followed a soldier for days until he saw revenge accomplished by means of a Belgian bayonet; then as the German soul came out he grappled with it again, and the two were torn by each other, the soldier not knowing he had left the body and feeling that he was at grips with an enemy still on earth. . . . .

"But now all the evil Karma of Belgium is lived out, and she stands like a new soul in the face of time.

"Another race has taken up the load that she laid down. Will that too be expended soon, or late? Germany has woven round herself a shirt of evil causes that will cling to her and chafe her flesh for generations. It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh."

There has never been written so strange a book of war-correspondence. To and fro the war-correspondent has passed, from army to army, from chancellery to chancellery; he has stood by the dying; he has interviewed the dead; he has seen the dark forces—no longer invisible—march with the invaders; he has met in the astral world cohorts of disembodied men and vampire entities and demons rolling forward in clouds of poison gases; and having seen these things—the mysteries that lie behind war—he has written them down in a clear way, precise and careful, as an experienced jurist would state the essential facts in a case. The book is vibrantly alive. Precisely such letters Percival Gibbon or Martin Donohoe might have written had they seen the war—not in Russia and the evil, bloody Balkans—but from "the other side." The temptation to quote these human adventures—stories of hate that cannot die and of love that is stronger than death—is not easily resisted; but were I to yield to it I should find myself reprinting the greater part of the book. So I shall quote but one of these mysterious

adventures—the one recorded in Letter XXV. I have chosen it because it describes, from the “other side,” the phenomenon of materialization, which is familiar to all those who have followed the investigations of modern psychic research. French science has established the existence of an invisible body within the body visible—of an aerosome within the sarcosome, to use the technical phraseology. Has it established the existence of a third principle—spirit? It would be more accurate to say that it accepts it as a working hypothesis. The seven bodies of the theosophic exegesis are, as yet, outside the domain of the acquired psychic science of the day. That science, is still concerned—as Paracelsus was—with the three bodies which can be studied in the laboratory, the clinic and the *séance* chamber. So far, I repeat, science is concerned with the three principles which are tonalized in the unity—man. And he who would study the apparition—the familiar materialization—the *boule mentale*—auric and etheric phenomena—must take his point of departure at the basic plane of these three principles, which is the physical, the sarcosome. That is why the work of most significant value in apparitional experiments has been done by trained physical scientists, such as Dr. Gérard Encausse, Dr. Baraduc, Maxwell, Grasset, Flammarion, Dr. Fugairon and other masters of concrete science. In the psychic laboratories of Paris—in the company of these men of science—I have seen many apparitional materializations, which were weighed, tested, analyzed. We did not establish the existence of the third principle of man, spirit; our work was with the two lower principles:

I The physical body, or sarcosome, considered only as the product and the support of the other elements,

II. The aerosome, or “astral body;” this is doubly polarized, Dr. Baraduc proved; and it unites the physical to the spiritual—at least this is the theory of modern science.

We could build up the phantom; and it walked and talked for us and met our scientific tests; but what spoke there, we knew not; we have coaxed the aerosome out of a mediumistic body and photographed it, but what animating entity created therein a speaking intelligence we did not know—for we had reached the frontier of physical science. Now in the letter from which I quote the Living Dead Man de-

scribes the process of materialization, as seen from the "other side." The adventure is an exceptional one, but it throws much light upon those experiments in the psychic laboratories of Paris. It has to do with a war-nurse, whose name is given as Mary. Before the war broke out she was betrothed to a young man (Tom) who in due time enlisted and was sent to the front. He was brought badly wounded, to the hospital where she was stationed. There he lay dying, a broken man, without belief in any life other than the life of pain and horror he was leaving. Her prayers did not touch him and it was her one desire that "something might happen, some miracle of thought or love, which should open his eyes to what she called the Truth." And each day the Living Dead Man's spirit spent a little time in the long white room, where the Dying Man lay. Vainly he tried to make himself seen or heard; and yet he knew that if Tom went out of life firmly believing that death was the end of him, it might really be the end for a long time. So he consulted one of those more highly developed spirits, who is known in this book as the Beautiful Being. And here I quote "X's" own words:

"Together we went back to the hospital where Mary sat talking with Tom about the future life, about God and Christ and angels. She had many soldiers under her charge; but the other nurses worked a little harder to give her more time with Tom, for all the world loves a lover—especially in the horrors of war-time.

'It isn't that I do not want to believe,' he was saying to Mary, 'it's that I just can't. If I could see with my own eyes an angel, or someone that I knew was dead, it would be different. But how could I see such a thing?'

The Beautiful Being drew nearer, smiling, and waved its gauzy veil before the eyes of the dying man; but he could not see. . . . .

'I think you will have to materialize,' the Beautiful Being said to me, 'those eyes are stopped with matter and cannot see anything finer than matter.'

I was not attracted by the suggestion, but my incomprehensible friend followed it up.

'In that bed yonder,' it said, 'is one of those mortals who are called natural mediums, natural materializing mediums, because their tenuous bodies are so loosely held by the physical that they are easily detached and borrowed from. Now materialize yourself and let Tom see something he will take for an angel.'

'I am no angel,' I said, 'and the eyes of a dying atheist would never mistake me for one.'

'Try it and see,' said the Beautiful Being, pointing to a man in a neighboring bed, who was the medium in question.

I looked at the man and read around him the story of his life. He was a coarse fellow, a saloon-keeper, and another familiar compound word would have fitted him like a glove.

'Clothe myself in that man's etheric body!' I said in disgust, 'I would not touch him with a ten-foot pole.'

'How dainty-fingered you are,' said the Beautiful Being. 'Did I not know you so well, I could almost believe you self-righteous.'

'Call me what you like,' I replied, 'but I will not do phenomena with that body.'

The Beautiful Being laughed.

'It would be so easy,' it said as if to itself, 'so easy and so convincing.'

The angel moved toward the sleeping saloon-keeper (I had almost written the harsher compound) and gradually from his side there issued a vaporous stream. From force of earthly habit I rubbed my eyes, for I could not believe that I saw aright. The pure and exquisite angel was clothing itself in the unhealthy emanations of the sleeping medium, and in the space of twenty ticks of the clock on the wall it passed, fully materialized, with a speaking throat, to the foot of Tom's bed.

He sat up, in the surprise and shock of the vision.

'What are you?' he asked hoarsely.

'I am an angel,' said the Beautiful Being truly, 'and I have come to prove to you that miracles can happen, and to assure you that when you leave your body behind on the morrow I shall meet you on the other side of the change.'

Mary could also hear and see, and she fell on her knees with a little sob of joy and wonder; for she had never seen an angel, though her faith was strong enough to remove mountains.

'Then it is really true?' Tom gasped. 'I shall not die with my body. And how wonderful you are!'

For the Beautiful Being had performed the transformation so well that it preserved in its borrowed body all the glory and amazing loveliness of that form which charms the hosts of the unseen world.

'I no longer doubt,' said Tom. 'I believe, and I die happy.'

'I shall not forget to meet you when you come out,' smiled my friend. 'Good-bye now for a little while. I leave you with Mary, who is also a kind of angel.'

Slowly the borrowed shape retreated toward the body of the sleeping saloon-keeper, and after a moment my friend stood beside me, clothed in its own pure form; but on its shoulders and feet were dark stains that looked like mud.

'They will soon blow away in the fresh air outside,' smiled the Beautiful Being. 'And was it not worth while to convince that soul of its own immortality?'

We passed out under the stars, but the scene left an indelible impression on my consciousness. And I shall often remember when I feel self-righteous, how the purest being I ever knew wore the soiled garment of a vulgar saloon-keeper, which left stains on its dainty shoulders and its shining feet—how it dipped itself for the first time in the filth of the world, for love's sake."

"The War Letters from the Living Dead Man" is not a book that can be described within the limits of a review; it is book to read and reread—an amazing record of supernatural facts. What is strongest in it is the grave, serene hope for the future of humanity—less a hope than a certainty that out of the hell of war there shall rise a new race and a new brotherhood and a new law of love. A wonderful book. To the scientist—to the student of the psychic principle in man—it offers a curious problem and many facts which are yet to be tested in the psychical clinic; to those who have never walked with the phantom, it will come as a strange revelation; and to those who love their fellow men it brings a new message of glad tidings. One thing it proves—do you remember the noble lines of Chapman?—

"There is no danger to a man who knows  
What life and death is; there's not any law  
Exceeds his knowledge."

V. T.

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### **Drink and Be Sober\***

When the war began in Europe, persons who were interested in reforms, especially in prohibition, were greatly rejoiced to read that Switzerland placed a check upon the manufacture of alcohol by forbidding the use of grain and potatoes; and liquor is now no longer allowed to its army; that Austria forbade corn being used for malting; that the Sultan had pronounced drunkenness such a crime that it is now subject to trial and court-martial; that Germany had limited the quantity of beer brewed to forty percent of the regular issue; that Russia had forbidden the sale of 'vodka,' the national drink; that England had limited the sale of liquor by restricting forces such as Licensing Judges and Boards of Control.

While, as above said, such national reforms are of profound importance and it would be difficult to calculate the benefit to the world of such measures, still, the individual appeal of books and articles is no less important. Reforms accruing from such governmental restrictions assist in

\*Moffat, Yard & Co., New York.

checking the vices of alcohol by compulsion, but books convince the mind of the individual and their mission is to convert him into a reformer by the intercession they make to the highest in him—his own soul.

Mr. Vance Thompson's book, *Drink And Be Sober*, makes a compelling appeal to be heard and truly it has that to say which cannot fail to carry much added force to the world movement against the use of liquor. It tells its own story simply, clearly and forcefully in the author's best mood. He is convinced of the necessity for the reforms he pleads, therefore he convinces others.

He says: "I think in the end you will agree with me that a remedy is needed—and must be applied by the state; but you have a right to know the facts and all the facts. You will find them, I think, honestly stated in this book. All of them—what alcohol is, why men drink it, why some drinkers are drunkards, what predisposition of mind or body encourages them, the pathology of vice and the psychology of the drunkard—strange and interesting things are these. You shall have to go with me into scenes of darkness and violence; you shall look in the face of crime—and hear mad voices shouting; always is it that you may know what thing it is—the Drink. Hear, too, what the scientist has to say, the physician, the economist and the student (less one-sided) of life; but, above all, see for yourself just what this confused problem is. For, I think, that when you see it—you, the men and women who direct the intelligence of the state and shape its will—then only it will be solved.

"And then—what is of more importance—is the immutable fact that always, in the end, a moral crusade wins. And this is a moral crusade."

Mr. Thompson begins by describing the disintegrating germs or mycoderma of alcohol and before his reader is conscious of the fact the insidious things have wriggled themselves into his mind and heart; they leave in their wake such an ominous tale of their perniciousness, that he gladly unites his own strength to the wide appeal of the book: "Drink (of my warnings) and be sober."

The title of chapters will give a general idea of the scope of the book: The bloom of the Grape. What alcohol does to the Man. The moderate Drinker. Wine and Beer and their little rural brother. Adulteration and Falsification.

Why some drinkers are drunkards. Therapeutics. Crime, drink-storms and degeneration. Drink and the national crises. Ethics and economics. Measures remedial.

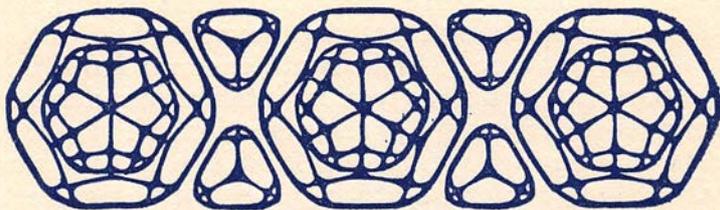
The statistics quoted by Mr. Thompson tell an impressive story. Among them are the following: Eighty-four percent of all the criminals of Massachusetts are drink-made criminals. The last census of the United States shows that the institutional cases of insanity are in almost exact proportion to the amount of alcoholic consumption. The annual drink-bill of the United States is \$2,336,662, 338.00. The Lord Chief Justice of England said: "If sifted, nine-tenths of the crime of England and Wales could be traced to drink."

"Washington is the headquarters of the alcohol forces of the nation. There were mobilized the congressional defenders of drink. Two-thirds of the nation has declared for the abolition of the pandemic plague of drink. In two-thirds of the nation the saloons have been closed. Against the will and purpose of these two-thirds stand the distiller-owned and brewer-fed congressmen. What states do they come from?"

"Four states in the union contain more than one-half of the saloons in existence. And these same states, mark you, are the homes of more than one-half of the congressmen who voted in the House of Representatives against national prohibition. And one state took the lead in this battle to thwart the will of the nation. That state was New York, which contains to-day more saloons than all the thirty-six states whose legislatures have the power to ratify and make effective a federal constitutional amendment prohibiting the liquor traffic."

Occultists will understand Mr. Thompson's reference to the 'three planes' even if the general reader may not. They know that anything which stimulates or depletes unnaturally the physical body, tears down the bridges of consciousness over which the ego travels, as it endeavors to keep pace with the personality, while striving to lead it along spiritual pathways.

The book has a lofty mission and we wish it 'God speed.'  
M. B. R.



### Projective Ornament\*

*“But this thou must not think to find  
With eyes of body but of mind.”*

How spontaneously one's appreciation springs forward in grateful recognition of the mission of Mr. Claude Bragdon's new book. Friends who know the author, either personally or through his writings and architecture, will give earnest consideration to this epoch-making contribution to the ideals of art and advanced thought and will feel that in time it must also greatly influence the world in general. For the last quarter of a century, if not before, there has been prevalent an under-current of dissatisfied unrest on the part of many lovers of art, especially admirers of architectural ornament and construction. In many cases this has been caused by a sub-conscious irresistible desire for a new school of expression; we might call it involuntary craving for something deeper, yet in a certain sense the word deeper would be misleading. The feeling is more correctly defined by the words expansive and inclusive. Not that art lovers have felt ungrateful for the long range of treasures extending from ancient Egypt to the modern Renaissance, loving this heritage of the past less, but that they cherished their intuitive ideals and unspoken promises of future treasures more.

This unrest and craving for newer fields of art in the world beautiful have shown themselves from time to time in various schools of painting, ornamentation, etc.; they have aroused much interest, attention and admiration.

\*The Manas Press, Rochester, N. Y.

Some of them have even hinted at a real message; but one could not help realizing that their devotees had portrayed only partial glimpses of their own ideas in a few effects of their labors, but had not given an intelligent understanding of the regenerative causes of their creations (if any existed) which would have shown their possibilities and their *raison d'être*. It was evident that they did not recognize these as necessities.

Not so with Mr. Bragdon. As an occultist he has understood that art is evolutionary; that it must keep commensurate rhythmic step with the development of man and is inter-related, inter-dependent, progressive and consummative with his evolution. Such architectural periods of the past, with their developments, he recognized and also felt the closing of the last cycle as well as the birth of the future one, with its response to wider laws, necessities and actualities. Mr. Bragdon describes accurately and succinctly the fourth-dimensional fundamentals of progressive geometry upon which his progressive ornamentation is based. They are real; not because past experience has made them so, but because they are related to the occult laws of future evolutionary needs, and appeal to the reason. In his book on *Projective Ornament* he has heralded the birth of his ideas by mathematical stars and cosmical figures drawn upon the firmament of his handiwork. He has been one of those wise men who has brought his art as an offering to the birth of the New World art, in a jewelled chalice of exquisite form, refined beauty and symmetry. His 'will to create' a new art of ornamentation is evidently impelled by the rare combination of constructive volitional imagination with receptive and inceptional intuition. Lest I may not do justice to his work if I try to put his ideals of it in my words, I shall quote his own:

"Consider the present status of architecture, which is pre-eminently the art of space. Modern architecture, except on its engineering side, has not yet found itself: the style of a building is determined, not by necessity, but by the whim of the designer; it is made up of borrowings and survivals. So urgent is the need of more appropriate and indigenous architectural forms with which to clothe the steel framework for which some sort of protective covering is of first importance, that some architects have ceased

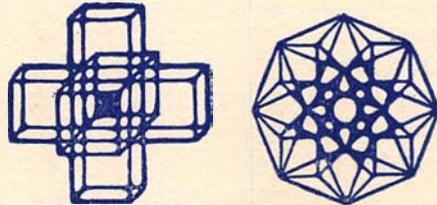
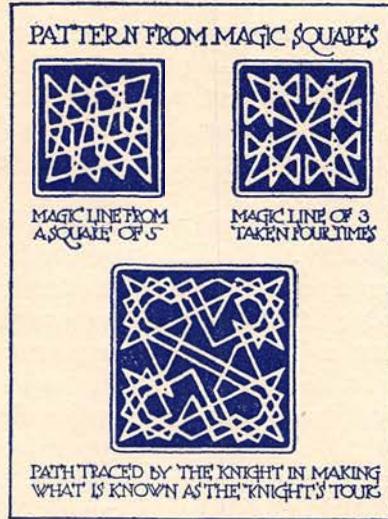
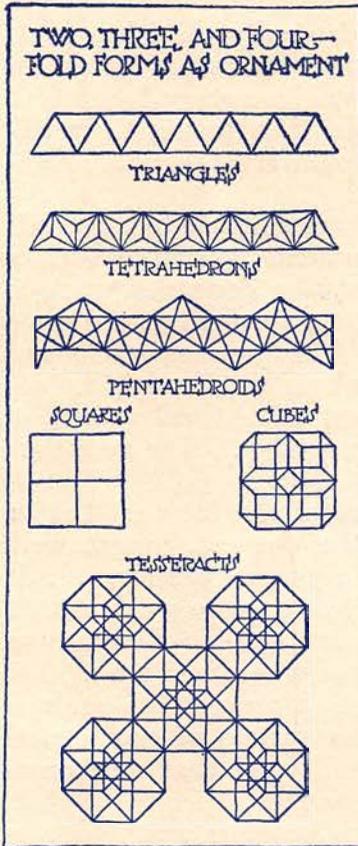
searching in the cemetery of a too sacredly cherished past. They are seeking to solve their problems rather by a process of elimination, using the most elementary forms and the materials readiest to hand. In thus facing their difficulty they are recreating their chosen art, and not abrogating it.

"We are without a form language suitable to the needs of today. Architecture and ornament constitute such a language. Structural necessity may be depended upon to evolve fit and expressive architectural forms, but the same thing is not true of ornament. This necessary element might be supplied by an individual genius, it might be derived from the conventionalization of natural forms, or lastly it might be developed from geometry. The geometric source is richest in promise.

"Our task is to create the art of the future: Let us then draw our inspiration from the deepest, purest well. Geometry is an inexhaustible well of formal beauty. . . . If with the zeal of the convert we set at once to work with T square and compass to devise a new system of ornament from geometry, we shall probably end where we began. Let us, therefore, by a purely intellectual process of analysis and selection, try to discover some system of geometrical forms and configuration which shall yield that new ornamental mode of which we are in search.

"To express our sense of all this Newness, many phrases have been invented. Of these the Fourth Dimension has obtained a currency quite outside the domain of mathematics, where it originated, and is frequently used as a synonym for what is new and strange. But a sure intuition lies behind this loose use of a loose phrase—the perception, namely, that consciousness is moving in a new direction; that it is glimpsing vistas which it must needs explore.

"Here, then, is the hint we have been seeking: consciousness is moving towards the conquest of a new space; ornament must indicate this movement of consciousness; geometry is the field in which we have staked out our particular claim. . . . The fourth dimension may be roughly defined as a direction at right angles to every known direction. It is a hyper-space related to our space of three dimensions as the surface of a solid is related to its volume; it is the withinness of the within, the outside of externality.



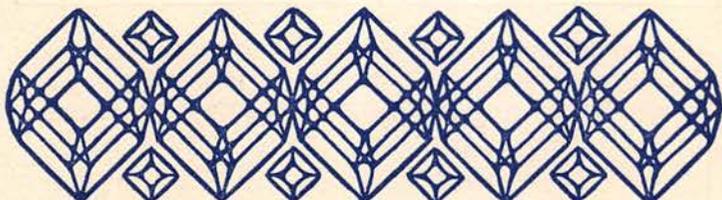
"For the sake of variety the figures are presented in three different ways; that is, in the form of *mons*, borders, and fields—corresponding to the point, the line, and the plane. It is clear that all-over patterns quite as interesting as those shown may be formed by repeating some of the unit figures. With this scant alphabet it is possible to spell more words than one or two. These figures illustrate a new idea, old as philosophy itself, that all forms are projections on the lighted screen of a material universe of archetypal ideas: That all of animate creation is one vast moving picture of the play of the Cosmic Mind."

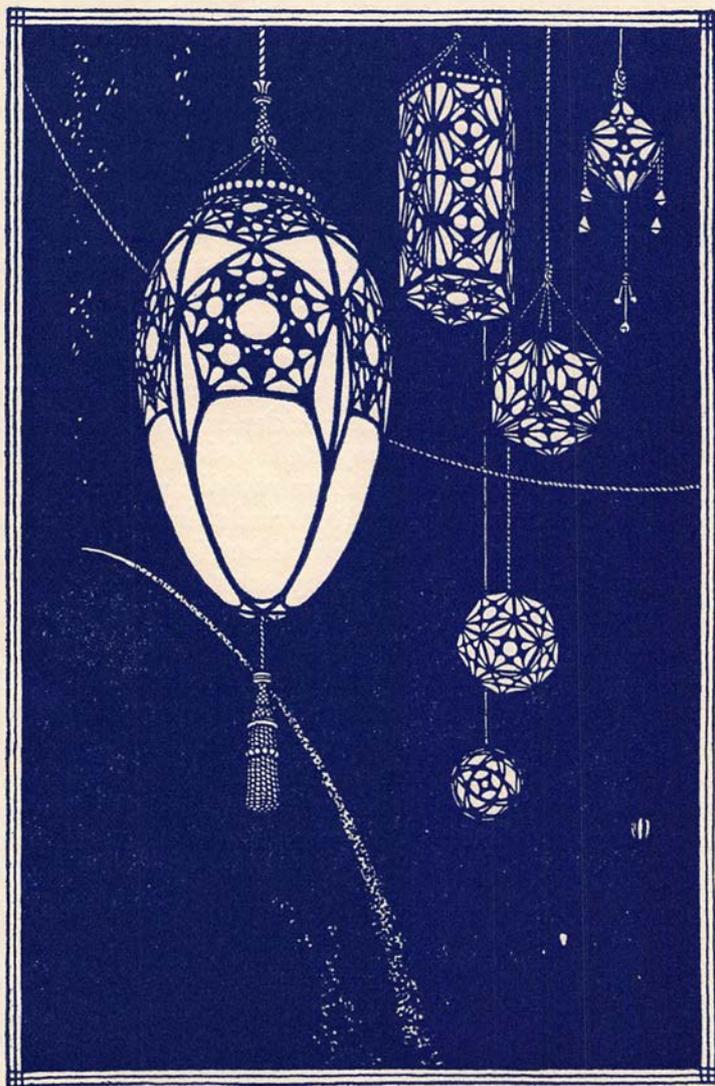
A very large number of students think sympathetically with Mr. Bragdon in his truly philosophical and practical ideals; but there are one or two facts connected with them which he has failed to state, and which may assist in widen-

ing their appeal. Perhaps his silence concerning them results from his modesty or because he has thought them too metaphysical and occult for his readers in general. They are these. Not only are forms projections on the lighted screen of a material universe of archetypal ideas, but these selfsame ideas must die as it were, and again become incarnate and change their forms constantly along with the necessities of progressive evolution. Both from within and without, while answering to the cosmic impulse, they are ever impatiently beating themselves against and bursting their limiting moulds, forged by a more constricted, less complex past, and building new ones when opportunity permits. The opportunity for which they seek is grasped in a genius such as Mr. Bragdon's, which assists in creating the more perfect forms that their wider expression demands. Again, occultism and the projected vision show that the New World humanity will the more rapidly attain its future development of a broader perceptual and spiritual refinement, if the senses of the personality can be but fed upon the rarer, purer alchemical forces revealed by such art and which are directly related to the hidden laws and principles already existing in the Ego.

In other words, this ornamentation and its development in the future will be the concrete precipitation of means which will gradually enforce a place for the potencies of evolution so that they may attain their end as uplifting influences and picture themselves, through the hand of the skilled artisan, to the earthly vision of man. This opens a pathway for more beautiful expression in his actions, emotions and thoughts, thus forcefully bringing him more closely in harmony with the divine Archetype which he is destined to reflect, through distinct and necessary stages, ere he can complete his spiritual destiny.

M. B. R.





At a recent public festival in Rochester, N. Y., some of Mr. Bragdon's ideas of Projective Ornament were used in artistic decorations, especially in hanging lamps, arousing much admiration.—Ed.

## Occult Review\*—Christmas Number

Mr. Ralph Shirley has given us a holiday feast in this number of the Review.

Those of us who love Prentice Mulford's writings are so grateful to *One of His Old Friends* for the article on the life of this splendid occultist of the last century.

There is a scholarly article by Capt. Vere D. Short on *The Vampire Superstition*, in which he gives some authentic instances and some legends.

Mr. W. Gorn Old has contributed an article on *The Old World Culture and The New*, in which he comments upon the religious books and scriptural ideas of India. We are especially indebted for the glimpse of the portraits of the Buddha and The Lord Maitreya—Boddi Sattva.

Part of Mr. Shirley's editorial notes on reincarnation claim the right to be reprinted as they are so instructive. Students of the occult are ever seeking data sufficient to convince the world of this reasonable doctrine. Mr. Shirley says:

'If our past existences are of service to us, it cannot, therefore, be owing to any conscious recollection of the mistakes which we have made in them. We gain rather through these past lives in a more indirect manner. When the consequences of our mistakes have taught us a lesson which in a preceding life has been built up into our character, and has in this way been made part and parcel of our real selves, we can carry over to a future existence the quality acquired, whether such quality be in the nature of self-restraint in the face of temptation, or of a more active kind, such as the capacity for acquiring any specific kind of knowledge or the more general power of surmounting difficulties and obstacles in life. We may not remember the struggles we have been through, but we may inherit in the hour of our need that force of character, that 'backbone,' as the phrase goes, which our ancestral selves have built up. Again, the man who has mastered his trade, the artist who has developed his artistic abilities in a previous life, starts a rung higher in the ladder in his next incarnation; and this, none the less surely, though he remembers nothing of the efforts which have made his powers what they are in the present life, nay, even though he may attribute those powers to the caprice of a deity who bestows on his children gifts of varying degree, like the fairy godmother of nursery romance. When will mankind learn that there is no possession that is not valueless, which has not been earned by the sweat of the brow of him who possesses it? That the gift which is not bought with the heart's blood of its possessor, is an evanescent illusion which will melt away beneath the sunshine of reality in the

\*Wm. Rider & Son, Ltd., London.

hands of him who holds it? Whence do a man's powers, his vices, his virtues, all the qualities that go to make up his real self, proceed, unless from what he has been, from which he has suffered, and from what he has accomplished in past existences? The question surely provides its own answer, except to those who are wilfully blind. There is one alternative, and one only, to this hypothesis—the belief in a God of pure caprice, and the necessary corollary to this belief, the denial of all law and order in the universe. The man who maintains that his life commences here, and here only, by this very admission avows his faith in an irresponsible deity, creating isolated individuals of his own freewill and pleasure and endowing them, without rhyme or reason, with qualities which they are in no way entitled to have, and therefore, which, in reality, if the word reality has any meaning whatever, they do not actually possess. This man, even though he be the first scientific authority of his generation, believes in the deity who created Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and who is still at his same old childish occupation in this present twentieth century. For such a man, evolution is a meaningless term, and the laws of nature merely a phrase used to tabulate for convenience sake the monstrous chaos of the universe. . . .

'A somewhat curious and subtle question arises for those who accept the doctrine of immortality but reject pre-existence. If no man existed before the formation of his present body, we are confronted with the problem how he became connected with a body of such a kind that his character, as it usually does, resembles the character of the ancestors of the body. From the materialist's point of view there is a simple answer. The character of the person born is the product of the body. This hypothesis assumes that the parents create the new being in generating the body. But from the point of view of all religion, Christian or otherwise, there is something positively blasphemous in this assumption. If we adopt the alternative hypothesis, we have here again to deny the reign of law in the universe, and to invoke in each case the absurd theory of a special act of divine interposition. If, however, we accept pre-existence, and postulate the descent into generation of previously existing human monads, we may assume a law of attraction on parallel lines to that of chemical affinity, by means of which the ego is drawn to the parents most qualified to provide it with the most fitting vehicle for its self-expression. On this supposition the soul may select its own parents, not so much consciously as by some law of affinity and instinctive attraction which determines the choice. A man's character, in this case, would be decided by his previous life history, and not by the character of the ancestors of his new body. But it would be the character of the ancestors of the new body and their similarity to his character which would determine the fact that he was reborn in that body rather than in another. The past, then, if these arguments are valid, is not necessarily preserved separately in the memory, but it nevertheless exists in a concentrated form, in the present life, where "all that was before a mass of hard-earned acquisitions, has been merged in the unity of a developed character.'

—H. H.

## Fire-Walking in India

In a recent letter a friend asked me if during my several visits to India I had witnessed any magic of the fakirs and, if so, would I describe some of their phenomena.

The fakirs in the streets of India's villages are almost as common a part of the life, as the beggar organ-grinders are in the west. The tricks of the former are recorded on many pages of history and story, so I shall not repeat what you can read there. However, I witnessed a 'miracle' of another kind which I think will not be without real interest to occultists.

From time to time one hears of the fakirs walking on fire, and crowds of people under the 'spell' of a magician being illusioned into imagining that a thing took place when in reality it never happened at all; but it is quite different when one is actually present oneself. It would have been difficult indeed for my three friends and me to believe that we had been hoodwinked at the following occurrence. We went to see it with the intention of investigating; we kept our wits about us and deliberately tested each stage of the proceedings. One day we heard that at sunset there was to be an exhibition of 'fire-walking' a few miles from Madras. We arrived early enough, not only to watch the performance itself, but to see all the preparations made for it.

Several Hindus selected a piece of ground about fifty feet square, cleared it and excavated to the depth of several inches. This was covered with dry straw, palm leaves and wood, over the whole was spread a thin layer of coal upon which they poured kerosene. They lighted it and for a time the flames covered the entire space, then died away, leaving a surface of red glowing coals.

At a certain moment a procession emerged from a nearby temple. The chief priest was being carried on a large golden dais seated at the feet of a figure of some deity. There followed a concourse of people in gala dress, surrounding about twenty youths in white robes decked with wreaths and garlands. They came running, dancing and singing along the way, till finally the procession halted in front of the burning enclosure. The priest stepped down from the dais and approached the fire; he removed a thin

scarf or drapery from around him and holding to one end of it, threw the other onto the burning surface and it caught fire. He jerked it back and extinguished the flames with his hands. I threw my handkerchief upon the coals and it burned away rapidly. Others threw down objects which burned and tested the reality of the fire. We were compelled to shield our faces from the heat by our umbrellas.

The priest began to chant, and the impatient youths joined with him drawing near to him. Otherwise there was a hushed tense excitement. After a little time the chief priest threw down the other end of his scarf upon the coals; this time it did not burn! There was a gasp of astonishment from many, quickly followed by a shout from the youths in white. Into that burning surface they plunged, running about and shouting. One fell prone upon his face and we stood transfixed in horror and fear for his life; but he sprang up and dashed on over the fire to the other side where the youths had all gathered together after the rush across the sheet of fire. Pandemonium then reigned. Priests, relations, friends ran to embrace the heroes, laughing, weeping, shouting.

Unbelievably I placed my veil upon the coals. It did not burn! Many skeptically threw down objects—flowers, lemons, gloves, handkerchiefs—but they remained unharmed. How long that inhibitory spell lasted, which held the fire element checked, I do not know, for I now turned my attention to the young men. I examined three of them, one being the youth who fell prone. They were dazed and seemed in a condition resembling hypnotic ecstasy. They let us examine their bare feet; they were not burned—neither were the white flowing clothes of the youth who fell. After an hour had passed we drew near to the temple where the youths and crowd had gone; there were still no signs of burns on the fire-walkers' feet and they were still being embraced and congratulated by the crowd.

After questioning many people and further investigation the following details were learned.

This demonstration took place once or twice a year. It was celebrated as a result of vows made by the youths at various times. If a member of a family were ill, or there were other troubles, a son of the family would come to the temple and while praying for the recovery of the loved one,

would vow that if his prayer were answered, he would return and offer himself for the fire-walking ceremony, which was to be the ultimate demonstration of the petitioner's gratitude.

One of the young men said that they had been worshipping and singing in the temple all the previous night and day, and that the chief priest had worshipped with them, giving them from time to time sweet drinks. He cried in ecstatic delight: "Because I prayed and gave my vow, my little wife was saved; the doctor said she must die; she was saved! I am saved!"

As we passed on, the chanting voice of the priest again reached us, this time from within the temple, droning—chanting on and on. Night fell; the moon rose. The sound of the mantrams and the tom-toms gradually died with the lengthening distance as we drove silently away. There was an uncanny feeling in the very stillness of the air. Perhaps the horse felt it too, since now and then he started and swerved aside from weird shadows thrown by the light of the fulling moon.

—M. B. R.

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### Curing By Colors

In certain hospitals they are working out the color cure, starting with a few principles that seem fully established by numerous experiments. Here are a few facts that they claim to have discovered:

Blue, especially the soft shades, quiets the nerves.

Yellow has a tonic effect on despondent persons.

Red cheers a depressed patient, but in case of some nervous disorders is too strong medicine.

Green is one of the best of all colors to soothe and rest the nerves.

The treatment is given in a room where there are no decorations or wall colorings to conflict with whatever hue is used in the treatment, and a flood of the chosen color is thrown about the patient, women being found particularly sensitive to the effect of the rainbow rays.—Los Angeles Times.

# THE CHANNEL

FOR APRIL, 1916

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