

INTELLIGENCE

FROM THE

SPHERE OF LIGHT.

BY

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INTELLIGENCE FROM THE SPHERE OF LIGHT.

Was it a dream or reality? Did Sleep approach so near its sister, Death, as to allow the veil to be turned aside? It began in peaceful slumber, and I felt the scenes of earth melt out of consciousness, while a strange exhilaration, peaceful and delightful, came over me. There were changing flashes of color rivaling the rainbow, coming and going in receding circles, and then a misty brightness, out of which slowly came, as though the cloudiness were material in the hands of an artist, a form which I recognized as our mother. A score or more of years had passed since the fateful hour when we gathered around her couch, too distressed to weep, and awed by the presence of the silent messenger. Wasted by painful sickness, she was at last free from pain, and a smile of joy came over her pale face when she knew it was soon to be over. We thought her dead, for her eyes closed and her breath ceased, when she repeated with a voice sweet as music :

Bright spirits await to welcome me home,
To that blissful region where you, too, may come,
Weep not, for our parting is only to sight,
Our spirits may still the more closely unite.

Perform well each day the task which to you
Is allotted, and murmur not if you must do
What now seemeth hardship, for soon you will prove
'Tis labor of kindness, an action of love.

Then her eyes closed again, and her features fashioned into a glad smile. There was now no mistaking the signs, and we went to our appointed tasks, feeling that it would be sacrilege to weep in the presence of such a triumph over death. We felt that we had been permitted to catch a glimpse of an unseen reality. As travelers in mountain regions are delighted after the valley is wrapped in twilight by the crest of some tall mountain catching the rays of the sun and reflecting its glory, so to us it seemed that the departing spirit had caught a glimpse of

the light of its new life, and reflected a smile on the face of the body it was leaving.

How beautiful she was with the graces of youth and the complete and perfected charms of maturity. No wrinkles on her brow, no marks of care anxiety or pain; she was ideal in excellence.

What has happened to you mother? How are you the same and not the same?

THE RESPONSE :

I have returned to my youth, and have brought my experience with me. I scarcely realize that the years have passed. Twenty-five, do you say? It to me seems not as many days; and yet let me recount. There has been a flood of events, and my recollection of the last time you saw me has grown dim. We count not time by years, but by accomplishments; by what we do and gain in thought. I am pained by the memory of the old time. You say it was twenty-five years or more ago! As I come again in contact with earth, my last sickness and suffering are recalled. How weary and worn I became! How I longed for the end! The love you all bore me and my love for you was the only cord which bound me to life, and as I approached the end I forgot even that. How much I suffered that day I cannot tell, but at last I was at peace. The terrible struggle between flesh and spirit was done, and the latter rested. I thought, I will sleep, and yet it was not sleep. It was a repose of all living functions, and yet my mind was intensely active. For a time I heard all that was said by those who were in the room, but soon I became so absorbed in the thoughts which rushed on my mind that I lost consciousness of everything else. Oh! it was such a delicious sense of comfort and of rest! I was so very weary; I had been so tortured by pain that to be free was indescribable happiness. I had heard them say I was dying, and I expected the dread moment with foreboding. It surely must soon come, yet I thought I had not reached it. The darkness began to lighten, and I thought the morn was breaking. An intense thrill of delight filled my being and the light grew stronger. I continued to rest and a

new strength came to me. I am getting well again, I thought, and, perhaps, when the morning comes I shall surprise my friends and children by at once arising from my couch. The light streamed in with a soft and a refreshing warmth. There were no walls to prevent its passage, I was floating in a cloud of light, borne gently and softly as a weary child on its mother's breast. Then out of the light, as though it had formed itself into shape and substance, I saw three friends, long since dead, and my own blessed mother. To meet them did not appear strange to me, yet I know they were not of earth. When they came around me, taking my hands in theirs, and caressing my forehead, I was surprised at their beauty and sweetness of expression. They read my thoughts, and answered :

“Yes, truly we are of the dead ; and you will find that dying means to live.”

“I thought I was dying ; they told me so,” I said, laughing at the absurdity. “But I have become well, never so well since a child. It is a joy to breathe, and feel the fresh life come coursing through my veins. But why do you smile,” I asked. They replied : “Do you not know that your new life means death ? How much have you to learn, our sister.”

“Yes, I have everything to learn, and my life has been full of cares.”

“They have been for others,” they replied. “And such are treasures in heaven. For us to learn is not labor. If we bring ourselves into the proper condition of receptivity, knowledge flows into our minds. There is no effort, no wearisome study. We may know all that the highest intelligence knows if we are in the condition.”

“I must bring myself at once into that condition,” I replied, “for there is need.”

“Be not in haste, our sister,” said they gently ; “there is time, and you must have repose. The pain you have endured reflects on your spirit, and you have not yet recovered.”

“I infer from your words that I have met the change I so feared,” I said again, smiling at the absurdity of the

idea. "When did I pass the limits of earth life, and why do I lose sight of my friends?"

"You need have no more dread," replied my darling mother. "You do not see them because we are far away from them. It would not be well for you to remain and witness their sorrow. We have taken you away, that you may first recover and grow strong."

As I felt the swift motion, which I had not before observed, for it had been to me the gentle rock of sustaining arms, I asked: "Am I to be taken away so far I cannot return?"

"Fear not, child," she replied in her old way; "fear not, for whatever we justly demand is granted to us. The craving of the heart is not left unanswered. Presently it will be all made plain to you."

We are drawn onward as by the tide of a great river, and I saw countless others coming and going, as though on swift errands. Then we paused on an eminence, overlooking a sea of amethyst on our right, and a vast plain on our left. The sky was softest purple, and the light fell with indescribable mellowness over all—there was happiness in the air, and those we greeted were radiant. No words can describe what I saw, or my rapidly changing emotions. There is nothing on earth with which to compare the landscape. The softest earthly colors are opaque in comparison, and the clearest sky a murky cloud. Overcome I wept for joy, and my companions wept with me.

"Oh!" exclaimed one, "how sweet to know that this is the reality; no more doubts, nor forebodings; no more fears, nor distress; a life that of itself is the highest pleasure, and yields us heaven."

I started at the word, for it recalled a tide of beliefs: "Heaven! When are we to go there? Where is it and what must we do to go there?"

"Be not impatient, dear sister; we are in heaven already. Where happiness is, there is heaven. Heaven is activity. It is the deed of kindness, the pure loving thought."

"What is its first principle?" I queried, "for I am weak and undeserving."

“Doing for others is the full measure of its law. This is the angel code from which every trace of selfishness has been weeded out. To do for others brings gain. The pure and noble angels bending from their spheres of light, labour for others in self-forgetfulness. When man so far forgets his selfishness as to sacrifice himself for others, he exalts himself in angel life. To work for self is no better nor worse than the brute world, from worm to elephant, and is devoid of immortal gain.”

How delighted I was at these words. The dross of the world was rapidly disappearing. The sphere of my earthly labour, which to me seemed so narrow, widened. I had been sympathetic with those who suffered, and to those weaker than myself I had given a helping hand. Little things, of no account at the time, so humble and narrow had been my life, yet now they had new meaning.

My companions smiled as they read my thoughts, and one responded: “Dear Sister, your weakness was your strength. It will be no effort for you to do as you have always done. They who can be unselfish under the coarse influences of earthly life, how grand must be their career under the purer conditions which here prevail.”

As we conversed there came one from another group, tall, beautiful, and radiant with light, and with him his companion more exquisitely beautiful than himself. They invited us, and we went to their abode. “How beautiful you are,” I exclaimed involuntarily to her.

“I am glad;” she replied, “for to be truly beautiful means that the thoughts are right and true, for they mould the features and through them gain expression; but it requires time, a great length of time.”

“How long have you been here?” I ventured to ask.

“Many hundred years. I scarcely know how long.”

“And you grow not old here?”

“We grow not old. The spirit knows not age. It is not limited by duration. It is an eternal now, concentrating the past and awaiting the future.”

I had not seen myself since the change. I put my hand to my face; it was smooth and unwrinkled. A happy ripple of laughter came from my companions. He who had come for us said: “Dear Sister, you left those

with your body. The pure spirit has not the wrinkles of care or of age."

I looked at him as he spoke and my attention was called to his robe, I had not thought of this subject before. I had been so eagerly watching the faces of my companions, I had not thought of their garments, or of my own. What a change! What was this raiment? I cannot describe it. It was a drapery as of a cloud, and its color depended on the spiritual condition of the wearer. I was glad that mine was azure, for that was the color of my companions, and thus I knew I was like them. What was it? A cloud or woven light? It fell around me soft and warm, and with a luxurious coolness contrasting with the burning of the fever I had recently escaped. How different from the roughness of the old garments was this fleecy robe, glinting and reflecting the light.

As we conversed there came a spirit who, paused in front of us, dark and sullen. His raiment was sombre and grim, like his thoughts. "Can you tell me where heaven is?" he grumbled. "I paid a preacher to gain it for me, and now having lost all else, I want that."

"Poor brother," replied the elder, "you search for what you can never find outside of yourself."

"You are a deceiver!" he muttered as he fled away.

The elder brother gazed after him sadly, and turning said: "On earth he was a miser, and who can count the years before his regeneration? He sought wealth, trusting to others his religious and moral culture. The recording angel has written against his name not one charity, not one unselfish deed. He now must wander in self-torment, seeking and finding not."

"Was he of consequence on earth?" I asked, for he was proud and haughty in his degradation.

"Thousands trembled at his beck, for he had made them dependents and slaves. He had vast riches, houses and lands, mortgages and title deeds. He was wise in getting wealth; but here mortgages and deeds are unknown, and he becomes the least in the kingdom; morally idiotic, mentally dwarfed, and a pitiable object of our compassion."

"How long before he will gain the light?"

“Ah! who but God can tell!” sighed my instructor. “Who can tell! Centuries may go by. He must first learn to ask; first learn humility and his mistakes. Then some kind angels will attempt his education. They will lead him out of his mental selfishness, and he will begin as a child in the old life. His task will be difficult because he cannot enter the sphere of receptivity as we are able to do, and thus absorb knowledge from others. His nature must first change, and complete regeneration be accomplished.”

The coming of this pitiable one brought a wave of sadness over us, but it passed, and the sun was more gladsome after breaking from the clouds. I had rested in delightful sleep; I do not know how often, and the old life was like a dream. It was not possible I had been sick, for I was so strong, so gladsome in my strength, and activity was a delight. My mind broadened. Contact with my companions gave me enlarged ideas. To think was to learn; to wish was to know. I was able to look beyond the effect to the cause. I could read the law in the result. Every day brought grander views, and my mental horizon expanded. Even in this larger growth I found rest. The faculties, dwarfed and starved in the old time, called for activity. The weariness of the body I was leaving behind me. How lovingly my companions would surround me with conditions of repose. How they gave me magnetic life, and drew to me those who would reveal the knowledge it was my desire to learn!

Then suddenly one evening I felt an earthward impulse. What power drew me thitherward?

“Is our sister disturbed?” asked my gentle companion.

“Oh! so disturbed! I have been selfish in my new joy, and how could I have been so forgetful; so unnatural? My husband and babe; my son and daughter weeping, and I have not thought of them!”

I wept, and my companion folded her arm around me and gently said: “You have been under our control, and are not responsible. To have been subject to the grief of those you left, would have been painful and useless. You are now able to bear a full knowledge, and

withdrawing our influence, you feel that of your family and friends. I will go with you and you will find what I tell you is true, and will bless us for our thoughtfulness."

We are poised, as it were, over a promontory beyond which the earth hung in space, as the full moon in a summer sky. Beyond were the stars. I was aghast at the journey, and fearful to the abyss which seemed deep as infinitude. While I trembled it was passed. I was in my old home. A great flood of human memories came over me. How I loved the dear familiar walls, the chairs, the glowing fire and more than all the family group. My husband sitting with head bowed in his hand, my daughter performing the tasks that had been mine; my little boy and girl at play; the babe asleep. There were tears in my eyes as I turned to my companion for strength to bear: "Did I not leave my body? Was there not a funeral? Why is it so quiet if I have truly passed the ordeal?"

"Listen," replied my companion, supporting me. "Listen. It was October when you passed away. The bright foliage of the trees, then burning in scarlet and gold, has been blown away by the blasts of winter and the snow covers the earth with its icy shroud. All you think of has been done. It is finished. Were you to go to the churchyard you would find a mound by the side of relatives gone before."

It was so unreal and absurd I was bewildered, and laughed at my misunderstanding; to weep the next moment when I saw my family. I went to my husband and placed my hand on his head and called him by name.

I called with all my strength to learn that my lips gave no sound audible to his ear, and that my touch was imperceptible. Then I turned to my daughter, and threw my arms despairingly around her. She was singing a song we sang together, and continued unheeding my embrace. Oh! how keen the grief when I found I was not known in my own old home. I who had come from such a distance, my heart beating with love found no response! My daughter finished her song, and her eyes filled with tears. I read her thoughts for they were of me. "Mother! Mother!" she was saying, and I

responded. It was the call I had heard beyond the bars of heaven! I could not bear it, and my companion said as she again placed her arm around me:

"Come, my sister, you can do no good here. There is your child sleeping in its crib. It is cared for as by yourself. Kiss it and we will go. Be assured whenever you are wanted here you will feel the desire."

I kissed my child. "Let me stay." I pleaded; "I want to sit in my old place, in that vacant chair. Then I will go."

"As you will, and I will endeavor to impress your daughter with some ray of sunshine."

She bent over my daughter, and by means I did not understand, her mind responded to the spirit's thoughts: "Your mother is with you, and retains the same affection for you she had in earth-life." With the influx of that thought a smile lit up her face and turning to the organ she sang, "Annie Laurie," a song we had often sung together. How thankful I was that one ray of sunlight gladdened her heart, and the memory of me was yet dear. I was grateful to the kind spirit who had assisted me, and then she said we must go, for the trial was too great for my strength.

"You must calm yourself," said my companion, "for this sorrow is without the least benefit. Believe it is for the best, and though the hour is dark, it will bring a perfect day."

"I cannot prevent myself thinking of my children and my husband. My love for them is stronger than ever, and I could not have been persuaded to have left them for a day. Can I not, oh! good angel, remain with them. The fairest scene of your home is desolate compared to the earth!"

With tenderest compassion, she said:

"You are now in the earth-sphere and take on its conditions. You are seeing through earthly eyes, and affected by earthly ways. When we once leave this scene you will be no longer distressed. Willingly would I leave you. I have no right to force you away. I influence you as I think for your highest good. Here

you are unrecognized, and are constantly troubled because you cannot make yourself known, and by a reflection of the sorrow of your family. Whenever you can be of use to them you will receive the knowledge and can return. Now we had better go."

She placed her arm around me, and whether the earth sank away from us, or we flew from the earth, I was unable to tell. I have since learned how to traverse space by the force of will, but then I was ignorant of the method, and depended on others. Now, when I desire to visit a place, or be with certain friends, the desire creates an attraction, which in spirit is the equivalent of magnetic attraction in the physical world.

When we again reached our spirit home our companions gathered around us, and I was soothed by the kind words of my mother. I felt condemned for my loss of interest in the earth-life which had so recently absorbed my mind, but it became like a dim dream, and ceased to trouble me. What if I should forget it entirely? I was appalled at the idea and cried out at the pang it gave.

"Do not fear, you will not forget, but after a time your affections will strengthen. Our sister has much to learn, and needlessly distresses herself."

The years passed and I became accustomed to my new life, when a message came for me. The palpitating waves repeated, "Mother! mother! mother!" It was my youngest daughter, who had grown almost to womanhood. I knew by her cry that she was in mortal pain, and yielding to the attractions I was soon with her. She was motionless on a couch, surrounded by her relatives, and her cousin held her cold hand. "It is all over," they said in tears.

"Can it be?" I eagerly asked. "Oh! can it be that the time has already come when I am to have one of my children with me? To have one of them who will know me, and converse with me? Oh! heavenly Father, I thank thee for this answer to my incessant prayer."

Then I looked closely and saw that the great transition was approaching. I could not assist; I could only stand by her side and receive her. She seemed asleep, which I

fully understood from my own experience. Slowly the spirit left the insensible body, and as I saw my spirit-daughter recovering her senses, I drew near and whispered, "Claribel." She opened wide her blue eyes, and I knew she saw me. I threw my arms around her and wept with gladness. "Darling Claribel, do you not know me, your mother?"

"Dearest mamma," she said, with her old smile, "know you? Why, you are younger, but the same. Where have you been so long? We thought you dead?"

"Do you not know?" I asked apprehensively.

"Know! what mean you?"

"Yes, I am what they call dead, and were you not likewise, you could not see me!"

"I dead?" she replied with a laugh which recalled her childhood, throwing her arms gracefully over her head. "Look you, mamma, how far from it I am. I have been wretchedly sick, and in such fiery pain, but it is over, and I am perfectly well."

We drew to one side and she then turning saw the friends, weeping, and her body on the couch.

"Why do they weep?" she asked, "and who is that on the couch? I am confused, for it is like another self."

"They are weeping for your loss, and that form on the couch is yours."

"Am I to return to it? What am I to do, dear mother?"

"No, you will need it no more. Your life is now with me and the angels."

"What mean you mother, by saying you and I are dead?"

"That we are, my child. That is, what people call dead."

"I do not understand" she replied musingly. Then, going to her cousin's side, who was still holding her physical hand, she said: "Cousin Frank, what are you weeping for? Do you not see how well I am?"

He did not hear her words, and she spoke again, playfully patting his face. Then she saw that she was no longer able to be heard or felt, and threw herself in my arms, weeping violently. I soothed her as best I could,

upbraiding myself with foolishly teaching her the ways of our life before she was able to receive. "My child," I said, "how glad I am to have you again with me. They will all come to us sooner or later. Now we will go to my home, for it is not well for you to remain. After a time you will be instructed in these mysteries."

I attempted to go, but found that although I could depart alone, I could not bear Claribel with me. I had not perfected myself sufficiently in the method, and her attraction was toward that spot alone. I prayed for the coming of a companion, and soon there came one to my aid. On either side we threw our arms around her, and then our wills bore her onward with us.

When we reached our home, and the loving companions came with welcome to Claribel, and she saw the beauty and perfection everywhere, and felt how happy her coming had made me, tears trembled in her eyes as she said: "It is wonderful, mother, and I ought not to regret, but you know earth life was sweet to me, and I had plans for the future."

"Yes, my child," I replied. "The days were too short, and your friends were devoted, and your plans are thwarted, yet you must know that all is well." Her towering air-castles had vanished, but soon she found far greater sources of happiness in the group of children she instructed.

I said I would not visit earth unless called, for the pain was greater than the pleasure. Even when called, I refused. "My husband," they said, "was about to wed again."

"It is well," I replied; "his is the rough, earth life, hard to walk alone. If he so desires, I ought to be willing."

Yet I was not willing or I should have gone. It would have seemed strange, indeed, to have visited my old home, and found another in my place. It would have emphasized my death to me. Thinking the matter over, I said:

"No! I will not go. Let them be happy. I will not enter their sphere."

When years after the message came that he was soon to join me, I hastened to his side. When I reached him he had already nearly passed through the transition, and had regained his spiritual perceptions so that when I came he at once knew me, and opened wide his arms to receive me. The years were blotted out. We were again to each other all we had ever been. By intuition he knew that he had met the change, and the first words he said to me were:

"I am so glad the weary watch is over. I knew heaven was not so large I could not find you, but I did not expect so soon to meet you. It was like you to come and I ought to have expected it."

"I heard your call," I replied, "and heaven is not so wide that I could not come. Now we must go, and I will take you to the most beautiful place you ever saw in dreams. You must not remain to witness the proceedings further."

He smiled at my words:—"Why you talk as if there was something terrible about death. It has been the most pleasant passage in my life. I have suffered a great deal in its approach, but when it came it brought only joy. When I saw you, I was so pleased, my clay-lips uttered my thoughts, the last words they ever gave. Now it is done, I must stay till it is over. I want to see how the relations and friends act, and hear what they say. You know it will be strange to hear one's own funeral sermon."

As he would not go, I remained with him, and entering again into the earth sphere, suffered from the contact. My husband was greatly interested in the ceremonies, and when they were over, he said:

"I am glad the old aching body has at last gone to its final rest. The children were grieved, and ought to know how they misunderstand. Perhaps I can tell them sometime. Hearts do not break with grief, else mine would have broken. Come, now, my new-found wife, I will go where you wish."

I need not repeat the story of the journey, or describe the meeting with our Claribel. Her father was of the

happy disposition that at once assimilated its surroundings and became one with its companions.

"I have worked and struggled along," he said, "having little time to think, and I am as ignorant as a savage. I desire at once to commence gaining knowledge. How am I to proceed?"

We all laughed at his eagerness, and one said:

"There is time enough; you must first rest and recover strength."

"Rest! I was never stronger, and I am anxious for exertion. I feel mentally starved and crave thought food."

"You will find no difficult task. To desire is to have, and you will soon become in sympathy with the thought atmosphere of our home."

The angel life became more complete and perfect as year by year the loved ones came up from the shadows of earth, until our family circle was almost restored. After a time its old members will take their new places, and when my earth-friends are all here, there will be little attraction for me in the old life.

This life is yet new and strange, and cannot be described to mortal comprehension. Language itself must be spiritualised and given new meaning.

I have mingled tears of pity with those who have been bereft, at the same time knowing that their loss was the gain of the departed ones.

Activity is our happiness, and thinking and doing are gateways to heaven. Earth-life is a joy only when the end is known. Here its infinite possibilities are realised. Not in a year, or a century, but in the fulness of time. Weep, for it is human, when your loved ones pass the shadowy portals, remembering, however, that the spiritual sun on the other side would by comparison make your brightest day on earth a rayless night.