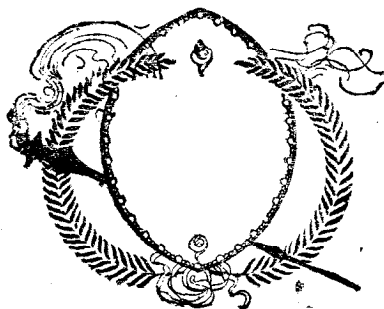


How God Tests Souls on the Moral Firing-Line

AUTHENTIC : AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL

By Rev. H. S. Geneva Lake



1904

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To H. S. G. L.

DEAR Pilgrim of Progress,
God speed thee aright—
The world to illumine,
Its wrongs to make right.

The sun has arisen,
The darkness has flown,
The Path lies before thee,
The way is made known.

February, 1893.

MATILDA H. CUSHING.

To Mr Theo. Debs. —

The trusted comrade in a crucial time, —
(Who did not fail) with New Year's Cheer!

Dec. 1904.

The Author.

These pages (*inscribed to those who seek the Inner Light*) are penned and published that the thousands to whom—for nearly a quarter of a century—I have ministered with voice and pen, may have an authentic record of intuitions and incidents which I regard as the very marrow of the Modern Spiritual Dispensation.

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How God Tests Souls on the Moral Firing Line.

BY REV. H. S. GENEVRA LAKE.

IT was in '92. I had been, since 1876, preaching the gospel of Immortality, in its latest significance (as interpreted by the Psychical Research Society). This was, of course, not a difficult matter, inasmuch as, from the age of five, I had seen and heard with the inner sense, and lived and labored wholly *as a soul*. Naturally, curious experiences had crossed, with rapidity and complexity, the pathway of my mundane pilgrimage. Perhaps one of the chiefest of these had been my "call" to the ministry, which had occurred by reason of the transition of one beloved, who had been vowed to an ecclesiastical order, and had retired therefrom to secure, if possible, a wider horizon of Truth.

Be that as it may, he was gone, and his mantle had fallen upon my all too frail and shrinking shoulders. Nevertheless, I strode sturdily forward with my message of "the persistence of the Ego" after the "shock," and had, as many readers will attest, been able to penetrate the jungles of Materialism and mendacity, which usually surround such explorers and iconoclasts.

To say that the task was easy, I cannot; neither can I declare that it was hard; for though often without friends, and beset by conditions which would have enfeebled and dismayed the most sanguine, still there seemed always around

and about a singular Persistence, which indicates the sanctified purpose, and that perpetually gave strength to go forward, mysteriously furnishing means to that end.

But as one after another of the basic principles of *the eternal life* were revealed to my inward perception, the proclamation appeared more perilous, inasmuch as I found that those who strained and gaped at "the wonderful phenomena" had, usually, no even vague conception of their connection with the *concerns of the soul*. I discovered that "seeing the dead" was a pretty pastime for the leisurely and well fed, while, for the haggard and helpless, it was *an employment office, where the gods secure positions for the wrecks which indifference, cunning and stupidity had hatched in stupendous crops.*

I was puzzled. The longer the years stretched on, and the farther my feet traveled, the more curious became the prospect.

At last Providence permitted me to gain a great hearing, in many fields, with pen and tongue, and my celebrity was both fattening and flattering.

I was led up into the tall mountain of a sleek social and psychic estate, and told to gaze upon and instruct the multitudes beneath.

As I looked, I became limp and faint, for I realized that the message of "immortality" was a subtle snare, as delivered by the modern messengers, *unless therewith were associated the insistent utterance: that he who takes another's product (life force) exploits his own soul-self; that "death" is not bodily, but moral and spiritual disease. "Lo!" I ventured to say, "Behold the women of the world, who bear most conspicuously the beast sign of this perpetual exploitation."*

Then a fierce cry rose up against me, for I was neither "great" nor "wise," and had only the soul as tutor.

Now the sequel:

As I said at the beginning, it was '92, and I had passed the entire night in overwhelming anguish, as it had been shown

me that, if I failed, on the following day, to proclaim the sin of the present statutory industrial Inferno, and to portray the pangs and perils of the suffering souls who gasp for air, and grasp for bread, and “struggle” for a meager sustenance, I, too, must sink where light is lost, and life, in any sense, *becomes a moral menace.*

* * * *

The morning came—the hours rolled by—the clock pealed forth the time for “sacred service”—and I faced the people who had come to learn—what?

An awesome silence entered in my soul. My lips and tongue seemed blistering, but the words were like unto a brazen trumpet and they rang, with vital force, against the quivering brains of all who listened. Never one arose, or moved, or queried. Never one essayed to stop the flood of speech which sprang from out the life of her who writes, and sobbed and swirled with power terrific, through each avenue of sense, until the world became a plaything, and the lightning of God’s truth had wrought its havoc in our worthless dust.

The words which follow are a portion of that discourse. (Many readers will recall them, though time has brought its changes in the thoughts and states of all.)

* * * *

“Churches abound with fawning sycophants, who do not believe the creeds, but who slavishly subscribe to them, that their material prosperity, mayhap, may be enhanced. The corridors of the houses of worship, dedicated to a truly unknown God, are thronged with these false communicants, who have nothing in common with the ministry, save that they are the psychic victims of the ‘System’ they thus wrongfully perpetuate and uphold.

“Oftentimes I have gone forth from this structure, feeling like one *mortally wounded*, for I realized that I had reentered the sphere where all the forces were of a destructive

and disintegrating character—a state properly described by the phrase: ‘The weakest are driven to the wall.’

“That condition, indeed, everywhere abounds. Today one may be strong in ‘material’ resources, comfortably situated, happily disposed, and all may seem bright and fair for the pilgrimage of life; tomorrow there may be a change of scene; with the shifting panorama of the world’s commercial ‘Enterprise,’ one may have no home; may have none of those environments which conduce to physical and mental health, *wherein average moral fibre roots itself.*

“Employment may be solicited unavailingly; one may be reduced to a dependence abject and degrading, and then, *unless he has unfolded a spirit superior to his surroundings,* he may enter upon revolting and seemingly hopeless servitude.

“If a woman, *the psychology of race interpretation* will jeopardize the very citadel of being, and invite the glee of ‘devils,’ who fatten on the ‘fall’; and thus the pageant of this pseudo-civilization proceeds, *unhindered and unchecked by you, ‘the wards of gods, whom angels do control.’*

“But mark and listen! for *I see a time* when stately buildings will not rear their heads, in isolated spots, inviting special members to a season of serene repose, but over all the world fair structures will arise, wherein the people of all callings, shall, *in equal opportunity, and mutual service,* UTILIZE THEIR BEST CAPACITY, AND REAP, IN DIGNITY AND PEACE, THE FULL RETURNS; for:

“*There is being precipitated, now, upon the Planet Earth a series of convulsions and catastrophes which shall awaken all the race. We shall be made to know what duty is, and to master, on this mundane plane, the meaning of that strange word, EQUITY.*”

* * * *

The discourse ceased; the twilight deepened, and the Prophetess departed. Slowly sauntered forth the several

listeners, dazed and awed. Neither organ peal, nor sound of song, had closed the portals of the soul; through all its inner spaces, with resistless force, the Truth had made its way; and she who had thus spoken was at last made free to enter, now, the world's arena, with the hapless "brotherhoods," while loving (?) spirits, in and out of mortal forms, passed coldly by upon the other side.

* * * * *

Many years have passed since then, and over all the lands the shadow of a stalwart Tumult stalks abroad, and asks, and gains, a hearing.

'Tis as though her message had been multiplied a billion fold, and farms and workshops, offices and sanctuaries, take up the question and demand solution for the ages yet to come.

Beneath the solemn skies, where sea and song-birds make sweet melody, and God keeps patient tryst, she walks in silent meditation, and notes the rising tide, which bears upon its crest the *coming Social Righteousness.*



I Am a Soul.

I am a soul;
The mighty surge of God's eternal Right
Makes melody within.
I am a vital, climbing vine,
Twined 'round the stately trunk of life.
I am a Thought—direct from that Great Source
Wherein breathes Action.
O wondrous truth, so rarely seen of men!
O mellow medicine for mortal ills!
Renew, each day, this mending fact,
And I shall die no more—
Except to Error and Unrest;
I shall be keyed for conquest
Of all lower states and forms,
And thus may brace my fellows,
As we wander towards the sunlit New.

H. S. GENEVRA LAKE

REV. H. S. GENEVRA LAKE

POET—PROPHET—PREACHER.

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