

THE DIARY OF A CHILD OF SORROW

by
ELIAS GEWURZ

"The storm-tossed bark on a raging sea is more peaceful than the life of the pilgrim to the shrine of Spirit."—

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*These are leaves from the Diary of a Child
of Sorrow whose eyes have wept bitterly,
whose heart has been broken sorely, one of
those who have come from great tribulation.*

PREFACE

*"Those who never ate their bread with tears;
never sat up on their beds during the long winter
nights weeping, they know not God's power."—*
GOETHE.

WE are often assured by great booklovers and great bookbuyers that books which one can reasonably expect to interest people nowadays must possess what they call "the human element"—that is to say, they must be alive and treat of things living. Mere theories and dicta belong to a day that is no more.

If a book is to appeal to the hustling man of this hustling age, it must be a human document in the real sense of these words.

The following pages may perhaps claim to fulfil this expectation, for the simple reason that they contain the record of a single-handed battle fought against mighty hosts by a lonely fighter handicapped by a peculiarly heavy Karma from past lives.

They are sent out with the prayer that they may help kindred souls in their fight, and that they may prove leaves of healing wherever help and healing are needed.

ELIAS GEWURZ.

LAS PALMAS, GRAND CANARY,
March, 1914.

"I found that the soul of man is purified from its grosser elements and rid of all that is base and unworthy by one thing only, and that is—by suffering.

"Of course, there is such a thing as the grace of God, but it is only known to that soul which sorrow has prepared for its reception."—(From the discourse of the travelling Philosopher with Rabbi Eleazar.)

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Rabbi Simeon Ben Jochai was very ill and his disciples gathered round his bed to listen to the words of wisdom falling from his lips in the midst of his agonies. Being overcome by the sight of his suffering Teacher, one of them, asked, "Rabbi, why should a pure and holy soul like yours have to suffer such anguish?" And at once a voice from the spheres (Bath-Kol, they call it) was heard, saying, "Do not question the wisdom of Him who knows better than flesh and blood. It is His will, and His will is law, and the law decrees that the balance shall be preserved as above so below; those who are to enter into the great joy must first partake of the bitter cup, and he who is to see the glorious light must first pass through the darkness of the night." —"Collected Hebrew Legends." Translated from old MSS. in the Oriental Department of the British Museum.

THE OBSCURE NIGHT

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"The advent of 'the obscure night' is heralded by many changes in man's constitution, and suddenly the soul discovers that she has been deprived of her beautiful and precious garments woven for her with much effort in her stainless and sinless days."

—THE QABALAH.

THE mystics of all ages have written about "the obscure night" and the awful experiences befalling the disciple therein. As to its exact time and duration in the aspirant's career accounts differ. It evidently depends upon the past life of the individualised soul and the lessons learned in its former sojourns upon earth. It is a common experience during the passage through the obscure night that everything turns against us; a feeling of voidness, of emptiness, of absolute loneliness is predominant. It seems as if things have gone all wrong, and there is nothing more to live for; very fortunate is the disciple who has not altogether lost hold of life on his arrival at this particular stage of experience. His task now is to set-

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the lower mind and the desire nature have to be uprooted and the tendency of the whole life stream turned in the opposite direction. This is a most painful process. It is like making a river flow upwards against its natural gravitation. No wonder, then, that the poor harassed soul feels thrown out of balance all the time these adjustments are being accomplished within her chambers. Therefore has the period during which this process is going on been called "the obscure night." The light by which ordinary man guides his steps has vanished for the disciple, and the new light has not yet arisen within him. He has caught a glimpse of it when he first put his foot on the threshold, but its fulness his eyes cannot behold until his whole nature has been transformed. The transformation of his nature takes place during the obscure night, and if he keeps close to the vision he has seen and orders his life in accordance with it even during the darkness, then shall he live to see all the wonderful things happen which have been foretold to him at his entrance upon the path, and his weeping, which lasted during the night, will be changed into joy at the coming of the morning. "Grow as the

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flower grows" is a very appropriate admonition, given to all who are treading the path; the flower has no self-consciousness, she neither strives nor cares, and so it is with the lilies that neither spin, nor do they toil, and yet we are told that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like them. Worry and strife, restlessness and care are all incidental to the human plane of development; when this stage is traversed they disappear because they are unnatural on the higher planes. The disciple who prepares for this entrance upon the higher planes must during the time of transition beware of the very accentuated symptoms of his former weaknesses; when the lower mentality begins to merge into the higher principles, the raven-voices are very loud. The example of the flower letting universal Nature work on her is the one to be imitated by the human soul; if the plasticity of the mind is allowed to be impressed by the surrounding influences in a natural manner, accepting the good and throwing off the evil automatically, without taking thought, then one grows as the flower grows, and the very serious danger of falling into the eighth sphere of decomposing mentalities is avoided.

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The harmlessness of the dove and the innocence of the child are principles to be deeply sunk into the mind for which regeneration is sought. No amount of cleverness or intellectual acumen will save a soul from shipwreck on the shoreless seas of the inner life. Childlike trust in the Vision and obedience to it will prove a real source of strength and save the aspirant from a host of enemies as cruel as they are subtle, and all the more mighty because they are not seen nor known to the waking mind. The obscure night is the hunting ground for all sorts and conditions of inferior spirits, preying upon the poor aspirants who have entered it unprepared, with all their weaknesses and failings still clinging to them. Even the smallest foible may become a grave menace to the disciple when far advanced on the Path. It is like a crevice in the armour of a warrior standing in an exposed position and facing the enemy's ranks.

In the humble soldier, standing at the rear of the regiment, a slight neglect may not matter; likewise the ordinary man may suffer no harm from many a failing which may prove fatal to the fighter on the battle-fields of spirit. It just depends where one

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stands and of what significance one's status is to the whole. Very advanced disciples must see that their mental life is scrupulously guarded during the obscure night, remembering that, on the spiritual planes of Nature, the causes with which we have to deal are thoughts. This cannot be emphasized sufficiently nor said too often. We are habitually considering thought-life as of less importance than our expressed physical acts. The man of the world goes even farther: he looks upon thought as of no account at all and often thinks inwardly the very reverse of his outwardly expressed opinions and actions. With the aspirant these things must be of the past; if he believes in the law of cause and effect (and what sort of aspirant is he who does not?) he can readily perceive the torments he is preparing for himself by a disordered thought-life. He is like unto a gardener trimming the beds of his garden nicely for outward show, but allowing worms, parasites, and all kinds of fungus to creep into his plants where they cannot be seen immediately. The end is devastation and ruin, and the same fate awaits the careless disciple. Many of the excrescences brought to the surface during

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the time of trial are due to unguarded mentation. On the plane of ultimate reality justice is inexorable, and to be forewarned is to be forearmed. When once the disciple realises that something unusual has happened to him and that he is being subjected to trials and temptations of which his fellow-men are free, let him double his watchfulness immediately and, turning his face towards the light, let him summon every bit of good Karma that he has stored up somehow, sometime, and somewhere, and, girding himself with its strength let him begin the battle in earnest. It is a warfare, and victory belongeth unto the strong in spirit, those who waver not nor do they falter. There are three companions whose company is especially desirable during the obscure night. Useful though they are at all times, their presence is inestimable during the darkness and stillness: their names are Faith, Hope and Charity. It is hard to say which of these three is higher than the others because they are all equally indispensable as integral parts in the armoury of the champions of light. There are many things which are useful in the quest for spiritual culture in order that the Divine germ latent in the human soul

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may develop in a healthful manner, but no quality is more needful than that childlike trust which makes one sensitive to the unseen and obedient to its behests..

Hope, based upon the soul's inner experiences, and Love, the crown of all pure feeling, will prove two mighty guardians whose hands are strong to save and to protect in times of stress and trial.

The Patriarchs of old, the Prophets and the Initiates, the seers and the sages of all times and all lands, have had to pass through the obscure night before they attained unto their powers. You, too, dear Pilgrim, whoever you are and wherever you are, will some day come into your own: the very fact that you are attracted to these pages proves that you are not a stranger to the spirit. But let sweet patience possess your soul while you are treading the Path, and let your heart not be troubled if the shadows of the night linger a little longer than you would like them to. Hark! the Herald angels whisper encouragement to you even in the midst of the stillness, and the consolations of God are indeed many for you even in the midst of your dire need and distress. Look at those whose feet have sunk altogether

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in the mire, who are perhaps in the grip of a vice and cannot ascend even the lowest rungs of the ladder. How great should your gratitude be for the light that has been given to you and for the beautiful teachings you were privileged to receive? Therefore, let despair find no room in your heart, but render thanks to the Lords of Compassion for having brought you thus far, and even while the battle lasts and you are passing through the experiences of the obscure night, throw yourself into their service with all your might and strength and wait calmly for the coming of the morning.

THE MISSION OF PAIN



THE MISSION OF PAIN

"It is a royal thing to suffer and to say nothing about it."—MARCUS AURELIUS.

PHYSICAL suffering is by no means the worst that can befall a human being; mental anguish and the burning of the psychic fire are much more trying, as all can testify who have been in the crucible. The effect upon the soul of mental distress is deeper and more lasting, and that is why disciples have their mental bodies laid bare when undergoing the ordeal of purification. This is not generally known, and people often wonder at the complaints of aspirants in regard to the things they have to endure. Those whose fleshly bodies are in good order, covering their rarer and more ethereal ones from the heavy impacts of the physical world, are too harsh in their judgment over the exceedingly fine and sensitive disciple-nature. This must needs be so, because they have never been in the same predicament and cannot know what it means. You might as well ask a blacksmith to apply his instru-

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ments to the delicate mechanism of a lady's small watch as expect the ordinary man with his blunted senses and earthly mode of thinking to appreciate the supersensitive mechanism and the working of the different bodies of a highly sensitised nature. Just as it takes greatness to recognise greatness in another, so does it require suffering to render a soul capable of sympathy with those who suffer. Now, the reason for the acute pain felt by the unfolding spirit is, as we know, the necessity for the hastening of the process of purification. In the ordinary course of things the man is oscillating between pleasure and pain, alternately tasting both; and the balance of his nature is adjusted life after life, without his becoming too painfully aware of it. Altogether different is the case of the man who has taken it upon himself to settle his Karmic accounts. In his case the veil hiding the ordinary man's experiences must be torn from his eyes and he must be made a conscious witness of the process of purification. For the blind forces of the evolutionary law doing their work for the whole world, in the case of a disciple the *conscious* agency of his own mind is substituted.

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This agency urges him from the interior springs of his own being to climb the dangerous steep, and not to rest until the summit of the mountain has been sighted. Dreary and weary is the pilgrimage, a wilderness seemingly without end, and without an oasis where to rest the aching feet. Again and again the wanderer falters and his heart and his courage fail him; his fellow pilgrims on life's broad main seem to have no sympathy whatever with him. Alone he has to carry his burdens, alone to fight, alone to suffer, alone to fail, and alone he must win.

It is this trial of isolation which makes the ordeal almost unendurable; when everything becomes void and still and dark and old ideals have lost their value and the new ones are as yet too vague and too remote from our reach, then the heart revolts and the last vestiges of the decomposing old personality rise in rebellion against the new regimen threatening to overthrow the nascent soul and to stifle its aspirations for the purer and higher life.

This happens to all aspirants, and woe betide the weak one who faithlessly ventures to turn back and to give way to his oppressing foes. There is no quarter for him if

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he so much as looks back upon the path he has traversed, allowing his mind to dwell upon the past and his failures. The disciple's mind must be fixed upon that which is before him and not upon that which he has left behind. Regret and remorse are all very well for the animal mind that finds a sort of satisfaction even in dwelling regretfully upon a beloved weakness; they have no place in the life of the disciple who knows the lesson which a weakness teaches, and the strength imparted by the conquest of a failing.

The laws of Nature are the expression of the wisdom of God and at the same time the eternal guarantees that a full measure of justice and equity will be meted out to every creature. But the wisdom of the law cannot be apparent to those whose sight is confined to the external happenings of a single lifetime; nor can the justice of God be vindicated to such whose knowledge is limited to one brief sojourn on earth. It is only by extending our vision both forwards and backwards and taking our present life to be what it really is—one chapter in the Ego's life story—that we can conceive of the magnitude of the plan and of the exalted

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character of our destiny. The mission of pain, whenever it makes itself felt, is to partially open our eyes to these facts; for as long as the kaleidoscope of pleasurable sensations holds us in bondage, we are not quite fit for reflections other than mundane. But whenever the desire for pleasure ceases to dominate our lives, and pain in some shape or form has made its appearance, it immediately disposes us to more serious reflection, because in the very depths of our being our spirit knows that things are ordered rightly, and, having to suffer, he strives and seeks to find out the cause of it. By so doing, pain has already fulfilled part of its mission, for it has made us think and ponder, whereas before we were content to drift along with the stream of sensations. Now, the first thing that strikes the reflecting mind is the presence of a mysterious factor in the process. This factor seems to say: "I shall reveal unto you the real cause of your suffering, but not all at once. As a first instalment I will tell you now, on your initial enquiry, that the whole of your painful experiences are merited, and if you devote yourself to the unravelling of their mysterious nature, I, who am behind all, shall gradually make it

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clear to you." We may perhaps call this mysterious personage "The Dweller on the Threshold," but the name does not much matter: all that is essential is to realise the character of the new acquaintance which forced itself upon us. There is no shirking the issue, the aspirant must on his arrival at this stage listen wholeheartedly to this Mentor and allow him to guide his steps.

It is now that the sacred truth of reincarnation will draw upon him in a manner which will compel acceptance; he will henceforth *know* it, and consequently he will not seek the cause of his sufferings in his actions of the present life, but will realise that the events of his former incarnations have shaped his present one and causes from the far past have made him what he is and put him where he finds himself at the given moment. He sees a long vista of lives, past and future, to be complementary parts of his present stay on earth, and, probing the mystery of pain, the disciple takes into account the things that have gone before and those which are yet to come. He finds that many of his sorrows were just means resorted to by those who guide him to rouse him from his sleep and sloth. The mission of pain, he now realises,

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is to bring about his final disillusionment so that he may be spared much greater calamities as he advances towards the temple.

Great disasters will surely overtake him if he awake not from his sleep.

An absolute change of life and conduct, eradicating every trace of the old Adamic tendencies, must now take place; all the ugly and loveless deeds indulged in even by those who think they live harmless lives, must be utterly abandoned. As a man fleeing from an enemy successively casts away in his flight things that incommode him, beginning with the heaviest, so must the aspirant get rid of everything which impedes his progress, beginning with that which he loves most, because it is there where the sore point is generally to be found. You must *truly renounce*, says the Qabalah; it is no good giving up what we do not care for, or renouncing that which has no attraction for us. The great Masters of the inner wisdom, whose eyes looked deeply into the nature of things and whose testimony is a very precious heritage to the human race in general, and to occultists in particular, left it on record in the Holy Qabalah that the cheerful acceptance of pain and of every-

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thing grievous that may happen to us will open the sanctuary.

"It is the hand of love that has allowed it thus to fall" should be the dominant thought in the aspirant's mind whenever he is called upon to face things painful to him. This attitude of mind will soon be productive of a mighty change and the whole environment of the disciple, which hitherto has been like unto a wilderness, bleak and bare, will now, as his soul withdraws from the external, become unto him a new world lit by the lights of faith and hope and love.

Pain will have fulfilled its mission of mercy unto him and with the sweet singer of Israel he will lift up his hands unto Heaven and say:

"It is good for me to have been in trouble, for *thus* did I learn thy law."

TRANSMUTATION.

TRANSMUTATION.

"And as I came near I saw the two large and loving eyes, and I caught a glimpse of the Divine pity looking through them; I bowed and heard the throbbing of the compassionate heart, and I knew I was in the presence of one whose nature has been changed and transmuted."—A note in my scrap-book written down after a visit to a member of the Brotherhood.

THE Yogis of the East and the Rosicrucians of the West have both taught the doctrine of Palingenesis, or the renewal of life and restoration of youthful forces to the decaying organism. Their teachings have been confirmed by the alchemists of the Middle Ages, and many references to "the great work" as it is called, are to be found in Hermetic writings of great antiquity. Stated briefly, the theory underlying it is that of the transmutation of inferior metals into gold. This in plain English means that the lower elements of nature in the human organism can by a certain process of spiritualisation be rendered self-renewing, and self-perpetuating.

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All that is required for the success of "the great work" according to Hermes, the Grand Master of the art, is "the fear of God and the love of man." This, united to a pure mode of living, will accomplish all that is needful.

Now, as regards the bodily capacities of the subject, it was deemed essential that a certain process of refinement should already have set in throughout the constitution which was to be rejuvenated. Physical man was to be made more ethereal and sensitive, the mental man more penetrating and profound, and the moral man more self-denying and philosophical. There was no need for any superior physique in the man on whom this experiment was to be made, because they held that all power comes from within, and is evolved from spiritual sources hidden in man.

Power, according to their teaching, increases in inverse ratio to the grossness of the material in every power-producing medium.

The progress in artificial lighting will serve as an illustration. The pine-knot, coarse and crude in material, burns with much smoke, giving little light; next comes

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the grease-lamp, in which fat is burned by a wick; then comes the tallow candle and oil lamps, and then kerosene. There is in every instance an increase in power and brilliancy of the light, in proportion as the crude materiality of the medium decreases. Refinement of material gives refinement of result. The succeeding step is gas, which is much finer, and the volume of light is greater than that of previous grosser mediums of lighting. At last electricity is introduced and the light is more brilliant still: it is the eternal law of the spiritualisation of substance. "The greatest degree of power is generated from the smallest quantity of matter," says a great contemporary authority on metaphysics. Power subsists in intelligence, which is the foundation of all substance on all planes and in every conceivable condition. This is the sovereign law of the manifested universe, and was well known to the alchemists and Hermetic philosophers of old. Their teachings were founded upon those universal truths of which the vulgar crowd was ignorant. To the ordinary scientists of all ages matter was the matrix of all power, and the more opaque a substance was, the greater was the force derivable from

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it supposed to be. The alchemists contended the reverse of this to be true, and modern science is just beginning to vindicate the authority of those much maligned and seldom understood sages. They were said to be dreamers and visionaries, but their dreams do not seem to have been altogether dreams. The latest findings of science point to it that there is a considerable substratum of truth behind all their apparently amusing allegories and parables and fairy tales. Matter, it is now stated on highest authority, is alive and transmutable; in its ultimate state it is force, seemingly inert on the lowest plane of manifestation, but becoming more vivid and more dynamic as it rises in the scale of evolution. In the mineral, vegetable, animal and human kingdoms, we see the gradual rising of the original matter of the universe into ever finer forms, until that which was first primordial dust has by slow degrees evolved into a conscious reasoning being. Students of alchemic literature, especially of mediæval alchemy, are often puzzled at the multifarious and complex tangles and evasions of the writers in stating their theories, and many ask, "Was all this really necessary? Would not a plain statement have answered

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the purpose better?" Well, in a way it would, and yet they knew well what they were doing, those old Knowers of the Gnosis. They have themselves been living lives of sacrifice and devotion to their research, and Nature rewarded their lifelong efforts by revealing to them the supreme secret—viz., the transmutation of matter, and the renewal of life. Overjoyed with their discoveries and full of the love of God and man (without which their work would never have succeeded, and no work ever will), they wished to pass their knowledge on to worthy students of future generations, but in order to guard against abuse by those whose motives were unworthy, they hit upon the expedient of disguising their teachings in fairy tales and allegories and parables. He who approaches them with singleness of purpose will not fail to read their meaning, but he who is unprepared will labour in vain. The same applies to the teachings of the Rosicrucians and their secret symbols; there lie hidden vast treasures of knowledge in these books inspired in the temples of the Rosy Cross throughout the centuries, but the key must be brought by the student himself. And it must not be

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forgotten that a pure life is the only material out of which that key can be wrought.

The Divine element is germinally contained in every man, but it is overlaid with many layers of crude matter, which must be removed before the Divine element can be reached. But, say the Rosicrucians, the removal of the layers of foreign matter cannot be effected by violently destroying them, on the contrary, they must be treated very gently and with much patience and perseverance.

The refining and attenuating of these coverings must be carried on by a systematic and graduated process adapted to every individual. It really requires the safe hand of a Master to supervise the work: if it is to be a success, only one who has attained himself knows the exact degree of refinement of which the matter and force in a given body are capable.

The ultimate object of the alchemical process is the transformation of the unconscious mechanical and instinctive force into spiritual power, but this cannot be done without a fine balancing of the centrifugal and centripetal attractions of the person in whom the work is to be accomplished. The un-

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erring intuition of a Master's mind can gauge a man's adaptability for it: he can take the measure of his spiritual stature and tell whether he is "a fit subject for the art" or not. There is a Rosicrucian traditional saying to the effect that the substance of cohesion must be equal to the fusion to be effected—that is to say, that man must have gathered within himself so much of spiritual experience and acquired such an insight into Divine truth that they will supply the substance needed to effect the fusion between the higher self and the lower personality. Man can only express his perfect Divinity on earth if this has been brought about, else he is but an instrument of universal Nature, manifesting light and shadow, good and evil, according to the Karma of his own situation and the Karma of the collective body of which he is a unit.

Hermes Trismegistus, who occupies a high position in the occult Hierarchy, enjoined upon his disciples to refine their bodies by living abstemious lives, and by withdrawing from the pleasures of the common Hoi Polloi. Pythagoras was likewise emphatic in his injunctions, and in his *Golden Verses* the note of purity is sounded again and again. The

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other great teachers of antiquity never lost an opportunity to proclaim the essential need of a pure and self-denying life to every aspirant. They knew very well that the relation subsisting between spirit and matter is subject to weight, measure and number, and that the power of spiritual intelligence increased in the same ratio as the gross vehicle by which it was enveloped became more refined. Whenever a disciple approaches the inner gates of the temple it is well for him to remember these things, and to diligently seek to recover lost ground if he has not yet acquired perfect self-control.

We are told on the authority of the Master Hilarion that the disciple's frame prior to initiation must vibrate to the lightest touch like a highly strung musical instrument, otherwise the Master's directions will not be understood. If the neophyte has been properly prepared and his various bodies duly purified, then every fibre of his being will act in unison with one another, and respond to every thought of the Master as do the strings of a harp to atmospheric vibrations. For upon this perfect responsiveness of their natures and that interior harmony between them is their union founded. Master and

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pupil must finally become like one single soul in two bodies, say the wise gurus of the East, and where this oneness of mind and heart cannot be secured the result of the relation will be proportionately poorer.

The object of alchemic transmutation is ever the same, and "the Elixir of Life" was nothing else but the purified spirit freed from the desires of the flesh and risen above the earthly image-making mind, and therefore able to renew the lower principles and to build them from above. "The Philosopher's stone" had the same significance and symbolised the soul that has conquered matter and its attractions, and by so doing acquired the gift of healing and the supreme wisdom and virtues of the celestial hierarchies. "The voice of man in whom transmutation has been effected is stronger than that of the angelic hosts," says the Qabalah, and, on the other hand, "The voice of the selfish and impure is (in a spiritual sense) weaker than the dumb plaint of brute nature." Nor need the disciple who finds on occasion that he has made a slip be disheartened, and think that in his case transmutation is impossible. "Even those who have fallen into the depths should still cling

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to mercy," says the Talmud; "their very wickedness will stand them in good stead when the currents of celestial compassion pass over them and incline their hearts to obey the good law." The reason for this being, of course, that the energy which they formerly put into their wicked desires will now be converted into good acts. This is borne out by science, which affirms that the welding of the most widely sundered particles evolves the greatest energy, and that the most beautiful music is produced from discords set in unison. There must always be pain consequent upon the separation from God, but the degree of the pain which a man endures when he falls from grace and rebels against the light he has seen, determines exactly the degree of joy and bliss which will eventually be his when he again seeks his Creator, fully utilising the depths into which he has fallen. The power to redeem souls is best gained through experiences in the gutter, and the lessons of love are mostly learned by being a target to the shafts of hatred.

The direct effect of having braved the storms of opposing forces is a sort of spiritual resistance which the soul acquires and which

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renders it immune from attacks of a similar kind in the future. This proves very useful to the disciple because it enables him to meet all sorts and conditions of men requiring his assistance without being repelled by the atomic emanations of their auras generated by their habits of life and thought. The godly man may thus range through the world at will; ascending to the highest heights and descending to the lowest depths, he is equally comfortable everywhere and moves in perfect safety and equilibrium from heaven to protoplasm and from protoplasm to heaven without contamination by contact with anything inferior to his spiritual status. The secret of transmutation when mastered endows the disciple with this power of changing conditions and states by changing their rhythm. One of the greatest difficulties confronting the disciple is his inability to cross "the laya centres." These centres are referred to in theosophical literature as "elemental essence." This elemental essence is to be found on all planes in an unorganised state and cannot be manipulated from below. Unless one has a Master's help to lift him above these laya centres, his progress comes

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to a standstill, or, worse than that, he retrogrades instead of advancing because the added force of the elemental essence intensifies every weakness of which there may yet be a trace left in the subconscious centres.

The Hermetic writers say, "The elementary planes (neutral layas) must be crossed ere victory is won." If they are missed, the light and force cannot unite and the red lion is not joined to the white eagle. This is equivalent to saying that the great work of transmutation requires the conquest of the whole man in his conscious, subconscious and unconscious parts and unless all the former proclivities have been eliminated and the entire nature subdued, the goal cannot be reached.

When, however, the difficulties have been surmounted, and the soul is free from all fetters, whether gross or subtle, then something like a miracle happens: the constituent molecules of the man's system become polarised towards the centre, and the Divine spirit from being diffused and latent becomes manifest and centered. Then it comes to pass that all the disciple's past Karma of good gathers over him, pouring down upon

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him a rain of blessings, and the disciple becomes one of the Saviours of the race, and a Redeemer of his kind.

THE LIFE BEAUTIFUL.

THE LIFE BEAUTIFUL.

"And as I came to know and understand the nature of pain and acquainted myself with grief, I ceased to strive against them. I looked upon them as good and faithful friends, and bade them welcome. Henceforth my whole life became beautiful."—THE DIET OF THE SOUL.

WRITERS of fiction generally endow the creations of their imagination, especially their hero, with some noble trait of character, and if they want to make him particularly attractive to the reader they represent him as a man of altruistic tendencies and ideal pursuits, whose life is lived for the good of humanity. Underlying this method is a deep insight into what appeals to the human heart most strongly. All the contentions of the materialistic school of writers like Emile Zola and his decadent followers to the contrary notwithstanding, there still burns in the secret chambers of the common man and common woman's heart a love for all that is good and true and fair, and they rejoice when they see virtue and justice triumph and they mourn when they see the

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tears of the oppressed, and they hate the oppressor. So that if an author wants to find his way to the heart of the people he knows what he has to do. The base and the ignoble in his stories must invariably be vanquished, while the good and the true must always conquer. This is a psychological fact, and woe betide the writer (and his publisher, too) who forgets it.

Now, why should this be so? Unless human nature is essentially Divine and strives to realise divinity even in this valley of tears called earth, these things would not be. But the fact is that Man *is* a child of God, and if the true keynote of his nature is found, the harmony of which it is capable will always be evoked.

These facts have become better known for the last three or four decades and a new generation is rising at present, even in the commercial and financial worlds, which hungers less for wealth and possessions than for something worth living for. The ideal life—many cultured people have come to see—is not the one in which a man tumbles suddenly into fortune, favour and glory, and is forthwith provided for with everything for the rest of his days, so that

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his soul can be put on a shelf and labelled "useless." No! the ideal life, we of this century have come to recognise is the strenuous, the self-denying life, a life devoted to an ideal, a purpose which we love more than anything else in the world.

Life is the grand searcher of the human heart to whom it is given to unseal the fountain of the soul. If we devote our lives to an object which commands all our love and unceasingly labour at its realization, then we become co-workers with the great Architect and the Master-builders of the heavenly mansions in which harmony, order and beauty reign supreme. Let us comply, then, with the laws laid down for the orderly raising of our spiritual edifice, and the indwelling Lord will not tarry to make His presence known. Scientists assure us that the beautiful workings of natural law can be studied and observed in the development of morbid phenomena just as much as in the unfoldment of healthy growths. The regularity, exactness, faithfulness of these tiny molecules and atoms and electrons making up the cells and the organs are equally admirable whether they work for the preservation of an organism or for its destruction. There

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is strict obedience to given laws which are never violated, nor departed from. The sole exception being when a higher law intervenes which suspends the effects of the lower. If this is true of unconscious nature (or what we call unconscious) how much truer must it be of the higher planes where spirit communes with spirit under the sway of celestial law and order which operate in the higher regions?

Now, if we want to bring about certain effects here below, we first create conditions likely to produce them; if we do not like the results we change the preceding conditions. Nature does not arbitrarily interfere to spoil our work, nor does she groundlessly intervene in order to please us.

Nature's law is her only lord and master, and him alone does she obey.

If a man wants to live the higher life there is nothing either on earth or in Heaven that can prevent it. The universal sway of law is a guarantee that no achievement is impossible, if we proceed lawfully. Having realised that the true object of man's life on earth is mental and moral perfection, and that this can only be attained unto, by living a pure and noble life, the best plan is to

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study the law, to lay the foundation according to its provisions, and to go on building upon these foundations the stately edifice in perfect faith and reliance upon the never-failing law that we shall not build in vain. From the divinely-awakened spirit nothing is hidden, and when man enters into the possession of his God-given gifts and powers, he is on the high road to his spiritual freedom. Like the seed when put into the earth and, nourished by light, heat and water, grows and continues to grow, as long as the conditions of its environments are favourable, so does the Divine seed planted in man's inmost being grow unto perfection, if the nourishment needful for its sustenance is not withheld. The nourishment most conducive to the unfoldment of our divinity is—*Consecration*. We must consecrate our lives if we want them to be beautiful by devoting the passing hour to that labour of love we deem most essential to humanity's welfare. The reason there are so many miserable people in this world is, as we know very well, ignorance. If people were not ignorant of life's purpose and life's uses, they would not lead the lives they do—*they could not*. But lacking knowledge, man is like a

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captain on the high seas without a knowledge of navigation and with no chart or compass. Such a captain would be at the mercy of wind and wave and such a man is at the mercy of time and circumstance.

In "Light on the Path" we are told that "There are persons so near the door of knowledge that life itself prepares them for it." This refers to the very sensitive natures who have been ground exceedingly well by God's mills through countless ages and past cycles. These souls are just now flocking into incarnation in great numbers. Their mission on earth is to teach the younger souls and to help them to round off the edges while traversing the perilous highways and byways of life. They come here to spread light and to dissipate the darkness of ignorance, to eradicate vice and crime and misery and to supplant them by virtue, beauty, and joy. All the things which contribute to mankind's comfort and help our civilised and ordered life on earth are due to the labours of those souls whose rebirth on earth is for the purpose of helping the race. What a grand opportunity this period is for all those whose spirits have pledged themselves to service. At no time in the world's history was there a

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grander opportunity. Therefore, I say to all the candidates for the life beautiful, join the ranks of those fighters of the good fight, enlist in the service of Humanity's volunteers and write your name in the golden book of all the brave and the good and the true, who have enriched this world by the nobility and greatness of their souls.

After acquiring power over life we just begin to be useful, and our lives really only count from that moment. Just as a master learns more in the laboratory than his pupil, so does the man whose soul has freed itself from the turmoil of passion and personality learn more in life's great school than the people who are still swayed to and fro by pleasure and pain, expectation and disappointment.

Those whose feet are planted upon the path must disabuse their minds of the idea of turning back to their life of sloth and sin and self-indulgence. I know how often it happens to quite advanced students to cast just as it were a longing glance behind them and to imagine that a compromise with the old Adam would do them no harm, and seeing perhaps that they are making no marked progress, they argue "it might perhaps be

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just as well." But, my dear Brother-pilgrims, remember that fruit and flower after they have blossomed cannot be put back into the seed, nor can a bird be put back into its egg after it has seen the light of day. The ordinary man who has never heard of such a thing as Discipleship or the Path sometimes wishes he could ennoble his life; but for the disciple there is no choice, he must either go forward until he reaches the heights or fall into the abyss. There is nothing between these two. Choose, therefore, O! brothers, the life beautiful as your own and make that of others of an equal pattern. There are beauties around us, the range and variety of which far transcend our present capacity of response. There is no fear of exhausting Nature's resources. Ally yourselves to the angelic hosts, coming to earth at this critical period in the life of the race, and be numbered among the helpers of Humanity, the Heralds of peace, and the Harbingers of light.

SILENCE.

SILENCE.

"When the disciple knows that the very thought of individual rights is the hiss of the old snake which poisons his own life and the lives of those about him, he is ready to take part in a ceremony open to neophytes. All weapons of defence and offence are given up at the door, all weapons of mind and heart and brain and spirit. Never again can another man be judged or condemned, never again can the neophyte raise his voice in self-defence or excuse. From that ceremony he returns into the world as helpless, as unprotected as a newborn child."—LIGHT ON THE PATH.

LOUIS CLAUDE DE SAINT MARTIN
In one of his books, the name of which I cannot recall at the moment, said that an Initiate is known by three things: He never entertains a desire which is not in obedience to the law, never conceives an idea which is not a sacred communication from on High, and never utters a word which is not a sovereign-power. The aspirant whose ultimate aim is Initiation must have these three perfection before his eyes, and though he fail again and again to reach the high Standard they set, he must not lose sight of them as the

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final criterion of his spiritual attainments. Whenever I entered the silence I made it a practice to think of these three characteristics of Saint Martin, and it always seemed to me that when I succeed in making the silence around me perfect I shall possess these attributes in their fulness. The purpose of the Silence is the acquisition of the faculty which enables us to see our Self at it is, without veneer or varnish. In the noisy places of the world and during the busy hours of the day we are aliens and strangers to our own selves. Like pilgrims in a strange country without a knowledge of the tongue, customs and habits of the people do we enter upon our early psychic excursions into the higher planes. The spirit-people we succeed in contacting are very seldom useful to us, and often very harmful, because we have not entered into the Silence completely and do not know our real Self. Without this knowledge all contact with Spirits is dangerous and will ever be so. The silence is to train us in the knowledge of the Self and thereby to fit us for communion with the Higher Beings living in the Higher worlds. The rationale which governs spirit communion is so simple and so easy of comprehension

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that one wonders why people should transgress these higher laws continually in spite of the disastrous consequences which their transgression invariably entails. The law of attraction which determines that substances having like affinities should be drawn towards each other, and that such that differ in their chemical composition should repel one another, this law rules supreme in the world of spirit as it does in the world of matter. As long as man is clothed in his fleshly robes and immersed in the atoms, particles, and elements of the material plane, he is prevented from direct contact with discarnate spirits. Their intrusion into incarnate man's sphere is far from beneficial in most cases. It is not good for man to cultivate direct intercourse with the Spirit world and their inhabitants as long as he has in his own constitution impure desires and low ambitions and Nature has mercifully hidden the way across the threshold. Whenever man breaks into the psychic realms without due preparation, the law of affinity just mentioned causes him to contact all those spirits and entities whose nature is like his own; thus any weakness that may be lurking within him comes to the surface and in-

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creases a hundred-fold because of the similar elements which attach themselves to it by the encroachment of the earth-bound spirits with like failings. It is this scientific fact of "like attracting like" which was known to the ancients and caused them to forbid the common people to approach the unseen realms.

The Prophets and the seers who did cultivate intercourse with the higher spheres did so after long periods of training and after having gone through many ordeals, the purpose of which was to fit them for the perfect silence which is necessary if one is to keep his mental balance after passing the outer courts of the temple of universal nature. In these latter days sensitive people are to be found everywhere in all walks of life, and sensitivity is just the indication that there is a cleavage (astral or mental, as the case may be) in the subtle bodies which is used by spirits from the other side to merge their natures with the incarnate personality. Some may ask why this should be so, why Nature's laws should be so cruel as to allow one spirit's sufferings to be aggravated by the evil inclination of others. To this the answer, the only answer, is—Karma. Those who are ignorant of the law of Karma may well

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think they have reason to reproach their Maker, but the knower of this most sacred law knows that the law is just and the law-giver merciful, and he also knows that our accounts do not begin with our physical birth, and do not end with what we call death, and therefore he is sorry for those who question the justice of their Creator and prays they may know more of him some day, or perhaps in some other life. Now, as to the prevention of undesirable entities from linking themselves to our bodies, there is only one way, the ancient way, well tried and proven by the saints and seers of old. It is the Silence, the complete Silence through which the neophyte must pass, the Silence in which the resonant voice of the Self only is heard and naught else. I often heard quite advanced students complain of the great need of distraction of some kind which they experience. A restlessness seems to drive them hither and thither just at the very time they would like to be still. On further enquiry into some details of their daily life and their habits I always found that the Silence has not been passed. Some have mastered their desires, their quick tempers, and otherwise made satisfactory progress,

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but their restlessness, their impulsive desire to will, to do, and to be, they could not overcome. It is, of course, necessary, for the Initiate even, to will and to do, and the greater the Initiate the more alive is he to his daily duties; but there is this difference, that while the Initiate wills and does according to the law and the dictates of his pure spiritual will, the still struggling aspirant is driven by his erratic impulses. Those who live constantly in the presence of God need no distraction whatever; they have learned the secret of inaction in action and can find peace and rest in the midst of bustle and toil. It is these natures which radiate sweetness and sunshine in the midst of the sorrow and gloom of this iron-age; they have glimpsed the coming glories of the race ahead of their brethren, and having passed through the Silence themselves would now like others to pass it. There is at the present time a great number of people in all civilised countries who desire knowledge, but there are only a few who desire wisdom; the indwelling Spirit of this planet charged with the evolution of the lower mind of man does not concern itself with the wisdom of God as we understand these terms. Cunning, adaptation of

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means to a given end, expediency, these are its methods of procedure, and it naturally follows that the bulk of humanity which is as yet subject to the astral dominion of this Planet-God is not very far advanced in things Spiritual. But it must be borne in mind that though the incarnate race knows not the Ruler of the Solar system nor the ultimate purpose of evolution, yet the Spirit of the race knows him very well. He knows that there is a great Hierarchy in the spheres to which he, the Planetary God, is subject like an obedient servant to his Lords and Masters.

The chief of these Masters is known by the name of Christ, and though the dwellers on earth as a whole are yet far from being under the rule of Christ, they may be so some day. At present they are receiving instruction from one of Christ's servants, the Spirit of earth, whom the Egyptians called Ra, and their Hierophants knew very well. But even during Ra's reign Christ is not altogether absent, and often He or his messengers intervene on behalf of those whose spiritual evolution and status entitle them to this privilege.

Even in our personal dealings with our

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fellow men we can often catch a glimpse of the working of this law of intercession from the higher spheres. Whenever we are faced by a wrongdoer, or oppressor, if we at once call upon the Higher Self to defend us and abstain not only from the evil act but refrain even from the unkind word, it is a marvellous thing how those seemingly strong ones of the earth turn weaklings and cowards in a moment of time. No sooner do you show them the Christ than they flee like the hosts of darkness at the dawning of the morning. Again and again does this happen to disciples making rapid progress, because the brothers of the shadow put up all manner of evil spirits against them, and their wiles and snares are very subtle; but if the disciple has been established in his faith and relies upon the gracious guardians of the pure in heart, these persecutions from the other side will really not harm him; on the contrary they will collect the last farthing of his old Karma and hasten his evolution, saving him perhaps many an incarnation.

These are not lightly spoken words, and I would like to express them as forcibly as the meaning, with which every one of them is pregnant, demands. "Resist not evil"

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must for the aspirant be the rule of life from which there is no departure.

This is the pledge which has been taken from him in the hall of learning, little though he know it in his waking consciousness. He will be tried and tempted over and over again until he has learned the lesson of non-resistance and has woven it into the very fabric of his spiritual nature. As soon as he has made it his own, Ra's Hammer will cease striking him, and the blows which may yet be aimed at him will recoil upon his adversaries. It is indeed a wonderful experience, that of subduing an enemy by love, and may often result in opening the gates for us, which would otherwise have remained closed for many a day. The spirit indwelling man's lower nature is inspired by the planetary God because it is his offspring; its desires are of the earth and its thoughts are evil, but in its deeper strata it knows that there is something higher, and whenever you show it that higher one, which you do by love, it falls down and worships it. Ra recognises his superior Lord, and like an obedient servant he makes his obeisance to his Master. This is exactly what happens every time you return love for hatred and good for

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evil. I do not say that it is easy for us to do it, but it is the goal towards which we all strive and which we must reach if all our labour is not to be in vain. To have entered the Silence completely implies that this lesson has been learned.

THE CHAPTER OF POWER.

THE CHAPTER OF POWER.

"Spiritual love is the atmosphere of the spiritual worlds; it is the ether in which the spiritual spheres revolve and move in their appointed paths. How easy it is thus to see that if anyone still hates, he cannot live in the higher spheres. You might as well try to breathe without air as try to live in the Heavenly regions without love. When man is aware of this truth he becomes a man of power."—THE QABALAH.

THERE are two kinds of love, the active dispensing love of the man who has dedicated himself to the path of action, the doer and the ruler, and the passive receiving love of the saint and mystic. Both are striving to realize Divinity, but by different methods. Disinterested work for the good of Humanity is the path chosen by the man of action, and soul-vision, contemplation, and detachment constitute the way of the mystic. When the soul comes down to earth to gather new experience and to accomplish its cycle of evolution, it generally forgets its mission, and so far as the waking-mind is concerned it knows only that which it learns anew aided

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by its inborn capacities, on the origin of which only the theory of reincarnation can throw some light. But there is always a distinct leaning in every individual towards either of the above paths; this does not say, however, that mystic leanings make a man a perfect mystic, or that an inborn desire to act and to rule makes anyone a competent ruler; far from it, often these soul-faculties manifest in their negative aspects for a considerable part of the man's life. Especially is this the case if some lower Karmic lessons have to be learned and the soul is thrown into the great pit of universal nature with no hold on the mind principle. This is often the case with such who have acquired occult powers, but have not conquered the lower bodies. When the time for an initiated disciple who has not mastered his desire-nature to return to earth arrives, it is the special care of the Lords of Karma to give him a body possessing many defects, a body often utterly unsuitable to show forth any of the Initiate's previously acquired gifts, and very often the superior energy stored up in his higher vehicles flows down into the incompetent body and is transformed into passion in the transit. In this way a man may be leading

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a life of shame during a whole incarnation in spite of the fact that he is an Initiate well versed in the mysteries and possessing great powers. He is handicapped by a body which the Ego needs for the expiation of ancient wrongs, and until the measure is full and Karmic justice has been satisfied the soul must be content with the humble lot of a despised sinner, though she may be the Soul of a great saint. We incarnate on earth upon our demerits and not according to our merits; that is to say, that any little failing of ours is taken into consideration by the Body-builders, so that all lessons should be learned. There is a beautiful passage in the Qabalah which explains the process of regeneration in nature. I cannot quote it verbatim, but it is to the effect that whenever any substance in Nature is to be renewed and regenerated, the negative or chemical force of light assumes the reins and increases the force of repulsion within the atom so that it subdues its opponent—*attraction*, and the atom is repelled and separated from its neighbour atoms.

When the positive or polar force of light again asserts its power and increases the attraction the atom acquires new affinities,

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and a new substance is formed. This happens to physical-plane atoms and to spiritual-plane ones as well. The thoughtful student will grasp the analogy between the two realms of nature and understand many things suggested so forcibly by this illustration.

Is it not the same with the individual soul when the time arrives for it to renew its substance and to be regenerated? Is not the passionate, impulsive nature, the lustful flesh, wishing to do the things that grieve the Spirit; is not this the very principle of repulsion broken loose and overbalancing the attractive power of the spiritual atom?

What a lesson for us to be kind and patient and forgiving to those in whom sin and sense are still ruling! How it teaches us to see in those who have fallen only our younger brothers and sisters in whom a natural process is going on; yea, sometimes they may be our elders upon whom nature is just putting the finishing touch. As soon as the centripetal power of attraction again asserts itself in them, they may become the Helpers of their kind, Leaders and Benefactors of the race, using their experiences for the good of their unfortunate fellow-brothers and fellow-

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sisters. Those who are on the mystic ray, which is the ray of love, are specially liable to the weaknesses of the Karmic principle, because the love pouring down through their vehicles is deflected from its path by the yet unconquered passion and caused to vivify the lower desires. Those who are seeking Union on the path of action are less liable to fail in this respect, but in them again the power from on High, if uncontrolled, manifests as anger and tyranny. Not until the soul has acquired perfect self-control over its astral and mental bodies can the fulness of the Divine influx be utilised according to the Spirit's design. Nor can anyone become self-controlled all at once; it takes time; the passage from one extreme to another must be through a medium. Nature makes no leaps, and the transition from the density of one plane to the other is made through measured gradations like the colour-shades in a rainbow. Progress, if systematic and continuous, will be rapid, but not sudden. If then, in obedience to his Teacher, with whom he is united by the mystic cord, the disciple throws off his last fetters, and centres his mind and soul on the Eternal, he will in time be able to resist the fiercest devils

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though he be only a mild and meek wanderer in search of his Heavenly Home. And even though a legion of Demons should attack him, including the Arch-enemy himself, the Disciple who knows whom he has trusted, will only look to the Lord enthroned on the holy altar of his purified heart, and being still, he will draw the very fiends thirsting for his blood to bow before the gracious presence of Love eternal, which naught in Heaven or earth can resist.

When the Divine consciousness is fully awakened and man has received his baptism of fire, his lucidity of mind is perfect and transcends anything known to either science or philosophy. The man-regenerate is "clothed with the Sun" and partakes of the wisdom of the other Logoi, and the Great Spiritual Intelligences whose bodies are the planets and stars visible to our eyes.

The etheric atoms of the purified body of a saintly man are in direct touch with spiritual states and spaces of a similar character, and connect him with those rays with which he has the closest affinity. The influx from those exalted planes fashioned the minds of the religious Geniuses of all ages. The Martyrs drew their strength and courage

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from those spheres, and the Great Reformers received from them their guidance. The man of power is linked to all these planes, even though he be little known in the outer world. It is very difficult for us to conceive of the greatness and splendour of things belonging to the Higher worlds owing to the lack of a proper terminology by which to express them. We are always compelled to use physical-plane terms whenever referring to supermundane planes and beings. We must, therefore, bear in mind the enormous difference in the description consequent upon this mode of presentation.

Neither matter nor mind have any beauty inherent in themselves, they are the passive primordial elements in various strata of refinement and attenuation, in which beauty of spirit traversing the astral element within them is reflected externally. The expansion of a principle in substance produces life, and the expression of an idea in form produces beauty. Neither the artist nor inventor create anything; they simply discover, or rediscover, pre-existing laws. "The beauty of the Macrocosm is reflected in the microcosm," says the Qabalah, but in ordinary man it is marred by the warring elements

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and chaotic tendencies of the lower nature. The man who has hushed the storm and stilled the waves of the animal part in himself, regains the child-state which he has lost, and with it he recovers the pristine purity and angelic beauty belonging to the denizens of the Heavenly spheres. The man of power who has passed the initiations of water, air and fire, is in *direct contact* with the fountains of all beauty and truth; he is a *real structural* part of the great Cosmos of Wisdom and love, and expresses through his life their eternal laws.

THE GATES OF COMPASSION.

THE GATES OF COMPASSION.

"And thou who wouldst freely give of thine own blood to redeem thy brother and to loosen the bonds of his pain, know that in the hour of thy supreme desire God has accepted thy oblation.

"Thy love shall not return unto the void; according to the greatness of her degree shall she accomplish thy will, and thy sorrow and thy travail shall be grace and blessing unto the soul thou wouldst redeem.

"Count not as lost thy suffering for other souls, for every cry is a prayer, and all prayer is power. It is love alone that redeemeth, and love hath nothing of her own."—THE PERFECT WAY.

THE great majority of the human race fail to realise the significance and the seriousness of life. This is partly due to the hard lives the great masses have to live, being in most cases stripped of everything but the bare necessities for their existence. They tangle the threads of their Karma heedlessly throughout the first half of their life-time and then it takes the other half to undo them and to retrace false steps. To live a perfectly ideal life is, of course, impossible in this iron-age of ours, but that we do not suc-

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ceed in establishing anything approaching it is all the more deplorable if we consider the possibilities for the improvement of the race and its progress under more ideal conditions than those at present obtaining. Hitherto it has been the talk of Politicians and Statesmen that the severity of competition in commerce has quite a salubrious effect upon the social body, and that the number of those who fall by the wayside on account of failure to comply with the exigencies of the struggle is of no account.

The Social Economists favouring this view base their judgment upon the havoc which Nature makes in her domains of all the weak and unfit. Seeing that Nature is merciless towards those that cannot help themselves in the lower kingdoms, they advocate the continuation of a similar policy on the Human plane. This sort of reasoning, if heeded, must inevitably result in the destruction of the human species. The point which the advocates of a materialistic philosophy of life (for such these statesmen and Economists are) lose sight of, is that on the Human plane a new factor is added belonging to quite a different order of things.

This factor is the Human soul, with its

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needs, hopes, longings, and aspirations. Of course, the representatives of materialism deny the existence of the soul altogether, and from their standpoint a social policy based on the "survival of the fittest" is quite justified. But somehow the belief in the soul's immortality has not been vanquished by materialistic science, and in these latter days the numbers of spiritual-minded people are growing more and not less. And what is even more pleasant to note is the fact that the recruits to the spiritual conception of life are mostly from the ranks of the cultured and learned classes, the members of which have had a scientific training. They do not hesitate to affirm that their studies and research have strengthened their faith in the unseen rather than anything else.

Now to those people who look upon this life as a transitory stage into the life which is life indeed it has become increasingly distasteful to go in the old orthodox way of worshipping God on Sunday and oppressing and exploiting their brothers and sisters on every other day. They, the children of the new age, say they want to be consistent in their profession and make their lives and their religion to be of one accord.

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If the conception of a God is the most valuable possession of the human race, they say, then let us do God's will on earth and try to make of Earth, Heaven. As it is earth is more like hell than any other place, and tender-hearted people refuse to enjoy comforts and luxuries while others starve and perish. There are many men and women blessed with an abundance of this world's goods who reason this way and act accordingly, but, on the whole, the organisation of Society is still after the savage pattern, and the stronger and more cunning is everywhere uppermost.

Thoughtful observers of the signs of the times can, however, detect a continuous process of spiritualisation going on in Society, and a sort of social conscience is being born in all civilised countries which bids fair to challenge the old rule of "each man for himself" and to supplant it by the more humane one of "Love ye one another" and "Share ye one another's burdens."

To the serious student of the history of our times it seems that nothing short of an outpouring of Divine love upon mankind can avert the social cataclysm threatening our civilisation with its unspeakable horrors.

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The internal troubles of the nations, the international complications, the greed of money-mad financiers, the corruption of statesmen, and the exploitation and oppression of the poor and the helpless, all these are factors which make of our civilised states seething volcanoes, the outside appearance of which often seems calm, but the danger of whose sudden eruption is not minimised by external appearances. If the Heritage of the Ages as embodied in the achievements of civilised humanity, in its institutions, and in its national treasures, is not to be destroyed some day by a sudden social upheaval, our Statesmen must be wiser than they are. It is no use telling people to be patient under their misfortunes without doing something towards their amelioration. Social reform must be the watchword of every Government worthy of the name, and by this I do not mean a haphazard policy of half-measure reforms calculated to benumb the sensibilities of the lower classes and their leaders. Reform, if it is to serve its purpose, must be systematic and continuous. At the present moment a glorious opportunity is afforded to all true lovers of mankind to join hands in this work of redeeming the masses and

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elevating the downtrodden, the poor and the social outcasts from their wretched conditions and raise them to a more human mode of existence. Especially is this crisis in the world's history to be utilised by the searchers of truth, no matter to what Society they belong, what their particular views may be, and without regard to their various doctrines and beliefs. The reason so many well-meaning people fail in their efforts on behalf of the poor is the lack of knowledge of the true needs of the masses. Millions are spent by wealthy Philanthropists year by year, but they are of no avail in combating the evil either of poverty or degradation. Would the benevolent Donors add a little more love to their gifts of money their labours would bear some fruit, whereas without love they are well nigh wasted.

A gift to be truly helpful must be inspired by love and by wisdom at the same time. Were this acted upon, there would not exist such a multitude of useless institutions with hordes of useless officials, and, on the other hand, every urgent public need would be met and every good cause would be sufficiently supported. As it is, the deserving causes are deprived of their support because the sources

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of their sustenance have been drained by conventional but useless organizations. If there were the feeling of genuine love in the heart of the Benefactors they would see to it that their gifts serve that purpose which is most in accord with evolutionary law and best satisfies human need.

As man advances on the path of discipleship, he must sooner or later recognise his duty towards the race, and devote his gifts to the welfare of the whole rather than to a circumscribed and limited portion of it. His own growth will be accelerated by nothing better than by that utter forgetfulness which unselfish work brings in its train. The summits of knowledge, even the highest, will never afford such a beautiful outlook and such lovely views as will be enjoyed by that aspirant who looks upon the world from the watchtower of service.

Pascal, the great French thinker, in his celebrated "Thoughts," tells us that "the greatness of the Universe and all its splendours are as nothing compared with the marvels of the human mind and its capacities for comprehending the wonderful things contained in the infinities of interstellar space." "But," he adds, "in spite of its

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significance and evolutionary value, the mind of man with all its excellencies is of little account compared with the spiritual beauty of a truly loving human heart."

A greater responsiveness on our part to the appeal of our less fortunate brothers and sisters causes our own appeals to those above us to carry more weight, and by rendering deeds of mercy we acquire the title to partake of its quality when we ourselves are in need of it. And where is that bold mortal who can say he is above such an emergency?

Long after all the marvels of scientific discoveries will have ceased to stir the imagination of man, and when wealth and luxury and power will no more be looked upon as the highest aim of human endeavour, there will still remain that outlet to our energies which alone can give us peace because it is in accord with our highest nature. That outlet is disinterested work and loving service. Whenever we start on this career of usefulness and cease caring for anything else except being helpful and useful, our noisy years will seem to be moments in the eternal silence which will surround us. Our deeds of mercy will be our companions as long as we stay on this plane, and when we pass on,

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they, like the ancient mountains and everlasting hills, will remain to testify to our self-conquest, ever-living monuments which neither time nor space can destroy. There have been such men and women in the past and their memories have come down to us like benedictions across the wide abysses of time.

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Those of us who are knocking at the gates of compassion must open our hearts to all that breathe and live; even our kith and kin of the lower kingdoms must not be cruelly treated.

We must cease to hunt for our pleasure and to slay for our enjoyment. We must not rob any creature of its life or freedom in order to enlarge our own. Neither may we interfere with anyone's chance to rise in the scale of evolutionary growth, in order to further the growth of our own personalities. The Sin of Atlantis consisted in the deprivation of less endowed human beings of their chance of growth for the benefit of those who happened to be mentally stronger and more capable. The future of the human race depends upon the direction which its

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units will choose at the parting of the ways. If they follow the Path of Light and obey their Mentors, then this civilisation will be saved, if they repeat the Sin of Atlantis this planet will share its fate.

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The mission of the disciple on earth is to proclaim this message far and wide; to teach the good law, and to spread the good word; and just as Nature herself in the lower realms is bearing testimony to the sacredness of the law so should Man-regenerate voice it on the human plane. The gates of compassion will finally be opened to incarnate humanity, and the whole creation, which groans and travails until now, will some day be redeemed. Then will man realise that consummate happiness for which he has been seeking in vain throughout the cycles and peace, perfect peace, will reign in his heart.

THE END.