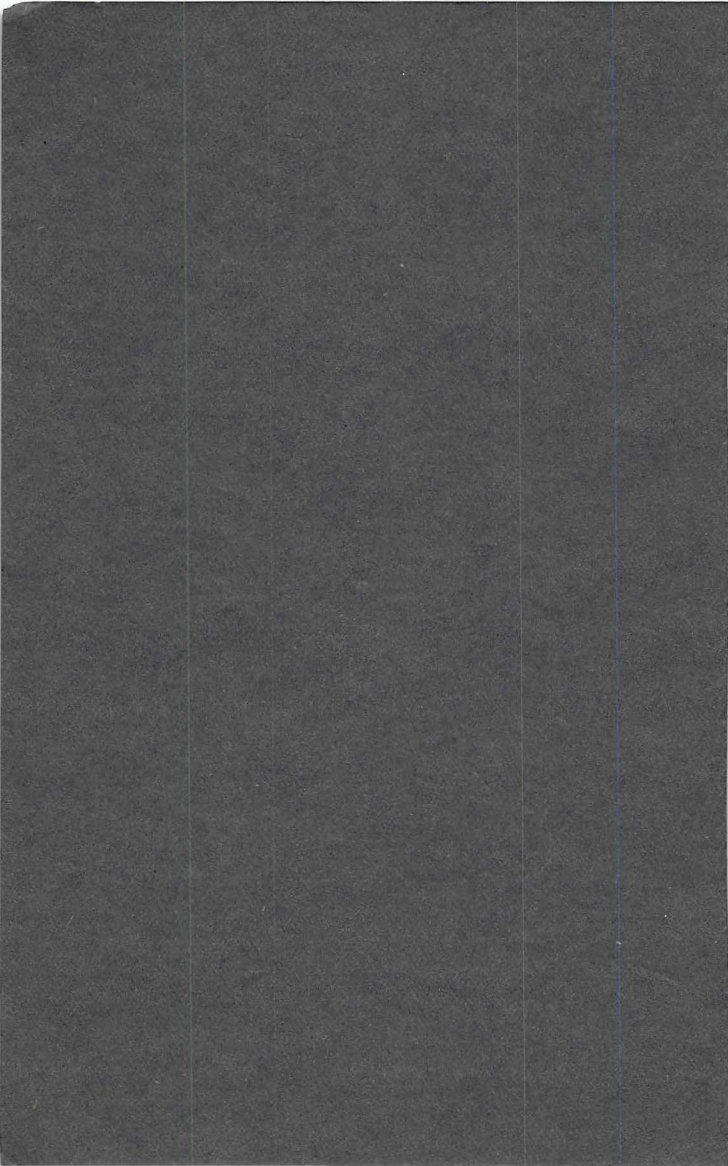




Theosophical Funeral Service



THEOSOPHICAL FUNERAL SERVICE

COMPILED BY
ESTHER P. TALBOT

THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE
AMERICAN BRANCH
KROTONA
HOLLYWOOD, LOS ANGELES, CALIF.
1919

THEOSOPHICAL FUNERAL SERVICE

MUSIC*

Let us draw near to that Eternal Life of which we are a part, and on which the whole visible and invisible universe depends, yet from which we separate ourselves when we live only for self and things of the earth, which perish.

Brought by the angel of death face to face with those things which change not, though all things else change, let us learn to read the mystery aright, and to know that what we call death is but the entrance to another sphere, in which the true man lives a stronger and better life than ever before. May we be enabled to realize that death is but laying aside one garment to put on another, and that those whom we have loved, and who loved us, still live and love. It is eternally true that love redeemeth, love lifteth up, love dissolveth not, neither forget-

* For suitable Compositions see page 16.

teth; for she is of the SOUL, and hath everlasting remembrance, so that there can be no separating of those who love.

Through many years love has united us with the Higher Self, now withdrawn from the body lying here before us, and nothing can sever that union—"neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature." Neither in this world, nor in any other, can a tie of pure affection ever be lost, for Love is the one enduring thing in the universe. It is of the very essence of the Divine Substance, and though its buds in human lives may be started on earthly planes, its perfect fruitage is in the heavenly. So your own—namely, what you love—will come to you, over and over again, both here and there. May we so live in love and unselfishness and purity, that we may be lifted into that higher life in which there can be no death or separation.

FROM "THE SONG CELESTIAL"

By Sir Edwin Arnold

"Thou grievest where no grief should
be! thou speak'st
Words lacking wisdom! for the wise
in heart
Mourn not for those that live, nor
those that die.
Nor I, nor thou, nor any one of these,
Ever was not, nor ever will not be,
For ever and for ever afterwards.
All, that doth live, lives always! To
man's FRAME,
As there come infancy, and youth,
and age,
So come there raisings-up and lay-
ings-down
Of other, and of other life-abodes,
Which the wise know, and fear not.
The soul which is not moved,
The soul, that with a strong and con-
stant calm
Takes sorrow, and takes joy indiffer-
ently,
Lives in the life undyng! That which
IS

Can never cease to be; that which
IS NOT

Will not exist. . . .
For he who shall say, 'Lo! I am
slain,'

He who shall think, 'Lo! he is dead,'
both

Know naught! Life cannot slay.
Life cannot die.

Never the spirit was born; the spirit
shall cease to be, never;

Never was time it was not; End and
Beginning are dreams!

Birthless, and deathless, and change-
less remaineth the spirit for
ever;

Death hath not touched it at all, dead
though the house of it seems!
Shall such

Say, 'This man is dead.'?

Nay, but as when one layeth his worn-
out robes away,

And, taking new ones, sayeth, 'These
will I wear to-day!'

So putteth by the spirit lightly its
garb of flesh,

And passeth to inherit a residence
afresh."

ADDRESS

Friends:

To-day we have met together to accord the last rites to our friend, and to say farewell to the form which, a few days ago, held within it the life, the affections, the thoughts of our departed one. That form is beloved, for it has been to us the expression, in this outer world which seems so real, of that life which it lately enclosed. But now it is an empty thing; the life has fled; the mind and the feelings of our friend no longer speak through it. For the present, perhaps it (he, or she) still lingers near to those whom it (he, or she) loved while on earth, held close to us by those invisible, yet mighty, ties of affection and sympathy—those most powerful of the forces of the universe.

Could that loved one speak to us now, he would probably tell us not to grieve for him, since he still lives and loves as before, only with a

wider, freer, vaster life and love, because the prison-house of flesh no longer holds him. Only our grief causes him sorrow now, and could he see that quieted, he might indeed be at peace.

To us, who are living here, this life seems the real; but when the hand of death has smitten down our physical bodies, as it has already that of our friend, we too shall know that we are freer, happier, lighter and more powerful for good without, than with, that physical form.

Why, then, should we grieve? Surely not because our dear one has gone from us, knowing, as we do, that he has gone to a better life. But it is because we can no longer see him, and feel his presence—his love—his kindliness—all those qualities which have endeared him to us. And such sorrow can do us no harm. So let us allow our hearts to go out in love, in gratitude, in tender remembrance of his deeds and words. But let not these loving thoughts take on a tinge of selfish longing. We would

not wish to have him back; we would not that any word or thought of ours could call him again into this dark world of suffering.

Therefore, putting ourselves aside, we tenderly and willingly give him up to that Divine Love which holds him ever in ITS care, sending after him thoughts of love and helpfulness, which would have shielded him while here in the body, and which still have power to aid and bless him.

Farewell, brother! May your rest be sweet! Take with you our loving thoughts, our gratitude for your goodness, our earnest desire that your future life may be one of growth and expansion. Only the empty form lies before us, but THOU art above and beyond, looking upon us, it may be, with tender pitying glances, understanding our sorrow, reading our hearts. But THOU canst smile, for that veil which shuts thee from our sight has been lifted for thee, and thou knowest that beyond the veil is Eternal Life.

(At the Crematory)

OPENING REMARKS

At the request of our friend, and in accordance with a custom of the greatest antiquity, we bring this body that it may be quickly consumed and purified, thus rapidly freeing the various elements of the spiritual man from their entanglement with gross matter.

Earth, air, water, fire, are the four elements active in building up the material world. Of these the purest, strongest, and most spiritual is fire, by which the others are quickly consumed.

To fire, the visible emblem of Eternal Spirit, we commit this body, that it may be purified and compelled to relinquish its hold on the complex being whom we call man.

Out of the baptism of fire, which destroys the gross, rises the fine, to take part in other and higher labors than those which engaged it while on earth, or to recuperate its weariness after the battle we call life, that new strength may be gained for the next life.

INVOCATION TO THE FIRE

Hail, Fire! purest of the elements! glorious emblem of that Spiritual Sun whence all proceeds, and to which all returns. We rejoice in the knowledge that soon the earthly shall be but a handful of ashes; while, freed from all bonds, our brother shall enter the rest of peace.

As this fire returns to the earth, the water and the air their original elements, so may the Spiritual Fire search through us, burning away all the impurities which we have accumulated during our pilgrimage through gross matter, and restoring to their original elements the seven-fold parts of the inner man. May the blazing Sun of Truth burn away all the errors of ignorance and illumine the dark corners, until we be enabled to know ourselves, and the universe of which we are the reflection. May the Sacred Fire, most glorious of all which has come forth from the Absolute, lift us from bondage to the lower self, and raise us to that Di-

vine Flame, of which we are a Spark.
Amen.

“Through love to light! O wonder-
ful the way
That leads from darkness to the
perfect day.
From darkness, and from sorrow of
the night,
To morning, that comes singing o’er
the sea.
Through love to light! through light,
O God, to Thee,
Who art the Love of love, the Eter-
nal Light of light.”

BENEDICTION

As we go hence, let us think of the
Higher Self, and the Eternal Nature
of our loved friend, as entering upon
that peace and rest which await
every human being when freed from
the bonds of matter. So may we re-
turn to our homes, knowing that the
purifying fire has performed its of-
fice, and that all is well with him
(her) we love. Amen.

Grant unto him (her) Eternal
Peace, O Lord, and let Light Per-
petual shine on him (her).

SONG

“Crossing the Bar” and the Twen-
ty-third Psalm may be substituted in
place of any one of the foregoing
remarks.*

CROSSING THE BAR

“Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the
bar
When I put out to sea.

But such a tide as moving seems
asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the
boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!

* See also page 16.

And may there be no sadness of
farewell
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time
and Place

The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar."

TWENTY-THIRD PSALM

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;

He leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul;

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

SOME SUGGESTIONS

PIANO

- Handel: "Largo" from "Xerxes"
Schubert: "Ave Maria"
Chopin: Prelude No. 20
Grieg: "Death of Ase," from "Peer Gynt" Suite
Chopin: Nocturne in D-flat
Mendelssohn-Bartholdy: "Nocturne" from "Mid-summer Night's Dream"
Dvorak: "On the Holy Mountain"
Mozart: "Sonata and Fantasy in D"
Chopin: "Funeral March"
Beethoven: "Sonata appassionata", or any suitable selection
Mendelssohn-Bartholdy: "Duet" in E-flat from "Songs Without Words"
Wagner: "Funeral March" from "The Dawn of the Gods"

VOCAL AND PIANO

- Handel: "Largo"
Sidney Homer: Requiem
Mendelssohn-Bartholdy: "I Waited for the Lord" (also a Duet)
 " "But the Lord is Mindful of His Own"
 " "I Waited for the Lord" (Solo or Duet)
H. van Vliet: "To Know Him"
Edwin Green: "Sing Me to Sleep"
Dal Riego: "O Loving Father"
 " "O, Dry Those Tears"
Reichhardt: "In the Time of Roses"
Handel: "Come Unto Me" from "Messiah" (also for organ solo)
Bach: "Sleep" from "Christmas-Oratorio"
Edward Alden Carpenter: "When Death Knocks at Your Door," "On the Seashore of Endless Worlds," "Light My Light," Words from Tagore's "Gitanjali"

