

As the Flower Grows

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Some Visions and an
Interpretation

In Two Parts

By

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"Light on the Path," "Idyll of the White Lotus,"
"As the Sun Moves Northward,"
etc., etc.

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I Dedicate this Book
to
CATHERINE MAUDE METCALFE
who enabled me to write it

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PART I

PROLOGUE

Some part of what I have seen myself on the battlefield of 1914-1915 I will set forth as plainly as possible ; for it deeply concerns my theme, and bears on it.

One figure which is always present in the thick of the battle, and has been since the first shots were fired, is one which holds no rank in any of the armies, yet it is there on that blood-drenched ground, where none but combatants may be, amongst the men, beside the officers, with and close to everyone who is concerned in the war. That sounds as though it were omnipresent ; and

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so it is. The ordinary physical sight does not perceive this Presence, and therefore to the soldier who has not yet suffered, it is not visible. But extreme agony dulls the physical sight, and opens the inner eyes. The Figure which stands beside the wounded soldier seems as a vision, and may only be remembered as a dream is ; but for the moment its intense reality overpowers all else. The horror of the war fades, the dreadful emotions aroused by it disappear from the heart, and even the agony of the physical wound is blurred. The presence alone does all this ; the pain is worth enduring for the sake of this amazing experience of actual acquaintance with the Healer of men. The Christ said that He would remain with us to the end of the æon ; He made this promise, and all who suffer so deeply that the bonds of the physical relax their hold, know that the promise is kept. He is always with us, in the hos-

pitals, in sick-rooms, with the prisoners of war, with the mourners at gravesides, with all who weep those bitter tears that purge and purify the whole nature.

I have not been to the battlefield in the physical body, but I have been there constantly in one or other of the inner bodies, and I have always seen Him there.

My experience assures me that there is an astral counterpart of this planet, and that we all possess an astral form which lives in that world of star-substance, as our physical form lives on the surface of the globe. We habitually regard all physical phenomena as external, therefore I call the astral form an inner body. It might be considered otherwise, as the astral plane encircles the physical world; and the ethereal plane is again beyond that. But for all practical purposes the astral and ethereal forms are interwoven within the physical, to the

man who is deeply immersed in human life. His physical body is where his consciousness is fully developed. He is aware of other beings solely by the use of his physical senses ; and he can only attain knowledge of his own inner bodies, or those of others, by retreating within himself. This knowledge is most often obtained in ordinary human life by means of dreams. Everyone knows the sensation of moving hither and thither, in a state of active consciousness, in a dream, while the physical body is motionless in the mysterious state of sleep. Those who believe nothing exists but physical phenomena regard dreams as phantasies. The occultist speaks of dream-consciousness, knowing that "you travel when you sleep."* Most often the

* The ego has to learn how to impress on the physical brain a true and clear record of what has happened during sleep in that other consciousness. It is its failure to do this which causes the apparent incoherence of dreams.

time of dream life is passed in the astral world. This is where the desires of the lower mental nature are very active, and it is better, if possible, not to linger there at all. As the ancient Persian stanza expresses it, "the soul takes the form of the thought." Men's thoughts are not always beautiful; in this age of war and racial hatred they are too often hideous. The ethereal world is so purified and exalted as to be almost spiritual, and the man who is without spirituality has a form upon that plane of life as helpless as a babe in swaddling-clothes is upon the physical plane. And in this state of helplessness he will remain unless he is possessed of an inner strength of will beyond that which most men possess, and can arouse himself. Pain and suffering are the instruments by which men of a material tendency are awakened to the knowledge of their own inner possibilities.

When a wounded soldier has lain all night under the stars, motionless, lest he should betray his comrades' position to the enemy, and has swooned from agony and awakened to see the Good Shepherd bending over him, he begins to know that the eyes with which he sees are not the eyes that look on the physical world. Pain, heroically borne for the sake of others, has brought his ethereal form to sudden life and power. A soldier who lay like this from eight in the evening till eight next morning, told me the night had not seemed long in spite of the pain ; he had been " quite happy." And his wounds were such that he was a cripple for life ! But he smiled always when he spoke of that strange night. Surely he had begun to have some understanding of what the Christ meant by the mystic words, " Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." All disciples know it is possible to follow

Him up the ladder of being, on to different planes of consciousness. And now every soldier has the chance, by means of heroism and endurance, of attaining to this knowledge. A gay and high-spirited young officer, writing from the front to a friend in August 1915, said things were terrible out there, but wonders happened—the heavens opened and they saw marvellous things. He implied that this was an immense compensation for the horrors of the battlefield ; dimly at first, and then more clearly, men come to know that the gain is worth the awful price paid.

The Christ lives and moves on the three inner or higher planes of being, passing to and fro, and taking on different forms according to which world He is in. That long battle-front is terrible on the physical plane, more terrible still upon the astral plane, and reveals an awful and amazing beauty on the

ethereal plane, to which only the purified souls can reach. By the strength of my intense desire to see the inner meaning of the world war, I have obtained guidance and help in using my own astral and ethereal forms, so as to perceive something of what was taking place on the inner planes of life on the battlefield. And always I found the Christ there.

Upon the astral plane, at the very first I saw Him hanging on the Cross, bleeding from the nails through His hands and feet—the form which His presence takes wherever sin and hatred are stronger than the spirit of love in the hearts of men. This Form hovered over the firing line, like a crucifix carried on high, unutterable sadness on the face. Then I saw Him moving about; the first time I saw this, He was beside the King of the Belgians, and He carried his cross. He accompanied him through the darkest hours, pouring spiritual confidence and courage into

that heroic soul. I remember the faint feeling that came to my confused mind that this must mean some sort of success for the Allies. The physical brain is always ready to make such a mistake. Speedily I recalled the vital truth that it is to the sufferer, the one in deepest trouble, that this divine companionship is given, never to earthly triumph or glory. And I knew then that the deepest darkness was not yet on the Belgian race; nor was it—it came later. And till that darkest hour I saw always the King of kings walking beside the king of the little country, healing the deep wounds in the sensitive nature.

Then came Death in his awful strength, and the bodies of men lay heaped so that they hid each other and one could not be known from another. I found myself, led by the guide who guards me in this terrible hell upon earth, standing gazing upon a mound of dead bodies of

soldiers. I felt like a frightened child, and clung to my guardian. From the astral world it is possible to look upon the physical world, as all know who have gone through the experiences of what is called "spiritualism." (It is on the ethereal plane that physical forms fade from view altogether.) Therefore I was able to see the heaped bodies of the dead and to perceive that some were not quite dead, and to pause and think how great the suffering must be. And then suddenly I saw moving amongst the bodies the Glorious Presence as the Good Shepherd, carrying His lantern. He was stooping over the dead, looking closely upon them, searching among them. Now and again He bent closer to one, and seemed to draw something from it. And I saw then that He was releasing souls not strong enough to release themselves; and I understood then that He was gathering His flock. He passed

across the line. I saw Him moving hither and thither on both sides, seeking His own from either field, from both opponents, from all armies.

I became aware, as my sight cleared, of innumerable angelic helpers, who were busied among the inanimate forms, lifting up the souls that escaped from them, guiding them, leading them, carrying them away. The souls were often maimed and broken, and very helpless. But those which the Christ drew forth came strong like a flame, and at a gesture from Him passed away from this astral plane. They did not remain, but the maimed and broken remained, and were taken to great rest-homes like hospitals which were close by the awful place of slaughter, on the very first plane of consciousness to which souls reach at death; and here they were laid down like helpless infants and tended by the angels. But if sin and hatred had brought

them to this state, little could even the angels do, save soothe them pityingly. And the Christ looked not on them at all, and I knew they were goats herding with the dark souls who have made money out of the war and lost the great opportunity of sacrifice and suffering.

And then came the slaughter of the innocents, and I saw Him in a new aspect—one that was too terrible to look upon. For He was not on the Cross, yet His wounds bled ; and they were not the wounds in His hands and feet—He was covered with wounds, and His white feet were stained with the blood that fell upon them. And He cried aloud, “ Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these My brethren, unto one of these least, ye did it unto Me.”

This dreadful scene I saw enacted and re-enacted night after night for weeks. I learned then that the Christ indeed suffers with the humanity He

loves ; He serves and suffers. When I awoke it was always with the consciousness that I had been kneeling at these blood-stained feet. I saw this so often, I suppose, because there was much to learn about it. One thing that I learned I can set down, and that was that those innocents whose wounds were inflicted upon the suffering Christ were not only children slain in cold blood for sheer cruelty ; many were young soldiers, who felt no longing for battle, who scarcely understood for what they suffered and died. There is always much learned at the feet of the Christ which cannot be set down in words, and yet much more which cannot even be brought back at all into the understanding of the physical brain ; which remains the priceless possession of the disciple in his ethereal or spiritual consciousness.

For many weeks I saw the bleeding Christ, and the memory of the vision made the days a pain ; though

of what I saw at night the consciousness most often dimmed and faded after the dawn, or it would have been unbearable. One sight I saw was so dreadful that it woke me from deep-sleep consciousness; I was obliged to seek refuge in waking physical consciousness. But I remembered what I had seen; a little child seized by strong and ruthless hands and torn to pieces. The horror and fear that were on me when I woke were so intense that I can never recall it without a shudder. Yet I had seen the Christ take the soul of the child in His arms, a little lamb, and soothe it, while He bore the suffering Himself.

So far I have spoken of what I have seen on the astral plane, that next to the physical, where the suffering and the horror are as great, and indeed much greater, than on the physical plane. The Christ is visible to all, the crucified and suffering Christ.

After a long period of witnessing these terrible scenes, I was one night, quite unexpectedly and suddenly, led on to the ethereal plane. I was aware that I was actually on the firing line ; I was made conscious of its great length. There had just been a fierce battle in one part of it, and the greatest heroism, the most supreme self-sacrifice, had been shown during this battle by soldiers who knew what they were doing and why they did it, who willingly gave their lives for that which is right and true. If only those who weep bitterly at home for the loss of such precious lives could see what I saw that night ! Some perhaps do, possibly many do ; for by the law of evolution suffering and grief have the power to open the inner senses.

I was led to this place, of course ; but my guide left me, and I was a little child standing alone, awe-struck. I knew I was in the

trenches; and in the whole length of them, the miles and miles of them, grew tall, white madonna lilies. Oh, the lilies, the sight and the scent of the lilies, the glorious blooms, the overpowering fragrance! Where souls pass through death to spiritual glory, the great white lily springs up at the passing, and makes the quivering ether sweet. I looked afar, and saw in the dim distance the line of the white flowers. And this was the terrible frontier line!—a garden such as has never before been seen. Suddenly I became aware of a quiet figure approaching me noiselessly, moving through the tall flowers. It was the Christ, as the Good Shepherd. He looked from right to left down among the flowers, and I knew He was looking to see if any lost sheep had been overlooked, and needed Him. And I knew that He had thus slowly paced the whole great length of the firing line, peace-

fully, quietly. He passed me without notice. I was but a little child from earth, a disciple being taught. His business was among those who had suffered so much and so heroically that the flower of flowers had bloomed, rising in sudden glory and opening its petals into the splendour of the ethereal world, from wherever the maimed or tortured body of one lay who had indeed fought the good fight and endured martyrdom.

I only now guessed how many of these martyrs there are, and how much the awful war is doing for the human race—purifying and redeeming men for whom otherwise purification and redemption must have been delayed for ages. The great turn of the wheel of evolution had caught these men, these “ordinary soldiers,” in whom was the germ of spiritual life, and forced their flowers into bloom.

“*Grow as the flower grows*” is

one of the most profound sentences in *Light on the Path*. The artificial effort of the would-be disciple to be a recluse, an ascetic, a non-killer, too often produces egotism, which is the first step towards black magic. But if a man rises up as a plant springs from the soil in which its seed is sown, fulfilling the duties close at hand, true to his family and his country, he is ready to be developed by the forcing process now being laid upon the laggard race. And he may go, a mere unit in khaki, to the place of pain, and there find illumination, and the blooming of the flower which is within all men may take place as by a miracle. And I know from what I have seen that not only is this possible, not only does it occur, but that it is, in fact, the great object of the war.

For many days and nights I was here among the lilies, perceiving by degrees more clearly the deep occult

meaning and reality in the phrase "Grow as the flower grows." Then one time I was taken suddenly straight into the spiritual world. I was still among the flowers; I still saw the long line of lilies going into the distance each way. But from where I stood—where a bitter battle had been waged on the physical plane and terrible results from it were being tended on the astral plane—from where I stood, a spirit in the spirit world, I saw a great wide avenue in front, going uphill. The avenue was formed of magnolia trees in full flower, the glorious ethereal counterparts of the magnolia trees of ancient Egypt, more perfect in bloom, more exquisite in fragrance, than anything these flower spirits have been enabled to produce on earth. Egypt is as one dead upon earth, but her power is great in the ethereal world.

The Christ was passing up the avenue, and I knew that He had

helped many, many souls to go up that way during the last few hours of horror in the physical world. He had returned from one of His searches among the lilies. He carried in His arms one who was asleep, who was too tired and worn to awake into the spiritual world to which he had earned the right of entrance. I was able to follow Him, though with difficulty, helped mysteriously to do so. A great dome of white marble was visible at the summit of the hill; white marble steps led up to a wide, open door. The Christ passed up the steps, carrying His burden. I followed Him, afraid yet not afraid, for I knew I was permitted or I could not have been there. Within the door I saw the soft, shining waters of a great bath like an indoor lake, so large was it; and I knew that the running water which passed through and gently disturbed it was the Water of Life. Many lay there,

sleeping, upheld by the mystic water, growing young and whole again. The Christ gave His sleeping charge into the care of this water, laying the form gently upon it. The little movement of the water was like the movement of a cradle, and I saw a faint smile on the tired face, and then a deeper sleep, full of profound healing, enwrap the weary consciousness. The Christ walked across the water to the other side; I followed Him, but I think I was carried. Then I gazed upon that which I cannot describe. Words are useless. A vast temple, full of light—roofless. The ray of the Logos poured down from above. Spirits sprang from the water, wakening full of strength, unknowing of the weariness left behind, and each was drawn to its own ray, and became as a flame and passed into it, and was drawn up into it.

“In My Father’s house are many mansions,” said the Master. One

I have now seen myself, and it proves to me more plainly even than the experiences of the wondrous day when I saw the glorious writing on the wall,¹ that it is before the Christ those who are disciples must be strong enough to stand, with the feet washed in the blood of the heart. For He is the Master of this æon, and I have seen Him with His feet stained with His own heart's blood. Only so can we present ourselves before Him. And I know, with the certainty that is felt only in the world of realities, that those who have suffered to the uttermost for justice and honour, are gathered up by Him as His little lambs, and pass from His arms as glorious flame forms into that ray of the Logos to which they belong, entering into that mansion of the Father's house which is truly their own home. What a home-coming!

There are many homes, as there

¹ *When the Sun Moves Northward*, chap. x.

are many mansions ; and but for the home-dwelling in a spiritual state between the incarnations, the purified souls would not be able to endure the ordeal of returning, either to the ethereal or the physical plane, as they must do in the distance of time. Their duty is to help the whole human race through the gate of freedom, and they will fulfil that duty, surrendering the pleasures of heaven with the same simplicity and certainty that they now fulfil the duty of patriotism, enduring the utmost suffering uncomplainingly, and surrendering their physical lives.

These visions have not been seen in dream consciousness, nor yet in trance, but in the full intense consciousness known, as I have already pointed out,¹ to the occultists of Southern India as *jagrat of swapna* (the consciousness of waking clairvoyance). In that condition I

¹ *When the Sun Moves Northward*, p. 149.

passed up from the physical to the spiritual state, perceiving the firing line of the great world war on each, and never confusing the one with the other or forgetting the physical horror and pain in the unutterable joy of the spiritual transformation. Nor does the Master ; for while in the glory and joy of the ray into which the redeemed souls entered like flames which became at once a part of the Great Flame, the least touch of a tiny appealing hand upon His robe, the use of His sacred name in an unuttered prayer, will bring Him back instantly from the glorious heights of spiritual realisation to the agony and grief and pain of the crucified and bleeding Son of Man, the Master of the Æon.

The Germans repudiate the teaching of the Master of the Æon. I quote *Le Matin*, June 25, 1915, to show the form which this repudiation takes :—

“LE ‘VIEUX DIEU’ ALLEMAND CONTRE JÉSUS-CHRIST

“Le ‘vieux Dieu’ allemand, par l’organe d’un de ses prêtres, le professeur de théologie Baumgarten, de Kiel, vient de dire son fait à un autre Dieu, le faible, l’imprévoyant, le trop humain Jésus-Christ.

“Voici, d’après la **Gazette de l’Allemagne du Nord**, le passage essentiel d’un prêche du docteur Baumgarten intitulé : ‘La guerre et le Sermon sur la montagne.’

“Jésus, déclare M. le professeur Baumgarten, a indisputablement condamné la guerre dans le Sermon sur la montagne. Mais aujourd’hui, les Allemands sont obligés de faire la guerre sans aucuns égards.

“Celui qui, ces derniers jours, n’a pas salué d’applaudissements joyeux le torpillage du **Lusitania** n’est pas un véritable Allemand. Le danger italien nous montre plus clairement encore que nous devons employer des moyens extrêmes pour assurer le salut de l’empire.

“Mais comment la pensée nationale se concilie-t-elle avec la pensée chrétienne ? Il ne suffit pas de dire qu’on se bat pour se défendre ou pour obtenir la paix. Notre vie

est faite de contrastes et d'oppositions. Il faut chercher un détour pour sortir des difficultés. *Jésus n'a pas songé à la situation actuelle. Il n'a pensé qu'à l'âme individuelle. Le Sermon sur la montagne n'a pas de rapports avec le droit, l'Etat, l'honneur et la société.*

“ Nous autres Allemands, en ces jours, nous sommes pénétrés de ce que nous devons à l'Etat. Notre Etat prusso-allemand est vraiment plus pour nous que ce que Jésus pouvait voir dans l'Etat de son temps. C'était alors une tyrannie assurant la contrainte des sujets. L'Etat, pour nous, est la réalisation de la personnalité du peuple : c'est une grandeur voulue et réalisée par Dieu à laquelle nous devons consacrer nos forces.

“Il y a donc entre l'éthique du Sermon sur la montagne et nos aspirations nationales une différence d'ordre et de grandeur. Les obligations qui en résultent pour notre âme individuelle ne s'appliquent pas à notre vie nationale et sociale.”

Trop - humain ! And is not the Master of the Æon the very soul of

humanity itself? Is He not the higher self of every man, in the deep occult sense the Son of Man? The "old German God" is claimed by this theologian to understand the situation, not the Master Jesus Christ, whose "Sermon sur la montagne n'a pas de rapports avec le droit, l'Etat, l'honneur, et la société." The preacher went on to say that between the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount and the national aspirations of his country there is a difference of order and of grandeur! and to declare that the obligations of the individual soul do not apply to national and social life.

The Avatar of this Æon, the great Christ soul, who has come down from spiritual states far above the reach of even the spirit of the sphere, is not only the lover of men, for whom and with whom He has chosen to suffer, but He is the friend of each man, and of each living thing. It is for the individual that He labours;

He looks for the lost sheep, and claims each one separately. Each one of these has his home and place in the Father's mansions.

National aspiration may demand the herding and driving of men so that individuality is lost and they become machines, but occultism is the drawing forth and development of all that is latent in each individual. The great Master, the Christ, therefore is depicted carrying one little lamb in His arms—for one lost sheep He would come down from heaven. In the hour of death and in the day of judgment, individuality asserts itself and claims its rights. Each man suffers alone and dies alone, even though angels tend him. And in the agony of wounds, in the suffering of the treatment of those wounds, in the solitude of the undeserved prison, in grief for those killed, in poverty and privation, the inner nature of the man arises and stands forth. He is no longer one

of a nation, fighting for the success of a flag. He has become something much greater, a part of the great whole. He is either noble or ignoble, according to his possibilities in this hour of the fiery ordeal. If he has within him the great possibility, if the seed of glory is latent within him, then his whole nature is put to the test, melted in the crucible of pain. What will come forth from the burning? Something which grows as the flower grows? Will the eyes have become incapable of tears, and the voice have lost the power to wound? That is what the Master asks for, what He seeks. He desires that every individual shall be redeemed, not merely the man of one nation or of another nation. For the flower of the soul blooms in all soils; the whole earth is its place of growth. That the causes of the world war were in operation when the Huns wore skins of untanned hide and fought with stone

hammers, as Mr Hales says, is, as I see it, a further proof, if any were needed, that this is the hour of evolution prepared for from the beginning. We are being separated into the sheep and the goats, and the goats will have lost their chance for this æon. The great task for the disciple now, for disciples of all standing, is to refuse to be dominated by the atmosphere of hatred and revenge which is clouding the thought of the world.

At the Easter ceremonies in the ethereal world in 1915, I heard chanted by the glorious choir of the Brotherhood of Love, in the Hall of Learning, a Litany for War Service which I was bidden to give to the world. The disciple of any degree who recites this daily, hourly, whether his days and hours are spent in the trenches or the hospitals, or in enduring hardships and privations resulting from the war, will be enabled by his very suffering

LITANY
for
War Service 1915-16



May we devote ourselves to the service of the spirit of love; may we not offend against the law of love.

May we who are thinking in unison cause a shape of love to be formed strong enough to obliterate all thought forms of hatred which it encounters.

May all disciples unwaveringly gaze on the Supreme, through all pain and hardship.

May all men attain consciousness of the great wheel of evolution turning in our midst, and may each of us rise with the upward turn, by means of sacrifice and suffering for that which is right and true.

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to learn the first rules of *Light on the Path*. By the power of this hotbed of experience in which the flower of the soul is forced into bloom amid the firing of great guns, his inner being will arise and stand in the presence of the Master.

PART II

CHAPTER I

The text of *Light on the Path* has now been before the world of students of occultism for over thirty years. The book has held its own in spite of misinterpretations, misreadings, and false statements. It is a proof of the fact that works, as well as beings, have individual karma. These rules were given to those on the physical plane who needed them and were ready for them, and those who are ready for them grasp at their meaning. To others they are meaningless.

The two sets of rules, each twenty-one in number, are written in living letters upon a wall in a sacred place in the ethereal world. That

place, that wall, those letters, have been there since time began, and will be there until time has ceased to be. Let there be no mistake about this. There is no authority connected with these rules, no "master" is responsible for them, nor any body of masters. They exist, as the phenomenal world exists while we exist in it. They are a part of the great mystery of being, calling into life the highest part of man's nature.

The numbered statements which are included in these two sets of twenty-one are called "rules" in the text itself; it is therefore best to call them by this word, which clearly indicates their nature. Their object is to make and keep straight the path of the disciple.

The title *Light on the Path* is no part of the text. It was given to the little volume, when it was first brought out, by the Theosophical friend who was so anxious to send

it into the world as to do so in spite of my earnest desire to keep it in manuscript. I did not think the world of occult students was ready for it then ; I do not know whether they are ready for it now. Certainly no book has been more misinterpreted.

The "Notes," which in some editions are intermixed with the text, are in no sense whatever a part of it. They were written by myself, and should appear only as an appendix.

The rules which form the text, the double set of twenty-one each, stand alone, not only in my experience, but in all literature.

They are blazing now, every word a jewel, on that wall where I saw them long ago and have seen them many hundreds of times since ; I, a little human soul, led by an ethereal being who guided me as one guides a child. I do not think anyone can perceive the rules, or is able to

reach the place where they are revealed, without such help. I was not merely permitted to write them down, I received the definite order to do so, and had to go again and again for the purpose of reading them all. Each time I was led to the place as a child is led, guided across a wide and glittering floor, and upheld when my strength gave way. And I knew myself as a little child on that plane. I was ordered to write them down, as I have said, but I was not ordered to publish them, and when that was done in spite of my doubts as to the wisdom of the step, I could only hope the book had its own karma with which I was not allowed to interfere. It appears that this was so, for good or ill according to the state of those who read it.

“These rules are written for all disciples.”

The word “disciple” is one of the most beautiful in our language,

meaning, as it does, one who learns from another. It does not contain the same meaning as the word "pupil," with which it is sometimes confused or interchanged. The Latin *pupillus* means actually a little boy, one who is in the care or charge of an older person, and who is bound to be obedient as well as to learn. The disciple is simply the learner; and a great doctor, a great musician, or a great artist will proudly declare himself the disciple of one still greater. There is no possibility of introducing the idea of obedience into the word. The *Dictionary of Theosophical Terms*, compiled by Powis Hault, gives *chela* as meaning a disciple or pupil, which is a good instance of the confusion which exists between the two words, regarded by many persons as interchangeable. In reality they mean quite different things. The children in the council schools are pupils, and the law gives to the masters the

power to physically punish those who are disobedient. Being under age, they are literally, according to the derivation of the word, in the charge of the masters, who are responsible for them during school hours.

On page 161 of Subba Rao's *Esoteric Writings* we have the statement that "Sankaracharya was a contemporary of Patanjali (being his *chela*)." It is pointed out in the same article that Sankara was looked upon as a far greater man than Patanjali by the Adwaites, and also that the views held by these two great men were not altogether identical. In such a case the rendering of the Sanscrit word *chela* into English must be disciple, not pupil. It would seem obvious that this must be the rendering always where the learner is of age, and is a voluntary follower of any particular master; it must therefore be the right one in all matters connected with occultism, where in-

dependent effort, and withdrawal from objects of sense (including the bodies of possibly embodied masters), is taught in all the great systems and schools.

The word "master" is one which always requires a descriptive word to accompany it; it cannot be used loosely without causing the greatest confusion, its meaning being so wide and splendid. The Latin word from which our English word "master" is derived means exactly the same as the Sanscrit *maha*, simply "great." The council-school teacher is the great one in that little community; the masters in art and music are the great ones even to those who are not able to become disciples and can but look and listen and admire. The word is one which must be coloured by context and the surroundings with which it is associated. Those who desire to learn occultism from others who know more than themselves have

a perfect right to call those others masters. If the adepts who have attained to knowledge in matters of occultism choose to take disciples, then are they rightly called the masters by them. Some, perhaps many, readers of *Light on the Path* suppose the words "nothing that is embodied—nothing that is out of the Eternal—can aid you" to be a contradiction of the possibility of an embodied master. That supposition arises from a complete misapprehension of the position and aim of the rules known as *Light on the Path*. The one who reads these in their original position on the walls of a place of learning which is entirely outside physical life, knows that they are addressed to the adepts, the ones who have attained. It is *they* who are the disciples. This is shown clearly at the very commencement.

The position of these rules, in that place where they have been

and will be while time lasts, must be considered when looking for the meaning of the word "masters" when used in them. It was written in this place before the first avatar descended to help humanity, and it will be there not only at the consummation of this age but at the end of time. It must be remembered that the one who reads these rules in their original place receives them into his physical brain in the language with which he is most familiar. The word I read as masters would be "the great" in any tongue. And who are "the great" in that high place of learning in which the Christ comes to teach? And what does the word "disciples" mean in such a context? It can by no possibility mean anything less than the adepts. The one who "sees" and "hears" that which is "soundless" and "invisible" is the adept, the one who has attained, whose state is that described in the Patan-

jali Yoga aphorisms as that of a seer without a spectacle. He has reached to this state by passing beyond the power of the pairs of opposites, so that he no longer experiences pleasure or pain. From this calm after the tempest, this "Yoga-sleep" (Subba Rao, *Esoteric Writings*, page 253), the stanzas proceed to arouse the initiate. He must once more become a learner in order to take the final steps. He must now be able to speak and to stand in the presence of the Master of the age in which he is a disciple. In the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, Arjuna addresses Krishna as the Master of the world of that age.

The Master who came down to earth two thousand years ago, and who promised to remain with us to the consummation of this age, is seen and heard by all who are able to enter the ethereal and spiritual spaces in which He moves, and where He is always ready to receive

sinners and sufferers, as well as the disciples who learn from Him. These, the disciples, are expected to be able to speak, and to be able to stand in His presence, and therefore to be able to do His will and to understand the rules of the higher life.

“*Attend you to them*” is an injunction in respect to these rules “written for all disciples” which most readers will pass over without thought.

In the chapter called “The Illumination of the Adept” in Adams’ *House of the Hidden Places*, a dialogue is given between the adept and the sill of the doorway through which he has to pass. “I will not let you go over me,” says the sill, “unless you tell me my name.”

“The weight in the right place is thy name,” answers the adept.

The word “attention” is the entrance-word to the mystery teaching of *Light on the Path*, as the

“sill” is at the entrance of the gateway for the divine Osiris-soul, in Adams’ interpretation of the esoteric teaching of the Great Pyramid. The “dead” (who are now truly alive) enter upon a definite course according to the doctrine of ancient Egypt, described in the miscalled *Book of the Dead* and illustrated by the passages and chambers of the Great Pyramid. But none can enter, even though an initiate, who does not know the true and inner meaning of the first step. So with the teaching of *Light on the Path*, which is for those disciples who have not only burnt out the impurities of ordinary human nature in the crucible of human life, but have passed through the first stages of Yoga ; these disciples must then be able to give the right meaning to the entrance-word of this advanced school of thought before that entrance can be effected. The fact that without that right meaning

no entrance can be effected shows that these rules are a true mystery teaching. It is easy to read them through, to study them, and even to attempt to live according to them, but without the true understanding of the first word of direction there is no understanding of the rules at all. All such aphorisms can be read as expressions describing mystic states, and therefore please and even satisfy aspirants who have within them the possibility of mysticism but who know nothing of practical occultism.

The word "attention" contains within itself, from its derivation, the idea of stretching. To stretch and reach out towards a method of development, and never to lose hold of it, implies great and continuous effort. Attention is no mere matter of reading sentences, of conning rules, of sitting in a school and listening to one who speaks and offers easy interpretations of diffi-

cult matters. On the contrary, it is a stretching of the whole self toward a goal placed on high, and apparently quite unapproachable ; a reaching out towards something within and beyond, something soundless and invisible. Without any compass the voyager embarks on this great undertaking. There is an invisible guide, a soundless voice, and upon these the aspirant depends, knowing that he is absolutely safe in the arms of his God, so long as his direction is true, his desire absolutely pure. The stretching out towards perfection which is an essential of the *Light on the Path* teaching is the willing crucifixion of the higher self. The lower self, the personality of the ordinary man, is crucified in time and space, in the inevitable duality which makes the pilgrimage (man and woman, pleasure and pain, heat and cold, etc.), but he has passed through these *as* a man, burnt in the crucible. The

“ stains have been burnt from his heart ” by the raging fire. He has now to find his way from the plane of matter to the state of spirit. This can only be done by conscious effort. It is a part of rebirth, of the upward path of evolution. The crucifixion of every day is *apparently* God-sent, but the crucifixion of the upward path is clearly and evidently entirely a result of conscious effort. This is plain, without confusion or doubt. No possibility of attributing the suffering of the upward path to God or Karma exists. It is definitely each man's own doing, the conscious and willing pinning of himself upon the tree of pain and sacrifice. By steadfast gazing upon the face of pain he becomes aware that it is capable of change. Long since, when, as a man, he gazed upon the face of Avîdya (evil), he looked long enough to see that face shrivel up and disappear. Only the man strong enough to do this can become a

disciple. Now, in his new place in life, that strength remains with him. He becomes aware of the true meaning of the mystery of the crucifixion. In its essential nature it can never be expressed, even to himself; he can only attain to the knowledge of it by clinging in spirit to the Father-Mother of the world. But he knows, as he passes through the bitter-sweet of life, that it is the mystic duality which makes the experience of humanity full of contrasts. And, with strength and determination to solve the mystery, he gazes upon it, making his mind into the transparent jewel of the Yogin, in which all mysteries can, by true religious concentration, be revealed. With the stoicism of the philosopher, he will choose pain to gaze upon, lest pleasure confuse him by its beauty. But such choice cannot be made; the two arms of the Cross are but one. As he looks intently into the dark face of suffering, it

becomes illuminated, and is suddenly no longer seen as pain but as something even more beautiful than pleasure, with which it is blended to form this new consciousness. So with evil and good ; they disappear mystically in the body that lies on the tree, in which a new force arises, made of both and known as neither. He who will attend to the rules and aphorisms of *Light on the Path* must stretch towards a state of being which to the ordinary man appears impossible. He can shed no tear, he can inflict no wound, he can see his own heart's blood flow, knowing that out of this surrender of personality his greater self will arise. And while surrendering the self, he must acquire such steadfastness on the plane of being to which he has risen, that he cannot be shaken, that he will stand firm even in the presence of the Masters.

The dignity and position of a master is of necessity the result of

the needs and ignorance of the learner. The occult aphorism that the disciple commands his teacher is a mere statement of fact, following the same law as the aphorisms, "Ask and it shall be given to you—seek and ye shall find." It is not that the disciple chooses who shall teach him, and orders what the teaching shall be, but that the demands of his nature draw that which is required by them from the inexhaustible, ever-flowing fount of life. Therefore the degree of discipleship being determined, the standing of the master can be guessed. School-children are not taught by great professors, and eminent scholars are not taught by beginners. This is self-evident in the ordinary life of the world. It is a deep and intense truth in occult training. The high position of the disciples to whom the rules of *Light on the Path* are addressed is shown at once in the first lines. In the

second part, rule 15, the disciple is told to do that which was held by the ancient Egyptians as being only possible in the initiation which comes to the just man after physical death. But the disciple is more than the just man, and he is therefore instructed in the mysteries when he is prepared, no matter whether he is still embodied or not. It is clearly stated that these experiences are only to be apprehended by the inner senses. They are not to be imparted by any human voice, or any words written in the languages of earth. Therefore it is evident that no teachers using these means of instruction can be the masters before whom the soul must be able to stand, and in whose presence the voice of the disciple must be able to speak.

The secrets of the earth, the air, and the water, according to the Egyptian ritual, were shown to the soul of the man who had left the

body by death. These mysteries have to be mastered by all souls who are ready to pass on, before leaving the wonderful world which has been their temporary home. The Masters indicated in *Light on the Path* are capable of showing these mysteries to highly advanced disciples, by means of the inner senses; they themselves therefore are dwellers in the world reached only by the use of those senses. They wear the glorified, luminous, resplendent shapes of the teachers of the human race. When the soul, in the Egyptian ritual, is told that he must pass "the road above the earth," he finds behind the Hidden Portcullis the face of the "Unseen Teacher." When initiation has begun, the soul is so strengthened that it can bear "the distant but unveiled vision" of that face. As in the far past, when this ritual of initiation after death was first written down in the Egyptian hiero-

glyphs, it was Osiris the God who, waiting in the hidden mystic places for the souls of men, drew forth the Osiris-nature of man ; so now it is Christ the God, who is fulfilling His promise of remaining with us even to the end of the world, who is ever in waiting on the mysterious threshold, and draws the Christ-nature in man towards Himself. It is not necessary for the disciple to have laid down his physical body before he learns to stand and speak before these Masters ; so soon as the inner senses are awakened, the Unseen Teacher makes His divine presence felt, even though His face may still be veiled. The glory and radiance of that face would be unbearable to one who had not yet entered fully into the territory of Light.

Such are the Masters of the World, the guides of the human race, before whose divinity the soul of man must learn to hold itself with steadfastness.

These great cosmic souls know the sufferings and the sorrows of men, and have suffered and sorrowed with them. Osiris was killed and dismembered upon earth, only to become an ever-present friend in the world invisible to men; as Christ was crucified in time and space, and descended into the tomb of matter, to rise again and move always among those who are perpetually suffering this crucifixion. He is seen by all who suffer to the uttermost, to that point when pain breaks down the barriers and the inner senses are awakened. On the battlefield, in the hospitals, in the hour of death and in the day of travail, the glorious shape of the Good Shepherd is seen, because then the universal teacher, life, is forcing men to become disciples and to cry aloud for the help of the Master.

Sight is the first of the inner senses roused into activity according to the rules of *Light on the Path*.

The disciple of this teaching is the highly advanced Yogin who has conquered self and entered into the impersonal condition. He requires sight first of all, in order to see the path and know without doubt that he is following the right direction and going unerringly upon the way which will lead him to the Supreme. This is the meaning of the way of Yoga, that every sense, opening as the petal of a flower opens, shall be used for the Great End only, and for no lesser purpose. But the psychic and spiritual forms will and do develop their senses by natural, slow evolution, and the experiences of life and death are the teachers. Never was that made more plain than now. I have shown in the *Crucible* how the terrible experiences of a world war train men in the Yoga of *Light on the Path*.

To those who regard man from their high condition of superhuman states, he appears as a somnam-

bulist, who, with closed eyes, deaf ears, and without speech, walks to and fro, obtaining sensation as he best may under such disadvantages. This is because the physical body is not observed by them ; its density, which makes it the only one of man's bodies visible to physical eyes, causes it to be unnoticed by the eyes of light which look from higher planes of existence. They see the etheric double pursuing the paths into which it is led by the physical senses, unaware of the plane of its own life, where it is but as a deaf and blind mute is upon the physical plane. They perceive the desire body confused and baffled by inexplicable passions which reach it from the physical senses, flinging itself hither and thither in its own world without obtaining any certain or permanent satisfaction. These two bodies are held together and held in movement, free, yet not free, by the breath of life, which is some-

times as a mighty wind, and sometimes as a mere faint flutter of air. It is that which creates vitality in these two bodies, even though they are deaf and dumb and blind. They form a vehicle for the fifth principle of man, the thinker, the reincarnating ego, which he uses to move about in. He is Arjuna, and these form his chariot. But it is not only from the density of the comparatively inert physical body that he receives impressions; all the parts of his chariot report to him. In the case of the ordinary man, during a whole incarnation the thinker is informed only of what the senses of the physical body are aware of. So soon as development begins and the inner senses awaken, he is informed of that which takes place in the worlds to which the etheric double and desire body belong. The first of the inner senses to awaken is sight, and when the etheric double opens its eyes upon the exquisite

world to which it belongs, the thinker is transported into a new and amazing region of delight.

Death, as a factor in life, does its great work unerringly and incessantly; and one of its most important and vital tasks is that of touching the eyes of the somnambulists who grieve for the one who is gone, and raising the heavy lids which droop. But this is only a part of Death's work when the great Spirit of Love is present. When the one who leaves the physical plane is unloved, he has failed in his chief mission in life, and that failure follows into the realm of death. It is the agony of longing, the bitterness of grief, when a loved one is lost, that forces open the closed eyes of the inner bodies, obeying the desire of the ego to continue its relationship with the ego which has "changed its world"—the beautiful Japanese expression for what we call death. This it is which enables the mourner to see

the unearthly shape of the one he has lost, either at the hour of death or soon after. The passing soul, as it becomes alive in its inner bodies, reaches towards the blind eyes of those it loves, in their inner bodies, and rouses them, too, to life. The shape of the one gone is not seen by the physical eyes of the one remaining behind, it is, as Tennyson expresses it in the greatest line of *In Memoriam*, "Spirit to spirit, ghost to ghost." Only so is any real sense of contact obtained, any real and vivid consciousness of the personality being present. And even if the mourner relapses into the state of the sleep-walker and returns to the life of the physical world, to be led hither and thither by his physical desires and outer sense only, he never can forget that amazing moment in which he knew himself to be a spirit, gazing with the sight of inner perception upon the freed form of one he loved. It is remark-

able how many persons have had that experience. In moments of confidence only can they be induced to speak of it, and usually they regard it as a unique experience peculiar to themselves alone. They have no idea that this arousal is one of Death's missions, which he has been fulfilling since the beginning of time, and will continue to fulfil until men need it no longer, being no longer sleep-walkers but in full possession of their senses upon all the planes of being.

In quite normal and unstimulated development, dream consciousness naturally follows upon physical consciousness, and the man becomes gradually aware that he is alive in another place when the eyes of his physical body are shut in sleep. He finds also that the experiences of this place, sometimes delightful, are sometimes also very disagreeable and painful. In fact, his etheric double is perceiving that which

surrounds it on the etheric plane, and it depends on purity of purpose and the direction which he is taking whether his etheric surroundings are baleful or beautiful.

CHAPTER II

To grow as the flower grows is the essence and the essential of the Yoga of *Light on the Path*. To develop in quiet, in confidence, as the lilies of the field do, without thought for the morrow, but always eagerly anxious to bring forth a flower worthy of the sun and air, perfecting the petals within the mystic enfoldment till the moment of opening arrives, is that which is set before the disciple.

It has been claimed by many students who look for a royal road and seek short-cuts, and by some writers who cater for their desires, that *Light on the Path* can be used as a guide and text-book for everyday life for the ordinary man. This is not so. The stanzas can only be understood by a disciple who is

already on the path towards freedom, the goal of the Buddha himself. It sets forth the manner in which to secure the great liberation, that which releases man from the wheel of rebirth. Should he desire to return, or remain, as a follower of the Christ, as a helper of the world, he does so as an act of grace, not as a deed resulting from bondage. Limitation is no longer his scourge.

The first aphorisms of *Light on the Path* can only be understood by a student who has mastered the Yoga of Patanjali, and who has thus changed his attitude towards life and the phenomenal universe. The first aphorisms clearly show, as plainly as words can express occult matters, that this is so. They describe the state of that student who has understood and confirmed the supreme vow, which includes the five pledges contained in the teaching of Patanjali, and which lie at the root of all religions and form the basis of

the commandments of all religions. These teachings, clear, simple, brief, eternal, come from ancient Persia, prehistoric Persia ; the sage Patanjali was the first to write them down, and that is why his name is associated with them. Every Roman Catholic, every Protestant, every Buddhist, learns them in childhood. In England we see them written upon the chancel walls of village churches in the form given to them in the Jewish scriptures. *Light on the Path* was revealed to me thirty years ago ; ten years ago I began to understand how little I or any other student understood it, and I resolved to approach it by a study of the most ancient teaching. I worked for five years upon the Patanjali Yoga, and I have put the results of my work into *The Transparent Jewel*.

The flower which is spoken of in *Light on the Path* is the mystic lotus, which grows in the inner stillness

of the soul. It lives hidden within the walls of the personality and the personal life. But it is there always, for all, and for all time, ready to bud and to bloom, and to respond to the sun and air, which are life-giving and joy-giving. In return it sends forth an unutterably sweet and precious fragrance. The first thing the disciple has to do is to enter the garden of his soul; and as he does this, by doing this, he changes his attitude towards the phenomenal world, towards mankind, the world of animals, plants, and inanimate objects. The way to do this is shown in *The Transparent Jewel*. There is no other way, no hasty method, no evading of study or of suffering.

A walled garden has a witchery of its own. Secluded from the surrounding of open nature, especially attached to the dwelling of its owner, gazed on by no eyes of strangers passing in the roadway, it has a

sense as of sanctuary about it. And while it is protected on all sides from the inroads of wind or dust, it is open to the great freedom of the sky, and revels in the rain as do the spreading garden spaces about it, while it draws the sun's rays into it and holds them hot within its walls. How strong and sun-fed is the fragrance of flowers that bloom within the shelter of the walls—how warm the earth about their roots!

There is an excitement in being admitted to a walled garden which is like no other sensation. The owner precedes you and turns the key—the lover of gardens quivers with anticipation. What will become visible as the door is pushed open? I remember watching such a door opened in a high wall in a dark street in Geneva. The high walls on each side of the narrow street excluded the sunlight. What a vision as the door opened! The sun poured down upon a secluded

yard full of orange trees in flower. In England the walled garden is most often a place where fruit ripens safely in the shelter and the fragrance of herbs fills the air. But in the wonderful past, when religion ruled the world, the temples had gardens within their walls. And in Spain these cloistered gardens are now within the churches, walled in and hidden from the outer world. We are thus led to the profound, world-old symbolism which is surely the inner source of the strange attractiveness of the walled garden. The temple is the representation of the physical body, that temple not made with hands; and the hidden garden symbolises the garden of the soul, where the flower grows—that sacred flower which dwells in secret within every human being. But it can only be found by entering the walled garden; and the owner does not often open the door for another; it is possible that he never opens

it himself, or even knows that he possesses the key.

The disciple is one who knows that he can open the door of the garden of his soul, and does so. There is but one way of entering this garden, and that is by the raising of Kundalini. The higher self-conscious centres of the ethereal form are like wheels of living fire, and are therefore called by the Sanscrit word *chakra*, a wheel. These are not the astral sense-centres of the astral body, but exist in a higher body and perform loftier functions. Nevertheless they have to be subdued by the advanced soul which has become a disciple. It is necessary to consider the meaning of the word "disciple" as used in the aphorisms of *Light on the Path*. The word itself contains only the idea of a "learner," being derived simply from the Latin *disco*, to learn. It has no resemblance to the word "pupil," which implies obedience, and is rightly

applied only to children who are not of an age to guide themselves, not being yet fully inhabited by their own egos. The words "disciple" (learner) and "master" (great one) can only be understood by considering the context. In the case of these aphorisms, there is internal evidence that the disciples addressed are initiates of a high order. The reference will serve to show this; the calm after the tempest spoken of in rule 21 is clearly the "Yoga-sleep" (Karana-sarira) (see *Esoteric Writings*, by Subba Rao, page 253).

This means that the disciple called upon to study these rules is sufficiently advanced to have roused Kundalini, the divine power which lies latent in ordinary men, to have by its strength broken through the seven Chakrams, and obtained the mastery over the powers located in them, thus gaining control over forces in supernature with which they are connected. He has reached

Sahasaram, the seventh and highest centre, where is the lotus-tank. He has entered into the garden of his soul, and there in the shelter of the temple walls he finds the thousand-petalled lotus blooming in its perfect beauty, in the midst of the brilliant flowers of spiritual passion and aspiration. It is an unopened bud in the hidden and unexplored garden of the man of the world. But it is there—unknown, though supremely beautiful—and he has but to open the door to perceive the splendour of the spiritual sun which pours down into it. It is not safe to do this until the moral nature of the man has been conquered by his own higher self, until the neophyte (“newly planted one”) is firmly set in his fresh place in life. Therefore are these rules written for all disciples. Those who read them with understanding and the desire to render obedience to them will find they give warning of great dangers

which arise in the path, and that they indicate the abysses which open before the pilgrim, into any one of which he may fall and become engulfed if not warned and prepared.

To be a disciple according to the standard of *Light on the Path* means being one who has the power to learn from his own higher self, who is able to gaze upon the light of the Logos within his own being, where it sheds its rays upon the mystical seventh Chakram.

No teacher is required in order that there shall be a disciple ; neither an embodied nor a disembodied guide is necessary. The power of learning and the desire to learn are the sole essentials ; these may be directed towards the Supreme Being or towards the ray which reaches the divine part within the man himself, from the Logos ; and he is, as it were, self-illuminated, a learner from the Light itself without any intermediary. Or he may learn

from another. The historical record that Sankaracharya was a disciple of Patanjali is a good instance of the meaning of the word ; for Sankaracharya was held to be a much greater man than Patanjali by the Adwaites ; and, moreover, it is known that the views held by the two were not identical on many points. Thus Sankaracharya was not a pupil of Patanjali ; but he learned from him, and was therefore his disciple.

The word "disciple" occurs in the first line of the writing known as *Light on the Path*, and governs the three conditions of attention, seeing, and hearing. These are the receptive states which the disciple must enter into first, and the price paid for attaining to them is told at once. So soon as the active states of speaking and standing are referred to, the word "masters" appears in the text. The manner in which these two words are used forms the key

to the esoteric meaning of the aphorisms. The words themselves can be used, and are used, on every plane of human development. There are always learners, and always great ones above them from whom they learn. Right through life, from the child's school, where the one taught is a pupil and is compelled to learn, and is compelled to render obedience, so soon as the ego of each man asserts itself, he becomes a learner, seeking knowledge of some kind, good or bad, worldly or unworldly. Very often, it is true, he remains a pupil only, because the ego has not asserted itself. So soon as it does, the passion for experience and knowledge arises, and the man becomes a learner. Every step in life, every hardship, every trial, every joy and pleasure, has its profound lesson for the one who is a learner. Life itself is that which man, as man, learns from. The desire *to live* is a passionate desire,

born of the inner knowledge that herein truth and reality are to be found. And out of the crucible of human life, in which the whole nature burns and spends itself, rises at last a flame of a different order, brilliant and unwavering. The desire to reach to the inner truth, the absolute knowledge, has arisen in the man; he seeks to know himself and to awaken his own divine power. The passion of passions now possesses him, he is hungry and athirst for the consciousness of the Supreme. He is prepared to enter upon the suffering of self-conquest for the sake of the high goal which seems to be within sight, he is ready to set aside self, and to compel obedience and silence from his animal nature. To be ready to do this is one thing, to be able to do it is quite another. It is easy to talk about self-conquest, without in reality showing the least understanding of what it means, and those

who essay the task find themselves continually turned back. They are obliged to begin at the beginning again, because of having failed to understand the nature of that which is attempted. Self-conquest cannot be learned from another, it is a lesson which each man learns for himself, alone.

The complete control of the psychic and physical senses arises naturally from that moral training which is the first part of all true Yoga. This being accomplished, it is a further and very great effort and accomplishment that gives to the soul the stability which enables it to stand in the presence of the masters. This *standing* is the attainment of the power of steadfastness, and is the result of certain conditions in the soul which are here laid down as constituting discipleship. Ecstasy can be reached by the mystic from time to time, but if he desires to be a disciple he must

be capable of remaining firm and unwavering in the highest place his soul can reach. There is no stronger test of capacity in ordinary human life than that of steadfastness; it contains within it that power of perseverance which is an essential of genius. This ranks as the last and highest of the four conditions which constitute discipleship according to this standard.

The treatise opens by declaring the rules which form the text to be written for all disciples, and then immediately sets forth in plain language the grade of disciples who will be capable of giving them the attention which they must have in order to be understood. None can see to read them until human grief has been overcome, so that the eyes are always bright with the joy of gazing on the Supreme, and are never dimmed by tears. The one who sees to read them can only attend to them if he has accom-

plished the great task which enables him to entirely change his attitude towards all living things from that which is common to ordinary men. He is incapable of suffering, and incapable of inflicting pain. His attitude is that of pure compassion and love towards all beings. This state is only attainable by the highly developed and advanced Yogin, who has passed through the moral preparation and conquered himself by the training of the mind. Many who desire to enter upon the path of Yoga are capable of great efforts, but are unable to maintain the condition reached in these efforts. It is made so plain that none can mistake the meaning, in the first ten lines of this treatise, that the disciples called upon to attend to the rules are Yogins of such an advanced order that devotion through many successive incarnations must have been required in order to attain to it. And then the power of remain-

ing unwaveringly in this high state is absolutely required. Only those who have made the attempt to leave the ranks of ordinary human beings, and to enter upon the rapid evolution which is called the path of occultism, know how easy it is to fall back and return into the old, world-worn way. At every point in the path, till man has climbed to the summit and passed over it, the fall is possible. The rules in this treatise are not written for those who fall away. The soul must be capable of the unwavering certainty which enables it to stand in the overwhelming presence of the Masters.

CHAPTER III

Dream consciousness, being the next consciousness to that of the ordinary waking state, is often attained by the normal person who is not making any definite effort to walk upon the path. Its reality is demonstrated by the fact that not infrequently the dreamer sees something which is happening to persons in whom he is interested, at the very time of the event, as though his etheric form were transported to the scene of some great tragedy in order that he may be actually present at what is taking place. There are many recorded cases of this in the chapter on "Dreams" in *Human Personality*. A remarkable instance of this kind of dream consciousness, in which it is clear that the inner form of the dreamer was taken

far from his body in order to witness an occurrence of deep interest, is the dream of Mr Tapping in connection with Mr Laurence Irving's death.

Mr Tapping, stage-manager of the Kingsway Theatre, was in the provinces when the tragedy happened at which he was invisibly present. On June 2, 1914, he gave the following account of his dream :—

“ ‘Last week,’ he said, ‘we were at Sheffield, and during the early hours of Friday morning, just about the time that the *Empress of Ireland* went down, I dreamt I was one of a gathering in a handsomely appointed room, where a number of people were assembled. They were mostly gentlemen, although there seemed to be a few ladies also. Looking round the room, I plainly saw Sir Henry Irving seated at a table on the right-hand side.

“ ‘His face had the waxy appearance of that of a dead or dying man. The people present seemed to realise that the great actor was about to quit for ever the scenes of his triumphs,

and it seemed to me that this was his farewell appearance among his friends before his final exit.

“ ‘Then all present passed in solemn procession before Sir Henry’s chair, and shook him by the hand in sad farewell. Irving’s face gradually seemed to have a mist gathering on it, and his eyes were becoming dim. It was evident his strength was fast failing.

“ ‘When all the company had passed before him he rose, and, with one of those gestures we all remember so well, and in low, halting tones, as if overcome by the sympathy displayed towards him, he uttered the words, which I could hear quite plainly, “I can endure it no longer.”

“ ‘Placing his hand on his forehead, he bowed his head and disappeared, death having claimed him.

“ ‘The people then began to leave the room quickly, and when most of them had gone out I looked round again, and saw Mr Laurence Irving, whom I had not noticed particularly during the mournful procession before his father. He was standing alone at the far end of the room. I went towards him and, stretching

out my hand appealingly, exclaimed, "Don't you see what is happening? Your father is dying. He has left us for ever."

"The son looked past me with amazement in his eyes, and seemed for a moment as if he would collapse; but suddenly, drawing himself up and with a resolute expression on his face, he followed his father with unfaltering step.

"It was a most dramatic departure, and made a deep impression on me. There was no farewell on the part of the son, whose call to go seemed to come suddenly and unexpectedly.

"I did not see Miss Hackney, Laurence Irving's wife, among the company.

"On the same morning came the news of the disaster of the *Empress of Ireland*, but at that time I had no reason to suppose that Mr Laurence Irving was on the boat. As soon as I heard the news, however, I recollected my dream, and told it to the members of my company, and also to my wife, remarking that I hoped Laurence Irving and his wife were not on board.

“ ‘The dream haunted me all the day, and when it became known that they had actually sailed on the *Empress*, the news quite unnerved me, as I felt certain it was a message that the young actor and his wife had perished.

“ ‘Mr Shiel Barry, a member of the company, seeing that I was much shaken, did what he could to buck me up before I went on the stage that night.’

“ Mr Tapping added that when he saw in a Sheffield paper a picture of the saloon of the *Empress of Ireland*, he at once recognised it as the room of his dream, from which Laurence Irving passed out after his father, although he has never in reality seen either of the *Empress* boats.”¹

The record thus clearly set forth is most valuable, and the detail in it is full of interest. The part played by Sir Henry Irving can only be understood by a student of the

¹ *Daily Chronicle*, June 3, 1914. I have had some correspondence with Mr Tapping, who writes (Aug. 6, 1915): “I have nothing to add to the report of the dream that appeared in the *Daily Chronicle*.”

inner life of man who knows the difficulty of returning to this external state when once it has been left behind. The hardship of assuming even the ghostly form is very great. I have been visited by the ego of a friend who had been gone some time, and who much wished to communicate with me in dream consciousness. The form approached me, clear, plain, familiar, as Sir Henry Irving's form appeared to Mr Tapping, and then, before a second had passed, these same words were uttered, "*I can endure it no longer.*"

I heard them—oh, so plainly—the last words I have ever heard uttered by that familiar voice, for I never would ask again that we should meet on that plane. It must be for me to bear the suffering of raising myself to a higher state of consciousness where we should meet as "spirit to spirit."

I understood it to mean that the ego, which had been living in a

spiritual condition for several years, could not endure the constraint and harshness even of the etheric form. I knew well that it could not even approach the physical plane to give any sign of its existence. I should interpret the dream I have quoted to mean that Sir Henry Irving had come down through the planes of consciousness to meet his son, and that he endeavoured to get as near to the physical as possible. But even the condition of the etheric was unendurable, and he was compelled to leave it. This looked to the dreamer, who knew not at the time what it was he saw, like physical death. It was no doubt the final effort of the etheric form, which would then disintegrate. It seems undoubtedly the case, from the many recorded instances, that this form retains its life for some such purpose as the welcoming and helping of one who is expected soon to pass through that plane.

It is not probable that the dreamer really understood what was taking place between Sir Henry Irving and the other persons who were in the room. The fact that he had no idea that this room was the saloon of the *Empress of Ireland* shows that he was not fully aware of what he was looking upon. This is one of the great difficulties we have to encounter in entering upon the inner planes. I have many times been present at crowded gatherings on inner planes of consciousness without being able to ascertain what the actual event was that I was witnessing. It requires a conscious effort to ascertain this, which one learns to make in the course of time. But the dreamer who was unexpectedly introduced to such a scene could not be able or prepared to do this. Sir Henry may have found it possible to comfort or encourage those among whom his errand brought him, and did so as long as he could endure

the limitation of the form he had descended into.

The sight used in dream experiences is liable to mistake what it looks on, as the sight of a child in earth life. Experience and training are needed before the child knows that it cannot pluck the moon from the sky. Infinitely perplexing and misleading are the sights we look upon when our eyes open upon the etheric world. But the follower of Patanjali Yoga and the disciple of *Light on the Path* has attained the illuminated and unerring perception of the true mystic, by reason of the complete conquest of self, the first step in the path of true Yoga; the conquest of the mind, which is explained in the *Transparent Jewel*, is that of changing the attitude of the self towards the world. The undeveloped man regards himself as the centre of the world and the one supreme object of interest and compassion. The

change of view makes the man into the mystic seer, who looks no longer on himself, but on all other creatures, with love and the desire to understand the mystery of being. He sheds no tears, for his vision perceives the mystery of the crucifixion, and sees how man must hang upon the cross until he can free his spirit from time and space, and the torture caused by the pairs of opposites, which control the physical world.

Death is continually freeing the spirit between the incarnations and in the moments of passing. The freed spirit can waken the mourner when the love that binds them is strong enough, and can show the limitless world, "out of time, out of space." This is the greatest impetus that can be given to an incarnated human soul, and thus death, in its incessant weeding of the earth, becomes one of the greatest factors in life.

When the Yogin has attained self-

conquest, then the power of receiving impressions which is awakened within him carries no message to the senses, these marvellous organs of action and absorption have passed through their fullness of experience in his physical body and his inner forms, and he is ready to attain the hearing of the disciple. The ear of the disciple is an instrument set, so to speak, for the use of intelligence; the thinker has no longer to suffer or rejoice through it, but to learn by its means. It brings amazing information, news of the doings of the whole phenomenal world, and by its aid he becomes aware of man and the spiritual possibilities of man, in a new and wondrous manner. The school of mysticism led by Eckhart in the fourteenth century had some remarkable students in its ranks. One of these, Henry Suso, developed the inner sight, and saw angels who showed him how to look with-

in himself. Then, after Eckhart's death, he saw that "blessed Master" in what must have been one of the highest forms, either the luminous, ethereal shape or the flaming, spiritual body, for it was glorious. Then Suso obtained the inner hearing, and Eckhart told him that he was in exceeding glory, that his soul was "quite transformed and made Godlike in God." He further explained to him in the mystic utterance that "words cannot tell the manner in which those persons dwell in God who have really detached themselves from the world." Thus the disciple learns of the mysteries of the spiritual life. His inner hearing admits him to the secrets of the universe: he hears the music of the spheres, the whisperings of the stars when their ruling powers speak together in the night; he hears the plants grow, he hears their gods breathe life into them; he hears, amidst the won-

drous chorus of the universe, the cries of human joy and pain. But none of the senses of his bodies are touched by these voices ; they cause him no sensation but that of adoration, for his hearing is no longer of that order which transmits sensation. He is aware of the glory of the God of this world, and of the splendour of the Supreme, and nothing can interfere with this consciousness of the majesty of life. Suffering and sorrow have fallen into their true position as a part of the duality of human life, belonging to one side of the tree of crucifixion. Therefore, though he is full of compassion, he knows no grief, for he knows that man came hither for the experience of crucifixion. Pleasure and happiness, and the cries of joy which arise from these states, do not move him, for he knows that they also are but a part of that duality which in itself constitutes crucifixion.

CHAPTER IV

It is because of the condition of crucifixion that the human soul is solitary and isolated. "We mortal millions live alone," said Matthew Arnold; and we do, most often. Sometimes a rare and advanced soul is granted to meet its affinity, its other half—not necessarily as husband or wife or lover, most often perhaps in one of the other relationships of our complex human life. And it is only for a brief time, followed by a separation of uttermost sorrow. In historical instances, witness Tennyson and his affinity Hallam, the Brownings, Balzac and the obscure provincial solicitor who was to him all that Hallam was to Tennyson, and whose grave he visited yearly for the shedding of bitter tears over his ir-

remediable loss. But had the two been permitted by Karma to be one all through a lifetime, the whole incarnation would have been passed in a consciousness of pure delight, and all the pain and anguish of the world, and all the tasks of personal evolution, would be utterly forgotten. This may not be, because man is not free; if all pain were removed from him, he would think he was free, and the disillusionment at the end of the incarnation would be intolerable. It is easier to endure the knowledge that one is an absolute bond-slave when the reminders are continual, as they are throughout all human life. The happiest person in the world, the one who seems indeed to be the favourite of the gods, is yet continually subjected to the trial of heat or of cold, if no more subtle test be applied at the moment. Late in life the balance is struck, if not earlier.

Juliana saw in what was said to

her in respect to sin and pain, that these terrible parts of the dark bar of the Cross are an essential part of it; but she saw also that the bar of light, the sword of flame, transformed and transmuted all evil into good, all pain into joy. This is the meaning of the miracle of transmutation. It is not to be effected, as the ascetic believed, by the embrace of suffering. Joy has also to be experienced.

Neither is it to be effected, as the Christian Scientists believe, by the denial of suffering. The whole of human life is man's heritage, by experiencing the whole alone can he become regenerate. When he has tasted of the uttermost joy and the uttermost pain, his desires will become transmuted, for he is ready for a different experience, and he himself, his soul, that which experiences within him, will be transplanted. In our unilluminated ignorance we call that death.

Comfort is found by man in places in his consciousness where he would not have dreamed of looking for it. In a brief respite from physical pain, in a short sleep of exhaustion in a sick-bed, comfort appears. It is the least active form of the bright bar of the Cross, or, to adopt a different metaphor, it is the dregs of the cup of pleasure. It is desired perhaps more poignantly and more universally than pleasure itself. The many to whom pure pleasure is practically unknown, crave for comfort; and the difficulty which hampers us at every step through life is that we cannot see a reason why we should be denied comfort or why we should overcome the desire of it. To the normal mind of man, pain appears simply as a blot on the visible world.

In *The Mystery of Pain*, a strange and brilliant study of the darkness in which we dwell, written by James Hinton (the father of Howard Hinton, known to most of us for his

work in connection with the fourth dimension of space), there are some passages which bear upon this aspect of the subject.

“ It is evident that all the effects of the events with which we are concerned are not, and could not possibly be, perceived by us. We see and feel things—alike the great ones and the small ones—only as they affect our senses ; that is, only in small part and for a short time. They soon pass beyond our sight, and while they are within it they never show us all they are, often those which are the greatest seeming to us the least. How little we are able, often, to calculate the influence even upon our own future of events or actions of which we seem to have the most perfect knowledge at the time. And of the effect of these events on others, which must go on, as far as we can estimate, without any end, only the smallest fragment is within our view. It is one of the first lessons taught men by experience, not to judge of events by what they seem

alone, but to remember that there may be much more involved in them than appears. To judge of our life, therefore, merely by that which is seen of it, is to commit ourselves to certain error"—and—"we shall be sure to be thinking and feeling falsely respecting our life if we cannot recognise some unseen bearing of it. For we do not, we know we cannot, see the whole; and this lesson is established not only by experience, it is the lesson which, almost more than any other, science teaches us also. In exploring the material world we soon find that in order to understand any part of it aright we must recognise things which are unseen, and have regard to conditions or to actions which do not come within our direct perception. It is enough to instance the pressure of the air, of which we have no consciousness; the motion of the earth, equally unperceivable by us; the hidden force, lurking in unseen atoms, of chemical affinity; the vibrations which traverse the universal ether."

Later on in this most interesting

essay, James Hinton deals with the actual uses of pain; and I wish to quote him further in this connection, for he works out a very profound result from his considerations, one which I myself accept, and which surely would have been accepted by those saints who sought to penetrate the mystery which surrounds suffering.

He points out that there are three evident uses of pain commonly recognised. *First*, bodily pain prompts us to many actions which are necessary for the maintenance or security of life. Cold and hunger lead us to feed and clothe ourselves, and when excess begins, there come satiety and disgust.

The true mystery of the crucifixion, which is depicted in *When the Sun Moves Northward*, has been shown to many mystics, and some who have remained obscure themselves have been shown the great and awful truths. Juliana of Nor-

wich, in 1373, was given a series of revelations. The crucifix being held before her in a severe illness, she saw the figure on the Cross turn into the living Christ. She explained afterwards that she saw this both by bodily sight and "ghostly sight." And following upon the ghostly sight came the "ghostly hearing." She has left, as her legacy to the world of mysticism, her description, in fourteenth-century English, of the way in which the teaching was given to her, "wrought by a 'divine illapse' into the spiritual part of the soul, the mind, and the understanding." Some of the teaching itself she wrote down, and in this the mystery of sin is expounded. "In my folly," says this quaint and obscure seeress of the Middle Ages, "often I wondered why the beginning of sin was not letted; but Jesus answered and said, 'Sin is behovable; but all shall be well, and all shall be well

and all manner of thing shall be well.' In this naked word *sin* our Lord brought to my mind generally all that is not good. But I saw not sin—it had no manner of substance, nor any part of being, nor might it be known but by the pain it caused thereof, and the pain purgeth and maketh us to know ourself and ask mercy. In these same words ('all shall be well') I saw an high and marvellous privity hid in God." This last passage is very interesting, as showing how the wakened receptive faculty obtained from a simple phrase a great hope and promise which became almost visible. This is true mystic hearing, which admits the hearer into the mystical sense of the utterance.

The famous St Teresa plainly describes the manner in which she received teaching. "The words were very clearly formed," she says, "and unmistakable, though not heard by the bodily ear. They are

quite unlike the words formed by the imagination, which are muffled (*cosa sarda*).” St Teresa is one of those holy persons proved to have had the power of levitation, which is a mark of the advanced Yogin. Undoubtedly “hearing” comes only to those who are far upon the path. These two seeresses were both accustomed to look upon the form of the Lord Jesus before their ears were opened. Their lives were entirely different, Juliana of Norwich having lived obscurely; she passed a great part of her life “in an anchorage” in the churchyard of St Julian at Norwich. St Teresa, on the contrary, was a leader of men and women, and a power during a long and busy life. The times in which the development of her inner senses made itself known were phases which broke up her activity. The conception of this development came to her when reading St Augustine’s *Confessions*.

“When I read how he heard the voice in the garden, it was as if the Lord called me.”

These things are true, but they exhibit only one side of the facts. If pain is in these respects often beneficial, it is also often harmful, and in almost all cases it is liable to exceed, in an immense degree, the amount which is needful to secure its beneficial influence. *Second*, pain serves as a punishment for sin; it follows wrongdoing; in the form of bodily disease or want, of mental anguish or social vengeance, suffering is the minister of justice. This is true in part, yet it is also inadequate to explain the facts. Of all the sorrow which befalls humanity, how small a part falls upon the specially guilty! *Third*, there is another end which pain fulfils, a worthier and more satisfying one, perhaps, than either of those that have been mentioned. It disciplines and corrects the erring.

Happily it does, but only in some cases. Unhappily, it more often fails to teach or to subdue. Often it hardens or perverts.

“ Pain is used for a discipline, but can we say that it exists solely for that, when those to whom it is no blessing, but a curse, whom it rouses only to bitterness, have no exemption and seem to plead in vain for pity.”

Hinton has thus, at greater length than I have quoted, worked out the inadequacy of the apparent and obvious uses of pain. He then goes on to say :—

“ We must therefore accept pain as a fact existing by a deep necessity, having its root in the essential order of the world—if the reason and the end of pain lie beyond the results that have been mentioned, then they lie beyond the individual. Pain, if it exist for any purpose, and have any end or use—and of that what sufferer can endure to doubt?—must have some purpose which

extends beyond the interests of the person who is called upon to bear it. To know the secret of our pains we must look beyond ourselves. While we look only at that which directly concerns the individual who suffers, no real explanation of suffering, no satisfaction that truly satisfies, can be found. But if we may look beyond and see in our own sufferings, and in the sufferings of all, something in which mankind also has a stake, then they are brought into a region in which the heart can deal with them and find them good."

James Hinton, by argument and reasoning, by the sweeping aside of false conclusions, has brought us to that which was given to Juliana of Norwich in a flash of revelation, by the use of the occult sense of hearing and true meditation upon the mystic words which penetrated to the inner sense. In the words ("all shall be well") uttered to her in this manner, she saw, as she says,

“an high and marvellous privity hid in God.”

Surely this high and marvellous seclusion is the place of salvation to which man is being perpetually driven and drawn by the double law which works out his evolution. He is made glorious by pleasure; he is made patient by pain. And that great use of individual pain, in which, as Hinton expresses it, mankind also has a stake, is the freedom of the whole race, which cannot be effected or attained without suffering, or without joy.

Hinton held the theory that our bodily nature is constituted rather for pain than pleasure. He therefore had a leaning towards the view held by the ascetics that the Cross is a cross of suffering only. In another incarnation, in which the spur of pleasure might be granted to him to lead him on to heights of accomplishment, he would probably hold a different view. He had not

the help given to those who probe the mysteries of life and death by the laws of karma and reincarnation. He strove to account for the great laws of evolution by the facts observable in a single lifetime. And the sensitiveness of the marvellously constituted physical nature is differently attained in different lives, as well as at different periods of one life. Be very sure that the outstretched, nailed hands of the Christos in man reach deep into two great dualities of pleasure and pain, drawing from both, as the moments and years of a life pass, as the ages and æons of successive lives, with their glorious intervals, pass, the uttermost knowledge and experience. And mankind has indeed a stake in the suffering of the individual, and in his joy; for mankind is a whole, and as a whole he will pass through the gate of freedom.

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