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# Editorials

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## THE SIGN OF THE TIMES

It has been well said that coming events cast their shadows before; and, in two events that have been heralded far and wide during the past months, we see the shadow of a complete change in the order of things, and an indication of a complete readjustment of conditions.

On the one hand, we find those that were closely connected with the labor movement and were supposed to be working for the uplifting of their fellow-laborers confessing to an inhumane crime—that of the destruction of property and many lives with it; and, on the other hand, we find the indictment of a leader of manufacturers for placing dynamite and destroying property in order that the labor movement might be discredited.

The confession of the McNamara brothers to the act of placing dynamite under a newspaper building and of destroying the property and with it many lives, was a shock to people generally; and there can be no question that it did great harm to the propaganda with which they had identified themselves.

The fact that the labor movement in general had nothing to do with the outrage is not taken into consideration by the majority of people; but they take only effects into account. They look upon things as they appear and not as they are.

That labor is crushed there can be no question. The investigator can come to no other conclusion than that the laborer is not receiving justice at the hands of the employer when the awful conditions are considered that hold in the several lumber camps, in factories where child labor is employed, and even in many of the northern factories that are nothing more nor less than death traps.

But, while this is true, the reformer that is interested in the welfare of humanity knows that these conditions cannot be changed through the destruction either of property or of lives. There is but one way by which to free men from undesirable conditions; that way is expressed in the terse saying: "Know the truth, and the truth shall make

you free." By teaching mankind the truth, by showing them that, only as they are true men and true women and only as they come to recognize their possibilities and their powers, can they free themselves from these undesirable conditions—only by such teachings is permanent reformation possible.

Just as long as man is ignorant of the Divine Laws that concern his life and the lives of others, just that long will he live contrary to them; and, just as long as he lives contrary to these laws, just that long will he bring suffering on himself and others. Man may not even believe in religion, he may even say that the story of Jesus is simply a myth; but, if he is at all fair-minded, he will agree that the principle taught by Jesus, "As a man sows, so shall he also reap," is just, if anything in this world is just.

The man that knows and understands the Law of life is not bound down by the conditions that hold the millions down. He knows the Law, and, through the Law, does he free himself.

There is therefore only one way in which to be of service to mankind—to teach them the Truth and the Law; for each one of us must free himself from the conditions by which he is bound.

Although the circumstances and the conditions of the millionaire are vastly different from those of the worker, and although he does not suffer for want of the necessities of life, yet he is bound by the same law that binds the worker. The millionaire, like the worker, is nothing but a slave to the conditions that hold sway at the present time.

The average laborer desires to have enough money so that neither he himself nor those depending on him shall suffer. He wants to free himself from the necessity of fear in regard to the morrow.

All men that have become rich have had this same reasonable idea in mind in the beginning: they labored to overcome the things they feared. Having more brains or shrewdness than the majority, they met with greater success. Gradually, they accumulated money; but, with the accumulation, came the responsibility of making still more in order to keep that which they had already gained; for, to have and not to be able to make more, soon results in losing that which one has.

The natural result is that the small amount they had gained, added another responsibility; and the second estate

was no better than the first. Step after step met with success; but, with each step, with each gain, came added responsibility. This continued in the individual case until the man became a millionaire; but, in this attainment, he has not changed Natural, or Divine, Laws, nor has he learned to live in harmony with them. Consequently, though he has the things he needs on the material plane, he is no happier than he was at the beginning, and his responsibilities are greater.

Were this not a fact, we would see such a man as the head of the Woolen Trust, with his many millions, the happiest of mortals, and not one who attempts, through destruction of property, to discredit the men that earned the millions for him, and who tries to fasten the crime on those that worked for him.

The economic conditions, the social conditions, and the educational conditions of the present age are outgrown. They no longer meet the requirements either of the classes or of the masses. The laborers, being in the majority, must learn their true sphere of usefulness and must do their duty toward the one that gives them employment.

The employer that needs the services of a laborer must learn his true position and must come to understand that, although, through superior fitness as a manager of men, he is placed at the head of men (for there must be leaders), it is his duty to consider those beneath him as fellow-beings and not as beasts of burden, and that he must render unto each one his due.

There is but one Supreme Law in the universe; there is but one Supreme Law in the heavens, or in the Soul Sphere—the Law of Justice. The man that needs the services of men in order to attain the highest for himself, must render absolute justice to those that he employs; and the laborer, likewise, must render absolute justice to him for whom he works or under whom he works.

If either one fails to do his part, then will he reap the penalty of a law that has been disobeyed; and, though he may be successful for the time being, the end is the same for each and brings its natural punishment.

The mission of man is to understand the Divine Law and to be of service to mankind. Service to self always brings misery, never happiness; and, only as we do our part, can we be happy.

In social conditions, the readjustment is being rapidly

brought about through the extremes to which both sides are going. These extremes bring swift punishment to those indulging in them, and, through this punishment, or this destruction, is brought about the readjustment, or the balancing, of things; for in balance there is peace, happiness, and contentment.

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### MAN IN THE GREAT BEYOND

What is the status of man in the Beyond?

Is his destiny irrevocably sealed at the transition called death?

After having lived a godless life during his earth existence, is he forever debarred from the opportunity to accept the divine standards, and to amend his ways in harmony with them?

After having lived the ordinary life of mortals on the earth plane, and having made no special effort to develop the Christ qualities while on earth, is it possible for him, in the Beyond, through any possible means, to gain admittance into the Soul realm? Is it possible for him, on the soul plane, to receive and to appropriate instructions in the Christic Law and there to perfect soul powers and there to attain individualized Soul Consciousness?

Is it possible for the new birth designated by the Master in the injunction, "Ye must be born again," to be experienced on any other than the earth plane? If the new birth, because of its very nature, can be experienced only on the plane of flesh, is the opportunity given for man to return, from time to time, to the earth plane, in order to perfect the conditions of such a birth?

Questions such as these are being asked by thinking men.

The idea that, at the end of one short earth existence, the godless are irrevocably condemned to an eternal state of conscious suffering and of conscious woe in a hell of never-ending punishment, has been long ago discarded by every sober-minded person, and needs no further comment.

But, how and where both mercy and justice are to be satisfied in regard to those that have not consciously attained the Christ-birth while on the earth plane, is a question that puzzles many earnest minds.

For many centuries, the doctrine of a probationary state of punishment awaiting man after he passes to the Beyond,

has held many adherents under its power. This doctrine teaches that, although, during his earthly existence, man may have disobeyed the divine laws, yet, after passing to the Beyond, through the intercession of loved ones on the earth, he may be freed from his sins and be released from the temporary state of punishment into which he was plunged on leaving the earth, and that, when this freedom from sin has been effected, he is admitted to the Soul plane, called Heaven by the Church.

Many, as individuals, cherish the fancy that each life begins in the Hereafter where it left off in this state of being, and that progress continues there without interruption and free from hampering influences. Those that cherish this hope, merely as individuals, representing no sect or cult, are by no means active in the endeavor to promulgate such ideas among others; nor do they claim to base their hope on any clearly-formulated or well-founded conviction other than that such a theory satisfies their own fancy.

Some comparatively modern schools of thought are now actively and openly promulgating a similar doctrine. They claim that those who have passed to the Beyond may there receive instruction in the Truth, and may identify themselves with the Divine Law, and thus free themselves from the bondage of sin. They admit that this is possible for all, even for those that may not have freed themselves from the law of sin while in the flesh; even for those that did not make amends for injuries done to others nor wipe out the record of wrong doing on their own soul—the Book of Life; even for those that had not attained Immortality of Soul, or the Christ Consciousness, before passing to the Hereafter.

All such theories as these are based on erroneous principles in two very important respects: first, they recognize the false claim that there is a mental, or an astral, plane of existence; second, they fail to grasp the fundamental significance of the New Birth, or the birth of Soul Consciousness, and the essential conditions of experiencing this birth.

It is well to examine these errors of thought from various points of view; yet the teachings of Jesus and other great Masters will be recognized by all as a safe foundation for interpretation. It is an admitted fact that there is no new Truth, no new philosophy, but that all questions are embodied in the Truth taught by Jesus and other Masters of wisdom. It must be admitted with equal candor that the statements of truth made by Jesus require interpretation,

in order to become intelligible and satisfying to the seeker. Masterly interpretation is necessary to depict the vital significance of a Master's sayings.

An estimate of man's status in the Beyond must be based on the Master's teachings in regard to the Second Birth, or the birth of Soul Consciousness. Jesus says, "Ye must be born again." He does not use the admonition, "Ye should be born again." Nor does He express the personal desire, "I wish you to be born again." Nor does He venture the plea: "O will ye not be born again?" But He makes the positive assertion: "Ye *must* be born again." This is not to be interpreted as a dogmatic, arbitrary statement, nor as an authoritative command from a superior potentate to His subjects in order to impress them with His right to dominate. Rather is it to be interpreted as a Divine Law giving the conditions under which a certain thing is possible: to be born again is the only condition under which it is possible for a man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Just as the natural birth is the only condition of sense-consciousness and of life on the physical plane, so is the Soul Birth the only condition of life and of consciousness on the Soul plane.

But where and under what conditions must the birth into Soul Consciousness take place?

This question is to be answered by a consideration of the reasons why human life should ever have been attracted to the sense plane amid material environments. The very desires and motives that led the spirit of man to descend into matter, in the first place, and caused his entanglement in material conditions, explain the necessary characteristics of his release from this entanglement and the essential features of his ascent into a higher plane of being.

The reasons for man's descent into matter, supremely important in their significance, are twofold: first, that the soul-atom, representing the realm of unindividualized soul essences, might take on flesh and pass through the experiences of flesh on the plane of sense-consciousness; second, that the soul-atom, having taken on flesh and having tasted the experiences incident thereto and having learned the contrasts of pain and pleasure that sense-consciousness makes possible, might free itself from the bondage of flesh conditions and from the contaminations to which the fleshly life is heir, and might grow into an individualized Soul

Entity, thus becoming conscious of its divine inheritance, or Godhood.

This cyclic round of descent into matter and of ascent into consciousness demands for the soul-atom a twofold experience: each experience is to be thought of as a long-continued process, rather than as a definite, specific act—the experience of being born into earth conditions and of attaining sense-consciousness, and the experience of being born into Soul conditions and of attaining Soul Consciousness, or Souluality.

It must be borne in mind that the soul-atom is a soul only in potentiality, or in latency. It is to be thought of as merely a germ, or an atom, or a spark, of the Divine, not yet having attained the slightest degree of individual consciousness on any plane of existence. Also, it must be noted that the “desire” to taste of the experiences of flesh is not a desire of which the soul-atom itself is really conscious; but the so-called “desire” is rather an impulse, or incentive, or directive, impelling force, inherent in the soul-atom, as a quality distinctly its own.

The quality that determines the soul-atom, or the germ of divine Souluality, from all else, and makes it what it is, is the instinctive impulse, innate and latent in it, to become a conscious individualized immortal entity on the Soul plane. The thing that determines the Soul realm, or the Soul Sphere, from all else, and makes it what it is, is the fact that nothing can enter here except souls or soulual essences; these may be, however, in various stages of manifestation, from those that have not yet entered upon their career of assuming flesh conditions to those that have passed through the necessary steps of growth and have attained maturity in Soul Consciousness. It should be expressly emphasized, moreover, that neither mind nor flesh can gain entrance into this realm.

The purpose of this article, however, concerns itself chiefly with the conditions of man after he has matured a personality under sense- and flesh-conditions, and is on the ascent, or ready to ascend, toward the realm of conscious Souluality. To him, at this stage of advancement, the divine law, “Ye must be born again,” should become known and understood. “To be born again” and “to accept the Christ” mean the same thing. By no serpentine manner of argument, can the injunction to accept the Christ be twisted to mean merely to believe in an historic personality.

To accept the Christ means to take, to receive, to lay hold of, the Christ. To accept the Christ means to cultivate the Christ qualities latent in one's nature, or to receive instruction in the Laws of the Christ and to live a life in harmony with these laws. To accept the Christ means to fulfil the requirements that make possible man's birth into the realities and the sublimities of Souluality.

The Law demands that the soul-atom shall now reverse the process of taking on flesh conditions. As it previously entered sense relations and became environed and bound and entangled by sensual desires, so, now, through a process of transmutation and purification, it must free itself from these very bonds and entanglements. Through the process of descent, it has allowed the flesh to hold supremacy and mastery over it. Now, through a conscious, voluntary effort, it must regain its supremacy over matter and material interests. It must become master of the flesh and of fleshly desires and tendencies. As the process of the soul's maturing a personality on the sense plane was gradual and slow in the intricacies of developing creative powers, so the process of the soul's freeing itself from the false claims of superiority and the subtle devices of sense and matter must be gradual and painstaking, demanding an untiring patience and an unflinching faith in the Law of the Christ.

Moreover, it must be emphasized that the very powers that have been developed through the soul's experiences on the sense plane are to become the means of its release from bondage to sense conditions. The powers of flesh, in themselves, are not evil, nor are they to be condemned. They are not to be destroyed nor blotted out of existence; their direction merely is to be changed; their tendencies are to be guided. Supremacy must be reversed; mastership must be exchanged. The Soul must regain its rightful supremacy over self; the Soul must demand its lawful mastership over the dictates of the personality.

This reversal of supremacy is to be accomplished through a judicious directing of mental activity and through a wise guidance of the physical creative forces. Both the mind and the physical organism, each with its varied and manifold activities and possibilities, are adjuncts of soul limited to the experiences of earth. Thus, the very forces and powers that the soul has developed through its contact with matter—powers both mental and physical—become the



means, and, indeed, are the only possible means, whereby the soul may accomplish its toilsome ascent into the realm of Souluality, whence it came, thereby experiencing the new birth. It descended as an unconscious, individualized soul-atom, possessing only the incentive and the possibility of becoming an individualized, conscious Soul; through contact with material conditions, it has developed all the faculties, mental and physical, that relate it to its material environment, and has attained self-consciousness as a personality on the plane of sense and matter. Now, its ascent to the soul realm is the process of developing the faculty of conscious contact with the things that pertain to the soul realm, and of acquiring as much skill in this new sphere of activities as it has already acquired in its contact with things of matter: it is the process of developing Self-consciousness as an immortal individuality on the plane of Soul and Divinity; in other words, this ascent is the process of becoming a Conscious Individualized Soul, or of attaining the Christ-ship promised by Jesus—a process that finds its culmination in the new birth indicated by Jesus in the divine law, “Ye must be born again.”

Both body and mind are merely features that link man to the earth plane: neither possesses the qualities of a permanent entity; at the transition called death, each, in an unindividualized state, returns to the realm whence it came. The mind is something that is produced by the threefold combination, or the partnership, of body and spirit, or life-principle, and the divine spark, or soul-atom. The ultimate purpose of mind in the Divine Plan is to develop the latent soul faculties, or to create the Soul.

This development of soul faculties is through a process of transmutation: thoughts and desires of flesh must be changed, or transmuted, into thoughts and desires of souluality. Through this process of transmutation is man to accept the Christ, or to develop the Christic qualities latent within him. Only through this process of regeneration is a reversal of the process of generation to be accomplished: through generation the soul-germ takes on fleshly thoughts and desires, and, temporarily, the flesh becomes supreme, and is in the ascendancy; while, through regeneration, the soul transmutes sensual thoughts and desires into Christic thoughts and desires, until the Christ-nature, or the Soul, becomes supreme and gains its rightful ascendancy over the fleshly personality.

From these considerations, it is evident that the process of regeneration, or the reversal of ascendancy, can be accomplished under no other than earth conditions. The process of transmutation can take place only under conditions wherein there is something to transmute, and under conditions wherein there are proper instruments, or agents, for carrying on the work. Thus, transmutation cannot take place in the Soul world; for it is impossible for anything that admits of transmutation to enter into that realm: the gross must be refined before being admitted to the soul sphere; coarse, heavy, clogging vibrations must become light, pure, aethereal, and rapid, before it is possible for them to reach the soul realm. In the realm of soul, there is nothing to overcome, nothing to change. Without fuel to burn, there can be no fire, no heat. Without the body and its desires, there is nothing to transmute. Without the mind, there is no agent of transmutation.

Then, if birth into the realm of Souluality is possible only on earth amid earth environments, how are both mercy and justice to be satisfied in regard to those that have not experienced this change during their earth career?

But one answer is possible: the soul is permitted, or, rather, impelled, to return, from time to time, to earth conditions, until it has had every opportunity to accomplish its mission. This being the case, there remains but one question to consider—the status of the soul while in the Beyond, and the conditions of its return to the earth.

At the transition called death, the body disintegrates, and its atoms return to their original storehouse; the life-principle, or the spirit, being set free from the task temporarily allotted to it, returns to the realm of spirit; the mind, having served as the connecting link between body and soul, and, having no permanency of its own, loses its identity in the great wave of universal mind; the soul, being the only part of man that possesses the quality of permanency and the possibility of individual perfection, ascends to the soul plane. Unless it has been corrupted, through persistent and willful wrong doing, to the extent that its inherent tendency to attain conscious souluality has been destroyed, it retains its original incentive to perfect itself. During the earth career through which it has just passed, it has been magnetized, or "charged," with one thought—the prevailing purpose, the dominant thought, the ruling desire, of its earth existence has been condensed

into an impetus, an impelling, directive force, an irresistible tendency, or inclination. This impetus constitutes the nucleus of its character, and determines its future. In the soul realm, this partially evolved nucleus can take on no new thought, nor can it experience growth or change: having no matured consciousness, it suffers neither joy nor pain; from one point of view, it is the resultant in germ-form of all past experiences; and, as such, it bears on its own Book of Life a record of both good and evil previously known and committed, the distinctive feature of which is a conscience that grants no rest nor peace, but forms a continual "urge" toward an environment that permits the attainment of its Ideal; since will is conditioned by Mind on the earth plane and by Consciousness in the Soul Sphere, the soul that is in this partially evolved state in the Beyond, has no will of its own other than the dominant incentive, or impetus, that impels it to seek an outlet, in order that it may again enter flesh conditions and continue the work that the Divine Law forces it to accomplish.

The length of the soul's sojourn in this realm is determined by the strength of the impelling force with which it has become magnetized as a resultant of previous incarnations: if it is far advanced in the process of transmutation and if its purpose is a distinct and well-formed conviction in favor of the Christic ideal of service to mankind, such as to give it a wonderful momentum in that direction—then, its stay in the soul sphere will be short, and it will naturally and quickly gravitate to such opportunity of rebirth into earth conditions as its own magnetic desire pre-determines.

If it had become conscious of its divine Sonship while on earth, the experience called death enables it to advance upward into the realm of Souls; for the consciousness evolved while dwelling in the temple of flesh, still remains with it; and, after having attained this consciousness, its "citizenship was in heaven," even though the soul was dwelling in the flesh and was serving mankind on the earth plane. If the Consciousness of Soul and of Divinity had become thoroughly established, it is not necessary, on its own account, for this soul to return to the earth plane and to take on flesh; though it may have become so magnetized with love for humanity and with a desire to teach mankind the divine Law that it returns voluntarily to its former state, to live a life of Christly service.

The philosophy of Christic interpretation is positive in its assertion that there is no mental, or astral, plane through which the soul may pass after its departure from the body. Consequently, there is no realm in the Hereafter—no realm except the physical—that admits of a fulfilment of the requirements of the new birth taught by Jesus, the Master of the first century.

An example taken from the material plane may serve to illustrate both the mercy and the justice of the divine law. For the accomplishment of a given object, a contractor has need of the services of a competent workman. Definite arrangements are completed with a certain man to perfect this work. Suppose that, instead of giving his attention to the task imposed upon him, the workman directs his thought and energy entirely in a different channel from that indicated by the contractor—indeed, in a channel foreign to the contractor's interests—and the specific work outlined for him lies untouched. Surely the employer would not be expected to compensate the workman for work not accomplished; although he might be lenient and give him another trial. Neither can we expect God to reward His children with the benefits of divine law, unless they meet the requirements of that law.

The very nature of the law demands that man must cultivate faculties of Soul on the earth plane in the workshop that is equipped with the materials and the implements necessary for accomplishing that specific work. The earth plane is a school with just such appointments and just such equipments as are best adapted to its purpose—the purpose of leading the soul to Illumination and to a life of Christic service. In this school of discipline and training, man must come to understand the divine law and to realize that the life of sin and godlessness is not the true life; here, he must change from a life centered in self-interests to a life that endeavors to focus its attention on Christly service; here, through good thoughts and good desires and good deeds, he must right the wrongs, both intentional and unintentional, that he has committed against others; here, he must make conscious, voluntary effort to attain Soul Consciousness, or Illumination. Not until these things have been attained, has he met the conditions that make it possible for him to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

## FUNDAMANTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE CHURCH OF ILLUMINATION

In presenting the fundamental principles of the Church of Illumination, it should be clearly understood that they are not offered as "articles of faith," to which adherents must formally subscribe; for, in the usual acceptation of that term, the Church has no articles of faith. "To set hand and seal" to a code of belief is demanded of no one. (The age of faith and belief is fast passing away. The incoming age is to be characterized by works and by a divine exemplification of the faith and the belief that have already been inculcated in the race-thought.)

Each age demands a distinctive type of interpretation of truth, adapted to the requirements of that particular period of history. (Truth is ever the same. Divine laws have not changed since the beginning of time. But the world of thought advances; and each outgoing cycle requires a laying aside of its cloak, as the snake sheds its skin, that the incoming cycle may be "clothed upon" with a new garment, better suited to its needs.) The texture and the designs and the coloring of the cloak of thought are determined by the particular emphasis that a given age employs in the interpretation of truth. For the human race to be enriched by all the varied aspects that truth and its realization may assume, it is necessary for the cloak of interpretation to be doffed and donned, again and again, in accordance with the laws of progress; it is necessary for a new system of emphasis in the interpretation of truth to be formulated from time to time.

The doffing of an old interpretation and the donning of a new, mark a transition period that is attended by unsettledness of mind and by perplexity of thought. It is truly a period of stress and strain. The world of religious ideas is now in a transitional stage. To satisfy this need, the Church of Illumination offers a new system of interpretation—an interpretation that claims to be the natural outgrowth of the cyclic stages through which the world has already passed. The law of cyclic changes indicates that the time is ripe for a restatement of religious principles, for a new presentation of fundamental laws. The unrest and the hunger of the present transitional stage of thought demands a different placing of emphasis in respect to the essential features of truth.

When interpreted in the light of symbology, the Bible is accepted by the Church of Illumination as an authoritative treatise of religious instruction; but, in order to secure a satisfactory comprehension of Biblical teachings, it is deemed necessary to give careful attention to its symbolic, allegorical, and mythic elements. The interpreter must learn to consult the vast library of legend and symbol and myth as faithfully and as accurately as he resorts to a lexicon of Hebrew and Greek stems and radicals; for such elements as these, sometimes considered mere meaningless child's play, are skillful devices for half-concealing, yet half-revealing, the deepest spiritual truths.

The Church of Illumination holds that all religions have sprung from a common source. They have emanated from one center; their origin may be traced to the same fountain. Christianity is a symbolical synthesis of all the beliefs of antiquity. In essential features, these religions are still practically the same. When the one key of interpretation is applied to all, the same essential elements of truth are disclosed to view. Their symbology, their ritual, their ceremonies, perpetuate a few fundamental, vital principles, alike in all, yet sadly in need of being disentangled from the rubbish of error and misunderstanding in which they have long been concealed, sadly in need of a new interpretation, in the light of a new age, formulated by a new Interpreter.

The religious thought of the past few centuries has been largely characterized by faith and belief. In respect to the teachings of Jesus, the Christ of the first century, the race-conception of truth has been passing through the period of childhood and early youth. Childhood is marked particularly by faith. The child has faith in his father. The child believes in his father's works and in his principles. When young manhood is attained, he is no longer satisfied with mere belief: he must demonstrate his faith by executing ideals; he must do such works as his father does. As a young man, he still has faith in his father; but his faith now demands the opportunity to exercise its own powers and to accomplish its own works. Religious teaching in the past has been largely occupied in the effort to convince mankind of the Messiahship of Jesus, and to establish the claims of the Christ. (But mere belief does not long satisfy. "Faith without works is dead," is something more than a trite saying. It is a law of growth that faith must demonstrate its powers; it must work out its principles; it must execute;

it must create.) The incoming age should be one that is characterized by the power of intelligent faith, one that executes ideals in harmony with a faith that understands divine law.

A clear distinction should be made between blind faith and intelligent, or a seeing, faith; between a faith that is passive and one that is active; between an inert and a living faith; between faith in a personality and faith in a principle, faith in a Jesus and faith in the Christ. Jesus is the name of a man, a personality. The Christ is the name of the Illumined Soul of Jesus. Jesus, as an historic character, lived his earth-life, and passed out of the plane of manifestation. The Christ, as a divine principle developed and individualized in Jesus, is eternal; as an Illumined Soul, the Christ is immortal. Faith in Jesus, as a personality merely, is a blind faith. Faith in the Christ, as a state of consciousness that all may attain by living the teachings of Jesus and by obeying the law of love he demonstrated, is an intelligent faith.

(How was Jesus enabled to live the perfect life—a life the entire biography of which may be condensed into five words: “He went about doing good”? To many, these answers will be convincing: by an intelligent obedience to divine law; by a conscious realization of truth; by the transmuting power of goodness; by a conscious application of the never-failing law of love and good-will to men; by a masterful directing of a purified will; by a faith that consciously operates in harmony with spiritual law; by the unconscious influence of a thought-atmosphere, normally characterized by the qualities of love, truth, and justice; by an Illumination of Soul that radiates its own light of understanding and its own warmth of love, on friend and foe, with impartial tenderness; by a prayer-life that attracts, from the infinite storehouse, a supply equal to its own demand.)

The many who are satisfied with such answers as these are ready for a change of emphasis in the interpretation of the life and the teachings of Jesus. The many already are thoroughly convinced of the genuineness, the sincerity, and the truth of His claim to be the Son of Man and the Son of God. Such as these are eager for emphasis to be placed on the interpretation of the law that enabled Him to realize His divine Sonship, and, in consequence, to live such a life. They are eager to understand “the way, the truth, and the

life," that will enable them to become conscious of sonship with the Father, and thus to live the good life. Their faith refuses to be satisfied unless it can express itself in works that exemplify its character. Their natures demand a fulfilment of the age of faith by an age of works that test and prove the law of faith, as lived by Jesus, the Master. Their natures demand a proof of the Christ-teachings in their own experience, a verification of the Christ-law in their own consciousness. Such a faith manifests itself by a willingness to put forth every effort to understand the law of the Christ, and by a determination to obey this law in their own lives.

To meet the need of the age in its demand for an interpretation of the laws of the spiritual kingdom, is one purpose of the Church of Illumination. That it is possible for man to understand, and that it is necessary for him to understand in order that he may intelligently obey the law and live a life in harmony with it, is a settled conviction among leaders of religious thought to-day.

That immortality of soul is attainable, is a fundamental doctrine of the Church of Illumination. Immortality of soul, however, is not thought of as something that is thrust on all alike, regardless of their desire or their seeking. It is not an inevitable factor of existence. The positive law of goodness functioning in the lives of men leads to immortality of soul, or to soul-consciousness. In each life is a spark, or a germ, of the divine nature. This divine spark is the potential Christ, or the potential individual soul, of that life. This may be nurtured and fed until it becomes "the light that lighteth all the world" of man's consciousness. When man becomes conscious of this Light within his own being, when he recognizes and obeys its "still, small voice," he has reached the state called Illumination of Soul, or Immortality; or, to express the same thought differently, he has reached the plane of soul-consciousness.

The divine spark latent in each individual may become a well-formed center of pure, white light. It may become a dynamic nucleus of fire—the Fire of Love, the Light of Truth. This fact gives the key to the significance of the name, Church of Illumination. The name signifies that each individual is capable of becoming a center of illumination. Man is the Church of Illumination, the Temple of the living Christ. Man is the architect of the temple of Solomon, which is a spiritual structure. The purified love



of his own heart and the clarified understanding of his own soul become the altar-fire of this temple. This flame unconsciously radiates its light of understanding and its warmth of "good-will toward men."

Man is made in the image of God. He is a reflection of the Divine, possessing the powers and the attributes of the Infinite. In different beings, these divine qualities are in different stages of unfoldment. In one, they may be in a latent state, concealed from view beneath the crust of a selfish personality; but, unless they have been burned and seered by the fire of persistent wrong-doing, they are none the less a potentiality, awaiting the unfolding processes of growth. In another, they may be in the incipient stages of a nucleus of goodness. In this state, they indicate an active, wholesome conscience; although the life may be painfully entangled and fettered and hampered by the lower personality. Yet, again, these qualities may have become a dynamic, vital expression of individualized life, such that the soul is conscious of its inseparable connection with the Infinite. They may have condensed into a center of radiation, into a perfect, pyramidal flame that warms the desire-nature with love, and illumines the understanding with truth. In this state, the divine qualities of love, truth, and justice unconsciously radiate, to those with whom the life comes in contact, the blessings of their inherent goodness.

Creation is the manifestation of the Divine Mind. All things, having been created by God, are, in themselves, good; but, through free-will, man may pervert the good by wrong use, and thus cause evil; he may misdirect possibilities that are inherently blessed, and thus bring on himself and others a painful curse.

In his fourfold nature, body, mind, spirit, and soul, man is an epitome of the universe. Potentially, he is the divine creation in miniature, and, consequently, has been called the microcosm, or "little world." He is the climax and culmination of forces, which for ages have been seeking expression. How to use his forces and to express them harmoniously, is the problem placed before him. To use them in harmony with the divine purpose and to express them only in service to mankind—this is the ideal he must be led to understand and to choose for himself. To use his powers and his possibilities in obedience to the law of goodness and in keeping with the correct understanding of truth, leads to

good. To pervert his powers and to misdirect his inherent possibilities in channels of error and sin, result in evil.

God has placed no higher mark of honor on man than to give him the right of choice, the power of decision, and the ability to direct will-power and to execute plans in accordance with his own decree. Every power is, in itself, good, although it admits of a twofold expression, positive and negative. Every law of his nature is, in itself, good, although it admits of a twofold functioning, constructive and upbuilding or destructive and disintegrating. The use one makes of a law determines its effect. Every virtue admits of a corresponding vice. Results depend on the use given to power, on the direction that a tendency takes. Every force, every possibility, placed within man's reach is intended to fulfil certain beneficent ends. Every organ, every function, both of body and of mind, is intended to serve a certain noble purpose. When used in harmony with the law of its highest purpose, the result is good. When perverted or misused, the results are evil. It is time for man to understand that he is individually responsible for putting forth intelligent effort to understand the laws of his own being and to obey their highest call.

One distinctive aim of the Church of Illumination is to give clear instructions concerning the laws of right and justice in order that man may intelligently choose his steps, and know how to cultivate his manifold powers and to direct them in proper channels.

Nothing is gained by evading the problem of evil; on the contrary, it is a question that demands honest handling and a reasonable interpretation. The existence of evil in the world is not to be denied. Neither is "the exceeding sinfulness of sin" to be gainsaid, nor is it to be covered with weak apologies. Nevertheless, with equal care is the other extreme to be avoided, the possibility of continually holding sin and evil before the mind in the hope of emancipation from it, the possibility of so misplacing the emphasis that the idea of punishment for sin is made more impressive than punishment by sin. These two extremes—the Scylla and the Charybdis of interpretation—are to be shunned with equal skill. The only reason for making a distinction between good and evil is to enable man to reject the evil and to choose the good.

At its core, the problem of evil identifies itself with the law of justice. When it is interpreted in the light of this

law, the emphasis falls in its natural place, and one reaches a solution both reasonable and satisfying in its practical application to life's needs.

The law of justice may be defined as the absolute working of the principle of cause and effect. In the physical world, the principle manifests itself in the mechanical law of action and reaction. Under another aspect, it appears as the law of balancing. Yet, again, it is the principle of reflection; while, under a still different aspect, it becomes the principle of reciprocity. In the spiritual kingdom, it receives various expressions, all of which indicate that every act is attended by its own natural consequences.

“Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

“All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.”

“Give, and it shall be given unto you.”

“With the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.”

“Judge not, and ye shall not be judged.”

“Condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned.”

“Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.”

“All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.”

“Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days.”

“Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.”

“Notwithstanding the land shall be desolate because of them that dwell therein, for the fruit of their doings.”

“If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.”

“If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

The law of justice is both impersonal and impartial. One error that needs correcting in the interpretation of the problem of good and evil is belief in a personal God that rewards and punishes according to an arbitrary standard and through a system of external agencies or interferences. The operation of the law of justice may be formulated thus: deeds, words, and thoughts, through the impartial and impersonal functioning of an unerring and undeviating law, set into operation forces, which bring about such results as are necessitated by the nature and by the strength of the thought, word, or deed. It seems quite simple to say that

men are punished by their deeds, not for them; but there is a world of difference in the significance of the two expressions. When men come to realize that the only personal element that the law of justice recognizes, is in their own lives, and nowhere else, they will be convinced of the fact of individual responsibility, and will seek to make such conditions in their own natures that good may be the natural result.

The law of justice, being the principle of causation, becomes an unerring record of compensation. A given trend of thought has corresponding effect on character; moods, indulged in, leave an impress on the soul in keeping with the nature of the mood; deeds have a reactionary influence on the doer. The effect, the impress, and the reactionary influence may be thought of as the consequent compensation one receives for such indulgence. Again, the functioning of the law is to be recognized from the opposite direction: every effect has its origin in the unseen world of causes; every condition and circumstance are occasioned by legitimate factors in the chain of causation. When the emphasis is thus placed, effects, conditions, happenings may be thought of as the payment of honest debts, which stand on our account in the unseen realm of causation. We may not be able to trace the links in the chain of causes nor is it wise for us to do so. To recognize that there is such a law is sufficient to keep us on our guard against harboring unkind thoughts and dispensing unkind deeds. Whatever we do to another, in thought or in word or in deed, returns to us, in its reactionary influence, on the wave of universal force. Thus the law of justice demands that each one receives adequate recompense for his own thoughts and his own deeds. By its own functioning, the law keeps the accounts straight.

It may be asked, How does a recognition of the law of justice help one in meeting the conditions of life. The soul that hungers for righteousness considers it no hardship to accept the verdict and the operation of such a law. He is not only willing but anxious to pay "the uttermost farthing." Some loss, injury, or misfortune befalls him. He accepts it as his due and becomes reconciled promptly to the fact of its existence. He seeks to extract good from it, and to rise above it, and to prove himself superior to it. He wastes energy neither "in kicking against the pricks" nor in puzzling over the question of causation, further than to

conclude that, sometime, somewhere, he has set into operation forces that now offer such an expression of their return. If it is his due, he is glad to pay the debt and to feel that so much is cancelled from the account of justice against him. By such an interpretation, the debt is cancelled, the error is transmuted into good. He knows that, if he kicks against the pricks or rails at fate or blames an unjust providence, the debt not only remains uncanceled, but that, by a rebellious, bitter, or unreasonable attitude of mind, he intensifies the forces that are thus displaying their power in his environment, and that, in consequence, a still heavier reactionary influence will manifest itself in his life, in some other way, at some other time. He knows that the sooner he cultivates a correct attitude of mind toward life's conditions, the sooner will all unfortunate debts be cancelled and all unhappy accounts be straightened. He sees God's hand in such conditions in no other way than as the founder and the author of the law. For the manner in which the law manifests itself to him, he considers God to be in no way responsible.

There is no antagonism between the law of justice and the law of love. They are the same law viewed from different angles. The merciful aspect of the law appears in the principle of transmutation. The Church of Illumination lays special stress on this principle and considers it of fundamental and vital importance.

That evil tendencies may be transmuted into good, ignorance into knowledge, undesirable qualities into desirable—this possibility, known as the principle of transmutation, is one aspect of the operations of the law of love and justice. Sacred literature has many ways of illustrating the various possibilities of this principle. Parable and allegory are suggestive in making clear this law of growth and refinement. The refiner's fire, the fuller's soap, the potter's hand, the salter's salt, the pruner's knife, the alchemist's crucible—each has its particular aptness in illustrating some feature of the cleansing, purifying, training, molding, and shaping of the soul. By an intelligent application of this law, the grosser elements of one's nature may be transmuted into the pure gold of love, truth, and righteousness. The attitude of mind one takes toward the happenings of life determines the effect they have on one's character. If one's attitude of thought grows out of a correct understanding of the Christ-teachings, if one's accept-

ance of conditions is in harmony with the principles of love and of justice—this very mental attitude toward them becomes a transmuting and a refining influence. Such an attitude of mind is constructive and upbuilding.

The Christ-law is the law of growth, advancement, and progress. Both in its positive and in its negative aspects, this law is exacting and relentless. Obedience to it is constructive and upbuilding, and tends toward growth of soul, reaching as its natural goal the plane of soul-consciousness, or immortality of soul. Failure to comply with the conditions of the Christ-law is destructive and disintegrating in its effects. It tends toward diffusion and dissolution. Its results are the opposite of growth; namely, self-destruction and continual tearing down of cells. The Church of Illumination is pronounced in its recognition of this law, both in its positive and in its negative aspects. Consequently, while it continually holds before the mind the ideal of growth and development that lead to immortality of soul, yet it admits that persistent evil thinking and evil doing tend toward total destruction of soul. To create and to follow evil persistently, by the operation of its own law, generates the fire that is self-destructive, and thus makes possible the dissolution of the individual soul that creates such disintegrating conditions, thereby liberating the original element of potential divinity.

The positive working of the law of the Christ is known as the process of salvation, or regeneration; while, in its negative working, it is called degeneration, or loss, of soul. The doctrine of salvation, or regeneration, receives practical attention in the teachings of the Church of Illumination; but, as a dogma or definition of terms, the doctrine offers little interest. Salvation does not specify a definite act, but a long-continued process of growth, or development, of soul. It results in illumination of soul, or immortality, or soul-consciousness. These, in turn, are stages of growth, and are not to be thought of as a climax of perfection that ends all effort, struggle, and attainment. Illumination of soul is but the beginning of thought and experience on a higher plane of expression.

Salvation, Regeneration, Transmutation, and Initiation, as used by the Church of Illumination, are practically synonymous terms. They mean the development of all the faculties of the Inner Being, and such a training of character as to insure that these faculties will be used only in

the channel of the purpose for which they were intended, and for the betterment of mankind. Their aim is such an unfoldment of the manifold powers and possibilities latent in man's nature that he may be, and may express, what he was intended to be and to express—the Image of his Maker.

The Church of Illumination does not point to a heaven that awaits the faithful in the hereafter nor to a hell that reserves its torments for the wicked in the beyond, nor does it picture God as a personal judge of right and wrong. Heaven and hell are states of consciousness that begin here and now. Adjustments, results, and consequences are not postponed to a future life; they begin in the present, and continue until satisfaction is made. Man's conscience, the God within, the soul, is the judge. Man will never find, nor will he need, a more exacting and severe judge than his own conscience: when its verdict has released him, he is free indeed.

The Will of God is supreme in the universe, operating directly or indirectly through the Hierarchies of angelic and ethereal forces and agencies. The Divine Will manifests its supremacy through the operation of natural laws, rather than by direct and personal control or interference. The superiority of the Divine Will, manifesting itself in the natural functioning of laws rather than by specific control, finds its necessary corollary in the individual responsibility of man. (Man is responsible for becoming an intelligent channel for the functioning of divine law. The degree of man's ascent toward the divine image in which he was created, is determined by the degree of his understanding of these laws and their natural operation, and of his ability to live in harmony with them, and, consciously or unconsciously, to direct and to use them for the betterment of the world in which he is placed.) He recognizes in the one Spirit, the Fatherhood of God; and, in proportion as he lives in accord with the divine purpose, does he testify by his life to a practical recognition of the Brotherhood of Man.

The most important of the principles emphasized by the Church of Illumination may be restated and condensed as follows:

Although the Will of God is supreme, its supremacy is manifested by the operation of impersonal and impartial law and by a system of hierarchical ministry, rather than by specific control.

(The divine law of justice manifests itself in the absolute operation of the principle of cause and effect; thus, reward and punishment are natural consequences resulting from the operation of forces set into motion by individual or collective agencies.)

Since all things are created by God and all human powers are endowed by Him, they are, in themselves, good; but, through ignorance or through a perverted disposition, man may misuse his inherent powers, and thus cause evil.

Being made in the image of God and being potentially an epitome of the universe, it is intended that, through the process of salvation, or regeneration, man should cultivate his inherent qualities until he attains the state of Christhood, or Illumination of Soul, or individual immortality—a state that indicates the entrance into a higher plane of consciousness and of usefulness.

But, being honored with the right of choice, it is possible for man, through continued, persistent wrong thinking and wrong doing, to diffuse and to disintegrate his powers of soul to such an extent that individual immortality is unattainable.

The cyclic wave of progress demands for this age an interpretation of the Law that enabled Jesus to bring into conscious expression His own Christhood, or Sonship with God. The faith of the age demands a testing of the Christ-principles, and a verification, in individual consciousness, of the Christ-claim for man: "Ye are the temples of the living God;" and "Greater things than these shall ye do."



### THE OCCULT

To many people, the words, "occult" and "occultism," possess a dark and sinister meaning; and many, through ignorance, have confounded them with black art, sorcery, hypnotism, and modern spiritualism. Because black art, sorcery, and such subjects savor of the supernatural and because occult means hidden, or secret, these terms are confused and associated together in the minds of many, and are placed on the same plane. This is a great mistake, and people do greatly err in believing them to be the same.

However, there are many who are sincere and earnest in their search for truth; but too often they make the mistake of blindly following the blind leaders of the blind, who represent the truth by vague, visionary theories and by supernatural manifestations or psychic phenomena. Although occult means hidden, or secret, there is nothing about it that is vague or visionary or spectacular. Neither is there anything objectionable, unstable, or undesirable about true occultism.

The most material and skeptical scientists of to-day admit the power of thought. Marconi says that a word, or its equivalent (its equivalent is a thought), creates a ripple in the air just the same as a pebble thrown in the water creates a ripple over the surface. Marconi has proved this to be a fact; and a man is deemed foolish and ignorant to-day, who doubts the possibility of wireless telegraphy.

Edison claims to be in touch with a power in nature we call God. He says that, within a short time, he will be able to prove to the world that there is a mysterious and unseen force dwelling, living, existing, in all nature; and that the force will permit demonstration. When Edison proves this fact to the world, it will be no new invention or discovery.

There are people who know and understand what this Force is, and who know that it is possible to prove its reality. Ages and ages ago, before this continent was in existence, men lived who understood this Force and knew the Great Secret. These men were Occultists. They were not the riff-raff and the scum of creation, who affected oddities of dress and mysterious manners; but they were men who held the balance of worlds in their power. They watched the old earth, weighted with the oppression of abused laws, sink beneath the tides and the floods; they

watched the new lands appear in their stead and the birth of new races on them. These men were leaders; for ages they controlled the destiny of nations; they were the living, breathing essences of God-like power and nobility. They were true occultists. You ask us: "Why did they not prevent the sinking of countries and nations?" We ask you: "Why did not God prevent it?" All laws must be obeyed; otherwise, the people must suffer the consequences. Neither God nor Masters can prevent it.

Moses was the greatest occultist of his time; and he is honored and almost deified by people to-day who are afraid of the word occult. He possessed greater power, you say, than Egyptian Magic could equal. Yes, we know it. And it is possible for the good and the faithful in this age to know where his power came from, and how he came by it. There is as much difference between true occultism and the prevailing idea of it among certain classes in this day and time as there was in the time of Moses. There was the true and the false then as there is now. There was a misunderstanding of the true occultism then as now.

People object to the occult because it is secret.

Is there a successful nation anywhere that does not follow secret laws? Why does not the United States hand over the plans of her Naval Coast defense to England, Germany, Japan, or any other nation? Why are the secrets of state guarded with close, jealous care, and why is the penalty of the traitor that betrays these secrets the penalty of death? It is the secrecy of laws that holds the power, and protects the destiny of our nation. How long would the United States stand, if her laws were betrayed into the hands of the ignorant, the crude, the unbalanced citizen?

Why do not men object to the principles of the Mosaic law and history, on the ground of secrecy? No man ever held the truth in closer secrecy and under more careful protection than did Moses. God called him to the top of the Mount and instructed him in the laws that were for the people.

Why did not Moses teach openly and gratuitously?

We read: "Moses alone shall come near the Lord: but they shall not come nigh; neither shall the people go up with him. And Moses was commanded to go up to the Mount alone where he was given the tables of stone and a law and commandments to teach the people." The Bible gives proof enough that he was taught apart from the people and in a

different manner. He possessed greater power than any other man of his time, and was the Savior of his nation. He taught the wisdom, the truth, the secrets, the laws, of the Osirian and Essenean Brotherhood of that day; for he was an Initiate of that Brotherhood. He worshipped the One God, called Osiris by the Egyptians. These same laws, wisdom, truths, are known to-day, and can be taught to all those that will be faithful. To all those that will leave "the golden calf" of their own selfishness, and will seek a true and unerring God, these truths may be taught.

These truths concerning the One God and His invisible forces have ever been taught carefully and guardedly. Secrecy is merely protective. Nature hides her greatest works from the most learned men. Tell us why. Why is the Supreme Being unseen? If man knew God, unless he himself was God-like, he might destroy worlds. God works silently and unseen. John, the beloved disciple, tells us that no man hath seen God at any time. Man must attain the likeness of God; and it takes ages to perfect himself so as to be like unto God. These secrets, so great and powerful, are destructive, when placed in the hands of the ignorant, the treacherous, and the unloving.

Who can tell the secret of the Sun, of the lightning's flash, and of the ponderous bolts of thunder? God does not betray Himself into the hands of the foolish or of the unenlightened soul; but slowly and secretly He works His own laws, the evolution of the smallest and the most imperfect, in ways that surpass the understanding of the worldly wise.

In one sense, it is true that all knowledge is free and open to all. All are welcomed to the treasure-house of truth and understanding. In one sense, it is true that God, in His ways and His laws and His works, is frank and free. There is nothing purposely mysterious about His methods. Truth is not hidden through any arbitrary, dictatorial arrangement. The fact of secrecy and of mystery is merely one necessary feature of the law itself—the law that man comprehends truth in proportion to his hunger to know the truth and to live in harmony with the truth. Man is permitted to comprehend truth as rapidly as his own hunger of soul and his own pure and unselfish motives make it possible for him to do so. If a man wishes to understand divine law and to direct the invisible forces for his own personal interests merely—this in itself is evidence that the truth is not safe in his hands; unless his heart is

cleansed of error and selfish motives, he is liable to play havoc with the subtle, invisible forces of nature, and to bring destruction and disaster both to himself and to others. Dynamite is safe in the hands of two classes of people: those that will leave it alone and not tamper with it; and those that understand its nature and the laws of its use, but that will not make it a means of devastation on their neighbors' premises.

Consequently, the deepest truths are carefully guarded by those that understand them. These occult features are beneficent in their purpose.

Again, in answer to the question, Why are not occult subjects taught gratuitously, it remains to be said that God does not give man life for nothing; that the universe is not constructed on the plan of something for nothing; that both divine law and ethics demand that we give for what we receive; that, for the most valuable, we pay the highest price; that all growth is based on the principle of giving out and taking in; that, unless this law of growth is observed, stagnation follows; that fair exchange is one feature of the law of duality everywhere manifest in nature.

There is one sense in which it is true that Salvation is free; but there are more aspects in which it is ours in return for a high price—indeed, the highest price—even the price of attainment.

“Something for nothing” was not the practice of the Jews. We read in Exodus how gladly the Hebrews brought their gifts to the tabernacle. The disciples contributed to the support of Jesus; and, even after the crucifixion, Joseph of Arimathea placed the body of Jesus in his own tomb—one wherein none was ever laid before. Mary Magdalene anointed Him and prepared Him against the day of His burial. The disciples were admonished to take neither scrip nor purse and were told that the laborer is worthy of his hire.

When the physical body needs a physician, it seems easy enough to pay the doctor's fee; but, when the soul is sick, weary, and overburdened, why is it such an arduous task to make glad returns for knowledge concerning the care of the soul? There never was a greater mistake than that of thinking it possible or right to receive something for nothing. Every mouthful of food one takes, is, in its essence, food for the soul. Is it free? Money-making is not an object with teachers of the Higher Knowledge; but money is

necessary, in these days of book-making and of correspondence-instruction, in order that the spreading of the truth may be made possible.

True occultism is the worship of the One God and His Laws in Conscious Unity. It is the great shadow that protects the Light of His presence from the eyes of the profane, the vulgar, and the unbelieving. True occultism is the Inner Wisdom, "the secret place" of the Most High. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." To know, to understand, and to dwell under the Shadow, called "Occult," is to be in touch with the Divine; and untold power and knowledge are given unto him who obeys the laws and unto him who dwells Within, on the Right Hand of the Truth of God.

It is to be admitted that an outcry needs to be made against phenomena, trickery, spiritualism, and hallucinations—things that are sometimes erroneously associated with the occult. Such things are no evidence of power or of wisdom. The true occultist shuns such manifestations, as one shuns poisons. In regard to supernatural manifestations that attract attention and wonder, the true occultist sounds a clear note of warning: "Beware." The true occultist strives to live a good, upright, quiet, modest life, and makes no display of his knowledge and of his power, other than in the simplicity of kind deeds and helpful words.

### INSTRUCTION AND ENROLLMENT CONDITIONS

Lessons in Bible Interpretation are prepared for the Sunday Schools of the Church of Illumination. These lessons are entitled, The Illuminated Faith Series.

During the first year, interpretation of the Gospel according to St. Matthew is given.

During the second year, interpretation of the Gospel according to St. John is given.

Other books of the Bible will follow in regular order as students are ready for them.

These lessons explain the teachings of the Bible in the light of Soul Science and as revealed through Soul Illumination. They impart the esoteric meaning of the Scriptures. People are generally awakening to the fact that Scriptural teachings underlie all successful achievement, whether in business, leadership, character, or government, and that, when correctly understood, the Scriptures are the best and safest guide in life. It is the aim of these lessons to unfold truth in such a way as to lead the individual to apprehend the secret of successful achievement in life. By those who have investigated them, it is claimed that these Bible interpretations are rich in originality of thought, and practical in their application to human need, stimulating in their suggestiveness, and convincing in the principle that "to aspire is to become."

Any one who so desires, is eligible to enrollment for these lessons. The invitation is extended to all. Connection with another Church organization or affiliation with another religious body is, in no sense, a barrier. To enroll for these lessons does not interfere with other church affiliations nor does it, in any degree, place the student under obligation to become a member of the organized Church of Illumination.

For these Bible Interpretations, students may enroll at any time. Instructions will begin as soon as the student is enrolled.

Wherever it is possible to do so, groups of students will be formed into classes, for class instruction and for class work under a competent teacher. These may meet as independent groups under private arrangement; or, they may

work in connection with the organized Sunday School of any church that favors the lessons.

Although class, or group, work is pleasant and profitable, it is not always available; and, indeed, there is much to say in favor of private individual study. In group work, exchange of ideas adds interest and sometimes becomes a stimulus to investigation. Yet it is possible for the stimulus to become purely intellectual, and for the investigation to become argumentative. In private study, the student is unhampered by the doubts and by the opinions of others, and is free to follow out and to trace even the slightest intimations of a thought or of a question and to make satisfactory test of its adaptability to personal need. The purpose of these interpretations is to stimulate hunger of soul and to supply food calculated to satisfy that hunger, rather than to foster mere intellectual acumen. Reflection and contemplation are necessary factors in soul growth. Recognition of the Law of one's own Being and obedience to that Law are to be fostered. One must gain confidence in the guidance and in the light that comes to one from one's own Christ-Center. These things being of prime importance, it is readily seen that the student who works alone has advantages peculiar to his situation.

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