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The Meaning of Books

A GOOD book is the purest essence of a human soul. The good of a book is not alone the facts that can be gotten out of it, but the kind of resonance that it awakens within our own minds. A book may strike out of us a thousand things, or make us know a thousand things which the book itself does not contain. Every one who reads a good book becomes a wiser man. He qualifies for a greater insight into all things around him, and is then himself a center of light and order. A collection of good books contain all the nobleness, and wisdom of the world before us, for every heroic and victorious soul has placed his stamp therein. A collection of books is the best of all universities. The university teaches how to read a book: but you must go to the book itself for what is in it.

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Issued Monthly by the Mystic Light Library Association

VOL. I, No. 1

49 JOHN ST., NEW YORK

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Introduction

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The MYSTIC LIGHT LIBRARY is the name given to a collection of books, which was, but a short time ago, a mere hand full brought together by a few friends associated in the study of the super-normal, or so-called mystery of Nature's finer forces.

The interest displayed in this study, as well as the collection of books, has increased so rapidly and to such an extent that it has become necessary to issue a catalog of the books, and to publish a bulletin in which reviews will be given on new works being added from day to day.

There seems to be no end, but rather an increasing demand for knowledge of that underlying principle of success, which brings Harmony and Prosperity to the many mystical societies now enjoying all styles of titles, from the Ancient and Honorable Order of Freemasons to the simple home circle.

Every thinking man apparently has determined for himself that in life there is more than mere physical existence, although the process of living is a question with which the human mind is forever struggling. He realizes more and more that advanced methods are necessary to increase the Harmony of this busy world.

"As a man thinketh, so he is," appeals to us as a truth as far-reaching and observable in good results from the man who thinketh aright, as are the poor results from the man who knows not the value of thought. Right Thought, we believe will in time furnish "plenty" in place of the "bread line;" and while it aids in sustaining the physical life, it will add to the spiritual more than meat and drink.

Every life, as we understand it, now is, and ever will be, just where it places itself by the natural law of its own desire—SOWING. But, after we discriminate between the quality of THOUGHT-SEED, and learn HABIT-GROWING properly, we shall reap a harvest that will be altogether satisfactory.

Study Knowledge and Experience form the ladder by which we climb to greater attainment on all planes of life. To aid in this study will be the "ideal" of the Library, and its Association cordially invite all to make free use of its books and magazines at the reading rooms whenever convenient, or to take advantage of its circulation plan at the nominal expense.

The bulletin will contain a directory of, and co-operate with, all centers of progressive thought for mutual advancement. It will also furnish continued series of essays, lectures and lessons by the best teachers in the lecture and literary field, suggesting a sytem of study or research as a guide to greater results.

May the searcher for truth, whatever his creed, church, society, or philosophy, glean from these pages and the Library they represent, the food best suited to his particular needs; and may each find herein some inspiration and help toward the unfolding of those higher, holier, powers within the soul of every man, that lead to the attainment of that perfect Harmony of life which makes us Emperors of our Fate—RULERS OF OUR DESTINY!

THE CREED

Whoever was begotton by pure love,
And came desired and welcome into life,
Is of immaculate conception. He
Whose heart is full of tenderness and truth,
Who love mankind more than he loves Himself,
And cannot find room in His heart for hate,
May be another Christ. We all may be
The Savior o the world, if we believe
In the Divinity which dwells in us
And Worship it, and nail our grosser selves,
Our tempers, greeds, and our unworthy aims,
Upon the cross. Who giveth love to all,
Pays kindness for unkindness, smiles for frowns,
And lends new courage to each fainting heart,
And strengthens hope and scatters joy abroad,
He, too, is a Redeemer, Son of God.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

Progress

Let there be many windows to your soul,
That all the glory of the universe
May beautify it. Not the narrow pane
Of one poor creed can catch the radiant rays
That shine from countless sources. Tear away
The blinds of superstition; let the light
Pour through fair windows broad as Truth itself
And high as God.

Why should the spirit peer
Through some priest curtained orifice, and grope
Along dim corridors of doubt, when all
The splendor from unfathomed seas of space
Might bathe it with the golden waves of Love?
Sweep up the debris of decaying faiths;
Sweep down the cobwebs of worn-out beliefs,
And throw your soul wide open to the light
Of Reason and of Knowledge. Tune your ear
To all the wordless music of the stars
And to the voice of Nature, and your heart
Shall turn to truth and goodness, as the plant
Turns to the sun. A thousand unseen hands
Reach down to help you to their peace-crowned heights,
And all the forces of the firmament
Shall fortify your strength. Be not afraid
To thrust aside half-truths and grasp the whole.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

Concentration of Thought

A Key to Victory

W. J. Colville

The great and always intensely interesting subject of mental concentration is one that is perpetually challenging the closest possible attention in all intelligent circles of society, for tho' it has been especially dealt with during recent years by advocates of peculiar modern cults, it is in itself a subject so entirely universal as to command the earnest interest of all people everywhere who are righteously endeavoring to glorify their lives, no matter whether their station be conspicuous or obscure.

To some people the idea of concentration of thought upon a single object to the complete exclusion of all beside, suggests painful and even harmful mental monotony, but that is because they erroneously infer that those who teach the wisdom of concentrated thought and attention take no account of the need for variety in occupation. The true Concentrator is simply one who does thoro'ly one thing at a time both mentally and physically, tho' he may do hundreds of things in the course of a busy day and give attention mentally to an equally large number of topics for meditation, but he will never divide attention between two or more at the same instant.

There is no complaint more frequently uttered than that against memory; our memories are dubbed by us "poor," "treacherous," "fickle," and much else equally uncomplimentary, and then we ask what we can do (if anything) to strengthen and improve them. To all who complain of defective memory it is well to insist upon the radical difference between the faculty of memory and the act of recollection, which is commonly overlooked.

Thomson Jay Hudson did yeoman service to the cause of true psychology by declaring that the "subjective mind" has a perfect memory, and as that term is applicable to the entire field of consciousness lying behind the veil of our ordinary waking consciousness the phrase need not be disputed, tho' many psychologists employ a different terminology. What is really meant by the subjective or subconscious mind or plane of consciousness, is that vast treasure house of secreted information whence we gather all our reminiscences both voluntary and involuntary. The latter variety are so common as to require no special comment, for we all experience them, sometimes as helps and sometimes as hindrances on our mental pathway. The object of the practise of deliberate concentration of thought and attention is to so completely discipline our memory that it plays no further tricks with us. Most memories appear tricky because they are improperly fed and generally badly treated.

The subjective realm of our mentality should never be confounded with the higher region, as it is

the province of the sub-self to receive impressions and carry out instructions, while it belongs to the higher self to give directions which the lower is to follow. As a subordinate memory is a very good and useful servitor, but as a master nothing can be more tyrannical.

We read in the Classic stories that when offered a memory which should never forget, a famous character replied that he would willingly barter all his temporal possessions for the boon of complete forgetfulness, and there are many in the modern world who can share his sentiment, for memory is often so doubtful an advantage that no less a poet than Robert Browning has told us that "to forgive is good, but to forget is best." Paradoxical tho' it may sound we cannot attain to perfect control over memory without indulging equally in forgetfulness, for the two are most intimately allied.

To remember at will and because we will and at no other time and in no other way, necessarily implies that we are in no case obliged to remember or recall, therefore that which we do not wish to remember we indubitably forget. Originally to forgive meant to give forth so when people prayed for Divine forgiveness they were praying for an influx of the Holy Spirit, which entering into them could so purify them as to drive forth all impurities, and when they acted upon the counsel of perfection which bade them to forgive all who had trespassed against them, they knew that it was their blessed privilege, as well as sacred duty, to send forth goodwill to all humanity,

thereby protecting themselves against the entrance of insidious illwill and other evils, and at the same time causing them to send forth helpful thoughts and desires to those less spiritually developed than themselves.

Mind and body are so closely inter-related that every experienced psychologist must trace a very near relation between psychical and physical conditions.

The Hermetic and Swedenborgian doctrines of correspondence between the within and the without are receiving perpetually fresh and added confirmation, and as we study the working of both alimentary and excretory processes in the human organism, and study them in the light of the law of correspondences, we shall soon come to understand the vital union which exists between remembering and forgetting.

In order to cultivate memory so as to make it serve us exactly as we desire, we must accustom ourselves to give such completely undivided attention to one thing at a time that we form the habit of such entire engrossment in our work that we become phenomenally accurate in all our entries and balancings.

To go no further than to consider the subject on the side of its commercial value we can see at once that to practise concentration perfectly would be to make oneself extremely valuable in any capacity where delicate transactions of great importance must be carried forward expeditiously and without a hitch.

As we are living on the material plane, as well as on the mental, it is essential to success in life to so

train our faculties that they serve us equally well in the different departments of our activity. It is, of course, quite possible to concentrate attention so exclusively upon secular engagements as to completely ignore all interests other than commercial, and it is also equally possible to withdraw so completely from the business world as to become an anchorite, but neither of these extreme courses is generally healthy or to be commended as conducive either to individual or social welfare.

The average intelligent and useful man or woman needs recreation thro' change of interest and diversity of occupation, both mental and physical, and the true view of concentration agree perfectly with determination to acknowledge and satisfy this wide demand.

A habit once thor'ly formed, if it be a good one, will never be discarded or relinquished, because the more we indulge it the more beneficial it will prove, but with erroneous habits the case is exactly the reverse, for the more we practise such the more deeply must we become involved in mental and physical disaster.

People are often heard to say that they cannot concentrate; this is an untrue statement, tho' by no means a wilful falsehood. What it really amounts to is that they have not formed the habit of concentrating upon any one thing perfectly, therefore they have grown accustomed to shiftless mental habits, and have persuaded themselves that their mental laxity is an affliction which they must endure, when it is really only a weak habit they need to cast from them

as an incubus hampering all their onward movements. A little careful investigation will soon prove to practically every moderately thoughtful person that we all concentrate quite a great deal on whatever interests us most, be it something frivolous or profound.

Only idiots seem actually unable to concentrate, but the failure of many boys and girls and men and women to achieve much in any line of useful effort is due simply to the fact that they do concentrate a great deal of attention upon unworthy objects while at the same time they believe and state that they cannot concentrate upon any serious undertaking.

As it is always desirable to begin with comparatively easy exercises and then proceed to those more difficult, it is very helpful to call attention to the fact that we find it difficult to do other than concentrate whenever we are greatly interested in any person or pursuit.

Without love, or something analagous thereto, concentration is certainly difficult, and it is surely reasonable to maintain that as all kinds of work need to be done in the world, in anything like an ideal social state, we shall all do something both useful and congenial. But before any radical social readjustments have been made we can greatly profit by taking a much higher and broader view of commonplace pursuits than we are generally accustomed to take.

To many sensitive and aspiring natures the greatest hardship of all is to feel that one is committed to an uninteresting and unimportant material grind merely for external maintenance. It is the low view taken

of ordinary work which engenders so much difficulty in the way of concentrating one's energies upon it, and it cannot be denied that not laziness but a mistaken view of idealism leads many aspiring individuals to let their thoughts wander very far indeed from the occupation with which they are concerned outwardly. First of all we should set ourselves a definite task and refuse to tolerate the thought of failure in its accomplishment.

Prentice Mulford in his famous White Cross Essays has helped a great many beginners by directing them to cultivate the habit of doing everything so thoro'ly that if one is cleaning a pen that pen should be cleaned with the same devotion that one would give to what he felt to be a transaction of supreme importance. This is exactly the right advice for beginners, but as we proceed we shall find ere long that it is no longer necessary to give so much intentionally directed attention to so small a detail, because we shall have trained some faculty of ours to do that work almost altogether sub-consciously, and it will be quite as well done as in the days when it was necessary for us to give it close objective attention.

We notice that when one is learning to play upon a musical instrument how essential it is at first to watch both notes and fingers very carefully, but after a little while, if the pupil is an apt scholar, it becomes quite unnecessary to watch either notes or fingers, and the selection is far better rendered in a seemingly careless manner than when it was laboriously produced according to the initial method.

To continue the musical illustration one step further it becomes us to notice how very important it is to acquire a good touch and a correct method of fingering very early in the educational process, or we soon find that a bad musical habit has been formed, difficult to break after it has become established. A good habit sinks in like manner into the sub-consciousness and forms a foundation for subsequent excellence of rendition when we try our hands at elaborate and difficult compositions.

Memory depends for sustenance upon the food we give it, just as does the body. We may not go so far in the wrong direction as either to starve or poison ourselves by dietary indiscretions, and yet we may sorely lack the energy and buoyant health which we should certainly enjoy if we fed wisely instead of injuriously. It is exactly so with memory; we remember what we have previously membered, we recall what we previously called, we recollect what we previously collected.

An act of repetition is usually easier and also less important than an original act, it therefore follows that we need to be much more careful as to how we feed our memories with fresh material than in considering how they may be induced to give us a second or any future edition of something they have already stereotyped.

As all efficiency depends upon thoro'ness, and this must be acquired before we can make any further progress, let us see how we may profitably conduct a few simple preliminary exercises.

First, it is always necessary to select a theme or object for contemplation and then determine resolutely to concentrate thereon until we have received into our inner consciousness a complete mental picture of it; then it is well to entirely dismiss all further thought of it for the time being and then turn to something else, perhaps of quite a different nature.

It is a great mistake to suppose that college students who take a great interest in cricket or any other sport are therefore remiss in their attention to lectures or in any other way negligent in their collegiate course. There certainly are some young men at universities who are students in name only, but among the brightest scholars are to be found many who concentrate attention on the matter in hand equally well in the cricket field and in the lecture hall.

The healthiest possible mental attitude is to throw one's entire interest into whatever may be going and for the nonce be so absorbed therewith as to be oblivious to all beside.

Recreations equally with business obligations furnish abundant opportunity for cultivating the concentrative habit, and that habit once formed is a highly valuable asset regardless of how or where we originally developed it.

Many people foolishly allow themselves to be unduly disturbed at meals and they permit their rest hours to be unreasonably broken in upon, with the result that they are generally listless and unfit for any work they may be called upon to accomplish.

It is well for us when we arrive at some intelligent idea of our righteous obligations, and while we must fulfil every one of these conscientiously we must not allow weakening and wearying burdens to be imposed upon us by thoughtless persons who evince no due regard for the privacy of others. We cannot reasonably expect that all our acquaintances are available for trivial gossip or to wait on our every whim by day or night because we choose to call upon them without invitation either personally or by telephone. Self-respect coupled with due regard for others should make us reticent rather than aggressive when we feel disposed to precipitate ourselves into the busy lives of others, and just as we should be graciously thoughtful of our neighbors' interests we should also train ourselves to become so utterly absorbed in our own pursuits, at least when engaged in any serious business, that we take no notice of interruptions if such are attempted.

The habit of concentration is not only an infallible cure for defective memory, it is also a complete panacea for insomnia and all other nervous ailments, which are usually traceable to lamentable lack of mental self-regulation. Things "get on our nerves" because we keep those nerves far too much exposed thro' failing to build around us a wall of protective aura. When we are comparatively unoccupied we always find ourselves much more amenable to exterior suggestions than when we are definitely employed. Taking advantage of this fact many advertisers em-

ploy public conveyances for advertising purposes because they find that they can successfully appeal to the travelling public while they are temporarily resting much more effectively than they can reach people while actively engaged in any kind of pursuit.

Mental impressions apart from externalized suggestions reach us with equal readiness in precisely the same way.

It is always a mistake to try to put something out of your mind which you do not wish to harbor by a definitely expulsive act, but it is always possible to accomplish a desired result by honoring the law of mental substitution.

Concentration of attention upon vices and diseases is extremely detrimental in its effects upon the health and morals of communities even tho' the plea is often made that we are endeavoring to put to flight the evils we are mentally attacking.

No better motto has yet been found than that beautiful saying in the New Testament which William Ewart Gladstone frequently commended to youths with noble aspirations: "Whatsoever things are excellent and of good report, think on these things." Out of a rich and varied treasury of many things aesthetic we may select for immediate contemplation just that particular excellent thing of which we feel we stand in most immediate need. By following this course we shall soon find ourselves constructing a system of mental suggestion which will prove of inestimable value in numberless directions.

We all know that health, success, and happiness are what we all desire and we certainly know that these blessings can never be described negatively. We cannot, for example, say that health is absence of disease or that happiness is lack of misery, for we should by such language give no idea whatever of that conscious fulness and joy of life without which health and happiness are words without significance. In like manner we cannot say that we are successful because we have not actually failed in an undertaking, for success is inseparable from the thought of definite achievement. We may be mildly unwell, unhappy, and unsuccessful without being seriously ill or intensely wretched, or without having brought disaster or disgrace upon ourselves or others, but no life deserves to be called either a healthy, happy, or successful one which does not radiate some determinable blessedness and contribute in some valid way to the betterment of the life of a community.

It is always claimed by certain schools of theologians that a contemplative life is higher and holier than any life can be which is lived in the outer world. The origin of such a concept is to be found in the very great value placed by ancient Mystics, as well as by many modern Mental Scientists, upon the silent and secret efficacy of well-directed mental activity apart from ostensible activity. In the life of a recluse we may find this idea carried to its logical ultimate, provided that the recluse in question is intentionally philanthropic, not a self-seeking individual desiring to

escape worldly contamination for his own private spiritual benefit.

As most people are obliged to busy themselves to some considerable extent with outward activities only a very small percentage of aspiring men and women can over righteously live the life of the cloister, be that cloister avowedly religious, scientific, or artistic, but for the few who can and should live a life thus extraordinarily sheltered vast opportunities for incessant usefulness are always widely opened. Let some gifted author retire into academic solitude for the sole purpose of producing a literary masterpiece, the influence of which should greatly bless a multitude of readers in the open world, no one could justly accuse that author of having neglected to play his part as an active worker in the hive of human industry; still it may be fairly contended that most authors come more nearly in touch with actual human needs when they sometimes rub elbows with the rank and file in the market places than when they seclude themselves entirely from general society on the favorite plea that they must be free from vulgar distraction while engaged in creative literary activity. A wise middle course between two extreme positions is usually best.

The worker who requires more than ordinary silence and seclusion for the best fulfilment of his task should occasionally leave his beloved retirement and mingle with the human throng, and those whose usual work compels them to be almost always in the midst of hubbub are largely benefited by occasional withdrawals from the accustomed round into the peaceful

silence of woods and mountain districts. We all need change, but some of us need it much more than others, and those who absolutely require the most frequent and radical outward changes are those who know least in practise of the art of creating mental changes and betaking themselves to mental solitudes or of entering into the company of those ideal interior conditions which we can make for ourselves regardless of all external circumstances.

There are many deeper and far more mystical aspects of the value of concentration than any we have yet alluded to, but these could not be intelligibly dealt with until a firm foundation had been laid by means of ordinary preliminary practise. Theoretically it is always easy to dilate upon the advantages of useful practises, but to gain any real benefit from a good theory we must resolutely work with it.

The greatest of all advantages derivable from the practise of concentration such as we have outlined, is that it has a wonderfully sweetening influence upon temper, because it conduces to perpetual inward serenity. We do not lose sensitiveness by becoming serene, nor do we lose affectionate interest in the welfare of those around us, but we enormously increase our powers of usefulness and our ability to render efficient aid in times of threatened danger or unusual difficulty.

The practise of the art of concentration is a necessary introduction to a right comprehension of the much discussed Law of Attraction, which will form the topic of the next essay in the present series.

Whatever we dwell most upon mentally we bring ourselves into the closest contact with, that is why it so often occurs that we get most of what we most dislike, because our aversions and our fears occupy so large a portion of our secret meditations even when we keep them out of our general conversation. Concentration upon whatever we most desire is the surest way to draw it to us, but there must be no excitement or agitation in connection with our anticipations. Undue eagerness is oftener an accompaniment of fear than an associate of faith, and while the mighty words are ever true "According to thy faith be it unto thee" and "According to thy word be it unto thee," unfortunately for the fulfilment of our hopes our mental word is often one of doubt rather than one of confidence.

To drill ourselves heroically to meditate only upon what we desire to bring to pass is one of the most salutary exercises in which we can possibly engage and tho' it must involve at the start a great deal of mental eliminative work because we have so long permitted fears to occupy the centre of our mental stage, as we go on with it we shall find it becoming easier and easier, and at every stage in the game such an exercise is bracing and inspiring in the extreme. We need but to remember that we can never derive benefit by concentrating upon disagreeable and unsightly objects, therefore all our exercises ought to grow increasingly delightful.

Let us first select some object we admire, associated with some excellence we wish to cultivate, then

every morning before rising, and every night after retiring, place it mentally before us as an object on which we are free to meditate.

If in the earliest stages of this practise some suitable outward symbol is found helpful we shall do well to employ a motto, picture, statue, recitation, or whatever also expresses clearly and tersely the ideal condition we are seeking to make manifest. Ritual observances of various beneficial kinds owe most of their helpfulness to the operation of the now widely acknowledged Law of Suggestion.

Let us use good and helpful suggestions more and more abundantly and at the same time positively refuse any of a pessimistic and unwholesome sort to enter the field of our guarded mental vision. This is the road to certain eventual victory.

This Essay will be followed by one, in the next number of the BULLETIN, entitled:

The Law of Attraction

How it universally operates



A LAUGH IN CHURCH.

She sat on the sliding cushion,
The dear, wee woman of four;
Her feet, in their shiny slippers,
Hung dangling over the floor.
She meant to be good, she had promised;
And so, with her big, brown eyes,
She stared at the meeting-house windows,
And counted the crawling flies.

She looked far up at the preacher,
But she thought of the honey-bees
Droning away at the blossoms
That whitened the cherry trees.
She thought of a broken basket,
Where curled in a dusky heap,
Three sleek, round puppies, with fringy ears
Lay snuggled and fast asleep.

Such soft, warm bodies to cuddle,
Such queer little hearts to beat,
Such swift, round tongues to kiss,
Such sprawling, cushiony feet;
She could feel in her clasping fingers
The touch of the satiny skin,
And a cold, wet nose exploring
The dimples under her chin.

Then a sudden ripple of laughter
Ran over the parted lips
So quick that she could not catch it
With her rosy finger-tips.
The people whispered, "Bless the child,"
As each one waked from a nap;
But the dear wee woman hid her face
For shame in her mother's lap.

HUMAN SYMPATHY.

It's the honest grip
Of comradeship
Makes a fellow take heart again;
It's the word of cheer
From a friend sincere
Makes him feel life's not in vain.
When the way is dark
And the luckless bark
Is drifting from safety's strand,
Why, God bless the men
And the women who then
Hold to us a helping hand.

—*Chartiers Valley Mirror.*

THINGS THAT OTHER PEOPLE DO.

The man who does his best to make
The world a better place,
Whose heart is pure, who dares to look
His neighbor in the face,
Is not the one who takes delight
In holding up to view
And scoffing at the foolish things
That other people do.

The man who gains the noble height
Where fame and honor wait,
Wins no delight from petty spite,
He gives no heed to hate.
For he has little chance to reach
This distant summit who
Gives up his time to smudging things
That other people do.

I like the honest man who tries
To keep away from sin,
I like the man who seeks to rise,
But does no wrong to win—
The world is brighter for the day
Spent in his presence who
Can keep from finding fault with things
That other people do.

—*S. E. Kiser in Chicago Times-Herald.*

Rosicrucian Christianity

Series Number One

The Riddle of Life and Death

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At every birth, what appears to be a new life comes into the world. Slowly the little form grows, it lives and moves among us, it becomes a factor in our lives; but at last there comes a time when the form ceases to move and decays. The life that came, whence we know not, has again passed to the invisible beyond. Then, in sorrow and perplexity, we ask ourselves the three great questions concerning our existence: Whence have we come? Why are we here? and Whither are we going?

Across every threshold the fearsome spectre of Death throws his shadow. It visits alike the palace and the poor-house. None are safe: old or young, well or ill, rich or poor, all, all alike must pass through that gloomy portal; and down the ages have sounded the piteous cry for a solution of the riddle of life, the riddle of death.

Unfortunately there has been much vague speculation by people who do not know, and it has therefore come to be the popularly accepted opinion that nothing definite can be known about that most important part of our existence: Life prior to its manifestation through the gate of birth and beyond the portal of death.

That idea is erroneous. Definite first-hand knowledge may be had by anyone who will take the trouble to cultivate a "sixth sense" which is latent in all. When acquired it opens our spiritual eyes so that we perceive the spirits who are about

to enter physical life by birth, and those who have just re-entered the beyond after death. We see them as clearly and definitely as we cognize physical beings by our ordinary sight. Nor is first-hand information about the inner worlds indispensable to satisfy the inquiring mind any more than it is necessary to visit China to learn about conditions there. We learn about foreign countries through the reports of returned travelers. There is as much knowledge concerning the world beyond as about the interior of Africa, Australia or China.

The solution of the problem of Life and Being advocated in the following pages is based upon the concurrent testimony of many who have cultivated the above-mentioned faculty and are qualified to investigate the superphysical realms in a scientific manner. It is in harmony with scientific facts, an eternal truth in nature which governs human progress, as the law of gravity serves to keep the stars unchangeably in their orbits about the sun.

Three theories have been brought forward to solve the riddle of life and death, and it seems to be universally agreed that a fourth is an impossible conception. If so, one of the three theories must be the true solution, or it remains insoluble; at least by man.

The riddle of life and death is a basic problem; everyone must solve it at some time, and it is of the utmost importance to each individual human being which of these theories he accepts; for his choice will color his whole life. In order that we may make an intelligent choice, it is necessary to know them all, to analyze, compare and weigh them, holding the mind open and free from the bias of preconceived ideas, ready to accept or reject each theory upon its merits. Let us first state the three theories and then let us see how they agree with established facts of life and how far they are in harmony with other known laws of nature, as we should reason-

ably expect them to be, if true; for discord in nature is impossible.

The three theories are :

1. *The Materialistic Theory*, which holds that life is a journey from the womb to the tomb; that mind is the product of matter; that man is the highest intelligence in the cosmos; and that intelligence perishes when the body dissolves at death.
2. *The Theory of Theology*, which asserts that at each birth a newly-created soul enters the arena of life fresh from the hand of God; that at the end of one short span of life in the material world it passes through the gate of death into the invisible beyond, *there to remain*; and that its happiness or misery there is determined for all eternity by its *belief* just prior to death.
3. *The Theory of Re-birth*, which teaches that each soul is an integral part of God; that it enfolds all divine possibilities, as a seed enfolds the plant; that by means of repeated existences in a gradually improving earthy body those latent powers are being slowly unfolded into dynamic energy; that none are lost, but all Egos will ultimately attain the goal of perfection and reunion with God, bringing with them the cumulative experience which is the fruitage of their pilgrimage through matter.

Comparing the materialistic theory with the known laws of nature, we find that it is contrary to such well-established laws, as those which declare matter and force indestructible. According to those laws mind cannot be destroyed at death as the materialistic theory asserts, for when nothing can be destroyed mind must be included.

Moreover, mind evidently is superior to matter, for it moulds the face so that it mirrors the mind; also, we know that the particles of our bodies are constantly changing; that an entire

change takes place at least once in seven years. If the materialistic theory were true, our consciousness ought also to undergo an entire change, with no memory of what preceded; so that no one could remember an event more than seven years.

We know that is not the case. We remember our whole life; the smallest incident, though forgotten in ordinary life, is vividly remembered by a drowning person, also in the trance-state. Materialism takes no account of these states of sub-consciousness or super-consciousness; it cannot explain them, so it ignores them, but in the face of scientific investigations which have established the verity of psychic phenomena beyond cavil, the policy of ignoring rather than disproving these alleged facts is a fatal defect in a theory which lays claim to solve the greatest problem of life: Life itself.

The materialistic theory has many more defects, which render it unworthy of our acceptance; but sufficient has been said to justify us in casting it aside and turning to the other two.

One of the greatest difficulties in the doctrine of the theologians is its entire and confessed inadequacy. According to their theory that a new soul is created at each birth, myriads of souls have been created since the beginning of existence (even if that beginning goes back only 6,000 years). Only 144,000 are to be saved, the rest are to be tortured forever. And that is called "God's plan of salvation"; extolled as proof of God's wonderful love.

Let us suppose a wireless message is received at New York, stating that a large transatlantic liner is sinking just outside Sandy Hook; that 3,000 people are in danger of drowning. Would we hail it as a glorious plan of salvation if a small, fast motor-boat were sent to their relief, and succeeded in rescuing two or three people? Certainly not. Only when some

adequate means was provided to save the great majority at least would it be hailed as a "plan of salvation."

The "plan of salvation" which the theologians are offering is worse than sending a motor-boat to save the people on an Atlantic liner, for two or three is a greater proportion saved out of a total of 3,000 than 144,000 of all the myriad of souls created on the plan of theology. If God had really evolved that plan, it would seem to the logical mind that He cannot be all-wise, and if He allows the devil to get the best of it, as per that plan, and torture the greatest majority of mankind, He cannot be good. If He cannot help Himself, He is not all-powerful. In neither case can He therefore be God. Such suppositions are, however, unthinkable as actualities, for that cannot be God's plan, and it is a gross libel to attribute it to Him.

If we turn to the doctrine of re-incarnation (re-birth in human bodies), which postulates a slow process of development carried on with *unwavering persistence* through repeated embodiment in human forms of increasing efficiency, whereby all beings are in time brought to a height of spirituality inconceivable to our present limited understanding, we can readily perceive its harmony with nature's methods. *Everywhere in nature is found this slow and persistent striving for perfection; and nowhere is found a sudden process of either creation or destruction analogous to the plan which the theologians and materialists would have us believe.*

Science recognizes the process of evolution as nature's method of development alike for the star and the star-fish, the microbe and the man. It is the progression of spirit in time, and as we look about and note evolution in our three-dimensional universe, we cannot escape the obvious fact that its path is also three-dimensional, a spiral; each loop of the spiral is a cycle, and cycle follows cycle in unbroken progression, as the

loops of the spiral succeed each other, each cycle being the improved product of the preceding and the basis of progress in the succeeding cycles.

A straight line is but the extension of a point, and analogous to the theories of the materialists and the theologians. The materialistic line of existence goes from birth to death; the theologian commences the line at a point just previous to birth and carries it into the invisible beyond at death.

There is no return. Existence thus lived would extract but a minimum of experience from the school of life, such as might be had by one-dimensional beings incapable of broadening out or rising to sublime heights of attainment.

A two-dimensional zigzag path for the evolving life would be no better, a circle would mean a never-ending round of the same experiences. Everything in nature has a purpose, the third dimension included, in order that we may live up to the opportunities of a three-dimensional universe, the path of evolution must be a spiral. So it is. Everywhere in heaven and on earth all things are going *onward, upward forever*.

The modest little plant in the garden and the giant redwood of California with its forty-foot diameter alike show the spiral in the arrangement of their branches, twigs and leaves. If we study the great vaulted arch of heaven and examine the spiral nebulae, which are worlds in the making, or the path of the solar systems, the spiral is evidently the way of progression.

We find another illustration of spiral progression in the yearly course of our planet. In the spring she emerges from her period of rest; her wintry sleep. We see the life budding everywhere. All the activities of nature are exerted to bring forth. Time passes; the corn and the grape are ripened and harvested, and again the silence and inactivity of winter takes

the place of the activity of the summer; again the snowy coverlet wraps the earth. But she will not sleep forever; she will wake again to the song of a new spring, and will then be a little farther progressed along the pathway of time.

Is it possible that a Law, universal in all other realms of nature, should be abrogated in the case of man? Shall the earth wake each year from its wintry slumber; shall the tree and the flower live again, and man die? No, that is impossible in a universe governed by immutable law. The same law that wakes the life in the plant to new growth must wake the human being to further progress toward the goal of perfection. Therefore the doctrine of re-birth, or repeated human embodiment in gradually improving vehicles, is in perfect accord with evolution and the phenomena of nature, when it states that birth and death follow each other in succession. It is in full harmony with the law of alternating cycles which decreed that activity and rest, ebb and flood, summer and winter, must follow each other in unbroken sequence. It is also in perfect accord with the spiral phase of the law of evolution when it states that each time the spirit returns to a new birth it takes on a better body and as man progresses in mental, moral and spiritual attainment in consequence of the accumulated experiences of past lives he comes into *an improved environment*.

When we seek to solve the riddle of life and death; to find an answer that shall satisfy both head and heart as to the difference in the endowment of human beings and give a reason for the existence of sorrow and pain, when we ask why one is reared in the lap of luxury while another receives more kicks than crusts; why one obtains a moral education, but another is taught to steal and lie; why one has the face and figure of a Venus, while another has the head of a Medusa; why one has perfect health and another never knows a moment's rest from pain; why one has the intellect of

a Socrates, and another can only count "one, two, many," as do the Australian aborigines, we receive no satisfaction from the materialist or the theologian. Materialism gives the law of heredity as the reason for sickness, and in regard to economic conditions a Spencer tells us that in the animal-world the law of existence is "eat, or be eaten"; in civilized society it is "cheat, or be cheated."

Heredity accounts partly for the *physical* constitution. Like begets like, so far as the *Form* is concerned, but not for the moral proclivities and mental trend, which differ in each human being. Heredity is a fact in the lower kingdoms where all the animals of a certain species look nearly alike, eat the same kind of food and act similarly in similar circumstances, because they have no individual will, but are dominated by a common group-spirit. In the human kingdom it is different. Each man acts differently from others. Each requires a different diet. As the years of infancy and youth pass the indwelling Ego molds its instrument so that it reflects itself in the features. Thus no two look exactly alike. Even twins who could not be distinguished in childhood grow to look different as the features of each express the thought of the Ego within.

On the moral plane a like condition prevails. Police records show that though the children of habitual criminals generally possess criminal tendencies, they invariably keep out of the courts, and in the "rogues' galleries" of Europe and America it is impossible to find both father and son. Thus criminals are the sons of honest people, and so heredity is unable to account for moral proclivities.

When we come to a consideration of the higher intellectual and artistic faculties we find that the children of a genius are mediocre and often even idiots. Cuvier's brain was the greatest brain ever weighed and analyzed by science. His five children died of paresis. The brother of Alexander the Great

was an idiot, and so cases could be cited ad lib. to show that heredity only partially accounts for similarity of *Form*, and not at all for mental and moral conditions. The law of attraction, which causes musicians to congregate in concert-halls, and brings about meetings of literary people because of similarity of tastes, and the law of consequence which draws one who has developed criminal tendencies into association with criminals, that he may learn to do good by beholding the trouble incident to wrong-doing, account more logically than heredity for the facts of associations and character.

The theologian explains that all conditions are made by the will of God, who in His inscrutable wisdom has seen fit to make some rich and most poor; some clever and others dull, etc.; that he sends trouble and trials to all, much to the many and little to a favored few, and they say we must accept our lot without murmur. But it is hard to look with love to the skies when one realizes that thence, according to divine caprice, comes all our misery, be it little or much, and the benevolent human mind revolts at the thought of a father who lavishes love, comfort and luxury upon a few, and sends sorrow, suffering and misery to millions. Surely there must be another solution to the problems of life than this. Is it not more reasonable to think that the theologians may have misinterpreted the Bible than to saddle such a monstrous conduct upon God?

The law of re-birth offers a reasonable solution of all the inequalities of life, its sorrow and pains, when coupled with its companion law: the law of consequence, besides showing the road to emancipation.

The law of consequence is nature's law of justice. It decrees that whatsoever a man sows, he reaps. What we are, what we have, all our good qualities are the result of our labor in the past, thence our talents. What we lack in physical,

moral or mental accomplishments is due to neglect of opportunities in the past or to lack of them, but sometime, somewhere, we will have other chances, and retrieve the loss. As to our obligations to others or their debts to us, the law of consequence also takes care of that. What cannot be liquidated in one life holds over to future lives. Death does not cancel our obligations any more than moving to another city pays our debts here. The law of re-birth provides a new environment, but in it are our old friends, and our old enemies. We know them, too, for when we meet a person for the first time, yet feel as if we had known him all our lives, that is but the recognition of the Ego who pierces the veil of flesh and recognizes an old friend. When we meet a person who at once inspires us with fear or repugnance, it is again a message from the Ego warning us of our old-time enmity.

The occult teaching regarding life, which bases its solution upon the twin laws of consequence and rebirth, is simply that the world about us is a school of experience; that even as we send a child to school day after day and year after year, in order that it may learn more and more, as it advances through the different grades from kindergarten to college, so the Ego in man, as a child of the Father, goes to the school of life, day after day. But in that larger life of the Ego each day at school is a life on earth and the night which intervenes between two days at the child's school corresponds to the sleep of death in the larger life of the human Ego (the spirit in man).

In a school there are many grades. The older children who have attended school many times have very different lessons from the tots in the kindergarten. So in the school of life, those in high positions, endowed with great faculties, are our Elder Brothers, and the savages are but entering the lowest class. What they are we have been, and all will in time reach

a point where they will be wiser than the wisest we know. Nor should it surprise the philosopher that the powerful crush the weak; the elder children are cruel to their younger brothers at a certain stage of their growth because they have not at that time evolved the true sense of right, but as they grow they learn to protect weakness. So will the children of the larger life. Altruism is flowering more and more everywhere, and the day will come when all men will be as good and benevolent as are the greatest saints.

There is but one sin—IGNORANCE; and but one salvation—APPLIED KNOWLEDGE. All sorrow, suffering and pain are traceable to ignorance of how to act, and the school of life is as necessary to bring out our latent capabilities as is the daily school which evokes those of the child.

When we realize that this is so, life will at once take on an altogether different aspect. It does not matter then what the conditions are in which we find ourselves, the knowledge that WE have made them helps us to bear them in patience; and, best of all, the glorious feeling that we are masters of our destiny and can make *the future* what we will, is of itself a power. It rests with us to develop what we lack. Of course we still have the past to reckon with, and perhaps much misfortune may yet accrue from wrong deeds, but if we will cease to do evil we may look with joy to every affliction as liquidating an old score and bringing the day nearer when we shall have a clean record. It is no valid objection, that often the most upright suffer the greatest. The great intelligences who apportion to each man the amount of his past score which is to be liquidated in each life always help the man who pays the debts of his past without adding new delinquencies, by giving him as much as he can bear, to hasten the day of emancipation; and in that sense it is strictly true that "whom the Lord loves he chasteneth."

The doctrine of rebirth is sometimes confounded with the theory of transmigration, which teaches that a human soul may incarnate in an animal. That has no foundation in nature. Each species of animals is the emanation from a "group-spirit," which governs them *from the outside*, by suggestion. It functions in the desire world; and as distance does not exist there, it can thus influence its members, no matter where located. The human spirit, the Ego, on the other hand, enters right into a dense body; there is an individual spirit in each person, dwelling in its instrument and guiding it *from within*. These are two entirely different stages of evolution, and it is as impossible for man to incarnate in an animal body as for a group-spirit to take human shape.

The question, "Why do we not remember our past existences?" is another apparent difficulty. But if we realize that we have an entirely new brain at each birth, and that the human spirit is weak and engrossed in its new environment, so that it fails to make a full impression on the brain in the days of childhood, when it is most sensitive; it is not so surprising after all. Some children do remember the past, especially in the earliest years, and it is one of the most pathetic phases of childhood that they are so thoroughly misunderstood by their elders. When they speak of the past, they are ridiculed, and even punished for being "imaginary." If children speak of their invisible playmates, and of "seeing things," for many children are clairvoyant, they meet the same harsh treatment, and the inevitable result is that the little ones learn to keep still until they lose the faculty. Sometimes it happens, however, that the prattle of a child is listened to and results in some wonderful revelations. The writer heard of such a case a few years ago on the Pacific Coast. A little child in Santa Barbara ran up to a gentleman of the name of Roberts on the street and called him papa, persisting that she had lived with him and

another mamma in a little house by a brook, and that one morning he had left the cabin and never returned. She and her mother had both died of starvation and the little one finished quaintly, "But I didn't die; I came here." The story was not told at once, or succinctly, but in the course of an afternoon, by intermittent questioning it came out. Mr. Roberts' story of an early elopement, marriage and emigration from England to Australia, of the building of a cabin by a stream, with no other houses near, of leaving his wife and baby, of being arrested; denied permission to notify his wife because the officer feared a trap, of being driven to the coast at the point of a gun, of being taken to England and tried for a bank robbery committed the night he sailed for Australia, of proving his innocence, of how then only notice was taken of his persistent ravings about a wife and child who must starve to death, of the telegram sent, the search-party organized and the answer that they had found but the skeletons of a woman and a child. All these things corroborated the story of the little three-year-old tot; and being shown some photographs in a casual way, she picked out the pictures of Mr. Roberts and his wife, though Mr. Roberts had altered much in the eighteen years which intervened between the tragedy and the Santa Barbara incident.

It must not be supposed, however, that all who pass through the gate of death re-enter as quickly as that. Such a short interim would give the soul no chance to do the important work of assimilating experiences and preparation for a new earth-life. But a three-year-old child has had no experience to speak of, so it seeks a new embodiment quickly, often incarnating in the same family as before. Children often die because a change in the parents' habits have frustrated the working out of their past acts. It is then necessary to seek another chance, or they are born and die to teach the parents a needed lesson. In one case an Ego incarnated eight times in the same family

for that purpose before the lesson was learned. Then it incarnated elsewhere. It was a friend of the family who acquired great merit by thus helping them.

The law of rebirth, where it is not modified by the law of consequence to such an extent as in the above cases, works according to the movement of the sun known as the precession of the equinoxes, by which the sun goes backwards through the twelve signs of the Zodiac in the so-called sidereal or world-year comprising 25,868 of our ordinary solar years.

As the passage of the earth in her orbit around the sun makes the climatic changes which alter our condition according to seasons and change our activities, so the passage of the sun through the great world-year makes still greater changes in climatic and topographical conditions, in respect to civilization, and it is necessary that the Ego should learn to cope with it all.

Therefore the Ego incarnates twice in the time it takes the sun to go through each one of the signs of the Zodiac, which is about 2,100 years. There are thus normally about 1,000 years between two incarnations and, while the experiences of a man are widely different from those of a woman, the conditions are not materially different in a thousand years, so the spirit usually incarnates alternately as a man and a woman. But that is not a hard and fast rule; it is subject to modification when such is required by the law of consequence.

Thus occult science resolves the riddle of life into the Ego's quest for experience, all conditions having that purpose in view, and all being automatically determined by desert; it robs death of its terror and its sting, by placing it where it belongs, as an incident in a larger life, similar to the removal to another city for a time; it makes the parting from loved ones easier by assuring us that the very love we feel will be the means of reuniting us, and it gives us the grandest hope in life that some

day we shall all obtain the knowledge which illumines all problems, links all our lives, and best of all, as taught by occult science, we have it in our own power, by application, to hasten that glorious day when faith shall be swallowed up in knowledge. Then we shall realize in a higher sense the beauty of Sir Edwin Arnold's poetic statement of the doctrine of rebirth:

Never the Spirit was born!
The Spirit shall cease to be never!
Never was time it was not,
End and beginning are dreams.
Birthless and deathless remaineth the spirit forever.
Death has not touched it at all,
Dead though the house of it seems.

Nay! but as one layeth
A worn-out robe away,
And taking another sayeth:
This will I wear to-day,
So putteth by the spirit
Lightly its garment of flesh
And passeth on to inherit
A residence afresh.

The preceeding Lesson is No. 1 in a series of twenty. No. 2 will appear in the next BULLETIN. They can be had singly (order by number) or in sets, from the Mystic Light Library, the Rosicrucian Brotherhood, Headquarters at Seattle, Wash., or the Rosicrucian Brotherhood, 45 John St. New York City. See the list of subjects on following pages.

The Mission of the Rosicrucian Fellowship

God is Light—if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have Fellowship with one another.—1st John 1:5-7.

The Rosicrucian Fellowship is not a sect or religious organization. It is a School of Thought. It does not aim at proselyting, but rather to make the Christian Teachings a living factor in the land by encouraging people to remain with their churches while giving them explanations which time has obscured. To such as have already severed their connections with the church it offers a temporary anchorage until they become aroused anew to a deeper understanding of the uplifting power and the beauty of the Christian teaching.

In the Rosicrucian Fellowship the Elder Brothers distinguish between three classes: First, *Students*, those who are merely studying the Philosophy.

Second, *Probationers*, who are students, but who wish to fit themselves for service and aspire to first-hand knowledge. To the latter, the General or Local Secretary will furnish a pledge wherein the aspirant promises *himself* to faithfully perform two specific exercises; to keep a daily record of his performance, and send that record monthly to headquarters. The term of probation is at least a year and has for its purpose to test the earnestness and persistence of the aspirant and to *give him the opportunity to purify himself, before taking up the more direct methods of training incident to discipleship*. The report is also designed to be a help to the aspirant in the performance of the exercises. It is human nature to want to make as good a showing as possible and the aspirant will thus try to do better, knowing that his work is being inspected.

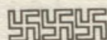
Third: *Disciples*, who have completed the term of probation, been accepted by the Elder Brothers and given individual instruction. Tuition is free.

The Rosicrucian Fellowship has no officers except a General Secretary, who is merely a channel for the dissemination of the teaching.

Any one may enroll as a *student* of Rosicrucian Christianity by writing to the General Secretary, who will furnish the necessary facilities for study, or, wherever possible, students may band together and form a local Fellowship center, a local school, selecting one of their number as local secretary to correspond with the General Secretary.

ROSICRUCIAN CHRISTIANITY

There are no charters, initiation fees, dues or other financial aspects incident to organizations. The expenses incidental to the promulgation of Rosicrucian Christianity are borne by voluntary subscriptions, which may be sent to General Secretary Rosicrucian Fellowship, P. O. Box 1802, Seattle, Wash.



There was a time, even as late as Greece, when *Religion*, *Art* and *Science* were taught unitedly in the Mystery-temples. But it was necessary to the better development of each that they should separate for a time.

Religion held sole sway in the so-called "dark ages." During that time it bound both *Science* and *Art* hand and foot. Then came the period of the Renaissance and *Art* came to the fore in all its branches. *Religion* was strong as yet, however, and *Art* was only too often prostituted in the service of *Religion*. Last came the wave of modern *Science*, and with iron hand it has subjugated *Religion*.

It was a detriment to the world when *Religion* shackled *Science*. *Ignorance* and *Superstition* caused untold woe, nevertheless man cherished a lofty spiritual ideal then; he hoped for a higher and better life. It is infinitely more disastrous that *Science* is killing *Religion*, for now even *Hope*, the only gift of the gods left in Pandora's box, may vanish before *Materialism* and *Agnosticism*.

Such a state cannot continue. Reaction must set in. If it does not, Anarchy will rend the Cosmos. To avert a calamity *Religion*, *Science* and *Art* must reunite in a higher expression of the *Good*, the *True* and the *Beautiful* than obtained before the separation.

Coming events cast their shadows before, and when the Great Leaders of humanity saw the tendency towards ultra-materialism, which is now rampant in the Western World, they took certain steps to counteract and transmute it at the auspicious time. They did not wish to kill the budding *Science* as the latter has strangled *Religion*, for they saw the ultimate good which will result when an advanced *Science* has again become the co-worker of *Religion*.

A spiritual *Religion*, however, cannot blend with a materialistic *Science* any more than oil can mix with water. Therefore steps were taken to spiritualize *Science* and make *Religion* scientific.

In the thirteenth century a high spiritual teacher, having the symbolic name Christian Rosenkreuz—Christian: Rose: Cross—appeared

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in Europe to commence that work. He founded the mysterious order of Rosicrucians with the object of throwing occult light upon the misunderstood Christian Religion and to explain the mystery of Life and Being from the scientific standpoint in harmony with Religion.

In the past centuries the Rosicrucians have worked in secret, but now the time has come for giving out a definite, logical and sequential teaching concerning the origin, evolution and future development of the world and man, showing both the spiritual and the scientific aspect; a teaching which makes no statements that are not supported by reason and logic. Such is the teaching promulgated by the Rosicrucian Fellowship. It satisfies the mind by giving clear explanations and neither begs nor evades questions. It holds out a reasonable solution to all mysteries—But, and this is a very important “But,” *The Rosicrucian Christianity does not regard the intellectual understanding of God and the Universe as an end in itself.* Far from it. The greater the intellect, the greater the danger of its misuse. Therefore *the scientific teaching is only given in order that man may believe and start to live the religious life which alone can bring true Fellowship.*



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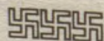
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LOW TWELVE. By Edward S. Ellis, A. M. Published by F. R. Niglutsch of New York. For sale in Utica by John L. Grant. Price, \$1.50.

"Low Twelve" is a series of truthful incidents illustrative of the fidelity of Free Masons to one another in times of distress and danger. The author is past master of Trenton (N. J.) Lodge, No. 5 F. & A. M., and evidently very much interested in the craft. He has collected some interesting stories, the first one occupying several chapters and relating to events happening in Indian warfare against Geronimo and the Apaches. Another story tells why James M. Seddon, Confederate secretary of war, saved a man who was condemned to be shot for bridge burning in Tennessee. Other stories tell why Ben McCulloch, the famous Texas ranger, saved Bishop James of the M. E. Church and his conference from being mobbed; why a well known clergyman was saved from assassination during the late strike in the coal regions, and how President Diaz of Mexico was at one time in danger and rescued in thrilling style. Every Free Mason has heard of the Morgan excitement, but all do not know what became of the man Morgan. Mr. Ellis tells this and numerous other things about Free Masonry. He is a well known historian and novelist and the stories collected in "Low Twelve" have been prepared carefully. A full list of the grand lodges in Canada and the United States is appended, together with the secretaries and number of members. The book is illustrated and will be of special and particular interest to Free Masons.—*Press, Utica, N. Y.*

RAMA AND MOSES. By Edouard Schuré. Trans. by F. Rothwell, B.A. London: William Rider & Son. Price \$1.00.

Here is another of Edouard Schuré's delightful impressions which, unfortunately, concludes the series of great character studies. He has already given us "Jesus, the last Great Initiate," "Krishna and Orpheus," "Pythagoras," "Hermes and Plato," into all of which he has breathed a new life. Starting with the historical data, the author assumes a position of probability, infers actuality in accord with his conception of the life and character of the subject, and from that point his characters grow and take on an atmosphere which is unusually impressive and convincing. We ask ourselves whether these things were so in very deed, whether, in fact, history has not gone astray, and whether the popular conceptions of these great characters have not been altogether distorted and misconceived. How many Hindus would concede a European origin to the great Râma, I wonder, or recognize the origin of the great Aryan cycle in the Druidical development of the Scythians to whom this same Râma was salvator and law-giver in conflict with the priests of Thor, the originators of the human sacrifice? To read Schuré is an education, a fascination and a delight, if only we concede to him the ordinary scope of the novelist. Admit for a moment the idea that there is, in addition to the literary faculty, an intuition or a revelation employed in these studies, and at once we are in touch with the scheme and purport of this series of works. The characters are no longer detached and epochal but become connected links in a consistent chain of social and religious evolution of which they are the successive initiators and directors. The whole of Edouard Schuré's scheme hangs together and constitutes an inspiration, if not indeed a revelation, which takes a tremendous grip upon the mind.—*Occult Review, London.*



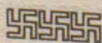
THE WAY OF INITIATION, OR HOW TO ATTAIN KNOWLEDGE OF HIGHER WORLDS. By Rudolph Steiner, Ph.D., from the German by Max Gysi. Dr. Steiner is an occultist and mystic, as well as philosopher and theosophist, of note in Germany. Many, even of the most cultivated men of our time, have a

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very mistaken idea of what is a true mystic and a true occultist, but a perusal of this volume will show that there is nothing horrifying, but rather something common to all humanity in both. As Masons we are familiar with the idea of Initiation as it is used in our various Masonic bodies. Many Masons never think that there may be other initiations, that will introduce the "properly prepared" to secrets of nature and life about and in them. Or if the idea does occur to them it is laid aside with the thought that it is useless to try to discover any natural laws governing matter, unless one is a scientific expert. But it is not the attitude of the materialist like Haeckel, that the theosophist takes. For example, in the *History of Natural Creation*, Haeckel gives a fascinating picture of the evolution of species, from the amoeba to man. In it he shows the successive growth of organs, and the physiological process by which living beings have raised themselves to organisms more and more complex and more and more perfect. But in the stupendous transformation, which implies millions and millions of years, he never explains the initial force of this universal ascent, nor the series of special impulses which cause beings to rise step by step. To these primordial questions, Haeckel has never been able to reply except by admitting spontaneous generation, which is tantamount to a miracle as great as the creation of man by God from a clod of earth. It is in vain that the naturalist would deny the divine Author of the universal scheme; he proved it in spite of himself, in so well describing His work. But the Theosophist greets, in the surging of species and in the breath which urges them onward—Man in the making; the very thought of God; the visible expression of the planetary Word. He says: "Had Haeckel but made a slight study of the philosophy of which he speaks, not even as a dilettante, but like a child, he would have drawn the most lofty spiritual conclusions from his phylogenetic studies." Again he says: "This mystic knowledge is no more a secret for the average man than writing is a secret to him who has never learned to read. And as everyone who chooses the correct method may learn to write, so too everyone who searches after the Right, may become a disciple and a teacher." (Macoy Publishing and Masonic Supply Co., N. Y. Cloth \$1, paper, 75 cents.)—*Tyler-Keystone, Ann Harbor, Mich.*

THE MASTERY OF DESTINY. By James Allen. G. P. Putnam's Sons. Price \$1.00 net.

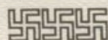
Here is a volume of thought which can safely be recommended to the service of the free mind. In it we find an attempt towards the solution of the vexed problem of "Determinism or Freewill?" Admitted that the circumstance of our daily lives is not of our own choosing and that at all stages our individual wills are found to be in conflict with those of others about us, that, in short, there is a law of Necessity to which we are compelled to conform, there may yet be a play-space, a "mean free path of vibration," proper to the unit of life according to the measure of his soul in the economy of that body to which he belongs. Mr. Allen argues for a "golden mean" which brings Freewill and Fate into close relationship as aspects of one central law pertaining to our moral nature. As long as the law of causation is in evidence, as long as cause is balanced by effect, so long will there be a state of freedom involved by this very equilibrium. A fuller consideration of the problem leads to the conclusion that man's disposition of the realm of effects will be in direct ratio to his ability to contribute to the realm of causes by the use of his thought, imagination and will-power. The fact that character is not ready-made but the result of evolution, as well individual as racial, is the guarantee of our power to originate causes. It is perhaps false logic to speak of Character as "the combined result of an incalculable number of deeds;" one would rather say of motives, an effect of continuous purpose. Mr. Allen accepts reincarnation and makes effective use of it in his argument. He shows how character may be formed and made powerful for good in the causative world and thence in the world of effects, by self-control, training of the will, concentration, meditation, etc., on all of which a systematic course of instruction is contributed. The book is well written and the subject-matter carefully arranged. Author and publishers have conspired to the production of a really useful and artistic work.—*Occult Review, London.*



REVIEWS

SACRED MYSTERIES AMONG THE MAYAS AND THE QUICHES
11,500 YEARS AGO. Augustus Le Plongeon. 153 pages.

It is a great pleasure to find that the Macoy Publishing and Masonic Supply Company has just issued a new edition of this work which for Masons and Theosophists has had such an interest for so many years. The first edition was printed in 1886 and since that time interest in the work has never ceased. The revelations as to the monuments of Yucatan and lower Mexico may by this work give a great impetus to the inner meaning of Masonry and symbolism in general as well as the relationship between the continent of America and the ancient continent of Atlantis.—*The Theosophic Messenger, Chicago.*



THE PRIESTESS OF ISIS. By Ed. Schuré. Translated by F. Rothwell, B.A. London: William Rider & Son. Price \$1.25.

A most fascinating story is this. It employs all the best faculty of the clever author and deals with one of the most enthralling subjects the mind of man can conceive. It is that of a deadly struggle between two rival devotees for the soul of the patrician Ombricius Rufus. Hedonia Metella, priestess of Hecate, an avowed Black Magician, strives by all her arts and blandishments to enslave Ombricius, while Alcyone, the daughter of Memnones, priest of Isis, holds silent sway over his affections and seeks to encourage his better nature. But Ombricius is devoured by an unquenchable thirst for power, and is swayed alternately by his spiritual aspirations and his temporal ambitions, adhering first to the priestess of Isis and anon to the priestess of Hecate. The story, which develops to a fine conclusion, holds the reader in an atmosphere of reality which the ancient setting does not in the least dispel. The characters are well drawn and the diction admirably suited to the theme. The story will prove to be one of the most entertaining works of this prolific author and is in many respects equal to the best work of Rider Haggard.—*Occult Review, London.*

A Foreword

"I looked upon the world, and saw that to some it was shadowed by sorrow and scorched by the fierce fires of suffering. I looked for the cause, but could not find it until I looked within, and there found both the cause and the self-made nature of the cause. I looked again, deeper, and found the remedy. I found one Law, the Law of Love; one Life, the Life of adjustment to that Law; one Truth, the Truth of a conquered mind and a quiet and obedient heart. And I dreamed of writing a book which should help men and women, rich or poor, learned or unlearned, worldly or unworldly, to find within themselves the source of all success, all happiness, all accomplishment, all truth: And the dream remained with me, and at last became substantial, and now I send it forth into the world on its mission of healing and blessedness, knowing that it cannot fail to reach the homes and hearts of those who are waiting and ready to receive it."





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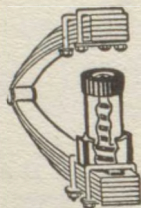
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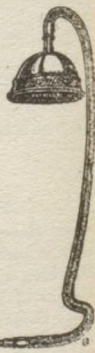
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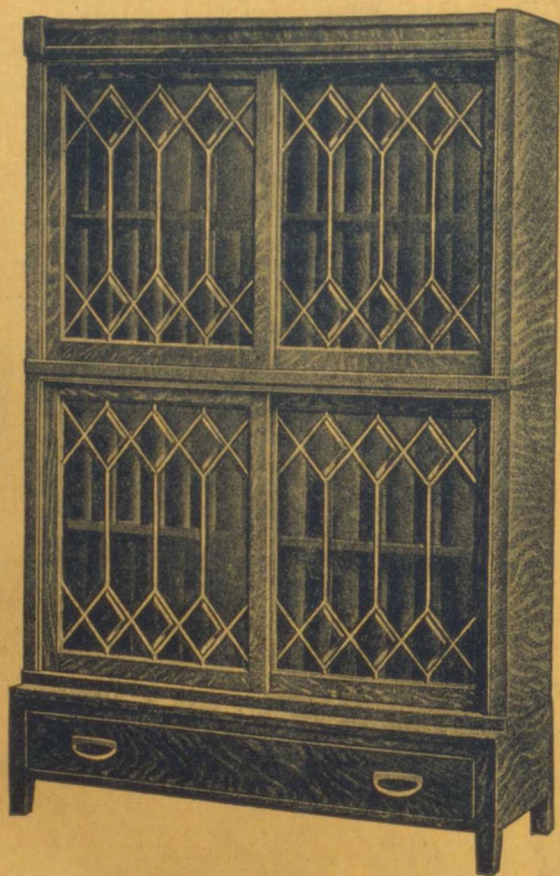
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