

Valor

MARCH, 1961

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and justice for all”*



The
Magazine of
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Out of the Mail

"Am so happy that I have now found what I think I've been searching for all my life . . . A good friend introduced me to your books and he gave me my very own copy of the above-mentioned book *As Thou Lovest*, which I have read and re-read and referred to endlessly, and which I like near me at all times. The answers to so many questions I have been asking for for years are found within the covers of this book."—H. C., *Ohio*.

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"I thank God every day for putting me in contact with the people who introduced me to your work."—M. S., *Calif.*

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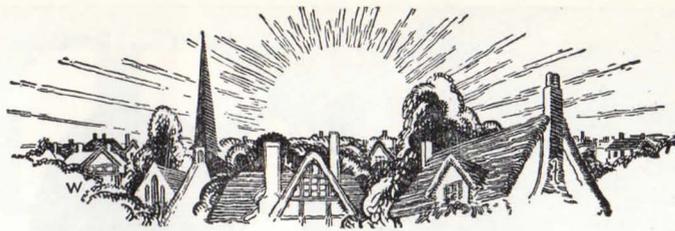
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Valor

The Magazine of Soulcraft

Volume XIII

March, 1961

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Valor

The Monthly Voice of the Soulcraft Doctrine

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What a Person Profits Practically By Knowing Soulcraft . .

SUPPOSE we say that upon a given street there are five homes. They each appear snug, neat, belonging to moderately prosperous occupants. In those homes, however, live five families of Americans, each of different religious faith. In the first house lives a family worshipping in the Baptist denomination. In the second is a Methodist family. In the third are Presbyterians. Across the way are two remaining houses, in the first of which is a Catholic group. But the family in the house to the west makes a strange report to the religious census-taker.

"We don't profess any orthodox creed," the pleasant-faced lady of the premises declares. "We're Soulcrafters."

"You're what!" cries the census-taker.

"Soulcrafters."

"That's a new one. What are Soulcrafters?"

"They're people who base their beliefs in Christianity on the findings of modern Psychological Research."

"Psychical Research! . . . isn't that a form of Spiritualism?"

"No, no. Soulcrafters get much the same results from psychical research that the Spiritualists get. But they go deeper and find out the scientific reasons for such things happening, which Spiritualists never attempt."

"I don't think I understand you. Just *what* things?"

"Well, we know for instance that when mortal people die, their souls don't travel immediately to either heaven or hell. Their etheric or spiritual bodies simply pull out of their physical vehicles and are free to explore all the

available planes of consciousness that they're qualified to enter."

"What leads you to believe they explore any planes?"

"They tell us so."

"You mean you actually communicate with them, or they with you?"

"Positively."

"How?"

"Under proper conditions they use the ectoplasm from mediumistic people to make their etheric or spiritual bodies substantial again to this mortal plane."

"What convinces you of that?"

"We see them in their familiar aspects, we hear their well-remembered voices anew, but most of all we listen while they recount remembered incidents in their earth-lives that remove all vestiges of doubt that they are anyone but the persons we assume them to be."

"You mean, *the dead come back to earthlife for you!*"

"No, not the 'dead.' Because, you see, we have evidences over and over that there *is* no such thing. These friends and relatives whom Soulcrafters contact have never been otherwise than alive. It was their physical sheathings that appeared to 'die.'"

"I've never heard of such a thing. It sounds preposterous, and a trifle unhallowed. Where is your church?"

"We don't have any church. No church is necessary to pursue scientific truth."

"But to have a religion you *must* have a church."

"No, . . . what we have is a Fellowship. Many of us, exploring these great matters together, are drawn into

ties of camaraderie by making common explorations and obtaining similar results."

"How long has this been going on?"

"About Twenty-five years."

"I'd like to learn more about this. Might I come in and have you tell me?"

"Certainly, come in."



THE CENSUS-Taker is more than professionally interested. He lost a beloved sweetheart a week before his anticipated marriage two years before, and the news that anyone might be communicating with the Departed, holds private interest to him. Presently he finds himself seated in a large and cheery front living room with a life-sized print of The Christ upon the wall. "You worship Jesus!" he cries in surprise.

"Not exactly," goes on the lady of the house. "We worship God. Jesus is our Elder Brother in life's quandaries and ordeals, counselling us out of them."

"How could He do that? Don't tell me, He materializes for you, too!"

"He could, we're certain, if the occasion demanded it. But we go by His words of latter day speakings, *The Golden Scripts*."

"The *Golden Scripts*? What are they, a Bible?"

"You might term them a Bible. We think of them as a restoration of the actual tenets He taught in Galilee, unaltered by theologians."

"How could you come by anything like that?"

"The recording of them started in New York back in 1929, almost a year before the famous Stock Market Crash. The transcripts began almost unheralded but were something like nine years in completion—273 chapters, 844 printed pages. They cover about every subject under the sun that might confuse or puzzle a conscientious Christian."

"What in the world ever led you to credit that they could have originated with the Son of God?"

"Strictly the nature of their contents. No lesser person could even have imagined them. Here, I'll let you look at our family copy."

The lady of the house lifts from the handy bookrack a thick, limp-leather covered volume. It has rounded corners and bears uncanny similarity to the conventional Bible only it seems to be printed in larger type.

She hands it across and the census-taker examines it curiously. He reads here and there. "H-m-m, this is somewhat startling."

"They have given every member of our household an utterly changed view of life."

"Changed how, Madame?"

"Well, principally I suppose, in that the episode of Death doesn't stack up as the tragic and irremediable thing that it does to the other families on this street. We've talked with so many individuals face to face whom the world thinks dead that there isn't any longer a doubt in our minds that Death is merely a religious fixation. It simply doesn't occur. That, of course, makes this whole earth-experience stack up in an altered way to us."

"Altered how, my dear lady?"

"We happen to know that individual consciousness is absolutely imperishable. Earthlife in our present bodies is merely a passing sequence in great cosmic affairs. We see ourselves correctly in relationship to it."

"You believe in immortality then?"

"Certainly we believe in immortality—in a way or to an extent that our orthodox neighbors never suspect. All consciousness is immortal by its very imperishability."

"You say you believe that souls 'come down' into earth-lives for passing sequences. That would infer they'd lived before,"

"All souls *have* lived before. Before coming into present bodies. I mean, as babies. Where do you think people get these instincts? How do you imagine they come by those frequent impressions of having been exactly in certain situations or environments on an earlier occasion when they well know they haven't?"

"Of course it would seem reasonable that if people had lived before they should remember it."

"Perhaps as children they do remember it, but the events of maturing adult life supersede those earlier recollections."

"That's pretty tall, Madame. Still, perhaps there's something to it. What I'm most interested in learning is, what does this so-called Soulcraft supply you as a spiritual

pursuit that the conventional faiths of other people do not?"

The Soulcraft lady smiled. "Courage!" she declared. "Courage! How, courage?"

"We're not afraid of life or anything in it, because we understand what process may be at work. We see the whole assembly of planes for what they are, each one developing certain phases of our consciousness and characters. This fearsome Death that prostrates our neighbors, is to us a perfectly natural and desirable graduation, marking our progress from one octave to another. We understand *why* we're in life and live intelligently in the knowledge of our purpose here. Grief doesn't numb us and bereavement doesn't floor us. This whole wonderful progression up the worlds places earth-life in its proper relationship to all that's gone before and all that comes after. Consequently we have a peace of mind that our neighbors do not."

"What interests me most is your certainty that personality survives the body. I'd like to see some of those demonstrations."

"Yes, I understand that. I'd hope, however, you'd be able to take it."

"Take it! What do you mean, take it?"

"Thousands show that they can't, you know."

"Do they? How so?"

"I mean life piles into a chaos for them, when they have it convincingly demonstrated that personality survives death of body. They've been so certain that 'death ends everything' that they feel cut adrift when they discover it does not."

"You're absolutely certain of all this, are you?"

"That's the one thing we *are* certain of, Mr. Census-Taker. And because we're certain, we can pursue life to its ends with no intrepidations. We *know*. Our neighbors only *hope* or *guess*. It makes a difference."

"Extraordinary. Most extraordinary."

"It certainly is. That's why this family has gone all-out for this stupendous Soulcraft revelation. It's brought us spiritual tranquillity, peace of mind, intelligent understanding of our daily programs, and a scientifically sound reason for us finding ourselves on this earth plane at all. If extraordinary hard luck seems to befall us, we can investigate the reasons and find the hardest sense in them. We live *liberated*, Mr. Census-Taker. We're no longer slaves to tradition and convention. Life has been made a grand and glorious adventure to us. We can hardly wait to die physically and then get back into it under a progressive dispensation of sanity and largess."

"That's certainly something to say, Madame, the state of it at present being what it is."

"That's the whole kernel of it, sir. Christ, and God, and Destiny are real and substantial to us. Everything that happens has *meaning*. Do you have to leave? I might tell you much more about it."



"Get a copy of these *Golden Scripts* to me. It might mean much more if I got it for myself!" . . .

"I'm sure it would. But besides the *Golden Scripts* there are twelve volumes of *Soulscripts* and eight to ten textbooks on various subjects, going into them specifically. The funny thing about them is, if you really get into any one of them, you'll want to read them all."

"And you say they're all hooked up with psychical research!"

"Sacred psychical research, yes."

"How's sacred psychical research different from any other kind?"

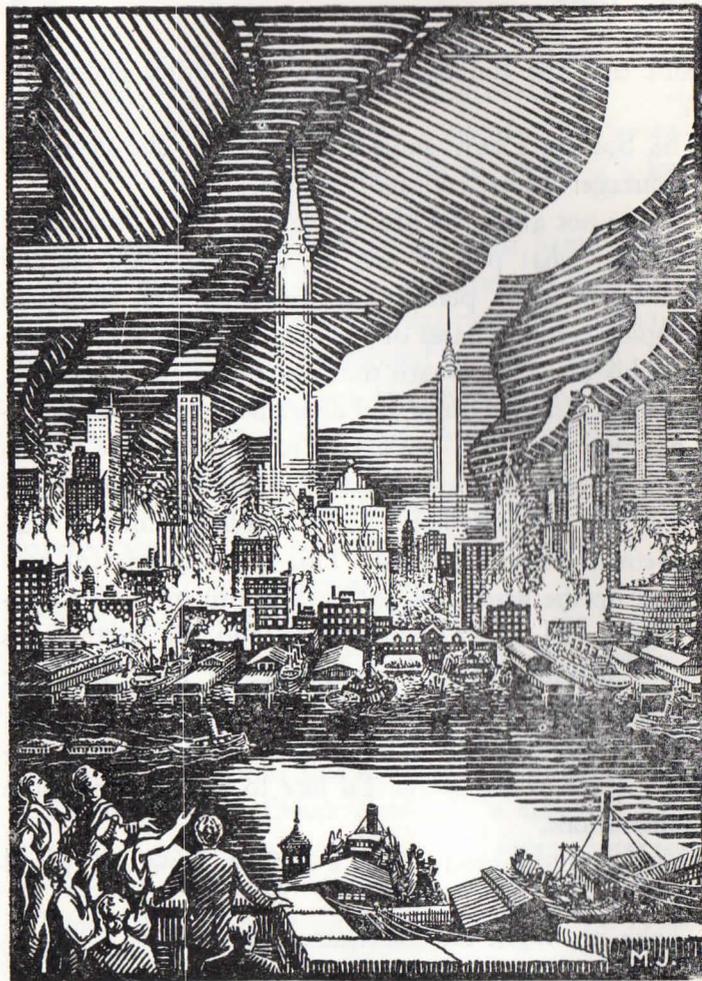
"Because it's chiefly concerned with facts of the after-life that expand one spiritually to know. It was probably from such enlightenment centuries ago that the old prophets and Biblical writers got their data that formed the basis of the faith expressed in Holy Writ. That's why Soulcrafters happen to know the Bible more intimately than those of our neighbors of other denominations."

"This has been an interesting quarter-hour, Madame. Apparently I've learned of something new under the sun."

Matters We Overlook In Fearing the Biblical Holocaust of Judgment . .

A GAIN and again in the transcendent Soulcraft disclosures, we have had our attention called to the discomfoting fact that the authors of the New Testament who wrote so direly of the destructions "in the last days", did so from the general assumptions of their times that the earth was flat. Their graphic narratives of the literal Second Coming are cases in point. At a given day and hour in the future, the "heavens" were due to "roll back as a scroll," a stupendous celestial staircase would be lowered to terra firma, and down such celestial flight would come descending the Lord of Hosts, to take suzerainty over the earth where graves were opening wholesale and the seas were giving up their drowned. It was a blood-chilling canvass as they painted it, but it becomes utterly fantastic when you regard it from geographical or astronomical certainty that the earth is spherical.

With no sacred disrespect intended, no matter where on the world's surface the bottom of that Celestial Staircase rested, it would be clipping off treetops, and knocking weathervanes from churches and bricks from chimneys, at the rate of $16\frac{1}{2}$ miles a minute—with the planet revolving eastward at a thousand miles an hour, or 26,000 miles every 24 hours. One mile a minute is considered fairly breathtaking speed in a motorcar. A plane that would travel 1,000 miles an hour would surpass the speed of sound by 270 miles. The divine spectacle of a Second Coming that started to manifest at 9 a. m. in New York City, would be over Pittsburgh fifteen minutes later, over Columbus, Ohio half-hour later, over Indianapolis, Indiana three-quarters of an hour later, and over St. Louis an hour later. If it lasted two and a half hours in length as a spectacle, Los Angeles would see the close



of it, and if it lasted three hours, the bottom step of the staircase would be considerably moistened by Pacific Ocean billows.

St. John didn't know these facts. He thought the earth was stationary.

VERY GOOD, it is all allegory, say the sacred apologists for St. John's lack of astronomical wisdom. But are all the details about the world's graves opening and the seas giving up their dead, allegory also? We have the demised and the drowned coming back into psychical seance-rooms every night in the year from Los Angeles to Johannesburg, by merely covering their spirit-bodies with ectoplasm donated by entranced mediums. St. John apparently had no prophetic information about this feat, also. And again with no sacred disrespect intended, if a man whose body has been drowned and shark-eaten in the West Indies in 1790 has to go back to the West Indies from St. Louis to search for his remains in 1953, what a senseless bit of pother. Much time and travel could be saved by plenty of celestial ectoplasm being supplied, to coat the light bodies of the long since dead, wherever they happen to be living discarnately in the

present—and no paradox intended. St. John was pathetically ignorant of the fact that no soul once mortally alive has ever perished, but is just as conscious in the present as he ever was in the past. Why then, such insistence about flesh being reassembled, when it has long since been metamorphosized or transmuted into other substances?

Then what about the numbers of folk to be resuscitated?

RIPLEY, the "Believe It or Not" cartoonist, once figured it out that if all the persons who had ever lived on earth—since the time of Christ only—were to be brought back in one stupendous feat of recreation, not only would there be no standing space on earth for them, but they would make a pin cushion of human beings 116,000 miles high, all over the planet, standing upon one another's heads.

Of the time it would consume to "judge" such a mass, granted only ten minutes were allotted to each, we confront an expenditure of time running into millions of years, . . . which, by the way, is one of the most powerful arguments attesting to Reincarnation. The reason the earth—or even Etheria—is not overcrowded is because the same souls as new people have been birthed back into successive bodies and died and been birthed again.

However, it's in the universal and demolition of all things earthly that our interest truly lies, particularly in this period of Great Pyramid "terminations."

What logic could possibly lie in the Messiah finally assuming charge of an earth that had become one vast carnal-house from continent to continent? Both Mentor testimony and Saucer-Men concernment over the effects of radiumistic fission on this plane carry corresponding disaster to higher planes that are accessory to earth's materiality. The Great God then, proposes to wreck all planes just because sundry millions of ignoramuses have gone hither and yon doing unhallowed deeds for a given number of generations—is that it?

What a display of barbaric inequity!

How can such practices savor of Divinity?

ACTUALLY, Extrasensory Perception discloses to us, the surface of the earth-planet and the life thereon is naught but a great cosmic university where millions upon millions of persons, generations upon generations, are attending the School of Experience, *learning to "save", redeem, and salvage themselves!*

Divine Love could countenance no wholesale destruction

that terrified even the godly by massive displays of elemental wrath—more than we can conceive the gentle Jesus ordering a holocaust to destroy the people, good, bad, or indifferent, populating Jerusalem the day of His crucifixion.

At one of the epiphanies when a generous section of the *Golden Scripts* was being transcribed, the Recorder asked—

"Master, is it possible to express in one paragraph or even one sentence, the heart and essence of your ministry while on earth, and how would you phrase it?"

The answer came in accents of fathomless compassion: "*The fact that every life, no matter how humble, no matter how tragic, no matter how broken and thwarted, has a meaning and an inner glory, and is precious in My sight!*"

Every life, take note.

Not the hint of an exception.

Every man, woman, or child who has ever breathed the breath of mortality, actually is on his way to heaven in the end, if the truth could be known. But it takes some souls longer than others either to find the way, or to qualify themselves spiritually to reside in it permanently.

The Bible, say the Higher Mentors, is the greatest book in any language, because it contains men's highest spiritual thinking up all the ages that ever have been known.

But it is *men's* highest thinking—not God's.

Any book done on God's highest thinking would be nonunderstandable to the elemental human race.

So the writings of the New Testament, being *men's* highest spiritual thinkings of the period, appear at variance with the scientific findings of the Twentieth Century. The limitations of human authorship were poignantly revealed by the limitations on astronomical and atomic knowledge that today are of common consciousness.

Get acquainted with the supernal tenets of Revealed Soulcraft and all life and human endeavor from the earliest beginning make constructive sense.

Christ and Divinity can take it.

They but loom up the greater and vaster as we rise higher and higher in our perceptions of *Truth!*

Remember, Man first discovers the universe, then he discovers God, then he discovers *himself!* When his discovery of self reaches certain plateaus of intellect, it always finds there the aspect of God appropriate to his culture. But it has been Man who has been evolving.

God in Essence is Man's *Perfection!*

"Would I Marry My Husband Again in Another Life?"

Some Questions a Woman Asks Herself When She Explores the Ageless Wisdom . .



NO WOMAN goes far in Soulcraft before she begins making some perturbing discoveries. Particularly does she make some perturbing discoveries in regard to Matrimony itself.

Gradually as the *real* Plan of Life unfolds to her, in a comprehensive and rational philosophy of why life's intimate relationships are what they are, she finds that she must discard the former hit-or-miss theories of the evolutionists, particularly those of the Natural Selection School, and look upon her married state as one of two things: either she is the close conjugal companion of what is descriptively called the Masculine Half of Herself, or she is substituting for some other woman in her husband's life whom he either can't find and maybe will never locate.

Of course the man of the partnership must make the same decision in respect to herself. Either she is the Feminine Half of Himself, or he too is substituting in *her* life for someone she cannot locate—or prechance both of them are paying off obligations to each other, originated in an earlier contact and association. More about this in a moment.

Clearer and clearer it becomes apparent to both, that when a man and woman are the correct complementing parts of each other—from which that hackneyed and much abused term, Soul Mates, has come—they never "fall out of love" nor divorce one another. They are too dear and close for any such ribald behavior. But when they are *substitutes* for life-partners who cannot be located—or at least haven't been located to the moment of disclosure of these truths—anything may happen. And it usually does.

If it be a karmic situation they are mutually working out, anything too may occur—good, bad, or indifferent. The point is, that in some previous career or contact one

has gotten the other tremendously in his or her debt, usually through atrocious treatment, and they have come together in the current life-span to work out amends. The important thing is, when the amends have been made, will they stay together or will they break up? And if there be children, what about their destiny? . . . can it be callously ignored?

To get back first to this Natural-Selection error. . . .

THE PURBLIND Evolutionists and psychologists of yesterday have held the stage for a hundred years with the theory—and that's all it has been—that a woman beheld certain appearances or qualities in a man's personality that she "admired", and when romantic love had flowered from such attraction, she surrendered herself to respectable concubinage under a religious or civil contract, and physically became his intimate paramour.

So Church and State have regarded Marriage for a hundred generations.

The truthful history of Matrimony has been that it originated in the status of Woman as a conceded spoil of war. The strongest or most audacious chieftain conquered an enemy tribe, clan, or nation, and had the women captives paraded before him. If there was one of outstanding grace, charm, and pulchritude, he reduced her to lifelong personal servitude to his vanities or passions. Such was the beginning of wifhood.

To hear the evolutionists tell it, males and females played about a Paradisical world and the sexes sorted themselves into pairs by a sort of instinctive sixth sense,

that joined all the finest masculine properties to all the most gracious feminine properties, and from such unions, ideal offspring peopled the earth and subdued it.

The facts of the case have been, that up to within little more than a hundred years, even in English speaking countries, the majority of marriages were arranged by the girl's parents and the Poor Dear had to accept what Mother and Father stipulated. Moslem countries still sell women for breeding purposes in slave markets by the truckload. In France of today, all marriages are family managed. If anything has not been true, and not worked, it's been the Natural-Selection formula. In the United States, only within the past generation has woman approached anything like parity with Man and man's reaction to it is a good-natured cynicism that "woman is wearing the pants and running everything." Woman has seemingly always made the best bargains with life that she could manage, and more or less gotten the tough end of the deal.

WHAT SOCIETY has yet to learn is, that a great law of Similarity of Vibration operates to bring together specified men and women who belong to each other as life-partners, no matter what the type of civilization under which they are born. Each man and woman who are halves of the one divine soul-essence will be pulled together by a strange cosmic magnetism though continents divide them. Once together, they remain together. This was undoubtedly the basis for the Biblical *cliche* that "Marriages are made in heaven." What the Biblical writer meant was, that unions between soul-halves are arranged before ever coming into life as infants. But here is where all the seeming difficulty between the sexes appears to arise—

If it so happens that one of the cosmic complements is "sitting out a life" in the higher dimensions because of too fast a development for the other to match, the one in earth-life—with a gnawing heartache for the one not present in the current sequence—takes whatever substitute turns up as available, usually someone of similar temperament and appearance to the true mate. And this is the marriage that fails to work out. It fails to work out because the true magnetic coil connecting them is sparkless.

Or there is another cause for marital disruption—the man who finds and marries a certain woman to make amends to her for cruel and inhuman treatment in a previous life or lives, or some injury done her for which

a life-sequence of support and cherishment can effect a balance. And the same circumstance may operate in the man's behalf.

So marrying a life partner because of his or her pleasing manner, or similar tastes, or sentimental affection that wears thin with intimate association, is more or less a fantasy.

The woman who would "marry her husband over again" is undoubtedly joined to her cosmic mate, whose wife and companion she has been for an untold number of lives. It isn't so much that "everything is right" about him; it's she is utterly familiar with every twist and quirk of his temperament, and knows him quite as well as he knows himself—perhaps better. Being mated to the same cosmic Other-Half of herself for such interminable periods, he is the entity she calls up when connubiality is mentioned.



It isn't a question of whether or not she would marry him over again, or whether he promised this or that to her, and did, or did not, carry out his promise that she fancied made for happiness. She will marry her true cosmic complement again and again till all need for earthly incarnation ends.

Criticism of the married partner, that leads to so much "unhappiness", isn't criticism as an individual so much as comparison of him with the true mate she feels she belongs *to*, and *with*. In her private and subconscious mind—or perhaps not so subconscious—she has an image of the character of the mate with whom she is completely at home, and who fills her marital fancy because he vibrates at exactly the same magnetic impulse that she vibrates. It is disappointment that the current husband does not duplicate this so-called "ideal" of hers, that

(Continued on Page 17)

Have You Ever Asked Yourself . .

WHAT Pet Prejudices Indicate? . .



THERE ARE two words in the language that all of us should know more about than we do. One is Prejudice; the other is Predilection.

Too many people think that Prejudice means little more than Bias, or Bent, or Tendency to think or act in a certain way because in times past they have encountered unpleasant experiences acting in an opposite way, and "a burnt child dreads the fire." But Prejudice and Predilection mean more than capricious judgments about this or that. Prejudice means "a *preconceived* judgment or opinion, or a leaning to anything without just grounds or from insufficient knowledge." Predilection means the exact opposite of Prejudice, so we can consider them together. It means "a prepossession *in favor* of something; to choose or like with partiality." Both mean passing judgment without considering evidence, one judgment unfavorable in advance, the other favorable in advance.

Now why on earth should reasonable human beings make up their minds *against* or for other people, institutions, movements, ideas or principles without adequate cause?

We say commonly that all of us have "pet" prejudices, although it is rare that we likewise say we have "pet" predilections. Nevertheless, we *do* have quite as many pet predilections as we have pet prejudices. We like to palm it off that we are "instinctively" for this or that, or against something else, thus blaming on instinct something with which instinct has nothing to do. Instinct, correctly defined, is "a tendency to actions which lead to the attainment of some goal *natural to the species*." We never talk about instinct as pertaining to a goal in which we are individually concerned or interested. But let's look at Prejudice.

WE FORM likes and dislikes toward persons, movements or principles really from the Subconscious. We meet a new acquaintance and take an unreasoning

dislike to his personality. "Subconsciously, something about him grates on us," is our common way of describing it. Or we put it colloquially and say, "Something about that girl to whom Joe introduced me, gets in my hair."

But two things may be at work.

The first and most common is, that the offending party unwittingly resembles someone we have known in the past, who either did us an injury or was connected with a sequence in which we suffered distress or loss. So we associate the features of one personality with the other, reasoning blindly—if we can call it reason—that individuals with certain traits of features, speech, or general manner in common, precipitate repetitions of distress or loss as natural performances when we are in the picture. We develop, in other words, what the garden variety of psychologist calls a Complex—toward white eyebrows or loose bony fingers or deficiency in the tongue that causes saliva to misbehave if we stand too close during converse. We say to ourselves, perhaps more consciously than we realize, "The slimy so-and-so who euchred me out of my bonus money in World War I, had white eyebrows, long moist fingers and a tendency to fuzzy speech." So we take it for granted that characters with white eyebrows, elongated fingers and poor control over their pronunciations will euchre us out of military bonuses until all wars end.

The second thing at work may be more mystical but no less scouring. . . .

ASSUMING ourselves to be male for sake of our exposition, three or four lives in the past, about the period that William the Conqueror was taking Britain, we had an odd predilection for a red-haired barmaid. She was cool, calculating, but withal enticing. Local roustabouts besought her favor, but because we had a generous legacy coming to us from an invalid uncle, she adroitly manipulated us into a marital engagement. The night before the marriage, she got us to make a general

assignment of the property to her and had it recorded with the clerk of the manor. Next day she put off the ceremony till the uncle should have died. She kept finding excuses for postponing the nuptials until finally when the uncle did Pass Over, she disclosed her mercenary motives. She laid claim to the property as an engagement gift pure and simple, which, she contended, did not obligate her to go through with the marriage if she had cause to change her mind.

In other words, she swindled us romantically out of a rightful legacy so that we joined up with the Saxons, got into an exquisite scrimmage with Invader William, and ended up a week later with a Norse arrow through the heart.

That woman thus started a karmic debt.

To try to square it in the next life when both were on earth in the Colonial period, she went through with the marriage contract, lived with us a twelvemonth and ran away with a handsome young Hessian at the close of the Revolutionary War. That deepened the debt.

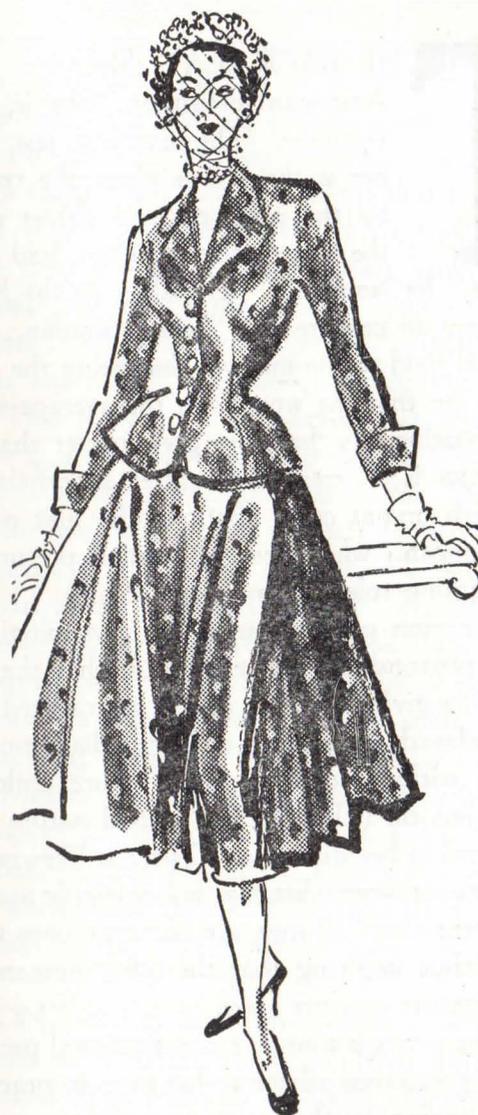
But in our prenatal memory something was registering. It was what was called an intuitive aversion to ladies with auburn tresses. They were "unlucky" for us. In a short period during the Civil War, the defecting redhead turned up again in the person of an embittered spinster aunt. She had that karmic debt hanging over her, and it tormented her, so she tried to make amends by adopting us when our parents were killed in a snowslide. Her rancor, at herself more than us, got the better of her, however, and the debt continued to pile up, because she gave us a loveless childhood. The red tresses she had brought through with her, life on life, always represented the wrong kind of woman in our eternal recollection.

When we run across her anew in modern life we despise her for her repentant and fawning manner toward us, and her somewhat poignant approaches to make amends without exactly knowing how. But we do remember that women with auburn tresses mean distress of some sort.

We have, as we say, a "prejudice" against redheads.

THIS is a brief and overdrawn illustration but it does account for many of our pet prejudices in respect to types of people, or perhaps similarities between people. Due to our distresses from one redhead, we have prejudices against all redheads, and condemn them on sight as being avaricious, caloric of temperament, and generally insincere and unreliable.

We remember difficulties we have had by being involved with certain types in the past, or certain social departures, or certain religions or civic enthusiasms. We say we are prejudiced against people who talk too frankly or too irresponsibly or too audaciously. In the deep cache of the subconscious mind, we are toting around every moment of our lives not so much the specific memories of our distressing associations with them as the *effect* of our involvements considered as effects.



The alternative, of course, is to deliberately face the justice and releasing enlightenments that come when the mind is held open and tranquil.

But prejudices, and especially pet prejudices, in nine cases out of ten are complexes hanging over from previous careers.

To know what they are, is to turn the panacea of common sense and intelligence upon their causes.

WHAT One Thing Is My Wife Teaching Me? . .

THE BACK-SEAT driver has become an American institution. She is, of course, feminine. The standard jest concerning her is the excuse given the traffic officer by the much-married driver as to how the destructive accident had happened.

"My wife," he lamented, "fell asleep in the back seat."

It is easy to censure the "bossy" woman. Too little attention is paid to the motives that bring the condemnation. To say that the woman in the average instance of husband-bossing has the more grey matter than the hen-pecked man is to treat the matter superficially. Why should such unions come about in the first place? Still more significant, why does any woman presume to play the dominating role in a marriage at all?

The common garden variety of psychologist declares from his profundities in the obvious, that the domineering or advice-giving wife is a case of aggravated maternity. She has played the role of child-guardian, nurse, governess, and withal counselor to immature child-souls she has nurtured till it has become second nature to include the husband in her directives. There is likewise a variety of feminine sentimentalist that will solemnly assure whomsoever listens that "all men are but little boys to women" anyhow—thus implying that the adult human female is the only mature creature alive.

That the average woman's constitutional prerogative—to supply gratuitous advice to her man in practically any situation arising in their common affairs—may have a more or less cosmic basis, is suspected only by the deeper student of Mysticism.

IT HARKS back to the difference between the mundane planes of consciousness and the loftier gradations of life and intellect. This plane of physical earth is the plane of action, contest, aggression, and withal experiment to prove what causes result in what effects. These are masculine pursuits. We are solemnly counselled that



the higher Thought Planes are areas of reflection, cogitation, analysis, and withal gestation and assimilation. These are uniformly feminine pursuits. In consequence of both, Man is the dominating factor in the earth-scene, whereas Woman is the dominating factor in the Thought-Scene.

When both souls are functioning in the physio-material world, the masculine takes predominance over the feminine. When both souls are functioning together on the loftier levels of life—in the long periods between physical existences—the feminine takes predominance over the masculine.

The popular way of putting it might be, "The earth-world is ruled by Men, the interim higher worlds—or planes—are ruled by Women," only "ruled" is too harsh a term to use for describing it. The "ruling" is merely an intuitive concernment for the general welfare of the husband, the family, or society, brought down from the Woman's World of the thought-planes and exercised more or less subconsciously. It is the very essence of motherhood, certainly, but in the case of the wife-partner to a marriage, we find it exercising militantly when the man is not measuring up to opportunities for improvement in character for which he came into mortality.

The woman, we might put it, takes it upon herself to see that the husband conducts himself so that the incursion will not be wasted.

She does not recognize consciously that such is the thing she is doing. But it amounts to that in practice.

EVERY man, in every life, is learning some thing more or less specific by being joined in domestic life to the woman he is—just as every woman is improving herself spiritually while on this plane by being the spouse of a given man. If they were not thus reacting upon one an-

other for a mutual profit, the marriage never would have materialized. The actions and reactions from matrimony, derived over a period of years, are far too consequential to be indulged in from caprice. Of course there is always the type of marriage that is based upon a paying off of karma, but it is the exception and not the rule.

The average normal marriage is an open-and-shut case of two people having come together in connubial intimacy because each contributes benefits to the association—the woman by her criticisms, harsh or affectionate, which either make the man stronger or correct him in temperamental blunderings; the man in his defendings of the woman's personality in a scheme of existence where she is compelled to play the minor role, or tutoring her in ways of worldly wisdom that are strictly the awards of actionist-experience.

Lifelong association with the temperament of the average wife instructs and perfects the normal man in one or more attributes. The most common is command of emotions resulting in injustice to others. The next most common is cultivation of patience. The third is development of strength of constancy to an ideal.

LET US say that man has come into life displaying the tendency to a vile temper, with callous disregard of the rights of others, or an aggressiveness that too often creates karma whose payment concerns both of them. Legion are the noble women who have married such males and "gone to work on them." Ignorant relatives or purblind neighbors bemoan the fact that Isobel seems determined to "make Horace over" into something she appears to cherish as her "ideal." But considered of herself, a little reflection brings the realization that Isobel must have some reason for making Horace over that by no sensible standards could benefit herself. Her ideal is Horace as she knows subconsciously he should be.

In other words, she is not trying to make Horace over for her own sake but for his. And the wise Mystical Psychiatrist sees the function of the complementing female-half of the soul in operation, carrying out the arrangement arrived at between them before getting themselves born. Over a lengthy period of time, the attention of Isobel's tenacity does alter her husband's character, much as he fancies he resists it.

When they arrive back on the Thought Planes, he will see that while the discipline developed its times of chagrin and even rancor, nevertheless she did a passably good job. Actually his love and devotion will deepen for her,

because she stuck with it through blackest discouragements.

Every man is learning something every day from the particular wife with whom he is carrying out his prenatal compact. She may not forever be the loquacious and chiding type; she may be the reproachful-eyed gentle-lady whose feelings are deeply wounded when her ministrations seem resented. Or the things he may be learning may not reach him in vocal form. She may be a woman who sets man his best example by her reactions to circumstances, and from accommodating himself to what seem to be her balances or foibles, he is gaining in his own character without always being aware of it.

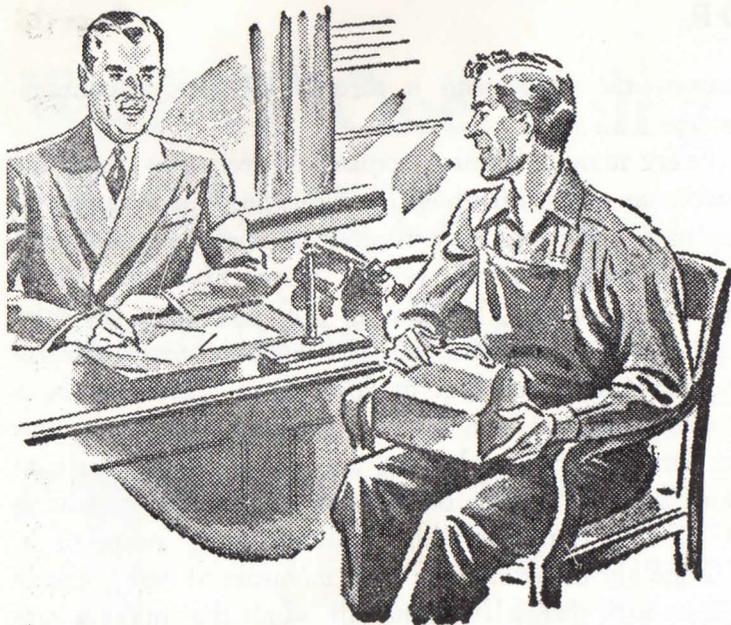
Nine out of ten men, in their moments of being strictly honest with themselves, generally admit that many a case of turmoil might have been avoided "if they had only listened to their wives." Women, being more naturally psychic than men, are more readily open to warnings and wisdoms from invisible sources, and while they term this psychic sensitivity "intuition", their counsel is no less priceless. This is by no means saying that every loquacious shrew is a masculine benefactress. But the average wife is far from being a loquacious shrew—she is a sincere feminine soul who wishes the best for her man, and wants earnestly to aid him to the utmost of her wisdom.

What Mr. Average Man should do is withdraw into himself more than he does, repress his outraged vanities, and take stock of the spiritual profits he is actually obtaining from his wife. Does she have some particular foible concerning him, on which she seems insufferably to harp? Mayhap by facing it instead of battling it, he would discover precisely the secret of their having become husband and wife—or at least the attributes in which the woman has surpassed the man to the moment, and in which she intuitively strives to see him catch up.

TOO LONG society has viewed these relationships in ignorance or mystical illiteracy. Men have thought that they came upon Mary or Imogene at a dance by accident and really wedded her through romantic caprice. And every night and day since the honeymoon she has been "harping" on one string at some distressing habit or weakness of which they are guilty but deem it not to be Mary's or Imogene's business whether they correct it. "She should have seen what I was when she married me," a man will growl, "and not expect me to become something different just to please her."

But Mary's or Imogene's expectation of a man's be-

(Continued on Page 17)



Why Dominant Nations or Individuals Command Respect . .

that makes some people employers and others employes, or some people leaders and others eternal followers.

It all harks back to a Quality of Consciousness that enables the Dominant People to judge values correctly by a sort of instinct that is the identification of an old and widely-experienced soul!

DEEP down in everyday human nature there is the fundamental tendency to subconsciously—and sometimes rancorously—resent the dominant personality. At the same time that such resentment exists, there develops the instinctive aspiration to be dominant in one's own right.

No normal person, strange to say, particularly delights in being another person's slave. Man looks upon Woman, perceives that she is fair, and pays assiduous court to her affections. Somewhere along in the maturing romance he prevails upon her to believe that if she will only consent to become his spouse, he will thenceforth and thereafter render her vast constancy and endless labor. Perhaps he means it. At any rate, the lady has her eye to the increments involved—to wit, receipted grocery bills for her consumption of foodstuffs for the remainder of her mortal period—and permits the poor lamebrain the chance to keep his promise. But this sort of slavery is the only type within the mortal tenure that is entered voluntarily.

Ninety-nine out of every hundred people work for somebody else, yet aspire to be boss. When they can't be the boss, they indulge their secret inferiority complexes, by displaying an itch to boss the neighbors. So we oftentimes find the smallest personalities kicking up the biggest shindy—about nothing in particular—and hoping they're registering Assertiveness and Character.

Of course they're not. Ten to one they're merely being finicky or bombastic. And withal ridiculous.

The trouble with the average person who wonders why Life doesn't pay him more adulation, is his incapacity to recognize just what dominance of character is—the kind

TO JUDGE values correctly—which implies swiftly!—and by a sort of instinct! That seems at first reading a somewhat inconsequential test of real leadership for a man or woman to pass. But that's all there is to it! That's all that makes the difference between the self-sufficient man and the one who by temperament finds it easier to follow a track.

It isn't that employers, leaders, heads of enterprises and projects, *know* more than those whom they gather around them as associates to help multiply their own accomplishments.

They merely *perceive* quicker!

Ever do they have an eye for essentials! Discerning all the particulars of the situation or complication at a glance, they designate reactively to themselves or to others what the key-item is.

Probably at some time or other in your life you have passed an evening playing jackstraws. A handful of little white wooden sticks was spilled out on the table. The game consisted in picking them off one after another with a little rake, without disturbing the pile as a whole.

Well, jack-straws or log-jams, the daily and hourly situations of life are similar.

The dominant personality is the one who regards them, conscious of the fact that some single item is more or less responsible for a social or personal complication's being what it is. Immediately that he is acquainted with all the factors, he pronounces as by instinct which one is at fault and how it should be remedied.

Of course, if it be his business to do so, he must likewise have the energy to shake a leg and do the remedying.

But he cleans up the whole complication while all the

rest of his fellows are standing around talking about it.

All leaders are such because they are experts in discrimination!

They know the values involved in any project and put their fingers on the cause of any constriction as from some psychic resource.

People without this ability to discriminate concede that the first are marvels and hate their immortal intestines.

In time the less efficient people will arrive at the same capabilities, but not till they've lived a sufficient quota of educating lives!

HAVE you ever studied the crowd around a stalled automobile?

The bespattered crate seems to be clanking and rattling along with only a minimum disturbance of the neighborhood's peace and tranquillity, when all of a sudden there's a distressing konk in its innards and it does everything in the public highway but get down on its knees and roll over on its side.

Immediately a dozen hands are applied to its surfaces to push it toward the curbing so traffic can resume. Someone pulls up the hood. Several people try the horn. No!—it isn't the horn that has given up the ghost. The horn is working quite nicely, thank you! Then what can be the matter with the ton of pig-iron?

Watch Mr. Average Man trying to figure it out. He pulls wires and punches gadgets. He declaims in a loud tone o' voice how his father-in-law by his second wife once owned a contraption of this specified make and it was a bust on principle. Automobiles aren't what they once were, and it must be the Administration. There's too many people running things, anyhow!

The crowd swells to the size of a baby riot, and fifty-seven kibitzers are crawling overhead and looking down.

Off at one side is a snappy-eyed person who'd like the mob to clear an opening so he can get back to his office and close a deal. "What's wrong?" he asks. "Somebody hit?"

"Yeah—the poor dub who owns this 'bus. In his wallet, for buyin' it," he is informed.

"You mean all this fuss just because it won't run?"

That seems to be the general situation. And some chap with his coat off and his hat over one eye is under the hood halfway to his spleen, busily pulling up cog-wheels and sending back advices over his shoulder that he'll have everything right again in a minute. Only he doesn't.

By the time he's yanked out the engine-housing, he remembers he's got a date to see a man about a dog.

Our snappy-eyed man stands an instant taking in the situation and then he demands: "Have you looked in the tank to see if she's run out of gas?"

The owner looks in the tank, and sure enough he *has* run out of gas!

Believe it or not, the man who sized up the situation thus was the boss of the situation and no nonsense about it!



HEADS of modern nations, who are Actionists, are merely men with the ability to judge great social values, discriminate almost psychically what's wrong with their particular corner of the universe, and do something toward fixing it while all the rest of their fellow citizens handing out advice on engine-housings, and then departing the scene when their dunderhead theories are proven to be busts.

And so the specification runs—all the way down to the individual who signs your pay check of a Saturday night.

He's boss because he hits essentials!

Watch the head executive of a great business on his daily job. Fifty-seven men are mobbed about the door to his private office, waiting the chance to get in and tell him that the enterprise is sour and the whole world smells.

They've run up against a thirty-cent complication down in the engine-room, or the supply room, or in the shipping department, and as he's the Boss, they're at his door to gripe.

He hears each man, makes instant discriminations, points out the key-log that's responsible for the jam, and sends the dunderhead to sling a tackle about and yank it out.

We say that he's dominant. But he isn't dominant. He has the instinct for discerning what's important and what's unimportant. He sees that the important things are done, and lets the small fry worry about the thingumbobs!

They will, anyhow. That's what keeps them small fry—and forever on somebody's payroll!

The dominant man merely recognizes what's important.

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Life's Dreary Path

There is just one time in a woman's life when she can be perfectly satisfied, that is when she can look ten years younger than her daughter.

Make yourself necessary to the world and mankind will cheerfully give you bread.

Every healthy man should make at least ten mistakes a day. A lady is no lady if she makes only one.

Love is the one thing in the world that no spendthrift can squander.

Optimism is consecrated ambition; pessimism is ambition misplaced.

God delights to isolate us every day and hide from us the past and future.

No man ever prayed heartily without learning more than he prayed for.

It is impossible for a man to really be cheated by anyone excepting himself.

What Price Cataclysm?



SPeaking of mail, . . . another standard inquiry made of VALOR is whether or not there is coming a universal terrain cataclysm that will erase half the United States territory and prostrate the remainder practically beyond recovery. Certain passages in the *Golden Scripts*, notably Chapter 72, are too often interpreted as predicting catastrophe,

preceding The Second Coming. In the "mountains know movement" reference, in Verse 47, the timid are certain that even the *Golden Scripts* predict wholesale demolition.

Calamity, remember, is ever a personal matter. The world can fold up for you at four o'clock this afternoon if news comes that the one you love dearest in life has suddenly made The Passing by a motorcar accident.

An earthquake that merely shakes half a state may mean quite as much "the end of the world" to those involved, as a cataclysm that buries an entire distant continent.

No, from all that the editor of VALOR has gathered from 30 years of clairaudient counselling, the "End of the Age" means the passing of this sequence of diabolical deceit and hoodwinking of naive humanity by Sons of Darkness. As for the *Golden Scripts*, notice in Verse 52 of the above-quoted chapter that the wording is explicit ". . . then do come earthquakes and cataclysms of a *spiritual* order."

Probe into the dire portendings of universal cataclysms that are due to demolish humanity lock, stock, and barrel, and find—as in one outstanding instance—that their authors are Kremlin educated. Putting a general Fear Complex into humanity, breaks down poise and valorous achievement to withstand the depredation that is fundamental in Marxism.

No, the nation is going through the karma of paying for the murder-bust of two world wars, and the paralyzing deflation that comes from spending money without sense. It is, however, a *brief* Valley of the Shadow through which Americans pass, and more spiritual and economic than literal and material. And a grander and greater United States is coming from the whole of it than anything Americans have known since the Constitutional Convention.

Soulcrafters have only to read that masterly Script, "*If I But Gave the Word!*" to obtain the guarantee that "the end of civilization" is still a long way off. "I give not such word" the Great Avatar promises.

If any "end of the world" were ahead, how account for specific instructions of

matters to be consummated in the months and years ahead? If the terminus of civilization threatened, would those in authority over all of humanity not be aware of it? Not even the atom bomb is to proceed to such might that it destroys what we know as civilization of the moment.

What price cataclysm indeed?

Positive vs. Negative



HERE are eight definitions of Negative in the dictionary. One pertains to Psychology: "Characterized by resistance or retreat to suggestion or stimulus." Otherwise Negative is nothing more than the antithesis to Positive. Positive is characterized by that which has sustained affirmation of a given proposition. The proposition morally may be good or evil, but the standards of appraisal are something wholly alien. You may entertain a Negative relationship to performances of wrong-doing and be wholly commendable therefore.

Too much pother has been made in certain forms of cult metaphysics about Positive and Negative, anyway. As to when Negative Thinking actually started, common sense would suggest that it started when Thinking of itself, that is intellectual performance, began. Too often it is berated when it means hesitancy about acceptance of a given code of action till all its merits or demerits have been examined.

Being positive simply for the sake of being positive is lacking in discrimination too often. What is called Negative is unwillingness to turn continual thought-power on a given proposal or project until it is accomplished into an aspect of reality. But supposing it is a wrong performance in itself? Sometimes the great doubter is demonstrating naught but his intense love of truth. The time element could scarcely be said to figure in such an attitude.

Men only learn true wisdom through practicing error. The sin enters the scene when they continue to practice it, perceiving it is error. The truly Negative Person is he who sees no good in any thing because he secretly enjoys his distinction for cynicism. . . .

Would I Marry?

(Continued from Page 9)

brings about the incompatibility. Gradually the discrepancies between him and her originally magnified until a state of almost continual belligerence is reached.

Then there is another member added to the Reno divorce colony and life flows along as before. . . .

IF YOU wish to learn the complete exposition of how the Bi-Sexuality of the Soul works out in practice—an agenda of behavior as old as the Orphic Mysteries of ancient Greece—you should acquire and give a careful reading to the fifth important Soulcraft book, *Adam Awakes*. The symbolism of the entire Edenic story is worked out in scientific mysticism of the Twentieth Century of 302 pages of surpassing wisdom, most of it obtained from great intellects who have long since graduated out of mortality.

But the woman who muses in the quiet hours, after she has gotten the children to bed, and the spouse has departed for the evening at lodge, billiard-hall or "work at the office," whether or not she would marry the brute over again if she had second choice, is only playing with purblind fantasy.

She is married to that particular man either because her ideal mate has not yet located her—or she, him—or is not in life in the current generation, or she is working out a problem that only the husband-wife relationship can solve. She has but herself to thank for it.

As for the offspring of such a transient or substitute union, wisdom more than sentimentality is needed to see the whole setup in its correct implications. No child comes to any pair of parents against its will, or without its knowing most of what the conditions are due to be, under which that parental pair will raise it. Those children are souls probably quite as old as the parents in the cosmic sense, if the truth could be known. They too have come into the current domestication to work out karma that lies between themselves and parents, or one another as brothers and sisters.

The chart of life is a fearful and wonderful thing, and requires long plotting and arranging, which is why so long a time is usually taken off between earth-lives to plot it. Furthermore, its length in preparation is the more truthful cause for the phenomenon of frantic Self-Preservation.

So if you feel you are an unhappily married man or

woman, try to discover what the personal problem is, that you are working out with the current partner of your so-called Joys and Sorrows.

As the mystery begins to clear up, so will your rancors making for incompatibility.

You might be surprised how swiftly you lose your seeming hatred for that which you intelligently understand, and realize you have entered with malice aforethought. . . .

What One Thing?

(Continued from Page 13)

coming something different, may truly have been the esoteric reason why the marriage came off as prenatally arranged. The cue to their situation is not stupidly to fight it but strive to analyze, comprehend and apply it. The day is ahead in social erudition when men and women shall know more intelligently why marriages come about as they do. Even perfectly attuned halves of the same cosmic soul may not always be in strict temperamental balance. One may have "gotten more" out of a prior life than the other, and gone farther along The Path. Now, in life anew, if the wife be slightly in the lead in spiritual progress, she will feel a sweet moral tenacity to hasten her masculine half along faster, that they may arrive at the end of the Journey in absolute step, one with the other.

Taking marriages as they come and go, however, the "nagging" woman is merely the woman trying to assure her husband's progress who has given up prematurely in discouragement because her efforts seem not successful enough to warrant patient concern. She retorts to a hysterical abuse that is cynicism executed through internal tears.

The truly astute man, awakened suddenly to great esoteric meanings behind most life relationships, will turn about and ask his loyal but weary spouse to tell him frankly and constructively wherein he is defective—and pay attention to what she answers.

Ninety out of a hundred wives will be telling their husbands truths that the husbands should pay money to hear, but won't.

After all, the poor dears are striving to do the best job they know how with what talents they may have perfected to a given life themselves.

God help all of us, . . . we seem to be so supersensitive about accepting criticism from those who love us most.



Twenty Minutes for Lunch

By William Dudley Pelley

IT WAS a ponderous green roadster with a hood spelling power. Hugging the hard-baked adobe road, it kept one constant speed through Wyoming's foothills in the furnace heat of July afternoon.

Up and down far-flung undulations it rose and dipped, weaved in and out through alders and cottonwoods, topped the rises of horizon-girt prairie, rattled over thresholds of cow-gates where range met range under infinite sky. Gophers scurried before it. White-faced short-horns lifted dirty heads and watched it diminish down dun-colored distance. And yet its speed was not excessive, its progress conveyed a certain tenacity.

It did not carry Wyoming license plates. The state of its registration had been Vermont.

Two men rode in the deep, brown-leathern seats. Linen auto coats enveloped them. Both had reversed the visors of their caps. Rakish goggles protected their eyes from sun-glare and grasshoppers. On running-boards and bumpers was much camping equipment. And yet they were more than idle tourists. Because when the machine finally mounted up the crest of a far-flung rise, the driver felt a hand on his arm.

"Slow up, Bill. Wait a minute. That's the place down there on the left. Let's take our bearings."

The brakes whined sharply; balloon tires skidded. But the roadster came to a halt. Both men pulled off their goggles, blinking dusty eyelids in the sun's whitish glare. The man at the wheel relaxed, exclaiming:

"Whew! Some country to drive in. What time is it?"

The passenger shoved back a sleeve from his wrist. "Twenty minutes past one."

"Not so bad, eh? Well, now what?"

"That's the house, all right. White with red trimmings. A fence around it. Two poplar trees by the gate. A silo and windmill behind a yellow pine barn."

FOR a full ten miles the country was spread out ahead. Not a breath of air moved over the grazing lands. Heat radiated from the road like bubbling fumes of half-visible gas. Few other cars were abroad in the mid-day; aside from the scattered groups of cattle, or an occasional buzzard flapping lone pinions far up against the floor of heaven, mile after mile had clicked up on the speedometer without signs of life in the sear, brown vista. The driver rolled a cigarette, whetting it delicately with his tongue.

"What's your program, Stickney?" he asked.

"We'll drive up to the house and I'll get out. You head the 'bus around, throttle down your engine and wait. I'll go around to the back and rap on the kitchen door while you keep the front covered. Got your gun ready?"

The driver produced the weapon, laying it on the seat between them. "Wish I'd taken aboard a meal o' vittles in Pisgah," he declared. "When I'm hungry, I'm nervous."

"It won't take long to clean up this business. As soon as it's over and you've got me back to the railroad, you can spend the rest of the week stuffing yourself with food."

"Good joke on us if he isn't home. But suppose he is, and tries to bolt out the front way?"

"Stop him—at any cost. Only try not to kill him. Wing him in the legs."

EIGHT minutes later they slowed and stopped before a trim ranch home. The passenger shed his dust-coat and

pulled off cap and goggles. He was a six-foot man in his middle forties. He had a sharp, expressionless face and ruthless black eyes. He dropped off while the car was yet in motion and stood for a moment surveying the cottage.

"Stick!" called the driver softly, bringing the roadster around, stopping it, throttling his motor and moving into the right-hand seat. "Look at that clothesline."

"I see it. What about it?"

"There's women's things hung on it."

"I'm not surprised. He's been out here long enough to marry—even have a family."

"Nick Cooper, back in Chicago, didn't say nothing about him havin' a wife. If he's picked up a dame out here, and she's strong for him, you better watch your step. That is, providin' she knows."

"That's what I've got to find out."

"Your badge is showin', Stick. Want 'em to see it—till you've done what you've come for?"

The six-foot easterner looked down at his vest. He frowned a moment in thought, then unhooked the silver credential of a Federal Marshal and shoved it in one trouser pocket. As a parting injunction he said:

"If Asheley should be anywhere out around the barns and comes up to find out who you are, race your engine. I'll be listening and come out at once."

"All right. Shake along. I feel the need of my vittles."

The officer moved up to the sheeps-wire fence and unlatched the gate. It closed with faint click behind him. A gravel walk led around some beds of wilted flowers. One or two complacent mother hens crooned among the chips of the sun-baked yard. A scrubby black cat leaped off a side porch and started for a nearby outhouse with vertical tail in the air; halfway across the yard it dropped down to bite a flea under one rakish hind leg. Four sheep watched the visitor intently

from behind the ragged boards of a pen and one of them bleated nervously. But thus far no sight of any human beings. The garments on the washline might have been painted there, so motionless they hung in the heat of early afternoon.

Then Marshal Robert P. Stickney of Paris, Vermont, approaching the rear of that cottage, halted abruptly. The two side windows had been raised, with screens in place. *Out of the shadowed interior came a woman's soft song.*

THE tenderness in voice and melody stopped the officer as effectively as though the man he sought to interview had suddenly stepped forth and confronted him with a shotgun.

As Stickney waited, listening, he likewise heard the clink of crockery, the swish of poured water, the tinny tap of an emptied pail. Then the song again . . .

*"My Bonnie lies over the ocean,
My Bonnie lies over the sea;
Oh who will sail over the ocean
And bring back my Bonnie to me?
Bring back—bring back—"*

The marshal's sharp face became a study in conflicting emotions and expressions. Then strange to relate, a wry, half-compassionate smile curled the corners of his otherwise harsh mouth. He went along and turned the corner.

Three luscious pies, their crusts a toasty brown, had been set to cool on a bench beneath the shade of the porch. "Big Stickney" caught the savor of them and thought of his hungry driver out front. A line from another song flashed across his mind at sight of these domestic mediocrities—something about "a little gray home in the west."

He reached the porch steps. A battered screen door with paper lashes tacked across its top kept a hundred febrile flies from the odorous interior where more smells of cooking came out. Along the wall above the bench a row of pegs held one or two coats and woman's calico sun-bonnet. A dried-out fishing-tackle leaned against a corner jutting. On gritty boards between the top of the steps and the kitchen threshold lay a little boy's train of cast-iron cars. The marshal did not miss their significance, curling there as some small tad had abandoned them to

turn an adult's ankles. Yet he climbed the steps and rapped sharply on the cleats of the screen.

The clink of crockery stopped inside. Stickney heard a light step. As his sun-dazzled eyes grew accustomed to the shade, he found himself looking into the face of a girl in her early thirties who might have been pretty but for the faded wilt of shoulders and figure. It was an artless, wistful face, Stickney thought. Perspiration had taken the wave from her hair; she had twisted those chestnut tresses in a careless knot, caught with two or three pins at the neck. A white calico house-dress opened loosely on a not uncomely bosom. As she appeared at the screen door, she wiped beety-hard hands on a flaccid crash towel.

"Is this the Asheley place?" the officer demanded. Ever since his talk with one Nick Cooper in Chicago, he had known Benson's alias.

"Why, . . . yes, sir."

"Is Asheley home?"

"No, sir. Not right now he ain't. Our hired man rode in from the side pasture about twenty minutes ago and said a lot of stock had broken through the wire into Winbolt's property. Martin had to ride down and fix it right off."

"How long will it take?"

"He oughta be back by at least two o'clock."

"Are you Mrs. Asheley?"

She nodded, too naive to lie to him.

"Yes, I'll come in," Big Stickney agreed.

"The house don't look very nice," she apologized, thrashing at the top of the screen door with a towel to scare off the flies before admitting him. "Teddy keeps things messed up so. He's asleep just now. He always has his nap between half-past one and three."

"You've got a boy?"

"My, yes. He'll be three years old in September. You're from Laramie, ain't you? Seems Mart said somethin' about a man comin' from Laramie today to see him about his lambs."

"I left Laramie at ten o'clock," the marshal replied ambiguously.

She led him through her cluttered kitchen to the cooler living room opening toward the south. Its pine board sheathing had been painted buff. A forty dollar

Axminster rug of riotous colors served as carpet. The room held a golden-oak piano, a table and one or two mission rockers, a rolltop desk and swivel—ostensibly secondhand from its batterings—a bookcase, a woven-reed perambulator. Some full-page lithographs from a woman's magazine served as pictures for the walls in frames that looked homemade. The place held these and yet looked bare.

The woman sank down first in one of the rockers, nervously. Apparently she accepted that it devolved upon her to "entertain" this affluent stranger until her husband's return. She still held the towel, pulling at it absently. The wistful expression never left her brown eyes. . . .

Stickney's inventory of the tawdry little room found him what he sought. On a mantel shelf between two closed doors stood a black ebony clock, two vases, half a dozen minor trinkets. And as though placed there purposely for him to walk in and find it, that shelf likewise held a cabinet photograph on a small wire easel.

It was the portrait of a man in his thirties, in soft-collared shirt and rough clothing, one arm resting along the back of a chair. The eyes held a tired, defiant expression which the camera had not missed.

"Is that your husband?" asked Marshal Stickney.

"Why, . . . yes, sir. Ain't you ever seen him?"

"Yes, I've met your husband. But it was several years bygone. How long have you been married?"

"In Nineteen-nineteen, we was married. Just after Martin come home from France."

"What's that! Your husband is a World War veteran?"

"He was overseas two years. That's why we wasn't married before."

"You knew him before he went over?"

"Lawsy, yes! Why, I've known Mart ever since he went to work for my father, back in Nineteen- eleven."

"So he worked for your father? Where?"

"To Iron Mountain. That's up back o' Laramie. Dad run a store and give Mart a job. Him and me just natcherly played 'round together for five or six years. When he was drafted to go to



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the war we found out how much we thought of each other. If he come back alive, we agreed we'd get married. I'd o' married him before he went, only he wouldn't have it. He claimed it wouldn't be fair if he comes back smashed up."

"Did he ever tell you much about his life—before he came out to Wyoming?"

"Why, . . . yes, sir. All there is to know, I guess. Just whatta you mean?"

"Where did he say he came from?" Big Stickney had seated himself, elbows on the chair-arms, hairy hands knotted against the point of his chin.

"New England. Some place in Massachusetts, I think."

"He never mentioned Vermont?"

"Vermont?" Her pitifully wistful eyes were large. "Why no, . . . I've heard him say he's been up there because he told us once all about how they make maple sugar—"

"But he never told you he lived there?"

She shook her head slowly. "Did he?"

"Yes, your husband lived in Vermont quite a while."

"Funny he never said anything about it to me."

"He never told you his reasons for coming west?"

"He told us it'd been terribly hard to make a livin' back east. He'd come out to Wyoming to strike better luck."

"Has he?"

The oversized eyes dropped down to the towel. "We had our ups and downs like all folks," she parried. "Only just the last two years we got goin' real well."

"You own this ranch?"

Her face lighted up. "Just this spring we finished makin' the payments. Mother's been dead since I was a girl so when father died, his insurance money come to me. I added it to what Mart had saved and we bought the place from the Travers boys—"

"Your husband had saved money!"

"Why, yes. Why not? He's been right proud of his record since he come out West. He got here on a freight. He worked for dad for his board and five dollars a week. I used to think he was terribly close, but he had a good reason. He didn't throw his money around like other fellers because he wanted to save up a stake. Thirty-four hundred he'd got laid by—when he come to go to war."

"Mart Benson saved thirty-four hundred dollars! I can't believe it."

"Mart Benson? My husband's name ain't Benson." She dropped the towel and sat up straighter. "Is somethin' wrong?" she faltered.

Big Stickney laughed to cover his confusion. "I mean . . . slip of the tongue . . . excuse me."

But the woman wasn't convinced. Her carelined features showed growing consternation. "Are you really here to look over our stock?" she cried frightenedly.

"I might . . . look over your stock . . . before I leave."

Suddenly Stickney thought of Bill Seavers out in the roadster showing the Vermont license plates. Supposing Mart Benson, *alias* Asheley, rode up and saw those plates before coming into the house. Panic might seize him. He might bolt blindly while he thought the bolting good—in which case all Big Stickney's effort to date would have gone for nothing.

"Your husband will know all about myself," he assured her. "Er, . . . by the way, . . . I motored down here with a friend. I left him out front in the car and I'm afraid the sun's pretty hot. Is there a place in your barn I could run our machine . . . if we've got to wait long for your husband?"

"We got our Ford in the barn. But I guess if we pushed it forward a piece there'd be room enough for your car too."

STICKNEY reached the roadster first. "He isn't here, Bill. Gone off for an hour to fix a fence somewhere. We've simply got to wait until he comes back."

"Is his wife wise?"

"No, her face is an open book for her mind."

"You haven't told her?"

"No, and I'm not going to tell her if I can help it. Let her husband settle it with her when the time comes."

"Cripes, man, I'm starved!"

"Maybe she'll give us some lunch."

"It's a cinch she mightn't if she knew who you were."

"Nix on that stuff! . . . here she comes. I've asked her to let us run the 'bus in the barn. Let me do the talking. You keep your trap shut."

They were joined by the woman. "Why,

your car's got Vermont license plates! Then you didn't come from—?"

"It belongs to a friend of mine who picked me up in Chicago. He said he was touring the West and asked me to come along. Mr. Seavers, meet Mrs. Asheley."

"Howja do," said Bill Seavers wryly.

The wife glanced from face to face in bewilderment not unmixed with dread. "I could show you the lambs if you want," she offered.

"No, no. I really must do business with your husband, Mrs. Asheley."

She led the way across to the barns. The driver whispered hoarsely: "She's wise, Stick!"

"No, she's not. I made a bad slip in the house—called her man by his real name. But she isn't wise, yet. Let's get this car out of sight."

"Hell, Stick! . . . this is a rotten piece of work, takin' advantage of a woman with a face like hers."

"Shut up and get this car in the barn. Benson bolted once for a reason not much stronger than the sight of this 'bus would be and I haven't come two thousand miles to have him do it again."

"All the same, it's a rotten piece of work!"

They released the safety brake and pushed a very new and polished Ford to the back of the barn. Seavers drove the roadster in.

"Don't hit it!" cried the woman shrilly. "We're awful proud of it," she added a moment later as the Vermont car's motor died to silence. "For three years we wanted an automobile awful bad, but didn't think we could afford one till the flock was bigger. We've only had it three weeks. Don't you think a Ford is a beautiful car?"

"Yes, Mrs. Asheley, you've bought a mighty fine machine," Stickney assured the little wife.

"Of course it doesn't cost as much as yours. But Mart and I get just as much fun out of it as though it did. He and I and Teddy have been out *three Sundays right agoing!*" She spoke as though they had somehow dissipated.

They came from the barn and she closed the doors carefully. As they crossed the road once more, the marshal asked:

"Would you sell us some food, Mrs.

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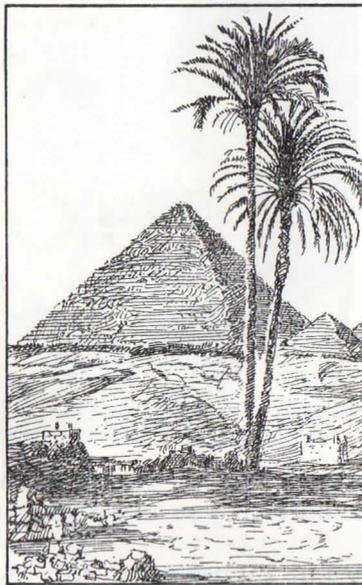
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Asheley? My friend and I haven't eaten since breaking camp this morning. We should have stopped for lunch at Pisgah or Laramie—"

"Sell you some food! Land's sakes alive! Out in this country people don't sell their food—not when other folks are hungry. How would you like a great big piece of fresh loganberry pie with a quart of cold milk?"

Bill Seavers assent was nearly a groan.

"All right. You two come back to the kitchen. You don't mind eatin' in the kitchen, do you? Mart and I always have. We decided we'd rather have the car than a new dining room set. And besides—our house ain't quite big enough for a regular dining room, anyhow."

They reached the porch and the woman went in ahead. Troubled though she was by an unknown Something flavoring these strangers, she cleared the kitchen table of cooking utensils and wiped clean the sheet of white oil cloth. Pushing up wooden chairs, she brought in one of the pies from the porch.

"You start right in," she invited, laying out plates and cutlery. "I'll have to go back across to the cistern for the milk. We keep it in a damp pit over there, so it'll always be cool."

When she had left them, Seavers looked the place over curiously. "Sort o' tugs at your heartstrings, don't it?" he said whimsically.

"I know," the marshal admitted, thoughtfully toying with his spoon.

"Two poor humans—man and wife—off here in a little shack under the sky with their kid, tryin' to scrape themselves a livin' and get ahead. And the biggest thing in their lives is their flivver. Apparently Mart Benson's turned over a new leaf since fleein' Vermont."

"Apparently he has, Bill."

"Who'd believe it?"

"It's the woman, I suppose. Women do make a difference like that, . . . some women."

"Looks as though he'd settled down, hard-workin' and steady and determined to amount to something. You've got to give him credit for that."

"Fought in France too, Bill. She told me he refused to marry her till he got back—because he might return smashed up."

"To hell with Nick Cooper, Stick! Wish to God you'd never met the tattlin' son of a gun. A guy who's done this sort of thing is entitled to an even break."

Marshal Stickney sprang up suddenly and went stalking nervously about the rooms. For a long time he stood on the threshold of the living room and somehow his features looked a little less ruthless. Despite the luncheon waiting, he pulled out a cigar and bit the tip off savagely.

"Got a match, Bill?"

Bill felt in his clothes. "Guess I used the last one to light my cigarette back on the hill," he declared.

The marshal stomped grimly about the kitchen looking for matches. None came to hand. A hot fire burned in the cook stove, however. He pulled a paper from his pocket, glanced at it carelessly—with eyes that somehow failed to see it—folded it into a long thin strip and lifted one of the stove covers. The paper curled in a yellow flame, into which he thrust the cigar and puffed savagely. Then he tossed the remains of the paper into the range, slammed down the cover and went on pacing the floor.

The smoke trailed heavily behind him.

"I don't mind saying there's times when I'm not stuck on my job, Bill," he announced. "This is one."

"Stick, . . . by some hook or crook couldn't you . . . well, couldn't you make out that . . ."

"That Benson wasn't Benson? Go back on my oath to do my duty? God knows I'd like to, Bill, but—"

"Cheese it! Here she comes back!"

The woman entered with a big blue-glass pitcher of milk. "My stars, what's the trouble?" she cried. "Why ain't you cut the pie? Ain't it good?"

"I guess, Mrs. Asheley, we're waiting for you to do it for us," laughed Seavers ruefully.

"Yes," confirmed the officer, "my friend here figures that if you don't designate how large a piece he can have, he might eat it all."

"But that's perfectly all right. There's two more pies on the porch. Mart just dotes on loganberry pie. I always make three or four."

"You think a lot of your husband, Mrs. Asheley?"



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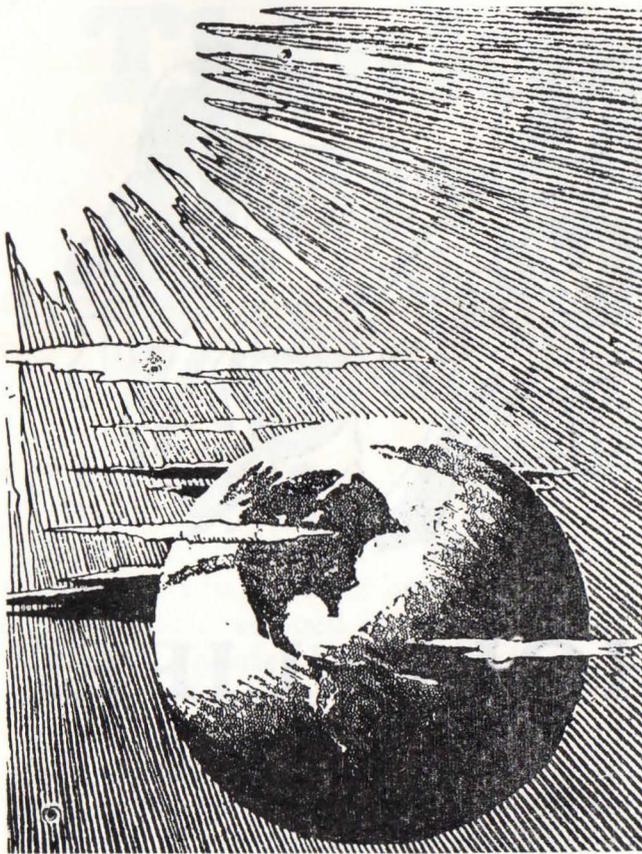
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The wife drew in both lips quickly and bit down hard upon them. She tried to smile but her eyes filmed over. Sinking in a hard-bottomed chair, she fought back her emotion.

“If anything happened to Mart, reckon I'd go mad,” she told them huskily. “He . . . and Teddy . . . are all I got.”

“He treats you pretty well, your husband?”

“He's so kind at times I just go off and cry. All the hard work and struggle don't matter so much in them times. I declare, . . . when we went to Chicago last month, it was just like takin' a honeymoon.”

“How much did you pay for the ranch? Will you tell me?”

“Eleven thousand dollars we give for the land. Then we spent two thousand more for the stock we started in with. We got a pretty good-sized flock now. Seventeen hundred head we sheared last season and that helped us finish the silo.”

“Your house looks recently built.”

“It's the third year we've had it. I'm terribly proud of it. You see, . . . Mart built it.”

“Alone?”

“Well, he had the stone foundations put in by masons from Laramie. But the rest of it he done himself—workin' mostly nights. All the year that Teddy was comin' I helped him much as I could. Though toward the last, about all I was good for was holdin' the lantern.”

“So,” mused Big Stickney with a tender smile that was strange on his face, “you held the lantern?”

“Why, . . . yes, sir. Why not?”

“I was merely wondering how many successful men, scattered across America, have owed their beginnings to some faithful woman who . . . held the lantern!”

“Well,” the wife went on huskily, “we finally got the house up so's Teddy could be born in one of the bedrooms. And then the next year Mart and I painted it together. We got stuck on the paint, though. It was awful poor quality. It's peelin' already.”

“I didn't notice it.”

“Didn't you?” she cried in delight.

“Where'd the two of you live while the house was going up?”

“We had a one-room sod shack that

Mart now uses for tools and grain. You see, when two folks have worked along together like that, and got ahead little by little, they grow to think a heap of each other. That's why I think so much o' Mart. He's been more like a pal than an ordinary husband . . ."

"Isn't it fearfully lonesome at times—especially in the winter—off here under the sky?"

"It does get pretty tough in the winter. We went back into the old sod house for a time last February 'cause it was really warmer for Teddy. But Mart's different than most men. He don't care so much about runnin' around with folks. Yes, he's even *queer* that way. Likes to keep off by himself, with the baby and me. I don't s'pose we'd even got to Chicago last month if he hadn't had to go there on business. It's a good thing I aint strong for society myself. It'd bother lots o' women far more'n it does me."

"Then on the whole, you're makin' out fairly well?" suggested Seavers, making wreckage of a wedge of pie.

"We ain't got cause to complain; lots o' folks has made out worse. There's a lot o' work, natcherly. But all of us have gotta work if we wanta get anywheres in this life, I reckon. So long's Mart keeps on bein' the husband he is, I wouldn't swap this place for the Lake Front to Chicago. I know when we drove 'round there and seen 'em, I was so homesick for our own that I busted right out cryin' in the taxi."

"I suppose you stand the chance of laying up quite a bank account," said the officer, "if nothin' happens?"

"Well, next year we wanner clapboard the barn, so's to make it warmer for the stock. And Mart wants to start another flock 'round the other side o' Big Peak. With Teddy comin' along and havin' to go to college sooner or later, I guess we can use all we make. Then again, mighty soon I gotta have a new sewin' machine. The bobbins don't work on the old one any more," she confided to them.

"But what would you do if anything did happen to your husband?" the marshal asked curiously.

Her face grew ashy. "You m-m-mean . . . if he died? I s'pose I'd try to go on somehow."

"Alone?"



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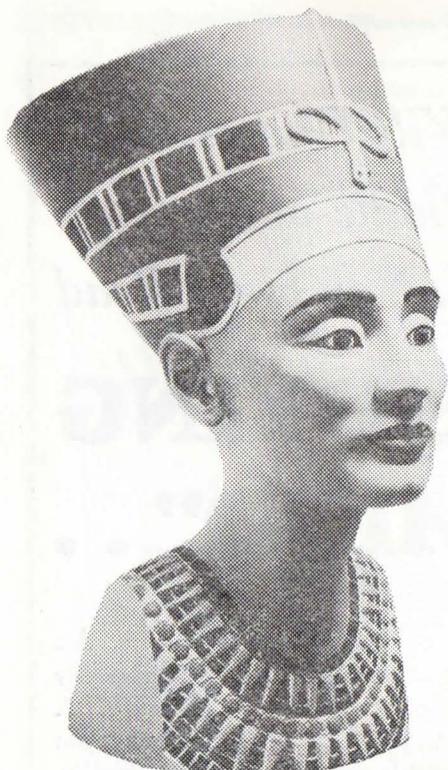
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"Teddy'll be a man someday. I'd try to work the place and keep it prosperous as I could, till he got big enough to lift it off my shoulders. But I don't wanner think about it. *I can't!* Mart's got to be just a part o' me. It'd be like goin' on livin' only half alive, . . . with the heart broke inside me." Again she bit hard on both lips. Again her eyes moistened. "You see," she added softly, "Mart and me's just more'n husband and wife. As I said, . . . we're partners!"

"I see," said Stickney. "Partners!" "Either one o' you married?" "No," said Bill Seavers, for himself. "I have been," Stickney assented. "Then you know how it could be." "I can only imagine," the officer said. "Listen! Don't I hear hoofs? Yes, I do! Here's Martin. He's comin' up by the lower corral."

Stickney got to his feet. To his companion he said stiffly:

"Stay here with Mrs. Asheley."



A Different Kind of Previous-Life Story

"Road into Sunrise!"

*The girl sent back into an earlier
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from it . .*

PERHAPS you've read other books about people being put to sleep in hypnotherapy and claiming to "remember back" into prior existence when they had different bodily identities. Are you aware that the great 658-page novel *Road into Sunrise* was the forerunner of all such stories, published in 1954 by Soulcraft? Sophie Blicher, a New York stenographer, was sent back into her prenatal mind and realized she had been one of the celebrated daughters of the great Egyptian Queen Nefertiti. Recalling all of her career as an Egyptian princess, she made the perturbing discovery that her memory veil would not return. She was permanently and constantly conscious of both embodiments.

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Noblesville, Indiana

A ROAN pony picked its way nimbly between the distant sheep-pens. It cantered up into the yard, stopping by an outhouse where its rider threw down some tools. The marshal strode toward the door and the porch.

Wheeling his mount, a stocky, sun-burned fellow rode to the steps and swung off. Despite the season, he wore heavy corduroy trousers tucked into riding boots, and an olive drab shirt open on a virile chest. Reaching the ground, he whacked the pony's rump with his hat, saw it canter in a circle and head into an adjacent shed. Drawing out a blue bandana, its owner wiped his forehead.

He did not notice Big Stickney until he had climbed two steps.

"Hello, Martin," the marshal said whimsically. "How's every little thing?"

It was deathly quiet about those premises in that quarter-moment ensuing. Off to the right, a sheep bleated. The scrubby cat came bounding back, mewling and purring as it reached the rancher's boots. No other sounds.

At the foot of the steps, the man with hat in one hand and bandana in the other, had been taken deathly sick. There was small doubt about it. The blood fanned slowly out of his features. About his mouth came a greenish tinge . . .

"You!" he choked. But he did not move. And neither did the marshal.

"How are you, Martin? Looks like you'd prospered. I been talking with the wife."

"What d-d-do you want?"

The arms hung listlessly at the young rancher's sides. Even his fingers were strengthless. Hat and kerchief dropped to the gravel.

"Happened to be passing through this part of the country with a friend, Martin, and thought I'd drop in for a talk. *Privately!*" he added, with a wink and a nod toward the kitchen behind him.

Asheley—or Benson—had been sweating profusely with his canter through the heat. Yet the subsequent moisture appearing on his lower eyelids was not perspiration. Great terrible man tears began to well there, though his gaze stayed riveted on his caller's sharp face. The whole stocky figure, splendid a moment before in physical development and pride of his acres, visibly started to droop. He be-

came in those two or three tense moments as one stricken.

"I . . . suppose . . . so," he whispered hoarsely.

"Don't run off, Martin."

"I won't run off. Where'd I run?"

"You did once before."

"I had a place to run to—then. Here!" he explained brokenly.

Stickney felt the screen push open behind him. He had to give way. Seavers had been unable to restrain the wife longer. She stumbled out and caught at a joist sustaining the roof. Her face too, was waxen.

"Martin!" she cried piteously. "What's it all about? What's the matter?"

"G-G-Got a little appointment with Brother Stickney here, honey," the husband said dully. "Had it, I guess, . . . for quite a long time."

The wife reached her man. She clung to him desperately. "Look at me, Martin! Oh Martin! . . . is he an officer, *after you for anything?*"

Reaching up mechanically, he patted her shoulder. He spoke to Stickney: "How m-m-much, . . . have you told her?"

"I haven't told her anything. You saw she didn't know and I'm determined to do my errand with you—in private."

"Oh, oh, oh!" wailed the woman, her knees softening, her body sagging.

"You can tell her," declared the rancher. "She's got to know it sometime."

"But I'd rather not. Where can we go for a little quiet confab, Martin?"

"C-C-Come across to the barn. It's as good a place as any."

"I'm going with you, Martin! I'm in on it too, *no matter what it is!*"

"No, honey, you stay back. It's . . . merely a little business Mr. Stickney and I got together."

"Look after the little lady a moment, Bill," the officer ordered his companion.

The wife stood riven to stone as husband and Nemesis moved away together.

THEY reached the shade of the barn. "I s'pose you found me because Nick Cooper saw me in that damned old hotel to Chicago?"

"After a fashion, Martin."

"Well, what you aimin' to do to me? I was a fool to think I could ever run



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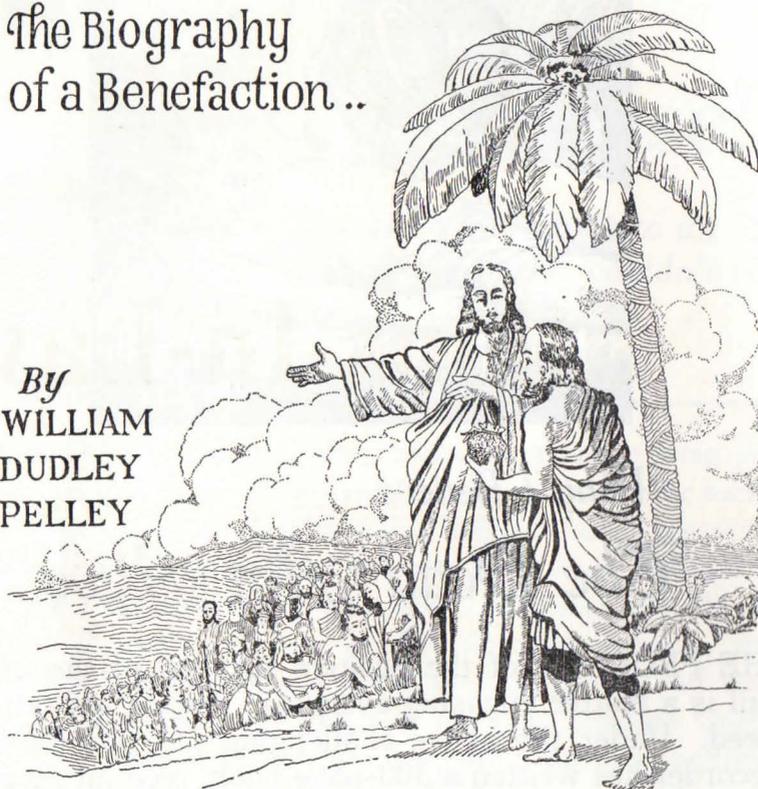
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far enough—or stay away long enough—for the government to forget.”

“And yet from the look of your ranch and your family, Martin, you’re hardly the lad who skipped out of Vermont.”

“I’m not! I was wild in them days, I’ll admit. But I come out here, Stickney, and turned a new leaf. Somehow I figgered if I did—and the government ever got trace o’ me—bein’ an honest, responsible citizen, mindin’ my own business and gettin’ ahead, might make a difference. Besides, there was Helen. I fell in love with her and . . . didn’t want her ever to know.” Tears were streaming down the culprit’s face now, mingling with the sweat. Yet he did not sob. And he made no move to wipe them away.

“You mean the fear of what happened back in Vermont altered you—made you what you appear to be today?”

“Before my Maker, Stickney! I paid for that mess back East through a thousand nights. Fourteen years I been tryin’ to live it down, Stickney, . . . *really* live it down. And I thought I had!”

“Fourteen years!” mused the marshal. “It must have been torment.”

“But now you’ve found me, the real torment’s ahead, thinkin’ of the sufferin’ it means for Helen and little Ted. Just a wild boyish prank, Stickney, to get a little easy money—and it jazzed up all my life. If Fred Whipple had only kept his rotten mouth shut. If he only had!”

“He was dying, Martin. He wanted the whole thing off his conscience.”

“But why didn’t he stop to think it made felons of the rest of us forever?” The rancher now smeared his sleeve across his forehead. It left a ludicrous streak. “I swear I never happened to think that old Sargent’s grocery was a branch post office as well—that what we was doin’ was really a federal offense. Think of it! . . . I was only twenty at the time. A kid don’t stop to figger things out very fine at twenty.”

“Breaking and entering any sort of place is a pretty grave crime, Martin. If you-all had been discovered and anybody’d been shot, you’d have been liable for murder.”

“But nobody was shot, Stickney.”

“Was Fred right in his confession: that *he* took the money while you only stood lookout?”

"He was, Stickney. I swear it before my Maker."

"And you came out here by hopping freights . . . turned a new leaf . . ."

"And have lived as honest as the day is long, Stickney. I couldn't do anything else—married to a woman like Helen. O my God! . . . what's it going to m-m-mean to her n-n-now, when she faces everything gone to smash? We've worked terribly hard here, Stickney, from the start. And I been honest ever since. I swear it, Stickney, so help me God!"

"And I suppose the memory of it—"

"The memory of it's hung over all my happiness out here with Helen like a cloud, every minute since. I've waked up in a cold sweat and clutched her a hundred times when she thought it was only ordinary nightmare. Every nail I drove in my house spiked the thought that I might never be allowed to enjoy it. Never once have strangers pulled up in front of my house that I ain't went sick all over with panic. Stickney, it's—been—hell!"

"You never heard from Vermont?"

"I dassent let anybody know where I'd gone. I just couldn't risk it."

"I thought so, Martin. Bill Seavers and I had reached Chicago on a tour of the West. By one chance in a thousand we encountered Nick Cooper in an arm-chair lunchroom. Not having seen each other in years we got talking about old times when he lived in Vermont. Me being in the sheriff business, we mentioned the robbery of Sargent's place."

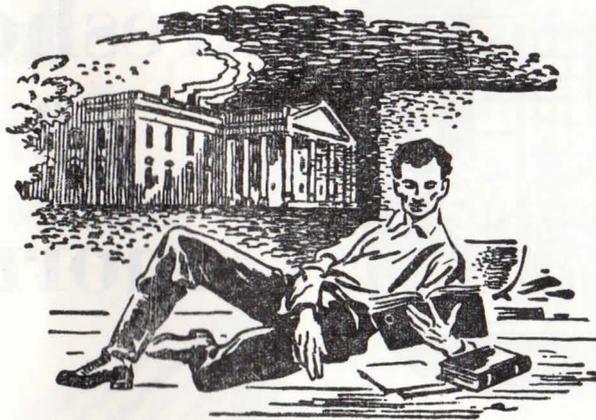
"He told you—?"

"That called up your name. He mentioned having seen you accidentally in Chicago recently, in a hotel lobby. He'd gotten your new name and address from the register. He told me how eaten with worry you looked—"

"I been sick with it every night since, I tell you. I knew he'd seen me. I figured he'd write about it back East. But I couldn't sell out here and skip again. It's come to mean home, Stickney—*home!* By the things I've done with my own two hands, I've made it home. And besides, it meant tellin' Helen everything. I couldn't do that, Stickney. I couldn't, I couldn't."

"Martin, I'm sorry—sorry as hell. We hear a lot about crime this day and age.

Another Bulls-Eye!



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Perhaps I hear most because running it down is my business. Yet I suppose there are crimes *and crimes*. Some are just the mistakes of thoughtlessness or immaturity. Others are black—ugly—premeditated—

and deserve punishment to the limit. It does occur to me, however, . . . there may be certain crimes that make a man—help him to find himself. Though that doesn't mean, of course, that a person



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must turn criminal in order to become successful in life. I wish I wasn't a federal officer, sometimes, Martin—"

"Damn the federal government, then!"

"Don't say that, Martin. There's nothing wrong with the government. It's no avenging Nemesis that lies awake nights to run down and wreck people trying their darndest to profit by experience. I don't believe there's a man in the whole Department of Justice but who would be helped and inspired himself by what you have done here—and seem to be doing. Yet it's got to draw the line somewhere. Right is right and wrong is wrong."

"All right," the rancher cried brokenly. "Serve your warrant and get it over with."

Big Stickney thrust his hand in the inner pocket of his coat. He pulled it out and thrust it in again. He pulled the coat out straight before him and looked in the pocket.

It was empty.

"What's the matter?" the rancher demanded.

"I had a warrant here somewhere. Now what the devil's become of it. Have I lost it?"

"You . . . can't . . . take me . . . without one, can you?"

"N-N-No, of course not."

"Stickney, . . . could you . . . for the sake of Helen . . ." But Benson *alias* Asheley found no heart to make the obvious request. Down on a crate he dropped, burying his face in his hands.

The marshal stared at him thoughtfully a moment. All the ruthlessness had now gone from his eyes. His sharp face was almost compassionate as he said:

"Well, if the warrant's lost out of my pocket it's a cinch all my trouble coming out here has gone for nothing, Martin."

"I know, . . . only you can get another one, of course, . . . and come back."

Stickney rubbed his lean chin reflectively.

"Of course I might do that," he agreed. "Only I'm a terribly busy man these days. All of us federal marshals are—with all the rum-running that's going on—"

Asheley sprang up. Frenziedly he clutched Big Stickney's coat-front.

"You m-m-mean—!"

"I mean, having lost that warrant, my case for the present is sort of sick, Martin. And between you and me as men—"

well, I'm just as satisfied that it doesn't get well. Suppose we go back to the house. I haven't finished that excellent loganberry pie Mrs. Asheley offered us."

"You won't . . . c-c-come b-b-back . . . with another warrant?"

Big Stickney suddenly laid his hands on the other's broad shoulders. He looked the suffering fellow in the eye.

"Martin, after what I've seen here, . . . say, do you really think I could be so blankity-blank yellow as that?"

THE ROADSTER with the Vermont license plates backed out of the barn. With a soft clicking of its gears and an accelerating of its powerful engine, it started forward with Stickney and Seavers up the road. Hugging the hard-baked adobe trail, it resumed one constant speed through Wyoming's foothills in the furnace heat of July afternoon.

Up a far-flung undulation it rose till it reached the top. There it slackened speed and halted. The two in the brown leather seats looked back.

Far back, down in the ranch yard two figures were standing close together under the sky. One was a man. The other was a woman's. His arm was about her shoulders. Her arm was about his waist.

Big Stickney did an impulsive thing. He stood up in the roadster and waved his cap. Back before the house, the man waved back—with his black beaver sombrero.

"All right, Bill. Step on her! Give her gas," the marshal ordered.

The roadster dipped down out of sight, over the summit.

"The hell you lost that warrant, Bob Stickney," the driver declared as the roadster commenced to eat up distance. "You know what happened to it as well as I."

"When a guy can't find matches, he's got a right to use anything that comes to hand when he wants to smoke."

"You knew what you were doing all the time, you son of a gun!"

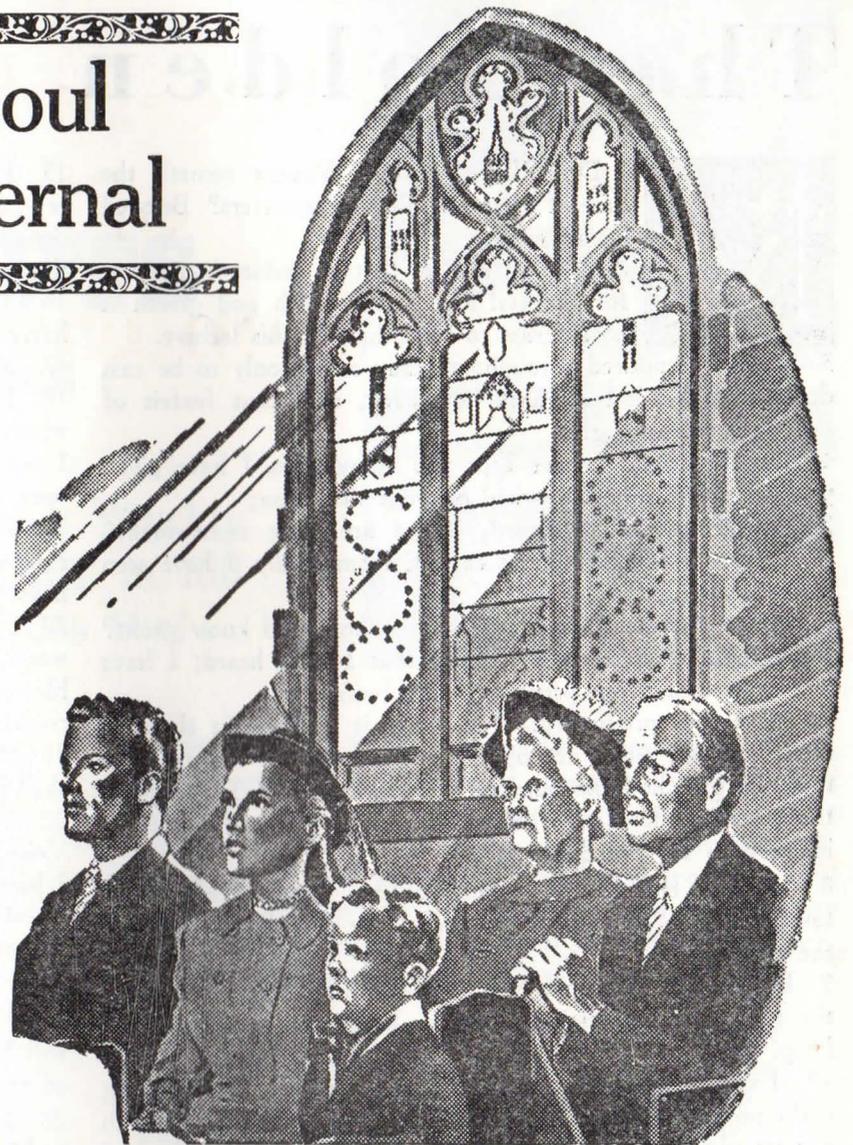
"Well, if you ever say so back East—when we get there—I'll shove your ugly jaw up into your ear."

"What good did it accomplish, visiting those folks, then?"

"Oh, call it we just dropped in twenty minutes for lunch. What else can we call it, when you've got such an appetite?"

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The Golden Speakings



MY DEARLY Beloved: Whence cometh the time of these ravishings of sorcerers? Beloved be stilled!

2 I say it is meet that ye endure in penury, for the evil man hath wealth and giveth it no surcease to mark him for his lechery.

3 Have we endured throughout many aeons, only to be cast down that the ambush hath its forfeit, even that forfeit of rigorous experiencing?

4 I tell you that I have kept you many days, I have given you assistance, I have marked on your demeanor;

5 I have said unto myself, These are mine eschewments, these my tribulations, I have entered them gladly, I have seen their beneficence!

6 Whereof come these rigors but that mankind know profit? I say that I have seen, I tell you that I have heard; I have met mine own sheep perverse in the byways;

7 Have they no luxury? I say that it shall profit them to know that the times are upon them foretold of the ancients, that the gale hath no surcease till the litter be cleared from the threshing floors of ages, till the righteous man be stilled in his cries for benedictions.

8 Ye have entered the gamut, ye have known the benedictions, ye have come into the great gale and known thereby the tempest.

9 Unhallowed precepts have brought unhallowed longings: the right hath an instinct, it goeth before you and setteth a lamp.

10 I say, Persevere in those charges wherewith ye are charged; make no errors in conscience, utter no statement that rendereth not translucence, give no hostages to bickering, keep free of defilements.

11 These are the seasons wherein great are Mammon's stalkings: have I not warned you that such would come upon you? what thought ye I reckoned in the eyes of my seasons?

12 I bid you be steadfast. I bid you know triumph. The winds of great exercising bend you to breakings, the gale hath its clamor, there is naught to forestall it.

13 Stand ye as a rock and know my procedures: stand ye as Vikings and let the gales lash you;

14 I say it shall be better with you than with earth's weaklings: they know not where to lay their heads, in that they have forfeited that which was their increment from the rights of past ages.

15 I give you my hand that vomits eschew you; I give you my promise that tall gales pass by you; have I saved you from destruction only to destroy you or allow you to be destroyed? there would be childishness in that.

16 The mad ones come, the tall ones bend, the lee hath a harvest of the bones of the valiant,

17 So it hath been Written, to be exercised in torments.

18 I seek not my sheep among boulders of defiance to that which is sacred; I call them anon to the huddlings of prescience; I say, Know my voice, that I lead you unto sustenance, that I open to you a pasture wherein nourishment spreadeth.

19 I have given you my staff, I have handed you my distaff, I have said, There is the field, behold go and plow it! Thus have ye motive for that which ye do.

20 These alone are my eschewments: that ye plow not to a wreckage, that the seed which ye plant hath a radiance in its blossoming, that the world hath its anchor in true principles of conscience, even that voice which persuadeth you to victories.

21 Be known, my beloved, for those whom ye are! I say it shall profit you that ye give yourselves voice!

22 I have kept you for a purpose, I have drawn you as a Voice, I have put syllables upon your harps of understandings, I have bidden that ye play them, I have given you the music.

23 Is it not time that such harmonies were rendered? wherein is true music unless it is played?

24 Arise and be valiant.

25 Know no bickerings with Mammon but offer him his choice: will he give you his endorsements or perish in his mockeries of that which fetcheth surcease to the rigors of his emptiness?

26 I tell you I have watched you; I see your fond gropings; but I bid ye hold steadfast to that which hath proclaimed you;

27 My hand is on the door latch, my foot is on the doorsill: I am come in my season to make a great merriment that the world's woes are conquered, that the energies of aeons have turned as a mill wheel, that rejoicing hath its banquet on the

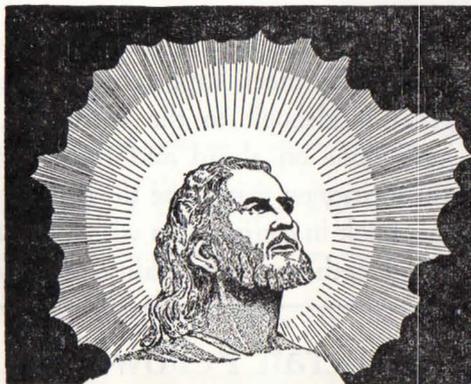
grist of their turnings, that man hath found a truer resting place in knowledge, that his species perceiveth its right to such reposings.

28 Endure, I command you, until I come again;

29 The event hath its augury in the wailings of the famished.

30 Whom I love, I protect, though the cohorts of Caesar ride the might of earth's whirlwind . . .

PEACE



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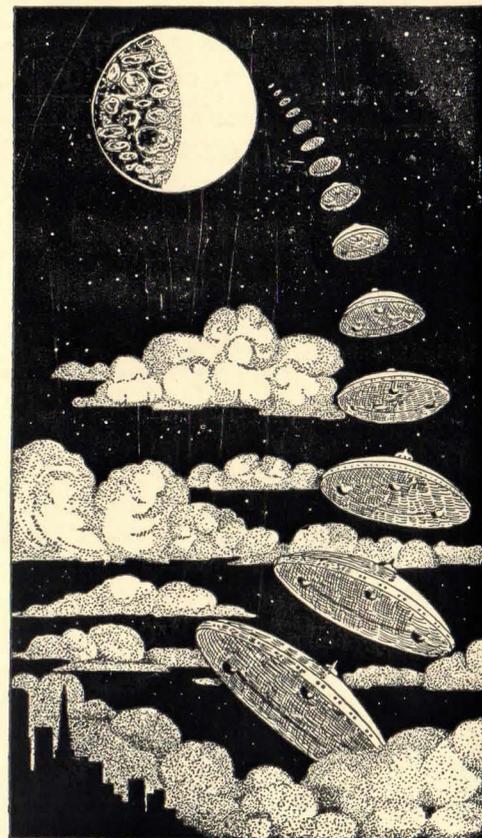
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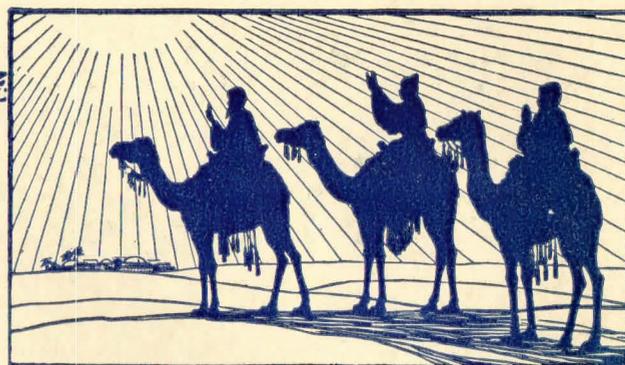
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