

# Valor

APRIL, 1961



.. The Magazine of Soulcraft ..



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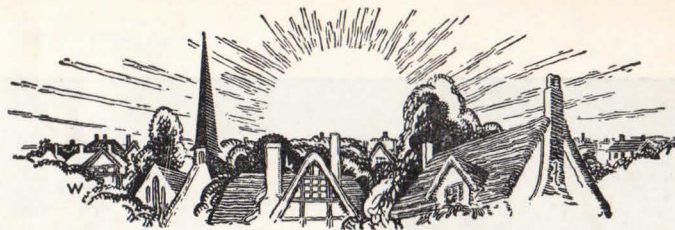
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The Magazine of Soulcraft

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# Valor

*The Monthly Voice of the Soulcraft Doctrine*

Volume XIII

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## DO Discarnates Depict Events Past or Future? . .

**C**LAIRVOYANCE is commonly defined as the power of perceiving without the use of the organ of vision, or under conditions in which the organ of vision with its natural powers alone would be useless. It comprises the "sight" of things past, present, or future. Various methods of clairvoyance are recounted within the philosophies of all peoples and races; by direct vision of things at a distance—opaque substances being no hindrance—by looking into a black surface; by looking into water or a crystal; or by laying the object whose history is to be described, on the head or chest of the clairvoyant, although this last comes generally under the head of Psychometry.

Generally, however, clairvoyants represent the cerebral region as the seat of illuminations.

From remotest antiquity the possession of such powers has been believed in, and unquestionably demonstrated. Instances of other clairvoyants of note besides Nostradamus in modern times may be mentioned in Jacob Boehme, who lived from 1575 to 1634, and Emanuel Swedenborg, the great Swedish scientist, and founder of the so-called Church of the New Jerusalem, who lived from 1688 to 1772.

The phenomena of clairvoyance have been most carefully observed. The clairvoyant state seems to be intimately connected with the mesmeric, the somnambulistic, and the condition known as "trance," though just what trance it has never been satisfactorily described—not at least, by materialistic psychologists.

Trance is generally recognized as a condition allied

with sleep, but differs from it as regards duration and profound insensibility to external impressions. Death Trance, however, is a positive status, and so recognized by psychological and medical authorities. It is a period of repose, the duration of which is sometimes definite and predetermined, though unknown.

The basis of Death Trance is suspension of the action of the heart, of breathing, and of voluntary motion; generally, likewise, of feeling and intelligence. The vegetative changes in the body are suspended and with such phenomena is joined the loss of external warmth, so that general evidence of life is gone. Yet strictly speaking, the person is not dead; that is to say, the spirit has not departed the bodily enhousement.

That all of these states, in some mystical manner, free the thinking mind from the distractions of its entrapping mortality and permit it to exercise in areas of activity that are not psychologically definable, apparently points to some of the elements making for clairvoyant expression.

**M**ESMERIC somnambulism and Clairvoyance were first brought to notice by Puysegur in 1784. The clairvoyant is usually in a state of trance, which may easily be induced by mesmeric passes. In this state, he is sometimes conscious only of his mesmerizer. In others, his clairvoyance is unrestricted and he does not need a mesmerizer. Relaxing himself, he gradually withdraws his faculties from sensations originating around him, and fixes them on a peculiar inner focus. He becomes unmindful of his environment, then of his physical feelings.



He loses the realization of being enoused in a body.

At first the ordinary phantasmagoria that accompany the closing of the eyelids—moving colors, shifting clouds of black, gray and white—continue. But as he relaxes the more, and concentrates on those moving colors and shifting clouds, he begins to note that they exhibit high-lights and low-lights. The murk of them, the confusion, gradually wears thin, and wraith-like forms shift to and fro across the lighter portions of Inner Consciousness.

Gradually these adopt an aspect of solidity, of three-dimensional reality. Then, in that form of clairvoyance that is technically called Bilocation, the seat of consciousness seems suddenly to slide out into this three-dimensional activity and become as much a part of it as a person is a part of a room in which he sits.

When such phenomena apply to this three-dimensional world, the person may discover later that his seat of consciousness actually was transferred into the scenes and surroundings that first appeared to him as kaleidoscopic fantasy. He will note what is going on about him, and after recovering from the state, will be astounded to find from contemporary reports that he actually visited a scene miles distant, or even upon the opposite side of the earth.



More miraculous still, it has happened that persons so transferring their consciousness have discovered that they moved, operated and observed, amid occurrences that will not transpire in worldly actuality for days or weeks.

How do they do it?

They cannot, themselves, make answer.

**S**EARCHING for some logical explanation that fits the ideology of a material world, we must consider the following—

Ordinarily we think of Consciousness, and the Soul, as “things,” that is, essences with an objectivity unto themselves that, permanently enoused in a mortal mechanism, compose what is termed a “living” person.

When the consciousness, or soul, “vacates” the body—and goes levitating off unto itself in ether—we commonly say that death has occurred, and that the person-soul has become discarnate. Its status, in other words, is no longer connected with the carnal.

We get the notion that the person-soul is an entity, because even after death of the flesh, the electrical or light-pattern body persists and under peculiar etheric conditions often exhibits in so-called materializations—ghosts, wraiths, shades, and all the rest of such “psyche phenomena.”

Again, however, the electrical light-pattern body is not the consciousness itself, but only the tenuous energy-form which consciousness takes in manifesting so that it is perceptible to those in materiality.

States of society even exist, in which these light-pattern bodies are as recognizable as those who compose this normal physical world that is commonly called Life.

But sooner or later, studying into such phases of Reality, we become aware of the fact that individualized consciousness eventually dies out of these electrical patterns also. It seems to be true that utter discarnation has ultimately to be arrived at—and is arrived at—before there can be another cycle of incarnation.

**C**ONSCIOUSNESS seems to be a self-aware knowing, and when we have said that, we have described something utterly subjective and to a degree unknowable to all outside itself. But how far that knowing extends, above and beyond the simple act of self-awareness, is something that probably never will be, nor can be, determined in this octave or dimension.

Seeking to rationalize Clairvoyance, we confront the proposition that perchance Consciousness in its utterly disembodied or discarnate state is a condition of Pure Knowing of Everything that Exists to Be Known.

Incarnation, or a residence in some type of animate Form, may be a qualified or portional loss of such Knowing, that spiritual discipline may be accomplished.

In other words, from a pristine state of Pure Knowing—encompassing a realization of all that ever Was, or Will Be—the individualized or self-aware Consciousness



may proceed down into graduated conditions, or circumscriptions or limits to knowing, that over a series of such—termed lives—it may come to recognize its real intellectual omnipotence.

It sounds like a silly paradox to say that Limitlessness comes to perceive itself, or understand itself, by voluntarily undergoing limitation, but that seems to be the way Cosmos operates, regardless.

Put in another aspect, we get this startling idea—

People in physical vehicles for material operation, carry around an illusion of being alive, when what they truly are experiencing is a degree of death, that may the better recognize and evaluate Real Life when Consciousness gains it back.

Again and again, in pursuing our explorations into Higher Octaves, we meet with the puzzling information that “such-and-such a personage is dead into mortality”.

What is meant is, that by enhousing itself in some form of mortal organism—that is, incarnating—the individualized Consciousness has entered into the appropriate degree of circumscription and limitation. To that degree it is “dead” in so far as Consciousness in the status of omnipotence or omnipresence is concerned.

The occupancy of the physical carcass stunts, blunts, blinds and handicaps the spiritual self to the degree that a wanted spiritual lesson is needed.

But when the soul-spirit is out of such entrapment it looks upon itself as truly “alive” because it has overcome all restrictions of Time and Space as quasi-dead “mortals” conceive of these terms.

Again and again, persons whom we popularly consider to be “dead,” get no small amusement out of having their mortal relatives so designate them. Comparing their own unfettered status with the blindness, circumscription, and thwartings of mortality, they recognize plainly enough that person-souls in flesh are the “dead ones” but don’t know it.

Now returning to the methods for concrete achievements of a great mystic like Nostradamus, we know that he passed whole nights seated motionless in his Salon village garret, gazing fixedly into a pan of clear water. We have the testimony of his servant Chavigny, for this. Chavigny’s master “did not seem to be there.” He had inductively lost all sense of time or place, or body or environment.

It might be suggested, in other words, that without actually going so far as to disengage his personage-spirit from his physical body, he had found ways to temporarily come out of the death trance that is life-in-flesh, and re-

turn for a period to his prenatal or utterly discarnate state of Pure Knowing.

In such state, it became recognizable to him in terms of form, precisely what the Scenario for his Cycle contained, that folk in the blindness of death-in-flesh must play out, in order to be recognizable actors in the mundane play at all.



Nostradamus must have detached his mind utterly from all inhibitions or distractions created by the flesh he occupied, and resumed periodically the full life-freedom of his cosmic self.

In such state, he entered a condition of thought from which “the slowness of time” had been subtracted, and all events to be comprised by the Cycle, or that made the Cycle itself, were present in an unenacted aspect.

If you want an illustration of what is meant by this: go back again to your modern photoplay.

The scenario is written, the drama is projected in thought—or as we say, in imagination—down to its smallest detail. The actors are chosen, their costumes designed and donned, and the play put on celluloid. When that photoplay is “shot,” the producer has the events in the lives of a dozen actor-people, perhaps extending over a score of years, in seven rolls of film which can be carried beneath the arm, stored beneath the seat of a motorcar, thrown from a moving train, or used as a temporary seat at a picnic. Those events are all real enough when seen on the screen, but they are thus compacted because the time-element has not yet become the adjunct of them in exhibition form.

*(Continued on Page 14)*



# Are You Striving to Reach Psychic Skill through Difficulties?

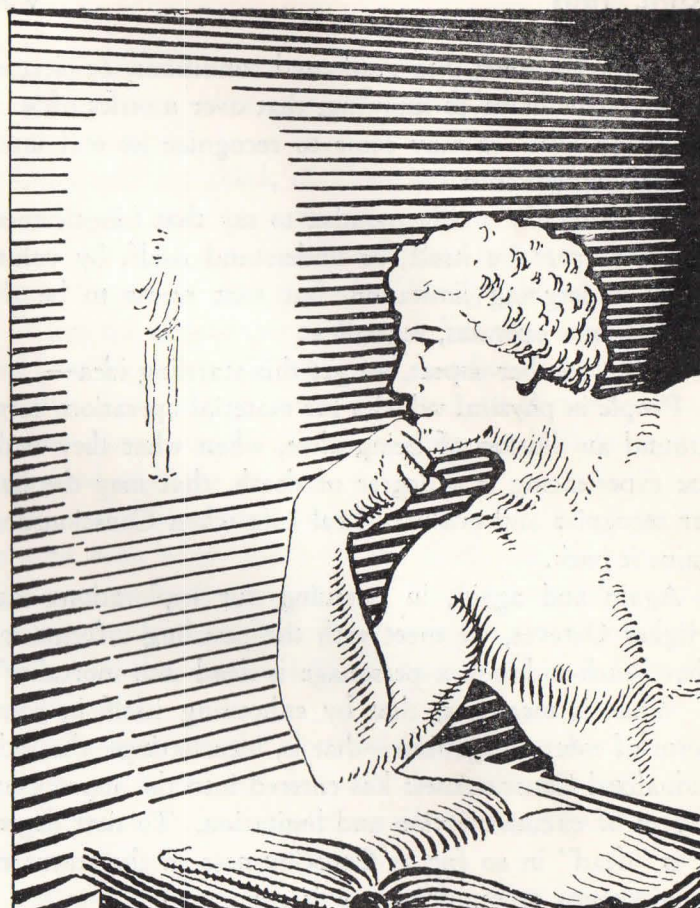
**L**EGION are the numbers of students struggling with difficult happenings and counselings in psychical developments in their own rights. To know what the happenings and counselings have been up the years—especially in the beginning—to the Scribe who reached such degree of adeptship that he recorded over a million words of the Soulcraft Doctrine—including the *Golden Scripts*—may be to pick up much illuminating information assisting with the cultivation of one's own talents. Are you striving to acquire Psychical facility through false advice and difficulties? VALOR does not affect to make psychical adepts of readers in any respect, but what happened in the Soulcraft Recorder's experience may be applicable to your own.

For instance, on November 14, 1928, the following declarations were made by the transcendent Mentor who was speaking that evening. Not only do they present the nature of bona fide counsel but they should be of interest to a special category of students who intuitively find all origins of the Liberation-Soulcraft philosophy fascinating.

Always, however, in short treatment of vital subjects, there are rich nuggets of pertinent information that work into the great spiritual mosaic of the whole. Although the Mentor in the following instance was addressing The Recorder personally, students of Soulcraft will have a better understanding of The Brevet bestowed on all, by noting the following—

**DEAR** Mortal Brother:

Know that you are to be a monitor for the Christ in a world where bleak science slowly is undermining men's faith in things spiritual. You will be the means of stopping much of the faithlessness of the present generation by your advice and teaching. You have asked tonight whether Science can advance to a point where



Christ cannot control it. Let us phrase our answer thus:

Christ, so-called, is Spirit Materialized as the power for Right in the world, and has nothing to do with aught otherwise. He is the power that has been for the Right in every land and time, and is not able to make contact with the spirit of evil or ignorance. But there are persons like yourself who are able to *combat* the spirit of evil and ignorance, and to bring men to understanding of the Good within *themselves*.

You are to help men and women get a clearer understanding of their roles in the divine scheme of things by helping them to a clearer and profounder understanding of eternal truths. You are much favored because you have opened your heart to Beauty and the Truth.

When Holy Spirit calls a man, It puts him through many tribulations, and you are having yours now. The reasons for your clogged channels are mainly physical.

A wholly new alignment of all the faculties is demanded when the psychical centers become opened to the intelligent communications from Higher Planes of life. The temperament must become dispassionate so that the Subconscious Mind does not intrude its idiosyncrasies into that which is conveyed, making for disillusion.

There is no pain like the pain of Disillusion, especially when the cause is not wholly clear. However, all first



students of this sort of revelation are called to go through such period. You are by no means alone. There is no balm in finding flaws with a theory, and the best remedy to seek is Quiet in Your Heart. The principles of this are sound, as you will eventually have shown you, but you do not want the intrusion of grosser interests to injure your belief.

No one is more susceptible to chagrin and heartbreak than those who love greatly, and those who love greatly are most susceptible to disillusion and turmoil. The best counsel we can supply you is to tell you to be deliberate as possible in your meditations, and keep your heart tender.

Sensitivity maintains as a matter of course.

**T**HERE IS only joy and peace in the enjoyment of the softer sentiments and those that are spiritual are the best material for comfort. We have not desire to wound you by disappointment in your worldly affairs and want you to feel that we are taking a daily interest in them.

*The toils of the world are not for the purpose of making weaklings, and you are not to be cast down if you feel that you are having more than your share.* We of the Light are more interested in your soul than in your bank account, although we know how seriously you are handicapped for service when perplexed by financial deficiency.

There is no room in the plans we have for you for employments of the old methods for making money. You are not to worry over your affairs, however, but to take all the time necessary for meditation and study of our truths, and we will attempt to make you rich in ways you neither *suspect* nor *expect*.

There is no sense in making money for the world to applaud, and the only way we are interested is to make money for the spirit of Truth which you can spread. You are the best judge of the ways in which we help you, by the ways in which we help your soul to tranquillity and opportunities for service, which we open to you when you are in a better mood for expression.

The ways of the most happy people are by far the best when they are not cluttered by the debris of the world's despair at little mishaps. We are not going to let you disappoint your loved ones, but we have endless ways for approaching a problem and solving it, and you will see that we are able to take care of yours. You will release more and more of the spirit of Truth when you are free of commercial worries, and we know it. But you are

not to be worried about your Subconscious. It has played you some ugly tricks but you are coming out the stronger for them. . . .



**T**HE WAY you have responded to us is very dear to us, for we are your good friends and loved ones Over Here who wish you to be both happy and successful in this beloved labor. You are the better for all your beginner's experiences already, and the way to find it out is to continue to respond when you hear us signaling you, and to do your best. When you have done your best, you will have done what we planted in your soul from the Beginning, and you cannot fail to win out in the end. We are of the Light, and are not to be kept from your affairs so long as we can possibly aid you.

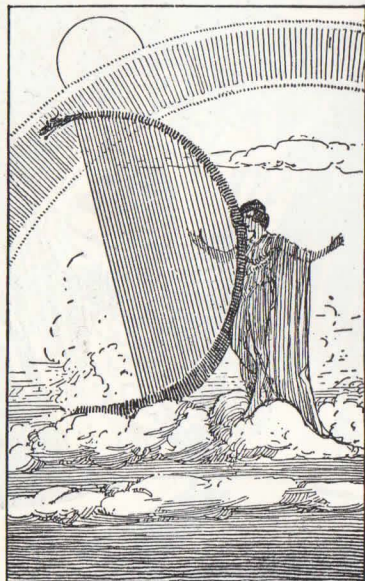
The Subconscious Brain is the organ of Mind, the same as the Conscious. It has in it all the hopes and desires of your heart. You are not willing to be told in your Subconscious brain what you should do for the good of your soul. There is no use of getting out of contact with us, no matter what the reason, if you will be patient and let us re-give you your cues while in the darkness of Doubt.

The way to get those cues is to make it plain to yourself that we are not to be the Cause of your misfortunes but the Remedy. And we will be in the better position to help you by our counsel.

You are the last person on earth we wish to annoy



with preachments, but you must not be so eager to let your desires mold your intuitions. The best way to avoid this is to give yourself a new experience with us whenever you can try it, and we will repeat ourselves until you have it right.



You are not to be in doubt about the substance of your worldly matters in the event of our not being able to reach you. We are not always on hand when you seek to communicate with us, but soon know it and respond . . . You are not to become exercised about the results if you do not seem to make progress, as you are in no position to see the results at once. You are perhaps better for your ignorance for the time, and we will be in the offing if you do not proceed as you should go. . . .

**THE WAY** to go forward is to forget the past and go onward in the courage of Right. You are not to be blamed for having doubts, because you live in a world of realities. *The man without doubts is the man without love, and the man without love is the man without Eternity.*

There are many kinds of Doubt, however. As there is no Doubt in Love, neither is there Fear nor Blame. The man who doubts is a better disciple than you suspect for he keeps the Truth alive, and the Truth is the beginning and end of all belief and faith in God. The men who will not believe in God are not doubters so much as dissenters from Holy Spirit after they know the Truth.

They are the real sinners in Christ.

The way to the Truth is by proving and comparing, and the way to the Light is by keeping the heart open

to the way of the wise men who have found out for themselves by experience.

**YOU ARE** not to be cast down for your so-called complexes, as you are the better for having them and triumphing over them. There is no way to becoming greater of soul than to do the things you have done and then rest in your knowledge of your worth to your Master, who is your only judge.

The work of the Lord is now on the increase more than ever before in the history of the race, and we are those who have most to do with it in the days just ahead. You and others will be on the earth-plane and we on the spirit-plane, advising you. You are to keep your work to the least possible advantage of the men who will not have Christ at any price, while we are to guide and sustain you by having our fingers on the pulse of their thoughts. We will do this work in harmony and love, and the result will be worth waiting for.

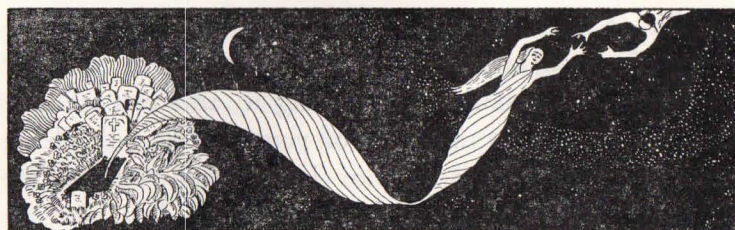
There is no need to worry over the rest of the world's troubles just yet. You are too prone to take the burdens of others on your own shoulders because you love them, and they are not to be blamed for letting you. But they would be far better off to struggle for themselves. You are too prone to shelter others because you have known few roofs yourself, but you are not to be blamed for that, either. The men and women who have nothing to struggle for, are the worse for love.

You will be at your best in your life work when you do not try to make the world's troubles your own, but accept them as decreed for the race from the Beginning. You will be at your best in life when you try to see Life as a thing of beauty, no matter what its aspects.

There are many kinds of love-work to be done in this Vineyard of the Lord, but eventually you will see that men and women are largely the products of their own hates and tempers, and yet the worst of them have something that is very beautiful and precious.

If you doubt it, you have only to look into their eyes when they are in love with one another and you will be surprised at the understanding you have of their souls.

Enough for the moment. . . .





# DO Women Subconsciously Disdain Other Women?

**VIEWED** from the higher cosmic explanations for all forms of human conduct and earthly relationships, how does it happen that "women have no use for women" and will tear the characters and motives of their sisters to shreds behind their backs while saccharinely polite to their faces? The modern psychologist will probably answer that the whole sex attitude is one of biological competition. Women sense in other women a menace to their mates. Only the abnormal or inhibited woman deliberately seeks the companionship of other women in preference to that of men.

So says the scholar who seeks to explain life purely from the physiological standpoint.

But is that the last word in the matter?

How does it happen that women in business will not work for other women—that in occupations with which men have nothing to do, and cases in which the disruption of happy matings cannot possibly be concerned—women will still act catty and vindictive toward one another?

**THE** original law of the Cosmos ordered that men were to become men in mortality, and women were to become women, because of a law of Cosmic Eugenics.

By that, our Higher Mentors imply that there is a certain mode or manner of procedure for souls of given attributes to take, in their journey up through spiritual evolution. Souls of one set of attributes appear to take one manner of method of operation to get adequate self-expression. Souls of other talents and attributes operate in opposition.

Now it is a fact that the higher cosmic law does *not* recognize any essential difference as between men and women as mortals. Both are encouraged to go into life and experiment, to get all the experiencing they can possibly acquire, and, in so doing, perfect themselves in maximum Self-Awareness. They are each to know pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, famine and plenty, heat



and cold, the delights of Love proffered and the distresses of Love rejected.

All this was for the purpose, our Higher Mentors say, of perfecting them in spiritual ennoblements. *But there is a higher spiritual ennoblement of which mortality is not wholly aware as yet: It is the ennoblement that comes from various forms of abject Self-Sacrifice.* And until that is learned, or at least digested, there can be no satisfying explanation as to why women are more critical of other women than they are of men.

Always in these matters there is a Higher Cosmic Process operating than average humanity knows anything about.

**IT SHOULD** go without saying that women as a sex are more self-sacrificing than their masculine consorts. That is one of their prerogatives as women—one of the major profits they come to earth to acquire.

*Women are souls who need greater exercise for their talents of self-abnegation than men need, and super-consciously they admit it.*

They are "created"—if we may use the term—as objects of a certain Self-Pity. Or to put it in another way,



the sum-total of their attributes—what they are and what they hope to perfect themselves in becoming—is to make them acutely conscious of their prime requisite, or errand in each earthly expression.

So when they come into life, age after age, or experience after experience, they mutually recognize one another's purposes or errands. And they are more or less sensitive of their own need for the things which life offers them *as* women.

This being so, it is only natural that they should hold a blanket of scorn for each other.



They say to one another in effect: You are weak and seek to be made stronger in principles of self-abnegation. Therefore you have incarnated as a female of the species that you may get the increments of your folly in other lives when you were bumptious, self-assertive, blustering, and ignoble. You have taken a turn at life again because you are that half of the human soul that must strive most for perfection in the divine attributes of patience and spiritual resiliency. You are essentially remiss in those traits and your feminine role is a matter of your choice and possession because you long ago sensed your own need and responded to it by a standard of life performance which the mortal world calls Femininity.

In this need and in none other, is to be found the major explanation, why women can't work with women and why they instinctively and inherently prefer the companionship of males to those of females.

They "disrespect one another's cosmic shortcomings" if such a phrase is understandable. They seek to show one another up *for* those shortcomings by employing tongues and tempers to each other's earthly detriment.

In a manner of speaking this might be called competition for the male, in that men uniformly prefer companionship with those other souls who have made, or are making, a definite gesture to perfect themselves in

cosmic achievements. And by no means should the strictly biological urge be discounted.

We are speaking of those women who seem to feel an inward fury at being surfeited with their sister women in any earthly predicament. They want to get out, to escape those sister women as a great blanket audience reminds them of the significance of their own life missions, else they would not be on this mortal plane of experiencing at all.

**N**OW women so exercised are not all weaklings, nor are they all under the blanket indictment of futility in their life's affairs. It goes deeper than that. It goes into a delineation of the original separation of the soul into its twin halves, that each half should progress a different route through the Cosmos and arrive at a different objective.

Woman by *her* division of the soul's attributes, to put it in that way, is essentially the Perfecting of the Attributes of Self-Abnegation within the completed Soul Whole. To her is delegated the job of teaching the race its Patience, Self-Sacrifice, Acquiescence and Nurturing Love.

Those qualities, it must be understood, are only possibilities, so to speak, when they are first recognized in the female counterpart to the male. They have to be brought into cognition by a long series of "treatments in, and by circumstances," on the finite plane of self-aware functioning.

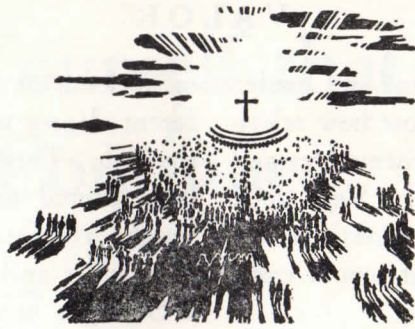
To perfect herself in these, woman has to be the thing which is understood as being perfected. And a swarm of women—to use that inartistic expression—to that degree constitutes a swarm of capabilities for self-sacrifice that cannot function altogether unto themselves else they would ultimately extinguish themselves in the very act and process. The result would be ludicrous if carried far enough.

So a different mode of expression is determined upon. They exercise their prerogatives for self-sacrifice, not on one another as a sex but on their opposites in soul development and spiritual enhancement: those coagulations of sentiment self-expression who are not in life to perfect those qualities so much as their opposites. That is only the Law of Common Sense.

**W**OMEN who are uniformly disrespectful toward each other, who tear apart one another's moral codes and ethical standards as they tear each other's hair

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# Understanding What Is Meant By Planes of Consciousness . .

**B**EGINNERS in Soulcraft are often heard to exclaim, "I wish somebody who knew what he was talking about would explain so I can visualize what is meant by *Planes of Consciousness*. A given person is either conscious or he is not. If he's not conscious, he's dead. How then can you have consciousness by grades or stages?" Like many other examples of "reasoning" displayed by many mortals, it is built on an utterly false basis to start.

It is quite true to say that a person is either conscious or he is not. It is entirely in error to say that if a person is not conscious he is dead. A minute's thought will bring proof of this to mind. You get hit by a baseball on a sand-lot by accident and fall unconscious. Being unconscious means that you're *not* conscious, doesn't it? But because you've passed out in a faint or because for the moment you're stunned, does it prove necessarily that you're dead? You 'regain consciousness', you say, after a time, recover, and go about your business. Death actually is quite something else, and has little to do with consciousness or nonconsciousness. It merely means that your consciousness has quit residing in your organic body permanently. By no means does it follow that because your soul-spirit has quitted your organic body that your consciousness has stopped for all time. Consciousness and your body are two different things. Consciousness isn't a *condition* of the body excepting when your soul is occupying it. When your consciousness moves elsewhere, your body is inert and "lifeless", as you put it. But you might as well say that when you're wearing a given suit of clothes, the clothes are alive, and when you take a given suit off, the clothing is 'dead'.

Your organic body is a sort of flesh-and-blood suit of clothes that you wear for a given period in earth-life. You can put off such garments and still be alive *to* yourself. The trouble is that your kith and kin likewise in the clothes of flesh, look at the suit you've just discarded by the process of 'dying' and treat the suit of clothes as though it were still *you*. Carefully they hold church services over these clothes and bury them most tenderly in a cemetery lot, to religious preaching and sacred music. The real *you* meanwhile has donned another kind of clothes, more adapted to your new condition. . . .

**S**TILL, that's not precisely what this article started to discuss.

The thing that puzzles beginners in Soulcraft is this question of the conscious condition being classified by planes. What truly is a plane of consciousness when a person is either conscious or unconscious as the case may be? Letting alone the item of whether the body is alive or dead, or is a kind of clothing or isn't clothing. What examples have we in earth-life that would explain various "stages" of consciousness?

Well, we have *three*.

We can illustrate by going back to the claim that when consciousness is enoused in some sort of organism, such organism is called "alive" on this plane of earth. What would we identify as the very lowest form of consciousness in this earth-world? The answer is easy. Couldn't we say it was fish-life, existing deep, deep down in the water of one of our great oceans?

No one would be so stupid as to declare that fish weren't alive or weren't conscious. They certainly are alive and conscious enough to make a grab for our worm



on the end of a fishline, and swallow it, and get hauled to land. Yet fish can't read books, or know how television works, or even know how to handle themselves and get about in any other element but water. Very good then, let's call fish-life the lowest *Plane of Consciousness* that exists in our world of Nature. What would come next?

We know that according to biology land mammals came about by fish forms of life learning to breathe air through their gills, and when they had conditioned themselves organically to breathe more and more air without strangling, they flopped up on dry land as tadpoles and lizards. From being amphibious as we term it—amphibious meaning able to live either in water or on land—there came time in their upward development that they remained on land permanently and never went back into the water at all. They learned to secure food on land instead of having it dart past them in water, whether it contained a fishhook or not. They learned to find shelter for their young in holes in rocks, finally to fashion artificial holes for themselves or progressing higher and higher toward the ape and human forms, to make build-ings to shelter them from storms on land.

All this additional knowledge brought them a higher and wider expanding or raising of consciousness. They remembered they were alive, just as they knew it as private and personal information when they were fish in the sea, but their consciousness had increased to take in all the details of land life. That might be called a *Second Plane of Consciousness*. Their organic equipment had adapted itself to land life until no vestige of fish life was left *in* them or *to* them. What next?

**T**HE NEXT Plane of Consciousness might be termed Air Consciousness, or bird-life.

The evolutionists explain that birds, no matter how beautiful their plumage today, really are descendants of flying reptiles, which once were sea creatures. The ancestors of the birds actually seemed to have been the flying lizards of prehistoric times. Instead of front legs they grew wings that flapped their bodies into the air. Gradually, as they adapted themselves to winged freedom, they grew feathers, and ceased to look so much like reptiles. In fact they became practically a species unto themselves. And their element was air.

True, they could make a swoop into water and get themselves food in a passing fish, as the gull or loon does to this day. When they got weary of flapping their wings or soaring, they could return to earth and either perch

on rocks or on limbs of trees. But they really had a different degree of consciousness than the land animal or the fish. They knew that they were alive, just as the land animal or fish knew it. But their consciousness sought a different way of displaying itself, and worked in a wider and freer medium.

— So right here in earth-life, meaning organic life, we have three planes of consciousness disclosed to us: Fish Consciousness, Animal Consciousness, and Bird Consciousness—each knowing itself as aliveness but each treating with a different element, and being experts in different elements, Water, Land, and Air. We are really talking about self-awareness living, moving and performing in different sets of conditions, being cleverer and wiser as it develops upward.

Don't you see, therefore, how you could carry the same thought up to elements not commonly sustaining life on this plane, adding two others, Ether and Thought? . . .

**N**OW this doesn't mean for a moment that birds are cleverer than human beings in the sense that human beings are cleverer than fish. We're considering how Consciousness can alter its width and breadth of performance by operating in different elements. Soulcraft teaches us that Ether and Thought are just as distinctive elements in their ways as Air, Land, or Water.

The best analogy—or example—we have of this in the mortal sense is the butterfly. We know that all butterflies start life really as ordinary grubs or worms. They live a certain length of time as worms, burrowing in soil or the trunks of trees. When they've lived that type of worm or grub life long enough, they spin a cocoon about their worm or grub selves and go to sleep. After enough time has passed they wake up, gnaw a hole out of their cocoons and crawl through it into aerial freedom, discovering that while they've been asleep they've grown beautifully colored wings. Actually they're Grub Birds.

The human spirit does almost the same thing, only the cocoon is lacking and they don't require to sleep so long. Liken the grub-self to the fleshly body-self—that again is the suit of clothes that the soul wears a given number of mortal years, and call the process of gnawing out of the flesh cocoon "dying" and you get a fairly good picture of what takes place respecting Soul Consciousness. Really it's the grub's consciousness that enters into the butterfly and goes fluttering away among the lilacs or roses. But it's performing in a new medium for a grub—the air.

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# DON'T Fool Yourself that No Romance Continues After Death . .



**T**HERE are millions of people who have been led to take for granted that once they get out of earth-life by dying physically, it's a case of bidding goodbye to all aspects of romancing and romantic love as between adult men and women and in the matter of love affairs they're "all washed up." But that's not the way we get it from those who have actually attained to the higher levels of life, themselves. There's even *more* loving and romancing going on in the loftier octaves of consciousness than ever displays upon earth, only it's a clear and sincere affection and not based upon mere attractions of physical sex.

The Bible long ago informed us that "in heaven there is neither marriage nor giving in marriage", so millions of childish-minded people have interpreted this to mean that all romantic and domestic relationships go kaput, men and women never regard each other as connubial companions, and sex as a troublesome item is forever abolished. It hasn't occurred to one in a million to grasp that perchance the information can be taken literally, that there isn't any marriage in the *legal* sense, but that men and women associate freely and love sincerely without requiring to register it somewhere before a dignitary.

This condition, of course, is considered reprehensible from the view of earth ethics, being stigmatized as Free Love. One Mentor in remarking upon it years ago, made the exclamation, "What else should *true* love be but FREE?"

However, don't make the mistake of concluding that because there are no legal ceremonies to join one man to one woman, that the celestial unions are promiscuous. Far from it.

**O**NE of the oddest conditions maintaining on planes immediately above the physical, we are informed, is the fact that one's thoughts have no such privacy to the individual thinking them as is the practice during life in the body. Verbal or audible speech in the higher octaves has no such universal employment for conveying ideas as it

does Down Here. People discourse by powers of thinking, and such thinking is at once transferred into the brain-mind of the associate as though it had been spoken with the mouth. The result is, that it is well-nigh impossible in the loftier realms for people to say one thing and mean another. Whatever they *think* is more or less public property, particularly when it concerns a given person.

Apply this perturbing condition of affairs to love and romance, and no man could tell a woman he loved her without her knowing instantly the truth of whether he spoke sincerely or not. No woman could ever carry on a crass flirtation with a man, leading him to believe she preferred him to any other male.

All this makes for a total and quick cleaning-up of the romantic relations. Or rather, they go perforce upon a basis of the utmost sincerity. However, on the other hand, there are no physical sex liaisons. There being no physical procreations, men and women do not desire to possess one another purely for the organic enticements. They love each other in the purest spiritual manner or not at all.

However, it is an absurd blunder to conclude that graduated souls lose their sex characteristics through making the Passing. In fact, we might almost put it that the very opposite manifests. Women on the higher planes are more womanly than ever, and men are more manly in the individual instance. Furthermore, women are more entrancingly beautiful in face, figure, and movement, because by the powers of Thought they can remedy any physical defects or deficiencies that handicapped them in mortality. . . .

**B**UT MAKE no mistake about it, if a woman shall have wholeheartedly loved a given man on earth, or man loved a given woman, that affair simply compounds and increases under the sweeter freedoms of the higher dimensions. Romances may almost be said to go on to the most blissful culminations. One the other hand, where marital union of earth have been but accommo-

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## Do Discarnates Depict Events?

(Continued from Page 5)

Start in at the beginning of reel one, and show the photoplay to a watching audience. It requires twelve minutes to a reel, and by the time the seven reels are run, an hour and twenty-four minutes of the audience's time has elapsed and curiously enough in addition, the audience may have seen an integration of events that has swept it in imagination or thought projection over a period of half a century.

Rewind the reels, store them back in their seven containers, drop them into a valise, and the drama is still present, and may be carried in entirety down the stairs and shipped to the next exhibitor. But the time-element has been withdrawn, precisely as in Consciousness-Omnipresence. To repeat, "the slowness of Time" is not a factor in the events as events. It requires time to enact these events in consecutive order, and make all the motion incidental to them. But the events as occurrences "in the raw" could be recognizable and interpretable without such chronological "stagger."

And all-pervading, all-comprehending Consciousness in its totally discarnate state might recognize them as events, along with their principal participants, without actual projection being necessary in a three-dimensional world of mortality and materials.

**M**EDICAL authorities who have examined and compared the testimony of drug addicts inform us that there are certain kinds of dope that play all manner of havoc with the addict's perception of time. Marijuana, it is said, will lengthen time in the consciousness. A marijuana addict will start to play a note on a musical instrument that seems only three or four seconds in duration to the normal listener. To the addict, it seems that the note runs for a full quarter-hour. A marijuana smoker may observe an automobile coming toward him in the distance. The automobile is truly but a couple of hundred feet away to the ordinary spectator, but it seems to require the better part of an hour for it to arrive and pass, to the person using marijuana. On the other hand, certain concoctions of opium will shorten the consciousness of time, and make the experience of hours seem as a matter of minutes.

What then, is Consciousness itself, if Time be merely an illusion that requires moving materials to measure?

Mayhap in the examination of Consciousness and Time we shall find the key to the mystery of Life itself! . . .

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## Women Disdain Women?

(Continued from Page 10)

at a bargain counter, are therefore following out a cosmic pattern for one-half of the Completed Soul's ultimate development. They are perfecting themselves in *being* and beyond that is no answer.

In individual cases, of course, women have unpleasant experiences with other women who disrupt their homes or entice away their mates. But it is an irony of the situation that in comparatively few cases are lasting sex hatreds bred from such biological causes.

It is all a form of Cosmic Procedure, by the way, that on the whole is irrelevant and facetious in the face of the grander accomplishments undergoing in the Cosmos.

They have no right or reason to so indict themselves or to indict each other. And yet they will probably continue to do so until the end of time on earth.

Men have the same fellow indictments in other phases than self-sacrifice or self-abnegation. They hate each other for having to learn the fallacy of Killing, for example. They continue to kill because they know they must learn *not* to kill in their ultimate attainments. To kill or not kill, whether individual murder, open warfare, or the exigencies of commercial trade, is a prime question with every man that makes him seek relief from the distractions or surfeitings of his kind in the companionship of Woman—the antithesis of slaughter in all its forms.

Men do not like each other as a sex, any more than women like each other as a sex, only they have a more primitive mode of showing it. They have not learned to preserve the aspect of companionship and altruistic acceptance of custom, as women preserve it and cultivate the saccharine voice and glassy smile. They hit another man on the nose and have done with it. Or they throw him into the hands of a receiver and brag about it.

**F**ROM the larger angle, there is not much to be said in vindication of either sex in their practices toward each other, or those of similar sex. They come and go in and out of the various life-experiences age on age and aeon on aeon, working out their own problems in their own peculiar ways. Now and then it is necessary for a given Half-Soul to have residence in the biological body of the other half as it manifests in the finite world. As



a rule, however, the designation is more or less constant. When the one-half has its lessons thoroughly learned, it awaits completion and complement with the other half and they combine into the one perfect whole on a plane of experience too remote and intricate for mortal minds to grasp.

Be that as it may, women *are* catty toward each other. But when each woman comes to realize that it is because she recognizes the deficiencies within herself, and that it is a reminder of her own scorn for being on earth, she may be a little more lenient toward the deficiencies of her sisters.

## Planes of Consciousness

(Continued from Page 12)

By the same token we can say the soul is the same consciousness that operated in the earth-body but it's broken out into a new medium—*Ether*. Again, however, don't think we mean the ether we inhale when we go to the dentist's to have a tooth pulled with as little pain as possible. . . .

**E**THER in the higher cosmic sense is the basic essence in Nature of which all atomic materials are formed by different varieties and speeds of their atoms. It exists hypothetically, that is in logical imagination, on this plane and everywhere but not in the same density that we become conscious of it and live in it when we get *above* or *beyond* Air.

When we get above or beyond Air, we make the still greater discovery that Thought, or Constructive Imagination, can control and mold ether the same way that the cabinet-maker's hands can cut a design in beautifully grained wood with a chisel, or a potter can shape clay to get a beautiful vase. Ether, in other words, *obeys Thought*.

You "think things" and ether results in producing them. Thought seems to have magnetic properties, we might put it, that makes ether obey it the way iron filings obey a steel magnet—only the other way about. Instead of being drawn toward Thought by some sort of attraction, as the magnet draws iron filings, Thought orders what ether shall do and ether forthwith does it. Sounds simple, and mighty interesting to see proven, all the same you need a still higher grade of Consciousness to credit it. Exactly the same way does the fish need the higher grade of consciousness to credit what life on land must

be like, or the animal needs a higher grade of consciousness to credit what the sensations of a bird must be, winging high over a storm-cloud.

Then among the final steps that Consciousness makes is to leave even Ether behind it and live *in* and *of* itself, all things of seeming substance contained *within* it. This is somewhat of an impossible and perhaps absurd idea to ordinary folk still on the earth-plane of consciousness. But the higher folk tells us that it is nevertheless possible and that it happens.

**A**T ANY rate, when people ask Soulcraft to explain Planes of Consciousness—or when *you* next hear it inquired—explain it by repeating these fish-animal-bird conditions, or Water-Earth-Air "planes" . . . thus it isn't overly difficult to imagine there could be Ether—or etheric—planes and even Pure Mental Planes. If we get up stupendously high in Consciousness, we even begin to learn about Planes of Flame and Light, and how self-conscious creatures can live and perform in them. Not flames as in the Biblical hell, but flames that may represent the universes in the starry heavens.

Just keep on with Soulcraft.

It will make all clear to you if you care to stay with it, and soak in all its Wisdom.

## Romance after Death

(Continued from Page 13)

dation affairs, or as some of the more cynical have phrased it "legalized prostitutions", these are swiftly and completely terminated. And no regrets.

The higher planes are planes of absolute honesty and integrity in relationships between the sexes. We all go Onward with our most beloved companions of earth-life as we elect. The "matrimony" that seems to be recognized on the planes above mortality is the union of two souls, completely engrossed in each other because of their mutuality of interests and aspirations, who prefer each other's companionship above all else.

Nothing fine and pure and brave encounters anything on the higher planes but the most beautiful culminations. If a husband and wife on earth have not been congenial to each other, in nine cases out of ten it has been due to diversity of spiritual achievements. On the higher planes, they will occupy different levels in consequence.

Particularly in matters of romance, it is "better further on!" . . .



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## Life's Dreary Path

Child's viewpoint: "I can understand how they found the planets, but I can't understand how they found out their names."

Words are like leaves, and where they most abound, much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found.

It is well to keep in mind, as the style of dresses change, that it is not the sack, but the potato in it that really counts.

Some fellows try to pull the wool over their wives' eyes with the wrong kind of yarn.

A vacation is what some folks take when they can't take what they've been taking any longer.

"Women love the simple things of life . . . men, for instance."

Father Time is a great artist, but few women admire his line work.

## Roman Holidays



**C**RITICISM of the program set forth in *Something Better* is surprisingly minor. The cold, harsh, economic facts and figures of the first six to eight chapters leave small room for retort. Still, it is annoying the thrifty element that any caste of citizens should be introduced to a full stomach as a steady diet, without manual labor to compen-

sate. It is entirely intelligent and charitable people who so react.

Liberally sprinkled through the sparse critical letters are the inevitable references to the decline and fall of the Roman Empire—by giving the multitude free corn and treating it to gladiatorial exhibitions without tickets being taken at the gate. Of course, this had little or nothing to do with Rome declining and falling, if one truly knows his history. Rome was bringing back so much loot from military conquest that home trade went to pot. Everybody had too much that formerly belonged to people over the skyline that the home artisans suffered for cash customers. A population of artisans without work or shekels was starving, so ambitious politicians arranged for allotments of free corn to be distributed—actually the Rooseveltian WPA relief in an earlier guise. And to keep the hungry thieves from climbing in Roman windows and stealing spoons—that had previously been stolen from people in Africa or Asia—the gladiatorial shows were thrown open to take up the unemployment slack. Today we're doing it with television.



No, it's not worry about the United States going the way of Rome that particularly scores. It's merely the thought that the Picklehauffer family down across the tracks might get something for nothing—the social castes be disturbed—that rankles on complexes too deep for description. Of course not an ounce of worrying is being done about old lady Giltplate and her six sons who were left a couple of million in steel stock—or steal stock—when old man Giltplate was gathered to his burglar ancestors. It's quite kosher for the Giltplate relict and her progeny to live on the coupons from stocks and bonds and not do a lick of honest toil the calendar around. Rome isn't summoned up by these.

However, that dratted family over on the Cabbage Patch getting a free dividend

from anywhere—where's that Roman history? Let's drag it out. Old man Picklehauffer brought eleven little Picklehauffers into this addled Republic before getting killed by that blast in the quarry, and on what he left his widow—or didn't leave his widow—the six Picklehauffer boys are due to grow up to be truckers, crap shooters and slot-machine jockeys, while the five Picklehauffer girls will be hustlin' the block before they're sixteen. That old lady Picklehauffer and the eleven little Picklehauffers should find themselves amply cared for, with finances available for a decent roof, respectable clothes, and full stomachs—with malnutrition something to be laughed at—might work out to make really valuable additions to society of the Picklehauffer procreational faculties and attributes.

Anyhow, it's the younger generation of Picklehauffers, not to mention the Giltplates as well—that the Commonwealth of Christian Mutuality is dwelling upon. Let old lady Giltplate throw mud in the eye of old lady Picklehauffer if it pleases her and Mrs. Picklehauffer let her get away with it. What's that got to do with Christian Economics raising a breed for the oncoming octave of society in which poverty and famine are unknown?

Anyhow, it's not half so ignoble to make a respectable Cooperative dividend available to the families across the tracks, as to put them on Federal relief and pay a Do-Gooder eight thousand a year to visit 'em periodically and make 'em feel their social debasement.

Can't we be honest with ourselves for once and recognize that these social complexes of ours are merely deep-rooted prejudices and hard to get out? The poor should be ground down because they are poor, just as we should bow and scrape to Madam Giltplate because of the grand larceny her old man committed before his demise on society and the steal industry.

Leave us the children to feed and give the breaks up one generation, and Soulcrafters will produce a country to be proud of. And the progeny won't be going to Marxist meetings in the evenings, either.

We're not worrying about making Romans of Americans.



# Stamped Envelopes

By William Dudley Pelley



**I**N HIS dusty private office in the Hebron Plow Works, Bob Kimball sat dourly, convinced he had reached "the end of his rope."

Now thousands of men sit periodically in private offices, convinced they have reached "the ends of their ropes." And so long as they accept it, perhaps they are correct. It is then a simple matter to utilize those strands to suspend themselves from stable beams or orchard tree limbs, or avoid facing creditors, relatives, and alas even wives, by such tragic alternatives as illuminating gas, naked razor blades, loaded automatics or deep, dark pools in woodland lakes.

In the majority of cases, however, quick, sharp misfortune has broken on them from skies comparatively clear. It is really shock which fuddles and numbs them, preventing them from staggering through their temporary sloughs of dependency to the firm, clean ground of renewed self-confidence and indomitable achievement. In Bob Kimball's case, it was no sharp misfortune. It was a long series of misfortunes, gradually increasing in size and weight, bearing down on him with concentrating cruelty till the soul of the man was sick with panic.

Outside it was raining—a cold, raw, dismal, October drizzle. When he raised his face to stare through the window ahead of him, he beheld a long, wide, be-draggled, smalltown street whose mediocre buildings were ruffled and rain-streaked like the feathers of a spiritless fowl. Across a labyrinth of intervening car-tracks, an intersecting street mounted up a hill. Down the grade ran riverlets of sordid yellow mud. Pedestrians were few. Here and there, nosed into the curbs, were battered Fords with tattered curtains. A damp, depressing, biotic panorama of small-town life, all of it. Very like the days on which the plow

works and its manager, Bob Kimball, had fallen. It was growing dark yet he did not rise and turn on the lights. Of what use were lights? Besides, the darkness suited his mood. He wished the darkness could smother him so thickly and completely he need never show his face to the world again.

That is why he did not notice the opening door or realize that someone had entered the office until the intruder spoke. But a woman had entered the office, closed the door softly, backed against it. And when she spoke, her voice was compassionate. Most women have compassionate voices when men are in trouble and they know it.

"Do you mind if I turn on the lights, Mr. Kimball? It's needlessly depressing here in the dusk."

Bob resented the intrusion. Yet he nodded. She snapped on the lamps.

She was an energetic little body in trim tailored waist and short pleated skirt. A saucy nose held pinch-glasses neatly. She had a dimple in her well-formed chin. Further, she was credited with the most shapely ankles in Hebron, the ankles and calves of a girl of twenty whereas Allie Peck was nearly thirty-five—one of those firmly knit, deadly capable little women who never admit defeat till they flirt with collapse, then laugh at it afterward as feminine weakness.

"You don't look yourself, Mr. Kimball. Is anything the trouble especially?" She sank in a chair with a table between them.

Bob looked at her dully. His smile was bitter.

"You ask me that! As if you didn't know!"

"But there's nothing the trouble, is there, excepting the business?"

"Excepting the business!"

"But what's a business but a mere series of commercial incidents? They can mostly be controlled."

She was really shocked at his appearance. She saw a fellow in his middle thirties, his linen soiled, hair awry, features hollowed and sallow with worry. Up to this moment she had failed to notice how very much gray was streaked through that hair.

"I've had a hoodoo after me, Allie. I think we're . . . busted. Not a handsome word, but . . . Lord, how much it expresses."

"Just because the bank refused to renew our note? Pshaw! What's a note?"

"A note is a note, Miss Pollyanna, when failure to pay it means bankruptcy. I'm almost licked."

"Good. Not really licked. *Almost*. That means you've got a chance."

"What kind of chance?"

"To win out. Yet!"

"I wish I had your nerve. That's the trouble with me, Allie. I guess I've lost my nerve."

"And you're blue besides, over losing your wife. It's a gray day, anyhow. I can't really blame you for that. But being moody won't help. It only makes things worse."

"No, losing Edith was only one phase of the hoodoo. I've wrecked the business her father left me. I've messed up everything. I'm a failure and wish I were dead."

There were women who might have scorched this admittance as weakness. But the Peck girl was more sensible. He was not a failure. He was only exhausted. So she did not fight him. She continued compassionate.

"Well, seeing you're not dead, what's the alternative? There's always an alternative. The escape is to find it."

"It's the hoodoo," he cried, springing up. "Bad break on bad break, fizzle after fizzle! Never were a man's opportunities so bright as when I married and stepped into this business. I had money in the bank. I had courage and incen-



tive. Most of all, I had old man Haskins' confidence. Then the first thing that happens, he dies. And throws the estate into litigation."

"That really didn't hurt your conduct of the business."

"No, but it worried and fretted Edith. And she passed the bulk of it along to me."

Allie Peck's face grew stern for a moment. He did not see her indignant flush. Well she knew the woman he married. Had they not been schoolmates? Snobbish, spoiled, petulant Edith who had never earned a dollar in her life yet played social arbiter up and down the valley because of her family's affluence! Not much like her father, Edith. More after her mother, a Galloway. All the same, she was dead like her father three years. What good could resentment against her accomplish?

"Well, what if she did? That's no fault of yours."

"No, but it had its effect. It was mainly responsible for my fuss with Donnelly. He wouldn't have taken his accounts to the Oliver people if he and I hadn't quarreled. That began the break in the old organization. And it lost us that business."

"But you landed other business to compensate."

"Not at any such margin of profit. And Stevens who took his place never got along so well with the men."

"Don't go rehearsing all your misfortunes. Consider some of your successes."

"What successes? When? Where? I've just been able to keep my head above water, . . . hold the works together on the old plant's momentum, . . . because of its history. Then came that Luther decision, when the courts decided against me. I'd have to pay the Haskins estate for my interest here or I couldn't hold it."

"But why go into all that?"

"Because those are the things that have brought me to this moment. Was I to blame for all that costly litigation? Was I to blame for Jake Gossey falling down that elevator shaft and breaking his back? Was I to blame for that boiler room fire that cost us our bank roll to put back in shape? Was I to blame for getting typhoid and being kept from the

office most of last summer—"

"Nobody's blaming you for anything. You're blaming yourself."

"I'm blaming the hoodoo. Then came that Gardner bankruptcy with only ten cents paid on the dollar. And that damnable labor agitator drifting into town, working up a strike to fatten his bank roll. Then hot on that came mother's paralysis. And little Gertrude's pony cart accident. It's a hoodoo, I tell you, the jinx on my trail. Look at old man Sloan. Twenty-five thousand of his legacy he agrees to invest to help us recoup. But within a week of settling the legal details and handing us his check, he falls in the quarry and punctures a lung. There's luck for you. Faugh!"

"But everybody has those—"

"I laughed at the jinx at first. Now it's got me by the throat. And look at our condition. Ten thousand dollars coming due the first of the month and right on top of old Sloan's death, the bank calls our loans. What else can happen, I ask? . . . *what else could happen?* I tell you, I'm at the end of my rope!"



"Lots of things, Robert." She had never called him Robert before. "The trouble with you, Robert, you haven't had misfortune *enough*."

"Haven't had—!" He turned in amazement. Had he heard correctly? But she was not jesting. Never had he beheld this firm, trim little woman so deadly in earnest.

"Dad used to claim there was something elusive about misfortune, Robert. A man never knows how much he can stand until it actually hits him. For everything else we can gauge our capacities, how much food we can eat, how much money we can spend—reasonably—how much success we can even carry before it goes to our heads. But how much misfortune we can bear is the unknown quantity 'x'. We have to go through the test to learn. And even then, when matters have veered for the better, we're

not so positive we might not have borne a little more."

"Oh Allie, for pity's sake—"

"And another funny thing, Robert, a man may meet with so much misfortune that it ceases to destroy him and starts to build him. Because it's misfortune and failures that shows us our weakness. Never success. When a man has had his nose rubbed in a recognition of his weaknesses, in sheer self preservation he scrambles to find a way out. And right there he turns constructive and his fortunes begin to mend. You haven't had misfortune enough to make you fighting mad, to take you by the hair and really rub your face in it so hard you hit back savagely and begin clawing your way to escape in spite of everything. Suicides, absconders, yellow boys who run away in any manner, get just enough discouragement to make them flaccid but never fighting mad."

"As if anything could happen that hasn't happened already."

"A lot could happen, Robert."

"I suppose you mean I could lose my health, go blind—"

"You counted terribly on getting old Mr. Sloan's investment, didn't you?"

"Counted!" He threw himself on the chair and again his laugh was bitter. "Last Monday night I even got the sheaf of accounts payable the first of the month and wrote out the checks, to have them ready without a moment's delay when Sloan paid his money. I got them all written and signed and addressed—"

"And what did you do with them?"

"I had Miss Turner tie a string about the bundle and tuck it way till the money was realized from some other source."

"You used stamped envelopes, didn't you, Robert?"

"Yes. The whole ten thousand of accounts payable was ready to mail to our creditors as soon as John Sloan had made his investment."

"Well, Robert," she announced quietly, "—that's just what I came in to see you about. Someone has blundered, Robert. I've reason to think *those checks have been mailed!*"

A MOMENT of silence ensued, silence as brittle as glass. Face to face they sat there, eye meeting eye. And the fea-



tures of the man changed from sallow yellow to chalky white, from chalky white to ashen gray.

"Those—checks—have—been *mailed!*" Through dry, caked lips he put the question.

"I saw them in Miss Turner's desk every night last week. I thought that's what they were: checks drawn in anticipation of Mr. Sloan's investment. And I knew them too dangerous to be lying about. I went to get them a few moments ago, fearing that new girl might decide they were overlooked mail. The bundle was missing!"

The man got to his feet.

"You're s-s-sure?"

"Do you think I wouldn't make sure on anything so tragic? I found them missing and suspected the worst. So I called up the girl at her home. She remembered something about a bundle of letters. She thinks she dropped them in the twelve-thirty mail this noon."

"O Lord!" Into the chair Bob Kimball sank, his body flaccid.

"Buck up, Robert. Maybe it's the last saving whack."

"The last saving whack?"

"That I mentioned a moment ago. I mentioned it on purpose to sort of prepare you. Since noon those checks have been in the mail. Most of them will be deposited tomorrow in New York. That means they'll be back here in the local bank for collection Friday."

"But we've less than a hundred dollars on deposit. Against ten thousand drawn checks. We've got to explain! We've got to stop payment! *We'll all go to jail!*"

"We won't go to jail if we get some sprawl into us and have ten thousand dollars to meet them when they commence turning up."

The man laughed shrilly. It was indeed the final blow, the capping misfortune.

"But ten thousand dollars by Friday morning! We can't even raise next Saturday's payroll."

"Well, Kismet in the shape of a green office girl has apparently taken an interest in this business. Instead of old Sloan. Robert, we've got to raise that money." Hitherto she had been but his office manager. Now she spoke like a

partner—his partner. "If ten thousand dollars worth of checks begin going back marked 'No Funds', explanations may be as embarrassing as they are . . . dangerous."

"Oh, what a fool I was to get them ready. Oh, what fool!"

"But not half such a fool as you will be in letting them turn up for collection with nothing to pay them. Robert Kimball, ten thousand dollars in new money coming into this business right now will restore our shaky credit and put us on our feet. Supposing we get it."

"Go get it where?"

"I haven't the slightest idea in the world, excepting *we must!*"

**T**HERE is one peculiar feature about an imminent jail sentence, fancied or otherwise, which possesses surprising points: an astonishing incompatibility in-trospection.

People on railroad tracks with fast expresses bearing down on them, passengers on liners which have collided with icebergs, young business executives who have inadvertently put ten thousand dollars in worthless checks into the United States mails, rarely stand on self pity.

In the next sixty minutes Robert Kimball's brain performed more concentrated gymnastics than at any time in the past six years. *Fear* clutched his vitals—fear of facing those irate creditors, fear of meeting his pettifogging bankers, fear of chagrin at the hands of towns people, fear that he might have broken some constitutional statute. He had to do something and do it quickly. But what? The woman like himself took to pacing the floor.

Several courses were open to him.

First, he could run away. He could catch the midnight express down the valley, make the New York train, drop completely from sight. But aside from its ethics, that course held two drawbacks: he could neither take his motherless little daughter with him nor leave her behind; second, to run away would be positive confirmation he had deliberately tried to put something over on his creditors and his bank.

The second course would be to acquire a gun, fashion a mask, walk into the Hebron Trust Company and scoop in all

the currency visible. That is, providing he could. But aside from the utter absurdity of the gesture, that would not be playing the great game of business according to the rules. Any fool could get money by snatching his neighbor's. And in case of certain detection, he would lose his place as head of the firm, anyhow; it would resemble selling a horse to buy it a bridle. No, first, last and all the time, whatever he did must be strictly within the law.

His third course would be to realize all he could on the outstanding Accounts Receivable, turn raw materials into cash where he could, perhaps dispose of one of the company's buildings. The Accounts Receivable happily totaled far in excess of ten thousand dollars. But it would take days, even weeks, to thaw them out and transform them into cash. Likewise to find any customer for raw materials. As for selling any realty, such negotiations would take months, with no end of damaging publicity beside. A mortgage was out of the question. The plant was already mortgaged for all it would bear.

No, he must either borrow the money and have it on deposit within thirty-six hours or he must find someone in the valley who would purchase a stock interest quickly as substitute for old John Sloan.

But borrowing ten thousand dollars on thirty-six hours notice however, with bankers and creditors passing the word: ". . . hear the plow works is slippin'". Better watch your credits" was almost as absurd as selling any realty. For weeks Bob had tried to borrow *ten thousand* and consistently failed. A small town has a mysterious way of knowing when a local industry is encountering ragged sailing. And distant city financiers have an equally disturbing way of demanding: "If your proposition's sound why can't you get the cash for it locally?" Thus by elimination was Kimball brought to the last.

"We've got to get someone to take Sloan's place, some one who has enough money right on tap at this moment. Who has ten thousand available in their checking account anywhere in this part of the state—who *could* pay it out if they had inclination?"

The woman sank down in the chair by





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the table. She pressed her tight little hands to her eyes. Suddenly came inspiration.

"Get the telephone directory," she ordered. "Go over every name. Some one might suggest itself that wouldn't occur to us otherwise."

He complied with alacrity. He was no longer a wailing incompetent. He was a man prepared to do battle for his life—at least for his liberty and pursuit of happiness. He started through the "A's."

Out on the roof of the boiler room, the factory whistle blew six. The meagre force of employes filed out in the groggy wet and the sough of their muddy footsteps died with distance. Old Pete Newcomb "came on" for the night shift as watchman. About them the buildings quieted.

It was twenty minutes to seven when Kimball finally reached the one lone phone subscriber under "Z's"—Amos Zangwell, a farmer, out near the Crossing. There were only three names, three people in all of Hebron township, of sufficient affluence to have ten thousand dollars in raw, idle currency on deposit for possible use by the plow works at nine o'clock Friday. Bob had noted them down on a billhead:

HOMER WRIGHT, banker  
SILAS WILLOWBY, manufacturer  
JETHRO PEPPER, contractor

Bob started at the "list" in irony.

"I suppose we can cross off old Wright at once," he said glumly. "If he's refused me some of the bank's cash already this week, it's certain he'd never hand me over ten thousand of his own."

"Mr. Willowby might manage it, if you gave him control. He did it for the creamery. Anyhow, call him."

Bob forced himself to use the phone as a motorist who has struck a pedestrian climbs down from his car to go back and examine his victim. At the end of three minutes he fumbled the receiver back onto the hook in relief. Mr. Willowby was spending the week in New York. He would not be back until Tuesday.

"That leaves Colonel Pepper," the man pronounced grimly. "Looks like we've just got to get that ten thousand out of old Colonel Pepper. But how can I do it? Help me in this thing, Allie. I swear I'll make you treasurer of the company,

. . . I'll raise your salary, . . . I'll—"

Suddenly he met her eyes. A queer sensation prickled through him. She was one of those candid little women whose eyes are the windows of their souls—and hearts. As if she would take money for what she was doing—her interest.

He turned brick red at what he saw. *She loved him*. It was because of her interest in himself that she was so concerned. Fool that he was, he might have known.

Yet despite that sudden revelation, he groped for her as a storm-tossed mariner tries for an anchor. She was the anchor type of woman. It was not altogether weakness on his part. It was strength on hers.

"Of course I'll stand by you," was her calm reply. She reached out her hand across the table. He gripped it tightly in both of his own. Only a man is frustrated when he finds himself in love.

"How can we bag the Colonel, . . . get him to believe he's losing the business chance of his life not to have a ten thousand dollar interest in the plow works by nine o'clock Friday? How can we make him *want* that interest, fight for it even, so he writes us a check for the whole amount?"

"I think," said the woman, "—some supper would help us. Mental engines need fuel like all types of engines. But we'll find a way. There's no human problem without a human solution."

He arose and came around the table. The woman stood up.

"Allie!"

How it happened was logical enough, though it had never happened before. When they finally found their hats and raincoats, the woman's hair was somewhat disturbed. But her eyes were shining. Oh the romance of small business! . . . the romance *in* small business the nation over.

They went from the office that night walking very close together under the same umbrella.

**N**OW WHEN a man spends most of his life in a small country town making money, he generally looks the part to perfection. Colonel Jethro Pepper was no exception to the rule.

A grizzled war horse of New England



business was the Colonel. Sundry Hebron folk referred to him as a "hard boiled egg." There were likewise those whose epithets were not even that considerate. "Stick a knife in him and he'd bleed lemon juice," was the way the dramatic expressed it. He had made his money in masons materials, pulp wood and timber on the stump. Of late years he had styled himself a "contractor"; at least he had erected the creamery, the pulley factory, the Old People's Home. It was a fad of the Colonel's to "keep his money liquid." Thus was he in a position to turn many a shavetail penny, invest in many a foreclosed bargain to his profit where his neighbors saw their financial futures as through a glass, darkly. Yet he was not the conventional small-town Shylock. Simply a hard-headed, elderly business man who had come to his worldly knowledge along the route of costly experience.

Six feet in height he stood, with legs like telegraph poles, a bullet head too small for his body, most of his ballast well up on his belt. He went to and fro in a battered green derby, a faded rumpiled suit and hands perpetually in the pockets on his stomach. His eyes were close together. His complexion was fiery red. He chewed tobacco in church.

When the telephone blared for the first time that evening at a quarter after eight, he arose to respond with vest off and suspenders down, the evening paper clutched disastrously in one great gnarled paw, the toe of each woolen sock twisted in a mighty knot. Viewed from behind, the rear of his person resembled the back of a hack.

"Hello, hello!" cried an excited voice. "Is this Colonel Pepper? Well listen, Colonel! . . . how much do you want for that lot of yours next to the plow works?"

"I've allus arst two thousand," he responded without dropping the paper. "Who's talkin', anyhow?"

"Well don't sell it until I see you. I can't explain now. But all hell's broke loose. Don't sell until I see you. Good-bye!" And so quickly the informant rang off.

The Colonel banged the receiver up and down on the hook but got no response. When Central finally answered

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she stated the call had come from the pay station in the Hebron hotel.

He went back to his reading with thoughtful face. But he did not read. Was it a practical joke? Funny thing to joke about, that lot beside the plow works. He did not think it a practical joke. The person had been greatly excited.

He lowered the paper. He started thinking. His caller had declared all hell had broken loose. What hell? Where? He was still thinking a quarter hour later when the phone bell spoke again.

It was a calm, modulated, woman's voice.

"Is this Colonel Pepper? I'm sorry to have bothered you tonight but it is somewhat essential. Do I understand correctly, Colonel Pepper, that you own the property adjoining the plow works?"

"Yaas, I do. Who's this speakin'?"

"It would do you no good to give you my name. We are strangers, Colonel Pepper. But of course you've heard the news about the plow works—"

"No, b'dam, I haven't. But I want to hear about it. What is it?"

"You *haven't!*" Came a perturbing pause at the other end of the wire.

"Last I heard, the plow works was nearly busted. Nevermind whether I know you or not, who's this speakin'?"

"Oh, I couldn't tell you that, Colonel Pepper. If you don't know anything about the plow works, why then I guess . . ." Another long pause. The caller was debating in confusion.

"But what is it, woman? *What is it?*"

The old man heard a funny little laugh, a sort of an astonished laugh, across the wire.

"The plow works is anything but financially embarrassed. I thought of course you knew. I'll have to ask time to consider. I'll call you up again. Goodbye."

And before the contractor could remonstrate, the wire went dead.

Colonel Pepper did not return to his sitting room this time. He sat in the hall by the phone stand debating. At length he called Homer Wright of the bank. Homer should know if anything was occurring in the plow works. But the Colonel was hardly prepared for what followed.

"Yeah," came that worthy's astounded tones on the wire. "Some man to New



York just finished speaking with me on the wire . . . twenty minutes or so ago, maybe. Wanted to know all about Bobbie Kimball."

"Did they say *why* they wanted to know?"

"Not exactly. Acted terribly mysterious. Just wanted to know all about him and the plow works—"

The conversation was suddenly broken. Central had inadvertently "cut in" on the Colonel's wire.

"Hello? Is this Colonel Pepper speaking?" The voice was a man's. It sounded very far away. It might have been out of town or the speaker may have been some distance from the instrument. "Parker's my name, Colonel Pepper. You don't know me but—"

"Has it got anything to do with the plow works?"

"Why, yes. Everything. How did you know?"

"Had two calls already this evening."

"The devil! Who from?"

"Can't tell you. Why be you? I mean what's your business?"

"I'm very interested in the Hebrew Plow Works just at present. I want to know how much you want for that land next to them along the tracks they're going to build on."

"Their goin' to *build on!* The plow works? What with? They're busted."

"Stuff and nonsense! What do you mean, busted?"

"Bobby Kimball, the manager, 's been tryin' all the week to raise ten thousand dollars to stave off bankruptcy—"

"You're hopelessly ignorant of what's going on then, Colonel. Ten thousand dollars to avoid a bankruptcy! Who's been stuffing you?"

"They ain't nobody been stuffin' me. I ain't the stuffin' kind."

"Have you seen Mr. Kimball lately?"

"Seen him to the post office somewheres around noon."

"And he didn't say anything?"

"What was there to say?"

"Perhaps not to you. That's true. Why should he? But you own that land there, don't you?"

"Tight as a drumhead."

"I'd like to discuss it with you in the morning, Colonel. Could I make an appointment?"



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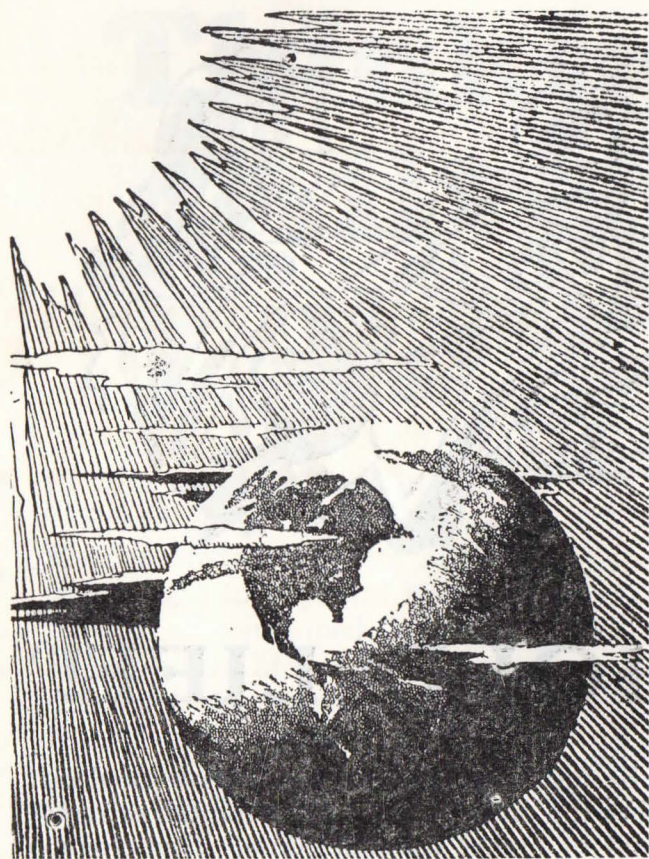
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“But what is there to discuss? What's happenin', anyhow?”

“Apparently Mr. Kimball has a closer mouth than I had supposed. No, I wouldn't care to give details over the wire. I'll inform you in the morning. Shall we say at ten?”

The Colonel was obliged to say at ten. The connection was broken.

The Colonel sat ludicrously in the hallway, creaking and cracking his toe-joints. He finally went back to the sitting-room. The minutes ticked past. He looked at his mammoth watch. Should he put on his shoes and collar and go down-street for details? At the end of nearly half an hour, curiosity got the better of him. He had one shoe laced when another bell rang, this time the doorbell. His wife upstairs called down for him to answer. He roared at her bellicosely. He went to the door in one shoe.

Bob Kimball himself stood outside. One look at his face and the contractor knew that something had happened indeed.

“I'm here to make you a quick offer on that land next to my factory, Colonel. I want to buy it at once—tonight!”

“What for, you young blatherskite?”

“To build a factory. An entirely new plant.”

“An entirely new plant! Come in, Robert. I been hearin' things aplenty about you tonight. What's stirrin', anyhow? What's the idea?”

“I can't give you details. But the plow works are looking up. I just want that land and I want it quick.”

“Somebody else after it?”

“Maybe. A hold-up. Something's leaked somewhere—”

“Why Robert, it'd cost you all of three thousand dollars, that land. Not a cent less 'n three thousand I'd take for that sidin'. It's gone up in value—”

“I'll give you five!”

Colonel Pepper nearly swallowed his chew. The evening had begun so quietly. And now this commotion!

“Three, I said, Robert. Three thousand dollars!”

“I know what you said. But I'll give you five!”

“Five thousand dollars! Why offer me five when I only arst three?”



"Will you take five thousand? Spot cash?"

"You're gonna build a plant, you say? A whole new plant?"

"A whole new plant. As soon as I can get it up."

"What with, Robert?"

"Wind," was the answer, heavy with sarcasm. "Wind and feathers and tissue paper and thistle-down. What else?"

"How much is this plant gonna cost?" Occasionally the Colonel was sarcastic himself. He knew its value.

"A hundred thousand more or less. Depends on what the contractor asks—from New York."

"Contractor? From New York?"

"You don't suppose there's any contracting firm around this part of New England capable of erecting a hundred thousand dollar plant—within the next four months—and getting it up in time for—" Bob stopped abruptly as though caught in a careless and dangerous statement.

"For what, Robert?"

"Nevermind for what. I don't want to seem rude but the details are . . . well, I'm not ready to make them public property."

"What's come over you, Robert? I seed you to the post office this noon and you looked like you'd lost your last friend. Heard your plow works was havin' hard sleddin', anyhow, . . . due to bust any minute. And you come sashayin' up here tonight with wild schemes for buildin' a new plant to the tune of a hundred thousand."

"Not so wild as you think, Colonel Pepper. Maybe a deal of mine has suddenly gone over, Colonel. Anyhow, I'm perfectly willing for you to consider me wild. Will you sell me that land—?"

"Where's this money comin' from, Robert, to put up a hundred thousand dollar building?"

"Do you think I'd be fool enough to blab that promiscuously for the town and my competitors to—"

"But you're askin' me to put up your buildin's, ain't you, . . . to take a risk—"

"Am I? That's news."

"Ain't you?"

"Indeed I'm not! I'm asking you for nothing at all but to sell me that land. For five thousand dollars!"



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"Whoa, sonny. Not so fast! Tain't every day we go sellin' four thousand dollar factory sites—" He stopped. The phone bell had blared in his hall. Young Kimball sprang up.

"That's my New York call probably. I asked to have it switched up here. If it's New York calling just tell them I'll speak."

In a semi-daze, the Colonel shuffled once more to the phone. Clear and sharp in answer to his response came a woman's

voice. It might have been the local Central's; it might have been Allie Pecks. The Colonel had no way of telling and it did not occur to him to ask. It demanded:

"New York calling Mr. Kimball. Is he there?"

"Yeah," said the Colonel jealously. "He's here."

Bob went to the phone and settled himself for a lengthy conversation.

"Hello? . . . Hello? . . . Yes? . . .





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yes, this is Mr. Kimball. . . . Who? . . . Oh yes, Mr. Martin." Long pause. The young man listened intently. Finally he interrupted, ". . . but I simply can't do it, Mr. Martin. . . . There wouldn't be time. Even if the McArthur people could get their workmen up here to break ground by the tenth and all their materials were . . . what?" Again he listened. Then he grew increasingly exasperated. "Yes, I know, . . . but there isn't any contractor up here who could possibly do it. I don't care if he did put up a forfeit. I know these country towns. The local contractors might erect houses and hencoops and frequently a fair-sized business block but—" Again he listened. In the inner room, Colonel Pepper was beginning to fret and fidget. He even arose and stood in the doorway. ". . . fifty thousand ready by Monday? Who? What? . . . but I tell you it isn't a question of capital. You know what your man said about the contract. It's purely a case of this being a small country town. And even if we agreed to begin shipments by February first, that would only leave us four months . . . what?" Another lengthy pause, this time so extended that the thoughtful old Colonel began pacing the hall. ". . . I know," broke in Robert at last, ". . . but our little plant as it stands couldn't do it. You New York people down there in the city are accustomed to service—"

"Wait a minute, Robert," came a hoarse, anxious voice at the young man's shoulder. "Arsk your party to hold the wire."

But with his free hand, young Kimball made a gesture for silence. He listened again.

"Robert, hold the wire!"

"I can't," snapped the young man aside, "—you don't know who I've got on this wire and wouldn't appreciate it if I told you. . . . *what?*" This last into the transmitter. ". . . no, no, no! Absolutely impossible! . . . I said if we got up the new plant by February first, we might possibly begin shipping plows to catch the steamers by the first of March. You misunderstood. But that means breaking ground almost this week and I don't know yet if I can get the land . . . I have reason to believe some news has leaked out. Somebody else wants to hold



us up. People right here in town . . . came in tonight I believe . . . No, our lot is nearly covered with buildings as it is . . . We'd have to move out of town otherwise . . . freight sidings, you know. They're important. What? . . . Well, supposing I could? No, no, no! . . . I'll tell you what I'll do. This is Wednesday night. I'll see what kind of service I can get up here and I'll give you a long distance ring around eleven o'clock tomorrow. Better still, I'll try to catch the Midnight tomorrow and be down to your office the following day . . . what? . . . no, no, I said I wasn't worrying about the money . . . I saw Parker tonight . . . what? . . . No, no, you couldn't get country town contractors to do that. Not in a million years. There's a firm down in Springfield who might. They understand a big contract like this. But these little fellows would be plumb scared to death—"

"ROBERT!" The Colonel had drawn close to the phone. Now his great paw was shoved over the mouth piece. "You listen to me. What's all this talk, anyhow? Tell me what—"

"Keep out of this, Colonel. It's none of your business."

"But it is my business. I'm a contractor and you know it."

"In a small way you may be. But these people want a ten to fifteen thousand dollar guarantee that any firm I might get to build the new plant in this neck of the woods would be capable of delivering."

"What's ten or fifteen thousand dollar guarantee on a hundred thousand dollar contract?"

"It's more money than you've got, Colonel. Loose!"

The Colonel went abruptly apoplectic. "More money than *who's* got loose?" he roared. . . . His wife abovestairs lifted her face in alarm from her sewing.

"*You!*" roared Bob in equal warmth. "Take your hand away from this phone before I lose my connection."

"Robert!" The contractor's tone was pleading. "For heaven's sake be sensible. Keep this job in town. Put off your party till you an' me can talk things over."

"We've nothing to talk over, . . . excepting the land." But the Colonel's hand was drawn from the instrument. Into



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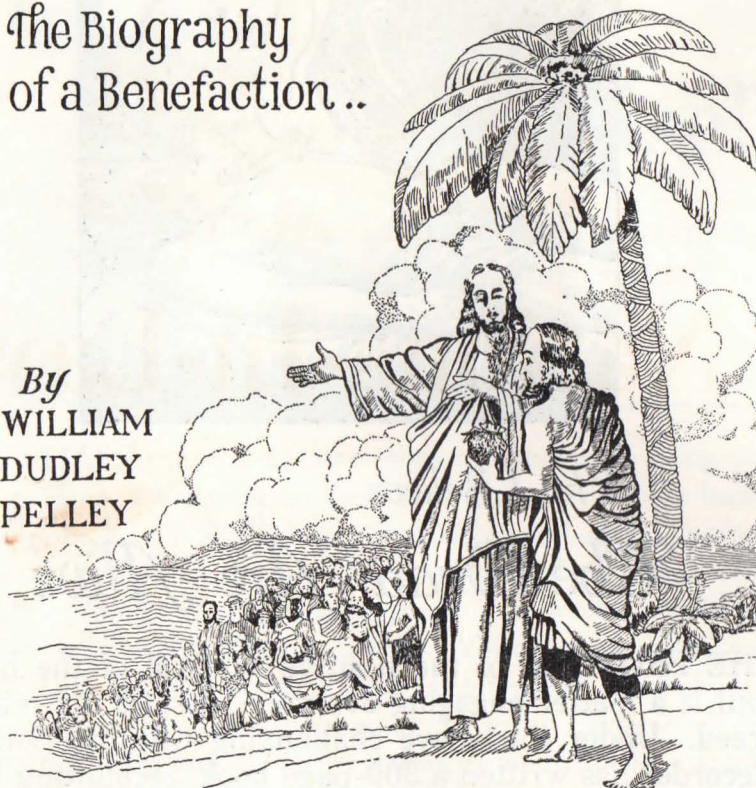


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the transmitter Bob Kimball concluded: "Hello, Mr. Martin! . . . there's a person up here listening who thinks things might be arranged for the sake of holding the work in Hebron. What? . . . a fifteen thousand dollar guarantee in advance? . . . paid to *me*? . . . No, no! It's hopeless . . . Absolutely hopeless! I told you this was a small country town. Couldn't put it over in a million years. But I know what I can do, . . . I'll go down to Springfield if you wish, stop over on my way to New York. I think I know the firm who would. How's that? . . . okay? . . . All right, then. Say Friday morning at eleven. Yes, I'll bring the check with me if they want the contract. . . . Yes, yes. All right. Goodbye!" Bob Kimball rang off and sat for a moment in angry thought.

"Robert, what's all this about? What's happened, anyhow?"

"Oh, I've had a little windfall," the young man replied with maddening self-content. "And seeing my deal's going through I'm going to erect the biggest plant east of the Mississippi."

"But Robert, . . . this is the biggest thing that's hit Hebron in years!"

"Don't I know it? Why do you think I hung to that bally little plow plant and tried to keep its head above water on loans? I had my reasons. I rather think so!"

"But a hundred thousand dollars is an awful heap of money. You can't keep control with—"

"Who said anything about keeping control? I know what I'm doing. I'm cleaning up. I simply want to know if you'll take five thousand dollars for that land we need for enlargement and bind it definitely so I can take proofs to New York tomorrow night?"

"No, you can't have that land. You can't have that unless I be the one to get the contracts for them buildin's. I built some pretty good sized buildin's, Robert. You know that."

"Yes, but I know you well enough, Colonel, to appreciate that guarantee stands in the way. You know you can build them, perhaps. Personally I have my doubts. But you heard what they said. They want a fifteen thousand dollar advance payment to be forfeited in case you fall down."



"Of course they do. They're business folks. If they weren't, they'd never live to New York. But who says I ain't in no position to put up such a forfeit?"

"I do. You heard what I told them."

"I got over thirty thousand *in cash* in my checkin' account right this minute!"

"What good does that do me—do *us*? They want fifteen thousand down in New York."

"What shouldn't they have it? If I was in their place, wouldn't I want the same?"

"Yeah, but I'm not forgetting your reputation in town and how I've had to struggle to borrow a little money on accounts to keep things running for this big event."

"Before you go callin' me names, suppose you make me a proposition and learn."

"If you're so darned sure of your financial ability and skill as a contractor, put it in writing. Now! At once! And be prepared to pay your spondulicks into the Hebron Trust Company by ten o'clock tomorrow morning. That's the only talk that registers in a red-hot situation like the present."

"But who 'm I dealin' with? You ain't said—"

"And I won't. For the present you're dealin' with the Hebron Plow Works—Robert Kimball, president and treasurer."

"But supposin' your deal fell through? What becomes o' my money?"

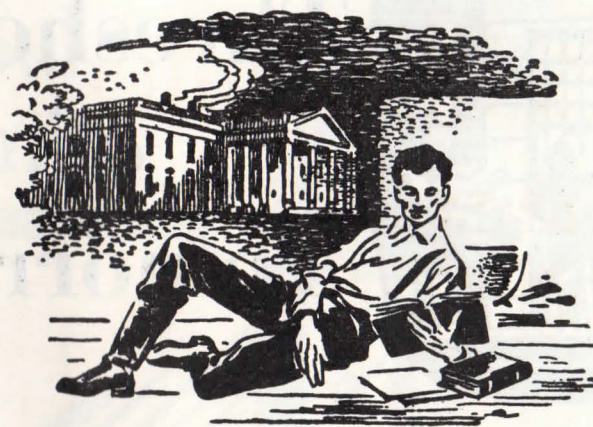
"I thought so. But in the face of what you've heard, if you're so darned afraid I'll skip to Europe with your bally little forfeit, I'm not unwilling to secure you by a sizable block of the company's stock. But you've got to talk fast. I'm doing business with Springfield, promptly in the morning."

"You got a lot of civic pride!"

"And a lot of civic pride the town's had for the plow works while I was desperately holding things together for this deal. It's my turn now, Colonel. And I'm going to have my pound of flesh."

**N**INE-THIRTY came. Ten o'clock. Half past. In Colonel's Pepper's small front parlor the lamps burned brightly on into deeper evening. Now and then silhouettes fell on the drawn cur-

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tains as of someone walking the floor. Finally, along toward eleven, the lamps came on in a small upstairs room, the Colonel's "private office."

It was long past eleven when Robert

Kimball came away from the house. He descended the steps rather dizzily. Down to the corner he walked in the mist. Under the nebulous arc lamps stood a woman, a firm-bodied, compact little woman





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who had waited there faithfully for over two hours.

She lifted her umbrella at his approach and made certain of his identity. The man slipped beneath. They walked away together.

"You did it?" she asked at last, unable to conceal her excitement longer.

It was a long time before he answered:

"Allie, believe it or not, but—I've done the impossible!"

"It's always the impossible that happens in real life, Robert. You actually got the money?"

"I've got Colonel Jethro Pepper's personal check in my inside pocket right this moment made out to the plow works for twelve thousand five hundred dollars. I closed the deal by splitting the difference."

"We can use that extra twenty-five hundred to meet our payrolls the coming fortnight."

"That's just what I figured."

"And what have you contracted to do in return?"

"You answer that, Allie. Coming right down to it, not a goldarned thing!"

"What?"

"Not a gol-darned thing. Excepting have some of our stock at the bank for him as security by noon time tomorrow."

"But the hundred thousand dollar factory! You were careful not to commit yourself so he can get you for obtaining money under false pretenses?"

"He put his signature to a rather vehement paper that when I'm ready to go ahead with construction, he's capable of building a hundred thousand dollar factory. And he's backed up his contention with a twelve-thousand-five-hundred-dollar check. What if he can build a hundred thousand dollar factory? I should worry. Personally I don't doubt his ability in the least. But if he's obsessed with the need of cramming a twelve-thousand dollar check into my hands simply because he overheard a bogus conversation with your brother Tom in New York, that's his funeral and I should grow old and get a wrinkle."

"Tom's a brick. And so is Agnes. I had a hard time making him understand what it was all about at first. But he certainly can play a part when he wants—and he gets the idea."

"When those checks come in, they'll



all be met. We won't owe a dollar in the world. That means a new underwriting of credit for the poor old plow works and the chance to get our accounts thawed out and the money collected to repay the Colonel when a 'hitch' comes in my deal and our 'New York people' discover they don't want to proceed."

"The bigger they are, the harder they hit, Robert. As for yourself, many a business man might find a way from his troubles by increasing them. Did Tom call that banker, too?"

"And while you were on your way up, I had Agnes also put in a teaser from right here in town. Ned also. Called himself Parker. It's lucky I thought of utilizing my relatives."

"It's lucky you thought of the whole scheme at all. Darned if somehow I don't feel that with you as a manager I *could* go ahead and build a new plow works." He stopped and lost step. "Gosh, Allie, lets!"

"Let's see what we can do with the present plow works first. But I agree that all you need is a good business manager—"

"Allie—would—you—take—the—job?" His voice was tender. "I don't know why I haven't seen it before. I think you're wonderful."

She laughed delightedly and kissed his damp shoulder. They turned down a side street away from the lights.

**BUT HOW** very wonderful she really was, he might better have appreciated if he had followed her movements later that night on leaving her at her brother's door.

For she did not enter at once. She waited for him to dissolve in the nebulous wet. Then she retraced her steps, downtown, down through the business section and across the freight tracks. Into the dusty old office she let herself in the dark. Fumbling around the bookkeeper's desk, in another drawer entirely she located a tightly tied packet of stamped and addressed envelopes—containing ten thousand dollars worth of unpaid bills and checks.

She mailed them on her way home to bed in the box at the station.

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## The Golden Speakings



MY DEARLY Beloved: The Sons of Light array themselves at my bidding: they go forth in the world and make it beautiful:

2 They are a goodly company indeed, but not the Goodly Company that findeth me through suffering.

3 The Sons of Light are of the Host; they are a creation of the Father for a purpose; men call them angels;

4 They are called Sons of Light by the Father's cohorts.

5 Behold their order is higher than man's, yet are they not Spirit manifest in earthly form: they are Spirit manifest in spirit form, for the commission of those goodly deeds which only the Father's wisdom decreeth.

6 They are endowed with infallible powers in Matter, in that Matter obeyeth them; Matter is their servant: they have dominion over it.

7 They know neither time nor space but transfer themselves from planet unto planet in the twinkling of an eye.

8 They come and go upon the Father's business: great is their joy therein: they are pure in heart and beautiful of mien.

9 They seek to do the Father's will, and in that they seek, they do find life wondrous.

10 They are not as we, for we are Spirit come into Matter to do the Father's will; we are celestial of origin but mundane of mission; they are celestial of creation and go unto the farthest star to be of service;

11 Perceive ye the difference?

12 The Sons of Light have neither name nor identity except that they be of good report; they live and have being in that they do good; Good is their watchword and password to existence, wickedness cancelleth their sentient lives.

13 Lo, they do destroy themselves automatically if they commit atrocities of temperament against the righteous of any creation.

14 They are brilliant of aspect to eyes without clay; children of darkness discern them never; children of light discern them easily when their vision is clear from mountain tops of wisdom.

15 Know ye that men are numbered with the Fallen;

16 Man of mortality hath defiled his own species: he hath made abomination that taketh him far from that which is spiritual;

17 He hath transgressed the laws of cleanness of heart;

18 Thus hath he fallen.

19 But man is not lost unless so be it he loseth himself: man climbeth, I tell

you, from his earthly degradation: he goeth up from beasthood and regaineth his lost status.

20 Man hath progressed far on that way which is upward, he hath glorified the form of the ape wherein he dwelleth, behold he hath sung carols unto the Father with a throat that once grunted, he hath seen eternal mysteries with eyes that once gazed upon practices unmentionable.

21 I tell you, be advised! Ye are as gods yourselves among men; the Sons of Light are your ministering servants.

22 The Father, I say unto you, pitieth man: man hath dealt harshly unto himself: he hath turned his high mind to matters that are childish: he hath made little birds of mud and expected them to fly;

23 He hath gazed upon starry heavens and exclaimed, Behold a canopy for our sweet entertainment!

24 He hath made no end of trivial ailment; he hath watched for signs and for seasons and kept tryst with those omens which he himself created.

25 Know that he is childish, he knoweth not his stature; know that he must dwell yet many aeons upon this planet to encompass his lost godhood.

26 But I say as I have said before, that he shall make faster progress from our presence among men.

27 Man hath a devil within himself: ever will he abominate:

28 And yet abomination concerneth not always the crossing of species; mayhap it meaneth the crossing of Brain with that which is Passion, the crossing of Intellect with that which is Appetite, the crossing of Desire with that which is Lust.

29 Man ever maketh new abominations as he striketh off the shackles of those which are old. Yet I say he progresseth, verily upward. Day unto day is his progress manifest.

30 Behold that time cometh when he standeth forth in body made of Thought, after the Father's image indeed, which I tell you is Light Incarnate: Light incarnate in Matter: which is Love incarnate in Light: which is Light and Love and Matter incarnate in the Godhead.

31 Do I speak unto you of mysteries? I say that ye shall know them in the Day of Understanding.

32 Behold my ministers who are Sons of Light manifesting, have orders of me that ye be protected in your thought and persons when it so cometh that ye advance my Plan;

33 Such is your shibboleth: of such are ye instruments.

34 Know my love and my blessing, for verily it cometh.

PEACE





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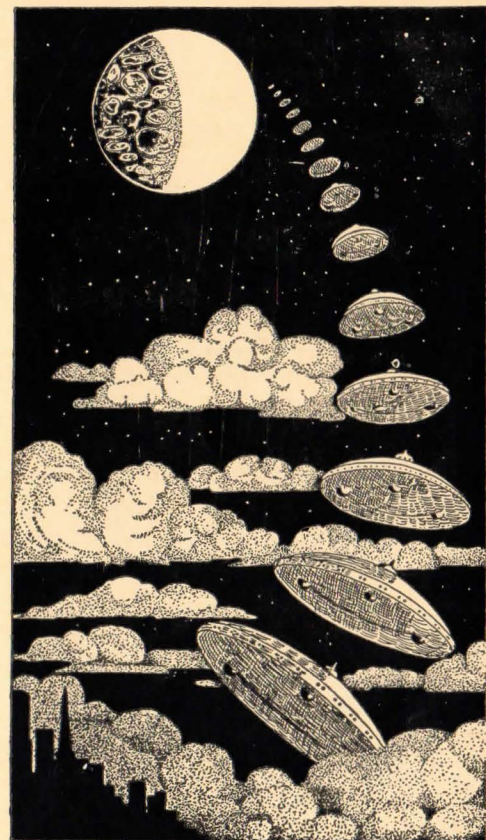
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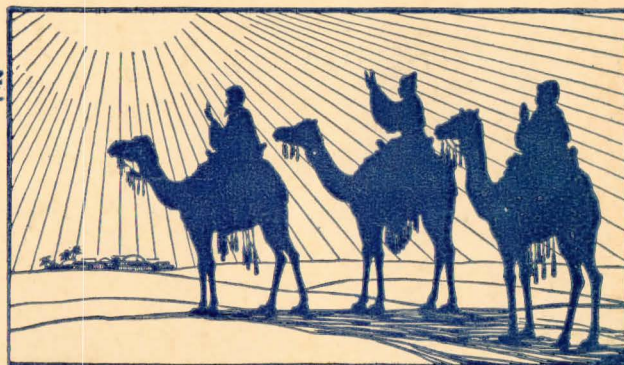
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