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August, 1930 Volume 3, No. 12

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The MYSTIC KEY



Edited By
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Rochester, New York

The MYSTIC KEY

A Monthly Magazine of Personal Power, Spiritual and Psychic Unfoldment.

Published by
THE ERWOOD PUBLISHING CO.
706 Temple Building, Rochester, N. Y.

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FLORENCE RUSSELL, *Associate Editor and Business Manager*
DEANE ERWOOD, *Publication Manager*

Single Copy ..... $ .15
Per Year 1.50
Foreign 2.00

Health Culture, Mental Science, Occultism, Mediumship, Oriental Mysticism and the Teachings of the Masters

Entered as Second Class Matter at the Post Office, Rochester, New York, Oct. 3rd, 1925.

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ILLUSION

God and I in space alone
And nobody else in view.
"And where are the people, O! Lord," I said,
"The earth below, and the sky o'er head
And the dead whom once I knew?"

"That was a dream," God smiled and said,
"A dream that seemed to be true.
There were no people, living or dead,
There was no earth, and no sky o'er head
There was only myself—in you."

"Why do I feel no fear," I asked,
"Meeting you here this way,
For I have sinned I know full well,
And is there heaven, and is there hell,
And is this the judgment day?"

"Say, those were but dreams," the Great God said,
"Dreams, that have ceased to be.
There are no such things as fear or sin,
There is no you—you never have been—
There is nothing at all but *Me*."

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

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BORDERLAND FACTS

MANY years ago Isaac K. Funk, that well known student of *Psychic Research,* and author of *"The Widow's Mite," "The Psychic Riddle,"* and other well known books upon divers subjects, said: *"If but one fact comes from across the sea of silence that cannot be scientifically explained away, it proves the whole proposition,"* meaning of course the proposition of a future life and communication therewith. It should be obvious to all that Dr. Funk took a very tenable position.

This is an age of facts. The world demands them and once they have been acquired, it takes more than wily sophistry and consistent prejudice to dispose of them. If a thing can be disproved it does not belong to the realm of facts—if, after thorough investigation, it remains unshaken, no amount of antagonism can alter its reality, albeit the opposition may succeed in convincing some people—those who are short in thinking ability, and long on faith—that there simply must be a mistake somewhere.

Notwithstanding the fact that this is a scientific age, and that we are living in an era in which there is greater skepticism and unbelief, probably, than in any other period of human history, there is, paradoxical as it may seem, a larger measure of faith in the future life than ever before. And, further, the answering of the question *"If a man die, shall he live again?"* is becoming, more and more, the paramount issue of the day.

Humanity seems to be rushing, pell mell, to destruction. In the mad whirl of emotional sensationalism, unbridled eroticism and the apparent crumbling

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of age old institutions, there is still an undercurrent of remarkable sanity. People are asking questions of gravest import. As an example I quote this experience: A few weeks ago a slender, vividly rouged young woman, whose straw colored hair might have been God's own handiwork, or the evidence of some skilled beautician's handicraft, called upon me.

When she entered my office there seemed to be an atmosphere of banality about her that shrieked aloud. She sat down on the chair opposite me, across the desk, and after a few commonplace remarks about the weather, etc., she suddenly leaned forward, clasped hands upon the desk, and said, tensely, eagerly, "Dr. Erwood, I am not here to ask about my boy friend, or if I am to be married—I'll take care of that myself; but what I want to know is: what is it all about—what does it mean?"

"What is what about?" I asked her. "*Life!*" she replied, tensely, "*what does life mean, and where is it leading to, and is there anything after the death of the body?*" There you have it. Rouge, free use of the lipstick, tawny hair, straight, clear-seeing eyes and ultra modern clothing, all cried aloud, "Flapper! flapper!" Yet, beneath it all there was an intense desire to know "*what it is all about?*" And that is but one case out of many I have encountered during the last year.

It might be asked, "Just what is the portent of this?" Simply that a very large number of people are not as flippantly thoughtless as they appear on the surface. And there is, increasingly, more thought being given to the vital questions of life and, especially, to that one concerning a future life—humanity has an intense desire to know whither we are drifting.

There has been a belief in future existence thruout the ages. The conception of what it meant has not

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always been the same—indeed, there are many different opinions concerning it in this day. But always the belief has been there, widely accepted; sometimes blindly, at other times thoughtfully and intelligently. Today the whole problem revolves about this question:

"*If man lives after death, is there any way to prove it?*" Then there have been two reactions: One causes a certain class to ask if there has ever been an evidence of conscious, intelligent communication with those who have gone ahead. The other reaction is that of my old friend Geo. F. Armington, of Beloit, Kansas, who very blatantly declared, "*No man has ever gotten a message from a spirit, and no man ever will.*" His assertion was wholly gratuitous and completely illogical. He assumed to speak for all humanity, past, present and future—a thing that is obviously beyond the pale of any human being even though he is as wise as Brother Armington thought he was.

Proof of a future life is very largely a personal matter. As we have said before: If I have an experience that satisfies me, and from which I have succeeded in eliminating every doubtful consideration, it embraces proof to me, but to you it is second hand evidence. You may have absolute faith in the veracity, the judgment and intellectual power of the one who tells you, and may accept it and declare your unshakable belief in it. Yet the indubitable fact remains you will not be in possession of real proof.

One fact proves a proposition up to a certain point, only. If it is a demonstrated fact, the reality of which is apparent to a sufficient number of people, it stands as acceptable evidence. If, however, it is a fact which has come to me, personally, and which has not been demonstrated to others, it remains my

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personal experience and is valuable, or otherwise, as I may, or may not be possessed of ability and intelligence to qualify me as a witness.

There may be a certain principle involved in this fact which makes it applicable to many lives and situations. It may be the fact of communication with the discarnate which we would advance as evidencing a future life. If I have had the experience, under satisfactory conditions; and if you, living in some other part of the country, may have had a similar experience, under just as convincing circumstances, and we are in a position to compare notes, it may be that, in due time, we shall have a sufficient number of witnesses to establish the fact as one of the unquestionable phenomena of life. Evidence, to be of real value must be cumulative and consentaneous, in order that we may have such a colligation of facts as will dispose of all doubt in the matter.

The value of a demonstrated fact does not, necessarily, depend upon the importance of the person observing the fact. But its effect upon humanity at large is materially measured by the standing of the individual who testifies to that fact. For example, the testimony of plain John Smith, of Posey County, Indiana, may be based upon his actual experience and clear eyed observation, but if near-sighted, thick headed, obtuse Prof. Smallbrains declares the thing to be impossible, even though his declaration is based upon preconceived prejudice, it will be quite sufficient for the majority of people. We have been singularly blinded by folks who have acquired a few D.D's; LL.D's; Ph.D's and a few other things. Thank the eternal Gods we are beginning to see the rising of the mist of prejudice and superstition. That's one mighty thing our age is doing for us.

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In these pages the story of the writer's life has been running for nearly two years. In this story there have been recitals of many facts and experiences of various kinds. The entire chronicle is replete with graphic incidents dealing with contact with the Borderland between two worlds, i.e. this one and that supernal world into which so many of our much loved comrades have gone. Many people have asked the question: "Do you know anyone else who has had such experiences?" And our reply is, "yes, scores of them—many of them people whose standing and integrity, to say nothing of their painstaking ability, must be regarded as unimpeachable."

It is to these people we shall turn for the *Borderland Facts* with which to answer the problem set forth here; and to bring something of an answer to those who, like the young lady referred to in this article, really want to know "*what life means . . . and where it is leading and if . . . there is really life beyond the portal of death.*"

—WILL J. ERWOOD.

"Man is the manifestation of *The Living Word*, that is, *The Spoken Word*. In his every action he is giving expression to the power of *The Word* itself, because there is no thing taking place in his whole life which is not the outcome of *The Word* spoken within his consciousness. It matters not whether it be a mere movement of the hand or the turning of an eye, the movement is a manifestation of the power of *The Word* as expressed thru the consciousness of man, himself, in consonance with the Cosmic Word in which man is immersed."

From "*Words of The Master.*"

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MASTERSHIP OF FATE



AM the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul," sang William Ernest Henley, in his poem "*Invictus.*" And many there are who believe firmly that Henley is right —though there are countless thousands who think quite the contrary. These are the ones who seek a convenient alibi for whatsoever muddle they have made of their lives. For every one who declares and manifests his willingness to fight to win, there are thousands who whimper, "One cannot go against fate." But remember this:

Insurmountable objects have been the stepping stones upon which many of the world's greatest men have risen to fame and victory. Had they not dared, they could not have won. Perhaps that is the chief difference between those who fail—and those who have succeeded in life. Of course we should realize that there are differences in types of mind, and that conditions differ greatly in various lives. But this fact does not alter the principle involved in the general elements of success.

We shall not attempt just here to decide what constitutes success, other than to say it is our opinion that the most successful life is the one which has contributed the greatest good to humanity—not necessarily the most wealth. But we are not talking of the ordinary concept of success—we are talking about an individual mastering fate as it applies to his own life. If you ask what individual we would say, why, any individual—me, or you, for example.

We are told that "fate is destiny," the "predestined lot" of any person, or "the inevitable necessity" of his life. That would presuppose a prearranged plan somewhere in the remote past, the purpose of which

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would be to outline, far in advance, the series of experiences and contacts destined for a particular person, and from which there was no possible escape. Such an idea would make of man nothing less than a puppet, a mere pawn on life's chessboard; and it must be at variance with all ideas of personal possibilities and entirely opposed to any thought of cosmic justice.

This writer is not a fatalist in the sense depicted in the above paragraph—but he does firmly believe in the Karmic Law, i.e. the law of cause and effect. Certain inherent possibilities are possessed by every human being. If they are unknown, allowed to follow certain lines without direction or control—in other words, if no attention be paid as to whither these inherent tendencies lead and every vagrant impulse be followed, without rhyme or reason, they will, quite naturally, lead one into negative paths; unless, of course, the individual has a preponderance of definitely positive impulses.

If, on the other hand, one studies his tendencies, his impulses, desires and ambitions, as well as his mental and physical equipment, and then sets about an intelligent course of action designed to shape and direct them, with a view to improvement in every way, he will unquestionably prove the master of his fate thru determining the outcome of his thought and actions.

Certain definite causes will, inevitably, bring legitimate effects or results—unless something is done, between the launching of the cause and the consummation of the effect, to modify or amplify the result.

People say to me, "I cannot help what I think." Why not, pray? The mind may be trained in definite channels as surely as a vine may be directed to cover the side of a house, or climb a church steeple or shade

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a trellised archway. Tendencies of the mind may be directed into selected channels thru an intelligent application of certain principles which are fundamental in nature. It is useless for anyone to say: "I cannot help what I think"—not only is it silly but it is a confession of weakness. How can it be altered? Here is a simple process which, if followed, will inevitably bring definite changes in the habit and process of thinking for anyone:

In the pages of *The Mystic Key*, as in every other publication, there will appear, from time to time, words that are not known to the reader, the meaning of which may be obscure, vague or entirely unfamiliar. The average person will look at it, pause for a moment, and wonder what it means. Others will glance at it and pass right on to the next word which they do understand—and the strange word will be forgotten. Now, obviously, the thing to do is to *stop right there, get the dictionary and look up the word, its pronunciation and definition.* Then, if you want to do the thing rightly, *look up at least one synonym* —word of similar meaning—*and one antonym*— word of opposite meaning. Doing this you will develop the habit of controlling and directing your mental processes and, in time, you will become an *intentional*, as well as *intelligent* thinker. Soon the bugbear, fate, will not loom as so formidable an antagonist, and desired effects will begin to manifest.

In nature there is a system of corrective processes which, if given a chance, will rectify many of the blunders of mankind. Intelligent physicians, making use of the science of physiatrics, call into action the inherent healing powers of nature to rectify physical mistakes. In the metaphysical field the intelligent metaphysician does the same thing, and employs the

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same principles to attain his end, i.e. the curing of negative mental states and tendencies.

To attain to *The Mastership of Fate* does not mean that one is expected to rule the universe and compel others to do his bidding. Far from it. It means self study, personal analysis or, in other words, looking oneself over intelligently, searchingly and painstakingly, to discover the defects of mentation, as well as the strong points in his mental operations. Then, too, it necessarily involves setting about to intentionally correct those defects to the end that they will cease and in their place will be developed positive and constructive tendencies. One vital point to be remembered is this:

When you discover a defective mental quality, don't sit down and brood over it. To do so will magnify its importance and strengthen its hold upon you. Do not permit it to obscure every good thing from your vision. On the other hand, when you find a commendable quality do not sit and gloat over it until it blinds you to the necessity of taking care to rid yourself of the negatives. So many people *enjoy their negatives,* much after the fashion of the old negro who declared, when asked as to how he felt, "I'se enjoyin' mighty poh health." He was, no doubt, getting much satisfaction in the attention he was attracting.

The writer knows many people who are educationally deficient, who are continually harping upon the unkindness of the fate that deprived them of the chance to get an education adequate to put them on a par with some of their friends. If they would spend the same amount of time putting into practice the principles set forth in these pages, within the year they would marvel at the growth they had made, they would become a joy to their friends and would have

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engendered a habit of mind that would carry them onward to the heights of wonderful achievement.

The thing called fate is not such a terrible thing. We can fight it intelligently if we will; or we can surrender to the first adverse condition and . . . lay the blame on someone else. Your fate is you, just as my fate is involved in myself. The big question is not "*what has fate in store for us?*" but, rather, "*what fate shall we design for ourselves?*" Shall we use intelligent methods to shape our own fate thru developing the qualities which engender inevitable success in all ways, or shall we just drift along, weeping because someone else is walking off with the prizes of life.

Apropos of this *Mastership of Fate,* may the writer advise you to get out your June and July copies of *The Mystic Key* and reread those splendid articles from the pen of Miss Russell—they are replete with suggestions which will help immeasurably. By application of the principles involved in those suggestions, and those incorporated in this lesson, the bugaboo of fate may be dissolved like mist before a summer sun. Try it—if life means a thing it should mean growth, power and happiness. And while you are achieving all of this, teach your soul to sing:

"I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul."

—WILL J. ERWOOD.

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THRU THE YEARS WITH THE EDITOR. XXIV



HE word "Mediumship" has come to have a peculiar significance in certain places and among certain peoples. And the number of those who have some conception of its meaning is rapidly increasing—so rapidly, in fact, that one can hardly go anywhere in these days that there will not be found someone who has a pretty fair idea of its accepted usage.

Of the word "medium" my little dictionary says: "*a person believed to be controlled by a spirit in giving information from the world beyond.*" It is in this sense that we are using the term here—which is the manner in which it is accepted by Spiritualists, the world over; by Psychical Researchers and, increasingly, by the general public. It is a matter of no small pride to me that I have for many years had this "gift" if you wish to term it that.

It is not the purpose of these chapters to take up the subject of Spiritualism, as a whole; merely as it is related to the life story being told, and as it has been the vehicle thru which all of these experiences have been presented to the public. But a definition might be quite in place just here. My Twentieth Century Dictionary says of Spiritualism: "*That belief or doctrine according to which all that is real is spirit, soul or mind; the belief that communication can be held with departed spirits in some way or other—more particularly by means of a person of special susceptibility.*"

This definition will suffice for now—elsewhere I shall, in due time, take up other phases of the matter. Suffice it to say I believe firmly, irrevocably, the substance of the definition, and much more. Why? For the best reason in the world—my experience

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proves the matter conclusively to me. Knowledge is the only criterion by which to judge—it is the only real justification for such a stand as I take everywhere.

In the last chapter of my life story I told you something of the Master Teacher's philosophy—very briefly, indeed. But there was enough to reveal something of the breadth of His vision, His fairness and justice and the universal nature of His interpretations. It would require several volumes of considerable size to tell the whole story of His instruction to those who have come under His direction. Some day, no doubt, it will all be compiled and put into proper form for those who wish to go further.

My association with this great entity has been peculiarly satisfying, and yet, withal, awe inspiring. I wonder if those who read can realize what it means for a fairly red-blooded individual to have reverence for a man. No, I don't like effeminate males—I pray whatever Gods there be to keep them out of my way, for they are offensive to me in the extreme.

Douglas Malloch once wrote something about "the love of a man for a man," that sent some good friends of mine right straight up in the air—I do not believe they have come down yet, in so far as that is concerned. But if you have ever read what he said, you will have some conception as to my feeling for this Master Soul who has come to me so much. As I look back over the years one thing stands out so vividly, viz: His immeasurable patience with this very human instrument thru whom He sought to give certain instruction to mankind. Why He did not take me by the scruff of the neck and souse me in some salty pool, is more than I can understand—maybe some day I shall. But He didn't—for He has so many times shown His magnanimity and patience.

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The phase of this association and mediumship that I would emphasize at this time is the way in which He has helped me to acquire what measure of education I possess. No, I am not one who believes in letting "the spirit world" do it all. But I am firmly convinced that these arisen Teachers can help us, greatly. One of the first things He impressed upon my mind was the need of study—of training the mind. And this lesson has been so deeply engraved upon my consciousness that it is hard for me to understand how, or why, anyone else can fail to appreciate it.

We have all, no doubt, read the story of "the handwriting on the wall" as chronicled in the Book of Daniel, 5th Chapter. If I say here a thing that is absolutely true, that there are times when I see written in letters of light, facts, statements, aphorisms, names and many things of personal value, there will be many who will cry out "imagination." Yet all of this takes place frequently. If I also add that often I have had books in my trunk, the pages of which had not been cut, and which I had never read, yet quoted from them during the course of a lecture—and afterwards found that what had been said was really part of the substance of those books, scores and scores of folk will laugh. Yet it has not only happened with books I had in my possession, but frequently with books I had never seen.

One of the most striking things that I experience, thru His intervention, is to see things that are happening at a distance, and to hear conversations that are taking place, or have taken place many miles away. When I have asked about this, the response has been: "*You are clairvoyant. And real clairvoyance apparently obliterates distance in that the object seen does not appear to be at a distance but in your immediate*

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vicinity. You are also clairaudient. And clairaudience does for audition what clairvoyance does for sight, viz: eliminates the sense of distance, since the voice you hear seems to be close at hand."

Sometimes I will be aroused from a deep sleep. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say I would be partially wakened, as that describes the situation more clearly. And while in that semi-wakened state—a state in which my mind seemed peculiarly alert—I have heard His voice expounding certain of His teachings, apparently to more than myself. How long these periods would last I cannot say—sometimes they were of greater duration than others. But this I know: When I would awake the next morning I knew what had been said and could sit down and write it out, indeed, many of the things I have given from the platform have been received, by me, in the above manner.

There are times when, in the course of my work on the platform, my own personality seems to be submerged. I feel it, and know when it is taking place, yet feel as though I were someone else—someone quite distinct from the real me. In such cases I am always fully conscious of what is being said and done. There are times, however, when I am used in what is called the "trance" state, as explained heretofore, when I have not the slightest knowledge of what is to be said, neither do I have any recollection of what has been said after the trance state has subsided and I am back in the normal consciousness again.

The nearest way I can explain this "trance" is to say that it is a state analogous to sleep. It is always heralded by a drowsiness, and a tendency to yawn, and those who know me best tell me that as it approaches there seems to be something like a film that

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draws over my eyes. Of this I can say nothing, except that I am quite distinctly aware of the sleepiness. Also I know that as I emerge from that state I always find myself under the impulsion to stretch in a manner so characteristic of one just rousing from a deep sleep.

When one has lived, as I have, for more than thirty years, in close contact and more or less intimate association with certain definite entities; and when, for that same period of time, one has encountered such psychic phenomena as have been my lot to experience, it would be quite difficult to put them out of his life. To me these things are realities. Never a day goes by that I do not have some psychic contacts. It is nothing unusual for me to awaken in the middle of the night and see persons, or a person, standing in my room. Frequently I am where it would be utterly impossible for any human—in the flesh, at least—to get into my room. Yet I have these visitors—many times they are nocturnal, sometimes I see them in the day time.

Out of all this experience there has grown within me a most comforting conviction as to the reality of spirit—and the equally real character of life, both as relates to this world and the super-mundane phase of existence. Those who have gone on, who have "died," to use the parlance of the day, have not ceased to exist. I do not think of them as dead, in the sense that they have gone down in a grave, there to remain "*until this corruptible shall put on incorruptibility, until this mortal shall put on immortality,*" as we are told by preachers who know so little about life as to believe the immortal soul of man can be incarcerated in a tomb and forced to keep company with decaying flesh, or listen to the crooning of earth worms and the like.

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While I do not pray with Hamlet, that "this too, too solid flesh might melt away," death holds no terrors for me at all. There is work here I would like to do, and fully expect to do—in fact never have I been planning greater things than now—yet I say truly when I say to you that I do not fear the denizens of the realms supernal, nor do I have any qualms or doubts about the great adventure, I would meet it as I did my first venture in aerial navigation—without hesitancy and with no tendency to hold back.

A dear old Episcopal Mother, who knew something of my antecedents, and also knew the strides I had made from the "Mother Church," said to me, one day, "Will, just what has Spiritualism and its phenomena done for you—what has it given you?" When I stated what I have just related above, she looked at me very thoughtfully for a moment and then, patting my hand, said, "My boy, if it never gives you anything else, that would justify your action in studying the subject." And then, and here is the tragedy of the kind of faith which leads people to believe God has sealed the tomb, and closed the door to the other world, she added, half to herself, half to me, "I wish I knew! I wish I knew!"

Critics, materialistic, theological and otherwise, will say to me, "You *think* they are real, you *think* you have seen and heard these things." I do not *think* . . . I know! Surely I realize that this is a broad statement—and I am aware that those without the pale of my experience will, quite naturally, declare it is impossible. Haven't I watched hundreds of audiences in which there were men and women who sat back with that supercilious grin on their faces, half scorn, half pity, as if to say to me, "You poor thing—how can you believe such things!" Didn't

one quite self-satisfied parson say to me, "I cawn't understand how a man of your apparent erudition and culture could believe such rot." Yet a few days before I had heard that very man indulge in the most trying theological gymnastics in an attempt to explain how it happened that Moses wrote the Pentateuch and told the story of his own death and of a city that did not exist until some five hundred years after Moses "was gathered to his fathers." And on another occasion I had heard him trying to explain the story of the resurrection, the disposal of Jesus's body and the manner of His return after the crucifixion. Verily, consistency is a jewel.

There will be but four more installments of this story. I have left certain facts, and the conclusions derived therefrom, purposely, to the last. They will make a bit more clear some of these experiences of mine. May I repeat my previous statement: It makes small difference to me what the attitude of the reader may be. I would like to feel that some of you realize that these things I have chronicled here actually took place, and that the writer is, at least, sincere and, I hope, fairly intelligent. But if that cannot be, why you must go your way and I will go mine. You see life has, thru me, written certain facts and, "having writ, moves on."

To be continued.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER

BELOVED! Life is the crucible in which all the dross of mortality is burned away and the spiritual man is set free from the things that fret and hinder his progress Godward. Thruout the ages mankind have been passing thru experiential emotions, and encountering the obstacles necessary to make humanity realize the transitory nature of material things. It is only when the soul has risen to the point that it comes to know that life and happiness are not dependent upon material possessions or relationships, that it is ready to assimilate what those relationships have to offer.

When humanity has risen above the limiting and restricting personalities which so absorb the larger concepts, and comes to know something of cosmic realities—the things of the spirit—the first faint gleams of the New Dawn will be discerned above the horizon of human life. To live according to the spirit is to give . . . and be. To express the fullness of one's selfhood and conform to the purpose of being is to give full manifestation of the self without stipulating the price of return. Nowhere does God say: "I shall love thee if thou but love me in return." The Eternal Spirit giveth love and life unstintingly for the very joy of loving and living. Pray, then, that thou canst be like unto the eternal Father, the divine Logos that speaketh all things well."

FRIEND CONSCIENCE

DR. HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK, in one of his inspiring radio sermons, said: "Conscience is the voice of repressed good."

We believe that man is potentially and fundamentally good—that he is a replica of the Divine in process of unfoldment and development. Ever the good in him is striving for expression—the eternal urge of that divine spark that glows in every human soul drives him relentlessly onward and upward.

Some there are who regard Conscience as a pest, when in reality mankind has no better, no more loyal and faithful *friend* than this *voice of repressed good.* If we harken to the voice of Conscience, that repressed good ceases to be repressed and becomes expressed in some constructive thought or action.

Do you chance to live within hearing of a church bell? If so, try the experiment of concentrating on it next time it peals forth its melodious tones and determine how long, after it ceases tolling, you can *hear* the sound *mentally.* Try that experiment over and over and you will discover that never before have you heard it so clearly or for so long a time. The more one concentrates on a sound or on anything else, for that matter, the more vivid and lasting is the impression it leaves in the mind.

In a group of business women of my acquaintance there is one who has allowed herself to become intensely irritated by a certain sound that emanates from one phase of the activities in that office. The root of the irritability may be found in jealousy of and vindictiveness toward one particular member of the group whose activity causes that sound. Others

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working in the same location do not even hear it, not because they have less acute hearing but because of the difference in mental attitude—they are absorbed in the tasks they have to perform and have no time to waste fretting over non-essentials.

So it is with Friend Conscience, the voice of repressed good. The more we harken to that voice, the more clearly and readily we hear it. If mentally we close our ears to it, the time inevitably comes when it is difficult to catch its faintest murmur, and surely we do not wish to shut out of our lives the greatest spur to character growth that we have!

But why have I called conscience "friend?" A friend is one who ever sees the divine in us, who stands by us through storm and stress as well as when the sun shines brightly in our lives, who glories in our achievements, in our good works, and does not condemn us for mistakes or failures but, rather, understands the underlying causes for those mistakes and ever strives to lead us to the same understanding and thence to elimination of the causes—a friend is one whose faith in our goodness is unshakable and whose loyalty is steadfast.

Now, in the light of this definition of "friend" let us consider Conscience for a moment and see what it does for us. Certainly Conscience is interested only in the *good* in us. If she sees us about to do something that is undesirable, unworthy or actually wrong, does she keep silent and then condemn us after the thing is done? Nay, not so—rather does she cry aloud to us and plead with all her power that we turn aside from the wrong path into the right one. There is no silencing her, try as hard as we may. She is our unseen but never unheard helmsman of the ship of life! I'll modify that statement and call her assistant

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helmsman for MIND is the real helmsman!

If we refuse to listen to her guiding voice and deliberately take the wrong path, what does she do? Does she say: "I'm disgusted with this individual and do not wish to have anything further to do with him!" Or does she say: "My friend has made a mistake this time but I will stand watchfully by and do all in my power to prevent a repetition of that mistake." *You* know the answer to that question—*I* know the answer—every human soul knows it.

And if we choose the right path and do the finer thing, no matter what the cost to ourselves, what does the voice of Conscience say to us? "Well done, friend, you have made me very happy and contented." A contented conscience is a mighty fine comrade on life's highway!

If we humans would "tune in" to the Voice of Conscience more carefully, we would play the game of life more fairly, and nobody can study humanity today without wanting to shout from the rooftops: "Oh, man, play fair, play *fair!*"

Are industrial leaders playing fair when, rather than reduce their own excessively large salaries or incomes and moderate their luxurious mode of living, they throw out of employment men and women who have no other way of obtaining the mere necessities of life? Are the workers playing fair if they "soldier" on the job, if they waste time and material with the attitude: "Oh, the company pays for that, so I should worry!" Are co-workers playing fair when they fail to assume their share of the work and responsibility or when they misrepresent their associates to others to further their own ulterior ends? And right here, let me remind you that such misrepresentation acts as a boomerang—it is sent out to injure

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another but, instead of injuring that other, it circles right back to injure the soul of the one who is petty enough and unfair enough to send it out. No one can hurt us unless we permit them to by our own mental attitude but those who strive to injure others are only injuring themselves always.

Perhaps nowhere does one find more cruel, cold-blooded lack of fair play than in the realm of so-love. Let me illustrate:

Judith was vacationing with her parents one summer and there came to the resort where she was staying an attractive man, who seemed to take to her on sight. He paid her the utmost attention, not only during their stay there but after they had returned to their respective home cities. He left no stone unturned for weeks to make Judith care for him and, then one fine day informed her that he was engaged to marry another girl but that he loved her. However, he felt in honor bound to go through with the marriage as the invitations were out by that time. In my opinion that man knew nothing of the meaning of real *love* and just about as much of *honor*. Was he playing the game fairly, and, if so, to whom was he fair? Had he been truly honorable, he would not have engaged himself to a girl unless he really loved her and, if he had known what real love was for the first girl, he would not have fallen, as they say nowadays, for Judith. Or if, through an error, he had mistaken something else for love for the first girl, he would, on finding himself so strongly attracted to the second, have gone away at once and shut her out of his mind. Most certainly he would not have paid her the attention he did. He was not only cruelly unfair to Judith but he was doing the other girl a grave wrong in marrying her when he did not really love her. I

would term him a *selfish weakling*. Had he listened to the voice of Conscience he would not have messed up three lives in that fashion.

But, lest my masculine readers think me a trifle severe to their side of the picture, I will give another illustration—

A girl of my acquaintance had accepted from a certain man, who literally idolized her, the most devoted attention and service for years, and gifts galore. At intervals he would urge her to marry him but she kept putting him off—not because there was anything wrong with him but she didn't care enough for him. One day she discussed the matter with me and I told her straight from the shoulder that I felt she was not and had not been playing fair with him, that either she loved him and should marry him, or she did not love him and should send him away and not keep him dancing attendance on her and spending more for her pleasure than he could afford to spend. But she was a thoroughly selfish person and did not wish to be without all that he gave her and did for her, so on she went. Then one fine day she "fell in love" with another man and married him. Fair play? Hardly.

It isn't just the suffering such things inflict on the one who has to learn not to care, though that is quite sufficient, no doubt, but it is the cruel blow to his *faith* in his fellowmen that leaves a deep-seated wound that it sometimes takes years to heal over.

Why, oh, why, do we humans hurt each other as we do; why do we play the game of life so unfairly just to gratify our selfish desires, ambitions or whims; why do we not listen to that inner voice and bring into expression the repressed good, that this world may be a finer place in which to live and that life may be a joyous, beautiful experience?

—FLORENCE RUSSELL.

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THE KINGDOM WITHIN

SOCRATES, praying with his friend Phaedrus, thus addressed his Gods: "O, thou great Pan! And all the other tutelary Deities make me beautiful . . . within!" And turning to his friend he said, "Phaedrus, have we not prayed enough?" Looking back from the vantage point of the present time, *Anno Domini* 1930, does it not seem that he was right and that they had "prayed enough." For there wasn't another thing in the world to ask for—when the wise man of Athens had asked for inward beauty he had encompassed every human need.

It was a very wise man, indeed, who said, "My mind to me a kingdom is," for it is the only real kingdom after all. Whatever we manifest must come from within—that inner realm which, as Jesus said, is the abode of real righteousness, i.e. the kingdom of heaven. All achievement, all talent, every accomplishment of any character whatsoever, has its origin there in that inner self of us—there can be no question about that. It is quite important that we understand this clearly, and it is for this reason it behooves all of us to think about it.

There are two great forces in human life which, strangely enough, are often in conflict. One is religion. The other, education. The first concerns man's concept of his relationship to the Infinite and his fellowman; and the second has to do with the problem of his intellectual unfoldment. Education should, of course, comprise everything—the spiritual as well as the intellectual. Real education does, no doubt. But what passes muster for it quite often does not.

In either one of these fields of human activity, the religious and educational, it is the inner self that

must be dealt with. Those who would proselyte their fellows in behalf of some particular creed or dogma must do so thru an appeal to that inner self; it is necessary to convince the thinker within before any headway can be made. So, also, if we would in any way change the course of a life it becomes necessary to make an impression upon the inner self. There can be no other method applied that will give such certain results.

Life, as a whole, is quite complex—but its processes are very simple. We see about us, everywhere, the operation of definite, smoothly working principles. If they are complied with and applied, the results are salutary and satisfying in the extreme—if not, well, all of the failures may be accredited to that fact. Principles do not change—but the applications thereof, and the circumstances involved may vary greatly. It is this that confuses and causes some people to imagine there is one principle at work for them, and another operating for the other fellow. But such is never the case.

Few people take time to sit down and analyze themselves. They do not realize what the personal equation is—they fail to get the proper perspective insofar as they are concerned, themselves. Perfunctory and more or less fleeting glances cast in their own direction seem to quite satisfy the majority of human beings. But to sit down, divest oneself of the mantle of self esteem, and, as it were, open up the door of one's consciousness and take out, one by one, the elements which interfere with proper and complete unfoldment, lay them upon the table and dissect them, —well, that is an entirely different matter—it is not being done in polite society these days. But if it could be made apparent to everyone that nothing brings such large returns as thorough knowledge of

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oneself, what a revolution would take place thruout the intellectual and spiritual world.

The wealth of a country may be variously estimated. When spoken of, it is usually tabulated in terms of commercial values. The content of mineral, grain, industry, etc., is carefully estimated and properly set forth. A kingdom is counted rich, or otherwise, according to its abundance as to commodities, army, navy, schools, churches, manufacturing interests and whatnot. The first thing I ask, when going to a new city is, "What is your chief interest: Schools, Churches, Commodities?" When I know that, it is possible to judge fairly well as to the status of the community—an intellectual gauge has been set down, as a general thing.

Take this inner kingdom, this metaphysical kingdom, if you wish. Of what does it consist? And how shall we go about analyzing and judging its riches—and, better still, develop them to a high degree? It is no part of this treatise to discuss the body—to all intents and purposes it has no existence, insofar as this lesson is concerned. *Man is mind—mind made manifest and in process of manifestation.* A mindless body would be as useless as an engine without motive power. Consequently we shall not speak much of bodily qualifications—since the mind is the motive power, the engineer and entire crew.

A great mind means a great kingdom. One with untold riches—and power immeasurable. It may be made still richer, more valuable, by the proper attention to its direction and the development of its natural resources. All of the real wealth of the world, all its art, music and literature, lies within the mind of man. Of what value is the fabulous wealth of mine, vineyard and orchard, of what use is the beauty

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of the universe, without the mentality to observe, comprehend and assimilate it all?

How many people take the trouble to sit down and ask themselves this question: "Why do I think as I do?" Or this one: "Why do certain things, facts, people, impress me as they do?" Probably not more than one in a million—that is the real tragedy of life after all, because from this fact arises practically every adverse condition and circumstance.

Mind is the connecting link between man and God. As this is written I am sitting in my room in the Briggs Hotel. My window is open and whenever I look out I see the great Ambassador Bridge which connects Detroit with Windsor, Canada. Its mighty span is clearly visible—its gleaming lights winking like so many eyes peering thru the twilight. And that bridge was, first, merely an image in a man's mind—it was part of the latent wealth of The Kingdom Within. Just as that bridge gives access to both Canada and Detroit, depending from which side one begins his journey, so does the mind of man bridge the chasm between the resources of nature in their raw state and the finished product in every field of human endeavor.

Now that I have seen this great bridge, Grand Circus Park, with its rim of wonderful buildings, and the many other beauties of famed Detroit, I can sit down, anywhere, close my eyes and envision the entire scene. It is all stored in the kingdom of the mind.

Mind is cumulative. It feeds upon itself—using its own processes to add to its substance and enlarge its scope. The universe is a great ocean of facts into which the mind may dip at will. It may take from that ocean whatsoever it wishes, making its own selection and in its own way. And, in turn, the mind be-

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comes a vast reservoir in which God stores the elements, the principles of the Infinite; each impression received is nothing less than an inrush of God, Divinity, Deity, or whatsoever you wish to call it.

From the universe about us we must gather the substance, the riches, we would store in our minds. Our consciousness, the practical, thinking, knowing part of us, constitutes the laboratory in which we bring about that metamorphosis which transmutes impressions into facts and realities of our mental world. The value of those transmuted elements depends upon what we have chosen as the basis of our operations. And the kingdom of the mind is rich, or impoverished, according to the selections we have made, or the use we make of what we have acquired.

If we but stop to think about it we can see that all we are dwells within us—each thought, impulse, inhibition, impression or ambition, must necessarily be measured by what we have within the range of our minds. Our entire wealth lies in that *Kingdom Within,* of the existence of which there can be no doubt. How we can capitalize on the possessions of this inner kingdom we shall try to make clear next month when we tell you about "*Realizing Our Possessions.*" In the interim, however, we pray you to give pause and think seriously about what this all may mean to you.

—WILL J. ERWOOD.

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THINGS I LOVE

I LOVE the winds that sing of roaring sails
That go their spindrift way down trackless lanes—
And then again, I love the early glow
Of candlelight against the dripping panes.

I LOVE the door of home and glowing hearth,
The solitude of hills—a whispering pine—
The fragrance of a rain-sweet trail at dusk,
And little pools where silver stars may shine—

A SONG when night comes groping over hills,
The drowsy chirp of birds, and bits of blue
Between the grayish clouds that roof the moor—
And little things that make me think of you!

—CRISTEL HASTINGS.

"If you would become an artist in the interpretation of life and understand the Cosmic purposes, let the magic of a great love for your fellowman touch the chords of your soul; and let the devotion you bear to the twin of your soul shed beauty everywhere! Do this, and the first thing you know your voice will have the authority of the Master and you shall speak as one with authority, for your life will reflect the Cosmic Power that pervades all life and being."

From "*Words of The Master.*"

"When the eternal Spirit bequeathed to man the gift of consciousness it bestowed upon him the greatest endowment, with which to enrich his life, within the eternal province. It is thru the exercise of consciousness that all things are made possible—in it dwells the spirit of melody, it contains the gift of poesy and the art of beauty, as well as the science of being. It is the common denominator which resolves God and man into one Being."

From "*Words of The Master.*"

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WITH THE EDITORS

This year of Nineteen Thirty is rapidly passing into the discard—and it will not be very long until we shall be called upon to herald the approach of Nineteen Thirty-one. It hardly seems possible but we have really reached the eighth month, have we not? And the question we shall soon be asking will be: "What have we accomplished this year?" It might be well to think about it—if you are anything like Ye Editor, himself, you'll be seeing that question staring you right in the face this very minute. Well, anyhow, it is time to think it over.

During the last month Ye Editor has made a brief stop at Peoria, another in Chicago, the city of his birth, by the bye, and another in Detroit, the magical city of automobiles. And when this reaches you he will be away down in Oklahoma, the State that is supposed to be so wild and fearsome, but which New York and Chicago put so much in the shade with their own special brand of wildness. Oklahoma is a wonderful State with many fine people, and wonderful opportunities for folks who know how to keep their heads.

We are planning on making the September issue something to conjure by—and we hope you will get ready for the fine material we shall have to offer. A lesson that will be of priceless worth to those who will apply it will be found in *"Realizing Our Possessions"*—it will touch the keynote of acquiring personal power. Then we shall have *"More Borderland Facts"* in which we shall show something of the "Cloud of Witnesses" who have touched the mystic realm of psychic things. In addition to this there will be something of interest under the caption, *"Our Psychic Selves,"* and, of course we shall give you another installment of *"Thru the Years."* Miss Russell's usual fine lesson will be there, with the other good things. Altogether it will be a great number—be sure and tell your friends about it.

Speaking of telling your friends about *The Mystic Key:* don't forget to urge them to become subscribers, and renew your own subscription so you will not miss a copy—the price is so small and the lessons so large that no one should be without it. At least, that is what many folk have told me. And, somehow, I believe they speak the truth. How about it?

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Here is a hearty wish that joy and prosperity may be yours in great abundance, for ever and ever.

—WILL J. ERWOOD.

"The spirit of fellowship is the eternal principle which binds humanity into one great, cosmic Brotherhood, irrespective of creed or race. It is catholic in the truest sense of the term—it is neither Roman, nor English nor American, but universal. To attempt to make it denominational or national is to limit—and when it is limited it ceases to be catholic in the true sense."

From *"Words of The Master."*

"So many gods and so many creeds,
And so many paths that wind and wind,
While just the art of being kind
Is all the sad world needs."

—ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.



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SAITH THE MASTER:

"MAN is the epitome of the universe! In him may be found every potentiality — every possibility. Because of these latent God powers with which he has been endowed, man owes himself an obligation which may not lightly be thrust aside. His growing consciousness, his increasing power and ability to comprehend the ways of the Infinite, constitute a covenant between himself and the Supreme Being that he will, thru earnest application of mental and spiritual powers, make steadfast and continued effort to evolve his Godship. Life provides the opportunity, and the world in which he lives, the experience which will burn away the dross and set him spiritually free—to reveal his unity, his one-ness with the purpose of Being."

—From "*Words of The Master.*"