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The MYSTIC KEY



Edited By
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Rochester, New York

The
MYSTIC KEY

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HAIL 1930

Hail, New Year! For This We Know Thou Art Come: To Bring New Opportunities, To Open Up New Channels Of Power And To Pave The Way To Greater Success.

We Welcome Thee For The Great Promise Which Thou Hast Brought. And We Pray That We May Have The Strong Heart, The Dauntless Courage, The Supreme Faith And Unswerving Hope To Live Up To The Possibilities Which Thou Hast Brought To Our Door.

Hail! All Hail! 1930.

—Will J. Erwood.

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THE TRUE MYSTIC



HERE is probably no subject more generally misunderstood by the public than the term "Mystic". The moment it is mentioned most people envision a long haired, eerie looking, impractical chap who has both feet in the air and his head far above the clouds, a man who is utterly useless to himself or his fellow men. The Mystic is supposed to deal in charms, mysterious rites and incantations, but nothing can possibly be farther from the mark.

There is nothing uncanny about mysticism—because the true Mystic is essentially a scientific student of life and its various processes; a philosopher who is seeking not only to learn something of the powers of the human soul, but to develop them within himself and others. While he does seek a solution of the so-called occult processes and laws, it is for the purpose of exposing them to the light of reason and rendering them of practical value to mankind.

Who has not read something of the Bahai movement—that uprising of spiritual understanding which dates back, insofar as its more modern expression is concerned, to some eighty years ago when in Persia there came the one known as the "Bab". After his martyrdom in 1850 he was followed by Baha'u'llah and a constantly growing group which has become quite world wide in its influence. Those who know anything about this movement know its purpose is to cement mankind, irrespective of creed or race, into one great unified whole,—certainly a most worthy object.

Three individuals stand out in this cause like spiritual Beacon Lights—viz, the Bab; Baha'u'llah and

'Abdu'l-Baha. They were teachers and leaders, truly; but they were more than that, they were—and are—Mystics of the highest type, students of the laws of God, the principles of life and the hopes of mankind. The simple directness of their lives and teachings has commanded the respect even in the minds of those who would oppose them.

Some years ago there came to America one of the great teachers of the Bahai Movement, one Jenabe Fazil. It was my privilege, while at the head of the First Association of Spiritualists in Philadelphia, to have this distinguished man on my platform. In mellifluous tones he spoke to us in his native tongue —beside him stood the interpreter who translated his words into our language that we might know what he was saying. Had there been no interpreter, however, to many of us the spirit of the message would have been received. Like the real Mystic he fairly radiated the essence of what he would have us know.

When his message was given us there, and again at Lily Dale, New York, where he spoke later in the same year, this writer felt there was nothing strange about what he would have us understand. The reason was that for many years there has been coming to him—the writer—a Master Soul of the older Persia, who had voiced again and again the same universal message—the same ideals, the same hopes and aspirations and the identical admonitions as to the need of certain spiritual realizations and awakenings.

All of this stands out very distinctly as being evidential of one very potent fact: viz., *the true Mystic is always a universal soul*—a member of what might be advisedly called the Messianic Class, the order of the Messiahs. They are cosmic entities, in other words, men who have gone far, studied much and

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thought greatly, that they might understand the humanity for whom they have come.

Everything that is not understood is mysterious—in the opinion of the masses who cannot see the real purpose and meaning in the operation of universal laws. So the Mystics come to us as "Lightbearers" whose mission it is to illumine the path of human progress. And, strange as it may seem, every step in human advancement has been pre-visioned by the Mystics who have gone into the very heart of things.

Outstanding figures among the Mystics of the ages, we have illustrious souls from many climes and periods. Suffice it to mention three others than those already spoken of: Zarathustra, from Persia; Buddha, Prince of India; and Jesus, the Master of Judea. A careful study of their lives and works will reveal striking parallels—similarities which bring the most astonishing revelations to those who think. In every instance there is the absolute dedication of their lives to the idea of unity—a unifying of mankind in one great, concrete manifestation of spiritual realities. We might say that the following outline gives the purpose back of every Messianic manifestation of the God in Man—and they have been so clearly re-declared in the teachings of Baha'u'llah, thus:

The Oneness of mankind.
Independent investigation of truth.
The foundation of all religion is one.
Religion must be the cause of unity.
Religion must be in accord with science and reason.
Equality between men and women.
Prejudice of all kinds must be forgotten.
Universal peace.
Universal education.

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Spiritual solution of the economic problem.
A universal language.
An international tribunal.

How many times have we emphasized these things in the pages of our publications. How often has the revered Teacher, that Master Soul, from cosmic realms, stressed the need of these things. And how universally have the Masters, the Mystics, of all ages emphatically called upon mankind to lay aside prejudice, forget the acrimonious and take up the banner of spiritual realization and go forward toward the heights of real attainment and unfoldment.

Mysticism is not the creator of sordid ceremonialism, of incantations, of dark cells and gruesome rites. It has nothing to do with the "eye of bat and wing of newt" idea which some people have come to regard as part and parcel of all mystic investigation. On the contrary it is the study of the eternal light in the human soul to the end that we may discover how like unto the Father is mankind.

The true Mystic studies the soul of man—but he also knows better than all others the material realities, as well. He realizes that the illimitable, cosmic verities find their finest manifestations in the mind of man, particularly the illumined mind of human beings who have come to see the gleam which leads them ever upward. It is not too much to say this is a fair summary of the characteristics of the real Mystics:

They are students of all cosmic processes, metaphysical laws and scientific principles.

They are devotees of truth, irrespective of what idol, or preconceived idea must be thrown down and discarded.

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They endeavor to discover the relationship between the past, the present and the future, and always come to know that today is yesterday's ideas, experiences and actions made manifest, while tomorrow is the consummation of all the yesterdays, plus today. That the irrefutable and immutable law of sequence governs all things is a definite fact to the really Mystical Mind.

The true Mystic is a student of the inner processes of mind and soul and spirit—and becomes in degree a Master of these hidden powers and thus, also, a demonstrator of the various faculties, gifts, or powers which are supposed to belong only to angels and beings of superior creation.

The real Mystic, also, is clean of mind and body —clearseeing and thinking, he knows the purposes of all functional activity; understands the cause of actions and, therefore, becomes the very essence of charity and compassion, when dealing with the frailties of others. And because of all of this, we shall here declare,

The real salvation of humankind shall come when we as a race—or group of races—have come to understand and comply with the instructions of those Mystics who have made the Order of the Messiahs what it is, because this way only lies the certainty of

World peace and unity!

—WILL J. ERWOOD.



WHAT PRICE HEALTH?



HE most priceless boon to mankind is the possession of a healthy, normal body and a keen, active, properly functioning mind. Without this it is quite impossible for anyone to function as befits a really vital human being. Yet there is nothing quite so generally neglected as this bodily machine thru which we must express ourselves in a manner good, bad, or indifferent. The countless caricatures in human form who pass for men and women give mute, but eloquent testimony to the need of a health awakening.

The body is a chemical laboratory; it is also a combination of various chemicals, proportioned according to the needs thereof. And the whole purpose of those chemicals is to produce a properly balanced, normally functioning organism thru which there may express a human mind, or soul, or both, as you will. If the chemical combination is correctly balanced there can be no other result than a perfect body—granted it is properly used otherwise.

It is not the purpose of this article to discuss the soul of man—or the spirit. That will be taken care of elsewhere in "The Mystic Key." It is the body we are interested in just now. The body, with all of its various organs, functions and attributes, constitutes the most marvelous bit of mechanism in captivity today. Many times I say to students and others: "If your automobile was lacking in gasoline; or if the ignition system was not working rightly, or if a tire was punctured, what would you do?" Invariably they answer: "Have it attended to at once." And, invariably, also, I ask them: "Why not be as fair to your body?"

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To understand what the body is, suppose we just take a glance at the elements it contains. Roughly speaking it is composed of the following constituents: *Hydrogen; Calcium; Magnesium; Fluorin; Silicon; Phosphorus; Oxygen; Sodium; Sulphur; Iron; Chlorine; Carbon; Nitrogen; and Potassium, with some traces of Iodine and Manganese.* The percentage of each one of these chemicals will be given later, in connection with some of the dietic instruction that we shall give.

For the present it will suffice to say that in order to keep the body in a normal condition it is necessary to supply the constituents, or chemicals listed above in their proper proportion. They are easily supplied, because nature has given an abundant supply of them —and a little forethought in the preparation of the food of which we partake would insure a safe margin which would mean the difference between ill health and perfect bodily functioning. The pity of it is that many of these very essential elements are thrown away during the process of preparation, as, witness, the quantity of vitamins and rich mineral salts thrown down the kitchen sink.

Wrong food combinations are, necessarily, the cause of disordered bodily functioning. The failure to supply the body with the elements required to perfect the cleansing process is the absolutely certain way of filling the system with the various toxic poisons which destroy the normal action of the entire eliminative organism. Many years ago the writer heard the Rev. Moses Hull say, "We dig our graves with our teeth,"—a statement that has been reechoed by many of the foremost physicians and health culturists the world over. It is surprising what a general awakening is being experienced everywhere.

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Health is always a personal problem. To me, it is vitally individual; and to you,—yes YOU,—who read this it is quite as important. Unless you have it you cannot function on any plane of your being as you should. If the whole body is congested, if there is pressure at every nerve center, and if the whole intestinal tract is filled, almost to the bursting point, with poisonous, decaying fecal matter, there can be no other result than a poisoned blood stream. And if there is a deficient blood stream, there is no possible chance for the brain, the heart, or any other of the vital organs, to function as they were intended to. This is why it is such a very personal matter to every one.

We have repeatedly declared that health is harmony. A healthy body is harmonious in its coordinations. Heart, liver, kidneys, spleen, glands, all are in accord with each other. In a state of this kind there can be no abnormal desires or tastes—everything will be in order and in accord with the purpose of the entire structure.

Nothing may be acquired without a price. Nature is very lavish in her gifts—but this lavishness is not prodigality by any means. It was the recognition of this fact that caused Emerson to say: "What will you have?" quoth God, "pay the price and take it." That's it . . . "pay the price and take it." It's yours for the asking . . . then.

If we were to put the matter up to you—yes, YOU—as a question of dollar and cent value, what would you estimate your health to be worth? Would it be ten dollars, a thousand, ten thousand or a hundred thousand dollars valuation you would put on it? Or would you say, as I have heard scores of people say, "My health is in God's hands . . . it shall be as

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He decrees!" Just think of any supposedly sane person making a fool statement of that kind. Just think this over:

So far as God is concerned, He doesn't care a picayune whether your body is healthy or not. Nor is He going to turn aside the universal law to take personal care of you—because YOU are no more important in the scheme of things than I am, or than anyone else in the universe. We are, as Pope has so aptly put it, "but parts of one, stupendous whole, whose body nature is and God the soul." Important? . . . yes, but no one of greater import than the other.

No, we must not think health is a divine gift, handed out as the doughty political ward heeler hands out the honorariums to those who have served him faithfully and well . . . even though they have forgotten everybody else. Health is a boon to be acquired, earned, derived as a result of personal effort and the conformity to well defined laws. We must pay the price—and, sometimes, it is a good round price, at that.

If you are too heavy for your height, or too thin; if your skin is blotchy and unwholesome, or there are numerous eruptions and discolorations; if your eyes lack the proper lustre and your muscles are deficient; or, if there is faulty elimination thru the pores, intestinal tract, or other organs of elimination, the fault is to be found in one general source, i. e. wrong food combinations, or habits; and the poisoned condition of the body arising therefrom.

We hear a lot about the folks who are naturally deficient in this degree of health or that. And there is much said about the inheritance we have received from our ancestors in the way of healthy bodies and the tendency to, or immunity from, certain diseases. But,

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until comparatively recently the matter of health has not been put squarely up to the individual himself. Neither has there been so much said about the relative values of food elements.

Fortunately this is an investigating age—an era of analysis. And humanity is becoming aware of the common sense thing to do, i. e., study causes and eliminate them in order that there will be no recurrence of the disorders. And we have come to know that we may not drug ourselves into normal health—drugs, as a general thing, are palliatives: they sometimes arrest certain activities and give nature a chance to get in her most efficient corrective efforts. But unless we get back to the normal in the matter of food, exercise and proper balance of activities all the drugs in the world will prove utterly worthless. Another thing that the best doctors I have known declare is that the natural elements, when derived from the food we eat, are more effective than when they have been segregated, put up in preservatives and derived from a bottle.

What price are you willing to pay for your health? Will the fee be in money, or what have you to offer? It is entirely up to you, my friends: If you are willing to do what we shall advise, follow the instructions to the letter, correct your dietic habits, and control your mental outbursts and emotions, there is a good time ahead of you. If not, you will not be interested in what follows in *"The Mystic Key,"*—it will be wise to lay it aside because we shall be frank, very frank and direct in the statements and instructions that are to follow.

One of the things each one of us must do, if we are to have health of body as the very valuable asset it is, and that is: We must be willing to work; we

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must agree to think; and we must stop chewing our way to the other world—perhaps it would be the wiser thing to say we must begin to chew our way to health instead of death, for indeed the degree in which we do or do not masticate the food which is to supply our chemical needs has much to do with the results.

Health, radiant, buoyant, dynamic health is not the impossible thing to achieve that some folk think. Everywhere I go I find men and women, who have had the death sentence pronounced upon them because of some physical derangement, literally lifting themselves by their bootstraps back to the plane of normal, healthy delight in living. They have learned to eat, to think and to breathe according to the divine law. In other words they are paying the price for health, splendid healthiness of body and mind, and are getting what they pay for.

What Price Will YOU Give For Health? It's Yours If You Will Meet The Terms!

—WILL J. ERWOOD.

"Cosmic Mind is the source of all universal and individual expressions of life. Mind functions thruout the Universe in large measure, or small, according to the channel of expression, according to the organism thru which that mind must manifest."

From "*Words of The Master.*"



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THRU THE YEARS WITH THE EDITOR. XVII



ROM Philadelphia I went to Rochester, New York, to take charge of Plymouth Church, that magnificient structure which is now an International Shrine and of which Sir. Arthur Conan Doyle said to the writer, "It is the finest Spiritualist Church in the world —I have seen nothing like it anywhere." And then, after standing for a while in the beautiful auditorium where so many of the most noted workers of the Spiritualist Movement have spoken and demonstrated their message, he said: "It's like the anteroom of Heaven!" He was psychic enough to feel the great force that was there—to know something of the "cloud of witnesses" that were come to testify to the truth.

This great church must ever be a monument to the earnest efforts of Dr. B. F. Austin, under whose able leadership it was made possible. Plymouth Church was, at one time, one of the noted Congregational Churches of the country. It was presided over by that great preacher, Myron T. Adams. And from its pulpit the great men of many denominations have spoken, at various times, the message of their organizations. Myron T. Adams, like many another, was ahead of his times. He thought his congregation would follow all the way—but, he preached one sermon too many, i. e. one that was too big and broad. It split the church in twain.

For some time it was used by different denominations; first one, then another. It became a Socialist center, then, afterwards a Spiritualist Church under the Pastorship of Dr. Austin. Mrs. Helen Russegue, that staunch old laborer in the Vineyard, was its Pastor, and later, Rev. Delvon A. Herrick, assisted by

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his good wife, Sadie Herrick, had charge of it. Afterwards the present writer served for five years in that capacity, once more showing that when the real spirit foretells an event, it will surely come to pass.

In nineteen hundred fifteen the National Convention was held in Plymouth Church, as also in nineteen eleven. At the convention there were many of the most prominent speakers and mediums, among them Mrs. Margaret Gaule and Mary Pepper Vanderbilt. I had never met Mrs. Gaule before—but at the close of the meeting she came down the aisle of the church to where I had been chatting with Mrs. Vanderbilt, shook hands with me and, as she turned away, remarked, "Someday, young man, you will be Pastor of this church." Mrs. Vanderbilt had but shortly before said the same thing. I laughed and replied, "No chance!" No one ever thought of Dr. Austin leaving Plymouth Church, in the first place, or Dell Herrick, either. But they both went west . . . . to grow up with the country, I guess. And I went to Plymouth Church.

My work there was in many ways a repetition of Philadelphia, with the exception that I gave myself a definite time in which to accomplish certain things, and said, "If I find it impossible in five years, I will leave." I did. But during that time there were many wonderful experiences which I would like to relate—and may, if time permits, later. Some of the personal things have no place in a narrative like this—or any other for that matter. Suffice it to say we had some very wonderful results there—there were many fine people connected with Plymouth Church but, as is true with all institutions, they could not all see the same way in all things—and this always accounts for the changing personnel of church organizations.

Our Lyceum organization was, for several years, a very fine institution. And it was in Plymouth Church that I had the pleasure of developing some of the best amateur talent I have ever seen—my boys and girls of the Lyceum did some splendid dramatic work from which a very practical help was derived for the church. And for several years this activity served to hold the young people together in a very helpful way.

It was while living in Rochester that my daughter Leone became so very ill and finally passed away. For three months I watched her fade away, bit by bit. A mind brilliant in the extreme—she possessed the mind of a poet and philosopher, a thinker and a dreamer. But the call had come, and so on May 24th, 1922, she answered the call and went to join the little mother who had gone ahead some years before. Since she went out on the "mystic tide" I have received some of the finest demonstrations of my whole career.

Before she became too ill to go out, Leone and I would go into Plymouth Church to discuss our dreams for that church—how much we hoped for it no one but she and I will ever know; and very few would understand. We would sit on the rostrum with no light but the soft tints that came sifting thru the stained glass windows, and plan for Plymouth Church and its future. She, too, knew, appreciated and loved the Teacher who came to us, and we talked of His work too.

The day came, however, when that had to be laid aside. Her physical body lay in the casket. Six girls in white, honorary pall bearers, grouped about it; one of the girls, a fellow class member, Miss Ellen Rathke, read part of the service and everywhere there was regret at her passing. More than one said to me, "Oh, Dr. Erwood, if only I could have gone and left her here

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to finish her work!" But those are things that may not be—the world must go on, its work continue, no matter who is called to the heavenly highlands. The day following the funeral I had two services to conduct in Plymouth Church—and I knew when I conducted them, she was there, too. How do I know? I saw her.

Many nights I went into Plymouth Church alone—I have sat alone on the rostrum, and many a time I have seen her sitting in the self same chair she was wont to occupy in those other days. I've heard her voice and felt her presence, as well as having seen her. Is it strange that I can appreciate those lines in Bulwer Lytton's poem "*Aux Italiens*", where he says,

"I turned and looked. She was sitting there
In a dim box over the stage; and dressed
In her muslin dress, with her full soft hair,
And the jasmine in her breast."

Some folks could not see how I could stay in that church as late as I did, alone. But I wasn't alone—I had visitors from the celestial realms. I know what Longfellow meant in his "*Footsteps of Angels*" when he said:

"Then the forms of the departed
Enter at the open door;
The beloved one, the true-hearted
Come to visit me once more."
"With a slow and noiseless footstep
Comes the messenger divine;
Takes the vacant chair beside me,
Lays her gentle hand in mine.
And she sits and gazes at me,
With those deep and tender eyes,
Like stars, so still and saint-like,
Looking downward from the skies."

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It was no uncommon thing for me to hear footsteps upon the dining room floor leading from the hall outside my study to the door of the workroom I had arranged back of the dining room—farther from the street. Yet when I would get up, flash on the lights and investigate, there would be no one there. I have gone downstairs, thru the entire church, tested the doors, finding them locked securely by bolts on the inside, and have come back upstairs, after finding no one in the building, other than myself, and have heard, distinctly, those same footsteps follow me up the stairs and to the door of my room. Then, at times, I'd hear a laugh as clear and distinct as it could be. Then I would be satisfied. The visits of my celestial friends never annoy or bother me—it is when mere humans, like myself, get to prowling around that I want to throw things, or take a shot at them.

It would be impossible for me to say how much comfort my experiences with Leone and her Mother, since they passed into the Beyond, have been to others who have witnessed the passing of their own loved ones. The little book, "Consolation", in which there is an account of her passing, and the message of comfort given me by the Teacher two days before she went, has been of almost incalculable value to hundreds. It is because of this, and because I know some of those other Mothers and Fathers are reading this series, that I shall, in the next installment, write about my seances with Miss Ada Bissinet, of Toledo, Ohio. It would not be possible to give that account this month, as space does not permit.

I have spoken of the Message of Comfort, given by the Teacher. I should tell you that was given in a class held, under His direction, every Monday night for four years—in Plymouth Church Study. There were

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members of that class who never missed a class night, or were late at any class session. And it was in this class that Leone spoke and was recognized by the members and her sister, Juanita, and Brother, Deane, both of whom were members of the Class, as was she, before passing on. In that class we had nearly everything in the way of phenomena that we could get. It would require the space of a book to write about the class, alone.

There are so many of the people with whom I had to associate that I would like to write about—but everywhere people say: "Dr. Erwood, tell us more of your actual psychic experiences." I suppose it is natural—yet to me they seem so natural and commonplace, these psychic experiences, that it is hard for me to realize everyone else does not get them the same as I do. Yet such seems to be the case. But when a man has been having such experiences as mine from his childhood, it is not at all to be wondered at that he thinks it a bit strange others are not encountering them also.

The gift of prevision, or foretelling, is not an unusual one, yet it is viewed with no small degree of derision or suspicion. Some of the laws passed by uninformed, though earnest, possibly, lawmakers say . . . "if an attempt is made to foretell future events, it is a misdemeanor." But what are we to do when it is not "an attempt" but is an actual fact, i. e. when future events are actually and correctly foretold? Many of my friends have been able to foresee; this writer has many times, spontaneously, caught a prevision of things that were to take place. If one has the gift of psychic power, what is to be done about it? Shall we deliberately seek to stultify it, to crush it out? Or is it not better to try to understand and develop what must be a God given talent?

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I have worked in so many places where there were those whose gifts were of the highest order; and I have heard so many of these finely gifted ones give such startling things, some of which were verified in the shortest possible time, that it is impossible to doubt them—to say nothing of the results of my own experience in that line. At the camps, summer Chatauquas of Spiritualism, I have seen thousands of people and met hundreds of mediums. Can it be that anyone would think this all imagination—the facts of phenomena witnessed there?

Among the camps I have worked at are: Lily Dale, New York; Lake Pleasant, Mass.; Chesterfield, Ind; Etna, Maine; Queen City Park, Vt.; Madison Heights, Me.; Vicksburg, Mich.; Sherwood and Lake Brady, Ohio; Clinton, Ia.; Wonewoc, Wis.; Grand Ledge and Hazlett Park, Mich.; Delphos, Winfield and Ottawa, Kansas; Guthrie, Okla.; and a number of others. Here I have met people from all over the world, seekers after evidence of the survival of human personality after bodily death. And I have lectured and demonstrated psychic and spiritual phenomena in most of the States of the Union. There are very few of the really first class cities I have not been in—always for the purpose of passing on the message, trying to give people hope for the future.

Thruout all the years, and in all of these places, the great cry has been: "Is there proof of another life?" And people have besieged me with the query, "Do you really know it is true—and if so, how do you know it, and can we find out too?" These questions, plus this: "If it be true that we can communicate with the so-called dead, what good is it?" Well, if you are a Father, my friend, and you watched a daughter—or a son—slowly fade away to the point at which

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Death claimed that one, and you saw the body lowered into the grave, and you were distraught and .... then .... suddenly there came to you indubitable evidence that that daughter .... or son .... was still living in a conscious, intelligent existence and could, occasionally, communicate with you so that you would know the grave and death, and destruction had been defeated .... well, what good would that be to you? If it came to a matter of dollars and cents, just what valuation would you put on the proof that had come to you? Suppose you think it over.

People ask me the question "how I know?" That shall be answered pretty clearly in the account I shall give in the next issue when, as I have said, I shall relate the story of the Bissinet seances. Maybe some of you will remember how highly Sir Arthur Conan Doyle spoke of Miss Bissinet and her phenomena—all that he has said, and much more, I can say. When I have given the facts of the case, I shall ask those who were witnesses of the phenomena to bear witness to the truth of them, and shall leave it to my readers to judge. When you have read of this evidence, you will know why I say, "I do not believe .... I KNOW!"

To be continued.



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TRUTH is never the same, yet always the same. Every mood of the person who approaches that statement of truth gives another vantage point from which to view it, just as every changing hour of the day places the sun at a different point of the compass and each succeeding angle from which the sun's rays strike the earth and touch the clouds above modifies or amplifies, softens or accentuates the hue that results from such contact.

Since every day is a new beginning, reading a great statement of truth from the vantage point of each new day, to which has been plussed the experiences preceding the arrival of that day, changes the color, the aspect. We of the Orient never tire of repeating certain fundamental truisms; we say them over and over, delighting in the reiteration of some of the great fundamental truths of the Universe.

From "Words of the Master."

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THE BLOSSOMING OF THE BUD

SAITH a Master Teacher to a typically impatient Occidental pupil: "The bud cannot burst into full bloom until all the elements have been packed into that bud."

For about two years it had seemed to the pupil in question that she was making no progress in the development of her psychic powers. In fact, it had seemed to her that she was going backward, that she had lost what power she had previously developed.

What an impatient lot we Occidentals are! Once we have planted the seed, we want the glory and beauty of the full blown rose *at once*. We are not content to wait quietly for the germination of the seed, the formation of the bud, the packing of all the necessary elements into that bud so that when the right time comes it may burst into full bloom—that most exquisite of flowers, the perfect rose!

And, yet, around us everywhere we see examples of patient waiting. Mother Nature is a pastmaster in the art. She plants her seeds, she quietly awaits the germination, patiently she packs into the bud the necessary elements, tirelessly she feeds the bud sunshine, moisture, all that it needs to form the perfect flower, and quietly she awaits the day when the bud shall burst into full bloom.

In the spring the robins collect bits of straw, string, etc., and build their little nest; then the eggs are laid in the nest and patiently the mother robin sits upon the eggs, keeping them warm until the day shall come when the shells shall burst asunder and the birdlings come forth. Tirelessly the parent birds feed and guard and protect their young. By and by they are fully feathered and they venture out of the nest

to try their wings. In due time they learn to fly and to take their place in the bird life of the world. No impatience, no undue haste, no effort to make the shells burst before the birds have been developed to the point where it is safe for them to come forth! Mother Nature is a patient soul.

Kipling said in his poem "If", which we have quoted before:

"If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,"

and, following that with many other "ifs", he closes with the lines:

"Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!"

In other words, we can attain the desired goal if we are willing to put forth the necessary effort to plant the seed, and continue patiently and quietly to nurture the seed, to give it the time to germinate, give it the care it needs for the formation of the bud and go patiently on packing all the elements in that bud until the day shall come when it shall burst into full bloom and our hearts may rejoice in the beauty of it.

The finest psychic it has been my pleasure and privilege to know—and perhaps many of you can guess who that psychic is—has learned more completely and thoroughly this lesson of patient waiting than any other individual I know. There have been periods in his career when his psychic powers seemed completely dormant and he has felt as if he were getting nowhere, only to find at the end of those periods that much more had been going on inside the psychic bud than he dreamed of, and to joy in the blossoming of the bud.

But we Occidentals, in this jazz mad age, are not content to wait for anything. Our newspapers are

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plastered with accounts of accidents of all descriptions—due almost invariably to the fact that someone could not wait to make sure that the railroad tracks were clear or that no car was about to shoot out of a side street sixty miles an hour. Misery and sorrow result! We read a book and we cannot take time or put forth the necessary mental effort to really absorb and digest what we are reading. We hop-skip through it and then, when some friend says: "Have you read so-and-so?" we can reply: "Oh, yes, indeed—charming book, wasn't it?" Fortunately for us, or some of us, the friends do not proceed to examine us as to the actual contents of the book! Or, if we be reading something in the lighter vein for relaxation—a novel, say—we cannot wait to read consecutively through the book until we come to the conclusion—ah, no, we must turn to the concluding chapter and find out what happens to the hero or the heroine!

We go to the theatre and we chafe at the long intermission between acts. The continuity and speed of the moving pictures has spoiled us for the legitimate stage with its necessary intermission between acts, and, if the play be not a real "thriller" with more or less of the suggestive and sordid, some are bored to death and can scarcely sit through it. If it be a play *worth* seeing, then why not spend the intermission studying and analyzing in one's own mind that part which has already been presented. Much might be learned from it in many ways.

The trouble with many of the psychics of the present day is they are not content to labor and to wait—they would rather be the crude mediums that too many of them are than put forth the effort to study and improve themselves, than go through the suffering that is needed to burn away the dross and fit them for truly fine mediumship.

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Show me a finely developed psychic and I will show you an individual who has suffered greatly, sacrificed endlessly, studied continuously, waited patiently year after year for the bud to burst into full bloom. That is why the true, fine psychic is such an understanding, kindly soul. Only those who have been through the mill can say: "Fellow traveler along life's highway, I understand because I, too, have experienced what you are now going through."

Does the master violinist select an instrument without first thoroughly testing it, trying it out to be sure that it is the perfect instrument he must have for the perfect transmission of the music of his soul? Ah, no. No more do the Master Souls who have gone on to other phases of life select as their instruments those who have not been tested and tried more than most people have any comprehension of.

In our educational system the child must go through a prescribed number of grades before he is considered qualified to enter the high school; he must complete certain courses in the high school ere he is considered equipped to enter college and in college a certain curriculum must be completed before he is graduated and supposed to be ready to take up his life work. This program has been mapped out and in operation for many years, so it is accepted as a matter of course, but, even so, there are those who are in too much of a hurry to conform and they are pushed ahead or jump ahead themselves at, I believe, considerable detriment to the net results of their education, in many cases.

But when it comes to psychic unfoldment, a comparatively new idea as applied to humanity in general, there is no definite program mapped out and individuals, who have allowed their normal psychic

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powers to remain dormant for twenty, thirty, forty or even fifty years of their lives, expect them to burst into full bloom in a brief period of two or three years. It is absurd on the face of it.

The impatient Occidental pupil referred to in the first paragraph of this article is, be it confessed, the writer. For more than twelve years she has been interested in the psychic—for at least eight she has been a constant student of the psychic. For a period of two years out of the eight it seemed to her as if she were getting nowhere. The psychic sensitiveness that was apparent prior to those two years seemed to have vanished and she was inclined to feel quite discouraged with her own denseness. It was at the close of that period that she was privileged to receive from the Master Teacher, under whose direction she has been studying and developing, the words quoted at the opening of this article—"The bud cannot burst into full bloom until all the elements have been packed into that bud." And he went on to assure her that much more had been accomplished during that two year period than she could possibly realize, that those in her position could not judge of the measure of progress they really were making and she must go quietly on, studying and working until the bud was prepared to burst into full bloom, and when that day came, she would realize more completely what had taken place. Also she was assured that certain phases of her work, which now seemed almost impossible to her, would become among the easiest of the tasks she would be called upon to perform.

Why is she telling you this? Because she knows that among our readers there are many who are going through these same experiences, many who are often discouraged over the apparent lack of progress in

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their psychic unfoldment and who are not as fortunate as she is in having a Teacher to set her mind at rest and encourage her to go steadfastly onward, firm in the faith that when the foundation has been strongly built, when all the elements have been packed into the bud, it *will* burst into full bloom.

Be not discouraged, good friends. It really is impossible to judge of our own progress in the matter of psychic unfoldment. Continue your study, above all keep your mind on that which is fine and worthwhile, on the beautiful and ideal in life—let your heart and soul be filled with sympathetic understanding and love for all life, and send out the prayer that you may receive from the spirit world the necessary guidance and aid of master teachers, to the end that you may unfold, not only for your own good but more especially for the progress of the human family, those God-given powers which are the normal qualities of all mankind, not just peculiar to a few.

For the further encouragement of those who are going through experiences similar to the writer's, be it added that the two year period referred to has been followed by a period of much keener psychic sensitiveness in every way.

This issue of our magazine marks the beginning of a new era as well as the beginning of a new calendar year—1930. It is our earnest hope that THE MYSTIC KEY may reach and unlock the door to many fine things for more of our fellowmen than did its predecessor SUPER-PSYCHOLOGY. You will find in its pages much more from the Master Teachers than you have had for some time—we are sure that you will not only revel in the beauty of those passages but find the great truths revealed therein most helpful and inspiring.

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As we launch THE MYSTIC KEY on its voyage with the beginning of 1930, it is our New Year's wish for each and every one of you that you may learn and be comforted by the great lesson contained in the words of a Master Teacher: "The bud cannot burst into full bloom until all the elements have been packed into that bud," and that you may, with patience and unswerving faith in the outcome, go quietly on, packing the elements into the bud, that the full blown rose may be perfect in its exquisite beauty.

—FLORENCE RUSSELL.

"Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait."

—LONGFELLOW.

"There is nothing, oh, beloved! quite so magnanimous as the Spirit of Life. Life is prodigal of her gifts. Freely she bestows the sunshine, the rain, the shadow, the struggles, the hardships and joys, to the end that the soul of man may rise to Olympian Heights and bask in the light of the Divine Ray which giveth life to all."

From "*Words of The Master.*"

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AFTER DEATH, WHAT?

SEVERAL thousands years ago, so we are told, a long suffering man asked a question of the utmost importance, viz: "If a man die, shall he live again?" In one form or another that query finds echo in the hearts of all humanity, whether they be believer or non-believer, materialist, atheist or whatnot. And it is not strange that this is so because we are, perforce, concerned about the welfare of those we love.

It is no easy task to sit supinely by and watch someone near and dear to you slowly lose hold of mortal consciousness, knowing that you are powerless to stay the hand of death. To watch the gradual disintegration of a well loved form, to note that constantly decreasing hold on life, is not the easiest thing a man can do. I know! I have had that experience, as have countless thousands of others.

Bodies are born, they grow to maturity — sometimes; then, because we know so little about the fundamentals of health and physical balance, they gradually go down the western slope until there comes the day of hushed voices, muffled tread and the trembling statement, "he is dead." We have, in the interim between birth and death, come to know these fellow travelers thru this "vale of tears"—have learned, mayhap, to love them. Consequently, when we see a silent, voiceless, body lowered into the grave, and hear the monotonous voice of some ecclesiast mournfully chant the dictum of theology, "*here to remain until the last trump shall sound, until this corruptible shall put on incorruptibility, until this mortal shall put on immortality*", we wonder what it is all about—and whether that ends all, or if there is something more in a newer day.

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If man were only a body and that body went down into the grave, then there would be some foundation for the idea that the grave was the final resting place of man, and that there was nothing more to look forward to. But man is not a body . . . he is a soul, or spirit, if you will. The conscious, thinking man retains his individuality all thru the years—his identity does not change during his journey thru the physical phase of life, even though his body changes scores of times.

The body is the habitat of man. That is, it is the house in which the ego, the real self, lives and thru which he expresses his personal selfhood. And often it is discovered that this personal self, this conscious, thinking ego is never so pronounced in its vital qualities of mind as just before severing its association with the body in which it has dwelt for a given period. And after this demonstration it takes its departure. And that is where the question of Job comes in so effectively.

There are thousands of men and women who have grave doubts as to the future of man. Not so this writer—for the more I see of life and its phenomena, the more convinced I am that death is the Gateway of Life. I am more profoundly convinced that Walt Whitman was right when he said, "*The smallest sprout shows there is really no death, and if ever there was it led forward life and does not wait at the end to arrest it. And ceas'd the moment life appeared.*"

Does it seem reasonable that the whole process of life has combined to evolve man to his present stage of consciousness, only to nullify the whole process by snuffing out the mind that had come to understand something of the scheme of things. Does it seem rational to think the eternal order has produced a

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Plato, a Socrates, a Jesus, Buddha, Zarathustra, and others, too numerous to mention,—souls whose luminous qualities still stand as beacon lights for human kind, only to snuff them out like a spent candle? By no process of reasoning can I bring myself to this view.

Of the soul of man there has been much said in the past. Let us consider for a moment what some of the world's thinkers have said:—from every source we may derive such testimony as this:

"Souls risen from the grave—(from death)—shall know each other and say: 'That is my father, or my brother, my wife or my sister' " declare the Persian Scriptures dating back as far as 850 B. C.

Prof. Boscowan has told us that "the ancient Akkadians no doubt saw, as they declared, the shadowy forms of departed human beings, which led them to regard them as still existing in some far distant subterranean abode." And he further declares "The inscriptions as early as 3800 B. C. on the tablets show belief in ancestral spirits, (nisi) the friends they once knew, traversing the underworld hailing each newcomer with the cry, 'Didst thou become weak as we? and dost thou realize life as now do we? Welcome—welcome to our abodes.' "

Think of the assurance of those who declared, in the Buddhist Scripture, "The soul is myself; the body is only my dwelling place. Death is not death; the soul merely departs and the body falls." And again, they declare, "The soul is not born, it does not die; unborn eternal, it is not slain though the body be slain. Thinking of the soul as unbodily amongst bodies, and firm amongst fleeting things, the wise man casts off his grief."

Seneca, that great thinker and Roman Philosopher, born in 58 B. C., said: "That which we call death is

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but a pause, or a suspension, and in truth a progress to life, only our thoughts look downward upon the body, and not forward upon the things to come." Another quotation tells us, "A great soul takes no delight in staying with the body: it considers whence it came, and knows whither it is to go. The day will come that shall separate this admixture of soul and body, of divine and human; my body I shall leave where I found it, my soul I will restore to heaven, which would have been there already, but for the clog that keeps it down."

Plato, than whom there has probably never been a clearer thinker, born 426 B. C., left this thought as a legacy of rare value, i. e. "The soul of each of us is an immortal spirit, and goes to other immortals to give an account of its actions. Can the soul be destroyed? No; but if in this present life it has shunned being governed by the body, and has governed itself within itself, then it departs to that which resembles itself,—to the invisible, the divine, the wise, the immortal."

How sagely Cicero, 106 B. C., put the whole matter when he said: "When I consider the faculties with which the soul is endowed, its amazing celerity, its wonderful power of recollecting past events, its sagacity in discerning the future, together with its numberless discoveries in the arts and sciences, I feel a conscious conviction that this active, comprehensive principle cannot possibly be of mortal nature. I consider this world as a place nature never intended for a permanent abode, and I look upon my departure from it as simply leaving an inn."

One more quotation before we leave the vast testimony of ancient thinkers. Socrates had been condemned to death. The intellectual savior of Athens,

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the light which had illumined the minds of her youth, and which still shines with undimmed brilliancy, was — so they thought—to be extinguished forever. The least concerned of all was Socrates, the supposed victim. His loved Crito asked him, "How will you be buried?" And Socrates replied, "Just as you please, if I do not slip from you." Then he continued:

"I cannot attain my end in persuading Crito that this is Socrates who discourses with you, and still he fancies that Socrates is the thing that shall shortly see death. He confounds me with my corpse; and in that view asks how I will be buried. And all this after the long discourse I made you lately in order to show, that, as soon as I shall have taken the poison, I shall stay no longer with you; but I shall part from hence and enjoy the felicity of the blessed."

In all of these quotations, it will be seen, there is evinced the firm conviction that the grave is not the end—that there is life, conscious, vital, even though spiritual, life. Without exception these illustrious men have viewed the physical part of man as the transitory, and the soul, or spiritual self, as the reality—the permanent and eternal. There is no shade of doubt manifest in what they have said on the matter.

There is, in my opinion, no very serious ground for objection to the idea of a continuity of life—in fact, the concensus of proof is all the other way. One short material life is a very limited time in which to garner all the wisdom within the range of man's mind; and to attempt to confine the accumulation of knowledge with the rich mintage of understanding and clarity of thought which the perfected man may acquire, is to sadly underestimate the realities of life.

The logical outcome of the whole scheme of material life is a conscious continuity—a new phase of

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living, of existence, in which men and women are themselves as much as are those of us who still function in the denser, more material bodies. A phase of life wherein there is ample opportunity to carry out many of the plans and ideals of this limited life here.

After death—the death of the body, but not of the mind, or soul,—we shall find ourselves, as have those who have preceded us, to be . . . . just ourselves. We shall think, and learn and grow. And we shall live, and love and aspire, reaching heights of such supernal beauty that what we now have shall seem like tinsel as compared to real gold; as bits of glass in comparison with pure, blue white, flawless diamonds. After death comes renewed, extended, all embracing life,—for death is the liberator, the emancipator who comes to our aid after we have completed our pilgrimage thru this material experience and have come to the point at which we have need of going onward.

—WILL J. ERWOOD.

"To speak of creative power is to at once associate it with the source of all life and energy, while to speak of the relationship between man and God is to suggest mind as the connecting link."

From "*Words of The Master.*"

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WITH THE EDITORS

With this issue you are getting the first copy of *"The Mystic Key"* and we are quite certain you will like it—and that you are going to like it increasingly as time goes on. One thing you will notice, you are getting more reading matter, because of the different arrangement, the larger type page, etc. And that alone should commend it to you and your friends.

It is too early for us to tell you about all of our plans. Suffice it to say it is our intention to make the magazine as snappy-and-up-to-the-minute as will be consistent with the determination to give our readers a high class, instructive publication. And everything that is of real value to humankind will receive attention in these pages—not that we intend to make *"The Mystic Key"* a babel of confused ideas. Rather, we wish to make it a digest of the best of everything needed to make life richer and better—to add to our personal power and development.

In the February issue we shall give you another installment of *"Thru The Years With The Editor"* in which there will be an account of some striking evidences of future life. Then we shall have special articles on *"The New Health Science"*, which no one interested in good health should miss; *"The Meaning of Mediumship"*, a valuable explanation of this much misunderstood subject; *"Dynamic Mentalism"*, in which there will be a vigorous lesson in personal power; and, *"A Message From The Master"*, in which an *"Elder Soul"* will have something worth while for us. Then, in addition to this, we shall have another splendid article from Miss Russell's pen, and other features which will make February number a real winner,—one neither you nor your friends can afford to miss.

There is one feature about *"The Mystic Key"* that we are sure will be of vital interest; and that is the fact that it will speak fearlessly and to the point upon such things as need plain speaking. Truth is truth—and facts are facts. And if it be necessary to state both truths and facts in plain language, they will be so stated. It is for this reason that every article will be signed by its author—you'll know just who's to blame. We have some of the most vital truths about

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the human body, how to develop it; and about the mind and soul powers, and what to do with them, that can be derived from any source and you shall have them. So get ready to reap the benefit.

If you are not a subscriber to this magazine and you receive a sample copy, know that it is an invitation to subscribe and begin the course of instruction in its pages. If you are a subscriber and receive an extra copy, know that it is an invitation to pass it along to a friend, who, you think, would be interested. And don't forget to send Miss Russell the names and addresses of friends you think would be interested—she will send them a sample copy at once.

Now, with the advent of The New Year, let us wish you every Joy and Success—May this Year be the richest in all your experience. And may the Spirit of the New Year move you to—interest your friends in *The Mystic Key*, because it will help to make all your dreams come true.

—WILL J. ERWOOD.



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SAITH THE MASTER:

"KNOW ye not that man is the eternal pilgrim, the comrade of suns, moons and stars, destined to wander thru various human experiences, always traveling Godward? This, to the end that he may one day stand, in full consciousness, and fearlessly, in the Eternal Presence, and knowing of a surety that he, man, is in the Father and that the Father is in him. Waste not, then, the hours of this day, for they be steps that lead to the Eternal Verities of Life."

—*From "Words of the Master."*