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April, 1930 Volume 3, No. 8

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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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TWO GODS

A boy was born 'mid little things,
  Between a little world and sky—
And dreamed not of the cosmic rings
  Round which the circling planets fly.

He lived in little works and thoughts
  Where little ventures grow and plod,
And paced and plowed his little plots
  And prayed unto his little God.

But as the mighty system grew,
  His faith grew faint with many scars;
The Cosmos widened in his view—
  But God was lost among the Stars.

Another boy in lowly days,
  As he, to little things was born,
But gathered lore in woodland ways,
  And from the glory of the morn.

As wider skies broke on his view,
  God greatened in his growing mind;
Each year he dreamed his God anew,
  And left his older God behind.

He saw the boundless scheme dilate,
  In star and blossom, sky and clod;
And as the Universe grew great,
  He saw in it a greater God.

—*Sam Walter Foss.*

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BIBLICAL AND MODERN MEDIUMS
(Conclusion)

A CERTAIN enthusiastic, though quite illogical critic once took me to task for two things, viz: Our Mediums took money for their services—a fact that I have very cheerfully admitted, though I do not know one that gets the salary that some of my clerical friends receive for the time they spend "serving the Lord." The second criticism of modern Mediums was that sometimes they gave information that was not true—a fact which I have also admitted quite as freely. Sometimes they do not know they are giving misinformation, and, then, some of them do know and give out deliberate misinformation for a certain purpose.

When all of this had been admitted, my critic waxed eloquent in denunciation of the "duplicity" of what he was pleased to term as "the emissaries of Satan," and began to hold up for my earnest consideration, the sterling qualities of all ancient dealers in psychic matters. Of course he did not say these men of old were "psychics"—they were "Men of God", workers of "miracles", "prophets and seers."

I am perfectly willing to admit all of the good qualities of men like Samuel, Elijah, Elisha and others. Moses and Aaron had many attributes that I admire very much. But, confidentially, I must admit I am very glad the old Mosaic Law is not the rule of the present day. I don't believe God is the author of the "eye for an eye, and tooth for a tooth" idea that was so popular in those ancient days. I really think Moses and some of his colleagues must have had a bad case of distemper when they invented that rule. I might sum it up this way:

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I do not believe God is the author of a rule of premeditated violence and cruelty. And it makes no difference to me what name you use to designate the Supreme Being, or Essence, or Breath. Call it by whatsoever name you like, the fact is the same: That which is Godlike, magnanimous and just, does not incite bitterness, racial hatred, bloodlust or any of its concomitants. In all the years of experience with the *Celestial Visitors* who have come to me I have yet to hear the first one counsel hatred or anything like it.

One of the strikingly outstanding characters of the Old Testament is Elijah—and after him came his pupil, his understudy, neophyte or disciple, Elisha. Elijah, so we are told, "was translated", i. e. taken away to heaven, bodily. This notwithstanding the fact that we are told that Jesus declared "flesh and blood" could not inherit the kingdom of heaven. The story of this event forms a very interesting chronicle—and illustrates very clearly the mediumship of Biblical days.

The end of Elijah's ministry was near. If you will turn to the First and Second Chapters of the Second Book of Kings you can read in detail the whole story. Three times Elijah said to Elisha: "Tarry here, I pray thee." (See second, fourth and sixth verses of II Kings.) Each time Elisha refused, saying, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth I will not leave thee." He knew it was about time for Elijah to depart; and "the sons of the prophets" had come to him telling him what he already knew, i. e. "the Lord will take away thy master from thy head today."

The crucial moment had arrived: They, Elijah and Elisha, had come to the banks of the Jordan. Fifty men of the sons of the prophets stood afar off

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and watched. Elijah took off his mantle and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so they went over on dry ground. As they proceeded, Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for thee before I am taken away from thee." Note the answer: "And Elisha said I pray thee, *let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.*" (See verse 9.)

Elijah replied, "thou hast asked a hard thing: *nevertheless* if thou see me *when I am* taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be *so.*" I have italicised just as the chronicle appears in my King James Version. Read the account, omitting the words in italics, and then think them over.

The rest of the story is easily followed, if you will take your Bible down, wipe the dust off it, and read it for yourself. You will read of the manner in which Elijah and Elisha were "parted asunder by the chariot of fire and the horses of fire." And of Elijah's being taken up "by a whirlwind into heaven."

Elijah's mantle fell, was picked up by Elisha and used to "smite the waters" just as Elijah had done. When the sons of the prophets saw this, they said, "*The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha.*" (The italics in this case are mine.) That statement meant exactly the same as we would mean when we say of anyone, "he is under spirit control." Elijah became the Spirit Guide of Elisha.

One would naturally think Elisha would have been greatly impressed by the dignity and solemnity of this experience. But was he? The 23rd verse tells us that as he went up into the city of Bethel, "there came out little children . . . who mocked him, saying, 'go up, thou bald head; go up thou bald head'." And the 24th verse says:

"And he turned back and looked on them and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there

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came forth two she bears out of the wood and tare forty and two children of them." That looks to me like a pretty vicious spirit for one who had just received a baptism of the spirit. A striking contrast to Jesus of Nazareth, who said, "*Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.*" I have been mocked many times by children and grown-ups, but never have I felt like calling down a curse upon them.

Elisha was quite as human as any modern Medium that I can think of. He was quite as human as I am . . . and a whole lot more vindictive. I don't like him at all and if he lived today he would probably land in jail, prophet or no prophet.

In the 8th Chapter of the same book (II Kings) we come upon another episode of Elisha's life. King Benhadad was sick. He had heard that "The Man of God" was approaching. So he told his servant, Hazael, to take a present to Elisha and ask if he, the King, would recover of his illness. We are told that Hazael went to meet Elisha and took a present with him, "*even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden* and came and stood before him, and said, Thy son, Benhadad, king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?"

And here is the way Elisha answered him. "Go, say unto him (the king) Thou mayest certainly recover." Then he added to the servant, "howbeit the Lord hath shewed me that he (the King) shall surely die." We are told that Elisha was "ashamed . . . and wept." Well, he should have. Human, and full of failings they were in those days. Splendid things they did, to be sure, but . . . how like modern men and women were these men of God of the ancient day.

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One fact I am certain of. If anyone came to me with a gift consisting of "forty camels' burden of every good thing of Damascus," or any other city, I would never die of any disease because the shock of such an experience would kill me then and there. I would never survive such a blow.

This is no brief for the individuals who have brought mediumship and the relationship of the seen and unseen worlds, into ill repute. It is simply an attempt to show that the humanism of mankind, and the tendency to error and the misuse of spiritual gifts is not confined to this age. No single period in human history has a monopoly on mortal frailty. Man's weakness is as old as time, but there is one blessed consolation, and that is, never before has there been so widespread an effort to understand the things of the spirit as now.

The main trouble with the ancient day was: As soon as a man gave evidence that he had some psychic ability he was, straightway, set aside as a "Man of God"—a superior being. He became the arbiter of the destinies of the people—thru him God spoke and "woe betide" those who failed to accept him as God's special representative. Today we know that the men and women who have mediumship, spiritual gifts, the gift of miracles, etc., are human beings just like the rest of us; but who have developed a quality, a power or attribute, which lies dormant in most people. This is one of the comforting signs of the times. The medium of today will take his place with those of all times, but occupying an increasingly important position.

—WILL J. ERWOOD.

A LESSON IN HEALTH

HEALTH is defined as "freedom from bodily pain or disease; vigor of mind." To this is added "moral purity and righteousness." The first part of the definition is standard the world over — the other is purely a matter of geographical location and custom. What is commonly regarded as "moral purity" is acting in accordance with the law . . . or custom. But that's another story. Just now we are dealing with the health of mind and body—knowing full well that it is difficult to have the one without the other.

Last month we gave you a reprint of the famous *Hollywood Diet.* But you know we emphasized the absolute necessity of the right use of it, in other words getting proper advice concerning your needs. People are taking many unnecessary chances with their health—becoming faddists, cranks, or fanatics never helps either mind or body. The craze for those silhouette frames will die out afterwhiles and then we will be ready for normal living. The trouble with many people is they want to add *haut-gout* to life—and they don't know how.

When you are thinking of the correct diet for your case, get this fact fixed in the mind: no special diet is sufficient to do the work unless there is the right amount and kind of exercise. You must build from within—it is impossible to pile strength on from the outside. A pair of padded shoulders, movable calves and dark circles under the eyes will never constitute health—no matter what kind of science is used to make one think everything is all right.

Health . . . means a normal body. When we say "normal" it means *every* part, every organ, every

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function, up to the standard of usefulness. There can be no clogged pores; no upset stomach; no palpitating heart, trying to turn somersaults; no intestinal tract tying loops in itself, and no liver going to sleep on the job, or going on a bilious jag. The whole bodily municipality must be in order, with each and every department doing its part in the scheme of things.

The health of the body is coming to be quite well understood. The specialist in diet is to be found everywhere. Physical culture teachers are legion and the progressive, up-to-the-minute physician is becoming a real guardian of the health of his clients,—he really is specializing in keeping his patients well.

Bodies require food, exercise, air. We all know that—perhaps you who read will say, "I know all that." Sure you do. But . . . here's the rub: Do you apply what you know? Or are you like the young man who informed us that his father was a Presbyterian . . . but wasn't working at it now? It makes a heap of difference whether you just know things, or know them and then work at 'em, too. So this month we are not going to spend all of the time considering the body side of health,—it is the other side of the matter with which we are concerned today.

The second half of the definition given above tells us that health is "vigor of mind." That means in a nutshell, if a man's mind is not vigorous, if he is not a snappy, vital thinker, no matter how fine a body he may have, *he is not healthy in the best sense of the word.* We are informed that there must be no disease germs in the normal body—else it ceases to be normal. No one may deny that.

It is not a very great strain on one's thinking apparatus to arrive at the conclusion that what is true of the body, must also be true of the mind, i. e. there

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must be no disease germs in the mentality, else there cannot be the vigor which denotes health. If there is the wrong mental attitude, if there be in the mind the wrong concepts of life, it is a foregone conclusion there will be corresponding imperfection in the physical machine thru which the mind expresses itself. It might be asked what constitutes wrong mental conditions — unsound, unhealthy mentation. And we shall answer as follows:

Thinking about morbid things. I know people who see nothing but the salacious in papers, magazines and books. The only things they buy, in the way of reading, is the trash that panders to outrages, or follows the perversions or abuses of perverts of various kinds. These people are constantly reading the stories about how someone else has been abused; or they read the sensational headings in yellow journals, etc.; or go to see suggestive and nerve racking pictures and then brood over the whole thing trying to figure out how they are abused themselves. Morbidity is a sign of ill health—*think about clean, wholesome, beautiful things and get well.*

Worry—worrying about your own, or someone else's, status in life is unhealthy. William George Jordan said, in his great book, "*Self Control,* Its Kingship and Majesty", "*Worry is the great American Disease.*" So it is. Watch the faces of the men and women you meet and see the lines written by the skilful and diabolic hand of worry. In drawing pictures that out-futurist the futuristic artist, leave it to that arch demon worry. *Stop worrying if you want to be healthy in mind and body.*

Fear is poison to the mind, death to the body. People who would never think of putting a spoonful of arsenic in their food will persistently fill the system with the poisonous elements of fear. It inhibits

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heart action, impairs digestion, clogs the arteries and paralyzes the brain. The most dangerous and damning thing anyone can do is to instill fear into the minds of growing children. And the most destructive thing a grownup may do to himself is let fear get a strangle hold on his mind. *Root out fear and develop courage if you would have health.*

Jealousy, doubt, envy, malice, hatred, suspicion, are all the very essence of decay. No mind that harbors them can possibly have even a fair modicum of health, to say nothing of having perfect, hundred percent healthfulness. It makes little difference what a man eats, or how; or whether he exercises or does not, if he harbors the mental germs enumerated above, he will fall short of being normal, by many degrees. *Get rid of every one of these miasmic poisons if you intend to be what God intended you to be.*

The first step in reconstruction should be a thorough mental house-cleaning. During the last month I have read a full half dozen articles on health. In every instance stress has been placed upon the need of "a thorough physical house cleaning." The Eighteen Day Diet; the Eliminative Diet; ten days on a strictly Orange Juice Diet; the Milk Diet and a dozen other things. But "nary a word" about that *mental housecleaning,* than which nothing is more essential to physical and mental well being.

Self pity is a mental cancer eating out the very essence of the capacity for joy. If there is to be a mental eliminative diet, suppose we start right in—yes, all of us—eliminating all of these mental microbes by taking up some new line of activity; by starting on those new lessons I wrote about the other day. And for h-e-a-v-e-n's s-a-k-e stop telling yourself, or thinking, or even suspecting that you are too old to do anything now. Of all the inane, unscientific,

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maudlin, tawdry, banal, petty, woozy excuses, that one is the worst.

What's the use of eating good food and taking exercise if you are going to spoil it all by declaring yourself to be: "Dumb; too old; lacking the ability; without talent; deficient in education; in the wrong environment; too sentimental and emotional; too sensitive", and the thousand and one other alibis of the indolently inclined who lack the nerve to try. Sometimes I wish I were in the movies where one is permitted—on the screen—to choke the everlasting tar out of the folk who provoke you. I'd pile the alibi ikes all together and take 'em one by one, make a "cat o' nine tails" out of their excuses and beat them till they yelled for mercy. A Russian knout wouldn't be in it.

I told you this would be a health lesson from a different angle—it is. Read it over and over. Maybe some of it will make you "mad" as the proverbial hatter. All right—go ahead and call me names, rave and rage as much as you wish. And then . . . when you cool off, read it again. Do you know what you'll do? You'll smile and say, "Goshblink it! he's right." God bless you! Go to it and get healthy in mind and body. Your soul will be all right, then.

—WILL J. ERWOOD.

"Man becomes the master of circumstance thru his understanding of and compliance with the principles of his being; and by attaining to knowledge of his inherent possibilities."

—From, *"Words of The Master."*

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A MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER

BELOVED! Let it be writ large in your consciousness that man is co-existent, co-eternal and coeval with God, the eternal Source of all Being. God is all wisdom and knowledge because He is All Consciousness—knowledge is a concomitant of intelligent, awakened and fully aware consciousness. There is no knowledge which is not based upon consciousness; and the degree of recognized and applicable knowledge is measured by the extent of the active consciousness of the individual. God being conscious and intelligent, the natural and inevitable conclusion is: *God is Mind in operation.* The corrollary of this, then, is:

Man being made in the image and likeness of God must possess the various qualities, possibilities and attributes with which the Supreme Deity is said to be endowed, and of which He is declared to be the perfect expression. It must follow, therefore, that man is God, the Divine Ego, the Infinite Will, manifesting in concrete and individualized form. In other words, man is a miniature universal deity, occupying a position of rare importance and unified with the Great All. Man is creator as well as created. Know this and fulfill your purpose and heritage."

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REVITALIZING MIND AND BRAIN

ONE of the famous old "saws" tells us something about the unwisdom of trying to put "new wine in old bottles"—and this more or less "wise-crack" has been hurled at this writer almost as many times as the familiar "you cannot teach an old dog new tricks." Admittedly, there is some truth in both statements, but neither one contains all of the truth by any means. They belong to the same class as the famous "opportunity knocks but once" delusion,—to believe any one of the three would be to sound the death knell to the hopes of countless numbers of men and women who realize their power late in life.

Bodies are constantly undergoing change. The degree of change depends largely upon the diet, the habits of life and the thinking. No matter what the cause, changes do take place. We have, frequently, the spectacle of the man or woman, who has been going thru life in a dawdling, haphazard way, suddenly becoming aware of the fact that there is something worth while in life, and lo! we are treated to the vision of a body and mind made new—new life courses thru the veins, newer ideas and ideals take possession of the individual and . . . the lazy wonder at the miracle.

The best way in the world to purify a stream is to let in new water and insure action, motion, a perfect outlet and an adequate inlet—the result will be purification of the water. Sunlight, air, action, will do the business for the stream of water—may we not also say they will do the same for minds, bodies, souls. It is unfair to set a limit upon anything that has in it the essence of divinity—and mankind is

nothing if not the "*repository of infinite possibilities.*"

While we are quoting aphorisms — stereotyped phrases that are calculated to stultify and inhibit freedom of action, may we not call attention, once more, to that much quoted, often misunderstood Biblical truism, "*as a man thinketh in his heart so is he.*" We want every reader of these pages to say that over and over again—to ponder carefully over its true significance. The beauty of this statement is that it does not hamper or restrict; it lays no boundary lines that may not be moved. Its borders are like the imaginary state lines which may be changed according to the will of the people.

A man is made up of his various impulses, thoughts, ideas, mental whims and fancies. Whatever he is, he is the measure of his own mind. A body, yes. A mind, most certainly. His actions are measured by his mental attitudes; and these mental attitudes may be changed, almost, overnight. It is entirely within the province of the average man to make himself over—even though it does take courage and perseverance.

The world is full of people who have false conceptions of things—they believe in helplessness, an absolute subjection to the whims of fate, to an alarming degree. They get the idea that "whut yo' does, yo' has to", as Paul Lawrence Dunbar makes the old darkey say when he is trying to justify the stealing of one of his master's chickens. Read it in "*Lyrics of Lowly Life*", by Dunbar. There you will have the philosophy of the dilettante in the science of living.

If a man's blood stream is imperfect; if the quality of the vital fluid coursing thru his arteries is below

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par and his life is, therefore, in jeopardy, what is the necessary course to follow? Can there be any doubt as to what is requisite? The food is changed, everything is done to create newer and better blood stream; even, at times, we go to the extreme of transfusion in order to speedily change the quantity and quality of the blood supply.

When a man's muscular system is weaker than it should be, what is the logical course to follow? No one ever thinks of advising a man to tie his arms to his sides, to keep them inert, in order to strengthen them. The rational thing to do is exercise each and every muscle according to a well defined system—the purpose being to increase circulation, direct activity and develop the latent strength. It is quite within bounds to say no reader of these pages will attempt to contradict this view.

The lazy man, the gourmand, the idler, rarely has great physical strength. Every popular revue, every spectacular play, say, like *"Rio Rita"*, *"The Gold Diggers of Broadway"*; such wonderful dancers as Natcha Natova, and the strikingly magnificent young men who aid her; the Denishawn Dancers, and others, are constantly revealing what can be done in the way of symmetry and beauty of form—and the perfect co-ordination of mind and body. Every time I see one of these marvels I say to myself: "there is the reason everyone should do more in the way of exercising the body and training the mind" or vice versa, if you will.

What is true of the body, as stated above, is also true of the brain and mind. To revitalize the brain it must be exercised, i. e. used. To revitalize the mind it, too, must be used. Sluggish blood streams give rise to sluggish action. So, also, sluggish men-

talism must follow the universal order and bring forth its kind—indifferent results and lethargic action in both mind and body. Now get this fixed firmly in the consciousness:

If you would revitalize mind and brain you must exercise them, use them, push them.

Yes, I know you are busy . . . that you have lots to do; that you are tired, etc. etc. What difference does that make? Isn't it the busy man or woman who always does the big things in life? There are thousands of men and women who are as busy as you are who are, nevertheless, doing things to keep the mind and brain active, stimulated, growing. If you want to get this revitalizing, remember this:

You must develop new interests—exercise your mind in a different way. Learn music—study a new language; do the "daily dozens" of things you have to do in a different way. For goodness sake stimulate your brain if you have to do it by scratching your head in a different way—anything to create a new approach. If you cannot do anything else, wash your dishes in a different way; journey to your office over a different route, or see how many different ways you can say "Good morning" to the folks you meet along the way. Take this paragraph and study it over and discover how many words you can think of that mean the same thing as the word "different."

Weariness and sluggish mentality often come from monotony, the constant sameness of things. Sometimes people are held in the thrall of some rut into which they have permitted themselves to be led—either by others or their own thinking. "Monotony kills", we are told. And sometimes, no doubt, it does. But did you ever stop to think of this:

Monotony is a state of mind—it is the habit of looking at everything from the same mental view-

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point until, finally, everything brings the same mental reaction. Houses, people, everything, are looked at thru the same colored glasses of the mind. People are, frequently, trying to find sameness . . . but, beloved, I don't:

I study people, places, buildings, things, not to see how nearly alike they are, but to discover differences. I find these differences in people, buildings, etc., which frequently look alike. So I have discovered this:

Differentiation—the art of seeing dissimilarity—is the key to mind and brain revitalizing.

Some of the psychologists traveling over the country are talking enthusiastically about "Vitalic Breath", "Brain Breathing" and various other exercises declared to be the panacea for all human ills. Some tell us we may eat all we want, and whatever we want, if we only breathe their way. Others tell us if we breathe their way we need eat but little, if anything. but don't forget this:

There must be vitalic—i. e. vitalized, vitalizing, vital-thinking before there will be vitalic anything else.

Thinking stimulates the brain and increases the mental power. Observation, seeing, hearing, sensing, noting what is around you, induces thinking. If you would have a vital mind, a vitalized brain, study everything to find new interests, differences, new relations. I dare you to walk for one hour watching everything, studying old things to find what you have not noticed before. Yes I dare you to use eyes, ears, senses, in new discovery—substituting differentiation and new interests for the old routine. I double dare you to try it out for one week.

—WILL J. ERWOOD.

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RESURRECTION DAY



CCIDENTALS—those Occidentals who call themselves Christians—when they hear the phrase "Resurrection Day" think of one particular day—that day on which Jesus, the Christ, is said to have risen from the dead. Perhaps it were more correct to say that many of them think of *two* Resurrection Days—the one just mentioned and the other, that day when there shall come, according to their belief, the rising again of all the dead of the human race at the Last Judgment.

In its broader interpretation, the word "resurrection" means *any rising again;* renewal; restoration. Hence it lies in our power to make *every* day of our lives a resurrection day. We may make of each day a threefold resurrection—a physical, mental and spiritual resurrection.

Let us consider first the *physical* resurrection—the restoration of the body to normalcy. Some will at once say: "It can't be done—we are born with certain physical handicaps, tendencies, limitations—we must make the best of them and carry them through life—it is our fate." To such I would like to reply in the inelegrant but extremely expressive vernacular of the day—"Bunk!" Why do I say "Bunk!"? Because I *know* that conformity to the laws of health, plus drawing upon the illimitable spiritual reservoir of strength and power that surrounds us in this Universe, can completely overcome physiological derangements.

For illustration, I will mention a man I know who is now about fifty years of age. I can think of no more perfect physical specimen than the man in question—tall, powerfully built, with a chest development that might be the envy of any athlete, muscular, quick and lithe in his movements, clear-eyed, with a com-

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plexion most girls would delight to possess—not an ounce of superfluous fat anywhere—a splendid specimen of manhood.

Keeping that picture in mind, let us turn back fifty years and see what this man was as an infant. Do you know what we find? A baby so frail that everyone told his mother she would never succeed in raising him! Look at him in his teens—a boy so slender and delicate that the doctors were sure he would pass out with tuberculosis. But doctors and friends and relatives overlooked two things—the boy's mentality and the spiritual forces back of him. His fine mind told him that by proper diet and exercise and conformity to the laws of health he could "resurrect" that body of his—restore it to normalcy. His unique spiritual development taught him that he could draw upon the divine force in the Universe to aid in that resurrection. Through the years he has conformed to the laws of health—he watches his diet and controls it, he exercises regularly and intelligently, that is, to fit his requirements—and, of *vital* importance, he is and always has been a *clean thinker* and a *clean liver.*

What this man has done, anyone else can do by application of exactly the same principles. And, remember this—it is never too late to start! *Today* is *resurrection day,* if you will it to be.

And, second, there is the *mental* resurrection. An unexercised muscle loses its strength and becomes flabby and weak—an unused mind becomes dull and inalert, (if I may use a word that the makers of dictionaries have failed to stamp with their approval). To regain the muscular strength we naturally proceed to exercise the muscles. To regain mental power and alertness there is manifestly but one thing to do—*use the mind.* Assign it increasingly difficult tasks

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exactly as you would increase the weights to be lifted in the development of muscles. It is nothing short of astonishing to note what transformation may, and very often does, take place in certain minds when they are once aroused to action and use of their myriad powers. It does not make a particle of difference whether you have had much or little schooling, whether you have neglected the training of your mind for twenty, thirty, forty or more years—it is never too late to begin. This idea that a person cannot learn after he or she has reached, say forty years of age, is all tommyrot. My own mind was never keener or stronger or more active than it is right now and, be it confessed, I have reached that state of antiquity! Of course, it is more difficult for the mind that has been dormant for years to suddenly start in becoming active, just as it is pretty painful when one starts in exercising muscles that have not been used for a long time, but in either case, they are *growing* pains, and growth, whether physical or mental, is always worth the price one has to pay for it. In fact, is there anything of real value in life for which we do not have to pay the price in one form or another? And have you ever noticed that the things we most value, the things that mean most to us are those for which we have either worked or sacrificed or paid the price in coin of some kind?

But there is this encouraging feature—growing pains are always most severe at first and grow less and less so as time goes on. You may find it exceedingly difficult at first to accomplish certain mental tasks but, with each accomplishment, you have gained power that will enable you to that much more easily conquer the next task.

The biggest obstacle to making of every day a day of resurrection physically and mentally is *laziness.*

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It is so much easier to let the muscles grow flabby through lack of exercise and the mind become dormant through inactivity but, oh, how much more life means to the man or woman, boy or girl, who is willing to put forth the effort to keep fit physically and mentally!

And, third and last, there is the *spiritual* resurrection. If we have sinned or erred in the past; if we have failed to do the honest thing or to play the game squarely; if we have maligned another or been unkind in thought or word or deed, let us make of *this* day a resurrection day. Insofar as it lies in our power to right the wrong done, to make amends, let that be our first task but, if the error is of such a nature that it cannot be undone, if the moving finger has writ and that writing cannot be erased, there is nothing to be gained by brooding over it. Accept its bitter lesson and face about and so live that there will be no repetition of the error. Again I say—it is never too late to resurrect one's spiritual self.

There was a certain man who was much beloved and respected in the city where he lived because of his rare kindliness and unselfish service to his fellowmen—an able man—a leader among men. There came a day in his life when he took a step—under who knows what sudden impulse or emotion—that, as he looked back on it, was as great a surprise to himself as to all those who had known and admired him. It was a wrong step—one that some people would condemn mercilessly because of their lack of understanding and kindliness. He disappeared with another woman, the wife of another man. He had no more than done it, when he awoke, came to his senses and realized what he had done. Right then came the great crisis in his life—the day of that awakening could have become either the day on which he let

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that error drag him downward or the day of his resurrection spiritually. He chose to make it the latter. He faced about, returned to his wife and told her the whole story—called on his friends and told them the truth. His wife—a fine, sweet, understanding woman, to whom he was really deeply devoted—took him back as if nothing of the kind had happened. His friends and associates, respecting the fine way he had come back to face the consequences of that momentary error, were glad to welcome him among them again. Instead of making of that mistake a millstone around his neck for the rest of his life, he turned it to his spiritual resurrection and has gone on living an ever increasingly fine, useful, upright life.

As we approach that day of great rejoicing in the Christian Churches—the Resurrection Day—we send out the prayer that for each one of us *every* day may become a resurrection day physically, mentally and spiritually.

—FLORENCE RUSSELL.

"With every rising of the sun
Think of your life as just begun.
The past has shrived and buried deep
All yesterdays—there let them sleep.
Nor seek to summon back one ghost
Of that innumerable host.
Concern yourself with but today.
Woo it and teach it to obey
Your wish and will. Since time began
Today has been the friend of man.
But in his blindness and his sorrow
He looks to yesterday and tomorrow.
You and today! a soul sublime
And the great pregnant hour of time.
With God between to bind the twain—
Go forth I say—attain—attain."

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

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"Man masters circumstance by and thru the principle of realization. The moment he begins to realize that inherent, dynamic spiritual and mental force, by and with which he has been endowed, he begins to rise above his supposed limitations. The instant he begins to realize that he has all Cosmic Energy coursing thru his being, and that he has within himself the mental ability to assimilate this force and turn it into personal expression, the shackels of fear, doubt and hesitancy, will disappear like mist before the summer sun."

—From, "*Words of The Master.*"

"Great men are ever men of great mind. The greatest minds are those characterized by simplicity and absence of friction. But friction is necessary sometimes, in order that human souls may come to know the larger truths and learn the lessons requisite to their passing to higher spheres of action: And one of the most important lessons man must learn is that he does not have to remain in unpleasant environments any longer than is necessary for him to know he need not be a slave to either circumstance or environment."

—From, "*Words of The Master.*"

"Man's place in the Universe is of utmost importance. He is the interpreter of Cosmic Mentation—the reflector of the Cosmic Will. He is God in process of evolution and expression and it is thru him that the purpose of creation and existence becomes apparent. He is the justification of eternal life."

—From, "*Words of The Master.*"



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THRU THE YEARS WITH THE EDITOR. XX.



REQUENTLY, when I speak of having had contact with those who have left this "vale of tears", people say, "How do you know it is real—and not the result of a too vivid or overwrought imagination?" A very natural question, probably. Yet, in view of the fact that humanity has been basing so much of its conclusions upon the testimony of others, it gets a bit monotonous at times.

We know very little of the characters made famous by Biblical records—yet, the rank and file of humanity will accept those accounts in toto, without a suspicion of question. It is the strange anomaly of perspective. A thing seen at the distance is fairer than that at our feet, or which surrounds us—usually. The thing that happened hundreds of years ago is enhanced by the mist of time—our vision fumbles thru the shadows of centuries, and lo! the very clouds lend lustre to that which we envision. But that which is, right here and now, we regard with suspicion and doubt. We are prone to declare, "it cannot be."

I am alive today. And have been for sometime—at least, I think I am. I may be mistaken, and it is quite likely that some individuals might exclaim, "Will Erwood! Why there ain't no such animal!" Maybe so, but if I am not, both scales and cameras have told some whopping big lies about it. They seem to think I am a reality. Be that as it may, here I am anyhow.

If I may make so bold as to say it, I do not travel around with my eyes shut. It has been said that this writer was fairly keen of observation; also the declaration has been made that "Will Erwood is all

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intellect, has no feeling at all," and, just lately the information has been imparted that "he hasn't a scrap of sentiment." All of this may be true. But if it is, it certainly does not militate against his value as an observer.

Hon. Horace Leaf, that very able, well informed and much traveled gentleman from London—who has been lecturing on Spiritualism and kindred subjects in America—has been quoted as saying, "American Spiritualists do not go into the matter scientifically." I don't know if he said it—but if he did not, he ought to have done so, because it is correct. Not so far as some individuals are concerned, but as regards the rank and file, it is absolutely correct. Many of them do not even read and study, to say nothing of scientific investigation.

The valuable observer must be cool, collected, not easily disturbed, and able to fix the attention upon certain definite details. There must be coherence in his account of what he has seen. And how can a person be a coherent observer unless he can likewise think coherently—i. e. unless his thinking be logical, analytical, and rationally related to facts. There should always be something to correlate the observed facts in such a manner as to preclude the possibility of doubt.

This contact with the "arisen friends,"—the discarnate who are said to be bodiless wraiths leading a restless existence in space; who have been declared to be clothed in diaphanous garments, intangible and unreal—must have some reasonable foundation, else it will not stand the necessary tests. So there must be something more to my contact with this Master Teacher, of whom I promised to write more fully in this and the succeeding issue of *The Mystic Key*.

Questions arise: Is He a reality? Do you really see Him? How does He look and what does He do? To the first questions, that is the first and second, I must emphatically answer, *yes, He is real and I do really see Him.* To the third question I must just as emphatically declare that He is one of the most splendidly majestic, and divinely human appearing individuals I have ever seen. And to the last question I must—and gladly do—declare that He does everything that a real Teacher can possibly do. He advises, counsels, instructs and guides.

The first problem is the reality. How shall we judge of reality—what evidence must we have? And how shall we go about the getting of it? Reality presupposes existence, form and substance. This, because in our human way of arriving at things, we must have something measurable and cognizable to our senses—there must be something to make an impact upon our sense perceptions, to impinge upon our consciousness. We may set down a few vital truisms just here:

That which has no existence, form or substance, or force of any kind, can make no impression upon consciousness, sensation, or perceptive faculties, in any way whatsoever. We believe there will be no denial of this.

That which has no ponderability, no weight, form or existence can not make an appreciable impress upon device, mechanism, or organism of any kind whatsoever. Likewise, anything which has a mode of motion, a fineness of substance, too high, or too sublimated to coordinate with any given mechanism, scale, balance or device may exist as a vital reality notwithstanding the fact that we have no consciousness thereof.

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The point in this is the reiteration of the statement made so many times in these pages, viz.: invisibility is in no sense an argument against the existence of a thing. Further, the fact that those who read these pages have not experienced what I have encountered does not prove that I am mistaken. And the fact that the majority of people do not have the experiences I have is no argument against the tenability of my position or experience in the least. It should not be necessary to reiterate these statements but, well, human nature is human nature, and many people do not like to admit that there is anything happening of which they are not actively aware.

To return to this Master Teacher. If what has been said above is correct, you will say, "then He must have a real body—it must have some of the attributes which characterize our own bodies." He has . . . and it does have. I have felt His hand on my shoulder. I have seen Him stand in the pathway before me. He has stood beside my bed at night and wakened me with a touch, a word, sometimes with the consciousness of His *presence* first, His *reality* afterwards.

You might say, "*How can you know it is real?*" First I shall deal with what might be called the metaphysical, the psychic side of the question. So we shall put it this way:

If life, personality, individuality, persist after bodily death, then that of me which will survive that event *must be in existence in and of me right now.* If I shall be soul or spirit ever, *then I am soul or spirit at this moment.* There can never be of me anything that is not in me, potentially, right now. *I am all that I am or will be, now, in substance, potentiality, and in process of evolution.*

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This being true, I am—right now—possessed of that which is capable of reacting, responding to the influence, the impact of one who has gone thru that so called mystical experience of death. In other words the sublimated body, which is, in the main, the prototype of His, is mine in fact and possession at this moment. It is wholly illogical to think that at the time of transition the formless, wraithlike spirit leaves the body, only to find someone waiting to enshroud him in a spiritual body which has been prepared for him.

Many years ago, R. Heber Newton declared "The body always grows around the life." Inaccurate as that may seem, it serves to illustrate the meaning. Spirit, form, substance: co-existent, co-eternal and coeval with each other. This idea of substanceless spirit being ejected from the body like the puff of breath passing thru one's lips on a frosty morning is very inadequate to express the reality. There are things very patent to me:

I am conscious of selfhood—a selfhood so different from every other person or individual I know. I reach out and touch the keys of my Remington and watch words form on the white sheet. I know that I am a reality. A while back when this physical body of mine was racked with pain, strained tendons, bruises and the various other physical things that bring us a certain kind of awareness, I was conscious of my selfhood. When the physician, bending over the body to discover if life was there, whispered, "He is nearly gone," I was conscious of my selfhood. Of course I could not move the muscles, nor speak. *But I could think.* And I could become aware of *the presence*, yea, *the Reality of Him* standing there and saying kindly, yet firmly, *"Not yet, not yet, your work is not done."*

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That period on the brink of eternity, as it is called, taught me more than a thousand lectures, a thousand books, on ordinary experiences. The almost incredible shake of the physician's head, when my eyes opened and he said, "*Why man, don't you know you were dead?*" And he added, "*As dead as you ever will be.*" Still standing there, with firm, white hand pressing my forehead, and eyes smiling into mine, I could hear the Master Teacher whisper, "*Yes, dead as you ever will be.*" I knew what that meant: It meant that I'd never be more dead than I was then and, since I was so keenly conscious, aware of those who loved me being at my side, able to think of those whom I could not wish to leave,—I say again, since all of this was so apparent to me, I had the answer to the riddle of life—it is, "*Continued, conscious existence.*"

They talk about "The Romance of Two Worlds" by Corelli. Why, my whole thirty odd years of experience with the Teacher from that other sphere has been like a romance of the finest kind—and be it known I am not indulging in any flight of fancy right now. I am wide awake, almost ready to go out to deliver the lectures of this day, and awaiting the many joys that I know are ahead of me. It is a joy to know that one is alive—and will always be.

Some folk, reading this chapter, may be inclined to say the experience I have just related must have been the resultant of bodily pain and the concurrent mental agitation. The only trouble with that argument would be *there was no mental agitation.* I am not given to violent mental agitation, nor do I go into rhapsodies over minor things. I don't agitate easily, because life to me is a constant analysis—I am looking for the why of things.

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Realizing, however, that there must be something concrete to build on, I shall give in detail a few of the most striking incidents of my personal contact with this Master Teacher who embodies so much that is real and vital about my life. When these additional incidents—they really are epochs in my life—have been related, I shall leave them for you to judge. You may draw your own conclusions. One fact remains, however, i. e.:

I have told many psychic researchers of these experiences. At dinner with Prof. James H. Hyslop, in Philadelphia, years ago, I related some of them. I knew when I did so that he could not use them, because they had not come under his scrutiny, or the examination required by the rule of that august body. One happy memory, however, is that Prof. Hyslop did not question them at all. He had reached the point where things had come to him that he, too, regarded as sacredly as I regard my experiences. Indeed, did he not say from my platform, the church of the historic First Association of Spiritualists, in Philadelphia, *"I have, unquestionably, talked with my dead father."*

To be continued

"Mastery presupposes understanding, and the intelligent application of principles and laws involved in any given task. Mastery always presupposes positivity—in other words, an adequate degree of self-confidence, self-assurance, self-dependence, and a measure of that spirit of independence which refuses to be discouraged by apparently undesirable circumstances and environments."

—From, *"Words of The Master."*

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WITH THE EDITORS

When I started the series of articles under the caption "*Thru the Years with the Editor*", it was my intention to tell that story in fifteen issues. Here we are giving you the twentieth installment in this number of *The Mystic Key*. I have thought seriously of closing it soon, but so many have commented on these incidents in my long career in the field, that I have been wondering about it. So I am putting the matter up to you: *Do you want more of my life experiences published in The Mystic Key?* I could publish a book about the Teacher alone. So, if you want more of them, just get a post card and send it to the office, addressed either to *The Mystic Key*, or Miss Russell. All you need to say is "*Continue the Editor's Life Story*," and sign your name. If you don't want more, say "*Discontinue*" instead of "*Continue.*"

We have a wealth of material for you for next month. First we shall give you that article on "*The Work Afield*"; another entirely new idea about "*The Problem of Healthiness*"; of course there will be another installment of "*Thru the Years*"—in which I shall tell of some wonderful experiences with *The Master Teacher*. Then we shall have a lesson "*Mentalism That Pays Dividends.*" More of those gems from "*Words of the Master*", another sterling article from Miss Russell's pen and . . . well, just heaps of good things.

During the last month I have had the very fine privilege of meeting Hon. Horace Leaf and Mrs. Leaf, from London. Mr. Leaf has been making a tour of America and is now in the West. He made many friends during the midwinter Mass Meeting of the Minnesota Spiritualist Association—and he will continue to make them everywhere because he has something real to offer. I am glad London loaned these splendid folk to us for a while—and hope they come again.

Don't you think Miss Russell and Deane have done things to a turn these last few months? *The Mystic Key* is being dressed up in the latest colors—there is nothing more attractive at Miami Beach, or elsewhere. While we are talking about it, have you invited your friends to subscribe

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for *The Mystic Key*, yet? If not, why not? You know Spring and Summer are on the way, vacation time is around the corner and they should have something good to read. C'mon, now, let's all pull together—let's make this the banner year by increasing the circulation to the very limit.

Wherever you are, *The Mystic Key* and the whole staff is wishing you every good thing that can come your way. Here's for Health, Wealth and Happiness.

—WILL J. ERWOOD.

"He who would become the master of circumstance and environment must fit himself, mentally, intellectually and spiritually, to fit into the desired situation so perfectly that nothing can dislodge him. When he has done this, he becomes the keystone of the arch and, the greater the pressure brought to bear upon him, the more secure his position."

—From, "*Words of The Master.*"



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SAITH THE MASTER

"IF Thou Wouldst Attain To Secure Heights And Know That There Is Naught Of Conflict Between Thee And Thy Supreme Master, Let Thy Soul Ever Affirm This: I AM One With The Cosmic Whole In Purpose; I Receive And Radiate Cosmic Energy; I AM Filled With Infinite Love For All Humankind—All Life; And Day And Night I Manifest The Divine Life And Will."

From "Words of The Master."