

APRIL 1918

Rays from the Rose Cross



A Magazine of Mystic Light

EDITED BY MAX HEINDEL

BIRTH CONTROL
THE TROUBLES OF TWINS
ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY
CHRIST AND HIS MISSION
THE WHITE ARMS OF PRAYER
TEMPLE BUILDING
THE MEANING OF DEATH

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General Contents

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A Department devoted to articles on Occultism, Mystic Masonry, Esoteric Christianity, and similar subjects.

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Designed to give further light upon the various subjects dealt with in the different departments, where queries from students and other subscribers make this necessary.

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One With God

I stand in the Great Forever,
I lave in the Ocean of Truth,
And I bask in the golden sunshine
Of endless Love and Youth.

And God is within and around me,
All good is forever mine;
To all who seek it is given,
And it comes by a law divine.

In the deathless glory of Spirit
That knows no destruction nor fall,
From the immortal firs of heaven
To the plains of earth I call.

Who is this "I" that is speaking—
This being so wondrous in might?
'Tis part of the primitive essence,
A spark of the infinite Light.

Blasphemous and vain they may call me,
What matters it all to me?
Side by side we are marching onward,
And in time we will all agree.

Oh! I stand in the Great Forever,
All things to me are divine;
I eat of the heavenly manna,
I drink of the heavenly wine.

In the gleam of the shining rainbow
The Father's love I behold,
As I gaze on its radiant blending
Of crimson and blue on gold.

In all the bright birds that are singing,
In all the fair flowers that bloom,
Whose welcome aromas are bringing
Their blessings of sweet perfume.

In the glorious tint of the morning,
In the gorgeous sheen of the night,
Oh! my soul is lost in rapture,
My senses are lost in sight.

Come back, O my soul, in thy straying,
Let thy wandering pinions be furled;
Oh, speed through the heavenly ether
To this prosy and sensebound world!

They say I am only mortal,
Like others, I'm born to die;
In the mighty will of the Spirit
I answer, "Death I defy."

And I feel a power uprising,
Like the power of an embryo god;
With a glorious wall it surrounds,
And lifts me up from the sod.

I am born to die? Ah, never!
This spirit is all of me;
I stand in the Great Forever,
Oh God, I am one with Thee!

I think of the birthright immortal
And my being expands like a rose,
As an odorous cloud of incense
Around and above me flows.

A glorious song of rejoicing
In an innermost spirit I hear,
And it sounds like heavenly voices
In a chorus divine and clear.

Oh, the glory and joy of living!
Oh, the inspiration I feel!
Like a halo of Love they surround me
With new-born raptures and seal.

I gaze through the dawn of the morning,
I dream 'neath the stars of night,
I bow my head to the blessings
Of this wonder gift of light.

Oh, God, I am one forever
With Thee by the glory of birth;
The celestial powers proclaim it
To the utmost bounds of earth.

Ye pilgrims of varied probations,
Ye teachers and saviors of men,
To your heaven-born revelations
My spirit shall answer "Amen!"

With you in the Great Forever,
With the children of earth I stand,
And this light flowing out like a river
Shall bless and redeem the land.

Oh, the glory and joy of living!
To know we are one with God;
'Tis an armor of might to the spirit,
'Tis a blossom that crowns the sod.

Thus stand in the Great Forever
With Thee as eternities roll;
Thy spirit forsakes me never;
Thy love is the home of my soul.

The Mystic Light

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APRIL 1918

The Meaning of Death

Theological and scientific dogmas that represent man's thought about himself and his environment at its worst, whether savage or sage, have exhibited what Schopenhauer calls "the will to live quite in the primitive biological way," says the London Light, in discussing a book called *La Sens de la Mort (The Meaning of Death)*, by M. Paul Bourget. The story itself is of the present day, but lack of space prevents us from repeating even the most abbreviated form of the plot. What immediately concerns us is the divergent views touching life and death that are made manifest during the discussion between two of the leading characters. One of these men is a famous surgeon who has just discovered himself to be doomed to death in a few months by cancer. The other is a healthy young man.

These two gentlemen are inspecting a hospital together when the young man remarks that the arrangement there are almost too comfortable. To this the great surgeon objects, "No, what is the use of suffering when it is possible to escape it." His question is passionately resentful because he is suffering very much himself.

The young man, who has never suffered, answers, "To pay." "Pay what?" demanded the surgeon, who has not told the secret of his suffering to others. "The debts of our faults and the faults of others," answers the young man. This interpretation the elder man resents, for his conceptions are mainly materialistic.

"Our faults, as if we had asked to be born! and the faults of others—it is monstrous!" "But," says the young man, "since everything in life leads up to suffering and death, if suffering and death have

not that meaning of expiation, what meaning have they, what meaning has life?" The answer of the great surgeon is short, for he is filled with intense resentment. "None," he concludes.

It is, needless to say to the student of the deeper philosophies that both are wrong. It is not true that everything in life leads up to suffering and death. The mission of pain and suffering is not merely expiation. There is no angry God, who aims to get even with us for our wrong doings, but we stand here face to face with a law, a good law, designed to teach us the lessons which are necessary for our advancement to greater heights in the scale of evolution.

So that by a succession of existences in earthy bodies of increasingly finer texture, we learn the lessons of life and how to adjust ourselves to the conditions here by right thought and right action. Who has a body so good and perfect that he would like to dwell in it forever? Surely no one. We all have our pains and aches and all are subject to suffering. Therefore death should be looked upon not as the king of terrors but as the merciful relief from an outgrown garment that a new one and better may serve us in a future life, and enable us to progress further upon the path of unfoldment. This is seen in all kingdoms.

If the primordial flora had not been subject to death and decay, no higher forms of plant life could ever have come into existence upon earth; and if death had not released the spirit that ensouled the primitive animal form, reptiles would still inhabit the earth, to the exclusion of the higher mammalian types. Similarly if man had not died, the primitive human forms absolutely unfit for the expression of life and intellect to which we

have today attained, would still be the only ones here. It is true that we reap what we have sown, but the only purpose of this reaping is not expiation; we are at the same time learning lessons how to avoid past mistakes on future occasions and conform to the laws of nature.

We are not here only to pay for our mistakes, but to learn by them, and such primitive ideas of atonement as expressed in the answer of the young man must be rooted out of human conception, that nobler forms of religion may take its place. All through the constitution of the Universe runs the principle of justice, but not cold, hard justice; justice it is, tempered with mercy, for that which we recognize as the laws of nature in their manifestations are in fact great intelligences, the ministers of God, the Seven Spirits before the Throne, and the Recording Angels. They are compassionate beyond any conception we can have of this term, and whatever befalls a human being under their guidance is suited just to his needs.

We are told that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without Our Father in Heaven wills it. And if nature—or God—or the Universe—however we name the power that progressively brought to birth the nonindividualized spirit in forms ascending upwards in the scale to man, conserving in each form all progressive developments of lower forms, if this ineffable power is justified even to man as regards the destiny of all creatures below him, the plain assumption in reference to his own fate is that he being the highest in the four kingdoms of life now evolving in this world must be provided for when he dies as well as before he was born. Such is the logical conclusion, and the more we examine the question, the more is that conclusion justified among those who have studied the matter and are in a position to know.

In this connection, it is as strange as it is illuminating to note the different ways in which the war affects people of different religious beliefs. Speaking generally we may say that there are three great religious systems represented among the combatants: the Hindus, the Mohammedans, and the Christians. Each of these three classes meet death in a different way, on account of what they

believe during life. Moreover, their belief makes them act differently when they enter the invisible worlds. For the sake of elucidation and comparison we may take the Hindu first. He believes in *karma*, that is to say, that most of the things which befall him in this life are the result of action in former lives, and this *kanna* it seems is, to say the least, very difficult to change, if it can be done at all. Perhaps to some extent some of the most intelligent believe that this *karma* may be changed, but as a race it is the writer's understanding that they believe that kind of karma cannot be avoided and they are here for the purpose of working it out. But while they are thus expiating the result of their past actions in former lives, they are also making new karma and thus laying the foundation for their future lives. In this respect they believe that they have free will, except as restricted by their environment, and thus they are able to change their lives in the future.

When a man is imbued with this belief and goes to war, he takes it as a matter or course that if he meets death, then it is karma. He fights fearlessly because he feels that if it is not his karma to die then he will come out safe whatever he does. If suffering comes to him, he looks upon that also as karma and strives to take it as patiently as possible. Furthermore, when after death he finds himself in the invisible world, he is calm and collected; he knows that his relatives, though they may grieve for him, will not do so in an inordinate measure, because they know that it is karma and therefore feel that it is no use to rebel. Furthermore, he believes that in due time he will come to birth again and will meet his dear ones in altered forms; thus there is no real cause for unrestrained grief.

The Turks have a somewhat similar belief in *kismet*, which is their name for fate. They believe that every thing in human life to the very smallest detail is predestined and that therefore it does not matter how they act or do not act, whatever is to befall will befall, regardless of any action or exercise of ingenuity of their part. Hence it has always been reported that Mohammedan soldiers went forth to war in an absolute disregard of their lives; that they fought with unexcelled bravery, and

endured all privations without a murmur, knowing that when they had fought the good fight they would be translated to paradise where the beautiful Houris would minister to their welfare forever. Though at the present time all religions seem to have fallen more and more into indifference, the effect of this belief is still seen to a considerable extent by the Invisible Helpers who take care of the victims of war when they pass over. They find usually the Moslems to be calm and resigned to their fate.

But when we consider the case of the Christians, the matter is very different. It is true that the Christian religion also teaches that what a man sows that shall he also reap, but in the first place, the religious teachings have had but a very small place among the Western nations compared to the grip which they have upon the people of the East, such as the Hindus and Mohammedans. Their religion is part of every day life. At certain times the Orientals, of whatever religion, devote themselves to prayer and are very sincere in their religious observance.

In the Western world, on the other hand, people are generally ashamed of being thought too religious. Recently one of the New York papers had a full page advertisement, if the writer remembers correctly, which stated that business men ought to go to church as that is a good asset in business, for it marked them as respectable citizens and would gain for them more credit. What an unworthy motive to hold out as an inducement! There was, 'of course, considerable indignation over this advertisement, but it shows the dilemma of the church, how they are put to it to keep up their membership' and attendance, and how few even among students seeking mystic development read this great book, the Bible.

The writer has often noticed that whenever a question comes up concerning the Bible, or someone is asked to read from the Bible, very few can pronounce the names properly, or name the various books of the Bible. These are all signs which go to show that religion with us in the western world is neither studied nor practiced daily by the great majority. On one occasion, while discussing this

question with a business man, he remarked that he had no time for the study of religion during the week, therefore he paid a minister to study, and went to church on Sunday in order that the minister might there give him the benefit of what he had learned during the past week.

Those who study the Bible are called cranks and shunned as such. Hence the idea concerning the meaning of suffering and death expressed by the surgeon in the book which gave rise to the thoughts here expressed. But even where the idea of mercy and vicarious atonement is embraced, that goes to the opposite extreme and teaches that immediately a man feels that he has sinned and is sorry he is at once forgiven as expressed in the couplet,

*Between the stirrup and the ground,
He pardon sought, and pardon found.*

This conveys the idea that one may live a life of sin up to the very moment of death and then on the deathbed, by saying that we are sorry, we may be forgiven for the whole score of our life. This wrong idea has become so ingrained in the public consciousness that we have lost respect for the law that "as we sow so shall we also reap," and are depending altogether on grace, that is to say, if we ever give the matter any thought at all, and in the writer's estimation, nothing short of a thorough education of the people of the Western world to the fact of their responsibility can ever waken the religious life again.

If the churches want to succeed and increase their attendance, if they want to spread the kingdom of Christ upon earth, then this is really the way. They must reawaken the sense of individual responsibility, which has been lost partly by the sale of indulgences practiced by the Catholic church, which has given those who believe in it the feeling that the justice and equality which is rooted in universal law could be cheated by the payment of a few paltry dollars. This was a blow at the very foundation upon which religion stands, and as a result we have today in the present war a spectacle which is too horrible for contemplation. And while

our brothers whom we call heathen face death and adjust themselves to conditions in the world beyond because they are imbued with a sense of this responsibility for their own actions, and a sense of the divine guardianship which has all things in its great care, we who pride ourselves upon being the most civilized people, Christians, face death in a manner that is altogether unbecoming. When we are not beside ourselves in anger and rage and pass over in that condition we cry and are unhappy because of the dear ones we left behind, and a small class is commiserating itself for having been taken out of earthly life and enjoyments there experienced.

There is sorrow and mental suffering among the Christians, so-called, that is unequalled and unparalleled among those who come from the East, and were it not that relatives of those people who are now passing over by the hundreds of thousands have pressed into service to soothe and quiet them until they find their balance, and thus minimize the dreadful condition, it seems as if this earth must have been swallowed up in an ocean of sorrow.

It seems therefore to the writer that in order to effect the regeneration of the Western world people must be educated concerning the action of the twin laws which are at the root of human progress, for when we thoroughly understand that under the law of consequence we are responsible for our actions, but that the retribution is not meted out by an angry God, any more than when we throw a stone up in the sky God takes that stone and throws it back at us. Action and reaction follow each other just as ebb and flow, night and day, winter and summer, and this law, coupled with the law of rebirth, which gives us a new chance in a new environment and better body, enables us to work our way from the human to the divine, as we have worked our way from microbe to man.

BIRTH CONTROL

By W. Stuart Leech, M. D.

The subject of birth control has recently attracted much attention by the lay press and elicited editorial notice in some of the medical journals. Some

time ago New York justice sentenced Mrs. Margaret H. Sanger to thirty days for distributing a certain circular called "Family Limitations." If the reputed reports of her teachings are true, it would require no novice to see that if the women of the land would follow her advice the nation ere the end of the century would be as barren of population as the desert of Sahara.

The large families, the congested districts, the numerous women who are made miserable by a succession of births at short intervals, together with the economical stress of the land, eternally forces this family limitation question squarely before us. Our lessons must be drawn from nature, for as an expression of Deity it is continually exerting itself to create and bring forth, but it never does so out of season.

Astrologers inform us that if sexual intercourse is participated in only under auspicious planetary rays, or when the proper aspects are in harmonic relations to the twain, there will then follow ease of birth and sufficient of the world's goods furnished by the Cosmic forces. The disciples of Esoteric Christianity teach that if intercourse is indulged in for the purpose of propagation only, then will the woman bring forth her product without pain and without sorrow, thereby solving the birth control question.

This is a high plane and is not beyond human attainment. However, if the ignorant indulgence of the creative act is adding untold sorrow to the 'human race, then we must whip ourselves into this high plane of living which evolution demands of us. The quicker we come to this realization the better, whether we desire it or not.

At the gate of the mystic Temple of Solomon we find the Cherubim, not holding a fiery sword as in the Atlantean period, but in the hands a flower, an emblem symbolical of the sexual purity which man must attain before he could enter the Shekinah Glory, or see with his soul-body. The symbol of the Cherubim upon the temple door holding the open flower was the key to sexual purity that would unlock the gate to man's unlimited power. This is not a new teaching, but is veiled in poetry and is mystically illustrated throughout the literature of

all ages. It is the mystery teaching of the Grail, the emblematic teaching of the "Kelch" and "Calix," and is the secret of the unfolding lotus of the mystic Hindu. Family limitation is a demand for nothing less than mental and physical purity. I am constrained to think that man is sexually lower than the dog, birds, cows, and snakes, which use the generative function in season for the purpose of propagating the species. Each of these has a primal guardian, the group-spirit, which in a great amount of wisdom sacredly guides them collectively. Even a superficial knowledge of the ways and the wherefores of the various group-spirits will put the best of us to the blush of shame.

Man then being self-willed and not guided by a group-spirit, how can he be taught to guard against the ignorant indulgence of the creative act? He feasts daily on erotic literature, fiery imaginations, suggestive scenes, and physically fills up on spices, peppers, wines, and the carcasses of slaughtered bulls and boars. His atoms partake of the nature of the slaughtered animal, to say nothing of the low vibratory action of such when considered in the light of man's advanced state in the scale of evolution.

Man thus gorges himself on improper food, which gives him a cloudy brain, overloads the colon, irritates the ureters, fills and titillates the testicular glands with an overflow to such an extent that the deluded victim would accept Dante's Inferno, forfeiting a paradise, rather than be denied the momentary pleasure of relief.

This destructive mode of living, united with the inherited predisposition, causes man to make himself "lusus naturae" (a sport or freak of nature).

Man, however, is not an evolutionary product of our present fauna, but in a de-evolutionary manner turns his generative organs towards the earth in shame, by reason of his tainted and irritated passion. The plant puts forth its generative organ, the flower, in a chaste way to the sun, becoming a thing of beauty and delight to man, bird, and insect. Its fertilization is accomplished without passion, in a chaste manner.

On the other hand, man, by the nature of his own manufactured environment, which is hostile, is

thus to be seen out of harmony with nature. We may feed and clothe the penniless; we may hew, cut, carve, and dissect diseased bodies; we may masticate, secrete, and expostulate for coming eons on the economical and political conditions of the masses, but it availeth little or nothing unless we go to the fountain's source and remove the cause. Are there too many children? Yes, in spots.

Hold up your hands in holy horror, say what you please, condemn me as a utopian dreamer, but the fact remains, nevertheless, that the sense gratification of the sexual act is its abuse, be it in associated vice, in wedlock or out of it. Most of us permit ourselves to be hoodwinked by looking upon matrimony as a license for the unbridled use of a sacred act.

It is absolutely not right to gratify the use of the passions at any and all times. We suffer by reason of our parents' attitude to the sex question and we are by our living trying to bestow the same maladies upon our children; and we will thus continue until sorrow and suffering make us realize that every child has a right to receive proper care in the period of prenatal life that it may be well born.

Limitation by vasectomy, mechanical obstruction, flush, chemical destruction, miscarriage, infanticide, and other unmentionable modes all belong to the destructive side of nature, and as such must be condemned as unworthy the serious consideration of the profession. In our present condition, the price to pay appears to be great; but the reward is worth while.

Individually and collectively it will require a complete modification of our diet, improved sanitary environments, and a subjugation without killing of our most fiery passion. It is the natural and the only constructive way for the limitation of families.

*YOU ARE ENCIRCLED WITH THE WHITE
ARMS OF PRAYER*

Corinne Smith Dunklee

"More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."—Tennyson

Somewhere in France the newly arrived regi-