

Rays from the ROSE CROSS



A Magazine of Mystic Light

EDITED BY MAX HEINDEL

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF WAR.

THE SOLAR ECLIPSE.

COMMENTARY ON OMAR KHAYYAM.

PADRE SETTIMO'S LAST DAY OF LIFE.

• THE ROSICRUCIAN PHILOSOPHY.

WHITE FLOUR AND MALNUTRITION.

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General Contents

The Mystic Light

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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The Philosophy of War

THOU SHALT NOT KILL

In the great crises of life we are brought face to face with certain issues and are called upon to make decisions of such importance that they often require reversion of ideas and ideals, even of our most cherished principles as hitherto conceived, and when such a crisis comes it will be nothing short of mental, moral, and spiritual suicide to shirk or evade the issue, no matter what the cost. Consistency is said to be a jewel, but if we would be truly wise, we must be ready to change or revise our ideas whenever occasion really demands.

The Rosicrucian teaching has always been in conformity with the Bible dictum "Thou shalt not kill". No qualification was made and some have carried this idea to such extremes that they would not kill a fly. But the majority rightly felt that the injunction was not intended to cover pests and micro-organisms which take such a terrible toll of human life; these things being a manifestation of evil thoughts, they are without the pale.

These people have no intention of allowing their bodies or the bodies of their children to be overrun by vermin rather than to kill the pests and they realize that extermination of insects was a great basic factor in America's success at Panama. In fact, it turned the balance from failure to success and this principle should be applied wherever necessary.

They feel that it would be a foolish application of the injunction "thou shalt not kill" to allow beasts or prey or poisonous reptiles to roam about among us to endanger our lives, and they would cheerfully kill to remove such a menace from the community. In their code of ethics the injunction

involves only the idea that it is wrong to kill for food, for sport, or for profit.

To kill a human being seemed so remote a possibility to most of us that it was not considered even as a contingency and we always denounced capital punishment, both on the ground that it is basically wrong and that it is worse than useless, for when we free the spirit of a murderer from his body, we liberate him in the spiritual world where he can and often does work on others to influence them to similar crimes.

Therefore it is better to restrain him in a prison and strive to reform him so that even if he does not regain his liberty in this life, he will in future existences respect the sanctity of life of others.

But while it is possible thus to deal with the individual murderer, the case is different when an entire nation runs amuck against another, committing wholesale murder, arson, destruction, and pillage. It is then impossible to imprison a whole nation and more drastic means of self-defense must be found.

In civil life we recognize the law of self-defense, which gives the intended victim of a would-be murderer the right to slay rather than be slain, and it would be specious to contend that this right is lost because a million murderers dress themselves in uniform, or because they go out boldly and brazenly, proclaiming their intention to kill, or because they lie in ambush by companies instead of singly. Being the aggressors, they are murderers and their intended victims have an unquestionable moral right to defend their own lives by slaying these murderers.

Furthermore, there rests upon the strong the

sacred duty of protecting the lives of those who are too weak to protect themselves, even though that involves the slaying of murderers.

From the spiritual standpoint, therefore, the right or wrong of war hinges upon the question: who is the aggressor and who is the victim?

This question is easily answered where war is started for the purpose of conquest, and when war is waged for an altruistic purpose, such as the emancipation of a subjected people from physical, industrial, and religious bondage.

It needs no argument to show that in such cases the oppressor is also the aggressor and the liberator is the defender of inalienable human rights; he is performing a sacred duty as "his brother's keeper".

When this is once understood we cannot be deceived by the jack-o-lanterns of diplomacy for we have a true light, a simple standard of right and wrong.

Having made up our minds on that point, it follows that it is far more noble and heroic to face a firing squad for refusing to enter the army of the aggressor or to flee from our native land or even join the ranks of the defenders in the most menial capacity than to hold a post of highest honor among the aggressors.

On the other hand it is a sacred duty in accord with the highest and noblest spiritual principles to fight among the defenders. The greater the sacrifice, the greater the merit, and he who shirks this sacred duty to defend hearth and home, kin and country, or who fails to fight for the oppressed, is beneath denunciation. Furthermore, the greater the emergency, the greater the sacrifice that is required.

Nor is this great privilege of sacrifice confined to those of brawn and broad shoulders. Not alone they are bound by duty; the work behind the lines is even more important and all can share according to talent and ability—mental, physical, and financial.

Furthermore, when the occasion arises where defense of others or self-defense becomes unavoidable, the harder the campaign is pushed, the shorter and more successful it will be. Therefore no half measure should be tolerated and

neutrality under such circumstances must be regarded at least as a sin of omission.

It is well understood by students of occultism that wars are instigated and inspired by the divine hierarchies who thus use one nation to punish another for its sins. Even a superficial study of the Bible will furnish many instances. This does not always mean that the victor is altogether righteous, but it does show that the vanquished nation has done wrong and merits the punishment inflicted, usually on account of its arrogance and godlessness.

Nor is it a sign that because it is victorious for a long time and extremely difficult to conquer it enjoys divine favor; at least in a measure. Such a course may be brought about by the invisible army who support the arms of the aggressor and prolong the struggle for the purpose of making the final defeat more thorough and disastrous; also to teach the defenders a lesson that could not be learned in a short decisive struggle.

Such, briefly, is the philosophy of war, from the spiritual viewpoint, regardless of who are the nations involved, and if we apply these principles and tests to the present war, it must be apparent to everyone who is not biased and will approach the subject with a broad and open mind that the militarists of the Central Empires have been preparing for this war for generations and on the fifth of July, 1914, at the notorious Potsdam Conference, which is now acknowledged by them, they agreed to start the war after a few weeks, during which the bankers of these nations were so manipulating the markets as to amass the greatest possible financial resources. This stamps the Austro-German war parties as the aggressors, who under the spell of the race spirits have marshaled their millions against all the other nations of the world.

In the beginning of the conflict France and England, who were the immediate neighbors of the outraged Belgians, made her cause their own and acted in that respect as their brother's keeper. But being unprepared, they have been unable to bring the struggle to a decisive termination, wherefore it became necessary for America to enter the conflict and turn the balance, so that peace may be restored

and safety be secured to those who are too weak to protect themselves.

It has been a matter of rejoicing that whenever the United States has been forced to enter upon a military campaign, it has always been either in self-defense or in the still more altruistic role of defender and emancipator of the weak. Were this a war of conquest or aggression, it would be better for any spiritually minded person to face a firing squad as already stated than to participate in such an unrighteous undertaking.

But on the other hand, seeing that the present struggle, which is waged for the purpose of crushing the militarism of Central Europe, has taken

such a terrible toll of human life, with the strength of the allied defenders nearly spent, it is the sacred duty of everyone to aid to the very limit, according to his spiritual, mental, moral, or physical capacity, either at the front or behind the lines, wherever the judgment of those who have charge may require his or her service.

Therefore we would urge each and every one of the students of the Rosicrucian Fellowship of whatever country now defending the cause of humanity against the militarist party of the Central Empires, to support his or her government to the very best of his ability that we may soon see "Peace on earth and among men good will".

MY CONVERSATION WITH A TREE

By Agpawan, a Filipino Boy

While I was walking in the Valley of Health, near the Silver Lake, the spirit of a tree came to me and greeted me, saying:

"Agpawan, I am greatly surprised to see you again. I would like to talk long with you." I received him cordially and took him to my cabin.

"I now tell you that I am of the plant kingdom. Our good king sent me to carry out his wish—to tell you about our place in nature; why we were created by the Divine Providence. We plants move from place to place where there are good surroundings; or depend on the climate or the quality of the soil. We inhabit the entire earth. Some live a long time and some live a short time, and each and all of us is seeking for the same—such as food, protection, liberty, and freedom. We cannot speak to you of our desire, feeling, agony and joy. But it is God's wish. We can do no otherwise but to feel glad for what God has given to us, great and small.

"Now why are we here? I believe without us you could not live; we give you all you need, your house, sugar, flowers, chairs, pure air, and many thousand things, that I cannot tell them here. Our trunks, leaves, barks, roots, living or dead, are not wasted: when we decay on the ground we become good fertilizer for those who are to grow, that they may give good seeds. And when we are cut down

by you we are not lost, but you use us for many purposes. "I wish to sum up: We are made different in body from you, very complex, but in some ways we are like you. In our nature there is power to reproduce our members, and perhaps we are a more ambitious and patriotic group than the animals. I advise you to look at us through the microscope instrument."

—*N. Y. Evening Mail*

WHITE MAGIC

By R. F.

Blind folk see the fairies,
Oh, better far than we,
Who miss the shining of their wings
Because our eyes are filled with things
We do not wish to see.
They need not seek enchantment
From solemn printed books,
For all about them as they go
The fairies flutter to and fro
With smiling, friendly looks.
Deaf folks hear the fairies,
However soft their song:
'Tis we who lose the honey sound
Amid the clamor all around
That beats the whole day long.
But they with gentle faces
Sit quietly apart;
What room have they for sorrowing
While fairy minstrels sit and sing
Close to their listening heart.