

Pilgrim's Progress Through Occultism

FOR SOME TWO THOUSAND years many schools, both orthodox and heterodox, have sought to convey the full meaning of the word *Christian*. The state of the world today, in all departments of human relationship, would indicate that a complete understanding has not yet been widely given out and that the need for it has never been greater.

Orthodox Christianity does not call for great individual effort and is largely dependent upon precedent for its authority. Orthodox religious thought, orthodox scientific thought, and orthodox philosophic or occult thought all conduct their activities, by definition, along established lines, adequately serving the majority of persons. The spiritual pioneers, those who more energetically seek to know and live life's fundamental truths, require more than what is disseminated through traditional institutions. The pioneer probes deeper into reality and discerns more with a compassionate heart and an intrepid mind.

The materialist stresses his physical body. In fact, it is who he is. So he favors it. But if he means well and wants to live right, he does not indulge his body. It must be conditioned and made sensitive and responsive to impacts coming from the physical world, the only one he recognizes and believes in. The materialist engages in little activity pertaining to his emotional or mental bodies, except as that activity relates to his physical needs and provides for his material comfort.

After a time he will feel that something about his life is lacking and he may join one of the orthodox religious denominations, hoping to benefit himself



Engraving, William Blake, from *For Children: The Gates of Paradise*, 1793, British Museum

Aged Ignorance

His eyes closed, his spectacles of no value, his back to the rising sun, the elder is about to clip the wings of youthful vision which is open to flights of imagination and intuition.

thereby. Now he is known to the world at large as a Christian, from which fact he derives, for a time, a degree of satisfaction. Here his emotional nature is worked upon in what proves to be a rather uncertain manner. Again he may soon feel that something is wrong with him or with his place in the scheme of things. He has been told that there is a heavenly life after this mortal existence and he is thereby given a hope for better things to come. But the moment he forms the thought that something definite might be known about the hereafter, he is given a rather wide berth by the orthodox community, for its doctrines teach to leave well enough alone. Thus he feels his first pangs of religious loneliness.

So he makes another move. He looks for answers elsewhere. He may leave the halls of emotionalism

and turn to the religion of the mind. He discovers that he can learn to improve his mind and strengthen its cognitive powers. But since the physical and emotional aspects of human existence are not considered, once more he turns away, again feeling that something is wrong but not knowing what it is.

By this time he has at least a passing interest in the existence of invisible worlds and he begins to explore one or another of the negative occult schools. Things begin to look promising and a real enthusiasm is awakened in him. He satisfies himself that there is a hereafter and that a connection with it may be made while one is still on earth. But he eventually learns that he is involved in mediumistic practices consisting of attempts to contact dubious spirit entities by negative methods. These methods do not proceed from any constructive plan, they do not improve his character or make him a better person. Indeed, passivity is emphasized. He is given no responsibility to carry positive projects forward to completion. He has seen something, but it is yet a thing apart from him. He can find no way to satisfy his need to be constructive and creative and to better accomplish what is fundamentally good.

So he looks elsewhere. After leaving the schools of mediumship and phenomenalism behind him, our friend the truth-seeker will more than likely take up the work of one of the Eastern occult schools. He learns many valuable things here, such as the fact that he is not his bodies, visible or invisible; that there is a law of rebirth, which explains something of his greater destiny; that the law of cause and effect ever redirects him away from his many mistakes back onto the right path; and that he himself is of some importance in God's universe. He is given much information concerning the path he has taken to date. He is given some information about the future and his place in it. But even here he is not shown how to shoulder responsibility in this School. He is obliged to decipher many concepts formulated in the older languages of Eastern origin. It is all good. But it also puzzles him the more he tries to work with it, until finally he despairs of understanding it correctly and completely, and so he gradually separates himself from it.

By this time our friend has become convinced

that there is a tremendous Something Definite back of all this intricate structure that he has been investigating. He wants to go behind the scenes and see what it is that lives in this garment of occultism, as it were. Throughout his pilgrimage he has been forming himself into an ever more efficient discoverer and investigator of truth. There is needed but the lamp of discrimination by which he may find the reality that lives in Truth and the final success of our friend is assured—provided he persists in his search.

But hold! We have at last given him something to do. Surely this is a simple commission that all may undertake with confidence and safety. Life commands that we be doers, not mere speculators or dreamers. So now our friend is intent on becoming more of a doer, a co-worker with life, in order to develop discrimination and discover reality.

In time he finds his way into one of the Western Mystery Schools whose key principle is the Ego's spiritual growth whereby it increasingly manifests its latent divinity.

Right here in the Mystery School our friend makes a new beginning. He is promptly shown that God exists in the world of form. It is easier to speak of things than to explain them. Orthodoxy speaks of them. The Mystery Schools explain them. It is this power to explain life's mysteries in terms that win the consent of the reasoning mind that distinguishes these teachings from theologies of orthodox schools. Our friend learns that God has a Great Plan, and he is shown his place and assignment therein. He becomes a willing and enthusiastic co-operator with God in the great work of life.

Growth of the total person in esoteric Christianity finds an analogy in the educational methods of the East, where the pupil searches for and commits himself to a Master. In the Western School, the student or personality—comprising the mind, emotional body, etheric body, and the physical body—pledges its obedience to and trust in the Master of its higher Self, whose counsel is always wise and helpful. We all have within us this higher Master nature. And we have the lesser self, which likes to be comfortable, runs after whims, false lights, side issues, and, like an undisciplined child,

may get into all sorts of trouble. When the lower nature resolves to become the obedient servant of the Higher Nature, it shows its first spark of wisdom. Thereafter the Higher Nature or God within ever labors to fan that spark into a brighter flame.

Properly understood, Christianity is designed to organize, purify, and transmute all of the bodies of man, as well as to assist him in developing his latent forces. This refining process is a spiritual operation.

Self-purification must precede the deeper work of the Mysteries. Only highly purified bodies can sustain the spiritual impacts sent through them by the Master within. Even the first impacts of these higher energies give the spiritual aspirant a sense that he is dealing with a holy Power. And when he has evolved to consciously register the greater currents of interplanetary Cosmic Life he realizes that he has been wise indeed to have committed himself to a program of thoroughly cleansing his physical body, emotions, and thoughts.

When our friend associated with the various negative schools of occultism, he was instructed how to direct refining influences to one and then another of his bodies. No one strategy worked with all of his bodies together in a balanced manner as do the methods of the Christian Mystery School, and that was exactly what was troubling him during his long and necessary pilgrimage through these other schools. So he had to look elsewhere to find a greater measure of wisdom to apply to himself and his problems. .

Our friend is taught in the Christian Mystery School how to so conduct his inner and outer life that he can advance in esoteric learning. When he does the necessary work he causes the latent sense centers of his desire body to become active, thus providing a means for super-physical investigation. He may then plainly see the shortened wavelength light of the Desire World and the forms it reveals. It strikes unimpeded straight through the physical planet far more easily than ordinary sunlight penetrates clear air. Really, it is all perfectly simple. Ordinary daylight does not reveal desire forms to physical sight because it is a vibration in



Archives of Alexander Fodor

Engraving, Michael Maier (c. 1568-1622), *Atalanta fugiens*, Oppenheim, 1618

According to some, Count Michael Maier was "the most learned scientist of his time." He was responsible for making the Rosicrucian documents Fama and Confessio widely known on the Continent. Maier taught that real knowledge results from combining nature, reason, experience, and study, "the four wheels of the philosophical chariot." Thus, the above illustration is not what it might appear to be, a satire, but rather direct visual symbolism: The footprints (designs) of nature are the pioneers, guiding and encouraging the quest for truth; the man's walking stick represents reason; experience provides the spectacles that correct vision; and the lantern represents the study of transmitted wisdom, which gives light.

ether. We are blind to the finer forms until we use the right kind of revealing agency.

The Christian Mystery School enables our friend to learn the facts concerning Jesus and the Christ. Spiritual sight is a normal possession of the Initiate of the Mysteries. Mary and Joseph were both Initiates. The Ego of Jesus attached itself to the aura of Mary, its future mother, several years before its intended conception. Instances are known of this attachment as much as twenty years before birth and often well before the future mother has even thought about marriage. The intended incarnation is directed by the Great Ones from the higher worlds which interpenetrate the physical world. Mary and Joseph could see the incoming Ego of Jesus and sense its high vibration, and they were instructed as to its mission. So they married and provided Jesus with a new physical body as a means of aiding humanity. There is nothing unnatural in

the whole matter. Certainly God would be the last one to break His own laws in providing means for body building in any of His worlds of form.

The Cosmic Spirit Christ entered and took possession of the physical and etheric bodies of Jesus at the time of the Baptism and the vehicles of our planet at the time of the Crucifixion. Thus Christ possessed a chain of vehicles reaching all the way from man to God. Then He became the Messiah. But at the Crucifixion He was lost to our world of men, as far as use of a physical body was concerned, because at that time He entered the planet's interior. Now He is directing Earth as its Ego. He is both a personal and a planetary savior. He is helping us to use our etheric bodies as vehicles of consciousness and expression. When a sufficient number of humanity have developed spiritually so as to warrant His return, He will reappear in the etheric body of Jesus which has been preserved for Him, and take direct charge of human evolution.

The Mystery student's increased understanding of the nature of Christ resolves most perceived differences between the orthodox and esoteric Christianity. Seeming contradictions in all departments of life may usually be overcome by determining whether the question relates to the life side of Nature or to the form side. Most students of orthodoxy have only learned to think in terms of the world of physical form, and so they become quite tangled up in trying to understand and explain matters pertaining to the life side of Nature mentioned in the Bible. In one sentence Scripture may be referring to the world of form and in the next it may be referring to the worlds of life as in the two Genesis accounts of creation.

Man possesses several bodies: the dense physical body, the etheric, the emotional, and the mental. The etheric body is really a superphysical body in the correct sense of the word. It is composed of four grades of ether. The lowest is the chemical ether, which governs assimilation and excretion in the physical world. The next is called the life ether, having to do with reproduction. The third is the light ether, which is the medium of sense perception, internal heat, and color. The highest or reflecting ether is the vehicle of memory. The third and fourth ethers play an vital role in the Christian

type of development.

The Christian works along occult lines diametrically opposite to the methods used in the schools of negative occultism. The only phenomena that he is interested in are the processes of soul growth by which he acquires soul power, soul light, and soul life, thereby becoming ever more useful as a co-worker with God. He is too busy serving to pay more than passing attention to such things as spirit materialization and similar antics.

While our friend was investigating other occult schools, he was invited to develop along lines that were relatively easy but negative. Occult development depends primarily upon creating energy pathways. The easy way to complete a circuit of human magnetism or life energy is to enlist the aid of like-minded others. So our friend joined hands with his fellows in a circle to combine their ethers for spirit materialization. Outside aids are also used, such as incense, which provides an embodying substance for disembodied spirits. Grave dangers attend mediumistic practices, including obsession. A great loss of the medium's vitality usually accompanies materializations, due to the draining of his life energy.

This type of occult practice does not require purification of the vehicles or the development of will and self-discipline. If too great a stream of psychic energy is sent through the vehicles of the unfortunate medium, he may easily become unable to care for himself. Similarly, a light bulb or electrical device may short out if the voltage flowing in the circuit is higher than what the wiring or filament are able to carry.

The Christian occultist will not attempt any inner development that relies principally on the aid of another. He stands alone, operating, not speculating, through his own power and under the supervision of his own will. This method is slower than that in group endeavors, but the net results are surer and more permanent. The aspirant has no "off" days and is therefore able to be of maximum use in helping to implement God's Plan. The writer advises all readers of this article to reject forever all forms of negative development as dangerous and unworthy of the attention of a Christian occultist. In fact, one cannot cultivate negative

practices and be a true Christian because they are of no lasting benefit to himself or to humanity. In addition, he must undo what he has done before he can proceed on the positive path, which is the higher way.

Christ Jesus did not tell us to be negative. He told us to *do* things. He told us to *do* unto others what we would have others do unto us. That is anything but negative. Let our lower nature do unto the Higher Nature what it would have the Higher Nature do unto it. Let them cooperate within our individual being to promote spiritual growth. Members of Mystery Schools are shown how, through loving service and unremitting self-control, they may open new vistas and gain more power to function in their inner cosmos. This is vastly different from relying on external aids and constitutes an essential difference between Christian and non-Christian development.

The Christian gradually builds a soul body, the Golden Wedding Garment, in which he may travel into and about our planet with the speed of light and operate as a "Free Mason." Is this "Operative Masonic Craft?" Yes, indeed. In building the soul body the Christian occultist attracts and weaves large quantities of the light and reflecting ethers into his etheric body. He does not deplete his vitality in this activity as does the medium. Moreover, he must purify his desires and develop altruism before he can use his soul body. He fashions this new body by aligning himself with God's will to support Life as it seeks to manifest in all of creation's innumerable forms. This love-labor is primarily done by the Life Spirit. When we live the Christian life the Life Spirit becomes active and begins to build a suitable body through which it can function.

Many people do not like the word *occultism* due to a misunderstanding of the term. Christian occultism, or any other type of authentic occultism, is devoted to the proper use of the forces required for building our finer vehicles. It does not dabble in producing psychic phenomena or seek to negatively influence others, though the term is usually associated with these practices. The Christ within, the Life Spirit, will come into fully conscious occupancy of its individual human temple when



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The Oracle of Apollo at Delphi

While the positive clairvoyant attains to a voluntary perception of the supersensible worlds "from above," the priestess tied on the seat atop the golden tripod was enveloped in fumes rising from telluric depths, which served as a medium for spirit messages. The cave (the Greek delphos means womb) was believed to be the lair of the serpent Python, and the fumes were emanations from its decaying body, further confirming the pythian oracle as a negative manifestation of the serpent power.

we will make it a suitable habitation for Him.

Our friend, whose development we have been following, purifies all of his vehicles as stated. Then gradually the creative force begins to rise in the spine. This threefold spiritual energy is symbolized by the three-legged tripod of the Delphian Oracle, and the three-stranded rope mentioned in Eastern writings, which is thrown into the regions above, uncoiling as it goes, enabling the man to climb to the home of the gods. In the East this energy is called the Kundalini. In the West it is called the Spear (of Life), the spear used by Parsifal and abused by Klingsor. It is also the Spinal Spirit Fire of the Western Initiates of the Flame, the Rosicrucians. When active it may be

felt as a gentle heat rising in the spine, giving a sense of immense power.

The movement of this energy causes the blossoming of the seven symbolical buds on the Rod of Aaron, the flowering or leafing out of the Masonic sprig of acacia, the opening of the chakras or lotus buds of the Eastern aspirant, and of the Rosicrucian Roses on the Cross. We find this vital energy depicted in the occult lore of all lands. It passes upward through the heart and into the head, where it passes through the pineal gland and pituitary body. This pathway is also symbolized by the beads of the Catholic rosary; for the truth has been in the world at all times, generally unknown, but always available to the Initiate.

When this energy completes its circuit in the brain, it makes possible a conscious birth into the spiritual worlds. He who follows the Christian Path of Initiation is building the vehicles of the Adept, which will enable him to travel with the instantaneous speed of thought through all the worlds of our universe in conducting the business of our heavenly Father. □

—A. T. Savage

THE SPEEDING OF A THOUGHT

“He sought for others the good he desired for himself. Let him pass on.”

—Egyptian *Vale* for the dead, 1600 B.C.

From the Logos at the heart of the universe there sped a beam of light. It was a thought of love. I watched its lightning-like flash through the worlds—heavenly, mental, desire and physical, and this is what I saw.

The dwellers in Heaven, already enjoying the rhapsody of a great Love felt its presence and a cry went up “Glory to God in the highest.”

And it touched the dwellers in the world of Intellect, and called new powers into their being, and great thought-waves took on a rosy tinge as

minds once more bent themselves to services of love in the cause of humanity’s uplift.

As the starry abode of our radiant soul bodies was lit up by its sword-like flame, I saw each member enveloped in a glow, the dull colors of the lower passions were consumed in its fires, and then—Human hove became angelic and desire burnt at white heat to serve the Great Brotherhood.

Finally, now split up as in a prism, the flame of a Divine Thought enveloped in radiance the earth-dwellers, according to their several paths.

Thus—the disciples of Devotion became a focus for vapors of glorious blue-green, those of the mystic ray taking a share of Heaven’s Azure.

Artists and musicians, reveling in beauty, received a baptism of rosy red flames—each one an inspiration.

And I could see many philosophers and seekers in cloister, laboratory, or library, solitarily pursuing an everlasting quest, and these seemed to be in the direct ray of sunshine caused by the yellow vibration, and with songs of hope in their hearts, they bent once more to their several tasks.

Others of god-like radiance, in whom I could discern those on the “way of the cross,” were hewing out paths for weaker brethren through endless forest tangles, some of them finding precarious and painful foothold on precipitous cliffs. And these looked up in ecstasy as a fountain of violet spray descended upon their bleeding brows, a baptism of Divine Fire.

And they began to sing, and the burden of the song was of a glorious future, yet not a future but a condition in which time, space, past, present and to come were all one, when all will live in the eternal Now—gathering and harvesting experiences of love and service to a great brotherhood which includes the lowliest herb and meanest insect, and stretches far away into the heart of the Universe where dwells the Logos—The Spirit of Love. □

—Agnes Cook

