

TEMPERANCE

A TRACT FOR THE TIMES

by Aleister Crowley

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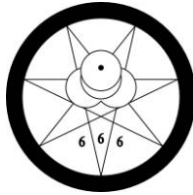
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DEDICATED TO
LADY ASTOR

“Mort aux vaches!”

Fénélon.

“Merde pour les Boches!”

Bossuet.

“Il faut épater le bourgeois.”

Pascal.

“He only does it to annoy,
Because he knows it teases—
But with his wow-wow-wow.”

Rev. C. L. Dodgson.

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In Memoriam

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for Deirdre

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BOB CHANLER.

IN MEMORIAM

*pintoris egregii
amici dilectissimi.*

“TRINC.”

Alcofribas Nasier

Oh let us bathe and crown our hair
And drink untempered wine!
Let ever greater cups ensnare
Our souls in traps divine.

Soon calms the season of love's rage,
And joy grows short of breath;
Birth shoots a shaft, weighed down by age,
That strikes the target, death.

Then come, thou golden goblet brimmed
With lust! Though all be vain,
There's hope for us, the lion-limbed,
In hashish and cocaine.

Though death should hale us by the scruff
Of neck to's mouldy portal,
To-night let us get drunk enough
To know we are immortal!

HYMN TO ASTARTE.

For DEIRDRE

Serene are the stars, and serene my soul, ablaze in the Night.
Then how shall I worship Astarte sea-born, how invoke her aright?
I am free from the fire and the foam, I have conquered the dragons
and doves;

I have gotten me Love as the gold from the furnace that melted my
loves.

Love is not bound to the body, not sparse and adrift with the mind,
Not secret with soul, though the soul seem one and alone of its kind.
The body is naught but a corpse, its growth but a name of decay,
A delirious dream of sick gods—where the Shadow hath sway.
Concocted of offal and mire, putrescent with cancer of breath,
A knot that unravels to naught, a riddle whose answer is Death?
The mind is the reek of the fume of the body's corruption, the mime
Of its magotty moods as it rots from its worm-eaten egg to its slime.
The mind hath not even a mist to excuse philosophic pretence
Of a substance; at most it distorts some few of the phantoms of sense.
Its reason is ever astray, its ignorance straitens its span;
It ends in the mystery-night whence its clumsy creation began.
It observes, it reflects, it decides as the slave of unconscious desires,
Knows neither the world nor itself, nor stands for an hour but it tires.
It struts in its pageant of pride, yet at heart is aware it is vain,
And its summit of proof is to prove nothing proven, and itself but
insane.

The soul, ah the flame! Ah, the star! The God in us shining above!
The soul, beyond being and form! Then is not the name of it Love?
Nay, darker and deeper the curse, more dread the abyss never
plumbed,

The horror ineffably huge, the agony not to be summed;
For the soul in itself is division, is separate, worse that its wings
Were fledged of the essence of truth at the evil beginning of things,
When the All broke its peace with the thought of itself, and the schism
began

That ended in chaos of crime, in the crazy catastrophe, man.
The soul is no ghost to conjure with the spell of: "Illusion, begone!"
It is true, and hath might to endure, unassailable, travelling on,
None hinders, commands or deflects; none alters its course by a jot;
Space cannot constrain it, and time the waster erodeth it not.
How should I love such a soul, my like, and like me the accurst
From the hour when the Second was struck a spark from the forge of
the First?

How should I love such a soul, though fierce and afar I may range
In my passionate pilgrimage, Love, for Love is the Will toward change.
Love is a lust and a prayer, and the soul of its act as its word
Is of them that were Two to make One, and to seal the Event with a
Third.

Oh, Love, Astarte sea-born, oh Star blue bright in the West,
I invoke thee, thy priest in the shrine that is built of my blood in my
breast!

Since thou art in me and of me, since thou art the heart of my heart,
The soul of my soul, nay, the skin of my skin, not a being apart,
I am thou, I accept the intent, acquiesce in the nature implied;
If change be the purpose of Love, I am launched and afloat on the
tide.

I accept every phantom of Mind, vain dreams in fatuity curled;
I accept the corruption of Body, delight to bring Death to the world.
In measureless madness I bask, I gloat upon carrion flesh.

I wallow with God in the mire, and of mire I create Him afresh.
There is naught, nor shall be, that my love cannot gnaw with
insatiate tooth:

I will wring forth the Truth from the lies as I once found the lies in
the Truth.

Astarte, I know thee for rotten as others have seen thee for pure;
I tear off the mask that smiled false on the slaves who would have
them endure.

But Thou and Thy masks are but one, Thy corruption the Essence of
Thee,

It is all of the nature of things, their virtue whereby they may be.
So therefore I hail Thee divine, All-one with the substance of Truth;
Mine age holds thee naked, the hem of whose garment bewildered my
youth.

My soul being thus with thy soul, shall not soul win at last to the wit
That its changeless perfection is death, itself the assassin of it?

Love under will is the law; all that exists, from the dust
To the Gods, is but jetsam of Love, cast up by the tide of Her lust.
So I hail thee, Astarte, and hymn thee in brothel and temple the
same,

Who are seed of all change, being Love, by Corruption Thine inner-
most Name!

I know Thy device to deceive Thy servants Thine image that hailed
How none, being mortal, might learn Thy name, or behold Thee
unveiled.

For Thy secret is this, that immortals are crowned with the virtue to
die;

And I, oh Astarte, bear death in my body—Of ye am I.

THE MORALIST.
For AUGUSTUS
“Il faut être toujours sâoul”
Charles Baudelaire.

Delaying to do the thing that's right
Is as bad as having a funk on;
Then why should we wait till Saturday night
To get all kinds of a drunk on?
With brandy a century old in sight,
Why should we wait till Saturday night?
If I haven't a house on the Grand Parade,
I'll build me a hut of wattle.
The corkscrew seems to have got mislaid?
Then smash the neck of the bottle!
Courage and will and a whack will aid,
Though the corkscrew seem to have got mislaid.
Anatomists say that a single wing
Isn't much for a bird to fly on.
There's not much ginger about the spring
Of the fiercest one-legged lion.
Another bottle's the obvious thing
To get the ginger into our spring.
Beloved brethren, listen to me!
If there's one truth of divinity
Clear, it's the virtue there is in Three,
And I myself was at Trinity.
The least we can do is to seek and see
The virtues hid in the Number Three.

If much be good, then better is more,
As any logician will prove you;
It's only a step from Three to Four;
May the argument's lever move you!
It's simply illogical not to explore
The little bit on from Three to Four.

On bread alone though a man can't thrive,
Saint Luke says nothing of brandy;
It may be the thing to keep us alive,
And I see there's a bottle handy.
Open it Bill! There's only Five.
It may be the thing to keep us alive.

The Road of Excess, said William Blake,
To the Palace of Wisdom leads one;
Open a bottle for Wisdom's sake!
And I am the boy that needs one.
It's a long, long way, but it's good to take—
Open a bottle for Mishter Blake!

At the door of Burgess' Fish Sauce Shop
She stood, oh, how does it go, boys?
Well, "truly rural" will do for the cop,
If you say it quiet and slow, boys.
Why the devil should anyone stop,
When "truly rural" will do for the cop?

I d'know 'f 't struck you, i' shtruck me
Th'was somethin' wrong with the pheasant.
Say, how would a little drink, maybe—
You'know, 'void an'thing 'npleasant?
Say, doctor, d'you prescribe it, shee?
W'd'y' think, lil drink, maybe?

'Fence o' th' Realm Act, I'm no fool,
All tha', Tha's ri', damnation!
'Member, 'm I wazza boy a' school,
A-Thanks, Ol' top, jus' trench ration
Zhero—overra top'sh my rule—
'Member, 'n I wazza boy a' school——

HAPPY DUST.

For MARGOTE

Snow that fallest from heaven, bear me aloft on thy wings
To the domes of the star-girdled Seven, the abode of ineffable things,
Quintessence of joy and of strength, that, abolishing future and past,
Mak'st the Present an infinite length, my soul all-One with the Vast,
The Lone, the Unnamable God, that is ice of His measureless cold,
Without being or form or abode, without motion or matter, the fold
Where the shepherded Universe sleeps, with nor sense nor delusion
nor dream,

No spirit that wantons or weeps, no thought in its silence supreme.
I sit, and am utterly still; in mine eyes is my fathomless lust
Ablaze to annihilate Will, to crumble my being to dust,
To calcine the dust to an ash, to burn up the ash to an air,
To abolish the air with the flash of the final, the fulminant flare.
All this I have done, and dissolved the primordial germ of my
thought;

I have rolled myself up, and revolved the wheel of my being to
Naught.

Is there even the memory left? That I was, that I am? It is lost.
As I utter the Word, I am cleft by the last swift spear of the frost.
Snow! I am nothing at last; I sit and am utterly still;
They are perished, the phantoms, and past; they were born of my
weariness-will

When I craved, craved being and form, when the consciousness-cloud
was a mist

Precursor of stupor and storm, when I and my shadow had kissed,
And brought into life all the shapes that confused the clear space
with their marks,

Vain spectres whose vapour escapes, a whirlwind of ruinous sparks,
No substance have any of these; I have dreamed them in sickness of
lust,

Delirium born of disease—ah, whence was the master, the “must”
Imposed on the All?—is it true, is it true, then, that something in me
Is subject to fate? Are there two, are there two, after all, that can be?
I have brought all that is to an end; for myself am sufficient and sole.
Do I trick myself now? Shall I rend once again this homologous
Whole?

I have stripped every garment from space; I have strangled the secret
of Time,

All being is fled from my face, with Motion’s inhibited rime.

Still and stiller I sit, till even Infinity fades;

’Tis an idol—’tis weakness of wit that breeds, in inanity, shades!

Yet the fullness of Naught I become, the deepest and steadiest

Naught,

Contains in its nature the sum of the functions of being and thought.

Still as I sit, and destroy all possible trace of the past,

All germ of the future, nor joy nor knowledge alive at the last,

It is vain, for the Silence is dowered with a nature, the seed of a
name:

Necessity, fearfully flowered with the blossom of possible Aim.

I am Necessity? Scry Necessity mother of Fate!

And Fate determines me “I”; and I have the Will to create.

Vast is the sphere, but it turns on itself like the prettiest star,

And I am the looby that learns that all things equally are.

Inscrutable Nothing, the Gods, the cosmos of Fire and of Mist.

Suns, atoms, the clouds and the clods ineluctable dare to exit—

I have made the Voyage of Thought, the Voyage of Vision, I swam

To the heart of the Ocean of Naught from the source of the Spring of

I Am:

I know myself wholly the brother alike of the All and the One;
I know that all things are each other, that their sum and their substance is None;

But the knowledge itself can excel, its fulness hath broken its bond;
All's Truth, and all's falsehood as well, and—what of the region beyond?

So, still though I sit, as for ever, I stab to the heart of my spine;
I destroy the last seed of endeavour to seal up my soul in the shrine
Of Silence, Eternity, Peace; I abandon the Here and the Now;
I cease from the effort to cease, I absolve the dead I from its Vow,
I am wholly content to be dust, whether that be a mote or a star,
To live and to love and to lust, acknowledge what seem for what are,
Not to care what I am, if I be, whence I came, whither go, how I thrive,
If my spirit be bound or be free, save as Nature contrive.

What I am, that I am, 'tis enough. I am part of a glorious game.
Am I cast for madness or love? I am cast to esteem them the same.
Am I only a dream in the sleep of some butterfly? Phantom of fright
Conceived, who knows how, or how deep, in the measureless womb of
the night?

I imagine impossible thought, metaphysical voids that beget
Ideas intangible wrought to things less conceivable yet.
It may be. Little I reckon—but, assume the existence of earth,
Am I born to be hanged by the neck, a curse from the hour of my
birth?

Am I born to abolish man's guilt? His horrible heritage, awe?
Or a seed in his wantonness spilt by a jester? I care not a straw,
For I understand Do what thou wilt; and that is the whole of the
Law.

THE ARTIST.

For FRIEDA

I

I know that Earth is false and Hell
And Heaven to man are deaf and dumb, too.
I know what last dim oracle
Every Panurge is bound to come to.
I find more mental bread and cheese
In bounty of one brandy bottle
Than in all books Averrhoes
Once built about his Aristotle.

II

The babble of my slut, I swear
Gives joy and certitudes intenser
Than all the wit of a Voltaire
And all the science of a Spencer.
My poppy-pipe—its shows surpass!
More and more beautiful and brainier
Than all the lumps of Pheidias
And all the daubs of de la Peña.

III

My music and my verse are mine.
I know myself and what my task is!
Be off, ye syncopated swine,
Wagner, Vitruvius, Velasquez,
Swift, Shakespeare, Shelley, Socrates,
Sterne, Blake, Petronius, Canova!
I'll make my universe to please
Myself, like jolly old Jehovah.