

THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON
THE KING

To plead the organic causation of a religious state of mind, then, in refutation of its claim to possess superior spiritual value, is quite illogical and arbitrary, unless one have already worked out in advance some psycho-physical theory connecting spiritual values in general with determinate sorts of physiological change. Otherwise none of our thoughts and feelings, not even our scientific doctrines, not even our dis-beliefs, could retain any value as revelations of the truth, for every one of them without exception flows from the state of their possessor's body at the time.

It is needless to say that medical materialism draws in point of fact no such sweeping skeptical conclusion. It is sure, just as every simple man is sure, that some states of mind are inwardly superior to others, and reveal to us more truth, and in this it simply makes use of an ordinary spiritual judgment. It has no physiological theory of the production of these its favourite states, by which it may accredit them; and its attempt to discredit the states which it dislikes, by vaguely associating them with nerves and liver, and connecting them with names connoting bodily affliction, is altogether illogical and inconsistent.

PROF. WILLIAM JAMES.

And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God and the altar, and them that worship therein.—*Rev. xi. 1.*

PREFACE

THE QUESTION

AVE!

There must have been a time in the life of every student of the Mysteries when he has paused whilst reading the work or the life of some well-known Mystic, a moment of perplexity in which, bewildered, he has turned to himself and asked the question: "Is this one telling me the truth?"

Still more so does this strike us when we turn to any commentative work upon Mysticism, such as Récéjac's "Bases of the Mystic Knowledge," or William James's "Varieties of Religious Experience." In fact, so much so, that unless we are more than commonly sceptical of the wordy theories which attempt to explain these wordy utterances we are bound to clasp hands with the great school of medical-materialism, which is all but paramount at the present hour, and dismiss all such as have had a glimpse of some-thing we do not see as *détraqués*, degenerates, neuropaths, psychopaths, hypochondriacs, and epileptics.

Well, even if we do, these terms explain very little, and in most cases, especially when applied to mystic states, nothing at all; nevertheless they form an excellent loophole out of which the ignorant may crawl when faced with a difficulty they have not the energy or wit to surmount.

True, the utter chaos amongst all systems of magic and mysticism that has prevailed in the West during the last two thousand years, partially, if not entirely, accounts for the uncritical manner in which these systems have been handled by otherwise critical minds.

Even to-day, though many thousand years after they were first written down, we find a greater simplicity and truth in the ancient rituals and hymns of Egypt and Assyria than in the extraordinary entanglement of systems that came to life during the first five hundred years of Christian era. And in the East, from the most remote antiquity to the present day, scientific systems of illuminism have been in daily practice from the highest to the lowest in the land; though, as we consider, much corrupted by an ignorant priestcraft, by absurd superstitions and by a science which fell to a divine revelation in place of rising to a sublime art.

In the West, for some fifteen hundred years now, Christianity has swayed the minds of men from the Arctic seas to the Mediterranean. At first but one of many small excrescent faiths, which sprang up like fungi amongst the superb débris of the religions of Egypt, Babylonia, and Greece, it was not long before (on account of its warlike tenets and the deeply magical nature of its rites¹) it forced its head and then its arms above the shoulders of its weaker brothers; and when once in a position to strike, so thoroughly bullied all competitors that the few who inwardly stood outside the Church, to save the bruised skins of the faiths they still held dear, were, for self-preservation, bound to clothe them in the tinsel of verbosity, in wild values and extravagant symbols and cyphers; the result being that chaos was heaped upon chaos, till at last all sense became cloaked in a truculent obscurantism. Still, by him who has eyes will it be seen that through all this darkness there shone the glamour of a great and beautiful Truth.

Little is it to be wondered then, in these present shallow intellectual days, that almost any one who has studied, or even heard of, the theories of any notorious nobody of the moment at once relegates to the museum or the waste-paper basket these theories and systems, which were once the very blood of the world, and which in truth are so still, though few suspect it.

Truth is Truth; and the Truth of yesterday is the Truth of to-day, and the Truth of to-day is the Truth of to-morrow. Our quest, then, is to find Truth, and to cut the kernel from the husk, the text from the comment.

To start from the beginning would appear the proper course to adopt; but if we commence sifting the shingle from the sand with the year 10,000 B.C. there is little likelihood of our ever arriving within measurable distance of the present day. Fortunately, however, for us, we need not start with any period anterior to our own, or upon any subject outside of our own true selves. But two things we must learn, if we are ever to make ourselves intelligible to others, and these are, firstly an alphabet, and secondly a

language whereby to express our thoughts; for without some definite system of expression our only course is to remain silent, lest further confusion be added to the already bewildering chaos.

It will be at once said by any one who has read as far as this: "I lay you whatever odds you name that the writer of this book will prove to be the first offender!" And with all humility will we at once plead guilty to this offence. Unfortunately it is so, and must at first be so; yet if in the end we succeed in creating but the first letter of the new Alphabet we shall not consider that we have failed; far from it, for we shall rejoice that, the entangled threshold having been crossed, the goal, though distant, is at last in sight.

In a hospital a chart is usually kept for each patient, upon which may be seen the exact progress, from its very commencement, of the case in question. By it the doctor can daily judge the growth or decline of the disease he is fighting. On Thursday, let us say, the patient's temperature in 100°; in the evening he is given a cup of beef-tea (the patient up to the present having been kept strictly on milk diet); on the following morning the doctor finds that his temperature has risen to 102°, and at once concludes that the fever has not yet sufficiently abated for a definite change of diet to be adopted, and, "knocking off" the beef-tea, down drops the temperature.

Thus, if he be a worthy physician, he will study his patient, never overlooking the seemingly most unimportant details which can help him to realise his object, namely, recovery and health.

Not only does this system of minute tabulation apply to cases of disease and sickness, but to every branch of healthy life as well, under the name of "business"; the best business man being he who reduces his special occupation in life from "muddle" to "science."

In the West religion alone has never issued from chaos; and the hour, late though it be, has struck when without fear or trembling adepts have arisen to do for Faith what Copernicus, Kepler, and Newton did for what is vulgarly known as "Science." And as Faith, growing old before its day, held back Science with a cruel hand, so let us now, whilst Science is still young, step briskly forward and claim our rights, lest if we halt we too shall find the child of the Morning once again strangled in the maw of a second Night.

Now, even to such as are still mere students in the mysteries, it must have become apparent that there are moments in the lives of others, if not in their own, which bring with them an enormous sense of inner authority and illumination; moments which created epochs in our lives, and which, when they have gone, stand out as luminous peaks in the moonlight of the past. Sad to say, they come but seldom, so seldom that often they are looked back upon as miraculous visitations of some vastly higher power beyond and outside of ourselves. But when they do come the greatest joys of earth wither before them like dried leaves in the fire, and fade from the firmament of our minds as the stars of night before the rising sun.

Now, if it were possible to induce these states of ecstasy or hallucination, or whatever we care to call them, at will, so to speak, we should have accomplished what was once called, and what is still known as, the Great Work, and have discovered the Stone of the Wise, that universal dissolvent. Sorrow would cease and give way to joy, and joy to a bliss quite unimaginable to all who have not as yet experienced it.

St. John of the Cross, writing of the "intuitions" by which God reaches the soul, says:

"They enrich us marvellously. A single one of them may be sufficient to abolish at a stroke certain imperfections of which the soul during its whole life has vainly tried to rid itself, and to leave it adorned with virtues and loaded with supernatural gifts. A single one of the intoxicating consolations may reward it for all the labours undergone in its life—even were they numberless. Invested with an invincible courage, filled with an impassioned desire to suffer for its God, the soul then is seized with a strange torment—that of not being allowed to suffer enough."²

In the old days, when but a small portion of the globe was known to civilised man, the explorer and the traveller would return to his home with weird, fantastic stories of long-armed hairy men, of impossible monsters, and countries of fairy-like wonder. But he who travels now and who happens to see a gorilla, or a giraffe, or perchance a volcano, forgets to mention it even in his most casual correspondence! And why? Because he has learnt to understand that such things are. He has named them, and, having done so, to him they cease as objects of interest. In one respect he gives birth to a great truth, which he at once cancels by giving birth to a great falsehood; for his reverence, like his

disdain, depends but on the value of a name.

Not so, however, the adept; for as a zoologist does not lose his interest in the simian race because he has learnt to call a long-armed hairy man a gorilla; so he, by learning to explain himself with clearness, and to convey the image of his thoughts with accuracy to the brain of another, is winnowing the wheat from the chaff, the Truth from the Symbol of Truth.

Now when St. John of the Cross tells us that a single vision of God may reward us for all the labours of this life, we are at perfect liberty, in these tolerant days, to cry "Yea!" or "Nay!" We may go further: we may extol St. John to the position of a second George Washington, or we may call him "a damned liar!" or, again, if we do not wish to be considered rude, a "neuropath," or some other equally amiable synonym. But none of these expressions explains to us very much; they are all equally vague—nay (curious to relate!), even mystical—and as such appertain to the Kingdom of Zoroaster, that realm of pure faith: *i.e.*, faith in St. John, or faith in something opposite to St. John.

But now let us borrow from Pyrrho—the Sceptic, the keen-sighted man of science—that word "WHY," and apply it to our "Yea" and our "Nay," just as a doctor questions himself and the patient about the disease; and we shall very soon find that we are being drawn to a logical conclusion, or at least to a point from which such a conclusion becomes possible.³ And from this spot the toil of the husbandman must not be condemned until the Season arrives in which the tree he has planted bears fruit; then by its fruit shall it be known, and by its fruit shall it be judged.⁴

This application of the word "Why" is the long and short of what has been called Scientific Illuminism,⁵ or the science of learning how not to say "Yes" until you know that it *is* YES, and how not to say "No" until you know that it *is* NO. It is the all-important word of our lives, the corner-stone of the Temple, the keystone of the arch, the flail that beats the grain from the chaff, the sieve through which Falsehood passes and in which Truth remains. It is, indeed, the poise of the balance, the gnomon of the sun-dial; which, if we learn to read aright, will tell us at what hour of our lives we have arrived.

Through the want of it kingdoms have fallen into decay and by it empires have been created; and its dreaded foe is of necessity "dogma."

Directly a man begins to say "Yes" without the question "Why?" he becomes a dogmatist, a potential, if not an actual liar. And it is for this reason that we are so bitterly opposed to and use such scathing words against the present-day rationalist⁶ when we attack him. For we see he is doing for Darwin, Huxley, and Spencer what the early Christian did for Jesus, Peter, and Paul; and that is, that he, having already idealised them, is now in the act of apotheosising them. Soon, if left unattacked, will *their* word become THE WORD, and in the place of the "Book of Genesis" shall we have the "Origin of Species," and in the place of the Christian accepting as Truth the word of Jesus shall we have the Rationalist accepting as Truth the word of Darwin.

But what of the true man of science? say you; those doubting men who silently work in their laboratories, accepting no theory, however wonderful it may be, until theory has given birth to fact. We agree—but what of the Magi? answer we; the few fragments of whose wisdom which escaped the Christian flames will stand in the eyes of all men as a wonder. It was the Christians who slew the magic of Christ, and so will it be, if they are allowed to live, the Rationalists who will slay the magic of Darwin; so that four hundred years hence perchance will some disciple of Lamarck be torn to pieces in the rooms of the Royal Society by the followers of Haeckel, just as Hypatia, that disciple of Plato, was torn to pieces in the Church of Christ by followers of St. John.

We have nothing to say against the men of science, we have nothing to say against the great Mystics—all hail to both! But such of their followers who accepted the doctrines of either the one or the other as a dogma we here openly pronounce to be a bane, a curse, and a pestilence to mankind.

Why assume that only one system of ideas can be true? And when you have answered this question there will be time enough to assume that all other systems are wrong. Start with a clean sheet, and write neatly and beautifully upon it, so that others can read you aright; do not start with some old palimpsest, and then scribble all over it carelessly, for then indeed others will come who will of a certainty ready you awry.

If Osiris, Christ, and Mahomet were mad, then indeed is madness the key to the door of the Temple. Yet if they were only called mad for being wise beyond the sane, then ask you why their doctrines brought with them the crimes of bigotry and the horrors of madness? And our answer is, that though

they loved Truth and wedded Truth, they could not explain Truth; and their disciples therefore had to accept the symbols of Truth for Truth, without the possibility of asking "Why?" or else reject Truth altogether. Thus it came about that the greater the Master the less was he able to explain himself, and the more obscure his explanations the darker became the minds of his followers. It was the old story of the light that blinded the darkness. You can teach a bushman to add one to one, and he may after some teaching grasp the idea of "two"; but do not try to teach him the differential calculus! The former may be compared to the study of the physical sciences, the latter to that of the mental; therefore all the more should we persevere to work out correctly the seemingly most absurd, infinitesimal differences, and perchance one day, when we have learnt how to add unit to unit, a million and a millionth part of a unit will be ours.

We will now conclude this part of our preface with two long quotations from Prof. James's excellent book; the first of which, slightly abridged, is as follows:

"It is the terror and beauty of phenomena, the 'promise' of the dawn and of the rainbow, the 'voice' of the thunder, the 'gentleness' of the summer rain, the 'sublimity' of the stars, and not the physical laws which these things follow, by which the religious mind still continues to be most impressed; and just as of yore the devout man tells you that in the solitude of his room or of the fields he still feels the divine presence, and that sacrifices to this unseen reality fill him with security and peace.

"Pure anachronism! says the survival-theory;—anachronism for which deanthropomorphization of the imagination is the remedy required. The less we mix the private with the cosmic, the more we dwell in universal in impersonal terms, the truer heirs of Science we become.

"In spite of the appeal which this impersonality of the scientific attitude makes to a certain magnanimity of temper, I believe it to be shallow, and I can now state my reason in comparatively few words. That reason is that, so long as we deal with the cosmic and the general, we deal only with the symbols of reality, but as soon *as we deal with the private and personal phenomena as such, we deal with realities in the completest sense of the term.* I think I can easily make clear what I mean by these words.

"The world of our experience consists at all times of two parts, an objective and a subjective part, of which the former may be incalculably more extensive than the latter, and yet the latter can never be omitted or suppressed. The objective part is the sum total of whatsoever at any given time we may be thinking of, the subjective part is the inner 'state' in which the thinking comes to pass. What we think of may be enormous—the cosmic times and spaces, for example—whereas the inner state may be the most fugitive and paltry activity of mind. Yet the cosmic objects, so far as the experience yields them, are but ideal pictures of something whose existence we do not inwardly possess, but only point at outwardly, while the inner state is our very experience itself; its reality and that of our experience are one. A conscious field *plus* its object as felt or thought of *plus* an attitude towards the object *plus* the sense of a self to whom the attitude belongs—such a concrete bit of personal experience may be a small bit, but it is a solid bit as long as it lasts; not hollow, not a mere abstract element of experience, such as the 'object' is when taken all alone. It is a *full* fact, even though it be an insignificant fact; it is of the *kind* to which all realities whatsoever must belong; the motor currents of the world run through the like of it; it is on the line connecting real events with real events. That unshareable feeling which each one of us has of the pinch of his individual destiny as he privately feels it rolling out on fortune's wheel may be disparaged for its egotism, may be sneered at as unscientific, but it is the one thing that fills up the measure of our concrete actuality, and any would-be existence that should lack such a feeling, or its analogue, would be a piece of reality only half made up.

"If this be true, it is absurd for science to say that the egotistic elements of experience should be suppressed. The axis of reality runs solely through the egotistic places—they are strung upon it like so many beads. To describe the world with all the various feelings of the individual pinch of destiny, all the various spiritual attitudes, left out from the description—they being as describable as anything else—would be something like offering a printed bill of fare as the equivalent for a solid meal. Religion makes no such blunders. . . . A bill of fare with one real raisin on it instead of the word 'raisin' and one real egg instead of the word 'egg' might be an inadequate meal, but it would at least be a commencement of reality. The contention of the survival-theory that we ought to stick to non-personal elements exclusively seems like saying that we ought to be satisfied forever with reading the naked bill of fare. . . . It does not

follow, because our ancestors made so many errors of fact and mixed them with their religion, that we should therefore leave off being religious at all. By being religious we establish ourselves in possession of ultimate reality at the only points at which reality is given us to guard. Our responsible concern is with our private destiny after all."⁷

"We must next pass beyond the point of view of merely subjective utility, and make inquiry into the intellectual content itself.

"First, is there, under all the discrepancies of the creeds, a common nucleus to which they bear their testimony unanimously?

"And second, ought we to consider the testimony true?

"I will take up the first question first, and answer it immediately in the affirmative. The warring gods and formulas of the various religions do indeed cancel each other, but there is a certain uniform deliverance in which religions all appear to meet. It consists of two parts:

"(1) An uneasiness; and

"(2) Its solution.

"1. The uneasiness, reduced to its simplest terms, is a sense that there is *something wrong about us* as we naturally stand.

"2. The solution is a sense that *we are saved from the wrongness* by making proper connection with the higher powers.

"In those more developed minds which alone we are studying, the wrongness takes a moral character, and the salvation takes a mystical tinge. I think we shall keep well within the limits of what is common to all such minds if we formulate the essence of their religious experience in terms like these:

"The individual, so far as he suffers from his wrongness and criticises it, is to that extent consciously beyond it, and in at least possible touch with something higher, if anything higher exist. Along with the wrong part there is thus a better part of him, even though it may be but a most helpless germ. With which part he should identify his real being is by no means obvious at this stage; but when Stage 2 (the stage of solution or salvation) arrives, the man identifies his real being with the germinal higher part of himself; and does so in the following way: *He becomes conscious that this higher part is conterminous and continuous with MORE of the same quality, which is operative in the universe outside of him, and which he can keep in working touch with, and in a fashion get on board of and save himself when all his lower being has gone to pieces in the wreck*"⁸

These last few lines bring us face to face with the subject of this volume, viz.:—

FRATER P.

To enter upon a somewhat irrelevant matter, this is what actually happened to the compiler of this book:

For ten years he had been a sceptic, in that sense of the word which is generally conveyed by the terms infidel, atheist, and freethinker; then suddenly, in a single moment, he withdrew all the scepticism with which he had assailed religion, and hurled it against freethought itself; and as the former had crumbled into dust, so now the latter vanished in smoke.

In this crisis there was no sickness of soul, no division of self; for he simply had turned a corner on the road along which he was travelling and suddenly became aware of the fact that the mighty range of snow-capped mountains upon which he had up to now fondly imagined he was gazing was after all but a great bank of clouds. So he passed on smiling to himself at his own childlike illusion.

Shortly after this he became acquainted with a certain brother of the Order of A.: A.:; and himself a little later became an initiate in the first grade of that Order.

In this Order, at the time of his joining it, was a certain brother of the name of P., who had but just returned from China, and who had been six years before sent out by the Order to journey through all the countries of the world and collect all knowledge possible in the time which touched upon the mystical experiences of mankind. This P. had to the best of his ability done, and though he had only sojourned in Europe, Egypt, India, Ceylon, China, Burma, Arabia, Siam, Tibet, Japan, Mexico, and the United States of America, so deep had been his study and so exalted had been his understanding that it was considered by the Order that he had collected sufficient material and testimony whereon to compile a book for the instruction of mankind. And as Frater N.S.F. was a writer of some little skill, the diaries and notes of Frater P. were given to him and another, and they were enjoined to set them together in such a manner

that they would be an aid to the seeker in the mysteries, and would be as a tavern on a road beset with many dangers and difficulties, wherein the traveller can find good cheer and wine that strengtheneth and refresheth the soul.

It is therefore earnestly hoped that this book will become as a refuge to all, where a guide may be hired or instructions freely sought; but the seeker is requested—nay, commanded—with all due solemnity by the Order of the A.: A.: to accept nothing as Truth until he has proved it so to be, to his own satisfaction and to his own honour.

And it is further hoped that he may, upon closing this book, be somewhat enlightened, and, even if as through a glass darkly, see the great shadow of Truth beyond, and one day enter the Temple.

So much for the subject; now for the object of this volume:

THE AUGOEIDES.⁹

"Lytton calls him Adonai in 'Zanoni,' and I often use this name in the note-books.

"Abramelin calls him Holy Guardian Angel. I adopt this:

"1. Because Abramelin's system is so simple and effective.

"2. Because since all theories of the universe are absurd it is better to talk in the language of one which is patently absurd, so as to mortify the metaphysical man.

"3. Because a child can understand it.

"Theosophists call him the Higher Self, Silent Watcher, or Great Master.

"The Golden Dawn calls him the Genius.

"Gnostics say the Logos.

"Zoroaster talks about uniting all these symbols into the form of a Lion—see Chaldean Oracles.¹⁰

"Anna Kingsford calls him Adonai (Clothed with the Sun). Buddhists call him Adi-Buddha—(says H. P. B.)

"The Bhagavad-Gita calls him Vishnu (chapter xi.).

"The Yi King calls him "The Great Person."

"The Qabalah calls him Jechidah.

"We also get metaphysical analysis of His nature, deeper and deeper according to the subtlety of the writer; for this vision—it is all one same phenomenon, variously coloured by our varying Ruachs¹¹—is, I believe, the first and the last of all Spiritual Experience. For though He is attributed to Malkuth,¹² and the Door of the Path of His overshadowing, He is also in Kether (Kether is in Malkuth and Malkuth in Kether—"as above, so beneath"), and the End of the "Path of the Wise" is identity with Him.

"So that while he is the Holy Guardian Angel, He is also Hua¹³ and the Tao.¹⁴

"For since *Intra Nobis Regnum dei*¹⁵ all things are in Ourselves, and all Spiritual Experience is a more or less complete Revelation of Him.

"Yet it is only in the Middle Pillar¹⁶ that His manifestation is in any way perfect.

"The Augoedes invocation is the whole thing. Only it is so difficult; one goes along through all the fifty gates of Binah¹⁷ at once, more or less illuminated, more or less deluded. But the First and the Last is this Augoedes Invocation."

THE BOOK

This Book is divided into four parts:

I. The Foundations of the Temple.

II. The Scaffolding of the Temple.

III. The Portal of the Temple.

IV. The Temple of Solomon the King.

Three methods of expression are used to enlighten and instruct the reader:

(a) Pictorial symbols.

(b) Metaphorically expressed word-pictures.

(c) Scientifically expressed facts. The first method is found appended to each of the four Books, balancing, so to speak, Illuminism and Science. The second method is found almost entirely in the first Book and the various pictures are entitled:¹⁸

The Black Watch-tower, or the Dreamer.

The Miser, or the Theist.

The Spendthrift, or the Pantheist.

The Bankrupt, or the Atheist.

The Prude, or the Rationalist.

The Child, or the Mystic.

The Wanton, or the Sceptic.

The Slave, or he who stands before the veil of the Outer Court.

The Warrior, or he who stands before the veil of the Inner Court.

The King, or he who stands before the veil of the Abyss.

The White Watch-tower, or the Awakened One.

The third method is found almost entirely in the second Book.

The third and fourth Books of this essay consist of purely symbolic pictures. For the Key of the Portal the neophyte must discover for himself; and until he finds the Key the Temple of Solomon the King must remain closed to him.

Vale!

BOOK I

The foundations of the Temple
of

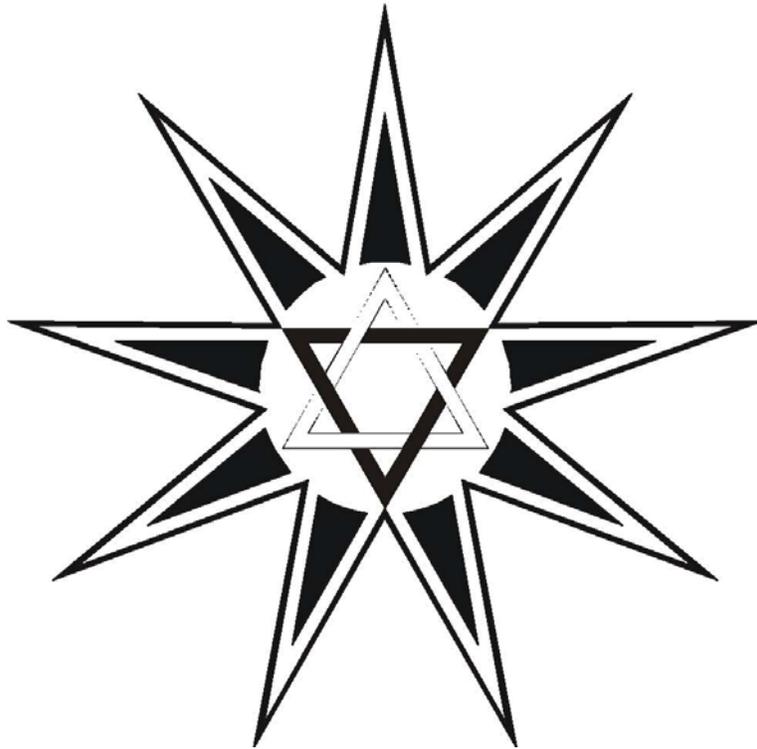
SOLOMON THE KING

and

The nine cunning Craftsmen who
laid them between the
Watch-towers of
Night & Day.

And from that place are cast out all the Lords
who are the exactors of the debts of mankind,
and they are subjugated.

The Greater Holy Assembly, xx. 440.



THE BLACK WATCH-TOWER

WHO has not, at some period during his life, experienced that strange sensation of utter bewilderment on being awakened by the sudden approach of a bright light across the curtained threshold of slumber; that intoxicating sense of wonderment, that hopeless inability to open wide the blinded eyes before the dazzling flame which has swept night into the corners and crannies of the dark bedchamber of sleep?

Who, again, has not stepped from the brilliant sunlight of noon into some shadowy vault, and, groping along its dark walls, has found all there to be but as the corpse of day wrapped in a starless shroud of darkness?

Yet as the moments speed by the sight grows accustomed to the dazzling intruder; and as the blinding, shimmering web of silver which he has thrown around us melts like a network of snow before the awakening fire of our eyes, we perceive that the white flame of bewilderment which had but a moment ago enwrapped us as a mantle of lightnings, is, but in truth, a flickering rushlight fitfully expiring in an ill-shapen socket of clay. And likewise in the darkness, as we pass along the unlit arches of the vault, or the lampless recesses which, toad-like, squat here and there in the gloom, dimly at first do the mouldings of the roof and the cornices of the walls creep forth; and then, as the twilight becomes more certain, do they twist and writhe into weirdly shapen arabesques, into fanciful figures, and contorted faces; which, as we advance, bat-like flit into the depths of a deeper darkness beyond.

Stay!—and but for a moment hurry back, and bring with you that little rushlight we left spluttering on the mantel-shelf of sleep. Now all once again vanishes, and from the floor before us jut up into the shadowland of darkness the stern grey walls of rock, the age-worn architraves, the clustered columns, and all the crumbling capitols of Art, where the years alone sit shrouded slumbering in their dust and mould—a haunting memory of long-forgotten days.

O dreamland of wonder and mystery! like a tongue of gold wrapped in a blue flame do we hover for a moment over the Well of Life; and then the night-wind rises, and wafts us into the starless depths of the grave. We are like gnats hovering in the sunbeams, and then the evening falls and we are gone: and who can tell whither, and unto what end? Whether to the City of Eternal Sleep, or to the Mansion of the Music of Rejoicing?

O my brothers! come with me! follow me! Let us mount the dark stairs of this Tower of Silence, this Watch-tower of Night; upon whose black brow no flickering flame burns to guide the weary wanderer across the mires of life and through the mists of death. Come, follow me! Grope up these age-worn steps, slippery with the tears of the fallen, and bearded with the blood of the vanquished and the salt of the agony of failure. Come, come! Halt not! Abandon all! Let us ascend. Yet bring with ye two things, the flint and the steel—the slumbering fire of Mystery, and the dark sword of Science; that we may strike a spark, and fire the beacon of Hope which hangs above us in the brasier of Despair; so that a great light may shine forth through the darkness, and guide the toiling footsteps of man to that Temple which is built without hands, fashioned without iron, or gold, or silver, and in which no fire burns; whose pillars are as columns of light, whose dome is as a crown of effulgence set betwixt the wings of Eternity, and upon whose altar flashes the mystic eucharist of God.

THE MISER

"God." What a treasure-house of wealth lies buried in that word! what a mine of precious stones!—Ptah, Father of Beginnings, he who created the Sun and the Moon; Nu, blue, starry lady of Heaven, mistress and mother of the gods; Ea, Lord of the Deep; Istar—"O Thou who art set in the sky as a jewelled circlet of moonstone"; Brahma the golden, Vishnu the sombre, and Siva the crimson, lapped in seas of blood. Everywhere do we find Thee, O Thou one and awful Eidolon, who as Aormuzd once didst rule the sun-scorched plains of Euphrates, and as Odin the icy waves and the shrieking winds, round the frozen halls of the North.

Everywhere!—everywhere! And yet now Thou art again God, nameless to the elect—O Thou vast inscrutable Pleroma built in the Nothingness of our imagination!—and to the little ones, the children who play with the units of existence, but a myriad-named doll a cubit high, a little thing to play with—or else: an ancient, bearded Father, with hair as white as wool, and eyes like flames of fire; whose voice is as the sound of many waters, in whose right hand tremble the seven stars of Heaven, and out of whose mouth flashes forth a flaming sword of fire. There dost Thou sit counting the orbs of Space, and the souls of men: and we tremble before Thee, worshipping, glorifying, supplicating, beseeching; lest perchance Thou cast us back into the furnace of destruction, and place us not among the gold and silver of Thy treasury.

True, Thou hast been the great Miser of the worlds, and the Balances of Thy treasure-house have weighed out Heaven and Hell. Thou hast amassed around Thee the spoil of the years, and the plunder of Time and of Space. All is Thine, and we own not even the breath of our nostrils, for it is but given us on the usury of our lives.

Still from the counting-house of Heaven Thou hast endowed us with a spirit of grandeur, an imagination of the vastness of Being. Thou hast taken us out of ourselves, and we have counted with Thee the starry hosts of night, and unbraided the tangled tresses of the comets in the fields of Space. We have walked with Thee at Mamre, and talked with Thee in Eden, and listened to Thy voice from out the midst of the whirlwind. And at times Thou hast been a Father unto us, a joy, strong as a mighty draught of ancient wine, and we have welcomed Thee!

But Thy servants—those self-seeking, priestly usurers—See! how they have blighted the hearts of men, and massed the treasure of Souls into the hands of the few, and piled up the coffers of the Church. How they racked from us the very emblems of joy, putting out our eyes with the hot irons of extortion, till every pound of human flesh was soaked as a thirsty sponge in a well of blood: and life became a hell, and men and women went singing, robed in the san-benito painted with flames and devils, to the stake; to seek in the fire the God of their forefathers—that stern Judge who with sworded hand was once wont to read out the names of the living from the Book of Life, and exalt the humble on the golden throne of tyrants.

Yet in these ages of crucifix, of skull, and of candle; these ages of *auto-da-fé* and *in pace*; these ages when the tongue jabbered madness and the brain reeled in delirium, and the bones were split asunder, and the flesh was crushed to pulp, was there still in the darkness a glamour of truth, as a great and scarlet sunset seen through the memory of years. Life was a shroud of horror, yet it was life! Life! life in the awful hideous grandeur of gloom, until death severed the dull red thread with a crooked sword of cruel flame. And Love, a wild, mad ecstasy, broken-winged, fluttering before the eyeless sockets of Evil, as the souls of men were bought and sold and bartered for, till Heaven became a bauble of the rich, and Hell a debtor's dungeon for the poor. Yet amongst those rotting bones in the oubliette, and in those purple palaces of papal lust, hovered that spirit of life, like a golden flame rolled in a cloud of smoke over the dark altar of decay.

Listen: "Have you got religion? . . . Are you saved? . . . Do you love Jesus?" . . . "Brother, God can save you. . . . Jesus is the sinner's friend. . . . Rest your head on Jesus . . . dear, dear Jesus!" Curse till

thunder shake the stars! curse till this blasphemy is cursed from the face of heaven! curse till the hissing name of Jesus, which writhes like a snake in a snare, is driven from the kingdom of faith! Once "Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani" echoed through the gloom from the Cross of Agony; now Jerry McAuley, that man of God, ill-clothed in cheap Leeds shoddy, bobbing in a tin Bethel, bellows, "Do you love Jesus?" and talks of that mystic son of Him who set forth the sun and the moon, and all the hosts of Heaven, as if he were first cousin to Mrs. Booth or to Aunt Sally herself.

Once man in the magic land of mystery sought the elixir and the balsam of life; now he seeks "spiritual milk for American babes, drawn from the breasts of both Testaments." Once man, in his frenzy, drunken on the wine of Iacchus, would cry to the moon from the ruined summit of some temple of Zagraeus, "Evoe ho! Io Evoe!" But now instead, "Although I was quite full of drink, I knew that God's work begun in me was not going to be wasted!"

Thus is the name of God belched forth in beer and bestial blasphemy. Who would not rather be a St. Besarion who spent forty days and nights in a thorn-bush, or a St. Francis picking lice from his sheepskin and praising God for the honour and glory of wearing such celestial pearls in his habit, than become a smug, well-oiled evangelical Christian genteel-man, walking to church to dear Jesus on a Sabbath morning, with Prayer-book, Bible, and umbrella, and a three-penny-bit in his glove?

THE SPENDTHRIFT

"ARCADIA, night, a cloud, Pan, and the moon." What words to conjure with, what five shouts to slay the five senses, and set a leaping flame of emerald and silver dancing about us as we yell them forth under the oaks and over the rocks and myrtle of the hill-side. "Bruised to the breast of Pan"—let us flee church, and chapel, and meeting-room; let us abandon this mantle of order, and leap back to the heaths, and the marshes, and the hills; back to the woods, and the glades of night! back to the old gods, and the ruddy lips of Pan!

How the torches splutter in the storm, pressing warm kisses of gold on the gnarled and knotted trunks of the beech trees! How the fumigation from musk and myrrh whirls up in an aromatic cloud from the glowing censer!—how for a time it greedily clings to the branches, and then is wafted to the stars! Look!—as we invoke them, how they gather round us, these Spirit of Love and of Life, of Passion, of Strength, and of Abandon—these sinews of the manhood of the World!

O mystery of mysteries! "For each one of the Gods is in all, and all are in each, being ineffably united to each other and to God; because each, being a super-essential unity, their conjunction with each other is a union of unities." Hence each is all; thus Nature squanders the gold and silver of our understanding, till in panic frenzy we beat our head on the storm-washed boulders and the blasted trunks, and shout forth, "Io . . . Io . . . Io . . . Evoe! Io . . . Io!" till the glades thrill as with the music of syrinx and sistrum, and our souls are rent asunder on the flaming horns of Pan.

Come, O children of the night of Death, awake, arise! See, the sun is nodding in the West, and no day-spring is at hand in this land of withered dreams; for all is dull with the sweat of gloom, and sombre with the industry of Evil! Wake! O wake! Let us hie to the summits of the lonely mountains, for soon a sun will arise in us, and then their white peaks will become golden and crimson and purple as the breasts of a mighty woman swollen with the blood and milk of a new life. There, amongst those far-off hills of amethyst, shall we find the fair mistress of our heart's desire—that bountiful Mother who will clasp us to her breast.

Yours are the boundless forests, and the hills, and the far-off purple of the horizon. Call, and they shall answer you; ask, and they shall shower forth on you the hoarded booty of the years, and all the treasure of the ages; so that none shall be in need, and all shall possess all in the longing for all things. Come, let us shatter the vault of Circumstance and the walls of the dungeon of Convention, and back to Pan in the tangled brakes, and to the subtle beauty of the Sorceress, and to the shepherd-lads—back to the white flocks on the hill-side, back to Pan—to Pan—to Pan! Io! to Pan.

Under the mistletoe and the oak there is no snickering of the chapel-pew, no drawing-room grin of lewd desire, no smacking of wanton lips over the warm flesh and the white skin of life; but a great shout of joyous laughter arises, which sways the winds from their appointed courses, and rattles down the dead branches from the leafy boughs overhead: or, all is solemn and still as a breathless night; for here life is ever manly in turmoil as in repose.

Here there is no barter, no usury, no counting of the gains and losses of life; and the great Sower leaps over the fields like a madman, casting forth the golden grain amongst the briars, and on the rocks, as well as between the black furrows of the earth; for each must take its chance, and battle to victory in manliness and strength. Here there is neither sect nor faction: live or die, prosper or decay! So the great live, and the little ones go back to the roots of life. Neither is their obedience outside the obedience which is born of Necessity; for here there is no support, no resting on others—ploughshares are beaten into swords, and spindles are fashioned into the shafts of arrows, and the winds shriek through our armour as we battle for the strength of the World.

The rain falleth upon the deserts as upon the fertile valleys; and the sun shineth upon the blue waters as upon the verdant fields; and the dew heedeth not where it sleepeth, whether on the dung-hill,

or betwixt the petals of the wild rose; for all is lavish in this Temple of the World, where on the throne of inexhaustible wealth sits the King of Life, tearing the jewels from his golden throat, and casting them out to the winds to be carried to the four corners of the Earth. There is no thrift here, no storing up for the morrow; and yet there is no waste, no wantonness, for all who enter this Treasure-house of Life become one with the jewels of the treasury.

Words! . . . words! . . . words! They have shackled and chained you, O children of the mists and the mountains; they have imprisoned you, and walled you up in the dungeon of a lightless reason. Fancy has been burnt at the stake of Fact; and the imagination cramped in the irons of tort and quibble. O vanity of vain words! O cozening, deceitful art! Nimbly do the great ones of to-day wrestle with the evil-smelling breath of their mouths, twisting and contorting it into beguilements, bastardising and corrupting the essence of things, sucking as a greedy vampire the blood from your hearts, and breathing into your nostrils the rigid symbols of law and of order, begotten on the death-bed of their understanding.

O children of Wonder and of Fancy, fly to the wild woods whilst yet there is time! Back to the mysteries of the shadowy oaks, to the revolt of imagination, to the insurrection of souls, to the moonlit festivals of love: back where the werewolf lurks, and the moonrakes prowl. Back, O back to the song of life, back to the great God Pan! And there, wrapped in your goat-skins, drink with the shepherds of Tammuz out of the skin of a suckling yet unborn, and ye shall become as the silver-gleaming waters of Istar—pure and bright! Speed, for he is the divine king of the fauns and the satyrs, the dryads and the oreads; the Lord of the Crowns; the Decider of Destiny; the God who prospers all above and beneath! And tarry not, lest as ye wander along the shore of the Ionian Sea ye hear a voice of lamentation crying, "Great Pan is dead!"

THE BANKRUPT

"O WHERE are the terraced gardens of Babylon, with their mighty groves towering up amongst the clouds? O where is the sun-god of Rhodes, whose golden brow was wont to blush with the first fire of dawn, whilst yet the waters at his feet were wrapped in the mists of night? O where is the Temple of Ephesus, and those who cried unto Diana? O where is the gleaming eye of Pharos that shone as a star of hope over the wild waters of the sea? Children of monsters and of gods, how have ye fallen! for a whirlwind hath arisen and swept through the gates of Heaven, and rushed down on the kingdoms of Earth, and as a tongue of consuming flame hath it licked up the handicrafts of man and cloaked all in the dust of decay. A yoke hath been laid on the shoulders of the ancient lands; and where once the white feet of Semiramis gleamed amongst the lilies and roses of Babylon there now the wild goats leap, and browse the sparse rank grass which sprouts in tufts from the red and yellow sand-heaps, those silent memorial mounds which mark the spot where once stood palaces of marble, and of jasper, and of jade. O woe! O woe! for all is dust and ruin; the flood-gates of the years have been opened, and Time has swept away as a mighty wind the embattled castles of kings with the mud-daubed huts of shepherds. Merodach has gone, and so has Ea, and no longer doth Istar flame in the night, or cast down her kisses on the sparkling goblets in the palace of Belshazzar. Isis, dark-veiled, hath departed, and Nu no longer uplifteth the Sun-bark with the breath of dawn. O Amen, bull fair of face, where is thy glory? Thebes is in ruins! O Lord of joy, O mighty one of diadems! The Sekhet crown has fallen from thy brow, and the strength of thy life hath departed, and thine eyes are as the shrouded shadows of night. Olympus is but a barren hill, and Asgard a land of sullen dreams. Alone in the desert of years still crouches the Sphinx, unanswered, unanswerable, inscrutable, age-worn, coeval with the æons of eld; even facing the east and thirsting for the first rays of the rising sun. She was there when Cheops and Khephren builded the pyramids, and there will she sit when Yahveh has taken his appointed seat in the silent halls of Oblivion.

The fool hath said in his heart, "There is no God!" Yet the wise man has sat trembling over the ruins of the past, and has watched with fearful eyes the bankruptcy of Splendour, and all the glory of man fall victim to the usury of Time.

O God, what art Thou that Thou dost abandon the kingdoms of this world, as a wanton woman her nightly lovers; and that they depart from Thee, and remember and regret Thee not? Yet thou art so vast that I cannot grasp Thee; Time flees before Thee, and Space is as a bauble in thine hands. O monstrous vacancy of vastness! Thou surpassest me, and I am lost in the contemplation of Thy greatness.

The old gods slew Ymer the giant; and from his blood they poured out the seas; and from his flesh they dug the land; and the rocks were fashioned out of his bones; and Asgard, fair dwelling-house of gods, was builded from the brows of his eyes; and from his skull was wrought the purple vault of Immensity; and from his brains were woven the fleecy clouds of heaven. But thou art more than Ymer; Thy feet are planted deeper than the roots of Igdrasil, and the hair of Thine head sweepeth past the helm of thought. Nay, more, vastly more; for Thou art bloodless, and fleshless, and without bones; Thou (O my God!) art nothing—nothing that I can grasp can span Thee. Yea! nothing art Thou, beyond the Nothingness of the Nothingness of Eternity!

Thus men grew to believe in NO-GOD, and to worship NO-GOD, and to be persecuted for NO-GOD, and to suffer and to die for NO-GOD. And now they torture themselves for him, as they had of yore gashed themselves with flints at the footstool of God His Father; and to the honour of His name, and as a proof of His existence, have they not built up great towers of Science, bastions of steam and of flame, and set a-singing the wheels of Progress, and all the crafts and the guiles and the artifices of Knowledge? They have contained the waters with their hands; and the earth they have set in chains; and the fire they have bound up as a wisp of undried straw; even the winds they have ensnared as an eagle in a net;—yet the Spirit liveth and is free, and they know it not, as they gaze down from their Babel of Words upon the

soot-grimed fields, and the felled forests, and the flowerless banks of their rivers of mud, lit by the sun which glows red through the hooded mists of their magic.

Yet he who gazeth into the heavens, and crieth in a loud voice, "There is NO-GOD," is as a prophet unto mankind; for he is as one drunken on the vastness of Deity. Better to have no opinion of God than such an opinion as is unworthy of Him. Better to be wrapped in the black robe of unbelief than to dance in the stinking rags of blasphemy. So they learnt to cry, "For the children, belief and obedience; for us men, solitude"—the monarchy of Mind, the pandemoniacal majesty of Matter!

"A Bible on the centre-table in a cottage pauperises the monarchical imagination of man"; but a naked woman weeping in the wilderness, or singing songs of frenzy unto Istar in the night, from the ruined summit of Nineveh, invoking the elemental powers of the Abyss, and casting the dust of ages about her, and crying unto Bel, and unto Assur, and unto Nisroch, and smiting flames from the sun-scorched bones of Sennacherib with the age-worn sword of Sharezer and Adrammelech, is a vision which intoxicates the brain with the sparkling wine of imagination, and sets the teeth a-rattling in the jaws, and the tongue a-cleaving to the palate of the mouth.

But the book-men have slain the Great God, and the twitterers of words have twisted their squeaking screws into his coffin. The first Christians were called Atheists; yet they believed in God: the last Christians are called Theists; yet they believe not in God. So the first Freethinkers were called Atheists; yet they believed in NO-GOD: and the last Freethinkers will be called Theists; for they will believe not in NO-GOD. Then indeed in these latter days may we again find the Great God, that God who liveth beyond the twittering of man's lips, and the mumblings of his mouth.

Filled with the froth of words, have these flatulent fools argued concerning God. Not as the bard sung of Ymer; but as the cat purrs to the strangling mouse: "Since God is First Cause, therefore he possesses existence *a se*; therefore he must be both necessary and absolute, and cannot be determined by anything else." Nevertheless these wise doctors discuss him as if he were a corpse on the tables of their surgeries, and measure his length with their foot-rules, and stretch and lop him to fit the bed of their Procrustean metaphysic. Thus he is absolutely unlimited from without, and unlimited also from within, for limitation is non-being, and God is being itself, and being is all-things, and all-things is no-thing. And so we find Epicurus walking arm in arm, from the temple of windy words, with Athanasius, and enter the market-place of life, and the throng of the living—that great tongueless witness of God's bounty; and mingle with the laughing boys, showering rose-leaves on Doris and Bacchis, and blowing kisses to Myrtale and Evardis.

God or No-God—so let it be! Still the Sun rises and sets, and the night-breeze blows the red flames of our torches athwart the palm-trees, to the discomfiture of the stars. Look!—in the distance between the mighty paws of the silent Sphinx rests a cubical temple whose god has been called Ra Harmakhis, the Great God, the Lord of the Heaven, but who in truth is nameless and beyond name, for he is the Eternal Spirit of Life.

Hush—the sistrum sounds from across the banks of the dark waters. The moon rises, and all is as silver and mother-of-pearl. A shepherd's pipe shrills in the distance—a kid has strayed from the fold. . . . O stillness . . . O mystery of God . . . how soft is Thy skin . . . how fragrant is Thy breath! Life as a strong wine flames through me. The frenzy of resistance, the rapture of the struggle—ah! the ecstasy of Victory. . . . The very soul of life lies ravished, and the breath has left me. . . . A small warm hand touches my lips—O fragrance of love! O Life! . . . Is there a God?

THE PRUDE

A FLY once sat upon the axle-tree of a chariot, and said: "What a dust do I raise!" Now a swarm of flies has come—the fourth plague of Egypt is upon us, and the land is corrupted by reason of their stench. The mighty ones are dead, the giants are no more, for the sons of God come not in unto the daughters of men, and the world is desolate, and greatness and renown are gone. To-day the blue blow-flies of decay sit buzzing on the slow-rolling wheel of Fortune, intoxicated on the dust of the dead, and sucking putrefaction from the sinews of the fallen, and rottenness from the charnel-house of Might.

O Reason! Thou hast become as a vulture feasting off the corpse of a king as it floats down the dark waters of Acheron. Nay! not so grand a sight, but as an old, wizened woman, skaldy and of sagging breast, who in the solitude of her *latrina* cuddles and licks the oleograph of a naked youth. O Adonis, rest in the arms of Aphrodite, seek not the hell-fouled daughter of Ceres, who hath grown hideous in the lewd embrace of the Serpent-God, betrayer of the knowledge of good and of evil. Behold her bulging belly and her shrivelled breasts, full of scale and scab—"bald, rotten, abominable!" Her tears no longer blossom into the anemones of Spring; for their purity has left them, and they are become as the bilge which poureth forth from the stern of a ship full of hogs. O! Eros, fly, speed! Await not the awakening oil to scorch Thy cheek, lest Thou discover that Thy darling has grown hideous and wanton, and that in the place of a fair maiden there slimeth a huge slug fed of the cabbage-stalks of decay.

O Theos! O Pantheos! O Atheos! Triple God of the brotherhood of warriors. Evoe! I adore Thee, O thou Trinity of might and majesty—Thou silent Unity that rulest the hearts of the great. Alas! that men are dead, their thrones of gold empty, and their palaces of pearl fallen into ruin! Grandeur and Glory have departed, so that now in the Elysian fields the sheep of woolly understanding nibble the green turnip-tops of reason and the stubble in the reaped cornfields of knowledge. Now all is rational, virtuous, smug, and oily. Those who wrestled with the suns and the moons, and trapped the stars of heaven, and sought God on the summits of the mountains, and drove Satan into the bowels of the earth, have swum the black waters of Styx, and are now in the halls of Asgard and the groves of Olympus, amongst the jewels of Havilah and the soft-limbed houris of Paradise. They have left us, and in their stead have come the carrion kites, who have usurped the white thrones of their understanding, and the golden palaces of their wisdom.

Let us hie back to the cradle of Art and the swaddling bands of Knowledge, and watch the shepherds, among the lonely hills where the myrtle grows and the blue-bells ring out the innocence of Spring, learning from their flocks the mysteries of life. . . . A wolf springs from the thicket, and a lamb lies sweltering in its blood; then an oaken cudgel is raised, and Hermas has dashed out the brains from betwixt those green, glittering eyes. There now at his feet lie the dead and the dying; and man wonders at the writhing of the entrails and the bubbling of the blood. See! now he gathers in his flock, and drives them to a dark cavern in the sloping side of the mountain; and when the moon is up he departs, speeding to his sister the Sorceress to seek of her balsams and herbs wherewith to stanch his wound and to soothe the burning scratches of the wolf's claws. There under the stars, whilst the bats circle around the moon, and the toad hops through the thicket, and the frogs splash in the mere, he whispers to her, how green were the eyes of the wild wolf, how sharp were his claws, how white his teeth and then, how the entrails wriggled on the ground, and the pink brains bubbled out their blood. Then both are silent, for a great awe fills them, and they crouch trembling amongst the hemlock and the foxgloves. A little while and she arises, and, pulling her black hood over her head, sets out alone through the trackless forest, here and there lit by the moon; and, guided by the stars, she reaches the city.

At a small postern by the tower of the castle known as the "lover's gate" she halts and whistles thrice, and then, in shrill, clear notes as of some awakened night-bird, calls: "Brother, brother, brother mine!" Soon a chain clanks against the oaken door, and a bolt rumbles back in its staple, and before her

in his red shirt and his leathern hose stands her brother the Hangman. And there under the stars she whispers to him, and for a moment he trembles, looking deep into her eyes; then he turns and leaves her. Presently there is a creaking of chains overhead—an owl, awakened from the gibbet above, where it had been blinking perched on the shoulder of a corpse, flies shrieking into the night.

Soon he returns, his footsteps resounding heavily along the stone passage, and in his arms he is carrying the dead body of a young man. "Hé, my little sister," he pants, and for a moment he props his heavy load up against the door of the postern. Then these two, the Sorceress and the Hangman, silently creep out into the night, back into the gloom of the forest, carrying between them the slumbering Spirit of Science and Art sleeping in the corse of a young man, whose golden hair streams gleaming in the moonlight, and around whose white throat glistens a snake-like bruise of red, of purple, and of black.

There under the oaks by an age-worn dolmen did they celebrate their midnight mass. . . . "Look you! I must needs tell you, I love you well, as you are to-night; you are more desirable than ever you have been before . . . you are built as a youth should be. . . . Ah! how long, how long have I loved you! . . . But to-day I am hungry, hungry for you! . . ."

Thus under the Golden Bough in the moonlight was the host uplifted, and the Shepherd, and the Hangman, and the Sorceress broke the bread of Necromancy, and drank deep of the wine of witchcraft, and swore secrecy over the Eucharist of Art.

Now in the place of the dolmen stands the hospital, and where the trilithons towered is built the "Hall of Science." Lo! the druid has given place to the doctor; and the physician has slain the priest his father, and with wanton words ravished the heart of his mother the sorceress. Now instead of the mystic circle of the adepts we have the great "Bosh-Rot" school of Folly. Miracles are banned, yet still at the word of man do the halt walk, and the lame rise up and run. The devils have been banished, and demoniacal possession is no more, yet now the most lenient of these sages are calling it "hystero-demonopathy"—what a jargon of unmusical syllables! Saul, when he met God face to face on the dusty road of Damascus, is dismissed with a discharging lesion of the occipital cortex; and George Fox crying, "Woe to the bloody city of Lichfield!" is suffering from a disordered colon; whilst Carlyle is subject to gastroduodenal catarrh. Yet this latter one writes: "Witchcraft and all manner of Spectre-work, and Demonology, we have now named Madness, and Diseases of the Nerves; seldom reflecting that still the new question comes upon us: What is Madness, what are Nerves?"—Indeed, what is Madness, what are Nerves?

Once, when a child, I was stung by a bee whilst dancing through the heather, and an old shepherd met me, and taking a black roll of tobacco from a metal box, he bit off a quid and, chewing it, spat it on my leg, and the pain vanished. He did not spend an hour racking through the dictionary of his brain to find a suitable "itis" whereby to allay the inflammation, and then, having carefully classified it with another, declared the pain to be imaginary and myself to be an hysterio-monomaniac suffering from apiarian illusions!

To-day Hercules is a sun-myth, and so are Osiris and Baal; and no man can raise his little finger without some priapic pig shouting: "Phallus . . . phallus! I see a phallus! O what a phallus!" Away with this church-spire sexuality, these atavistic obstetrics, these endless survivals and hypnoid states, and all these orchitic superficialities! Back to the fruits of life and the treasure-house of mystery!

Let us leap beyond the pale of these pedantic dictionary *proxenetes* and this shuffling of the thumbed cards of Reason. Let us cease gnawing at this philosophic ham-bone, and abandon the thistles of rationalism to the tame asses of the Six-penny Cult, and have done with all this pseudo-science, this logic-chopping, this levelling loquacity of loons, louts, lubbers, and lunatics!

O Thou rationalistic Boreas, how Thou belchest the sheep and with the flatulence of windy words! Away with the ethics and morals of the schoolmen, those prudish pedants whose bellies are swollen with the overboiled spinach of their sploshy virtues; and cease rattling the bread-pills of language in the bladder of medical terminology! The maniac's vision of horror is better than this, even the shambles clotted with blood; for it is the blood of life; and the loneliness of the distant heath is as a cup of everlasting wine compared with the soapsuds of these clyster-mongers, these purge-puffed prudes, who loose forth on us an evil-smelling gas from their cabbage-crammed duodenary canals.

Yea! it shall pass by, this gastro-epileptic school of neurological maniacs; for in a little time we shall catch up with this moulting ostrich, and shall slay him whilst he buries his occipital cortex under the

rubbish-heap of discharging lesions. Then the golden tree of life shall be replanted in Eden, and we little children shall dance round it, and shall banquet under the stars, feasting off the abandon of the wilderness and the freedom of the hills. Artists we shall become, and in the storm shall we see a woman weeping; and in the lightning and the thunder the sworded warrior who crushes her to his shaggy breast. Away with laws and labours. . . . Lo! in the groves of Pan the dance catches us up, and whirls us onward! O how we dash aside the goblets and the wine-skins, and how the tangled hair of our heads is blown amongst the purple clusters of the vine that clammers along the branches of the plane-trees in the Garden of Eros!

But yet for a little while the mystic child of Freedom must sit weeping at the footstool of the old prude Reason, and spell out her windy alphabets whilst she squats like a toad above her, dribbling, filled with lewd thoughts and longings for the oleograph of the naked youth and the stinking secrecy of her *latrina!*

THE CHILD

UNDER the glittering horns of Capricornus, when the mountains of the North glistened like the teeth of the black wolf in the cold light of the moon, and when the broad lands below the fiery girdle of many-breasted Tellus blushed red in the arms of the summer sun, did Miriam seek the cave below the cavern, in which no light had ever shone, to bring forth the Light of the World. And on the third day she departed from the cave, and, entering the stable of the Sun, she placed her child in the manger of the Moon. Likewise was Mithras born under the tail of the Sea-Goat, and Horus, and Krishna—all mystic names of the mystic Child of Light.

I am the Ancient Child, the Great Disturber, the Great Tranquilliser. I am Yesterday, To-day, and Tomorrow. My name is Alpha and Omega—the Beginning and the End. My dwelling-house is built betwixt the water and the earth; the pillars thereof are of fire, and the walls are of air, and the roof above is the breath of my nostrils, which is the spirit of the life of man.

I am born as an egg in the East, of silver, and of gold, and opalescent with the colours of precious stones; and with my Glory is the beast of the horizon made purple and scarlet, and orange, and green, many-coloured as a great peacock caught up in the coils of a serpent of fire. Over the pillars of Æthyr do I sail, as a furnace of burnished brass; and blasts of fire pour from my nostrils, and bathe the land of dreams in the radiance of my Glory. And in the west the lid of mine Eye drops—down smites the Night of reckoning and destruction, that night of the slaughter of the evil, and of the overthrow of the wicked, and the burning of the damned.

Robed in the flames of my mouth, I compass the heavens, so that none shall behold me, and that the eyes of men shall be spared the torture of unutterable light. "Devourer of Millions of Years" is my name; "Lord of the Flame" is my name; for I am as an eye of Silver set in the heart of the Sun. Thou spreadest the locks of thine hair before thee, for I burn thee; thou shakest them about thy brow, so that thine eyes may not be blinded by the fire of my fury. I am He who was, who is, and who will be; I am the Creator, and the Destroyer, and the Redeemer of mankind. I have come as the Sun from the house of the roaring of lions, and at my coming shall there be laughter, and weeping, and singing, and gnashing of teeth. Ye shall tread upon the serpent and the scorpion, and the hosts of your enemies shall be as chaff before the sickle of your might: yet ye must be born in the cavern of darkness and be laid in the manger of the moon.

Lo! I am as a babe born in a crib of lilies and roses, and wrapped in the swaddling bands of June. Mine hands are delicate and small, and my feet are shod in flame, so that they touch not the kingdoms of this earth. I arise, and leave the cradle of my birth, and wander through the valleys, and over the hills, across the sun-scorched deserts of day, and through the cool groves of night. Everywhere, everywhere, I find myself, in the deep pools, and in the dancing streams, and in the many-coloured surface of the mere: there I am white and wonderful, a child of loveliness and of beauty, a child to entice songs from the wild rose, and kisses from the zephyrs of dawn.

Herod would have slain me, and Kansa have torn me with his teeth of fire; but I eluded them, as a flame hidden in a cloud of smoke, and took refuge in the land of Ptah and sought sanctuary in the arms of Seb. There were the glories of Light revealed to me, and I became as a daughter of Ceres playing in the poppied fields of yellow corn: yet still as a sun-limbed bacchanal I trampled forth the foaming must from the purple grapes of Bacchus, and breathing it into the leaven of life, caused it to ferment, and bubble forth as the Wine of Iacchus. Then with the maiden, who was also myself, I partook of the Eucharist of Love—the corn and the wine, and became one.

Then there came unto me a woman subtle and beautiful to behold, whose breasts were as alabaster bowls filled with wine, and the purple hair of whose head was as a dark cloud on a stormy night. Dressed in a gauze of scarlet and gold, and jewelled with pearls and emeralds and magic stones, she, like a spider

spun in a web of sunbeams and blood, danced before me, casting her jewels to the winds, and naked she sang to me: "O lover of mine heart, thy limbs are as chalcedony, white and round, and tinged with the mingling blush of the sapphire, the ruby, and the sard. Thy lips are as roses in June; and thine eyes as amethysts set in the vault of heaven. O! come kiss me, for I tremble for thee; fill me with love, for I am consumed by the heat of my passion; say me, O slay me with kisses, burn me in the fire of thy kingdom, O slay me with the sword of thy rapture!"

Then I cried unto her in a loud voice saying: "O Queen of the lusts of flesh! O Queen of the lands haunted by satyrs! O Mistress of Night! O Mother of the mysteries of birth and death! Who art girt in the flames of passion, and jewelled with emerald, and moonstone, and chrysoleth. Lo! on thy brow burns the star-sapphire of heaven, thy girdle is as the serpent of Eden, and round thine ankles chatter the rubies and garnets of hell. Hearken, O Lilith! O Sorceress of the blood of life! My lips are for those who suckle not Good, and my kisses for those who cherish not Evil. And my kingdom is for the children of light who trample under foot the garment of shame, and rend from their loins the sackcloth of modesty. When Two shall be One, then shalt thou be crowned with a crown neither of gold nor of silver, nor yet of precious stones; but as with a crown of fire fashioned in the light of God's glory. Yea! when my sword falleth, then that which is without shall be like unto that which is within; then tears shall be as kisses, and kisses as tears; then all shall be leavened and made whole, and thou shalt find in thine hand a sceptre, neither of lilies nor of gold, but a sceptre of light, yea! a sceptre of the holiness and loveliness of light and of glory!"

O Children of the land of Dreams! O ye who would cross the bar of sleep, and become as Children of Awakening and Light. Woe unto you! for ye cleanse outside the cup and the platter; but within they are full of uncleanness. Ye are soaked in the blood of corruption, and choked with the vomit of angry words. Close your eyes, O ye neophytes in the mysteries of God, lest ye be blinded, and cry out like a man whose sight has been smitten black by a burning torch of tar. O Children of Dreams! plough well the fields of night, and prepare them for the Sower of Dawn. Heed lest the golden corn ripen and ye be not ready to pluck the swollen ears, and feast, and become as Bezaleel, filled with a divine spirit of wisdom, and understanding, and knowledge—a cunning worker in gold, and in silver, and in brass, in scarlet, in purple, and in blue.

But woe unto ye who tarry by the wayside, for the evening is at hand; to-day is the dawn, tomorrow the night of weeping. Gird up your loins and speed to the hills; and perchance on the way under the cedars and the oaks ye meet God face to face and know. But be not downcast if ye find not God in the froth or the dregs of the first cup: drink and hold fast to the sword of resolution—onwards, ever onwards, and fear not!

Devils shall beset the path of the righteous, and demons, and all the elemental spirits of the Abyss. Yet fear not! for they add grandeur and glory to the might of God's power. Pass on, but keep thy foot upon their necks, for in the region whither thou goest, the seraph and the snake dwell side by side.

Sume lege. Open the Book of THYSELF, take and read. Eat, for this is thy body; drink, for this is the blood of thy redemption. The sun thou seest by day, and the moon thou beholdest by night, and all the stars of heaven that burn above thee, are part of thyself—are thyself. And so is the bowl of Space which contains them, and the wine of Time in which they float; for these two are part of thyself—are Thyself. And God also who casteth them forth from the coffers of his treasury. He, too, though thou knowest it not, is part of thyself—is THYSELF. All is in thee, and thou art in all, and separate existence is not, being but a net of dreams wherein the dreamers of night are ensnared. Read, and thou becomest; eat and drink, and thou art.

Though weak, thou art thine own master; listen not to the babblers of vain words, and thou shalt become strong. There is no revelation except thine own. There is no understanding except thine own. There is no consciousness apart from thee, but that it is held feudal to thee in the kingdom of thy Divinity. When thou knowest thou knowest, and there is none other beside thee, for all becometh as an armour around thee, and thou thyself as an invulnerable, invincible warrior of Light.

Heed not the pedants who chatter as apes among the treetops; watch rather the masters, who in the cave under the cavern breathe forth the breath of life.

One saith to thee:

"Abandon all easy, follow the difficult; eat not of the best, but of the most distasteful; pander not to thy pleasures, but feed well thy disgusts; console not thyself, but seek the waters of desolation; rest not

thyself, but labour in the depths of the night; aspire not to things precious, but to things contemptible and low."

But I say unto thee: heed not this vain man, this blatherer of words! For there is Godliness in ease, in fine dishes, and in pleasures, in consolations, in rest, and in precious things.

So if in thyself thou findest a jewelled goblet, I say unto thee, drink from it, for it is the cup of thy salvation; seek not therefore a dull bowl of heavy lead!

Yet another saith unto thee:

"Will not anything, will nothing; seek not for the best, but for the worst. Despise thyself; slander thyself; speak lightly of thyself."

And again:

"To enjoy the taste for all things, then have no taste for anything."

"To know all things; then resolve to possess nothing."

"To be all; then, indeed be willing to be naught."

But I say unto thee: this one is filled like a fool's bladder with wind and a rattling of dried peas; for he who wills everything, is he who seeks of the best; for he who honours himself, he who prides himself most; and he who speaks highly of himself, is he who also shall reign in the City of God.

"To have no taste for anything, then enjoy the taste of all things.

"To resolve to possess nothing, then possess all things.

"To be naught, then indeed be all."

Open the book of Thyself in the cave under the cavern and read it by the light of thine own understanding, then presently thou shalt be born again, and be placed in the manger of the Moon in the stable of the Sun.

For, children! when ye halt at one thing, ye cease to open yourselves to all things. For to come to the All, ye must give up the All, and likewise possess the All. Verily ye must destroy all things and out of Nothing found and build the Temple of God as set up by Solomon the King, which is placed between Time and Space; the pillars thereof are Eternity, and the walls Infinity, and the floor Immortality, and the Roof—but ye shall know of this hereafter! Spoil thyself if so thou readest thyself; but if it is written adorn thyself, then spare not the uttermost farthing, but deck thyself with all the jewels and gems of earth; and from a child playing with the sands on the sea-shore shalt thou become God, whose footstool is the Abyss, and from whose mouth goeth forth the sword of the salvation and destruction of the worlds, and in whose hand rest the seven stars of heaven.

THE WANTON

THERE is a woman, young, and beautiful, and wise, who grows not old as she dances down the centuries: she was in the beginning, and she will be in the end, ever young, ever enticing, and always inscrutable. Her back is to the East and her eyes are towards the night, and in her wake lieth the world. Wherever she danceth, there man casteth the sweat from his brow and followeth her. Kings have fled their thrones for her; priests their temples; warriors their legions; and husbandmen their ploughs. All have sought her; yet ever doth she remain subtle, enticing, virginal. None have known her save those little ones who are born in the cave under the cavern; yet all have felt the power of her sway. Crowns have been sacrificed for her; gods have been blasphemed for her; swords have been sheathed for her; and the fields have lain barren for her; verily! the helm of man's thoughts has been cloven in twain by the magic of her voice. For like some great spider she has enticed all into the silken meshes of her web, wherein she hath spun the fair cities of the world, where sorrow sits tongueless and laughter abideth not; and tilled the fertile plains, where innocence is but as the unopened book of Joy. Yet it is she also who hath led armies into battle; it is she who hath brought frail vessels safely across the greedy ocean; it is she who hath enthroned priests, crowned kings, and set the sword in the hand of the warrior; and it is she who hath helped the weary slave to guide his plough through the heavy soil, and the miner to rob the yellow gold from the bowels of the earth. Everywhere will you find her dancing down empires, and weaving the destiny of nations. She never sleeps, she never slumbers, she never rests; ever wakeful, day and night, her eyes glisten like diamonds as she danceth on, the dust of her feet burying the past, disturbing the present, and clouding the future. She was in Eden, she will be in Paradise!

I followed her, I abandoned all for her; and now I lie, as a fevered man, raving in the subtle web of her beauty.

Lo! there she stands swaying between the gates of Light and Darkness under the shadow of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, whose fruits are death; yet none that have not tasted thereof can tell whether they be sweet or bitter to the tongue. Therefore all must pluck and eat and dream. But when the time cometh for the mystic child to be born, they shall awake, and with eyes of fire behold that on the summit of the mountain in the centre of the garden there groweth the Tree of Life.

Now round the trunk of the Tree and the lower branches thereof there twines a woman, wild, wanton, and wise; whose body is as that of a mighty serpent, the back of which is vermilion, and the belly of red-gold; her breasts are purple, and from her neck spring three heads.

And the first head is as the head of a crownéd priestess, and is of silver, and on her brow is set a crown of pearls, and her eyes are as blue as the sapphire; but upon perceiving man they turn green and yellow as the water of a troubled sea; and her mouth is as a moonstone cleft in twain, in which lurks a tongue born of flame and water.

And on beholding her, I cried to her in a loud voice, saying: "O Priestess of the Veil who art throned between the Pillars of Knowledge and Ignorance, pluck and give me of the fruit of the Tree of Life that I may eat thereof, so that my eyes shall be opened, and that I become as a god in understanding, and live for ever!"

Then she laughed subtly, and answered me saying: "Understanding, O fool that art so wise, is Ignorance. Fire licketh up water, and water quencth fire; and the sword which one man fleeth from, another sheatheth in his breast. Seek the Crown of Truth, and thou shalt be shod with the sandals of Falsehood; unclasp the girdle of Virtue, and thou shalt be wrapped in the shroud of Vice."

And, when she had finished speaking, she wove from her lips around me a net-work of cloud and of flame; and in a subtle song she sang to me: "In the web of my tongue hast thou been caught; in the breath of my mouth shalt thou be snared. For Time shall be given unto thee wherein to seek all things; and all things shall be thy curse, and thine understanding shall be as the waves of the sea ever rolling

onwards to the shore from whence they came; and when at the height of their majesty shall their pride and dominion be dashed against the rocks of Doubt, and all thy glory shall become as the spume and the spray of shattered waters, blown hither and thither by the storm."

Then she caught me up in the web of her subtleties and breathed into my nostrils the breath of Time; and bore me to the Abyss, where all is as the darkness of Doubt, and there she strangled me with the hemp and the silk of the abominations and arrogance of mine understanding.

And the second head is as the head of a young woman veiled with a veil as clear as rock crystal, and crowned with a crown fashioned in the shape of a double cube around which is woven a wreath of lilies and ivy. And her countenance is as that of Desolation yet majestic as an Empress of Earth, who possessing all things yet cannot find a helpmeet worthy to possess her; and her eyes are as opals of light; and her tongue as an arrow of flame.

And on beholding her I cried in a loud voice saying: "O Princess of the Vision of the Unknown, who art throned as a sphinx between the hidden mysteries of Earth and Air, give me of the fruit of the Tree of Life that I may eat thereof, so that mine eyes shall be opened, and I may become as a god in understanding, and live for ever!"

And when I had finished speaking she wept bitterly and answered me saying: "Verily if the poor man trespass within the palace gate, the king's dogs shall be let loose so that they may tear him in pieces. Also, if the king seek shelter in the hut of the pauper the louse taketh refuge in his hair, and heedeth not his crown nor his cap of ermine and gold. Now, thou, O wise man who art so foolish, askest for Understanding; yet how shall it be given unto him who asketh for it, for in the giving it ceaseth to be, and he who asketh of me is unworthy to receive. Wouldst thou enter the king's palace in rags and beg crumbs of his bounty? Take heed lest, the king perceiving thee not, his knaves set the hounds upon thee, so that even the rags that thou possesseth are torn from thee: or, even should the king cast his eyes on thee, that he be not overcome with fury at the presumption of thine offence, and order thee to be stripped naked and beaten from his garden with staves back to the hovel whence thou camest. And being a king, if thou seekest knowledge and understanding in a beggar's hut, thou shalt become as an abode of vermin, and a prey to hunger and thirst, and thy limbs shall be bitten by cold and scorched with fire, and all thy wealth will depart from thee and thy people will cast thee out and take away thy crown. Yet there is hope for the beggar and the king, and the balances which sway shall be adjusted, and the sun shall drink up the clouds, and the clouds shall swallow the sun, and there shall be neither darkness nor light. Pledge thy pride and it will become but the habitations of vermin, pledge thy humility and thou shalt be cast out naked to the dogs."

Then when she had finished speaking she bared her breast to me, and it was as the colour of the vault of heaven at the rising of the sun; and she took me in her arms and did caress me, and her tongue of fire crept around and about me as the hand of a sly maid. Then I drank in the breath of her lips, and it filled me as with the spirit of dreams and of slumber, so that I doubted that the stars shone above me, and that the rivers flowed at my feet. Thus all became as a vast Enigma to me, a riddle set in the Unknowability of Space.

Then in a subtle voice she sang to me: "I know not who thou art, or whence thou camest; whether from across the snowy hills, or from over the plains of fire. Yet I love thee; for thine eyes are as the blue of still waters, and thy lips ruddy as the sun in the West. Thy voice is as the voice of a shepherd at even, calling together his flock in the twilight. Thy breath is as the wind blown from across a valley of musk; and thy loins are lusty as red coral washed from the depths of the sea. Come, draw nigh unto me, O my love: my sister ensnared thee with her subtle tongue, she gave thee to suck from the breasts of Time: come, I will give thee more than she, for I will give unto thee as an inheritance my body, and thou shalt fondle me as a lover, and as a reward for thy love will I endow thee with all the realms of Space—the notes in the sunbeam shall be thine, and the starry palaces of night, all shall be thine even unto the uttermost depths of Infinity." So she possessed me, and I her.

And the third head is as the head of a woman neither young nor old, but beautiful and compassionate; and on her forehead is set a wreath of Cypress and Poppies fastened by a winged cross. And her eyes are as star-sapphires, and her mouth is as a pearl, and on the lips crouches the Spirit of Silence.

And on beholding her I cried to her in a loud voice, saying: "O Thou Mother of the Hall of Truth!

Thou who art both sterile and pregnant, and before whose judgment-seat tremble the clothed and the naked, the righteous and the unjust, give me of the fruit of the Tree of Life, that I may eat thereof so that mine eyes shall be opened, and that I become as a god in understanding, and live forever!"

Then I stood before her listening for her answer, and a great shaking possessed me, for she answered not a word; and the silence of her lips rolled around me as the clouds of night and overshadowed my soul, so that the Spirit of life left me. Then I fell down and trembled, for I was alone.

THE SLAVE

THE blue vault of heaven is red and torn as the wound of a tongueless mouth; for the West has drawn her sword, and the Sun lies sweltering in his blood. The sea moans as a passionate bridegroom, and with trembling lips touches the swelling breasts of night. Then wave and cloud cling together, and as lovers who are maddened by the fire of their kisses, mingle and become one.

Come, prepare the feast in the halls of the Twilight! Come, pour out the dark wine of the night, and bring in the far-sounding harp of the evening! Let us tear from our burning limbs the dusty robes of the morning, and, naked, dance in the silver radiance of the moon. Voices echo from the darkness, and the murmur of many lips lulls the stillness of departing day, as a shower in springtime whispering amongst the leaves of the sprouting beech trees. Now the wolves howl outside, and the jackals call from the thicket; but none heed them, for all inside is as the mossy bank of a sparkling streamlet—full of softness and the flashing of many jewels.

O where art thou, my loved one, whose eyes are as the blue of the far-off hills? O where art thou whose voice is as the murmur of distant waters? I stretch forth mine hands and feel the rushes nodding in the wind; I gaze through the shadows, for the night mist is rising from the lake; but thee I cannot find. Ah! there thou art by the willow, standing between the bulrush and the water-lily, and thy form is as a shell of pearl caught up by the waves in the moonlight. Come, let us madden the night with our kisses! Come, let us drink dry the vats of our passion! Stay! Why fleest thou from me, as the awakened mist of the morning before the arrows of day? Now I can see thee no more; thou art gone, and the darkness hath swallowed thee up. O wherefore hast thou left me, me who loved thee, and wove kisses in thine hair? Behold, the Moon hath followed thee! Now I see not the shadows of the woods, and the lilies in the water have become but flecks of light in the darkness. Now they mingle and melt together as snow-flakes before the sun, and are gone; yea! the stars have fled the skies, and I am alone.

How cold has grown the night, how still! O where art thou! Come, return unto me, that I stray not in vain; call unto me that I lose not my way! Lighten me with the brightness of thine eyes, so that I wander not far from the path and become a prey to the hunger of wild beasts!

I am lost; I know not where I am; the mossy mountains have become as hills of wind, and have been blown far from their appointed places; and the waving fields of the valleys have become silent as the land of the dead, so that I hear then not, and know not whither to walk. The reeds whisper not along the margin of the lake; all is still; heaven has closed her mouth and there is no breath in her to wake the slumber of desolation. The lilies have been sucked up by the greedy waters, and now night sleeps like some mighty serpent gorged on the white flesh and the warm blood of the trembling maidens of dawn, and the wild youths of the noon-tide.

O my dove, my loved one! Didst thou but approach as a wanderer in the wilderness, thine hair floating as a raiment of gold about thee, and thy breasts lit with the blush of the dawn! Then would mine eyes fill with tears, and I would leap towards thee in the madness of my joy; but thou comest not. I am alone, and tremble in the darkness like the bleached bones of a giant in the depths of a windy tomb.

There is a land in which no tree groweth, and where the warbling of the birds is as a forgotten dream. There is a land of dust and desolation, where no river floweth, and where no cloud riseth from the plains to shade men's eyes from the sand and the scorching sun. Many are they who stray therein, for all live upon the threshold of misery who inhabit the House of joy. There wealth taketh wing as a captive bird set free, and fame departeth as a breath from fainting lips; love playeth the wanton, and the innocence of youth is but as a cloak to cover the naked hideousness of vice; health is not known, and joy lies corrupted as a corpse in the grave; and behind all standeth the great slave master called Death, all-encompassing with his lash, all-desolating in the naked hideousness and the blackness wherewith he chastiseth.

"I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and behold all was vanity and vexation of spirit." Yea! all are of dust, and turn to dust again, and the dead know not anything. Health has left me, wealth has departed from me, those whom I love have been taken from me, and now Thou (O my God!) hast abandoned me, and cast me out, and setting a lock upon Thy lips hast stopped Thine ears with wax and covered Thine eyes with the palms of Thine hands, so that Thou seest me not, nor hearest me, nor answerest unto my bitter cry. Thus I am cast out from Thy presence and sit alone as one lost in a desert of sand, and cry unto Thee, thirsting for Thee, and then deny Thee and curse Thee in my madness, until death stop the blasphemies of my lips with the worm and the dust of corruption, and I am set free from the horror of this slavery of sorrow.

I am alone, yea! alone, sole habitant of this kingdom of desolation and misery. Hell were as Paradise to this solitude. O would that dragons came from out the deep and devoured me, or that lions tore me asunder for their food; for their fury would be as milk and honey unto the bitterness of this torture. O cast unto me a worm, that I may no longer be alone, and that in its writhings on the sand I read Thine answer to my prayer! Would I were in prison that I might hear the groans of the captives; would I were on the scaffold that I might listen to the lewd jests of bloody men! O would I were in the grave, wound in the roots of the trees, eyeless gazing up into the blackness of death!

Between the evening and the morning was I born, like a mushroom I sprang up in the night. At the breast of desolation was I fed, and my milk was as whey, and my meat as the bitterness of aloes. Yet I lived, for God was with me; and I feared, for the devil was at hand. I did not understand what I needed, I was afraid, and fear was as a pestilence unto my soul. Yet was I intoxicated and drunken on the cup of life, and joy was mine, and reeling I shrieked blasphemies to the storm. Then I grew sober, and diced with mine understanding, and cheated mine heart, and lost my God, and was sold into slavery, and became as a coffin-worm unto the joy of my life. Thus my days grew dark, and I cried unto myself as my spirit left me: "O what of to-day which is as the darkness of night? O what then of to-morrow which is as the darkness of Eternity? Why live and tempt the master's lash?" So I sought the knife at my girdle to sunder the thread of my sorrow; but courage had taken flight with joy, and my hand shook so that the blade remained in its sheath. Then I cried unto myself: "Verily why should I do aught, for life itself hath become unto me as a swordless scabbard"—so I sat still and gloomed into the darkness.

THE WARRIOR

THERE is an indifference which overleaps satisfaction; there is a surrender which overthrows victory, there is a resignation which shatters the fetters of anxiety, a relaxation which casts to the winds the manacles of despair. This is the hour of the second birth, when from the womb of the excess of misery is born the child of the nothingness of joy. Solve! For all must be melted in the crucible of affliction, all must be refined in the furnace of woe, and then on the anvil of strength must it be beaten out into a blade of gleaming joy. *Coagula!*

Weep and gnash your teeth, and sorrow sits crowned and exultant; therefore rise and gird on the armour of utter desolation! Slay anger, strangle sorrow, and drown despair; then a joy shall be born which is beyond love or hope, enduring, incorruptible. Come heaven, come hell! Once the Balances are adjusted, then shall the night pass away, and desire and sorrow vanish as a dream with the breath of the morning.

The war of the Freedom of Souls is not the brawling of slaves in the wine-dens, or the haggling of the shopmen in the market-place; it is the baring of the brand of life, that unsheathing of the Sword of Strength which lays all low before the devastation of its blade. Life must be held in contempt—the life of self and the life of others. Here there must be no weakness, no sentiment, no reason, no mercy. All must taste of the desolation of war, and partake of the blood of the cup of death. O! warriors, ye cannot be too savage, too barbarous, too strong. On, O storm-blown sons of the fire of life! Success is your password; destruction is your standard; Victory is your reward!

Heed not the shrieking of women, or the crying of little children; for all must die, and not a stone must be left standing in the city of the World, lest darkness depart not. Haste! bring flint and steel, light the match, fire the thatch of the hovel and the cedar rafters of the palace; for all must be destroyed, and no man must delay, or falter, or turn back, or repent. Then from the ashes of Destruction will rise the King, the birthless and the deathless one, the great monarch who shall shake from his tangled beard the blood of strife, and who shall cast from his weary hand the sword of desolation.

Yea! from out the night flashes a sword of flame, from out the darkness speeds an arrow of fire!

I am alone, and stand at the helm of the barque of Death, and laugh at the fury of the waves; for the prow of my laughter smiteth the dark waters of destruction into a myriad jewels of unutterable and uttermost joy!

I am alone, and stand in the centre of the desert of Sorrow, and laugh at the misery of earth: for the music of my laughter whirleth the sands of desolation into a golden cloud of unutterable and uttermost joy!

I am alone, and stand on the storm cloud of life, and laugh at the shrieking of the winds; for the wings of my laughter sweep away the web of outer darkness, and reveal the stars of unutterable and uttermost joy!

I am alone, and stand on the flames of the mountains of pleasure, and laugh at the fire of rapture; for the breath of my laughter bloweth the bright flames into a pillar of unutterable and uttermost joy.

I am alone, and stand amongst the ghosts of the dead, and laugh at the shivering of the shades, for the heart of my laughter pulseth as a mighty fountain of blood clothing the shadows of night with the spirit of unutterable and uttermost joy!

I am alone, yea alone, one against all; yet in my sword have I all things; for in it lives the strength of my might, and if joy come not at my beckoning, then joy shall be slain as a disobedient slave, and if sorrow depart not at my command, then shall sorrow speed through the valley of death as a foe that passeth not his neck beneath the yoke.

In the bastion of mine imagination lie all the munitions of my might; and from the tower of my resolution do I sweep away the stars, and pour forth fire and water on the world of laughter and

weeping. I cannot be despoiled, for none can approach me; I cannot be succoured, for I am far beyond the path of man's help. Yet neither would I if I could; for if I could, I would not; and if I would, I could not; for I have become as a giant amongst men, strong as he can only be who has feasted on the agony of life, and drunken of the cup of the sorrow of death, and towered above all things.

Laughter is mine, not the laughter of bitterness, nor the laughter of jest; but the laughter of strength and of life. live like a mighty conquering Lord and all things are mine. Fair groves and gardens, palaces of marble and fortresses of red sandstones; and the coffers of my treasury are filled with gold and silver and precious stones; and before my path the daughters of pleasure dance with unbraided tresses, scattering lilies and roses along my way. Life is a joy indeed, a rapture of clinging lips and of red wine, which flows in beads along the bronze and purple tresses, and then like rubies of blood finds refuge between the firm white breasts of maddened maidenhood.

Hark! . . . What is that, the yelping of a dog? No, it is the death-cry of a man! . . . Ay! the biting of sharp swords, and the shrieking of many women. Ho! the feast has indeed begun, the rabble have broken in, scythes glisten in the torchlight and tables are overturned; wine is gulped down by filthy mouths, and spilt and mingled with the blood of the slaughtered children of Eros, so that the banquet of love has become the shambles of death. . . .

Now all is still and the rose has given birth to the poppy, and the bronze tresses of the revellers lie motionless as snakes gorged on clotted blood, and shimmer wantonly in the moonlight between discovered limbs and disemboweled entrails. Soon the quivering maggots, which once were the brains of men, will lick up the crumbs of the feast in the temple of love, and the farce will be ended.

I rise from the corpse of her I kissed, and laugh; for all is beautiful, more beautiful still; for I create from the godless butchery of fiends the overpowering grandeur of death. There she stands before me, rose-limbed, crimson-lipped, with breast of scarlet flame, her tresses floating about her like a cloud of ruby fire, and the tongue which creepeth from her lips is as a carbuncle wet with the strong blood of warriors. I laugh, and in the frenzy of my exultation she is mine; and on that soft bed of bloody corpses do I beget on her the laughter of the scorn of war, the joy of the contempt of sorrow.

Life is a horror, a writhing of famished serpents, yet I care not, for I laugh. The deserts awe me not, neither do the seas restrain the purpose of my mirth. Life is as prisoner in a dungeon, still I laugh; for I, in my strength, have begotten a might beyond the walls of prisons; for life and death have become one to me—as little children gambolling on the sands and splashing in the wavelets of the sea. I laugh at their pretty play, and upon the billows of my laughter do I build up the Kingdom of the Great in which all carouse at one table. Here virgins mingle with courtesans, and the youth and the old man know neither wisdom nor folly.

I have conquered the deserts and the forests, the valleys and the mountains, the seas and the lands. My palace is built of fire and water, of earth and of air, and the secret place within the sanctuary of my temple is as the abode of everlasting mirth. All is love, life, and laughter; death and decay are not: all is joy, purity, and freedom; all is as the fire of mystery; all is all; for my kingdom is known as the City of God.

The slave weepeth, for he is alone; O be not slaves unto yourselves, lashing your backs with the sorrows of your own begetting. But rather become strong in the widowhood of your joy, and evoke from the horror of your seclusion the morion of the victory of resolution, and from the misery of your loneliness, the sword of the destruction of desire. Then shall ye turn your faces towards the West, and stride after the night of desolation, and on the cup of the sunset shall ye become strong as warriors fed on the blood of bulls, and shall step out past the morning and the night in the manliness of might, to the conquest of thyself, and to the usurpation of the Throne of God!

THE KING

THE King is the undying One; he is the life and the master of life; he is the great living image of the Sun, the Sun, and the begetter of the Sun. He is the Divine Child, the God-begotten One, and the Begetter of God. He is the potent bull, the jewelled snake, the fierce lion. He is the monarch of the lofty mountains, and the lord of the woods and forests, the indweller of the globes of flame. As a royal eagle he soars through the heavens, and as a great dragon he churns up the waters of the deep. He holds the past between his hands as a casket of precious stones, the future lies before him clear as a mirror of burnished silver, and to-day is as an unsheathed dagger of gold at his girdle.

As a slave who is bold becomes a warrior, so a warrior who is fearless becomes a king, changing his battered helm of strength for a glittering crown of light; and as the warrior walks upright with the fearlessness of disdain in his eyes, so does the king walk with bowed head, finding love and beauty wherever he goeth, and whatever he doeth is true and lovely, for having conquered his self, he ruleth over his self by love alone, and not by the laws of good and evil, neither proudly nor disdainfully, neither by justice nor by mercy. Good and Evil is not his, for he hath become as an Higher Intelligence, as an Art enshrined in the mind; and in his kingdom actions no longer defile, and whatever his heart inclineth him to do, that he doeth purely and with joy. And as the countenance of a singer may be ruddy or white, fair or dark, nevertheless, the redness or the whiteness, the fairness or the darkness, affect not the song of his lips, or the rapture of his music; similarly, neither does man-made virtue and vice, goodness and wickedness, strength and weakness, or any of the seeming opposites of life, affect or control the actions of the King; for he is free-born from the delusions and the dream of opposites, and sees things as they are, and not as the five senses reflect them on the mirror of the mind.

Now he who would become as a king unto himself must not renounce the kingdoms of this world, but must conquer the lands and estates of others and usurp their thrones. Should he be poor he must aim at riches without forfeiting his poverty; should he be rich he must aim at possessing poverty as well, without taking one farthing from the coffers of his treasury. The man of much estate must aim at possessing all the land, until there is no kingdom left for him to conquer. The Unobtainable must be obtained, and in the obtaining of it is to be found the Golden Key of the Kingdom of Light. The virgin must become as the wanton, yet though filled with all the itchings of lust, she must in no wise forfeit the purity of her virginity; for the foundations of the Temple are indeed set between Day and Night, and the Scaffolding thereof is as an arch flung between Heaven and Hell. For if she who is a virgin become but as a common strumpet, then she indeed falls and rises not, becoming in her fall but a clout in the eyes of all men, a foul rag wherewith to sop up the lusts of flesh. So, verily, if she who being a courtesan, becometh as an untouched virgin, she shall be considered as a thing of naught, being both sterile and loveless; for what profit shall she be to this world who is the mother of unfruitfulness? But she who is both crimson and white, a twisted pillar of snow and fire, soothing where she burneth, and comforting where she chilleth, she shall be held as queen amongst women; for in her all things are found, and as an inexhaustible well of water around whose mouth grows the wild apricot, in which the bees set their sweet hives, she shall be both food and drink to the hearts of men: a well of life unto this world, yea! a goodly tavern wherein cool wine is sold, and good cheer is to be had, and where all shall be filled with the joyaunce of love.

Thus shall men attain to the unity of the crown and become as kings unto themselves. But the way is long and hilly and beset with many pitfalls, and it traverses a foul and a wild country. Indeed we see before us the towers and the turrets, the domes and the spires, the roofs and the gables, glittering beyond the purple of the horizon, like the helmets and spears of an army of warriors in the distance. But on approaching we find that the blue of the sky-line encompasses a dark wood wherein are all things unmindful of the Crown, and where there is darkness and corruption, and where lives the Tyrant of the World clothed in a robe of fantastic desires. Yet it is here that the Golden Key has been lost, where the

hog, the wolf, the ape, and the bearded goat hold revel. Here are set the pavilions of dreams and the tented encampments of sleep, in which are spread the tables of demons, and where feast the wantons and the prudes, the youths and the old men, and all the opposites of virtue and of vice. But he who would wear the crown must find the key, else the door of the Palace remains closed, for none other than he can open it for him. And he who would find the Key of Gold must seek it here in the outer court of the World, where the flatterers, and the parasites, and the hypocrites, buzz like flies over the fleshpots of life.

Now he who enters the outer court sees set before him many tables and couches, at which with swollen veins revel the sons of the gluttony of life. Here men, in their furious love of greed, stuff their jaws with the luxuries of decay, which a little after go to the dunghill; and vomit their sour drink on one another as a certain sign of their good fellowship. Here they carouse together drunkenly as in a brothel filling the world with the noise of cymbal and drum, and the loud-sounding instruments of delusion, and with shouts of audacious shame. Here are their ears and eyes pleasantly titillated by the sound of the hissing of the frying-pans, and the sight of the bubbling of stews; and courting voracity, with necks stretched out, so that they may sniff up the wandering steam of the dishes, they fill their swollen bellies with things perishable, and drink up the gluttonies of life. Yet he who would partake of the Banquet of Light must pass this way and sojourn a while amongst these animals, who are so filled with swinish itchings and unbridled fornications that they perceive not that their manger and their dunghill lie side by side as twins in one bed. For a space he must listen to the hiccuping of those who are loaded with wine, and the snorting of those who are stuffed with food, and must watch these lecherous beasts who insult the name of man rolling in their offal, gambolling, and itching with a filthy prurience after the mischievous delights of lewdness, drunkenly groping amongst the herds of long-haired boys and short-skirted girls, from whom they suck away their beauty, as milk from the udders of a goat. He must dwell for a time with these she-apes, smeared with white paint, mangled, daubed, and plastered with the "excrement of crocodiles" and the "froth of putrid humours," who are known as women. Disreputable hags who keep up old wives' whispering over their cups, and who, as filthy in body as in mind, with unbridled tongues clatter wantonly as they giggle over their sluttish whisperings, shamelessly making with their lips sounds of lewdness and fornication. And wanton young dabs with mincing gait swing their bodies here and there amongst the men, their faces smeared with the ensnaring devices of wily cunning. Winking boldly and babbling nonsense they cackle loudly, and like fowls scratching the dunghill seek the dirt of wealth; and having found it, pass their way to the gutter and the grave loaded with gold like a filthy purse.

O seeker! All this must thou bear witness to, and become a partaker in, without becoming defiled or disgusted, and without contempt or reverence; then of a certain shalt thou find the Golden Key which turneth the bolt of evil from the staple of Good, and which openeth the door which leadeth unto the Palace of the King, wherein is the Temple. For when thou hast discovered Beauty and Wisdom and Truth in the swollen veins, in the distended bellies, in the bubbling lips, in the lewd gambollings, in the furious greed, the wanton whisperings, the sly winkings, and all the shameless nonsense of the Outer Court, then indeed shalt thou find that the Key of gold is only to be found in the marriage of wantonness and chastity. And taking it thou shalt place it in the lock of cherubic fire which is fashioned in the centre of the door of the King's house, which is built of ivory and ebony and studded with jet and silver; and the door shall open for a time as if a flame had been blown aside, and thou shalt see before thee a table of pearl on which are set the hidden waters and the secret bread of the Banquet of Light. And thou shalt drink and eat and become bright as a stream of molten silver; and, as the light of the body is the eye, so shalt thy true self become as an eye unto thee, and see all things, even the cup of the third birth; and, taking it, thou shalt drink from the cup the eucharist of Freedom, the wine of which is more fragrant than the sweet-scented grapes of Thrace, or the musk-breathing vines of Lesbos, and is sweeter than the vintage of Crete, and all the vineyards of Naxos and Egypt. And thou shalt be anointed with sweet-smelling nards, and unguent made from lilies and cypress, myrtle and amaranth, and of myrrh and cassia well mixed. And in thine hair shall be woven rose-leaves of crimson light, and the mingling loveliness of lilies and violets, twined as the dawn with night. And about thee shall waft a sweeter fragrance than the burning of frankincense, and storax, and lign-aloes; for it is the breath of the Temple of God. Then shalt thou step into the King's Palace, O warrior! and a voice more musical than the flute of ivory and the psaltery of gold, clear as a bell of mingled metals in the night, shall call unto thee, and thou shalt follow it

to the throne which is as a perfect cube of flaming gold set in a sea of whiteness; and then shalt thou be unrobed of sleep and crowned with the silence of the King—the silence of song, of thought, and of reason, that unthinkable silence of the Throne.

THE WHITE WATCH-TOWER

CHAOS and ancient night have engulfed me; I am blind. I crouch on the tower of uttermost silence awaiting the coming of the armies of the dawn.

O whence do I come, where am I, O whither do I go? For I sit maddened by the terrors of a great darkness. . . . What do I hear? Words of mystery float around me, a music of voices, a sweetness, as of the scent of far burning incense; yea! I see, I hear, I am caught up on the wings of song. Yet I doubt, and doubt that I doubt . . . I behold!

See! the night heaves as a woman great with child, and the surface of the black waters shimmers as the quivering skin of one in the agony of travail. . . . The horizon is cleft and glows like a womb of fire, the hosts of the night are scattered, I am born, and the stars melt like flakes of snow before mine eyes. . . .

Lo! there she stands, born in maturity, shaken from out the loins of the darkness, as a rainbow from the purple jars of the thunder. Her hair is as a flood of dancing moon-beams, woven with golden ears of corn, and caught up by flashing serpents of malachite and emerald. On her forehead shines the crescent moon, pearl-like, and softly gleaming with the light of an inner light. Her garment is as a web of translucent silver, glistening white and dew-like, now rippling with all the colours of the rainbow, now rushing into flames crimson and gold, as the petals of the red-rose, woven with poppy, and crocus, and tulips. And around her, as a cloud of irradiant mystery gleaming with darkness, and partly obscuring the softness of her form, sweeps a robe, woven of a network of misty waters, and flashing with a myriad stars of silver; and in its midst, as a great pearl of fire drawn from the depths of the seas, a full moon of silver trembles glowing with beams of opalescent light—mystic and wonderful. In her right hand she holds a sistrum, and chimes forth the music of the earth, and in her left an asp twisted to the prow of a boat of gold, wherein lie the mysteries of heaven.

Then clear and sweet as the breath of the hillside, I heard a voice, as of the winds across a silver harp, saying:

I am the Queen of the heavenly ones, of the Gods, and of the Goddesses, united in one form. I am She who was, who is, and will be; my form is one, my name is manifold; under the palm-trees, and in the deserts, in the valleys, and on the snowy mountains, mankind pays me homage, and thunders forth praises to my name. Yet I am nameless in the deep, as amongst the lightsome mountains of the sky. Some call me Mother of the Gods, some Aphrodite of the seas of pearl, some Diana of the golden nets, some Proserpina Queen of Darkness, some Hecate mistress of enchantments, some Istar of the boat of night, some Miriam of the Cavern, and others yet again Isis, veiled mother of Mystery.

I am she who cometh in unto all men, and if not here, then shalt thou behold Me amidst the darkness of Acheron, and as Queen in the palaces of Styx. I am the dark night that bringeth forth the bright day; I am the bright day that swalloweth up the dark night; that bright day that hath been begotten by the ages, and conceived in the hearts of men; that dawn in which storms shall cease their roaring, and the billows of the deep shall be smoothed out like a sheet of molten glass.

Then I was carried away on the wings of rapture, and in the strength of my joy I leapt from the tower of Night; but as I fell, she caught me, and I clung to her and she became as a Daughter of this world, as a Child of God begotten in the heart of man. And her hair swept around and about me, in clouds of gold, and rolled over me, as sunbeams poured out from the cups of the noon. Her cheeks were bright with a soft vermilion of the pomegranate mingling with the whiteness of the lily. Her lips were half open, and her eyes were deep, passionate, and tremulous, as the eyes of the mother of the human race, when she first struggled in the strong arms of man; for I was growing strong in her strength, I was becoming a worthy partner of her glory.

Then she clung to me, and her breath left her lips like gusts of fire mingled with the odours of myrtle; and in mine arms she sang unto me her bridal song:

"Come, O my dear one, my darling, let us pass from the land of the plough to the glades and the groves of delight! There let us pluck down the clustered vine of our trembling, and scatter the rose-leaves of our desire, and trample the purple grapes of our passion, and mingle the foaming cups of our joy in the glittering chalice of our love. O! love, what fountains of rapture, what springs of intoxicating bliss well up from the depths of our being, till the foaming wine jets forth hissing through the flames of our passion—and splashes into immensity, begetting a million suns.

"I have watched the dawn, golden and crimson; I have watched the night all starry-eyed; I have drunk up the blue depths of the waters, as the purple juice of the grape. Yet, alone in thine eyes, do I find the delights of my joy, and in thy lips the vintage of my love.

"The flowers of the fields have I gazed on, and the gay plumage of the birds, and the distant blue of the mountains; but they all fade before the blush of thy cheeks; and as the ruby goblet of the Sun is drained by the silver lips of night, so are they all swallowed up in the excess of thy beauty.

"I have breathed in the odour of roses and the fragrance of myrtle, and the sweet scent of the wild jessamine. I have drunk in the breath of the hillside, and the perfume of the woods and the seas; yet thy breath is more fragrant than they, it is sweeter still, it intoxicateth me and filleth me with joy, as a rich jar of wine found in the depths of a desert of salt—I have drunk deep and am bewildered with love.

"I have listened to the lark in the sky, to the curlew, and to the nightingale in the thicket, and to all the warblers of the woods, to the murmur of the waters and to the singing of the winds; yet what are they to the rapture of thy voice? which echoes in the valley of my breast, and trills through the depths of my being.

"I have tasted the juice of the peach, and the sweetness of honey and milk; but the wine of thy lips is strong as the aromatic vintage of Egypt, and sweet as the juice of the date-palms in the scented plains of Euphrates: Ay! let me drink till I reel bewildered with kisses and pleasure . . . O my love! . . . my love! . . . O my love!"

Then I caught up her song and cried: "Yea! O Queen of the Night, O arrow of brightness drawn from the quiver of the moon! O Thou who hast ensnared me in the meshes of thine hair, and caught me up on the kisses of thy mouth; O thou who hast laid aside thy divinity to take refuge in mine arms, listen!

"I have drunk deep of the flagons of passion with the white-veiled virgins of Vesta, and the crimson-girdled daughters of Circe, and the drowsy-eyed maidens of Ind. I have woven love with the lithe girls of Hellas, and the subtle-limbed women of Egypt whose fingers are created to caress; all the virgins of Assyria, and the veiled beauties of Arabia, have been mine; yet amongst them all have I not found one to compare to a lash on the lid of thine eye. O Thou art as the wine of ecstasy, a thousand times more delicious than all these. Ah! but what is this languor which cleaves to me? My strength has left me; my soul has mingled with thine; I am not, and yet I am. Is it Thy weakness that I feel?"

"Nay, O lover, for it is only at the price of the illusion of my strength that thou hast given me the pleasure of unity which I have tasted in thine arms. Beauty has conquered me and drunk up the strength of my might; I am alone, and all things are mine in the mystery of my loneliness.

"Evoe! life burns in the brasier of love as a ruby flame in a sapphire bowl. I am dead, yet I live for ever!"

Arise, O sleeper, for the night of loneliness hath rolled up the hangings of her couch, and my heart is burning like a sun of molten brass; awake before the Beast riseth and enter the sanctuary of Eden and defile the children of dawn. Thou Child-Man, cast off the cloak of dreams who before thy sleep wast enraptured with the strength of love. Fair and fresh didst thou come from the woods when the world was young, with breast like the snowy hills in the sunlight, and thine hair as a wind-ravished forest of oak, and thine eyes deep and still as the lakes of the mountains. No veil covered thee, and thou didst revel naked in the laughter of the Dawn, and under the kisses of mid-day didst thou leap with the sun, and the caressing hands of night laid thee to rest in the cradle of the moon. Thoughts did not tempt thee, Reason played not the prude with thee, nor imagination the wanton. Radiant child that thou art, thou didst grow in the light that shone from thine eyes, no shadow of darkness fell across thy path: thy love was strong and pure—bright as the stars of night, and deep as the echoing depths of hills of amber, and emerald, and vermilion.

Awake! tear from thy limbs the hempen ropes of darkness, arise!—fire the beacon of the awakenment of the nations, and night shall heave as an harlot great with child, and purity shall be born

of corruption, and the light shall quiver through the darkness, an effulgence of opals like the beams of many colours irradiated from the L. V. X.

Through the night of reckoning hast thou passed, and thy path hath been wound around the land of darkness under the clouds of sleep. Thou hast cleft the horizon as a babe the womb of its mother, and scattered the gloom of night, and shouted in thy joy: "Let there be light!" Now that thou has seized the throne, thou shalt pass the portals of the tomb and enter the Temple beyond.

There thou shalt stand upon the great watch-tower of Day, where all is awakenment, and gaze forth on the kingdom of the vine and the land of the houses of coolness. Thou shalt conquer the Empire of the Sceptre, and usurp the Kingdom of the Crown, for thou art as a little child, and none shall harm thee, no evil form shall spring up against thee. For Yesterday is in thy right hand, and To-morrow in thy left, and To-day is as the breath of thy lips.

I am the Unveiled One standing between the two horizons, as the sun between the arms of Day and Night. My light shineth upon all men, and none can do me harm, neither can the sway of my rule be broken. I am the Unveiled one and the Unveiler and the Re-veiler; the world lieth below me and before me, and in the brilliance of mine eyes crouch the images of things that be. Space I unroll as a scroll, and Time chimeth from mine hand as the voice of a silver bell. I ring out the birth and the death of nations, and when I rise worlds pass away as feathers of smoke before the hurricane.

Yet, O divine Youth who has created thyself! What art thou? Thou art the birthless and the deathless one, without beginning and without end! Thou paintest the heavens bright with rays of pure emerald light, for thou art Lord of the beams of Light. Thou illuminest the two lands with rays of turquoise and beryl, and sapphire, and amethyst; for Lord of Love, Lord of Life, Lord of Immensity, Lord of Everlastingness is thy name. Thou hast become as a tower of Effulgence, whose foundations are set in the hearts of me, yea! as a mountain of chrysoleth slumbering in the Crown of Glory! whose summit is God!

NOTES:

1. Primitive Christianity had a greater adaptability than any other contemporary religion of assimilating to itself all that was more particularly pagan in polytheism; the result being that it won over the great masses of the people, who then were, as they are now, inherently conservative.

2. "Œuvres," ii. 320. Prof. William James writes: "The great Spanish mystics, who carried the habit of ecstasy as far as it has often been carried, appear for the most part to have shown indomitable spirit and energy, and all the more so for the trances in which they indulged."

Writing of St. Ignatius, he says: "St. Ignatius was a mystic, but his mysticism made him assuredly one of the most powerful practical human engines that ever lived" ("The Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 413).

3. "In the natural sciences and industrial arts it never occurs to any one to try to refute opinions by showing up their author's neurotic constitution. Opinions here are invariably tested by logic and by experiment, no matter what may be their author's neurological type. It should be no otherwise with religious opinions."—"The Varieties of Religious Experience," pp. 17, 18.

4. "Dr. Maudsley is perhaps the cleverest of the rebutters of supernatural religion on grounds of origin. Yet he finds himself forced to write ('Natural Causes and Supernatural Seemings,' 1886, pp. 256, 257):

" 'What right have we to believe Nature under any obligation to do her work by means of complete minds only? She may find an incomplete mind a more suitable instrument for a particular purpose. It is the work that is done, and the quality in the worker by which it was done, that is alone of moment; and it may be no great matter from a cosmical standpoint if in other qualities of character he as singularly defective—if indeed he were hypocrite, adulterer, eccentric, or lunatic. . . . Home we come again, then, to the old and last resort of certitude,—namely the common assent of mankind, or of the competent by instruction and training among mankind.'

"In other words, not its origin, but the way in which it works on the whole, is Dr. Maudsley's final test of a belief. This is our own empiricist criterion; and this criterion the stoutest insists on supernatural origin have also been forced to use in the end."—"The Varieties of Religious Experience," pp. 19, 20.

To put it vulgarly, "the proof of the pudding is in the eating," and it is sheer waste of time to upbraid

the cook before tasting of his dish.

5. Or Pyrrho-Zoroastrianism.

6. We have to confess that the part of it [mental life] of which rationalism can give an account is relatively superficial. It is the part that has the prestige undoubtedly, for it has the loquacity, it can challenge you for proofs, and chop logic, and put you down with words. But it will fail to convince or convert you all the same, if your dumb intuitions are opposed to its conclusions. If you have intuitions at all, they come from a deeper level of your nature than the loquacious level which rationalism inhabits.—
"The Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 73.

7. "The Varieties of Religious Experience," pp. 498-501.

8. "The Varieties of Religious Experience", pp. 507, 508.

9. From a letter of Fra P.

10. "A similar Fire flashingly extending through the rushings of Air, or a Fire formless whence cometh the Image of a Voice, or even a flashing Light abounding, revolving, whirling forth, crying aloud. Also there is the vision of the fire-flashing Courser of Light, or also a Child, borne aloft on the shoulders of the Celestial Steed, fiery, or clothed with gold, or naked, or shooting with the bow shafts of Light, and standing on the shoulders of the horse; then if thy meditation prolongeth itself, thou shalt unite all these symbols into the Form of a Lion."

11. Ruach: the third form, the Mind, the Reasoning Power, that which possesses the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

12. Malkuth: the tenth Sefhira.

13. The supreme and secret title of Kether.

14. The great extreme of the Yi King.

15. I.N.R.I.

16. Or "Mildness," the Pillar on the right being that of "Mercy," and that on the left "Justice." These refer to the Qabalistic Tree of Life.

17. Binah: the third Sefhira, the Understanding. She is the Supernal Mother, as distinguished from Malkuth, the Inferior Mother. (Nun) is attributed to the Understanding; its value is 50. *Vide* "The Book of Concealed Mystery," sect. 40.

18. Nine pictures between Darkness and Light, or eleven in all. The union of the Pentagram and the Hexagram is to be noted; also the eleven-lettered name ABRAHADABRA; 418; Achad Osher, or One and Ten; the Eleven Averse Sephiroth; and Adonai.

[Book II "The Scaffolding" will appear in No. 2.]