

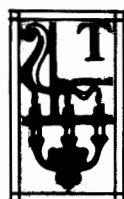
# MYSTIC LIGHT

VOLUME I, NO. 1



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## COMMENDATION VS. CONDEMNATION



THE Rosicrucian Fellowship lays stress upon actual service to our Fellowmen, and very often the question is asked, "How can I serve my Fellowmen? I do not seem to have the opportunity?" It may be well to point out that service does not necessarily mean a great and spectacular deed, such as going into a burning building to rescue those who would otherwise burn to death. Such opportunities do not come to everyone, or everyday, but all without exception have opportunity to serve no matter what their environment, and the line of service we shall indicate is of even greater value than any single act of saving someone from a death which must sooner or later be the portion of all, for surely it is of greater value to help people to live well than to help them merely to escape death.

It is a deplorable fact that the greatest majority of us are selfish to a degree. We seek the best there is in life with an almost entire disregard of our neighbor, and one of the ways this selfishness expresses itself most frequently is in maintaining an attitude of self-satisfaction. We are too prone to compare our efforts, our belongings, our faculties, with those of others, and where it is manifest that they have more than we, that they are more accomplished, etc., there is a feeling of jealousy and envy that prompts us to speak disparagingly of them or in some way to minimize their success or attainments under the delusion that by this comparison we arise to their level, or above it. If, on the other hand, it is manifest that they have not as much as we, if it appears that their social standing is beneath our own, and it seems easy to establish their inferiority, we may adopt the supercilious attitude, we may speak patronizingly or condescendingly of them, thinking that by such comparison we raise ourselves greatly above our actual position.

If we hear someone speak evil of another, we are always ready and prone to believe the very worst because then, by comparison, we seem to be so much better, so much holier, and so far exalted above the culprit in the case. And where merit is so manifest that praise cannot be withheld, we generally give it in a most grudging manner, for we feel as if the praise given to them takes away from ourselves, or perhaps even exalts them above ourselves.

That is the general attitude of the world. However deplorable or lamentable, it is a fact, among the great majority, everybody seems concerned to keep everybody else

back. This is one of the great items of man's inhumanity to man, which makes countless thousands mourn, and causes them to make other countless thousands mourn in return.

What greater service can anyone render than that of adopting a systematic attitude of encouragement and commendation? There is nothing more true than the sentiment of the doggerel: "There is so much good in the worst of us, and so much bad in the best of us, that it scarcely behooves any of us to find fault with any of the rest of us." In the home, in the shop, in the office, everywhere, we meet day by day, with different people, each amenable to a desire for encouragement. As the sunshine is to the flower, so is an encouraging word to everybody in the world. If someone has done well and we speak a word of appreciation, that word will help him or her to do even better the next time. If someone has done wrong, or failed, a word of sympathy and confidence in their ultimate ability to achieve, or retrieve, will encourage him or her to try again and to win, just as surely as the attitude of discouragement will wither and make a wreck out of the life that might have been saved by a word of cheer. When someone comes along with a tale of evil about someone else, be very slow to believe and slower still to tell anyone else. Endeavor by every means of persuasion to stop the one who came to you with the tale from repeating it to others. No good can ever accrue to yourself or to anyone else from listening to and believing in such tales.

This line of service may seem easy at first thought, but bear in mind that it will often require very great self-abnegation to carry on the work because we are all so imbued with selfishness that it is next to impossible for most of us to always put that self away entirely, and place ourselves in the position of others and give them the encouragement and commendation for which we ourselves so earnestly long.

But if we persist in this attitude, and carry it out consistently with everyone in our environment, always making it a point to speak a word of encouragement wherever we can possibly find an opportunity, we shall presently find that people come to us not only with their sorrows, but also with their joys, and that thus we may gain some recompense. We shall feel then that we have had a large share in their attainment, and in all these successes of other people there will be a joy and a success that legitimately belongs to ourselves, that no one can take from us, that will go with us beyond the grave as treasure in heaven. Let it not be forgotten that

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## OF FIRST HAND KNOWLEDGE



### ROOTS OF DANTE

ALL who earnestly attempt improvement in life, sooner or later realize that advancement is gained only with effort, heartfelt faith, and unswerving devotion to the chosen method of attainment. The path which our spirits attract often seems to deny every step, and, more lost than found, we journey as wayfarers, disowned of all but an inner light which assures that somewhere, somehow, it will merge with greater Light and fulfill our dreams.

Do we dream of love, transformation, and enlightenment? Let us learn from a giant in poetry and a most profound student of ideas which form the *Western Wisdom Teachings*, Dante Alighieri, who lived in Italy from 1265 to 1321.

A serious child, orphaned by 12, of modest origins, dark, questioning eyes, and sensitive temperament, the citizens of Florence dubbed him “the little poet of the other world.” As we sense certain unspoken truths in the spirit, young Dante gave people a queer feeling when he turned his melancholy face upon them.

There was one in particular upon whom he longed to gaze. Longed, yet dared not. For Beatrice—Bice, as she was known, was a daughter of Florentine wealth and influence. At a *festa*, he stole a glance at her. In her golden hair and brilliant eyes he envisioned an angel. After that fleeting glimpse she was gone. She became a *glorisse dome della mente*, “the glorious lady of my mind.” They were age 9.

Some years later it was she who looked upon Dante. “Passing through a street she turned her eyes toward the spot where I stood greatly abashed and with ineffable courtesy she bestowed upon me a modest smile.” They were now 18. But, in young insecurity, wanting to hide and protect the precious inspiration of their love from social ridicule, he made a terrible mistake. He began courting someone else. Beatrice stopped looking back.

The next years spelled agony. She was given in marriage to the heir of a prestigious family. Dante got along. He applied himself to his career in government, wrote out his love in *Vita Nuova*, the “new life,” and began examining love, inspiration, and spirit. Beatrice’s sudden death became a blessing through heartbreak. Absence of further consummation of the relationship, which seemed blocked by personalities as well as circumstances, forced idealized qualities into high imagination, and tempered frustrated passion and attachment into the altruism of the *Paradiso*—a definition of human love reaching divine proportion.

Were the more human qualities of the girl, had she lived, to have become emphasized through time, would the Creator have had ferment in this tormented soul? Or did her demise at 24, but a year into her marriage, and late on the cusp of Gemini/Cancer, the ebb of that season so special to these archetypal, star-crossed lovers, marking both their nativities

and that of their relationship, imply that here *was* an angel sent to help our poet define love for the ages?

Dante began to climb what he depicted in the *Divina Commedia*, “as a ladder raised so high that it was lost beyond my mortal vision.” Beginning with the image of a girl, he opened an approach for soul growth by affirming the steps to “heaven” or spiritual unfoldment through acceptance of virtue, the Redeemed Life, God’s Plan. St. Bonaventura was saying: “God is a circle whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere.” Dante visualized in word form a way to the center. As he did, the process worked as a leaven in him, defining love as an inner force, a developed quality rather than an accident of grace.

Max Heindel discusses the inner process:

“Constructive criticism which points out defects and the means of remedying them is the basis of progress; but destructive criticism, which vandalistically demolishes good and bad alike without aiming at any higher attainment is an ulcer on the character and must be destroyed.”

To swallow this two-edged sword of criticism safely, Dante had to blend renunciation with affirmation, approaching God through successively more essential virtue. This tangle of affirmation and rejection in each of us has to be drawn into some kind of pattern.

With notable insight, Ellen McCaffery says:

Dante sees a great golden ladder stretching up beyond sight. The ladder of Saturn represents the intenser aspects and experiences by means of which the mystic climbs. It is by such progressive steps as concentration, meditation, observation, discrimination, aspiration, contemplation, and adoration that the seeker mounts to the Heaven of the Fixed Stars, that is, to some conception of the whole. The essence of what is learned in one heaven is never lost. The men in the higher heavens understand those in the lower, but those in the lower are content where they are, hence they are in heaven or peace. No one quite knows how he ascends to the higher just as no one feels growth in the physical body.

He acquiesced to the words of St. Athanasius: “Not by conversion of Godhead into flesh, but by taking of Manhood into God.” For Dante, change was in and around him. As the introduction of glass, moveable print, and sequential time began to sever the fugue of medieval life, the individual awoke to self as an independent entity. Exercise of our innate liberty, “*esta innata libertate*,” was sacred to him. Yet, “Though free, ye bow before a mightier force and better nature, that creates in your mind, which is outside the care of heaven.” (*Purgatorio* XVI)

After the death of Beatrice, Dante prospered for a decade. He had risen to political power, married with a family of four, was landed, and commanded credit. But events in Europe would oppose what seemed a comfortable future. France’s Phillip the Fair wanted to rule the papacy and thus control the balance of power in Europe. The church had its own interests, primarily financial. Dante’s party supported the

pope—or rather the papacy. With passionate, moral conviction, he hated corruption—and openly criticized Pope Boniface VIII. Boniface heard and did not forget. When he and Phillip successfully conspired to overturn the seat of power in Florence, in 1302, Dante was exiled. He never returned to the home he loved and hated.

He wandered Italy for the 19 years left to him, humbly living at patronage of friends, and bore hard fate. Though he tried by force and persuasion to re-enter Florence, he refused amnesty he felt would compromise his virtue, and poet's laurels years later because they could not be presented there. Obsession with return to Florence wore thin as his vision expanded. Over "difficult steps of sincerity, contrition, and love...," he found the more important way to God.

He had lost everything. The road of the homeless, medieval wanderer was rugged and perilous. Dispossessed, disillusioned, stripped bare by institutional corruption of the ideals he cherished, he surrounded himself with helpful thoughts.

Boccaccio, recalled his "marvelous capacity, most retentive memory, and keen intellect." Even in exile he "delighted in solitude, holding himself aloof, so that his meditations might not be interrupted." He emerged the most influential scholar of his generation. He revered Plotinus, Plato, and Aristotle, and the idea that a life given up to intellectual speculation would transcend the human condition "not so far as man is man would he live it, but insofar as there is something divine in him."

He did not read Greek. Neo-platonism came through St. Augustine, and contemporary lights such as St. Thomas Aquinas (1226-1274) and his teacher, the master Alchemist and reputed Maji, Albertus Magnus (1193-1280). Looking for Aristotle, Dante found the Doctor Universalis. In *De Natura et Origine Animae*, Albertus teaches the concept that "all potential forms of matter first exist in the mind of the Creator....;" in *De Meteoris*, the evolution of the solar system is discussed; *De Intellectu* and *De Sensu et sensato* reveal metaphysical relationships between matter and spirit and the phenomenon of Light.

Through Albertus and Aquinas, Dante found an advancement of the Platonic teaching revealed to few. An aptitude for discrimination, cultured by years of contrition in difficult exile, enabled him to apply true metaphysical observation to the theology of St. Augustine and form a superior understanding of Divine reason.

He loved transcendence, and St. Augustine is, in the realm of thought, the archetypal transcendent. In his last days at Ravenna, where, reunited with his children, Dante is at the climax of his immortal vision, having "held heartbreak at bay for 20 years" we feel him living the *gaudium de veritate*, "the joy of conscious contact with the truth!"

In *De Civitate dei*, Augustine says that this contact can only be felt by the conscious ordering of love. He establishes *ordo amoris*, the balance between heart and mind, as the crux of spiritual development. Here is the purgatorial process of affirmation, pictorialized in the *Commedia* where love

regains innocence through transmutation of desire.

Deeper influence came from within and Dante, in profound attraction to Christ, could not help falling under the spell of the monumetal man of his era, St. Francis of Assisi, "the Apostle of Poverty."

St. Francis (1182-1226) appeared at an hour when Christian faith was being betrayed by the corruption of the church and eroded by the effects of the new sense of individualism. St. Francis was a true brother of Christ, clairvoyant, and spiritual master because having the choice, he chose without hesitation to live the Life. If Virgil cannot enter *Paradiso*, it is because even highest reason fails without the pure humility expressed in the life of Francis, "whose character had been formed by many probatory blows of painful infirmities." Our gifts are given, but soul qualities are earned. Reason becomes unnecessary when the higher faculties of intuition and soul power open in the purified spirit.

One wonders if, as thought are things, Dante did not bring about his own exile and purgation? He had read in books, like *Sacrum Commercium* (1227) how:



The blessed Francis, like a true imitator and disciple of the Saviour, from the beginning of his conversion, gave himself up to seek, to find, and to hold Holy Poverty that he might come unto her to whom the Lord had given the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven....and how at last he and his brethren attained to her embrace on the topmost pinnacle of the mountain of Light.

Here too, we read that Poverty suffered with Christ upon the Cross "so that nothing did seem more glorious in Him than her."

The *Commedia* shows, among many wonderful things, that the Christianity Dante came to espouse is found in the *Western Wisdom Teachings*, and is laden with Rosicrucian symbolism and terminology.

When, at last, Dante perceives Beatrice (*Purgatorio* XXXIX), it is in the panorama of a seven-branched golden candlestick. For him the branches represent the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, piety, fear of God.

Entering *Paradiso*, Dante learns: "Heaven in a word is Light—a Light that is Beauty, a Beauty that is Love." When St. John examines him (*Paradiso* XXVI) concerning love, Dante is temporarily blinded by the light (or?) "while I stood troubled by my loss of vision..." We see in this, humble deference to those who love completely and thus ever in the Light. Retrospecting his times of prevarication, he is blinded, but is redeemed by his answer:

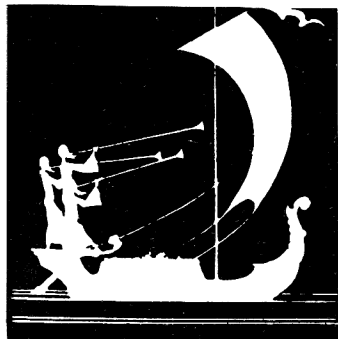
For good, when apprehended by the mind,  
Straightway enkindles love, in just proportion  
As it may harbor goodness in itself.  
Hence to that essence—so replete a source  
Of every good, that good outside of It  
Is but an emanation of Its light....

(*Paradiso* XXVII)

The final culmination of heaven, the seat of Divine Love, is envisioned in the form of a Great White Rose:

On high there shines a brilliance that displays  
the sight of God to whatsoever creature  
Finds its peace in sight of Him alone.  
It spreads into a circle of such width,

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# PIONEERS

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The Mystic Marriage of Religion, Science & Art.

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THE rules universally applied by the spirit in the architecture of its human representation are, though from common perspective inscrutable, accessible in essence, at least, within a capacity for moral reason. If we deny the moral foundation of relationship, or the testimony of reason in the formation of perception, we arrive at either anarchy (perhaps the leaning of contemporary Darwinist exclusion of all non-objectivistic information as heresy unsanctioned by scientific method), or the dismissal of personal freedom by justification of ignorance broadly evidenced in our intellectual subservience to the aegis of aesthetic totalitarianism wielded by materialist bureaucratic authority.

Even in our irresponsible present version of ideals that we should base our relations to each other upon, the individual must have voice. And that voice, coming from within, continues to be heard, if by a solitary listener, regardless of the conditions of society, and the larger world.

In this most microcosmic of relationships, which evolves within the individual being between what one is in waking consciousness, the perceiver of material reality, and what one hears from within (the foundation of this consciousness), as listener to the spirit, moral reason becomes the crux, the original symbiosis in all structuring of future material manifestation and (one hopes) spiritual growth.

That this architecture of the world we know is, in extension, the reflection of the cumulative direction of the human spirit, the common act of will, compassed by our innate intellectual limitations of archetype (or what is known) and the degree of conscience or altruism (or the most tempered expression of love humankind may or may not be collectively capable of) bears testimony to our stature in evolution as a process not of divine intent alone, but rather to be negotiated through our response to that intention.

Here the importance of moral reason, as the window of the soul, a portal for the ascent of inner light into active demand for material association, where light becomes matter, emerges as the individual participates in evolution.

In this hour of the inverted pyramid, moral lassitude is encouraged and even demanded for survival and material advancement, hardness of one's heart is emulated, self-assertion and self-centeredness are deemed indispensable to success, and self-obsession rages. Are we evolving?

Chaos is dissension, division, dissolution. Creation is attraction, unification, harmony. One dwells in the currents of the other, the latent demi-urge which arises punctuating the formless or the form, bringing the inevitable dawn or

darkness. We see in selflessness the urge toward unification, fellowship, humanity. In the presently prevalent appearance of its opposite—we witness the deterioration, the ruin of these things.

Architecture, the word, is derived from the Greek "arche" and "tekton." From *Ancient and Modern Initiation* (Max Heindel, Rosicrucian Fellowship, 1931), we learn:

....the divine pattern of the path of progress is never given to anyone who has not first made a covenant with God that he will serve Him and is willing to offer up his heart's blood in a life of service without self-seeking. The term "mason" is derived from "phree messen," an Egyptian term meaning "Children of Light." In the parlance of Masonry, God is spoken of as the Grand Architect. *Arche* is a Greek word which means "primordial substance." *Tekton* is the Greek name for builder. It is said that Joseph, the father of Jesus, was a "carpenter," but the Greek word is *tekton*—builder. It is also said that Jesus was a "tekton," a builder. Thus every true mystic Freemason is a child of light, a builder, endeavoring to build the mystic temple according to the divine pattern given to him by our Father in Heaven. To this end he dedicates his whole heart, soul, and mind. It is, or should be, his aspiration to be "greatest in the Kingdom of God," and therefore he must be *the servant of all*.

This mystic masonry, the drawing out of images (imagination) from the primordial substance through will and understanding—by the faith which flowers as work—is the individual's only means to real progress in consciousness. When our work is undercut by selfishness, we admit a lack of faith, a perversion of natural harmonies, a mandate for isolation. If there is meaning in this isolation, its expression is lost to the confluence of forces which do trend within divine purpose.

A contemporary architect who has produced living designs both sophisticated and primarily functional, as well as artifacts of matter and word, revealing no little inner development, is R. Buckminster Fuller. In his most recent appraisal of our precarious standing in evolution (viewed from the material standpoint), *Critical Path* (St. Martin's Press, 1981), Dr. Fuller tries to come to terms with the forces which so threaten the basis of human life on this planet—its synergetic potential—that is, our power as a life-wave to continue to evolve within the give-and-take processes which form the cosmos, an ever-increasingly productive relationship with the life inductive forces of our Universe. The reasoning leads to a creditable summation of cosmic law, and the conclusion is moral:

The first manifestation that humanity may make good on this planet will be the serious introduction of cosmic costing

into the mainstream deliberations of Earthians.

Cosmic accounting completely eliminates the economic validity of bankruptcy accounting, except when humans make the mistake of trying to hoard or withdraw critical "capital" assets from production functioning. Withdrawal of capital assets is akin to attempting to withdraw one of the stars from the celestial system. Into what Universe, other than the cosmic totality, may the star be transferred? Every atom and electron is an essential part of the eternally regenerative—ergo, totally inexhaustible (but always locally ebbing and flooding)—pulsative Universe.

While this eloquent plea for ecological rationality is materially oriented, the subjective implications call to our inner nature. For if we are found to be hoarding our environmental resources, food, currencies, et. al.—then, applying the hermetic axiom, how much more are we hoarding, from each other no less, of the essence of truth, love, and service. The best of our immortal side, which should be given out, is so long hidden, secreted under pretenses, neglected, even supplanted for awhile, by the too temporal emphasis on social nomenclature, and the mad rush to conceal lack of faith with an illusion we almost believe. Fuller goes on to say:

....you will be able to throw your weight into the balancing of humanity's fate. While you could be "the straw that breaks the camel's back," compressively—you can also be the "straw"—straw of intellect, initiative, unselfishness, comprehensive integrity, competence, and love—whose ephemerally effective tension saves us.

The invisibly tensive straws that can save us *are* those of individual human integrities—in daring to steer the individual's course only by truth, strange as the realized truth may often seem—wherever and whenever the truths are evidenced to the individual—wherever they may lead, unfamiliar as the way may be.

....The integrity of the individual's enthusiasm for the now possible success of all humanity is critical to successful exercise of our option. Are you spontaneously enthusiastic about everybody having everything *you* can have?"

Reason's torch is thus applied, revealing dark zones of selfishness which corner our lives as barriers in development of the cohesive human future we seek. The path of positive action and work can be effective only when compounded by the virtue of faith, faith in creation, faith in the universal breadth and meaning of our actions, insignificant as any of us may be.

This echoes the cherished dream of the alchemical marriage of fire and water, the casting of the "molten sea," humanity's ancient yearning for harmony which can only come with perfect clarification of all consciousness, the production of the "philosopher's stone" in every soul, the realization of the cosmic order as the solely universally shared responsibility—our most sacred trust and treasure.

Fuller's vision decrees that all energy must manifest somehow in this order. The universe is a closed system and nothing can be lost. "Cosmic night" becomes *entropic*; "cosmic day" *syntropic*.

The entropic stars exporting energy as radiation; and the syntropic loci in the Universe where energy is being imported and converted from radiation to matter. ....planet Earth is one of those syntropic energy importing places—the only one we know of—where the entropic sun radiation is constantly being impounded by the syntropic photosynthesis of the vegetation and converted from random radiation receipts into

beautiful, orderly molecular structures (matter), with other living creatures and organism in turn consuming the vegetation-produced molecules and thereby syntropically "growing" physically by themselves, producing large numbers of chemically orderly molecules.

Implications of the budding nuclear holocaust imagery as macrocosmic representation of individual selfishness manifesting in an entropic demise of our planet shooting off "random radiation receipts" of our own into the Universe rather than receiving them, are not to be overlooked.

Max Heindel, pioneer scientist of an earlier era, believed that the force of altruism would eventually grow to surmount selfishness in motivating individual decisions, through the superiority of cohesion over diffuse dissension, if for no other reason.

There is no doubt that the law for the *body* is "Survival of the Fittest." The law for the evolution of the spirit demands "sacrifice." As long as men believe that "Might is Right," the Form prospers and waxes strong, because all obstacles are swept out of the way regardless of others. If the body were all, that manner of life would be the only one possible for man.... He would be quite regardless of his fellow beings; absolutely insensible to any force *from without* that tended to make him act in any manner not conducive to his own momentary pleasure.

It is manifest, then, that whatever urges man toward a higher standard of conduct in his dealing with others must come *from within*, and from a source which is not identical with the body, otherwise it would not strive with the body and often prevail against his most obvious interests.... Nature is sure to accomplish her purposes. Though slow, her progress is orderly and certain. In the breast of every man this force of altruism works as a leaven. It is transforming the savage into the civilized man, and will in time transform the latter into a God!

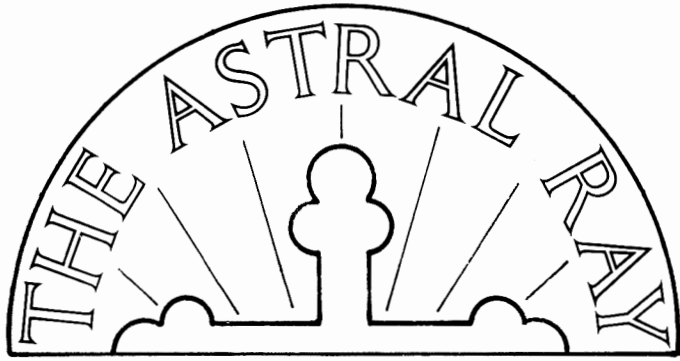
Thoughts and feelings which aspire to what is higher than ourselves rather than to the idea of gaining something for ourselves are *selfless* in intent. We act from response to a higher impulse, and gradually assume that higher bias of motivation. "Under the continued impacts of a force similar to that within him, the Love of God to man has awakened this force of altruism and is constantly increasing its potency."

Recognizing processes such as these gives hope. We are daily writing the signature on the portrait of our inner activity with our behavior. Christ came to earth to rend us from selfish desires and exclusionary practices, to save us from isolating ourselves into an evolutionary standstill. Will we be able to consciously take control of the syntropy operating through the spirit and reverse the seemingly endless selfish trend of human activity?

With always more than optimism to offer, Mr. Heindel answers affirmatively:

Physiologists note that certain areas of the brain are devoted to particular thought activities and phrenologists have carried this branch of science still further. Now, it is known that thought breaks down and destroys nerve tissues. This and all other waste of the body is replaced by the blood. When through the development of the heart into a voluntary muscle, the circulation of the blood finally passes under the absolute control of the unifying life spirit—the Spirit of Love—it will then be within the power of that spirit to withhold the blood from those areas of the brain devoted to selfish purposes. As a result, those particular thought centers will gradually atrophy.

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## GEMINI AND THE PRINCIPLE OF ALTERNATION

THE story of the Discouri, the twins in classical Greek mythology, contains a number of principles fruitful to spiritual pondering. In the story, Castor, the mortal twin of human parentage, dies during a battle, transfixed to a tree by a spear. Polydeuces, the immortal twin, grief-stricken at the loss of his beloved brother, pleads to his father, the god Zeus, that he will forego his immortality if he cannot share it with Castor. Zeus is faced with a dilemma. He does not wish to challenge a decreed fate or his brother Hades, lord of the underworld, nor lose the joy of such a son. So he allows each twin to spend alternate days in the underworld and the upper air. In further testimony to brotherly love he places their images in the stars as the twins arm in arm. Both share death and immortality. The twins' curious parentage merits meditation, but our attention here is drawn to the significance of their alternation between life and death.

The principle of alternation is among the most fundamental in the cosmos. Bulwer-Lytton, in his eloquent spiritual novel, *Zanoni*, observes that were there complete equality in the world there would be no change, no development, no improvement. Were divinity to remain in undifferentiated unity there would be no creation, no evolution. So, one of the first acts of creation is a polar differentiation *within* unity into spirit and matter, heaven and earth, actual and potential, will and imagination, life and form, and, of course, Father and Mother—all essential attributes of the primordial polarity. As a dream bridges the actual and the potential, so unity lies between and within duality, even after differentiation. Polar attraction is a consequence of unity within duality and as a result, attention is drawn alternately from pole to pole. From the alternation of attention between poles all new waking consciousness is born, i.e. consciousness is the child of the union of the divine Father and Mother. All evolutionary accomplishment is the result of cycling alternately between various poles. All creative epigenesis comes from individual application to involution and evolution.

In human activity, this principle manifests in many ways. Through the cycle of many successive rebirths and resurrections, we pass back and forth through the realms of matter and spirit becoming more self-conscious with each alternation. Now in the world of form, then in the world of meaning, the creative consciousness gradually dawns. One facet of alternation, distinction, is beautifully demonstrated in this

process. When the spirit is reborn into the physical plane it usually alternates as male and female. The distinct, separative nature of the external world is perceived through the distinctive masculine or feminine experience wherein we appreciate a special point of view, balanced and compensated by the ever-attractive opposite pole. When something is carried to its polar extreme it is experienced and known in its purest state. This process is realized physically when we tone our bodies via alternate steam baths and ice water dips and more subtly through the gradual alternating experience of summer and winter.

While alternation leads to knowledge and appreciation of distinct states of being and their opposites, it also unfolds the relationship of change and consciousness. Walking through a forest, we become aware of the nuances of light and shape and color, but when we stop and remain still and silent we become aware of the life of the forest. Eventually, through continuous alternations, changes, and adaptations, the still, silent fact of consciousness itself dawns on us as a constant. All waking consciousness is born through alternation and change. Rosicrucian philosophy is more precise and teaches that consciousness is born of the struggle between active desire for change and our preservative instinct for constant, steady life. If consciousness is realized through change, then by shifting attention from the change to the consciousness itself one becomes self-conscious. Realization of our individual free agency as conscious beings within divinity is thus born.

In philosophy and politics another facet of the principle is expressed. There really are few new philosophical questions or positions, or even political stances. There always are nominalists and realists, idealists and materialists and, in politics, the liberals and the conservatives—with the tide of advantage constantly shifting back and forth between them. Despite the constancy, neither philosophy nor politics is monotonous because there is always progress. Confronted with the advantages of opposing ideas of the preceding generation, contemporary philosophers carry the question farther by allowing for previous arguments and meeting them with new sophistications in thought, building on the past. Everywhere in the continuum of time the principle of alternation leads to progress of one sort or another.

In scientific realms, we observe this principle from the leafing of plants to AC electricity, which both improves and enslaves our mode of living. But nowhere is it more classically illustrated than in the function of the human lungs. Through alternate inhalations and exhalations we are revived with fresh oxygen and relieved of stale carbon dioxide. Even our consciousness in the physical body is changed by the alternating oxygenation and carbonation of the blood as we can see in the extremes of gasping and sighing. It is a miracle worthy of adoration.

Numerous manifestations of alternation are there for our discovery in the process of self-development and service. However, the fact that alternation, like almost every other principle, can be misused should also be examined briefly.

We can become so mesmerized by the alternations that we ignore the awakening to general consciousness or self-consciousness. Here is the phenomenalist who never asks

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## COMMENDATION VS. CONDEMNATION

(Continued)

every little act is engraved upon the seed atom in our hearts, that the feeling and emotion which accompanies that act will react upon us in the post-mortem existence, and that all the joy, all the pleasure, all the love that we pour out toward other people will react upon us in the first heaven and give us a sublime experience, will inculcate in us a wonderful faculty of giving more and more joy to others, of being of greater and greater service. And let us remember, that that is the only true greatness, the only greatness which is worth working for, the greatness that helps us to be of service.

Above all, even more than encouraging others in their work, let us remember that when anyone comes to us with a tale concerning someone else, no matter what may be the justification, repetition does not do any good; it does harm, and as a snow ball that rolls down a mountain, accumulates more and more snow, grows larger and larger, so also the tale which is carried from one mouth to another becomes exaggerated and much sorrow and suffering is caused by the tongue of the gossip. We can render no greater service to the parties involved or the community than endeavoring to get those who carry tales of evil to stop that habit. Homes have been wrecked, communities have been disrupted, men have gone to the gallows time and again, or to a lifelong servitude in some institution, which is far worse, because of idle tales carried about. We can render as great a service by refusing to listen to gossip, as by encouraging those who have failed in their ambition, or commending those who have succeeded. Every day opportunities are knocking at our door, no matter where we are or what our station in life.



the whys and the wherefores. It is possible to escape into change and become a faddist and ignore the responsibility of self-development, or become indecisively suspended in oscillation and be neutralized in progress. One can psychologically hyperventilate from too much alternation. These misapplications, like the positive uses of the principle, are as multiple as human creativity allows.

In the cosmic mandala, Gemini, the first mutable sign, most basically and intensely expresses the principle of change and alternation. Gemini's location in the horoscope indicates where in life the principle tends to be most active.

Gemini on the cusp of the 9th house may indicate a religious nature best developed or satisfied by viewing divinity in alternately male and female creative aspects, as Father and Mother. On the 2nd house cusp, it may indicate alternatives in investment as a means of loosening up the potentially stiff personality, changing sources of materials or necessitate alternating the materials themselves to remain solvent. Gemini on the 6th might mean that control of breath is essential to health. On the cusp of the 5th, it could mean vacillation in child rearing where steady honesty is needed;

or, on the 7th cusp, misapplied, a situation where alternation and variety are socially and morally inappropriate.

Mercury, messenger of the gods, is the apt ruler of this sign. As primary significator of the concrete mind, Mercury in Gemini demonstrates the classic neutrality of seeking out the truth by looking into both sides of the matter. It shows ability to develop a line of thought dialectically and a mind that might appreciate both the truth and its shadow.

Jupiter in Gemini indicates a propensity to ideate from opposing sets of facts but difficulty in transcending them. Venus must have an object for her love and finds alternation discomfiting if not disgraceful, though she will beautify its progressive delineations and smooth over its arguments.

In the astrological mandala, Gemini coincides with the 3rd house, and the principle of alternation finds optimal expression in one signification of that house—communication. We know that letters have to alternate to be successful communication. But we seem to forget that when we engage in conversation and go off on our "meaningful" monologues.

The 3rd house indicates communication, *not* expression (found in the 5th house). Brief, clear, alternating statements make the most direct and relevant communications as heard in the archetypal radio dispatch. Conversely, the prolix, story-telling propensities of the opposite sign Sagittarius are out of place in this house (the idealism need not be). At the other extreme, taciturn Capricorn or Saturn in the 3rd may extinguish communication, often due to insecurity or fear. Cancer communicates well through pictures or feelings; Taurus may get bound up in clichés, and so on. Possible manifestations of the principle of alternation and the art of communication are infinite and it is a challenge to the creative imagination and intuition of the astrologer to find those relevant to the horoscope and needs at hand.



## PIONEERS—(Continued)

On the other hand, it will be possible for the spirit to increase the blood supply when mental activities are altruistic, and thus build up the ones devoted to altruism, so that, in time, the desire nature will be conquered and the mind emancipated by Love from its bondage to desire. It is only by complete emancipation, through Love, that man can rise above the law and become a law unto himself. Having conquered himself he will have conquered the World.

Whether or not we are willing to speculate on implications of the fact that the heart is the only cross-striped involuntary muscle in the human anatomy, we are eventually inclined to take responsibility for the world in which we live. We can appeal to reason, and make this appeal within the inescapable moral fabric of being. When we do, shall we be contributing to a nucleated entropy of our existence, or calling forth from the creative self an affirmation of the next step in evolution?

## Echoes from Mt. Ecclesia

THE voice of St. Paul was one of the greatest the world has known. Once filled with anger and with threats of murder against the disciples of the Lord, he became one of Christ's most effective servants and the greatest apostle of love.

This most corruptible of men, who, through action and faith, put on profound incorruption, knew that development of altruistic love, keynote of his Master's principles was the key to transformation in every being. From the road to Damascus onward, ever it was the deeper journey into himself to bring out a purer and more comprehensive love to serve upon the altar of his fellow human longing, as the essential force in creating the liberation of the Truth we seek.

God is Light. Love is Light. God is Love. As Paul realized this through the revelation of the spirit he was able to say, "If ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.... the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." Love is law unto itself, and we follow with no coercion, for the law of love is forgiveness.

Paul taught that, regardless of exteriors, we are only agents of divine law. "No man is your enemy, no man is your friend, all alike are your teacher." To realize this is to know love as the only valid principle in human relationship.

In fellowship, love and forgiveness become one, forgiveness being the material manifestation of the latent spiritual power—love. Knowing this truth is "to know only Christ, and Him crucified." Forgiveness is the healing force of fellowship. True forgiveness means tolerance of weakness both in ourselves and others. Forgiveness is a positive step toward human alliance based on recognition of a common problem in need of a solution. Forgiveness is the product of inward strength which puts a brake on the outburst of negative feelings, frees the mind from the bondage of selfish desire, and identifies with others in the spirit of Love.

Through forgiveness, we may come to the height where we can say with Paul: "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Paul draws no distinction in meaning between love and charity. Faith without works is love without charity, and anything which is of the spirit, is eternal, is love, and also charity, "which bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things...."

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"Love never faileth!" Let us forgive so that we, in the spirit of Paul, may light and keep ablaze the beacon light of true spiritual Fellowship, which is the balm of Gilead, the only panacea for the world's woe. Love.

### DANTE—(Continued)

That its circumference would be too large  
To form a girdle round the sun itself  
Its whole appearance issues from a beam  
Reflected from the primum mobile,  
From which it takes its life and potency.  
And as a hillside decked with leaves and flowers  
Is mirrored in the water at its base,  
As though to see itself thus glorified:  
Just so, above that light on every hand,  
Were mirrored, in a multitude of thrones,  
All those of us who have returned on high.  
And if the lowest grade reflects such light,  
How vast indeed must be the amplitude  
Of this great rose, in its remotest petals!

(Paradiso XXX)

Thus, in the semblance of a snow-white rose,  
There was displayed to me the saintly throng  
That Christ, with His own blood, had made his bride.  
(Paradiso XXXI)

This unhappy man, orphaned by the world, lived  
to overcome the worst in himself:

Imagine with what wonder  
I was filled  
Who from earthly things  
to things divine....  
From time  
unto eternity itself....

(Paradiso)

Doing so, he created a definition of love which  
transcended the common notions of his day. His vi-  
sion of Divine Love as the key to unfoldment is said  
to be painted on the inner dome of the Sistine  
Chapel—and higher places.

I raised my eyes aloft,  
and I beheld  
the scattered chapters  
of the Universe....  
Gathered and bound  
in a single book  
By the austere and tender  
hand of God.

(Paradiso)



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