

Question No. 94

Was not the star of Bethlehem a comet?

Answer: No; the Star of Bethlehem shines at midnight of every night as it shone upon the night which is recorded in the Bible, and may be seen by anyone among the wise men of today, though hidden from all others.

The key to the mystery is this:

The Gospels are not simply stories of the life of an individual; they depict dramatically and in symbol the incidents in the path of attainment; they are formulas of initiation.

In the summertime, when the whole earth is exerting itself to bring forth *the Bread of Life* for all who live upon it, the sun is high in the heavens, sending forth its life giving rays toward our planet. Then all the

physical activities are to the fore and man is engrossed in material occupations necessary to his existence. But when in winter the sun is below the equator and nature slumbers, *spiritual influences* sent forth from the sun are most potent. When the physical darkness increases the spiritual light burns more brightly and culminates in the birth of saviors on the darkest night in the year, between the twenty-fourth and the twenty-fifth of December, at the time the sun starts on its journey northward to save humanity from the cold and famine which would result if it remained in the southern latitudes.

On that particular night of the year the spiritual vibrations are strongest. It is the *holy night* of the year par excellence. On that night it is easiest for the neophyte to come into conscious touch with spiritual vibrations. Therefore it was customary to take neophytes into the temples on yon Holy Night. There they were entranced under the guidance of *wise men* and taught to leave their bodies consciously by an act of will. The earth then became transparent to their gaze and they saw behind it *the Sun at midnight—the blazing star*. Not, of course, the physical sun, but the spiritual sun which is the true Christ-star, for the cosmic Christ is the highest Initiate among the luminous sun spirits, the Archangels.

Question No. 95

What were the gifts of the wise men?

Answer: The Bible tells us that they were *gold*, myrrh and frankincense.

Gold has always been regarded as the emblem of spirit in the old legends and symbology. In the story of the Ring of the Niebelung, dramatized by Wagner, we hear how the Rhine maidens played in their watery element on the bottom of the river Rhine. The water was lighted by the flame of the gold. This legend takes us back to the time when these *children of the mist* were living in the beautiful conditions of early Atlantis, where they were one vast brotherhood, innocent and childlike, and the Universal Spirit had not yet drawn into the separate bodies.

The gold resting upon the rock at the bottom of the water was the symbol of the Universal Spirit illuminating all mankind. Later it is stolen and welded into a ring by Alberich, the Niebelung, who forswears love to possess this gold. Then it becomes the symbol of the separate Ego in the present loveless age of selfishness. The man who has become wise and sees the evils of selfishness offers gold to the Christ as a

symbol of his desire for the return to the Universal spirit of Love.

The second gift, *myrrh*, is an aromatic plant growing in Arabia which is very rare and scarce. It is the symbol of the soul. We are told in legends of saints who have been so holy that they emitted an aroma. This is thought to be a pious fable, but it is an actual fact that a man may become so holy that he emits a most beautiful perfume.

The third gift, *frankincense*, is a symbol of the dense body, which has been etherealized by a holy life, for frankincense is a physical vapor. The minister of the interior of Serbia, one of the conspirators who planned the regicide in that country less than a decade ago, has since written his memoirs. It appears, according to him, that when they burned incense at the time they invited people to join them in their conspiracy, they invariably succeeded in winning over the one whom they sought. He did not know why, he simply mentioned it as a curious coincidence. But to the esotericist the matter is plain.

No spirit can work in any world without a vehicle made of the material of that world. To function in the Physical World, to fetch and carry, we must have a dense body and a vital body; both are made of various

grades of physical matter, solids, liquids, gas and ether. We may obtain such vehicles in the ordinary way, by going through the womb to birth, or we may extract ether from the body of a medium and temporarily use that to materialize, or we may use the fumes of incense. In the Catholic Church, where certain spirits are invoked, incense furnishes the vehicle whereby they may operate upon the assembled congregation as the discarnate spirits did to favor the Serbian regicides.

Thus we see that the gifts of the wise men are *spirit, soul and body*, devoted to the service of humanity. To give oneself is to imitate Christ, to follow in His steps.

Question No. 96

Was not Jesus a Jew? If so, what did he mean by saying "Before Abraham was, I am"? For even if He reincarnated, Abraham was the father of the Jewish race.

Answer: In olden times, and even up to the present day, patriotism is looked upon as one of the prime virtues, but from the esoteric standpoint there is of course but the One Spirit, and the races are but an evanescent phase of the scheme of evolution; in fact, a

very dangerous phase, for while in the Periods and great Epochs of evolution there is an abundance of time, and it is possible for the leaders to bring most of the spirits in line for promotion, the races and nations are born and die in such a comparatively short time, there is great danger that the spirits may become enmeshed in the race bodies and not follow the bulk of humanity in their progress.

The Christ combated this idea of *identity with the race* when he said, "Before Abraham was, I am." The Ego existed before Abraham; Abraham was an incarnation of an Ego, a spirit. He, and the Jewish race descended from him, were simply *bodies*, but the Egos which inhabited them existed before the race bodies. Thus the Christ advised his hearers to look from the evanescent to the eternal.

In another place He said, "Unless a man leave Father and mother, he cannot follow me." Father and mother are also *race bodies*. We have no right to leave dependent relatives to follow the higher life; we must fulfil all our duties here before we selfishly take up the study of the higher life, but we are not to identify ourselves with the race, the nation, or the family into which we are born. *Every one of us is an individual spirit, which existed before the bodies we call races and*

will exist after they have ceased to be. Failing to keep that fact in mind, we may crystallize and stay with the race instead of progressing.

Question No. 97

Jesus was baptized at thirty, receiving the "Christ Spirit." Please explain this baptism.

Answer: The earth has not always been as it is now. Science tells us that there was a time when it was blended firemist. The Bible goes back even further and speaks of a time before that mist, when the earth became glowing and luminous as fire; a time when darkness reigned.

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There have been in all four epochs or stages in this development of the earth. First there was this dark stage, which is called in the Rosicrucian terminology the "Polarian" Epoch. Then the substance which now forms the earth was a dark mass, hot and gaseous. In the second stage, called the Hyperborean Epoch, this dark mass was ignited. We are told "God said: 'Let there be light,' and there was light." Then came the stage when the heat of this firemist in contact with cold space generated moisture, and this moisture was

densest near the fiery core, where it was heated to steam that rushed outward from the center—"God divided the waters from the waters," that is, the dense water nearest the core from the light steam outside. Finally there came an incrustation, such as always takes place where water is boiled over and over again, and thus the crust over the earth, the dry land, was formed.

When that crust had been completed, there was no water upon the surface of the earth, but as the Bible says, "A mist went up from the surface," and no herb had yet grown upon the face of the earth. At that time, however, vegetation began to appear and nascent humanity lived there. But they were not a humanity constituted as we are today. Their form was very much different and they were not nearly as evolved as we are at the present time. In fact, body and spirit were not perfectly together; the spirits hovered partly outside and therefore "man's eyes had not yet been opened."

Old folk stories such as we hear of in Germany and different places in the Old World, speak of them as the *niebelungen*. "Niebel" means mist and "ungen" is children. They were the "*children of the mist*," for the clear atmosphere of today did not then exist; the Sun appeared like an arc lamp in the street on a very foggy

day, on account of the density of the mist which rose from the earth.

While humanity lived in that state, they were not as far advanced mentally as we are now. They could not see things outside themselves, but they had an inner perception. They saw the soul qualities of all who lived around them and they perceived themselves as spiritual rather than material. At that time there were no nations at all, but humanity was one vast brotherhood. All were partially outside their bodies and therefore in touch with the Universal Spirit, which has now been obscured in the separateness of egotism which causes each man to feel himself distinct and apart from all the rest of humanity; where brotherhood is forgotten and selfishness rules.

When any one has progressed so far that he appreciates the blessings of brotherhood, where he endeavors to abolish egotism and cultivate altruism, he may go through the rite of baptism. He enters the water as a symbol of his return to the ideal conditions of brotherhood which existed when all humanity lived, so to speak, in water. Therefore, we see Jesus, the herald of universal Brotherhood, at the beginning of his ministry entering the waters of the Jordan and being baptized there. When he rose from the waters, the

Universal Spirit rested upon Him as a dove, and from that time on he was not simply Jesus, but Christ Jesus, the potential Savior of the world imbued with the Universal Spirit, which shall eventually take away all the evils of selfishness and restore mankind to the blessings of brotherhood which will be realized when the Universal Spirit has become immanent in all mankind.

Question No. 98

In your teaching you state that we stay for a time, avergaing about one-third of the length of the Earth life in purgatory in order that our sins may be expiated prior to going to heaven. How then do you reconcile this teaching with the words of the Christ to the dying thief: "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise"?

Answer: The New Testament was written in Greek, a language in which no punctuation marks are used. The punctuation marks in our Bible have been inserted by our later Bible translators, and punctuation often very radically changes the meaning of a sentence, as the following story will illustrate:

In a prayer meeting some one handed in a request which the pastor read thus: "A sailor going to sea, his

mother-in-law desires the prayers of the congregation for his safe return to wife and child." The request was not punctuated at all, but would imply that the young man's mother-in-law was very solicitous to have him return safely to his wife and child and therefore desired the prayers of the congregation. Had the pastor read it without the comma, it would have implied that the sailor, going to see his mother-in-law, desired the prayers of the congregation for his safe return to wife and child, and one would naturally think that the lady in question must be a Tartar when it was necessary for the young man to ask the prayers of the congregation before facing her. In this case, if the words of Christ are read thus: "Verily I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in Paradise," they would imply that the thief would be with the Christ at some future time not defined. But where the comma is placed before the world today, as in the Bible, it gives the idea ordinarily held by people.

That this idea is absolutely wrong can be seen by the remark of the Christ just after His resurrection, when He said to the woman, "Touch me not, for I have not yet ascended to my Father." If He promised the Thief that he should be with Him in Paradise on the day of the crucifixion and three days later declared that He had not yet been there, the Christ would have been

guilty of a contradiction which, of course, is an impossibility. Placing of the comma as suggested fully reconciles the meaning of the two passages, and besides Peter tells us that in the interval He worked with the Spirits in Purgatory.

Question No. 99

What is the esoteric meaning of the two thieves and the cross?

Answer: Contrary to the ordinarily accepted opinion, the four Gospels are not at all the biography of Jesus, the Christ; they are Formulas of initiation of four different Mystery Schools, and in order to veil their esoteric meaning, the life and ministry of the Christ is also intermingled. That could be easily done as all initiates, being cosmic characters, have similar experiences. It is truly said that unto the multitude the Christ spoke in parables, but the hidden meaning was given to His disciples in private. Paul also gave the milk to the weak and the meat to the strong ones. It was never intended at any time to give the hidden symbols to ordinary people, or to make the Bible "an open book of God," as people nowadays believe.

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When reading in the memory of nature, we find that at the time of the crucifixion, there were not only two, but a number, who were crucified. The people of that time meted out capital punishment for the slightest offenses and there were always plenty to suffer these barbarous deaths. Thus, those who wanted to veil the hidden meaning of the gospels were at no loss to find something wherewith to fill out the tale and obscure the points which are really vital in the crucifixion. The part of the story relating to the thieves is, therefore, a true incident, without having anything to do with the esoteric meaning at all.

Question No. 100

What is the meaning of the cross? Is it simply an instrument of torture as usually taught in the orthodox religion?

Answer: Like all other symbols, the meanings of the cross are many. Plato gave one of these meanings when he said, "The World-soul is crucified," that is to say: We have four kingdoms in the world— the mineral, the plant, the animal and the man.

The mineral kingdom ensouls all chemical substance of whatever kind, so that the cross, of whatever

material it is made, is first a symbol of that kingdom.

The upright lower limb of the cross is a symbol of the plant kingdom because the currents of the group spirits which give life to the plants come from the center of the earth where these group spirits are located and reach out toward the periphery of our planet and into space.

The upper limb of the cross is the symbol of man, because the life currents of the human kingdom pass downward from the sun through the vertical spine. Thus man is the inverted plant, for as the plant takes its food through the root, passing it *upward*, so does the man take his nourishment by way of the head, passing it *downward*. The plant is chaste, pure and passionless, and stretches its creative organ, the flower, chastely and unashamed *toward the Sun*, a thing of beauty and delight. Man turns his passion filled generative organ *toward the Earth*. Man inhales the life giving oxygen and exhales the poisonous carbon dioxide. The plant takes the poison exhaled by man, building its body therefrom, and returning to us the elixir of life, the cleansed oxygen.

Between the plant and the human kingdom stands the animal with the horizontal spine, and in the horizontal spine the life currents of the animal group

spirit play as they circle around our globe. Therefore the horizontal limb of the cross is the symbol of the animal kingdom.

In esotericism the cross was never looked upon as an instrument of torture, and it was not until the sixth century that the crucified Christ was shown in pictures. Previous to that time the symbol of the Christ was a cross and a lamb resting at its foot, to convey the idea that at the time when the Christ was born the sun at the vernal equinox crossed the equator in the sign Aries, the Lamb. The symbols of the different religions have always been made in that way. At the time when the sun by precession crossed the vernal equinox in the sign Taurus, the Bull, a religion was founded in Egypt where they worshiped the Bull Apis in the same sense that we worship the Lamb of God. At a much earlier date, we hear of the Norse God Thor driving his twin goats across the sky. That was at the time when the vernal equinox was in the sign Gemini, the Twins. At the time of the birth of Christ, the vernal equinox was in about 7 degrees of Aries, the Lamb, therefore our Savior was called the Lamb of God. There was a dispute in the earlier centuries regarding the propriety of having the lamb as a symbol of our Savior. Some claimed that the vernal equinox at His birth was really in the sign Pisces, the Fishes, and that the symbol of

our Savior should have been a fish. It is in memory of that dispute that the bishop's miter still takes the form of the head of a fish.

Question No. 101

Could not the mission of Christ have been accomplished without such a drastic method as the crucifixion?

Answer: It could, of course, have been accomplished without the specific method of crucifixion, but *it was an absolute necessity that the blood should flow*. There are various grades of teachers and they require different conditions for the accomplishment of their task. Some teachers, like Moses and the Buddha, come to a nation and help it to a certain a point, they themselves growing thereby; and both of the teachers mentioned attained to the point in their own development where their bodies became luminous. We hear how the face of Moses shone so that it become necessary for him to use a veil,. The Buddha become luminous at the time of his death. The Christ attained the stage of luminosity at the time of His transfiguration, and it is very significant that the most important part of His work, His suffering and death, took place after the event of the transfiguration. And while it become necessary for

Moses, Elijah, Buddha and the other previous teachers to be born in a physical body and will not need again to take upon Himself such an instrument. For when the spirit leaves the body in the natural way it takes along certain impurities as it slowly withdraws from the congealing blood. Even in such a pure body as the body of Jesus, there were impurities, and the violent death which caused the blood to run liberated the Ego of Christ from the blood with a quick wrench, leaving behind whatever impurity there may have been, so that the Christ emerged from the body of Jesus unsullied and without the time of destiny usually attendant on life in the dense body.

On the same principle it is a fact that although at the present time we have wars that are to be regretted from the mere human standpoint, it is nevertheless a fact which is patent to the esotericist that these wars have cleansed the blood of the race considerably, so that gradually humanity is becoming less and less passionate and more and more spiritual. Also we may say that in this fact lies the redeeming feature of the slaughter of animals. When humanity went through the animal stage it had no red passion filled blood as our animals have; we were not as highly evolved. The animals of today, though behind us in evolution, are on a higher spiral and while we now are suffering under

the law of consequence because of having to overcome our passions in our own strength, the animals are being helped and held in check by their group spirits. And when they reach the human stage in the Jupiter Period, they will be a higher humanity, free from the passions which have made this world such a sorrowful place. thus nature always transmutes whatever evil we may commit into a higher good.

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Answering the question, we may therefore say that in the case of Christ the violent death was necessary because it enabled the Christ Spirit to withdraw from the body of Jesus without retaining any of the impurities attached to that merely human vehicle.

Question No. 102

According to the Rosicrucian Teaching, when will Christ come again?

Answer: The Bible says truly that the "day and the hour knoweth no man," and the people who have been trying to fix a certain date or a certain year for the Second Coming have entirely misunderstood the object of the Christ's mission on earth. His teaching was given to humanity in order that the law, "An eye for an eye

and a tooth for a tooth" might be abolished—that *the Law of Fear* (of God) might be swallowed up by *the Law of Love*. "The law and the prophets were until Christ," it is said, but we know that even today law is, and is necessary. Therefore, it is evident that law was not abolished at the physical coming of Christ. It is the coming of Christ into "the within," the inner nature of man, that is to abolish law. Paul speaks of this advent as the "Christ being formed in ye," and until the Christ has been formed in us we are not ready for the Second Coming. Angelus Silesuis says:

"Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be
born,
And not within thyself, thy soul will be forlorn.
The cross on Golgotha thou lookest to in vain,
Unless within thyself it be set up again."

The Second Coming of Christ depends upon how soon a sufficient number of people have become Christ-like and attuned to the Christ principle. so that, as tuning forks of the same pitch sing together when one is struck, they will be able to respond to the Christ vibrations that will be set up at the return of the Savior. Therefore, this event is not to be calculated. Every time we endeavor to imitate Christ and fulfill His

teachings, we are hastening His Coming; so let us thus strive.

Question No. 103

What is meant by the saying that Christ was made a high priest forever after the Order of Melchisedec?

Answer: We are told that this Melchisedec was king of Salem and also a high priest. We are told that his priesthood was far above that of Aaron, for it was unchangeable, while that of Aaron and the Levites was subject to frequent change.

During the times of which we have records in history, there has always been a division of the temporal and the ecclesiastical powers. Moses was the temporal ruler and leader of the Jewish people, while Aaron was the priest who looked after their spiritual welfare, and down the ages this division of the church and the state has ever been apparent, at times causing great strife and bloodshed, for their interests seem ever to be diametrically opposite. But at the time of this Melchisedec, king of Salem, which interpreted means "*peace*," there was no such division, the two offices were combined in one individual. The story of Melchisedec, a Being without earthly pedigree, refers,

of course, to the time in early Atlantis when humanity had not yet been divided into warring nations, but were one vast, peaceful brotherhood, and the leaders of the people were Divine Beings, who were both kings and priests.

The later division of church and state has been one of the most fruitful sources of enmity and war among humanity, for each of these powers has striven for supremacy over the other, while in reality there should be no prejudice, for no one who is not as spiritual as a priest should be fit to rule as a king, and no one who is not as wise and just as a king should be fit to have the spiritual guidance of humanity as the priests have. When these qualities are combined in one leader again, the reign of universal peace and brotherhood will become a fact. The Christ has been heralded as such a leader, capable of uniting church and state as king and priest after the order of Melchisedec. His Second Coming inaugurates the millennium, the age of peace and joy, where the symbolical New Jerusalem, the city of peace (for Jer-u-salem, means "*there shall be peace*"), reigns over the nations of the earth, united into one universal brotherhood. There shall be Peace on Earth and Goodwill among Men.

What did Christ mean when He said, "All who came before Me were thieves and robbers"?

Answer: We read in the Bible about two great cities, strangely similar yet directly opposite. One is the city of Babylon, the birthplace of confusion, where men ceased to be brothers and separated from one another. It lies upon seven hills by a river and is ruled over by a king. Lucifer—the "day star"—the light giver. His fall from heaven is lamented exceedingly in the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah, and later on we hear of the fall of that great city, which has become an abomination, is called a harlot, having caused war, trouble and desolation among all the people of the earth.

Then, in supreme antithesis, we are told of another city called the New Jerusalem, which occupies the honored position as bride. *in* that city there is *not a flowing river* but *a sea of glass*. It also lies upon seven hills, is ruled over by another light giver who is called "the light of the world," and it is a city of peace where the gates are never closed although the precious Tree of Life is within. This city is not a city of this world, but a city which has come down from heaven.

To understand this symbology, it is necessary to go back into the far distant past when man-in-the-making had not yet attained the development he has today.

When he first came upon this earth the dense body was built in the *Polarian Epoch*, and was vitalized by the interpenetration of a vital body in the *Hyperborean Epoch*. At that time man was like the Angels, male-female, a complete creative unit, able to create from himself by projecting his whole creative forces—which is love.

Later it becomes necessary for man to evolve a brain, and in order to accomplish that object one-half of his creative force was turned inward in order to build the necessary organs. From that time on, man must seek the cooperation of some one having the other half of the sex force available for propagation. Now he loves selfishly to obtain the cooperation of another in propagation; the other half of the creative force wherewith he built his brain and larynx he also uses selfishly to think, because he desires to obtain knowledge.

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Previously man had projected his whole creative force without reserve, unselfishly. Since the division of the sex force man has eventually become selfish and therefore by attraction a prey to others of like nature.

The Angels were the humanity of the Moon Period and have since attained to their present high development, but as in every great company there are stragglers, so also in the case of the Angels there were some who did not attain—a class of beings which were behind the Angels but above humanity. They were in a sad state, for they could not follow the present development of the Angels and neither could they sink as low into matter as man. They could not, as the Angels, dispense with a brain, yet they were incapable of building one for themselves, so when humanity evolved the brain and spinal cord they saw an opportunity in woman, who expresses the negative pole of the creative force, *imagination*, the faculty which enables her to build a body in the womb. In order to gain access to her consciousness this intelligence took advantage of a perplexity then disturbing the woman on account of her exercise of the imaginative faculty.

At that time the eyes of humanity had not yet been opened; they were spiritual beings, not quite conscious of the possession of a physical body. The woman was the first to dimly observe that she and others possessed such an instrument, and she had observed that at certain times some of her friends whom she had previously perceived as having this physical appendage, had lost it, so she was troubled. From the

Angels she could obtain no information, but this intelligence which appeared within herself in the serpentine spinal cord, enlightened her, and "the serpent said unto the woman, 'Hath God said, ye shall not eat of every Tree in the Garden?'" to which she answered that they had been forbidden "to eat of the Tree of Knowledge" under penalty of death. But the serpent said: "Ye shall not surely die, for God knows that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." The woman secured the cooperation of the man according to the instructions of *Lucifer, the Light Giver*, and since then their eyes have been opened, they have known good and evil. But prior to that time man had been unconscious of the possession of his body; it had fallen away from him at times, as the leaf falls from the tree, without inconveniencing or disturbing him, for his consciousness had been focused in the Spiritual World at all times. But the Lucifer spirits desired a power over him, a foothold in his brain and spinal cord. They incited him to break away from the yoke of the Angels and take the creative function in his own hands. By the oft repeated and ignorant abuse of that faculty the consciousness of man was withdrawn from the Spiritual Worlds and focused in the Physical World. Then came death in all its present terrible aspects, for man now regards this earth life as the only real life. When that

ends, he enters an existence of which he knows nothing and which he consequently fears.

Thus, on account of listening to Lucifer, *the false light giver*, man has become subject to sorrow, pain and death. He has been robbed of his innocence and peace. The Christ came into the world to save humanity from sin, sorrow and death. Therefore He called Himself the *True Light*, and the others, who had come before, He characterized as thieves and robbers, for they had robbed man of the spiritual sight though they had enlightened him in the physical sense.

Question No. 105

What did the Christ mean when He said, "Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter therein"?

Answer: In the world around us we see the kingdom of men, where every one is endeavoring to maintain his own position and depends upon his own ideas and his own self-assertion to hold that position against all comers. When anything new is presented to him, his mental attitude is usually tinged with skepticism. He fears to be deceived.

The attitude of a little child with regard to what it sees or hears is exactly the reverse of the position of its elders. The little child has no overwhelming sense of its own superior knowledge, but is frankly ignorant and therefore eminently teachable, and it was to this trait that the Savior referred in the passage quoted.

When we enter the higher life, we must first forget everything that we knew in the world. We must commence to look at things in an entirely different way, and *when a new teaching is brought before us we must endeavor to receive it regardless of other facts previously observed.* This in order that we may be perfectly unbiased. Of course, we are not supposed to believe offhand that "black is white," but if some one seriously asserts that an object which we have hitherto regarded as black is really white, our mind should be sufficiently open to prevent us from passing judgment at once and saying, "Why, I know that that object is black." We should be willing to reexamine the object to see if there may not be a point of view whence that thing which we have thought black appears to be white. Only when we have made thorough examination and have found that the thing is really black from whatever point of view may we return to our previous opinion.

There is nothing so remarkable about a child as the flexible attitude of its mind which renders it so teachable, and the pupil who endeavors to live the higher life should always aim to keep his mind in that fluidic state, for as soon as our ideas have become *set* and incapable of being changed, our progress ceases. That was the great truth which the Christ was endeavoring to present to his hearers when he made the remark which has occasioned the question.

Question No. 106

Did not Jesus eat fish? Why then are the Rosicrucians vegetarians?

Answer: After the Resurrection the Christ at one time appeared among His disciples while they were in a locked room. They did not recognize Him at once and did not believe that His was a material body. But the vehicle in which He appeared was the vital body of Jesus, and it was possible for Him, as for anyone else capable of functioning in that vehicle, to draw matter of the chemical region around Himself and build a perfectly tangible, dense body in a moment. In order to convince them that He was as usual, He asked for something to eat and was given a piece of a honeycomb and some fish. It is stated that he ate, but

not that he ate the fish, and one who had been brought up among strict vegetarians like the Essenes would not have eaten the fish any more than he would have eaten flesh if it had been set before him.

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It is also related of the Buddha that he died after gorging himself upon boar's flesh, which is highly amusing to anyone aware of the fact that he taught his disciples the simple and harmless life—to sustain the body upon the purest and best foods as they come directly from the ground—and was moved to the greatest pity at the sight of suffering on the part of man or beast. The esoteric student understands that in olden times the boar was a symbol of the esoteric knowledge. One may give of his knowledge; the more we give the more we have—at least the same amount of knowledge always remains. This truth was taught in a symbol of the Norse mythology: In Valhall the warriors who had fought the good fight were seated around tables feasting upon the flesh of a boar, which was so constituted that as often as they cut a part of its flesh away the flesh grew out at once, so that there was always plenty, no matter how much was taken or how many ate. The Buddha in his earth life had gorged

himself upon this sacred knowledge, and when he died he was full thereof.

Nevertheless, the inquirer has a wrong idea. The Rosicrucians do not teach that everyone should be a vegetarian *at once*. In fact they teach that the vegetarian diet generates an abundance of energy, much more than flesh foods. This energy is not only physical but spiritual, so that if a man leads a sedentary life and is of a material disposition, engaged, perhaps, in sordid business transactions or in other lines of strictly material endeavor, this spiritual energy can find no vent and is apt to cause systemic disturbances. Only those who live an active, outdoor life, where the abundance of energy generated by the vegetarian food can be thrown off, or who transmute that energy into spiritual endeavor, can thrive on the vegetarian diet. Besides, we recognize that the heredity of many generations has made man partly carnivorous, so that in the case of most people the change from a mixed diet to vegetables should be gradual. The diet which suits one man is not fitted for another, *vide* the old proverb that "one man's meat is another man's poison," and no hard and fast rules can be laid down which will apply equally to all people. Therefore, everything that we eat as well as everything else

connected with our personality should be determined by ourselves individually.

The Bible says truly that is not that which goeth into the mouth that defileth us. If we crave and support ourselves upon loathsome food, *it is the craving that is the sin*, and not the food itself. If a man is in a place where he cannot obtain the pure foods which he desires and craves, he ought to take the food which is obtainable, even flesh food, without loathing, just as thankfully as he takes the pure food. It will not defile him because of his attitude of mind.

Question No. 107

If Christ fed the multitude with fish, why is it wrong for us to use them, or even flesh, as food?

Answer: It is the nature of a beast of prey to eat any animal that comes in its path, and its organs are such that it must have that kind of a diet to exist, but *everything is in a stage of becoming*; it is always changing to something higher. Man, in his earlier stages of unfoldment, was also like the beasts of prey in certain respects; however, he is to become God-like and thus he must cease to destroy at some time in order that he may commence to create.

We have been taught that there is no life in the universe but the life of God. That "in Him we live and move and have our being." That His life animates everything that is and therefore we naturally understand that as soon as we take *life* we are destroying *the form* built by God for His manifestation. The lower animals are evolving spirits and have sensibilities. It is their desire for experience that causes them to build their various *forms*, and when we take their forms away from them we deprive them of their opportunity for gaining experience. We hinder their evolution instead of helping them. It is excusable in the cannibal, who knows no better, when he eats his fellow men. We now regard cannibalism with horror, and the day will also come when we shall feel a like disgust at the thought of making our stomachs the burying ground of the carcasses of murdered animals.

It is natural that we should desire the very best of food, but every animal body has in it the poisons of decay. The venous blood is filled with carbon dioxide and other noxious products on their way to the kidneys or the pores of the skin to be expelled as urine or perspiration. These loathsome substances are in every part of the flesh and when we eat such food we are filling our own bodies with toxic poisons. Much sickness is due to our use of flesh foods.

When we cry to the Bible as authority for flesh eating we should also be willing to follow its injunctions and stop eating pork, which is the most horrible food of all. It is a notable fact that the orthodox Jews who abstain from the foods interdicted in the Bible are immune from consumption and cancer.

In a great many places where the Bible speaks of "meat," it is very plain that flesh food is not meant. The chapter in Genesis where man's food is first allotted to him says that he should eat of every tree and herb bearing seed, "and to you it shall be for *meat*." The most evolved people at all times have abstained from flesh foods. We see, for instance, Daniel, who was a holy man and a wise man, beg that he might not be forced to eat meat, but that he and his companions be given pulse. The children of Israel in the wilderness are spoken of as "*lusting* after flesh," and their God is angry with them in consequence.

There is an esoteric meaning to the feeding of the multitude where fish was used as food, but looking to the purely material aspect we may sum up the points made in our answer by reiterating that we shall some time outgrow flesh and fish eating as we have risen above cannibalism. Whatever license may have been given in the barbaric past will disappear in the altruistic

future, when more refined sensibilities shall have awakened us to a fuller sense of the horrors involved in the gratification of a carnivorous taste.

For a very full presentation of the question, "Does the Bible justify Flesh Eating," we would refer the inquirer to a little pamphlet by that name issued by the Unity Society of Kansas City, Missouri, which gives the pro and the con with great impartiality, and shows that it was only as a concession to the before mentioned *lust* for flesh that the practice was tolerated at all.

Question No. 108

Please explain why the fatted calf was not killed for the righteous son instead of the prodigal. Was that not giving a reward for wrong doing?

Answer: The story of the prodigal son was a parable whereby the Christ intended to teach a lesson and not an actual fact. It is a story which tells of the spirit's pilgrimage through matter. There are different classes of spirits. Some, but not all, have gone into the school of experience, the world. They have descended from their high estate in the World of God gradually deeper and deeper into the sea of matter which blinds them. At last they find themselves enmeshed in the dense

matter of the Physical World. That is the turning point where they wake up; where the unconscious path of involution ends; where self-consciousness is attained plus a consciousness of the world without. But the spirit within is not content to remain in this world. Re-awakened to a sense of its inherent divinity it feels drawn anew to the highest spheres, and says "I will arise and go to my father."

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Then comes the toil of stripping off the various vehicles in which it has become enmeshed and of raising itself once more to the conscious communion with God. While engaged in this arduous task "the Father meets it a long way off"; the still small voice from within begins to speak and tell of the heavenly glories and, at last, when either the evolution of humanity has been completed or the single spirit has taken *the short cut of initiation*, there is a reunion with God and the other brothers who have not yet gone out into the school of experience. Naturally there is more rejoicing over the return of one who has fought the good fight and has come back to his heavenly home, than over the one who has not yet sought to improve his opportunity.

Question No. 109

Why did the Lord commend the unjust steward as related in the sixteenth chapter of St. Luke?

Answer: The inquirer should read the chapter carefully. We are told of an unfaithful steward who was brought before his master, the latter being suspicious that his accounts were not quite right. This unfaithful steward made a bargain with the debtors of his master to secure himself against the day of discharge from his position. It is said in verse 8 that "the lord commended the unjust steward." When he rendered his accounts he must have fixed them so skilfully that his master was deceived, for the "lord" of the man—his master—was the one who commended him, as will be seen from the fact that the word "lord" is spelled with a small letter, whereas the capital letter is always used where the Christ is signified.

Question No. 110

Please explain what is meant by sinning against the Holy Ghost.

Answer: Speaking generally, the Holy Spirit is the creative power of God. For confirmation, remember the passage in the creed "Conceived by the Holy Spirit,"

which Gabriel said to Mary should come upon her. By that all that is has been brought into being, and it is a ray from that attribute of God which is used by men for perpetuation of the race. When that is abused, that is to say, when it is used for sense gratification, whether in solitary or associated vice, with or without the legal marriage, that is the sin against the Holy Spirit. That sin, we are told, is not forgiven; it must be expiated. Humanity as a whole is now suffering for that sin. The debilitated bodies, the sickness that we see around us, has been caused by centuries of abuse, and until we learn to subdue our passions there can be no true health among the human race. We have been born of parents who thought that it was right to gratify their passions at any and all times. In consequence we suffer now, and by our attitude toward the sex question most of us are at the present time conferring the same maladies upon our children. Thus the sins of the fathers are being visited upon the children from generation to generation, and will continue to bring sorrow and suffering until we shall understand that every child has a right to be well born and to receive the proper physical conditions during the period of antenatal life.

Question No. 111

Is the Christian creed based upon divine authority?

Answer: There are three forms of the Christian creed. One of them is known as the *Apostle's Creed*, although not composed by the apostles, but supposed to embody their beliefs. Another creed was formulated and adopted at the Council of Nice and is called the Nicene Creed. The Athanasian Creed was of still later date. They have no more divine authority than any other contention of men concerning the Bible.

The Bible itself gives a creed, however, in the passage which states that *there is no other name given except the name of Christ Jesus whereby men may be saved*, and this is in harmony with the esoteric teaching, for Jehovah was the author of all the old Race Religions where the fear of God was pitted against the desires of the flesh and a law was imposed upon man to curb desire. Race Religions act educationally upon the desire nature by the means stated, but will in time be superseded by the Religion of Christ. This religion of brotherhood and *love will cast out the fear* engendered by the law of Jehovah. It will endeavor to do away with nations, with their laws, with struggle and strife, by working upon the vital body so that humanity shall be actuated entirely by love instead of by law. This is not the ultimate, however. When the kingdom shall have been fully established, He is to give it over to the

Father. The Religion of the Father will be something higher even than the Religion of the Son.

Question No. 112

How do you reconcile the law of cause and effect with the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins?

Answer: The inability to believe in the forgiveness of sins has caused many to believe exclusively in the law of cause and effect, as taught in eastern countries under the name *karma*. There are also many who think that, because eastern religions teach that law and the law of rebirth more clearly than the western religion, Christianity, these eastern religions are better and more scientific than the western religion, which teaches, as popularly interpreted, that the Christ died for our sins and that in consequence belief in Him will bring us forgiveness.

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As a matter of fact, however, the Christian teaching also enunciates the doctrine that "as we sow so shall we also reap," and thus it teaches both the law of cause and effect and the forgiveness of sins. *Both* of these laws are vitally operative in the unfoldment of humanity, and there are good reasons why the earlier

eastern religions have only one part of *the complete teaching which is found in the Christian religion*.

In those early days when the religions of the East were given to humanity, mankind were still more spiritual in nature than the material beings of the present day Western World. They knew that we live many lives in different shapes and forms here upon this earth. In the East today they are yet thoroughly imbued with that idea. Many of them are more concerned with thought of Nirvana—the invisible world—where they may rest in peace and joy, than with taking advantage of their present material resources for advancement. As a consequence, their country is arid and waste, their crops are small and often destroyed by a scorching sun and devastating flood. They suffer famine, they die by millions, but although they teach the law of cause and effect, they seem to be unaware that their miserable conditions are brought about by indolence and indifference to material things. For naturally, when they have not worked here they have nothing to assimilate in the heaven life between death and a new birth, and as an organ or limb that is disused gradually atrophies, so a country that is not developed by the spirits incarnated therein gradually atrophies and becomes useless as a habitation for mankind. It was necessary to the evolution of humanity

to enter this material world and develop all its resources.

Therefore, the Great Leaders have taken various means to cause us to temporarily forget the spiritual side of our nature. In the West, where the pioneers of the human race are found, they commanded marriage outside the family. They gave to the West a religion that did not definitely teach the doctrine of rebirth and the law of cause and effect as means of advancement. They also originated the use of alcohol, with its paralyzing effect upon the spiritual sensibilities of man. By these means we have in the West temporarily forgotten that there is more than this one life on earth, and in consequence we apply ourselves with the utmost diligence to making the fullest possible use of what we believe to be our only opportunity here. Therefore, we have developed the West into a veritable garden; we have made for ourselves, *between incarnations*, a land that is exceedingly fertile and rich in the minerals which we need in our various industries, and thus we are conquering the visible material world.

It is evident, however, that the religious side of man's nature must not be entirely neglected, and as Christ, the great ideal of the Christian religion, had been set before us for imitation, and we could not

possible hope to become Christ-like in one life, which is all that we now have any knowledge of, there must be given us a compensatory doctrine, or we should cease to strive in despair, knowing that it would be futile. Therefore the Western World was taught the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins through the righteousness of Christ Jesus.

It is equally certain, however, that no doctrine which is not a truth in nature can have any uplifting power, and, therefore, there must also be a sound basis behind the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins, which seems to vitiate the law of causation; it is this:

When we look about us in the material world, we observe the different phenomena of nature, we meet other people and have various transactions with them, and all these sights, sounds and scenes are observed by means of our sense organs. Yet not all, for we are usually exceedingly unobservant of details. It is exasperatingly true when it is said that "we have eyes that see not and ears that hear not." We lose a great deal of experience on that account. Besides, our memory is woefully lacking; while we are able to recall a little, most of our experiences are lost to us because we forget them. our conscious memory is weak. There is another memory, however. As the ether and the air

carry to the photographic plate in a camera the impression of the landscape without, omitting, not the slightest detail, so also does the air and the ether which carries impressions from the outside to our sense organs carry into the lungs, and thence to the blood, an actual picture and a record of everything with which we come in contact. Those pictures are stored in the minute seed atom resting in the left ventricle of the heart, and that little atom may be considered the Book of the Recording Angels, where all our deeds are inscribed. Thence it is mirrored in the Reflecting Ether of our vital body.

In the ordinary course of life, man passes into Purgatory at death and inscribed upon that atom. Later he assimilates all the good stored there in the First Heaven, working upon his future environment in the Second heaven. But a devout person realizes each day his shortcomings and failings. He examines the events of this life daily and prays from a devout heart to be forgiven for sins he has committed. Then the pictures which have recorded the sins of omission and commission fade, and are wiped out of his life's record from day to day. For it is not the aim of God or nature to *"get even"* as it would seem under the law of causation, which decrees an exact retribution for every transgression, as well as a reward or compensation for

every good act. It is the aim of God that we should learn by experience here to do justly and well. When we have realized that we have done wrong and determine to do better, we have learned the lesson, and there is no necessity for *punishing* us.

Thus the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins is an actual fact in nature. If we repent, pray and reform, the sins we have repented of, prayed for and reformed from are forgiven and wiped out of our life's record. Otherwise, they are eradicated by corresponding pains in Purgatory after death. Thus the doctrine of Karma, or the law of cause and effect as taught in the East, does not fully meet human needs, but the Christian teaching, which embodies *both* the law of causation and the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins, gives a more complete teaching concerning the method employed by the Great Leaders to instruct us.

Question No. 113

By what power did Peter raise Dorcas from the dead?

Answer: Peter did not raise Dorcas from the dead, neither did the Christ raise Lazarus or anyone else, nor did he so claim. He said "*He is not dead, he sleepeth.*"

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In order that this matter may be understood, we will explain what takes place at death and wherein death is different from the state of trance, for the persons mentioned were entranced at the time the supposed miracles took place.

During the waking state, when the Ego is functioning consciously in the Physical World, its various vehicles are concentric—they occupy the same space—but at night, when the body is laid down to sleep, a separation takes place. The Ego, clothed in the mind and desire body, extricates itself from the dense body and the vital body, which are left upon the bed. The higher vehicles hover above or near. They are connected to the denser vehicles by *the silver cord*, a thin glistening thread which takes the shape of two figure sixes, one end being attached to the seed atom in the heart and the other to the center vortex of the desire body.

At the moment of death, this thread is ruptured at the seed atom in the heart and the forces of this atom pass along the pneumogastric nerve, through the third ventricle of the brain, and thence outward through the suture between the occipital and parietal bones of the skull, along the silver cord and into the higher vehicles. Simultaneously with this rupture, the vital body is also disengaged and joins the higher vehicles which are

hovering above the dead body. There it remains for about three and one-half days. Then the higher vehicles disengage themselves from the vital body, which disintegrates synchronously with the dense body, in ordinary cases.

At the time of this last separation, the silver cord also breaks in the middle, and the Ego is freed from contact with the material world.

During sleep the Ego also withdraws from the dense body, but the vital body remains with the dense body and the silver cord is left intact.

It sometimes happens that the Ego does not enter the body in the morning to waken it as usual, but remains outside for a time varying from one to an indefinite number of days. Then we say that the body is in a natural trance. But the silver cord is not ruptured in either of the two places mentioned. Where these ruptures have once taken place no restoration is possible. The Christ and the apostle were clairvoyants; they saw that no rupture had taken place in the cases mentioned, hence the saying, "He is not dead, he sleepeth." They also possessed the power to force the Ego into its body and restore the normal condition. Thus so-called miracles were performed by them.

Question No. 114

Do you believe in conversion?

Answer: Certainly, but there are conversions and conversions. There is the conversion which takes place in a revival meeting to the beating of drums, the clapping of hands, the singing of gospel hymns and the insistent calling of the revivalist to "come before it is too late." All these aids to conversion produce an intense hypnotic influence, which works upon the emotional nature of many people in such a way that these "sinners," so called, can no longer remain in their seats, but are *forced* in the most literal sense to obey the command and come forward to "the mourner's bench." That kind of a conversion is usually of very little worth. Revivalists find that it is extremely easy to convert people in that manner. The exasperatingly difficult problem is, as one of them expressed it, "to make it stick," for when the victim of the hypnotic revivalist leaves the meeting, the influence gradually wears off, and sooner or later he relapses into his original attitude. And though these "backsliders" may feel no pang at all when backsliding, the next revival meeting draws them to the mourners' bench again as surely as a magnet draws a needle. They are converted repeatedly and backslide regularly every time there is a

revival meeting, to the disgust of the revivalist and the amusement of the community, who are unaware that it is a simple case of mild hypnotism.

There is another conversion, however, always accompanied by planetary influences, and according to the strength of these influences the conversion, or change in the life, will be more or less radical. It then shows that the soul has reached a certain point in its pilgrimage where it feels attraction to the higher life. The immediate cause of conversion may be a sermon, a lecture or a book, a verse in the Bible, or something in nature, but that is only the physical cause of something which was already a fact spiritually. From that moment the man or the woman will commence to take a new view of life, will lay aside the old vices, will follow new lines of thought and endeavor. It may change his whole attitude toward life and also his environment. In fact, very often a journey has brought him out of the usual environment for the time being, to give the proper condition for sowing of the new seed.

Question No. 115

Is there any value in confession and absolution?

Answer: If the inquirer means confession and absolution in the sense in which it is practiced in the Catholic Church, it may be stated that the priest, certainly, has no power to forgive the sins of the penitent, and the practice of confession *by the order of a church* at the best is usually but an outward show of penitence, putting one in mind of the prayer of the Pharisee who went into the temple that he might be seen of men.

If, on the other hand, confession is made in the spirit of the scribe, which is the spirit of true penitence, then there is a certain value, for as a little child who has committed a wrong feels conscience smitten and sorry, so may we feel extremely penitent for our sins of omission and commission.

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It is a fact often noticed by kind parents that penitence in silence is sometimes insufficient to the child which feels the need of going to the parent and *confessing its sin*. When the forgiveness of the parent has been obtained its conscience is at rest. So also with the child of God. We sin and we are sorry for our sins; we determine not to commit this or that wrong again; but if we can confess to someone in whom we have faith, and get their sympathy and assurance that this

wrong will not be held against us, we shall feel easier in conscience. That was the principle underlying the command of the Bible "Confess your sins to one another." The one to whom we confess will, of course, be a person for whom we have a profound respect and love, and he or she will stand toward us at that moment as the representative of God or our own higher nature, and we shall thus feel very much relieved at having received his sympathy. But we shall feel also that the pact we have made with ourselves not to commit the sin in question again has been strengthened by having him as a witness. If confession is made thus, and absolution so obtained, then it has undoubtedly a very beneficial effect.

Question No. 116

Is there any value in the Latin ritual used by the Catholic church? Would it not be better if it were translated so that people could understand? And are not the extemporaneous sermons and prayers used in the Protestant churches much to be preferred to the ritual and stereotype masses of the Catholics?

Answer: At the present time all humanity has evolved so far that they are above law in some respects. Most

people obey the law "Thou shalt not steal," for instance.

Law is a curb on the desire nature, but where esoteric or rather spiritual advancement is contemplated, the spiritualization of the vital body must also be accomplished. And that is attained by means of art and religion, in *oft-repeated impacts*, for the keynote of the vital body is *repetition*, as we can see by looking at the plants which have only a dense body and a vital body. Their stem and leaf follow each other in upward succession; the plant keeps on growing them alternately. It was the vital body that built the vertebrae of the human spine one after another by constant repetition. And memory, for instance, which is one of the faculties of the vital body, is strengthened and developed by constant iteration and reiteration.

When the Protestants left the Catholic Church they truly left many of the abuses behind, but they also left almost everything of value. They abandoned the ritual which everyone may know and understand regardless of poor enunciation upon the part of the preacher. Knowing the ritual, the laity could send their thoughts in the same direction as the thought of the priest who was reading, and thus an enormous volume of identical spiritual thought was massed together and projected

upon the community for good or evil. Nowadays the congregation in a Protestant church listens to the extemporaneous prayer or sermon of their minister, who usually does not think so much of the spiritual work before him as he does of how he may turn out the most euphonious phrases to tickle the ears of his congregation. They forget what he has said before they leave the church. Those who go to a Catholic church understanding the ritual are still today able to unite their thoughts in spiritual conclave and keep within memory that which has been gone through. Thus they are every time adding a little to the spiritualization of their vital bodies, while the Protestant church members have been affected only in their emotional natures, and that effect is soon thrown out. The Bible tells us to pray without ceasing, and many have scoffed saying that if God is omniscient He knows whereof we have need without our prayer, and if He is not, He can most likely not be omnipotent, and therefore our prayers are not granted, so that it is useless to pray. But that command was indited from a knowledge of the nature of the vital body, which needs that repetition in order that it may be spiritualized.

So much for the ritual. As to the use of the Latin language, it is stated in the first chapter of John that in the beginning was the word. . . and without it was

nothing made that was made. Word is sound. If we take sand or plant spores and place them upon a brass or a glass plate, then take a violin bow and draw it across the edges, we shall produce a sound, and that sound will cause the spores or sand to arrange itself in geometrical figures, similar to the crystals of which all things are composed. *Every sound produces a different formation.* Thus, if a certain sound produces a certain effect which we wish to produce, *we cannot change the sound without also changing the effect.* If we emit a certain sound and say "Deum," then translate Deum and say God, the sound is very different, and as sound produces certain effects upon our invisible bodies, the effects that were produced by the original Latin ritual have been lost to the Protestant churches which changed it into English or dropped it altogether.

It is often a wonder to people how the Catholic Church retains its power over its people, and it may be said that were they to abandon the Latin ritual there would not be one of their followers left in ten years. Moreover, their truly esoteric rituals have not been transposed into English, and even among the Rosicrucians, Latin rituals, though not those used in the Catholic Church, are in vogue at the services.

What is the actual merit in martyrdom? Did the martyrs really become saints?

Answer: Man lifts himself to a union with God through four great steps or stages. First he prays to or sacrifices to a God whom he fears and, therefore, seeks to propitiate, so that his God will not harm him. Next he learns to look upon this God as a mighty ally against his enemies and as a giver of all good things to him, that is, provided he obeys the God and sacrifices to him of the material things which he possesses. In the third step he is taught *to sacrifice himself* by living a life of righteousness, and expects to be rewarded in a future state called heaven, where he is to live in eternal happiness as a compensation for whatever he may have endured during earth life. The martyrs were at the stage where they held this belief, and were thoroughly imbued with the verity and glory of heaven. Therefore it was to them an easy matter to sacrifice their lives and then attain to the future glory at once.

In reality, if martyrdom can unlock a heaven with eternal bliss, that is a most easy method of obtaining the reward. It may take courage to die, but after all it takes infinitely more courage to live. We are very apt to think that when a man has given his life he has given to the very utmost, and we often hear people say of a

man who has committed suicide that *"he has paid it all."* As a matter of fact, suicide is usually an expression of the greatest possible cowardice, and martyrdom is far less to be admired than the lives of people who day by day endeavor to follow the spiritual teachings of the Bible and live a noble life. Of course it is readily admitted that the martyrs are to be admired for staunchly adhering to their faith in the face of death and torture. Undoubtedly they will have greater opportunities for spiritual growth in later lives than they were deprived of when burned at the stake or otherwise exterminated. And we may also surely say that they were saints and holy people in the sense that their faith was even more to them than life, but we strenuously hold that the edict of a church is incapable of making a sinner a saint.

Question No. 118

In one of your lectures you said in effect that it was a mistake to send missionaries to foreign countries; that the religions practiced by the so-called heathens are right for them at the present time, but that these missionaries have done little harm as yet. How then do you explain the command of Christ to His apostles, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature?"

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Answer: The meaning of the Christ's words obviously rest upon the interpretation of the word "world." If by that word we understand the whole earth, it may be right to send missionaries to foreign countries; but the Bible tells us that *The disciples to whom the command was given* returned after having accomplished their mission, showing that the word of command could not have been meant to include the whole earth. In this connection the word "world" should rather have been given the interpretation "polity," which will also be found in some of our dictionaries as another meaning for the word. At the time of Christ people did not know the whole world. We find even to this day the westernmost cape of Spain called Cape Finisterre— *the end of the Earth*. Therefore this term at the time when Christ spoke his command could not have included the whole earth as we know it today. The statement is, therefore, not contrary to Bible teachings. It is wrong to send missionaries out to the people we call "heathen," for their development is as yet such that they cannot understand a religion which preaches *love* to one's neighbor, a religion which even we have not yet learned to practice. Besides, if the great Recording Angels who have charge of men's evolution are capable of judging our needs, and placing each one in the

environment where he will find the influences most conducive to progression, we must also believe that they have given to each nation the religion most salutary to its unfoldment. Therefore, when a man has been placed in a country where the Christian religion is taught, that religion holds the ideal which he should strive for, but to try to force it upon other people who have been placed in a different sphere is to set our judgment up as greater than the judgment of God and His ministers, the Recording Angels. However, as said, the Christian missionaries have done little harm to the people they have visited, but they might have done more good at home. We do not need to go away from home to find heathen who need instruction in the Bible. Professor Wilbur L. Cross of Yale mentions, for instance, that in a class of forty students not one could place Judas Iscariot; that he had a Jewish student who had never heard of Moses and that in answer to a question concerning the nature of the Pilgrim's Progress, the best answer was that it is the basis of New England history. If the missionaries were brought into contact with these heathen, perhaps they might do some good.

More harm, however, is done when the East sends its missionaries over here to convert us to Hinduism and kindred religions, for often these Hindus teach

breathing exercises which cause insanity or consumption, because our western bodies are not at all fitted for such practices. it is safest to rest in the religion of our country, to study and practice that, leaving to other nations the privilege of doing the same in respect to their own religions.

Section V

Questions Concerning Spiritualistic Phenomena

Question No. 119

Is mediumship injurious to health?

Answer: That depends: Where a person becomes the medium for a disembodied spirit which enters the body, as in the case of the trance mediums, where it takes possession of this body and uses it as the owner might do, there is little if any harm done, provided the spirit control does not abuse his privilege. In fact, there are some cases where spirit controls have a better idea of caring for a body than the owner himself, and may sometimes improve the health. But spirits of a high ethical nature do not usually control a medium, it is rather earthbound and low spirits such as Indians and others of a like nature who obtain a control over mediumistic persons, and when in possession of the

body they may use it to gratify their low passions for drink and sex. Thus they cause a disturbance to the system and a deterioration of the instrument.

In the case of the materializing medium, we may say that the influence is always injurious. The materializing spirit entrances the victim and then draws the ether of the vital body out through the spleen, for the difference between the materializing medium and the ordinary person is the fact that the connection between the vital body and the dense body is exceedingly lax, so that it is possible to withdraw this vital body to a very great extent. The vital body is the vehicle whereby the solar currents which give us vitality are specialized. Deprived of the vitalizing principle, the body of the medium at the time of a materialization sometimes shrinks to almost one-half its usually size; the flesh becomes flabby and the spark of life burns very low. When the séance is over and the vital body replaced, the medium is awakened and in normal consciousness. He then experiences a feeling of the most terrible exhaustion and sometimes, unfortunately, resorts to drink to revive the vital forces. In that case, of course, the health will very soon suffer and the medium will become a total wreck. At any rate, mediumship should be avoided, for apart from this danger to the instrument there are other and far more serious

considerations in connection with the more subtle bodies, and particularly in connection with the after-death state.

Question No. 120

Where mediums make so-called soul trips, what is it that leaves the physical body, and can it leave in the waking state to gather data?

Answer: A medium is a negative or involuntary clairvoyant and under the control of a spirit from the Desire World. He or she corresponds to the victim of a hypnotist in the Physical World. In the case of the hypnotist, he is seen by his victim in the waking state, while the medium does not see the spirit which hypnotizes her until she has been driven out of her body. She is then clothed in her desire body and therefore usually unable to bring her experiences back.

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All her experiences take place while the physical body is in a trance. It is the Ego clothed in the mind and desire body which leaves the physical body behind, and the same separation takes place then as in ordinary dreamless sleep, with the difference, however, that the physical body is not left tenantless upon the bed, but

the spirit control usually enters the physical body of the medium, taking possession and using it according to pleasure, often to the great detriment of the medium. For when such a spirit control has been a drunkard or libertine during earth life, it will often use the medium's body to gratify its craving for liquor or its base, sensual instincts. We cannot too seriously impress upon people that this physical body is our most valuable instrument, and that it is very wrong for anyone to abandon it to the tender mercies of either a hypnotist or a spirit control. In the case of mediums, there is a still graver danger, for sometimes it is not an ordinary human Ego which is the control, but an elemental that cannot ordinarily function in the Physical World. When the medium at death enters the Desire World, the elemental has obtained such a power over the desire body of the medium that it may rob the owner of his vehicle. The desire body is the vehicle whence comes the spring to action, and therefore when an Ego is deprived of that vehicle there is nothing to cause it to reincarnate. The elemental may keep this body even for millions of years, and so, while the result of humanity is progressing, the unfortunate Ego, deprived of its desire body, is left inert and will be far behind all its fellows, perhaps, before it is released from the bondage of this entity. Therefore, mediumship is the

gravest danger to the soul the writer knows of or is able to conceive, except the practice of black magic.

Question No. 121

I have taken many soul flights, and on one of these journeys my guide took me through gates into a crystal city and on into a temple filled with ethereal people, saying, "This is God's holy city." Will you kindly tell me where this is, why there are gates and walls around the city, and why everything looked like crystal?

Answer: It is one of the peculiarities of desire stuff, which is the matter of the Desire World that it is exceedingly plastic and readily molded by thought. In the twinkling of an eye it takes the most different shapes according to the thought that ensouls it, and where many people upon earth think along similar lines all their thoughts mass themselves and form one grand whole.

Thus in the lower regions of the Desire World, the thoughts of people who believe in a fiery, furnace-like Hell make of the desire stuff there such a place of torture. There we may see devils with horns, hoofs and tails, prodding the unhappy sinners with pitchforks, and often when people pass out at death, after having lived

in that belief, they are in a sad state of fear on beholding this place which they have helped to create. There is also in the higher regions of the Desire World a city such as you describe, a New Jerusalem with pearly gates, with a sea of glass and its great white throne upon which is seated a thought form of God, created by these people and appearing like an old man. It is probable that you visited this place, which is a permanent feature of the Desire World, and will remain so as long as people continue to think of the New Jerusalem in that way, for these forms have no life apart from the sustained thoughts of mankind, and when in time humanity shall have outgrown that faith, the city created by their thoughts will cease to exist. Its crystal-like appearance is due to the exceeding brilliance of the desire stuff of which it is built. The old alchemists called the Desire World "astral," "starry," on that account.

Question No. 122

Are not the desire bodies left by progressing Egos used by elementals to deceive friends and relatives of the deceased person? How can they be detected and recognized?

Answer: When the spirit has passed out at death, and after a stay in Purgatory of shorter or longer duration enters the First Heaven, it still has with it the desire body used during the earth life, but when it enters the Second Heaven that desire body is left behind in a like manner as the vital and dense bodies were left at death and shortly after. But, while the dense body goes to decay and disintegrates, becomes inert and useless *at once* when the spirit has left it, it is very different with the desire body. The material of which that body is composed is so much more vitalized by the *Universal Spirit* that it will retain the ability to move about a long time after the spirit has left. The shell is drawn by magnetic attraction to those with whom it associated during earth life and a memory of that past life very often enables it to pose successfully as a deceased relative. This is particularly the case when the shell is used by an elemental entity.

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These empty shells ensouled by elementals account very satisfactorily for most of the phenomena encountered at spiritualistic séances. The pranks of these elementals in spilling water down the necks of the sitters, throwing chairs, tables and the like about,

are specimens of what may be done by such empty shells when in the possession of elementals.

As to how they may be detected or recognized by us, it will be evident that while our deceased friends and relatives during earth life possessed common sense, there is nothing to be gained from the inane nonsensical communications of these empty shells, for the spirit which was in reality our friend has passed away, leaving the house empty. Therefore we may judge them by words and acts as we judge people here.

Question No. 123

Can elementals assume the shape of animals or reptiles, and what can be done to stop them?

Answer: In this material world all the forms are stable and do not easily change. The Desire World is widely different in that respect. The fairy tales, like the metamorphosis of Cinderella's mice, etc., are actual facts in the Desire World, for the forms change at the will of the ensouled life with a lightening-like rapidity, which is very bewildering to one who enters that world as a neophyte. It is, therefore, necessary for the clairvoyant to be trained, in order to escape being

glamoured by *the form*, which is always changing and may assume any shape at any moment. When we are able to see the ensouling *life*, it does not matter what form it takes upon itself for the time being, we are not deceived. Like all others in the Desire World, elementals have this faculty of changing their shape, and it is due to that fact that so many strange tales or visions seen are thought true by untrained clairvoyants. Nothing can be done to stop elementals from changing their shape, but we may shoo them away from us as we chase a serenading feline from below our bedroom window.

Question No. 124

How can one avoid becoming obsessed?

Answer: Obsession is a state where a discarnate spirit has taken permanent possession of the body of someone after dispossessing the owner. but sometimes people who have formed a habit of drunkenness or some other low vice seek to excuse themselves by claiming to be obsessed. Wherever a person makes that statement concerning himself, one may nearly always be sure that it is nothing but an excuse, for a thief who has stolen something here in the material world does not go about and tell people of his theft,

neither does an obsessing entity go around proclaiming the fact. It is very certain that such an entity does not care what is thought about the man whose body he has stolen, so that there is no reason why he should tell and risk being exorcised.

There is an infallible means of knowing whether a person is really obsessed, namely, by diagnosis of the eye. "The eye is the window of the soul," and only the true owner is capable of contracting and expanding the iris, or pupil of the eye, so that if we take a person who claims to be obsessed or whom we think is obsessed, to a room which is darkened, we shall find that the pupil of his eye will not expand if he is obsessed. Neither will the pupil contract when we bring him into the sunlight, nor expand if we ask him to look at an object at a distance or contract when he is asked to read small type. In short, the pupil of the eye will respond neither to light nor to distance when a person is obsessed, but there is also a certain disease called locomotor ataxia, where the iris will not respond to distance but is responsive to light.

No one who maintains a positive attitude of mind can ever become obsessed, for so long as we assert our individuality that is strong enough to keep all outsiders away. But in spiritualistic séances where the sitters are

negative there is always a great danger. The best way to avoid becoming obsessed would be to maintain this positive attitude. And anyone who is at all negatively inclined should avoid spiritualistic séances, crystal gazing and other methods of evoking spirits. That is bad practice anyway, for those who have gone beyond have their work to do there and should not be brought back here.

Question No. 125

What is psychometry?

Answer: Science teaches us that every particle of matter in the Physical World is interpenetrated by ether, so that the chemical atoms of every substance, no matter how dense, do not touch one another, but each little atom vibrates in a field of this all-pervading ether. The vibrations of this ether emitted by every object carry to our eyes a picture of the things about us. This picture is not lost. The pictures of all things which we have consciously observed still exist in the ether of our vital body, and it only depends upon our ability to call them back whether we remember them or not.

There is also in the ether pervading every object a picture of the whole surroundings of that object. On the walls of our rooms are inscribed all the scenes, every incident that ever happened in that room, and even though we strip them of lath and plaster, it may be impossible to get rid of all the pictures inscribed there. If we take a piece of plaster from such a room and bring it to a person who has cultivated etheric sight, it is possible for that person to see the ether in that piece of plaster, and to tell about the scenes which happened where that plaster came from. If we show him a piece of stone taken from the pyramids of Egypt, he will see those pyramids just as well as if we had brought him a photograph, for it is the ether from an object such as the pyramid that makes the impression upon the photographer's sensitive plate, and the only difference between that impression and the impression we receive through the eye is that we are able to fix it on the photographic plate, and may take a look at the photograph at any time, while we are not yet able to clearly visualize the scenes of our past under ordinary circumstances. But the psychometrist who can read the ether has a wonderful picture gallery at his disposal.

Question No. 126

Is it true that at spiritualistic séances persons are sometimes transported bodily from one place to another by invisible hands; that flowers are brought into the room through closed windows and doors, and if so, how can that be done?

Answer: Yes, it is perfectly true that such phenomena as you have mentioned take place at times under conditions where no fraud is at all possible. As to the movement of objects, that may be accomplished by the spirits in charge of the séance in various ways. Hands may be materialized which are either visible or invisible, and they may lift objects or persons from one place to another, or else these objects may be lifted by the suspension of the law of gravity so far as that object is concerned. As to the passage of flowers through a wall, a closed window or other material object, we should remember that these objects are not really as solid as we usually think. Science recognizes the fact that no two atoms in any substance touch one another, but each atom swings and vibrates at a varying rate of speed in the sea of ether which permeates all matter. It is well known also that all substances may be reduced to gas. Iron, stone, water, or whatever other substance we name is capable of being thus reduced. Realizing this, it is only a step further to the idea that as these substances are

reduced to a gaseous state and as readily resolved back into their original state, so a flower may be resolved into ether, passed between the atoms in a wall and then resolved back into its existence as a flower. That is in fact what happens.

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But the inquirer may say, "Yes, but if you take a silver dollar, melt it in a crucible, or retort and change it into a gas, it will not take the shape of a silver dollar when it is resolved back into the metallic state but will become simply a lump of metal." That is true where the operation is performed by an ordinary man, who is incapable of separating the dense material from its etheric counterpart during the process of melting, but the spiritual entities who perform the feats spoken of are capable of thus detaching the ether part of the flower from the dense material. And it is that etheric part which retains its shape and forms the matrix or mold which gives form to the material of the flower when liberated in the room after having been passed through the wall.

Question No. 127

Will you kindly explain the use of the planchette? And state if it is advisable to try to produce the phenomena among amateurs.

Answer: The planchette is a small board placed upon wheels with a device for holding a pencil in a vertical position, so that when the medium's hand is placed upon the board and moved about by the spirits the pencil will write their messages on a sheet of paper. Like all other spiritualistic phenomena, planchette writing is produced by a disembodied spirit through a negative medium.

When an entity has passed out of earth life and entered the Invisible Beyond, an evolution of a different nature from ours awaits him in Purgatory and the various heavens. It is a retrogression when he tries to communicate with us here under ordinary circumstances. Therefore, all spiritualistic phenomena which bring the disembodied spirit into contact with the Physical World are to be deprecated as having a bad effect upon the spirits concerned. The communicating entities are also dangerous to the negative sitters in a circle, who abandon their will powers and their bodies to a certain extent.

Of course in planchette writing the whole body may not be in trance, although it sometimes is; but at least

an arm is abandoned to the control of a discarnate spirit whom the sitter does not see, and who may or may not be what it represents. If a tramp came to our door and tried to persuade us to abandon our house and allow him to take possession for a little while, we would indignantly refuse, but when a tramp from the Desire World asks us to let him have possession of our most valuable house, our body, many at once comply, flattered in the belief that "a dear Angel" has visited them. But "dear Angels" and philanthropists do not grow on every bush in the Desire World any more than here. It cannot be too often reiterated that there is no transforming power in death; that an ignorant Indian does not suddenly become all wise by the mere fact of having passed out at death. As it is necessary to study in order to gain knowledge in this world, so must the departed spirits apply themselves if desiring to learn about conditions in that world, and until they have had the requisite amount of experience, the departed are no more fit to guide us from there than they were while here. The safest plan is to leave all negative phenomena alone, concentrating all our energies on *living the Life*, and doing exercises which foster in us the faculty of entering that world at will, either traveling in our finer vehicles or clairvoyantly observing it while still within our dense body. *That is progress*; when we have that ability we can see the disembodied

entities face to face and judge for ourselves whether it is advisable to listen to their counsel or not. Until we can do that we are at a disadvantage, and caution should teach us to keep on the safe side.

Question No. 128

Is a vampire the same as a werewolf?

Answer: No, a vampire is a person who absorbs the vitality of another, while that which was called a werewolf in medieval times was the vital body of a low order of black magician. He would give a gruesome shape to his vital body, and partly stud it with dense matter in order to inflict harm upon other people. The old folk stories said that it was no use to strike such a thing, blows would not hurt it. But if it were stabbed with a knife or another sharp instrument, it would commence to disgorge the blood of its victims, run away yelping to its home, and there the black magician who had manifested as a wolf could be found suffering from a wound in the precise place where the wolf had been hurt. This is on account of a curious circumstance known to esotericists as *repercussion*, and the same phenomena may be seen where spirits materialize at a séance. The ether in which these spirits materialize has been taken from the body of the medium, and if a piece

is cut out of the robe of such a spirit, a piece will be found missing from the garment of the medium at the close of the séance. This fact has been used by skeptical investigators ignorant of the law of repercussion to stamp mediums as frauds, when in fact they have been perfectly honest, though incapable of explaining away the seemingly damning evidence.

Question No. 129

What is the difference between a trance medium, a materializing medium, the trained clairvoyant and the ordinary person?

Answer: Roughly speaking, we may say that humanity today is divided into two classes—those in whom the connection between the vital body and the dense body is very close, and another class where the connection is more loose. The former class is the ordinary person who is engaged in material pursuits and is altogether out of touch with the Spiritual Worlds. The latter class is the so-called sensitives, and is again divided into two classes. One class is *actuated by the will from within* and is positive. From this class comes the trained clairvoyant and the [Invisible Helper](#). The other class is negative and is *amenable to the will of others*. From this class mediums are recruited.

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When the connection between the vital body and the dense body of a man is somewhat lax, he will be sensitive to spiritual vibrations, and if positive he will *by his own will* develop his spiritual faculties, live a spiritual life and in time receive the teaching necessary to become a trained clairvoyant and a master of his faculty at any and all times, free to exercise it or not, as he pleases.

If a person has this slight laxity between the vital and dense bodies, and is of a negative temperament, he is liable to become the prey of discarnate spirits, as a medium.

Where the connection between the vital and dense body is very lax, so that it may be withdrawn, and the man is positive, he may become an Invisible Helper, capable of taking the two higher ethers away from his dense body *at will* and using them as a vehicle for sense perception and memory. He can then function consciously in the Spiritual World and bring back a recollection of everything he has done there, so that, for instance, when he leaves his body at night he takes up the life in the Invisible World in a fully conscious manner, as we do here when we wake up in the

morning after sleep and perform our various duties in the visible world.

When a person has this lax connection between the vital body and the dense body and is of a negative temperament, the spirits which are earth bound and seek to manifest here may withdraw his vital body by way of the spleen and temporarily use the ether of which it is composed to materialize spirit forms, returning the ether to the medium after the seance is over.

Question No. 130

If mediumship is so dangerous, why do not the mediums cease to allow themselves to be controlled?

Answer: In the first place, of course, the great majority of the mediums do not realize that there is danger. They are particularly unaware of the enormous danger which threatens them after death. The desire body may then be appropriated by the spirit control. If they were to try to stop the influence of the spirit control while still here in the body they would find that that entity has an exceedingly strong hold upon them, a control it is very difficult to break, and they ought to realize that naturally when death brings them into the

same world with these spirit controls the danger will be still greater.

The writer has known certain cases where mediums have balked and tried to escape from the toils of the spirit control, but have failed to break the strong hold of that entity. They were helpless. Mediums have come to the writer for help and told him that they were almost irresistibly compelled by their spirit controls to commit suicide and murder; that they had begged and pleaded with the spirit controls to leave them alone, but without avail. Cases are known also where spirit controls have mercilessly dragged their victims out of bed in the middle of night against their will and forced them to listen to their importunities. Only seldom does one hear that they show mercy. Though the writer has known mediums who have been ill from such treatment, he has only known of one case where the sickness of the medium induced the spirit controls to listen to his plea and leave him alone for a few months while he recuperated.

Thus it will be seen that mediumship, once entered into, is not usually a matter of choice with the mediums; they lose the power to shut out spirit controls. While they do the bidding of their taskmasters and are docile, they may not feel the bit; but let one of

them try to balk, and he or she will soon feel that the spirit control has both bit and spur, and is merciless in his use of them.

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