

Spiritual Seeing and Spiritual Hearing

WHILE THE PHYSICAL disability of blindness is without doubt a great affliction, there is a blindness which has a more detrimental effect upon those who are suffering therefrom, namely, blindness of heart. An old proverb says, "None is so blind as he who will not see."

Every great religion has brought to the people to whom it was given certain vital truths necessary for their unfoldment, and the Christ Himself told us that the truth would make us free. Many of the sublime truths contained in the Christian teachings have, however, been obscured by creeds and dogmas, with which the various sects and denominations have contented themselves. They hire a minister and charge him with the duty of expounding to them the truth of the Bible, but his tongue is tied by the creed of his particular denomination. He is prohibited on pain of public disgrace and dismissal from publishing or preaching anything not in strict agreement with the particular brand of religion desired by those who pay him his salary. Each minister is given a pair of glasses, colored according to the particular creed which he represents, and woe betide him if ever he dares to look at the Bible save with those spectacles upon his nose; to do so means financial ruin and social ostracism, which very few are brave enough to face.

So long as the minister keeps his denominational spectacles on there is no danger, but sometimes

it happens that he takes them off, either by design or by accident. He may be of a venturesome nature and somehow have a feeling that there is something outside his particular sphere of vision, or he may have accidentally mislaid his glasses. But in either case if he stumbles upon the naked truth in God's word he becomes unhappy. The writer has spoken to a number of ministers who confessed that they had become aware of certain truths but dared not preach them because to do so would have called down the wrath of their congregation upon them, by disturbing established conditions. And this is not to be wondered at. Even King James, who was a monarch and an autocrat, cautioned the translators of the Bible not to translate in such a manner that the new version would disturb established ideas, because he knew that the moment new points were introduced there would be a controversy between the defenders of the old religious views and the new, which would probably result in civil war. The great majority are always ready to sacrifice truth for the sake of peace. Therefore we are bound today, despite our boasted freedom, and no matter how keen may be our physical eyesight, vast numbers among us are blinded by a scale so opaque that it almost entirely obscures their spiritual vision.

But in spite of everything the truth crops out, sometimes in the most unexpected places, as the following quotation, will show. It sounds more like the musings of a mystic than the writings of a Presbyterian minister bound to the dreadful doctrine of predestination and commitment of souls to everlasting hellfire, where dreadful tortures are

Some readers may be particularly interested in this article written by Max Heindel because, though it first appeared in the October 1915 Rays, it is not contained in any book.

endured for eternity, even by babes who have been thus foreordained to suffer for eternity by their Creator. The article was written by a well-known Philadelphia minister, and is only another indication of the fact that a sixth sense is slowly developing, often in the most unexpected people, crushing creed with mystic facts and knowledge. The minister says

Everyone of us casts a shadow. There hangs about us a sort of penumbra, a strange, indefinable something which we call personal influence, which has its effect on every other life on which it falls. It goes with us wherever we go. It is not something we can have when we will nor lay aside like a garment. It is something that always pours out from our life like light from a lamp, like heat from a flame, like perfume from a flower.”

Once when the Christ was alone with His disciples, He asked them: “Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?” And they answered and said: “Some say that thou art Elijah, others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.” And Christ answered and said: “But whom say ye that I am?” Peter said, in answer to this question: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” He had discovered the truth, had seen the Christ. And the rejoinder of Christ came quickly: “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven....and I will give unto thee the keys to the kingdom of heaven.”

Here materialistic religion, which has so often debased art in its service, can see only a material key, and therefore we find pictures where Peter stands with an enormous key in his hand. But the mystic finds in this incident that the disciples were taught a great truth in nature, the truth of rebirth. By the key of Initiation this mystery was unlocked, and the doors of heaven were opened to show the immortality of the spirit, and that we return to this sphere of action to learn new and greater lessons life after life just as a child learns its lessons at school day after day.

If rebirth were not a fact in nature, statements about the return of departed spirits such as Jeremiah, Elijah, and others in the body of the living Jesus would have been an absurdity, and it would have been the duty of Christ as Teacher of His disciples to have explained to them that such ideas were ridiculous. Instead, He pursued the subject to discover the depth of their discernment, and asked, “Whom say ye that I am?” And when the answer came, showing that they discerned in Him someone above the prophets, above the human race, namely, the Christ, the Son of the living God, He perceived that they were ready for the Initiation which settles the question of rebirth beyond all dispute in the mind of the disciple.

No amount of reading in books, of conversations or explanations,



Stained glass, Edward Burne-Jones, Victoria and Albert Museum

The Calling of Saint Peter

The fisher of men for the kingdom of heaven is given the keys of initiation—for himself and to confer through teaching and example.

can ever settle that point beyond all possibility of doubt. The candidate must know for himself. Therefore in the Mystery Schools of today, after the first

Initiation has opened to him the invisible world, he is given the opportunity to satisfy himself concerning rebirth. He is shown a child that has recently passed out of the body. On account of its tender years it takes birth quickly, probably within a year after death. The new Initiate watches this child until finally it enters the mother's womb, to emerge as a newborn babe again. The reason he watches a child in preference to an adult is that the latter stays out of physical life approximately one thousand years while a babe has a new embodiment inside of a very few years; some even find a new environment after a few months and are born within a year.

During this time the new Initiate has opportunities also to study the life and actions of those who are in purgatory and the first heaven, which are the hell and heaven referred to in the Bible. This was what Christ helped His disciples to do—to see and to know. Upon the rock of this truth the Church is founded, for if there were no rebirth there could be no evolutionary progress, and consequently all advancement would be an impossibility.

But what then is the way to realization? This is the great question, and to this there is and can be only one answer—the unfoldment of the sixth sense by means of which the mystic discovers the immortal shadow that the Presbyterian minister speaks about. Heaven and hell are all about us; our own past lives and the lives of our contemporaries have been thrown upon the screen of time and are there ready to be read at any time when we shall have built senses so that we may read them. The electric light focused through a stereopticon lens projects a brilliant image of a slide when there is darkness, but leaves no visible imprint whatever when the sun's rays strike the screen. Similarly, if we would read the mystic scroll of our past, we must learn to still our senses so that the world without disappears in darkness. Then by the light of the spirit we shall see the pictures of the past take the place of those of the present.

The shadow seen by the Presbyterian minister around the body is analogous to the photosphere or aura of the sun and the planets. Each of those great bodies has such an invisible shadow, that is to say, invisible under ordinary conditions. We see the

photosphere of the sun when the physical orb is obscured during an eclipse, but at no other time. So also with this shadow or photosphere of man. When we learn to control our sense of sight so that we may look at a man without seeing his physical form, then this photosphere or aura may be seen in all its splendor, for the colors of earth are dull in comparison with those spiritual living fires which surround and emanate from each human being.

The fantastic, coruscating play of the aurora borealis gives us an idea of how this photosphere or shadow acts. It is in incessant motion; darts of force and flame are constantly shooting out from every part thereof, but are particularly active around the head; and the colors and hues of this auric atmosphere change with every thought or move. This shadow is only observable to those who close their eyes to all the sights of earth, who have ceased to care for the praise or blame of men, but are looking only to their heavenly Father; who are ready and willing to uphold truth and truth alone; who see with the heart and see into the hearts of men that they may discover therein the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Nor is that thing which thus surrounds us a shadow which fades when the sun of life has ceased to shine in the physical body. Far from it. It is the resplendent garment of the human spirit, obscured during physical existence by the opaque garment of flesh and blood. When John L. McCreery writes about the friends who have passed over, that

*They have but dropped their robe of clay
To put a shining raiment on,*

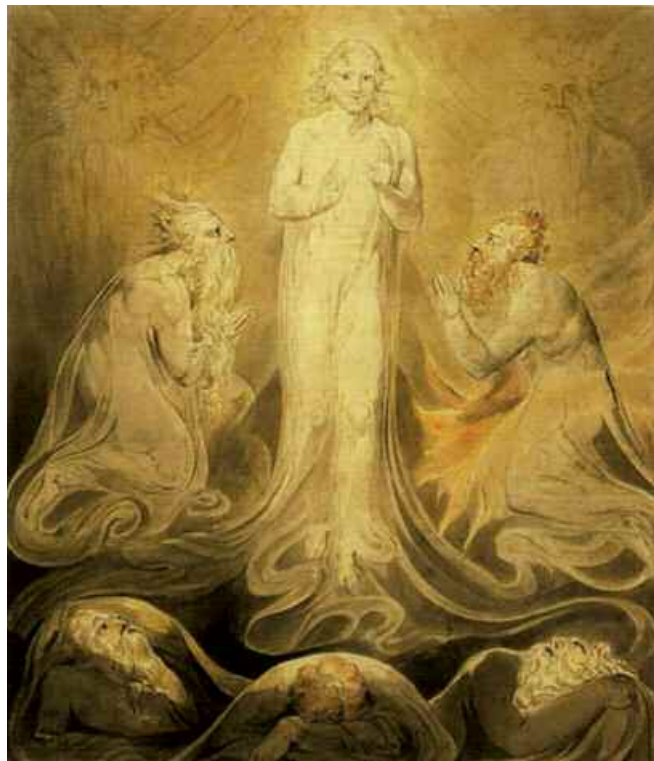
he is incorrect. Their raiment is truly "shining," but they do not put it on at death. It would be more correct to conceive of ourselves as wearing a garment of intensely brilliant soul-substance which is hidden by a dark and lusterless "coat of skin," a physical body. When we drop that, the magnificent house from heaven spoken of by Paul in 2 Cor. 5 becomes our normal habitation of light. It is the *soma psuchicon* or soul body (mistranslated "natural body" in 1 Cor. 15:44) in which we shall meet the Lord at His coming, for "flesh and blood," such as we use at present, "cannot inherit the Kingdom of God."

There is a great deal of difference in these auric emanations; in fact, there are as many different types as there are people. The play of colors is never twice the same. If we were to watch the sunrise and sunset for a lifetime, we should never find two exactly alike as to color, cloud effect, etc. Similarly, when we watch the play of human emotions as revealed in the aura, there is an infinite variety even in the same person when placed in identical positions and conditions at different times. In a sense all sunsets are alike; certain people see no differences, but to the artist the variegated color play is sometimes actually painful in its intensity.

Some may view the luminous auric cloud with only a vague appreciation of its import. But when a Christ beholds the Promethean struggles of poor blind humanity, what wonder that He cries: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Unless we are prepared to become "men of sorrows," we should not wish for the extension of sight which enables its possessor to penetrate the opacity of the body, revealing thereby the soul, for thenceforth we are bound to bear our brother's burdens in addition to our own. But whoso becomes a "servant" of humanity has with all the sorrow also a joy and a peace that passeth understanding.

When we have had our spiritual eyes opened and have learned to see this heavenly vision, the Christ within the hearts of men, there are other steps that take us further along the path. When we learn to close our ears to the clashing and clamoring throng, to the quarrels of men over this, that, and the other unessential thing, when we have learned that creeds, dogmas, and all earthly opinions are of no value, that there is only one voice in the universe worth listening to, the voice of our Father that speaks ever to them that seek His face, then we shall be able to hear the Song of the Spheres spoken of in the immortal *Faust* in the inspired words:

*The sun intones his ancient song,
Mid rival chant of brother spheres,
His predestined course he speeds along,
In thunderous march throughout the years.*



Watercolor on paper, William Blake (1757-1827), Victoria and Albert Museum, London

The Transfiguration

"The Transfiguration as seen in the Memory of Nature reveals the physical body of Jesus as a dazzling white, thus showing his dependence upon the Father, the Universal Spirit."

Similarly to the case of the photosphere of the sun, which is seen only during an eclipse when the physical orb has been obscured, the Song of the Spheres is not heard till all other sounds have been silenced, for it is the Father's voice. In this sublime harmony of the spheres the keynotes of Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty reverberate through the whole universe, and in these vibrations we live, move, and have our being.

Love divine pours out upon us in unstinted measure from each cosmic chord to cheer the despondent and urge the laggard. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father...Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." Therefore let us rest upon the great cosmic heart of the Father. His voice shall comfort and strengthen the soul.

Each year and age this great Cosmic Chant changes; each life we learn to sing a new song. God, in all and through all, works His miracles in

nature and in man. We are usually deaf to the magic wrought by the silent sound of the divine Word, but if we can learn to “hear,” we shall sense the true nearness of our Father, closer than hands and feet; we shall know that we are never alone, never out of His loving care.

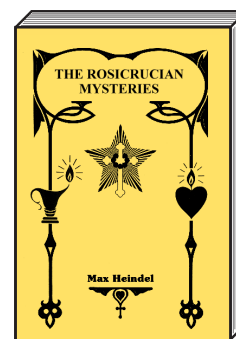
As the sun and planets give both light and sound, so man also has his keynote of light and sound. In the medulla burns a light like the flame of a candle, but it does not burn steadily, quietly, and silently; it pulsates and at the same time it emits a sound which varies from birth to death and may be said never to be the same. As it changes, so do we change, for this sound is the keynote of the human being. In it is expressed his hopes and his fears, his sorrows and his joys, as they have been worked out in the physical world. This fire is kindled by the archetype of the physical body. The archetype is a vacuous sphere, but by sounding a certain note it draws to itself the physical concretions which we see here as its manifestation, namely, the body which we call the man. In this sounding flame the greater number of nerves in the human body have their root and origin. This place is the vital spot in man, the seat of life, the kernel of the “shadow” which the Presbyterian minister spoke about. When we find that point, we have almost reached the heart of man.

To reach that supreme point other steps are necessary. But we are usually so wrapped up in our own interests, regardless of the interests and cares of other people, that we are self-centered. This must be overcome; we must learn to bury our own sorrows and joys, to stifle our own feelings, for just as the light of the sun hides the photosphere and the opaque physical body of man veils the beautiful auric atmosphere, so also our personal feelings, emotions, and interests make us insensible to fellow feelings. When we have learned to still the feeling of our own hearts, to think little of our own sorrows and joys, we begin to sense the beating of the great Cosmic Heart, which is now in travail to bring many sons to glory. The birth pangs of our Father-Mother in Heaven are sensed only by the mystic in his highest and most sublime moments when he has entirely stifled the selfish wailing of his own heart. That is the strongest and

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most difficult enemy to overcome. But when that has been achieved he senses, as said, the Great Heart of our Father in Heaven.

Thus step by step we approach the Light, even the Father of Lights in whom there is “no shadow.” And let us make the following points very clear: it may be a mark of some achievement to be able to see “the shadow”; it may mark a higher step in attainment to be able to hear “the voice in the silence”; but above everything, let us strive to feel the heartbeats of our fellows, to make their sorrows our own, to rejoice in their attainments, and to guide them to our Father's bosom for peace and comfort. □