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# CLOUD UPON THE SANCTUARY

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KARL von ECKARTSHAUSEN





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KARL von ECKARTSHAUSEN





Karl von Eckartshausen was an eminent German nobleman and statesman who flourished towards the end of the eighteenth century. The following letters were written prior to 1800 A.D.

Save to a few students his writings have remained unknown in England, though his influence was widespread in Germany, Russia and France. Tolstoy, in his great novel "*War and Peace*," describing the social conditions in Moscow at the time of the Napoleonic invasion in 1812, says that "everyone here is reading Eckartshausen."

Eckartshausen died in 1813, aged 61 years.

## LETTER I

THERE is no age more remarkable to the quiet observer, than our own. Everywhere there is a fermentation in the mind, as in the heart of man; everywhere there is a battle between light and darkness, between exploded thought and living ideas, between powerless wills and living active force; in fine, everywhere there is war between animal man and growing spiritual man.

It is said that we live in the age of light, but it would be truer to say that we are living in that of twilight; here and there a luminous ray pierces the mist of darkness, but does not light to full clearness either our reason or our heart. Men are not of one mind, scientists dispute, and where there is discord, truth is not yet apprehended.

The most important objects for humanity are still undertermined. No one is agreed either on the principle of reason, on the principle of morality, or on the cause of the will. This proves that though we are dwelling in a reputed age of light, we do not well understand what emanates from our hearts—and what from our heads. Probably we should reach this knowledge much sooner if we did not imagine that we have the torch of science already in our hands, or if we would cast a look on our weakness and recognise that we need a higher illumination. We live in the times of idolatry of the intellect; we place a common light upon the altar and we loudly proclaim that here and now is the aurora, that everywhere daylight is really about to appear, and that the world is emerging more and more from obscurity into the full day of perfection, through the arts, sciences, cultured taste, and even by a purer understanding of religion.

Poor mankind! To what eminence have you raised the happiness of man? Has there ever been an age which has counted so many victims to humanity as the present? Has there ever been an age in which immorality and egotism have been greater or more dominant than in this one? The tree is known by its fruits. Insensate beings! With your imaginary natural reason, from whence have you the light by which you are so willing to enlighten others? Are not all your ideas borrowed from your senses, which do not give you the reality but merely its phenomena? Is it not true that in time and space all knowledge is but relative? Is it not true that all which we call reality is also relative, for absolute truth is not to be found in the phenomenal world. Thus your natural reason does not possess the true essence, but only an appearance of truth and light; and the more this semblance increases and spreads, the more the essence of light fades inwardly; the man is lost in the apparent and gropes vainly after dazzling phantasmal images devoid of all actuality.



The philosophy of our age raises the natural intellect into independent objectivity, gives it judicial power, exempts it from any superior authority, makes it autonomous, converting it into divinity by closing all harmony and communication with God ; and deified Reason, which has no other law but its own, is to govern Man and make him happy ! Can darkness spread the light ? . . . Can poverty dispense wealth ? Is death capable of giving life ?

It is truth which leads man to happiness. Can you confer truth ?

That which you call truth is a form of conception empty of real matter ; its knowledge is acquired from without, through the senses, and the understanding co-ordinates these by observed synthetic relationship into science or opinion.

You abstract from the Scriptures and Tradition their moral, theoretical and practical truth, but as individuality is the principle of your intelligence, and as egotism is the incentive to your will, you do not see, by your light, the moral law which dominates, or you repel it with your will. It is to this length that the light of to-day has penetrated. Individuality under the cloak of false philosophy is a child of corruption.

Who can pretend that the sun is in full zenith if no bright rays illuminate the earth, and no warmth vitalises vegetation ? If wisdom does not benefit man, if love does not make him happy, but very little has been done for him on the whole.

Oh ! if only natural man, that is, sensuous man, would learn that the principle of his reason and the incentive of his will are only his individuality, and that on this account he is miserable, he would then seek interiorly for a higher principle, and he would thereby approach that source which alone can communicate this principle to all, because it is *wisdom in its essential substance*.

Jesus Christ is Wisdom, Truth, and Love. He, as Wisdom, is the Principle of reason, and the Source of the purest knowledge. As Love, He is the Principle of morality, the true and pure incentive of the will.

Love and Wisdom beget the spirit of truth, the interior light, this light illuminates us, and makes supernatural things objective to us.

It is inconceivable to what depths of error a man falls when he abandons simple truths of faith by opposing his own opinions.

Our century seeks to determine by subtlety of brain the principle of reason and morality, or the ground of the will ; if the men of science were mindful, they would see that these things are better answered in the heart of even the simplest man than through their most brilliant casuistry. The practical Christian finds the incentive

of the will, the principle of all morality, really and objectively in his heart ; and this incentive is expressed in the following formula :—  
“ Love God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself.”

The love of God and his neighbour is the motive for the Christian's will, and the essence of love itself is Jesus Christ dwelling within us.

It is in this way that the principle of reason is wisdom in us ; and the essence of wisdom—wisdom in its substance—is again Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Thus we find in Him the principle of reason and of morality.

All that I am now saying is not hyperphysical extravagance ; it is reality, absolute truth, that every one can prove for himself by experience, as soon as he receives within him the principle of all reason and morality—Jesus Christ, being wisdom and love *in essence*.

But the eye of the man of sensuous perception only is closed firmly to the fundamental basis of all that is true and all that is transcendental.

Even that reason which many would fain raise to the throne of legislative authority is only reason of the senses, whose light differs from that of transcendental reason, as does the phosphorescent glimmer of decayed wood from the glories of sunshine.

Absolute truth does not exist for sensuous man ; it exists only for interior and spiritual man who possesses a suitable sensorium ; or, to speak more correctly, who possesses an interior organ to receive the absolute truth of the transcendental world, a spiritual faculty which cognises spiritual objects as objectively and naturally as the exterior senses perceive external phenomena.

This interior faculty of the man spiritual, this sensorium for the metaphysical world, is unfortunately not yet known to those who cognise only on the external, for it is a mystery of the kingdom of God.

The current incredulity towards everything which is not cognised objectively by our senses explains the present misconception of truths which are, of all, most important to man.

But how can this be otherwise ? In order to see one must have eyes, to hear one must have ears. Every apparent object requires its appropriate senses. So also transcendental objects require their sensorium—and it is this sensorium which is closed in most men. Hence they judge the metaphysical world through the intelligence of their senses, even as the blind imagine colours and the deaf judge tones—without suitable instruments.

There is an objective and substantial ground of reason, an objective and substantial motive for the will. These two together form the new principle of *life*, and morality is there essentially inherent. This pure substance of reason and will, re-uniting in us the Divine



and the human, is Jesus Christ, the light of the world, who must enter into direct relationship with us, to be really recognised.

This real knowledge is actual faith, in which everything takes place in spirit and in truth.

We must therefore have a sensorium fitted for such communication, an organised and spiritual sensorium, a spiritual and interior faculty able to receive this light; but it is closed—as I have said—to most men by the incrustation of the senses.

Such an interior organ is the intuitive sense of the transcendental world, and until this intuitive sense is effective in us we can have no certainty of more lofty truths. This organism has been naturally inactive since the Fall, which relegated man to the world of physical sense. The gross matter which envelops the interior sensorium is a film which veils the internal eye, and prevents the exterior eye from seeing into spiritual realms. This same matter muffles our internal hearing, so that we are deaf to the sounds of the metaphysical world; it so paralyses our spiritual speech that we can scarcely stammer words of sacred import, *words which we pronounced formerly*, and by virtue of which we held authority over the elements and external nature.

The opening of this spiritual sensorium is the mystery of the New Man—the mystery of Regeneration, and of the vital union between God and man—it is the noblest object of religion on earth, of that religion whose sublime goal is none other than to unite men with God in Spirit and in Truth.

We can discern easily after this manner why it is that religion tends always towards the subjection of the senses. It does so because it desires to make the spiritual man dominant, in order that the truly rational man may govern the man of sense. Philosophy feels this truth, only its error consists in not apprehending the true source of reason, and in attempting to replace it by individuality and sensuous reason.

As man has internally a spiritual organ and a sensorium to receive the true principle of reason, or divine wisdom, and a true motive for the will, or divine love, so he has likewise exteriorly a physical and material sensorium to receive the *appearance* of light and truth. As external nature can have no absolute truth, but only the relative truth of the phenomenal world, so human reason cannot cognise intelligible truth; it can but apprehend through the appearance of phenomena, which stimulate concupiscence only as a motive for the will, and in this consists the corruption of sensuous man and the degradation of nature.

The exterior sensorium in man is composed of frail matter, whereas the internal sensorium is organised fundamentally from incorruptible, transcendental and metaphysical substance.

The first is the cause of our depravity and our mortality, the second of our incorruptibility and of our immortality.

In the regions of material and corruptible nature, mortality hides immortality; therefore all our trouble results from corruptible mortal matter. In order that man should be released from this distress, it is necessary that the immortal and incorruptible principle, which dwells within, should expand and absorb the corruptible principle, so that the envelope of the senses should be removed, and man appear in his pristine purity.

This natural envelope is a truly corruptible substance found in our blood, forming the fleshly bonds binding our immortal spirits under the servitude of the mortal flesh.

This envelope can be rent more or less in every man, and then he can be placed in greater spiritual liberty, and can be made cognisant of the transcendental world.

There are three different degrees in the opening of our spiritual sensorium.

The first degree reaches to the moral plane only; the transcendental world then operates in us by interior movements, called inspiration.

The second and higher degree opens our sensorium to the reception of the spiritual and the intellectual, and then the metaphysical world *works* in us by interior *illumination*.

The third degree, which is the highest and most seldom attained, opens the whole inner man. It breaks the crust which darkens our spiritual eyes and ears; it reveals the kingdom of spirit, and enables us to see, objectively, metaphysical and transcendental sights; hence all visions are explained fundamentally.

Thus we have an internal sense of objectivity as well as that which is external; but the objects and the senses are different. Exteriorly animal and sensual motives act in us and corruptible sensuous matter receives the action. Interiorly it is metaphysical and indivisible substance which gains admittance within, and the incorruptible and immortal essence of our Spirit receives its influence. Nevertheless, generally things pass much in the same way interiorly as they do externally. The law is everywhere the same. Hence—as the spirit or our internal man has far other senses and another objective sight than the rational man—one need not be surprised that the spirit should remain an enigma for the scientists of our age, for those who have no objective sense of the transcendental and spiritual world. They measure the supernatural by the measurement of the senses; they confound the corruptible motive with the incorruptible substance, and their judgments are necessarily false on an object for the discernment of which they possess no senses, no objectivity of the thing in consequence, and—also in consequence—neither relative nor absolute truth. So far, however, as regards those truths which we proclaim herein, we owe a debt of gratitude towards the philosophy of Kant.



Kant has shown incontestably that the natural reason can know absolutely nothing of what is supernatural, spiritual, and transcendental; that it can understand nothing either analytically or synthetically; and that thus it can neither prove the possibility nor the reality of spirits, or souls, or God.

This is a great truth, lofty and beneficial for our epoch, though it is obvious that St. Paul has already enunciated it (1 Cor. i, 2-24). But the pagan philosophy of Christian scientists has been able to ignore it up to Kant. The increment of this truth is dual: in the first place it puts insurmountable limits to the sentiment, to the fanaticism and to the extravagance of carnal reason. Secondly, it shows, by dazzling contrast, the necessity and divinity of Revelation. It proves that our human reason, in its state of enfoldment, *has no* objective source for the supernatural except revelation, no source otherwise of instruction in Divine things or concerning the spiritual world, the soul and its immortality; hence it follows that without revelation it is absolutely impossible to suppose or conjecture anything regarding these matters.

We are, therefore, indebted to Kant for proving philosophically, nowadays, what long ago was taught in a more advanced and illuminated school—that *without Revelation no knowledge of God, neither any doctrine touching the soul, could be at all possible.*

It is therefore clear that an universal Revelation must serve as a fundamental basis to all mundane religions.

Hence, following Kant, it is clear that the intelligible world is wholly inaccessible to natural reason, and that God dwells in light, into which no speculation of the enfolded reason can penetrate. Thus the natural man, or man of human reason, has no sense of transcendental reality, and therefore it was necessary that it should be *revealed* to him, for which faith is required, because the means are given to him in faith whereby his inner sensorium unfolds, and through this he can apprehend the reality of truths otherwise incapable of being understood by the natural man.

It is quite true that with new senses we can acquire the perception of further reality. This reality exists already, but it is not known to us, because we lack the organ by which to cognise it. One must not lay blame on the percept, but on the receptive organ.

With, however, the development of the new organ, we have a new perception, a sense of new reality. In its absence the spiritual world cannot exist for us, because the organ rendering it objective to us is not developed. In its unfoldment, the curtain is all at once raised, the impenetrable veil is torn away, the cloud before the Sanctuary lifts, a new world suddenly exists for us, scales fall from the eyes, and we are transported from the phenomenal world to the regions of truth,

God alone is *substance*, absolute truth; He alone is He who *is*, and we are what He has made us. For Him, all exists in Unity; for us, all exists in multiplicity.

A great many men have no more idea of the development of the inner sensorium than they have of the true and objective life of the spirit, which they neither perceive nor forecast in any manner. Hence it is impossible for them to know that one can comprehend the spiritual and transcendental, and can thus be raised to the supernatural, even to vision thereof.

The great and true work of building the Temple consists solely in destroying the miserable Adamic hut and in erecting a divine temple; this means, in other words, to develop in us the interior sensorium, or the organ to receive God. After this process the metaphysical and incorruptible principle rules over the terrestrial, and man begins to live, not any longer in the principle of self-love, but in the Spirit and in the Truth, of which he is the Temple.

The moral law then evolves into love for one's neighbour in deed and in truth, whereas for the natural man it is but a simple attitude of thought; the spiritual man, regenerated in spirit, sees all that *in its essence* of which the natural man has only the forms void of thought, mere empty sounds, symbols and letters, which are dead images without interior spirit. The most exalted aim of religion is the intimate union of man with God; and this union is possible here below; but it can only take place by the opening of our inner sensorium, which enables our hearts to become receptive of God.

Therein are those great mysteries of which our human philosophy does not dream, the key to which is not to be found in scholastic science.

Meanwhile a more advanced school has always existed to which the deposition of all science has been confided, and this school was the community illuminated interiorly by the Saviour, the society of the Elect, which has continued from the first day of creation to the present time; its members, it is true, are scattered all over the world, but they have always been united by one spirit and one truth; they have had but one knowledge, a single source of truth, one lord, one doctor, and one master, in whom resides substantially the whole plenitude of God, who also alone initiates them into the high mysteries of Nature and the Spiritual World.

This community of light has been called from all time the invisible and interior Church, or the most ancient of all communities, of which we will speak more fully in the next letter.



## LETTER II

IT is necessary, my dear brothers in the Lord, to give you a clear idea of the interior Church ; of that illuminated Community of God which is scattered throughout the world, but is governed by one truth and united in one spirit.

This community of light has existed since the first day of the world's creation, and its duration will be to the end of time. It is the society of those elect who know the Light in the Darkness and separate what is pure therein.

This community possesses a School, in which all who thirst for knowledge are instructed by the Spirit of Wisdom itself ; and all the mysteries of God and of nature are preserved therein for the children of light. Perfect knowledge of God, of nature and of humanity are the objects of instruction in this school. It is thence that all truths penetrate into the world ; herein is the School of the Prophets and of all who search for wisdom ; it is in this community alone that truth and the explanation of all mystery is to be found. It is the most hidden of communities, yet it possesses members gathered from many orders ; of such is this School. From all time there has been an exterior school based on the interior one, of which it is but the outer expression. From all time, therefore, there has been a hidden assembly, a society of the Elect, of those who sought for and had capacity for light, and this interior society was called the interior Sanctuary or Church. All that the external Church possesses in symbol, ceremony or rite is the letter which expresses externally the spirit and the truth residing in the interior Sanctuary.

Hence this Sanctuary, composed of scattered members, but knit by the bonds of perfect unity and love, has been occupied from the earliest ages in building the grand Temple to the regeneration of humanity, by which the reign of God will be manifest. This society is in the communion of those who have most capacity for light, *i.e.*, the Elect. The Elect are united in spirit and in truth, and their

Chief is the Light of the World Himself, Jesus Christ, the One Anointed in light, the single mediator for the human race, the Way, the Truth and the Life—Primitive Light, wisdom and the only *medium* by which man can return to God.

The interior Church was formed immediately after the fall of man, and received from God at first-hand the revelation of those means by which fallen humanity could be again raised to its rights and delivered from its misery. It received the primitive charge of all revelation and mystery ; it received the key of true science, both divine and natural.

But, when men multiplied, the frailty of man and his weakness necessitated an exterior society which veiled the interior one, and concealed the spirit and the truth in the letter. The people at large were not capable of comprehending high interior truth, and the danger would have been too great in confiding that which was of all most holy to incapable people. Therefore, inward truths were wrapped in external and visible ceremonies, so that men, by the perception of the outer, which is the symbol of the interior, might by degrees be enabled safely to approach the interior spiritual truths.

But the secret depository has always been confided to him who in his day had the most capacity for illumination, and he became the sole guardian of the original Trust, as High Priest of the Sanctuary.

When it proved necessary that interior truths should be enfolded in exterior ceremony and symbol, on account of the real weakness of men who were not capable of sustaining the unveiled Light, then exterior worship began. It was, however, always the type and symbol of the interior—that is to say, the symbol of the true homage offered to God *in spirit and in truth*.

The difference between spiritual and animal man, or between rational and sensual man, made the exterior and interior imperative. Interior truth passed into the external wrapped in symbol and ceremony, so that sensuous man could observe and be led gradually thereby to interior truth. Hence external worship was symbolically typical of interior truths, of the relationship between man and God before and after the Fall, the estate of his dignity and of his most perfect reconciliation. All the symbols of external worship are based upon the three fundamental relations—the Fall, the Reconciliation and the Complete Atonement.

The care of the external service was the occupation of priests, and every father of a family was in the ancient times charged with this duty. First fruits and the first born among animals were offered to God, the one symbolising that all which preserves and nourishes us comes from Him ; the other that animal man must be killed to make room for rational and spiritual man,



The external worship of God should never have been separated from interior service, but as the weakness of man tended too easily to forget the spirit in the letter, so the Spirit of God was vigilant to note in every nation those who had most capacity for light; they were employed as agents to spread the light according to man's capacity, and to revivify the dead letter by the Spirit and the truth.

Through these divine instruments the interior truth of the Sanctuary was taken into all nations, and modified symbolically according to their customs, capacity for culture, climate, and receptiveness. So therefore the external types of every religion, worship, ceremonies and Sacred Books in general have more or less clearly, as their object of instruction, the interior truths of the Sanctuary, by which man—but only in the latter days—will be conducted to the universal knowledge of the one Absolute Truth.

The more the external worship of a people has remained united with the spirit of esoteric truth, the purer its religion; but the wider the difference has been between the symbolic letter and the invisible truth, the more imperfect has become the religion. It even degenerated into polytheism among some nations, when the external letter lost utterly the interior spirit, when the external form parted entirely from its inner truth, when ceremonial observances without soul or life remained alone.

When the *germs* of the most important truths had been carried everywhere by God's agents, He chose a certain people to raise up a *vital symbol* destined to manifest the means by which He intended to govern the human race in its present condition, and by which it would be led into complete purification and perfection.

God Himself communicated to this people its exterior religious legislation; He gave all the symbols and enacted all the ceremonies, and they contained the impress, as it were, of the great esoteric truths of the Sanctuary.

God consecrated this external Church in Abraham, gave its commandments through Moses, and thereto assured its highest perfection by the dual mission of Jesus Christ, existing personally in poverty and suffering, and by the communication of His Spirit in the glory of the Resurrection.

Now, as God Himself laid the foundation of the outer Church, the whole of the symbols of external worship formed the science of the Temple, or of the Priests, in those days, and the mysteries of the most sacred truths became external through revelation. The scientific knowledge of this holy symbolism was the science designed to unite fallen man once more with God; hence religion received its name from being the science of rebinding man with God to bring man back to his origin.

One sees plainly by this pure idea of religion in general that the unity thereof is to be sought in the inner Sanctuary, and that the multiplicity of external religions can never alter the true identity which is at the base of every exterior.

The wisdom of the temple under the ancient alliance was preserved by priests and by prophets. To the priests was confided the external,—the cortex of hieroglyph. The prophets had the charge of the inner truth, and their occupation was continually to recall the priests from the letter to the spirit when they began to forget the spirit and cleave only to the letter. The science of the priests was that of the knowledge of exterior symbols. That of the prophets was experimental possession of the truth of the symbols. In the external was the letter; in the interior the spirit lived. There was, therefore, in the ancient alliance a school of prophets and of priests, the one occupying itself with the spirit in the emblem, the other with the emblem itself. The priests had the external possession of the Ark, of the shew-bread, of the candlestick, of the manna, of Aaron's rod; but the prophets were in interior possession of the inner spiritual truth which was represented exteriorly by the symbols just mentioned.

The external Church of the ancient alliance was visible; the interior Church was always invisible, must be invisible, and yet must govern all, because force and power are alone confided to her.

When the divine, external worship abandoned the interior worship, it fell, and God proved by a remarkable chain of circumstances that the letter could not exist without the spirit, that it is only there to lead to the spirit, and that it is useless and even rejected by God if it fails in this object.

As the spirit of nature extends to the most sterile depths to vivify, preserve and cause growth in everything susceptible of its influence, so also the spirit of light spreads itself interiorly among nations to animate everywhere the dead letter by the living spirit.

This is why we find a Job among idolaters, a Melchizedek among strange nations, a Joseph with the Egyptian priests, a Moses in the country of Midian, as living proofs that the interior community of those who are capable of receiving light was united by one spirit and one truth in all times and among all nations.

To these agents of light from the one inner community was united the Chief of all agents, Jesus Christ Himself, in the midst of time, as *royal priest* after the order of Melchizedek.

The divine agents of the ancient alliance hitherto represented only specialised perfections of God; therefore a powerful movement was required which should show all at once—*all in one*. An universal type appeared, which gave the real touch of perfect unity to the picture, which opened a fresh door, and destroyed the number of human bondage. The law of love began when the image emanating from wisdom itself showed to man all the greatness of his being, vivified



him anew, assured him of his immortality, and raised his intellectual status that it might become the true temple for the spirit.

This Chief Agent of all, this Saviour of the World and Universal Regeneration, claimed man's whole attention to the primitive truth, whereby he could preserve his existence and recover his former dignity. Through the conditions of His own abasement He laid the foundation for the redemption of man, and He promised to accomplish it completely one day through His Spirit. He showed also truly in a narrower circle—that is, among His apostles—those things which should come to pass in the future to all the Elect.

He extended the chain of the inner community of light among His Elect, to whom He sent the Spirit of Truth, and confided to them the most exalted primitive instruction in all divine and natural things as a sign that He would never forsake His community.

When the letter and symbolic worship of the external Church of the ancient alliance had been realised by the Incarnation of the Saviour, and verified in His person, new symbols became requisite for external use, which showed us through the letter the future accomplishment of universal redemption.

The rites and symbols of the external Christian Church were formed after the pattern of the great, unchangeable and fundamental truths, announcing things of a strength and of an importance impossible to describe, and revealed only to those who knew the innermost Sanctuary.

This Sanctuary remained changeless, though external religion received in the course of time and circumstances varied modifications, and became divorced from the interior truths which can alone preserve the letter. The profane idea of wishing to "secularize" all that is Christian, and to Christianise all that is political, changed the exterior edifice, and covered with the shadow of death all that reposed within it of light and life. Hence rose divisions and heresies, and the spirit of Sophistry ready to expound the letter when it had already lost the essence of truth.

Current incredulity increased corruption to its utmost point, attacking the edifice of Christianity in its fundamental parts, confusing the sacred interior with the exterior, already enfeebled by the ignorance of weak man.

Then was born Deism; this brought forth materialism, which looked on the union of man with superior forces as imaginary; then finally came forth, partly from the head and partly from the heart, the last degree of man's degradation—Atheism.

In the midst of all this, truth reposed inviolable in the inner Sanctuary.

Faithful to the spirit of truth, which promised never to abandon its community, the members of the interior Church lived in silence, but in real activity, and united the science of the temple of the ancient alliance with the spirit of the great Saviour of man—the spirit of the interior alliance—waiting humbly the great moment when the Lord will assemble His community in order to give every dead letter external force and life.

This interior community of light is the reunion of all those capable of receiving light, and elect thereto; it is known as the *Communion of Saints*. The primitive deposit of all power and truth has been confided to it from all time—it alone, says St. Paul, is in the possession of the science of the Saints. By it the agents of God were formed in every age, passing from the interior to the exterior, and communicating spirit and life to the dead letter—as already said.

This illuminated community has been through time the true school of God's spirit, and considered as school, it has its Chair, its Doctor, it possesses a rule for students, it has forms and objects for study, and, in short, a method by which they study.

It has, also, its degrees for successive development to higher altitudes.

The first and lowest degree consists in the moral good, by which the simple will, subordinated to God, is led to good by the pure motive of the will which is Jesus Christ, received by faith. The means by which the spirit of this school acts are called inspirations.

The second degree consists in that rational intellectuality by which the understanding of the man of virtue, who is united to God, is crowned with wisdom and the light of knowledge, and the means which the spirit uses to produce this are called interior illumination.

The third and highest degree is the entire opening of our inner sensorium, by which the inner man attains the objective vision of real and metaphysical verities. This is the highest degree, when faith passes into open vision, and the means which the spirit uses to this end are real visions.

Such are the three degrees of the school for true interior wisdom—that of the illuminated Society. The same spirit which ripens men for this community also distributes its degrees by the co-action of the ripened subject.

This school of wisdom has been for ever most secretly hidden from the world, because it is invisible and submissive solely to Divine Government.

It has never been exposed to the accidents of time and to the weakness of man, because only the most capable were chosen for it, and the spirit which selected could suffer no deception.



By this school were developed the germs of all the sublime sciences, which were next received by external schools, were then clothed in other forms, and in fine sometimes degenerated therein.

This society of sages communicated, according to time and circumstances, unto the exterior societies their symbolic hieroglyphs, in order to attract external man to the great truths of the interior.

But all exterior societies subsist only in proportion as this society communicates its spirit thereto. As soon as external societies wish to be independent of the interior one, and to transform a temple of wisdom into a political edifice, the interior society retires and leaves only the letter without the spirit. It is thus that secret external societies of wisdom were nothing but hieroglyphic screens, the truth remaining invariably without the sanctuary so that it might never be profaned.

In this interior society man finds wisdom and therewith the All—not the wisdom of this world, which is but scientific knowledge, which revolves round the outside but never touches the centre (wherein is contained all power), but true wisdom and men obedient thereto.

All disputes, all controversies, all the things belonging to the false prudence of this world, fruitless discussions, useless germs of opinion which spread the weeds of disunion, all error, chisms and systems are banished therefrom. Neither calumny nor scandal are known. Every man is honoured. Satire, that spirit which seeks diversion to the disadvantage of its neighbour, is unknown. Love alone reigns. Never does the monster of calumny rear among the sons of wisdom its serpent head; estimation in common prevails, and this only; the faults of a friend are passed over; there are no bitter reproaches heaped on imperfection. Generously and lovingly, the seeker is placed upon the way of truth. It is sought to persuade and touch the heart of those who err, leaving the punishment of sin to the Lords of Light.

Want and feebleness are protected; rejoicings are made at the elevation and dignity which man acquires. No one is raised above another by the fortune which is a gift of chance; he only counts himself most happy who has the opportunity to benefit his brethren; and all such men, united in the spirit of love and truth, constitute the Invisible Church, the society of the Kingdom within, under that one Chief who is God.

We must not, however, imagine that this society resembles any secret order, meeting at certain times, choosing its leaders and members, united by special objects. All associations, be these what they may, can but come after this interior illuminated circle, which society knows none of the formalities belonging to the outer rings, the work of man. In this kingdom of power the outward forms cease.

God Himself is the Power always present. The best man of his times, the chief himself, does not invariably know all the members, but the moment when it is the Will of God that they should be brought into communication he finds them unfailingly in the world and ready to work for the end in view.

This community has no outside barriers. He who may be chosen by God is as the first; he presents himself among the others without presumption, and he is received by them without jealousy.

If it be necessary that true members should meet together, they find and recognise each other with perfect certainty. No disguise can be used, neither hypocrisy nor dissimulation could hide the characteristic qualities of this society, because they are too genuine. All illusion is gone, and things appear in their true form.

No one member can choose another, unanimous choice is required. All men are called, the called may be chosen, if they become ripe for entrance.

Any one can look for the entrance, and any man who is within can teach another to seek for it; but only he who is ripe can arrive inside.

Unprepared men occasion disorder in a community, and disorder is not compatible with the Sanctuary. This thrusts out all who are not homogeneous.

Worldly intelligence seeks this Sanctuary in vain; in vain also do the efforts of malice strive to penetrate these great mysteries; all is undecipherable to him who is not prepared; he can see nothing, read nothing in the interior.

He who is ripe is joined to the chain, perhaps often where he thought least likely, and at a point of which he knew nothing himself.

Seeking to become ripe should be the effort of him who loves wisdom.

But there are methods by which ripeness is attained, for in this holy communion is the primitive storehouse of the most ancient and original science of the human race, with the primitive mysteries also of all science. It is the unique and really illuminated community which is in possession of the key to all mystery, which knows the centre and source of nature and creation. It is a society which unites superior power to its own, and includes members from more than one world. It is the society whose members form a theocratic republic, which one day will be the Regent Mother of the whole World.



## LETTER III

THE absolute truth lying in the centre of Mystery is like the sun, it blinds ordinary sight and man sees only the shadow. The eagle alone can gaze at the dazzling light, and only the prepared soul can bear the arcane lustre. Nevertheless, the great *Something* which is the inmost of the Holy Mysteries has never been hidden from the piercing gaze of him who can bear the light.

God and nature have no mysteries for their children. Mystery is caused by the weakness of our own nature, unable to support light, because it is not yet organised to bear the chaste sight of unveiled truth.

This weakness is the Cloud that covers the Sanctuary ; it is the curtain which veils the Holy of Holies.

But in order that man might recover the lost light, strength and dignity, loving Divinity bent to the weakness of its creatures, and wrote the truth that is interior and eternal mystery on the *outside of things*, so that man can transport himself through this to their spirit.

These letters are the ceremonies or the externals of religion, which lead to the interior spirit—active and full of life—of union with God.

Among these letters there are also hieroglyphics of the Mysteries—the sketches and outlines of interior and holy truths which emblazon the curtain drawn before the Sanctuary.

Religion and the Mysteries go hand in hand to lead our brethren to truth ; both have for object the reversing and renewing of our natures ; both have for their end the re-building of a temple wherein Wisdom dwells with Love, or God with man.

But religion and the Mysteries would be useless phenomena if Divinity had not also accorded means to attain their great ends.

Now, these means have been always in the innermost sanctuary. The Mysteries are destined to build a temple to religion, and religion is required to unite Man with God.

Such is the greatness of religion, and such the exalted dignity of the Mysteries from all time.

It would be unjust to you, beloved brothers, that we should think that you have *never* regarded the Holy Mysteries in this *real* aspect, the one which shows them as the only means able to preserve in purity and integrity the doctrine of the important truths concerning God, nature, and man. This doctrine was couched in holy symbolic language, and the truths which it contained, having been gradually translated among the outer circle into the ordinary languages of man, became in consequence more obscure and unintelligible.

The Mysteries, as you know, beloved brothers, promise things which are and which will remain always the heritage of but a small number of men ; these are the secret things which can neither be taught nor sold publicly, which can be only acquired by a heart that has attained to wisdom and love.

He in whom this holy flame has been awakened lives in true happiness, content with everything, even in slavery, and in everything free. He sees the cause of human corruption and knows that it is inevitable. He hates no criminal, he pities him, he seeks to raise him who has fallen, and to lead back him who has strayed, because he feels, notwithstanding all the corruption, that in the *whole* there is no taint.

He sees with a clear eye the underlying truth in the foundation of all religion ; he knows the sources of superstition and of incredulity—knows that they are *modifications* of truth, which has not attained perfect equilibrium.

We are assured, my esteemed brothers, that you consider the true Mystic from this aspect, and that you will not attribute to *his royal art*, that which the misdirected energy of some isolated individuals has made of this art.

It is, therefore, with these views, which accord exactly with ours, that you will compare religion, and the mysteries of the holy schools of Wisdom, to loving sisters who have watched, hand in hand, over the good of mankind since the necessity of our birth.

Religion divides itself into exterior and interior religion—exterior signifying ceremony, and interior the worship in spirit and in truth. The schools of wisdom are also within and without ; the outer schools possessing the letter and the symbol, the inner reserving the spirit and meaning. External religion is united to the inner by ceremonies, and the outer schools of the mysteries are linked with the inner by symbol. Yet a little while, and the spirit will restore the living letter, the Cloud will be lifted from the Sanctuary, symbols will pass into vision and words into true understanding. He who reveres the Holy Mysteries will make himself understood no longer by speech and the outward sign, but by the spirit of language and the truth of signs.



Thus religion will be no longer an external ceremony, but hidden and holy mysteries will penetrate through symbol into the outer worship, to prepare men for the worship of God in spirit and in truth.

Very soon the night of symbol will disappear, the light will bring forth the day and the holy obscurity of mysteries no longer veiled will manifest in the splendour of full truth.

The ways of light are prepared for the elect, for all who can walk therein. The vestibule of nature, the temple of reason, and the sanctuary of Revelation will form but one Temple. Thus the great edifice will be completed—that edifice which consists in the re-union of man with nature and God.

A perfect knowledge of man, of nature and of God will be the lights which will enable the leaders of humanity to bring back from every side their wandering brothers, those who are led by the prejudices of reason, by the turbulence of passion, to the ways of peace and knowledge. The crown of those who rule the world will be pure reason, their sceptre native love, and the Sanctuary will impart to them that unction, even that force, by which the minds of people will be emancipated and their physical condition relieved.

We are approaching the period of light, and the reign of wisdom and love—that of God, Who is the source of light. Brothers of light, there is but one religion, whose simple truth spreads in all religions, as in branches, returning through multiplicity into the unity of the tree.

Sons of truth, there is but one order, but one Brotherhood, but one association of men who are agreed in the sole object of acquiring the light. From this centre misunderstanding has brought forth innumerable Orders, but all will return, from the multiplicity of opinions, to the only truth and to the true Order—the association of those who are able to receive the light the *Community of the Elect*.

With this measure all religions and all orders of man must be measured. Multiplicity is in the ceremony of the exterior; truth is but one in the interior. The multiplication of fraternities is in the manifold interpretation of the symbols caused by the lapse of time, needs of the day, and other circumstances. The true Community of Light *can* be only one.

The exterior symbol is only the sheath which holds the inner; it may change and multiply, but it can never weaken the truth of the interior; moreover, the letter was necessary; we ought to seek and try to decipher it—so to discover the interior sense.

All errors, divisions, all misunderstandings, all which in religions and in secret societies tends to divagation can only concern the letter—

the outer veil of symbol, ceremony, and rite. What rests behind remains always pure and holy.

Soon the time for those who seek the light will be accomplished, for the day comes when the old will be united to the new, the outer to the inner, the high with the low, the heart with the brain, man with God, and this epoch is destined for the present age. Do not ask, beloved brothers, why for the present age? Everything has its time with those who are limited by time and space. It is in such wise according to the unvarying law of the Wisdom of God, Who has co-ordinated all in harmony and perfection.

The elect should first labour to acquire both wisdom and love, in order to earn the gift of power, which unchangeable Divinity gives only to those who *know* and those who *love*.

Morning follows night, the sun rises, and all moves on to full mid-day, where shadows disappear in the vertical splendour. The letter of truth must exist in the first place; then comes the practical explanation, then the truth itself; and it is only thereafter that the Spirit of Truth can descend Which testifies to truth, and sets the seals closing the light. He who can receive the truth will understand. It is to you, much-loved brothers, you who labour to reach truth, you who have so faithfully preserved the glyph of the holy mysteries in your temple, it is to you that the first ray of truth will be directed; this ray will pierce through the cloud of mystery, and will announce the full day and the treasure which it brings.

Do not ask *who* those are who write to you; look at the spirit, not the letter—the thing, not at persons.

Neither pride, self-seeking, nor any unworthy motive can exist in our retreats; we know the object and the destination of man, and the light which lights us works in all our actions.

We are especially called to write to you, dear brothers in the light; and that which gives power to our commission is the truth which we possess, which also we will pass on to you at the least sign, and according to the measure of the capacity of each.

Light is apt for communication, where there is reception and capacity, but it constrains no one, and waits its reception tranquilly.

Our desire, our aim, our office is to revivify the dead letter and to spiritualise the symbols, turning the passive into the active and death into life; but this we cannot do *by ourselves*, only through His spirit of light Who is Wisdom, Love and the Light of the world.

Until the present time the Inner Sanctuary has been separated from the Temple, and the Temple beset with those who belong only to the precincts; but the day is coming when the Innermost will be re-united with the Temple, in order that those who are in the Temple



can influence those who are in the outer courts, so that the outer may pass in.

In our sanctuary all the hidden mysteries are preserved intact ; they have never been profaned by the uninitiated or soiled by the impure.

This sanctuary is invisible, as is a force which is only known through its action.

By this short description, my dear brothers, you can tell who we are, and it will be superfluous to assure you that we do not belong to those restless natures who seek to build in this common life an ideal after their own fantastic imaginations. Neither do we belong to those who wish to play a great part in the world, and who promise miracles that they themselves do not understand. We do not represent either that class of malcontents who would like to take vengeance on certain ranks in life, who have no better object than the desire of dominating others, the passion for adventure and things extravagant.

We can also assure you that we belong to no sect or association save the one true and great company of all those who are able to receive the light. We do not confess to prejudgments, of what kind soever ; we are not of those who think it their right to mould all after their own model, who seek arrogantly to re-model all other societies ; we assure you faithfully that we know *exactly* the innermost of religion and of the Holy Mysteries ; that we possess with absolute certainty all that has been surmised to be in the Adytum ; and that this same possession gives us the strength to justify our commission, imparting to the dead letter and hieroglyphic everywhere both spirit and life. The treasures in our sanctuary are many ; we understand the spirit and meaning of all symbols and all ceremony which have existed since the day of Creation to the present time, as well as the most interior truths of the Holy Books, with the laws which govern the rites practised by primitive peoples.

We possess a light by which we are anointed, and by means of which we read the hidden and secret things of nature.

We possess a fire which feeds us, which gives us the power to act upon everything in nature. We possess a *key to open* the gate of mystery, and a *key to shut* nature's laboratory. We know of a bond which will unite us to the Upper Worlds, and will reveal to us their sights and their sounds. All the marvels of nature are subordinate to the power of our will, and this will is united with Divinity.

We have mastered the science which draws directly from nature, wherein there is no error, but there are truth and light only.

In our School we are instructed in all things, because our Master is the Light itself and its essence. The plenitude of our scholarship is the knowledge of the bond between the Divine and spiritual worlds,

between the spiritual world and the elementary, between the elementary, in fine, and the material world.

By these knowledges we are in condition to co-ordinate the spirits of nature and the heart of man.

Our science is the inheritance promised to the Elect—otherwise, to those who are duly prepared for receiving the light—and the practice of our science is the plenitude of Divine Alliance with the children of men.

We could often tell you, beloved brothers, of marvels relating to the hidden things in the treasury of the Sanctuary, and these would amaze and astonish you ; we could speak to you about things from which the profoundest philosophy is as far removed as the earth from the sun, but to which we are near as the innermost light to Him who is innermost of all.

Only inward persuasion and thirst after the good of our brethren should actuate one who is capable of receiving light even from the source of light—at that source where the thirst for wisdom can be satiated and the hunger after love satisfied. Wisdom and love dwell in our retreats ; the stimulus of their reality and of their truth is our magical power.

We assure you that our treasures, though of infinite value, are concealed in so simple a manner that they entirely baffle the researches of opinionated science ; these treasures would bring to carnal minds both madness and sorrow, but they are and they ever remain to us the pearls without price of the highest wisdom.

My best blessing upon you, O my brothers, if you understand these great truths. The recovery of *the triple word* and of its power will be your reward. Your happiness will be in helping to re-unite man with man, with nature and with God, which is the real work of every craftsman who has not *rejected the Corner Stone*.

Now we have fulfilled our trust ; we have announced the approach of high noon, and the joining of the inner Sanctuary with the Temple ; we leave the rest to your own free will.

We know well, to our bitter grief, that even as the Saviour was not understood in His personality, but was ridiculed and condemned in His humility, so also His Spirit, when it shall appear in glory, will be rejected and despised by many. Nevertheless the coming of His Spirit must be announced in the Temples, that it may be fulfilled, even as it is written : " I have knocked at your doors and you have not opened them to Me ; I have called and you have not listened to My voice ; I have invited you to the wedding, but you were busy with other things."

May Peace and the light of the Spirit be with you !



## LETTER IV

AS infinity in numbers loses itself in the unit which is their basis, and as the innumerable rays of a circle are united in a single centre, so it is also with the Mysteries ; their hieroglyphics and infinitude of emblems have the object of exemplifying but one single truth. He who knows this has found the key to understand everything, and all at once.

There is but one God, but one truth, and one way which leads to this grand Truth. There is but one means of finding it.

He who has discovered this way possesses everything therein ; all wisdom in one book alone, all strength in one force, every beauty in a single object, all riches in one treasure only, every happiness in one perfect felicity. And the sum of all these perfections is Jesus Christ, Who was crucified and Who rose again. Now, this great fact, expressed thus, is, it is true, only an object of faith, but it can become also one of *experimental knowledge*, as soon as we are instructed *how* Jesus Christ can be or become all this.

This great mystery was always an object of instruction in the *Secret School of the invisible and interior Church* ; this great knowledge was understood in the earliest days of Christianity under the name of *Disciplina Arcani*. From this secret school are derived all the rites and ceremonies extant in the Outer Church. But the spirit of these grand and simple verities was withdrawn into the Interior and in our time it is entirely lost as to the external.

It has been prophesied long ago, dear brothers, that all which is hidden shall be revealed in these latter days ; but it has also been predicted that many false prophets will arise, and the faithful are warned not to believe every spirit, but to prove them if they really come from God (I John iv. *passim*). The apostle himself explains how this truth is ascertained. He says : " Hereby know ye the Spirit of God : every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the

flesh is of God : and every spirit which confesseth not . . . is not of God." That is to say, the spirit who separates in Him the Divine and human *is not from God*.

We do—on our own part—confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, and hence the Spirit of Truth speaks by us. But the mystery that Jesus Christ is come *in the flesh* is of wide extent and great depth, and in it is contained the knowledge of the divine-human, and it is this knowledge that we are choosing to-day as the object for our instruction.

Since we are not speaking to neophytes in matters of faith, it will be much easier for you, dear brothers, to conceive the sublime truths which we will present to you, as without doubt you have already chosen for the object of your holy meditation various preparatory subjects.

Religion considered scientifically is the doctrine of the conversion of man separated from God into man re-united with God. Hence its sole term is to unite every human being with God, through which union alone can humanity attain its highest felicity, both temporally and spiritually.

This doctrine, therefore, of *re-union* is of the most sublime importance, and being a doctrine it necessarily must have a method by which it leads us, firstly, to knowledge of the correct path of re-union, secondly, to instruction upon the correct means and how these should be suitably co-ordinated to the end.

This grand concept of re-union, on which all religious doctrine is concentrated, could never have been known to man *without* Revelation. It has always been outside the sphere of scientific knowledge, but this very ignorance of man has made Revelation absolutely necessary to us ; otherwise we could, unassisted, have never found the means of rising out of our state of ignorance.

Revelation entails the necessity of faith therein, because he who has no experience or knowledge whatsoever of a thing must necessarily believe if he wishes to know and have experience. If faith fails, there is no desire for Revelation, and the mind of man closes, by itself, its own door and road for discovering the methods contained in Revelation only. As action and re-action follow each other in nature, so also inevitably Revelation and faith act and re-act. One cannot exist without the other, and the more faith a man has the more will Revelation be made to him of matters which lie in obscurity. It is true, and very true, that all the veiled truths of religions, even those veiled most deeply, those most difficult to us, will one day be justified before a tribunal of strictest reason ; but the weakness of men and their lack of penetration in perceiving the relation and correspondence between physical and spiritual nature, require that the highest truths should only be imparted gradually. The holy obscurity of the mysteries is thus on account of our weakness, and the growing splendour



of their light is graduated for the same reason—to strengthen that weakness till our eyes can bear its fulness. In every grade at which the believer in Revelation arrives, he obtains clearer light, and this progressive illumination becomes the more convincing, because every truth of faith so acquired is more and more vitalised, passing finally into conviction.

Hence faith is founded on our weakness and also on the full light of Revelation which will, in its communication with us, direct us—according to our capabilities—to the gradual understanding of things, so that in due order the cognisance of the most elevated truths will be ours.

Those objects which are quite unknown to human sense belong necessarily to the domain of faith. Man can only adore and be silent, but if he wishes to demonstrate matters which cannot be manifested objectively, he necessarily falls into error. Man should adore and be silent, therefore, until the time arrives when these objects in the domain of faith become clearer, and, therefore, more easily recognised. Everything proves itself by itself as soon as we have acquired the interior *experience* of the truths revealed through faith, so soon as we are led by faith to vision, or, in other words, to full cognisance.

In all time there have been men illuminated of God who had this interior knowledge of the things of faith demonstrated objectively, either in full or partly, according as the truths of faith passed into their understanding or their hearts. The first kind of vision—and this purely intellectual—was called *Divine illumination*. The second was entitled *Divine inspiration*. The inner sensorium was opened in many to divine and transcendental vision, which was called ecstasy when the sensorium was so enlarged that it entirely dominated the outer physical senses.

But this kind of man is always inexplicable, and such he must remain to the person of mere sense who has no organs receptive of the transcendental and supernatural. Nor must we be surprised that one who has drawn near to the world of soul should be counted as extravagant, and even a fool, for common judgment is restricted by the common horizon, and “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him and he cannot know them because they are spiritually judged” (I Cor. xi. 14)—*i.e.*, because his spiritual senses are not open to the transcendental world, so that he can have no more objective cognisance of such world than a blind man has of colour; thus the natural man has lost these interior senses, or rather, the capacity for their development is neglected almost to atrophy.

Thus also, mere physical man is, in general, spiritually blind, having his interior eye closed, and this again is one of the consequences of the Fall. Man then is doubly miserable; he not only has his eyes

blindfolded to the sight of high truths, but his heart also languishes a prisoner in the bonds of flesh and blood, which confine him to animal and sensuous pleasures and deny those which are more elevated and genuine. Therefore are we slaves to concupiscence, to the domination of tyrannical passions; therefore do we drag ourselves as paralysed sufferers supported on crutches—the one crutch being the weakness of mere human reason, and the other sentiment—the one daily giving us appearance instead of reality, the other making us constantly choose evil, imagining it to be good. Of such is our woeful condition.

Men can only be happy when the bandage which intercepts the true light falls from their eyes, when the fetters of slavery are loosened from their hearts. The blind must see, the lame must walk, before happiness can be understood. But the great and all-powerful law to which the felicity of man is indissolubly attached is the one following: “Man, let reason rule over your passions!”

For ages has man striven to teach and to preach, with, however, the result, after so many centuries, of the blind leading the blind; for in all the foolishness of misery into which we have fallen, we do not yet see that of ourselves we can effect nothing, that man wants more than man to raise him from this condition.

Prejudices and errors, crimes and vices, only change from century to century; they are never extirpated from humanity; reason without illumination flickers faintly in every age, in the heavy air of spiritual darkness; the heart, exhausted with passions, also remains the same.

There is but One who can heal these evils; but One who is able to open our inner eyes, so that we may behold Truth; but One who can free us from the bonds of sensuality.

This One is Jesus Christ, the *Saviour of Man*, the *Saviour* because He wishes to extricate us from the consequences which follow the blindness of our natural reason, or the errors arising from the passions of ungoverned hearts.

Very few men, beloved brothers, have a true and exact conception of the grand scheme which is termed the Redemption of Man; many suppose that Jesus Christ the Lord has only redeemed or re-bought us by His Blood from *damnation*, otherwise the *eternal separation* of man from God; but they do not believe that He could also deliver those who are bound in Him and confide in Him from the miseries of this earth-plane!

Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the World; He is the deliverer from all human wretchedness; He has redeemed us from death and sin. But how could He be all this if the world must languish perpetually in the night of ignorance and in the bonds of passion? It has been clearly predicted in the Prophets that the time of the Redemption of His people, the first Sabbath of time, *will come*. Long ago ought we to have acknowledged this most consolatory promise;



but the *want* of the true knowledge of God, of man and of nature has been the real hindrance which has ever obstructed our sight of the great Mysteries of the faith.

You must know, my brothers, that there is a dual nature, one pure, spiritual, immortal and indestructible, the other impure, material, mortal, and destructible. Pure and indestructible nature preceded that which, though pure, was destructible. This latter originated solely through the disharmony and disproportion of substances which form destructible nature. Hence nothing is permanent until all disproportions and dissonances are eradicated so that all remains in harmony.

The imperfect conception regarding spirit and matter is one of the principal causes which prevent many verities of faith from shining in their true lustre.

*Spirit is a substance*, an essence, an absolute reality. Hence its properties are indestructibility, uniformity, penetration, indivisibility and continuity. Matter is not a substance it is an *aggregate*. Hence it is destructible, divisible and subject to change.

The metaphysical world is one *really existing*, perfectly pure and indestructible, whose Centre we call Jesus Christ, whose inhabitants are known by the names of Angels and Spirits.

The physical world is that of phenomena, and it possesses no absolute truth; all that we term truth is here but relative, the shadow and the phenomena only.

Our reason here borrows all its ideas from the senses; hence they are lifeless and dead. We draw everything from external objectivity, and our reason is like an ape who imitates what nature shows him outwardly. Thus the light of the senses is the principle of our earthly reason, sensuality the motive for our will, tending therefore to animal wants and their satisfaction. It is true, however, that we feel higher motives imperative, but up to the present we do not know either where to seek or where to find.

In this world, where everything is corruptible, it is useless to look for a pure *principle* of reason and morality or a motive for the Will. This must be sought for in a more exalted world—where all is pure and indestructible, where reigns a Being all wisdom and all love—a Being that by the light of His wisdom can become for us the true principle of reason, and by the warmth of His love the true principle of morality. Thus the world neither can nor will become happy until this Real Being is received by humanity in full and has become its All in All.

Man, dear brothers, is composed of indestructible and metaphysical substance, as well as of material and destructible substance, but in such a manner that the indestructible and eternal is, as it were, *imprisoned* in the destructible matter.

Hence two contradictory natures are comprehended in the same man. The destructible substance enchains us to the sensible, the other

seeks to deliver us from these chains, and to raise us to the spiritual. Hence again the incessant combat between good and evil: for ever and absolutely the good desires reason and morality, while the evil tends daily towards error and passion.

The fundamental cause of human corruption is to be found in the matter from which man is formed. For this gross matter oppresses the action of the transcendental and spiritual principle, and is the true cause of blindness in our understanding and errors in our inclinations.

The fragility of a china vessel results from the clay out of which it is formed. The most beautiful impression that clay of any sort is able to receive must always remain fragile because the matter of which it is composed is itself fragile. Thus do men remain likewise frail, notwithstanding all our external culture.

When we examine the causes of the obstacles keeping the natural man in such deep abasement, they are found in the grossness of the matter in which the spiritual part is, as it were, buried and bound.

The inflexibility of fibres, the immovability of temperaments, in those who wish to obey the refined stimulation of the spirit, are, as it were, the material chains which bind us, preventing in us the action of those sublime functions of which the spirit is capable.

The nerves and fluidity of the brain can only yield us rough and obscure notions derived from phenomena—not from truth and the things themselves; and as we cannot, by the strength of our thinking powers alone, have sufficient balance to oppose representations strong enough to counteract the violence of external sensation, the result is that we are governed by our passions, and the voice of reason which speaks softly internally is deafened by the tumultuous noise of the elements which keep our mechanism going.

It is true that reason strains to raise itself above this uproar, and wishes to decide the combat, seeking to restore order by the light and force of its judgment. But its action is only like the rays of the sun constantly hidden by clouds.

The grossness of all the matter in which material man consists, with the tissue of the whole edifice of his nature, is the cause of that disinclination which holds the soul in continual imperfection.

The heaviness of our thinking power follows in general from its dependence upon gross and unyielding matter, which forms the bonds of flesh, and is the true source of all error and vice. Reason, which should be an absolute legislator, is continually slave to sensuality, which raises itself as regent and, governing the reason that is drooping in chains, follows its own desires.

This truth has been felt for long, and it has always been taught



that reason should be sole legislator. It should govern the will and never be governed itself.

Great and small feel this truth ; but no sooner is it desired to put it in execution than the animal will vanquishes reason, and then the reason subjugates the animal will ; thus in every man the victory and defeat are alternate, and this power and counter-power cause a perpetual oscillation between good and evil, or the true and the false.

If man wishes to be led to the true and the good in such manner that he shall act only in accordance with the laws of reason, and from the purified will, it is absolutely necessary to constitute the pure reason sovereign in man. But how can this be done when the matter out of which many men are formed is more or less brutal, divisible and corruptible, the source of that misery, illness, poverty, death, want, of those prejudices, errors and vices which are the necessary consequence of the limitation of an immortal spirit in the bonds of brute and corruptible matter. Sensuality is bound to rule if reason is fettered, and reason is fettered assuredly when the weak and unclean heart repels the pure light.

Yes, friends and brothers, such is the general fate of man, and as this state of things is propagated from man to man, it may in all justice be called the hereditary corruption of our race.

We observe, in general, that the powers of reason act upon the heart with reference to the specific constitution of the matter of which man is made. It is also extremely remarkable that the sun vivifies the animal matter according to the measure of its distance from the solar body, that it makes it as suitable to the functions of animal economy as to a degree more or less raised of spiritual influence. Diversity of nations, their peculiarities as a result of climate, the variety of character, passions, manners, prejudices and customs, even their virtues and their vices, depend entirely upon the specific constitution of the matter from which they are formed, and in which the imprisoned spirit operates accordingly. Man's capacity for culture is modified in conformity with this constitution, which even affects his science, for this can only modify people so far as there is matter present that is susceptible of such modification, and therein consists the capacity for culture suitable to such people, and dependent partly on climate, partly on descent.

Generally, we find the same kind of man weak and sensual everywhere, wise just in so far as his physical matter allows reason to triumph over the sensuous, or foolish as the sensuous obtains mastery over the more or less fettered spirit. In this lies the evil and the good specially belonging to each nation, as well as to each isolated individual. We find in the world at large the same corruption inherent in the matter from which man is made, only under various forms and modifications.

From the lowest animal condition of savage nature man enters into the social state, primarily through his wants and desires ; strength and cunning, the chief qualities of the animal, accompany him and develop into other forms.

The modifications of these fundamental animal tendencies are endless, and the highest degree to which human culture, as acquired by the world, has attained up to the present has not carried things further than the putting of a finer polish on the substance of our animal instincts. This means to say that we are raised from the rank of the brute to that of the refined animal.

But this period was necessary, because on its accomplishment begins a new era, when the animal instincts being fully developed, there commences the evolution of more elevated desires, working towards light and reason.

Jesus Christ has written in our hearts in exceedingly beautiful words this great truth, that man must seek in his common clay for the cause of all his sorrows. When He said, "The best man, he who strives the most to arrive at truth, sins seven times a day," He intended to show that in a man of the finest organisation, the seven powers of the spirit are still so closed that the seven sensuous actions overcome him daily after their respective fashions.

Thus the best man is exposed to error and passions ; the best man is weak and sinful ; the best man is not a free man, and, therefore, exempt from pain and trouble ; the best man is subject to sickness and death, because these things are the inevitable consequences incidental to the corrupt matter of which he is formed.

It follows, therefore, that there can be no hope of higher happiness for humanity so long as the corruptible or material forms the principal substantial part of our being. The impossibility of mankind to transport itself, of itself, to true perfection, is a despairing thought, but, at the same time, one full of consolation, because, in consequence of this radical impossibility, a more exalted and perfect being than man permitted himself to be clothed in this mortal and destructible envelope *in order* to make the mortal immortal, and the destructible indestructible ; herein is to be sought the true reason for the Incarnation of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ, or the Anointed of the Light, is the splendour of God, the wisdom which came forth from God, the Son of God, the substantial Word by which all is made, and which existed from the beginning. Jesus Christ, the Wisdom of God working in everything, was as the centre of Paradise and the world of light. He was the only real organism by which Divine power could be communicated, and this organism is the immortal and pure nature, that indestructible substance which gives new life and raises all things to happiness and perfection. This pure incorruptible substance is *the pure element* in which spiritual man lived.



From this perfect element, which God only inhabited, from this substance out of which the first man was formed, that man was separated in the Fall. By partaking of the Tree of Good and Evil, the good and incorruptible principle combined with the bad and corruptible one, and man was self-poisoned, so that his immortal essence retreated interiorly, and the mortal, pressing forward, clothed him externally. Thus disappeared immortality, happiness and life, mortality and death being the results of the change.

Many men cannot understand the idea of the Tree of Good and Evil; this tree was, however, the product of movable but central matter, in which destructibility had somewhat the superiority over the indestructible principle. The premature use of its fruit was that which poisoned Adam, robbing him of his immortality and enveloping him in material and mortal clay. In this manner he fell a prey to the Elements *which originally he governed*. This unhappy event was, however, the reason why Immortal Wisdom, the pure metaphysical element, clothed itself with a mortal body and was voluntarily sacrificed, so that its Interior Powers could penetrate into the centre of the destruction, and could thus raise gradually all that which is mortal into the immortal state.

When it came about quite naturally that immortal man became subject to mortality through the enjoyment of mortal fruit, it happened, also quite naturally, that mortal man could only recover his former dignity through the enjoyment of Immortal Matter.

All passes naturally and simply under God's Reign, but in order to understand this simplicity it is requisite to have pure ideas of God, of nature and of man. And if the sublimest Truths of faith are still, for us, wrapped in impenetrable obscurity, the reason is that we have up to this present severed the connection between God, nature, and man.

Jesus Christ spoke to His intimate friends when He was still on this earth, of the grand mystery of Regeneration, but all that He said seemed obscure, and they could not then receive it; the development of the great Truths was reserved for these latter days, as the greatest and the last Mystery of Religion, wherein all Mysteries return, as into Unity.

Regeneration is no other than a dissolution of, and a release from, this impure and corruptible matter, which enchains our immortal essence, plunging into deathly sleep its obstructed vital force. There must be necessarily a real method to eradicate this poisonous ferment, which breeds so much suffering for us, and thereby to liberate the obstructed vitality.

There is however, no other means to find this excepting by religion, for religion, looked at scientifically, is the doctrine which proclaims re-union with God, and it must of necessity show us how to arrive

thereat. Are not Jesus and His living knowledge the principal object of the Bible and the centre of all desires, hopes and efforts of Christians? Have we not received from our Lord and Master, while still He walked with His disciples, the profoundest solutions of the most hidden truths? When He was with them in His glorified Body after the resurrection, did He not give them a higher revelation with regard to His Person, and lead them still more deeply into central knowledge of truth?

Will He not realise that which He said in His Sacerdotal Prayer, St. John xvii, 22, 23: "And the glory which Thou has given to Me I have given unto them, that they may be one, even as We are One: I in them, and they in Me, that they may be perfected into one."

As the disciples of the Lord could not comprehend this great mystery of the new and last alliance, Jesus Christ transmitted it to the latter days, to that future now arriving. This alliance is called the Union of Peace. It is then that the law of God will be engraven in the heart of our hearts; we shall all know the Lord; we shall be His people, and He will be our God.

All is prepared for this actual possession of God, this union really possible here below; and the holy element, the efficacious medicine for humanity, is revealed by God's Spirit. The table of the Lord is ready and everyone is invited; the "true bread of Angels" is prepared—as it is written: "Thou didst give them Bread from Heaven."

*The holiness and the greatness of the Mystery which contains within itself every mystery here obliges us to be silent, except in respect of its effects.*

The corruptible and destructible are destroyed, and replaced by the incorruptible and by the indestructible. The inner sensorium opens and links us on to the spiritual world. We are enlightened by wisdom, led by truth, nourished with the torch of love. Unimagined strength develops in us wherewith to vanquish the world, the flesh, and the devil. Our whole being is renewed and made suitable for the actual dwelling-place of the Spirit of God. Command over nature, intercourse with the upper worlds, the delight of visible intercourse with the Lord—these are granted also!

The hoodwink of ignorance falls from our eyes; the bonds of sensuality break; we rejoice in the liberty of God's children.

We have told you the chiefest and most important fact; if your heart, having the thirst for truth, has laid hold on the pure ideas that you have gathered from all this, and has received in its entirety the grandeur and the blessedness of the thing itself as object of desire, we will tell you further.

May the Glory of the Lord and the renewing of your whole nature be meanwhile the highest of your hopes!



## LETTER V

IN our last letter, my dear brothers, you granted me your earnest attention to that highest of mysteries, *the real possession of God*; it is therefore necessary to give you fuller light on this subject.

Man, as we know, is unhappy in this world because he is made out of destructible matter that is subject to trouble and sorrow.

His fragile envelope, *i.e.*, the body—exposes him to the violence of the elements—to pain, poverty, suffering, illness. These are his normal fate while his immortal spirit languishes in the bonds of sense. Man is unhappy, because he is ill in body and soul, and he possesses no true medicine either for soul or body.

Those whose duty it is to govern and lead other men to happiness, are as other men, also weak and subject to the same passions and prejudices.

Therefore, what fate can humanity expect? Must the greater part of it be always unfortunate? Is there no salvation for all?

Brothers, if humanity as a whole is ever capable of being raised to a condition of true happiness, such state can only be possible under the following conditions:—

Firstly, poverty, pain, illness and sorrow must become much less frequent. Secondly, passions, prejudice, and ignorance, must diminish.

Is this at all possible with the nature of man, when experience proves that, from century to century, suffering only assumes fresh form; that passions, prejudices and errors always cause the same evils; and when we realise that these things only change shape, that man in every age remains much the same weak man?

There is a terrible judgment pronounced upon the human race, and this judgment is that men can never become happy so long as they will not become wise; but they will never become wise while sensuality governs reason, while the spirit languishes in the bonds of flesh and blood.

Where is the man that has no passions? Let him show himself. Do we not all wear the chains of sensuality more or less heavily? Are we not all slaves, all sinners?

This realisation of our low estate excites in us the desire for redemption; we lift up our eyes on high, and an angel's voice says—*the sorrows of man shall be comforted.*

Man being sick in body and soul, this mortal sickness must have a cause, and *this cause* is to be found in the very matter out of which he is made.

The destructible imprisons the indestructible; the light of wisdom is imprisoned in the depths of obscurity; the *ferment of sin* is in us; in this ferment human corruption originates, and its propagation continues therein, with all the consequences of original sin.

The healing of humanity is only possible through the destruction of this ferment of sin; hence we have need of a physician and a true remedy. But one invalid cannot be cured by another; the man of destructible matter cannot re-make himself of indestructible matter; dead matter cannot awake what is dead; the blind cannot lead the blind.

Only the Perfect can bring anything to perfection; only the Indestructible can raise the destructible to its own state; only the Living can wake the dead.

This Physician and this active Medicine cannot be found in death and destruction—only in superior nature, where all is perfection and life!

It is ignorance of the harmony between Divinity and nature, between nature and man, which is the true cause of all prejudice and error. Theologians, philosophers, moralists, all wish to regulate the world, and they fill it with endless contradictions. Theologians do not see the accordance of God with nature and fall therefore into error. Modern philosophers study only matter, not the connection of pure nature with Divine Nature, and therefore announce the falsest opinions. Moralists will not recognise the inherent corruption of human nature, and they expect to cure by words, when means are absolutely necessary.

Thus the world, man and God, ever continue in dissension; one opinion drives out another; superstition and incredulity take turn about in dominating society, separating man from the word of truth when he has so much need of approaching her.

It is only in the true Schools of Wisdom that one can know God, nature and man; in these, for thousands of years, work has been done in silence to attain the highest degree of this knowledge—the union of man with pure nature and with God.

This great end, God and nature, towards which everything moves, has been represented to man symbolically in every religion; all the symbols and holy glyphs are but the letter by which man can step



by step, recover the highest of all mysteries, divine, natural and human, or otherwise learn the means of healing his unhappy condition, and of the union of his being with pure nature and with God.

We have attained this epoch under God's guidance. Divinity, remembering its covenant with man, has provided the means of cure, the means of man's restoration to his original dignity, of his union with God, the Source of his happiness.

The knowledge of this method is the science of Saints and of the Elect; its possession is the inheritance promised to God's children.

Now, my beloved brothers, I want you to grant me your most earnest attention to what I am about to say.

*In our blood there is lying concealed a slimy matter (called the gluten) which has a nearer kinship to animal than to spiritual man. This gluten is the body of sin.*

It is a matter which can be modified in various manners, according to the stimulus of sense; and according to the kind of modification and change occurring therein, so also vary the divers sinful tendencies of man.

In its most violent expansion this matter produces pride; in its utmost contraction, avarice, self-will and selfishness; in its repulsion, rage and anger; in its circular movements, levity and incontinence; in its eccentricity, greediness and drunkenness; in its concentricity, envy; in its essence, sloth.

This ferment of sin, as original sin, is more or less working in the blood of every man; it is transmitted from father to son, and in its perpetual propagation everlastingly hinders the simultaneous action of spirit with matter.

It is quite true that man by his will-power can put limits to the action of this body of sin, and can dominate it so that it becomes less active, but to destroy and annihilate it altogether is beyond his power. Here then is the cause of the combat which we are constantly waging between the evil and the good in us.

This body of sin forms the ties of flesh and blood which, on the one side, bind us to our immortal spirit, and, on the other, to the tendencies of the animal man. It is, as it were, the allurements of the animal passions that smoulder and take fire at last.

The violent reaction of this body of sin in us, or sensuous stimulation, is the reason why we choose, for the want of calm and tranquil judgment, rather the evil than the good, because the active fermentation of this matter impedes the quiet action of the spirit necessary to instruct and sustain the reason.

This same evil matter is also the cause of our ignorance, because, as its thick and inflexible substance surcharges the fine brain-fibres, it prevents the co-action of reason, which is required to penetrate the objects of the understanding.

Thus falseness and all evils are the properties of this sinful matter, this body of sin, just as the good and the true are essential qualities of the spiritual principle within us.

By a thorough understanding of this body of sin we can learn to see that we are beings morally ill, that we have need of a physician with a medicine which will destroy and eradicate the evil matter always fermenting banefully within us, a remedy that will restore us to moral health.

We learn also to recognise clearly that all mere moralizing with words is of little use *when real means are necessary*.

We have been moralizing in various terms for centuries, but the world remains pretty much the same. A doctor would do little good in talking only of his remedies, it is necessary for him actually to prescribe his medicines; he has, however, first to see the real state of the sick person.

The condition of humanity—the moral sickness of man—is a true case of poisoning, consequent upon the eating of the fruit of that tree in which corruptible matter predominated.

The first effect of this poison resulted thus: the incorruptible principle, the body of life, as opposed to the body of sin or death, whose expansion caused the perfection of Adam, concentrated itself inwardly, and the external part was abandoned to the government of the elements. Hence a mortal matter gradually covered the immortal essence, and the loss of this central light was the cause subsequently of all man's sufferings.

Communication with the world of light was intercepted, the interior eye—which had the power of seeing truth *objectively*—was closed, and the physical eye opened to the plane of changing phenomena.

Man lost all true happiness, and in this deplorable condition he would have forfeited the means of restoration to health, were it not that the love and mercy of God, Who had no other object in creation than the greatest happiness for its creatures, afforded a means of recovery. In this means, man, with all his posterity, had the right to trust, in order that, while still in his state of banishment, he might support his misfortune with humility and resignation, finding in his pilgrimage, moreover, the great consolation that all his corruptible parts could be restored perfectly through the love of a Saviour.

Despair would have been the fate of man without such revelation.

Man, before the Fall, was the living Temple of Divinity, and at the time when this Temple was destroyed, the plan to rebuild it was already projected by the Wisdom of God. At this period begin the Holy Mysteries of every religion, which are all and each in themselves, after a thousand varying modes, according to time and circumstances, and method of conception by different nations, but symbols repeated



and modified of one solitary truth, and this unique truth is—*regeneration, or the re-union of man with God.*

Before the Fall man was wise, he was united to Wisdom ; after the Fall he was no longer one therewith ; hence a true science, through express Revelation, became absolutely necessary to restore the union.

The first Revelation was as follows:—

The state of immortality consists in the immortal permeating the mortal. Immortal substance is Divine Substance, and is no other than the magnificence of the Almighty throughout nature, the substance of the world and spirits, the infinity, in short, of God, in whom all things move and have their being.

It is an immutable law that no creature can be truly happy when separated from the source of happiness. This source is the magnificence of God Himself.

By partaking of destructible nourishment, man himself became destructible and material ; matter, therefore, as it were, places itself between God and man ; that is to say, man is not directly penetrated and permeated by Divinity, and, in consequence, he is subject to the laws regulating matter.

The divine in man, imprisoned by the bonds of this matter, is his immortal part, the part that should be at liberty, in order that its development should again rule the mortal. Then once more would man regain his original greatness.

But a means for his cure, or a method to externalize what is now hidden and concealed within, is requisite. Fallen and unwise man, of himself, can neither know nor grasp this expedient ; he cannot even recognise it, because he has lost pure knowledge and the light of true wisdom ; he cannot take hold of it, because the remedy is infolded in interior nature, and he has neither the strength nor power to unlock this hidden force.

Hence Revelation, in order to learn this means and have strength to acquire this power, is necessary to man.

The necessity for the salvation of man was the cause of the determination of Wisdom, or the Son of God, to give Himself to be known by man, *being the pure substance out of which* all has been made. In this pure substance power is reserved to vivify dead substance, and to purify all that is impure.

But before that could be done, before the inmost part of man, the divine in him, could be once more penetrated and re-opened, and the whole world be regenerated, it was requisite that this Divine Substance should incarnate in humanity, should become human, and transmit the Divine and Regenerative Force to humanity ; it was necessary also that this Divine-Human Form should be slain, in order that the divine and incorruptible substance contained in His blood should penetrate into the recesses of the earth, and thenceforth work a gradual dissolution of corruptible matter, so that in due time a pure

and regenerated earth may be restored to man, the Tree of Life again planted therein, that by partaking of its fruit, containing the true immortal essence, mortality in us may be once more annihilated, and man healed by the fruit of the Tree of Life, just as he was once poisoned by partaking of the fruit of death.

This constitutes the first and most important revelation on which all others are founded, and it has been carefully preserved from mouth to mouth among the chosen of God up to this time.

Human nature required a Saviour ; this Saviour was Jesus Christ, the Wisdom of God itself, reality from God. He put on the envelope of humanity, to communicate anew to the world the divine and immortal substance, which was nothing else but Himself.

He offered Himself voluntarily, in order that the *pure essential force* in His blood could penetrate directly, bringing with it the potentiality of all perfection to the hidden recesses of the earth.

Himself, both as High Priest and as Victim at the same time, entered into the Holy of Holies, and after having accomplished all that was necessary, He laid the foundation of the Royal Priesthood of His Elect, and taught these through the knowledge of His person and of His powers after what manner they should lead, as the first-born of the spirit, other men, their brethren, to universal happiness.

And here begin the Sacerdotal Mysteries of the Elect and of the Inner Church.

The Royal and Priestly Science is that of Regeneration, or the science of the re-union of fallen man with God. It is called *Royal Science*, because it leads man to power and the dominion over nature. It is called Sacerdotal, because it sanctifies and brings all to perfection, spreading grace and benediction everywhere.

This Science owes its immediate origin to the *verbal revelation* of God ; it was always the Science of the Inner Church of Prophets and of Saints ; and it recognised no other High Priest but Jesus Christ, the Lord.

This Science has a triple object : firstly, the regeneration of the individual and isolated man, or the first fruits of the Elect ; secondly, of many men ; thirdly, of all humanity. Its exercise consists in the highest perfecting of oneself and of everything in nature.

This Science was never taught otherwise than by the Holy Spirit of God, and by those who were in unison with this Spirit ; it is beyond all other sciences, because it can alone teach the knowledge of God, of nature, and of man in a perfect harmony ; other sciences do not understand truly either God or nature, either man or his destination. It enables man to distinguish the nature which is pure and incorruptible



from that which is corruptible and impure, and by the separation of the latter to attain the former. In a word, the subject-matters of this Science, are the knowledge of God in man, of Divinity in nature; these being, as it were, the Divine impression or seal, by which our inner selves can be opened and can arrive at union with Divinity.

Thus re-union was the most exalted aim, and hence the Priesthood derived its name, *religio, clerus regenerans*.

Melchizedek was the first Priest-King; all true Priests of God and of nature descend from him, and Jesus Christ Himself was united with him as priest after the order of Melchizedek. This word is literally of the highest and widest significance—(MLKIZDQ). It means literally instruction in the true substance of life and in the separation of this true vital substance from the mortal envelope which encloses it.

A priest is one who separates that which is pure nature from that which is impure nature, the substance which contains all from the destructible matter which occasions pain and misery. The sacrifice of that which has been separated consists in bread and wine.

Bread means literally the substance which contains all; wine the substance which vitalises everything.

Therefore, a priest after the order of Melchizedek is one who knows how to separate the all-embracing and vitalising substance from impure matter, one who knows how to employ it as a real means of reconciliation and re-union for fallen humanity, in order to communicate to man his true and royal privilege of power over nature, and the Sacerdotal dignity, or the ability to unite himself by grace to the upper worlds.

In these few words is contained the mystery of God's Priesthood, and the occupation and aim of the Priest.

But this royal Priesthood was only able to reach perfect maturity when Jesus Christ Himself as High Priest had fulfilled the greatest of all sacrifices, and had entered into the Inmost Sanctuary.

We are here on the threshold of new and great mysteries which are worthy of your most earnest attention.

When, according to the wisdom and justice of God, it was resolved to save the fallen human race, the Wisdom of God had to choose the method which afforded in every aspect the most efficacious means for the consummation of this great object.

When, after the enjoyment of a corruptible fruit—which permeated him with the ferment of death—man was poisoned so thoroughly that all around him became also subject to death and destruction, then Divine mercy was constrained to establish a counter remedy, which could be taken after the same manner; it contained within itself the divine and revitalising substance, so that by receiving this immortal

food, poisoned and death-stricken man could be healed and rescued from his suffering. But in order that this Tree of Life could be replanted here below, it was requisite beyond all things that the corruptible material in the centre of the earth should be first regenerated, resolved and made capable of being again one day a universally vitalising substance.

This capacity for new life, bringing about the dissolution of corruptible essence which is inherent in the centre of the earth, was only possible in so far as Divine Vital Substance assumed flesh and blood to transmit the hidden forces of life to dead nature. This was done through the death of Jesus Christ. *The tinctural force* which flowed from His blood penetrated to the innermost parts of the earth, raised the dead, rent the rocks and caused the total eclipse of the sun by driving from the centre of the earth, wherein the light penetrated, the central darkness to the circumference, and therein laying the foundation of the future glorification of the world.

Since the death of Jesus Christ, the divine force, driven to the earth's centre by the shedding of His blood, works and ferments perpetually to press outward, and to fit and prepare all substances gradually for the great cataclysm which is destined to take place in the world.

But the rebuilding of the world's edifice in general was not the only aim of Redemption. Man was the principal object in the shedding of Christ's blood; to procure for him, even in this material sphere, the highest possible perfection by the amelioration of his being, Jesus Christ submitted to infinite suffering.

He is the Saviour of the world and of man. The object or cause of His Incarnation was to rescue us from sin, misery, and death.

Jesus Christ has delivered us from all evil by His flesh, which He sacrificed, and by His blood, which He shed for us.

In the clear understanding of this *flesh* and this *blood* of Jesus Christ lies the true and pure knowledge of the real regeneration of man.

The mystery of union with Jesus Christ, not only spiritually, *but also corporeally*, is the greatest aim of the Inner Church. To become one with Him in spirit and in being is the fulfilment and plenitude of all efforts of the Elect.

The means for this real possession of God are hidden from the wise of this world, and revealed to the simplicity of children.

Do thou, O vain philosopher, bend down before the grand and Divine Mysteries which thou canst not understand in thy wisdom, and for the penetration of whose secrets the feeble light of human reason, darkened by sense, can give thee no measure!



## LETTER VI

GOD became man to deify man. Heaven united itself with earth to transform earth into Heaven.

But in order that these divine transformations can take place, an entire change, a complete and absolute overturning and upsetting of our being, is necessary.

This change, this upsetting, is called re-birth. *To be born*, simply means to enter into a world in which the senses dominate, in which wisdom and love languish in the bonds of individuality.

To be *re-born* means to return to a world where the spirit of wisdom and love governs, where animal-man obeys.

The re-birth is triple; there is, firstly, the re-birth of our intelligence; secondly, of our heart and our will; and finally, the re-birth of our entire being.

The first and second kinds are called the spiritual, and the third the corporeal re-birth.

Many pious men, seekers after God, have been regenerated in the mind and will, but few have known the corporeal re-birth. Those to whom it has been given have only received it that they might serve as *agents* of God, in accordance with great objects and high intentions, and to bring humanity nearer to felicity.

It is now necessary, my dear brothers, to lay before you the true order of re-birth. God, Who is all strength, wisdom and love, works eternally in order and in harmony.

He who will not receive the spiritual life, he who is not born anew from the Lord, cannot enter into heaven.

Man is engendered through his parents in original sin, that is to say, he enters into the natural life and not the spiritual.

The spiritual life consists in loving God above everything, and your neighbour as yourself. In this twofold love consists the *principle* of the new life.

Man is begotten in evil, in the love of himself and the things of this world. Love of himself! Self-interest! Self gratification!

Such are the substantial properties of evil. The good is in the love of God and the neighbour, in knowing no other love but that of mankind, no interest but that affecting every man, no other pleasure but the well-being of all.

It is by such sentiments that the spirit of the children of God is distinguished from the spirit of the children of this world.

To change the spirit of this world into the spirit of the children of God is to be regenerated, and this means to put off the old man and to clothe one's self with the new.

But no person can be re-born if he does not know and put in practice the following principles—that truth is the object of faith and the good that of our activity as well as our abstinence from action. Therefore, he who desires to be re-born ought first to know what belongs to re-birth. He ought to understand, meditate and reflect on all this. Afterwards he should act according to his knowledge, and the result will be a new life.

Now, as it is first necessary to know, and to be instructed in all that appertains to re-birth, a doctor, or an instructor is required, and if we know one, faith in him is also necessary, because of what use is a teacher if his pupil have no confidence in him?

Hence, the commencement of re-birth is faith in Revelation.

The disciple should begin by believing that the Lord, the Son, is the Wisdom of God; that he is from all Eternity from God; and that He came into the world to bring happiness to humanity. He should believe that the Lord has full power in heaven and on earth, and that all faith and love, all the true and the good come from Him alone; that He is the Mediator, the Saviour and Governor of men.

When this most exalting faith has taken root in us, we shall think often of the Saviour; our thoughts, turned towards Him, will unfold from within; and by His grace reacting in us, the seven closed and spiritual powers are opened.

*The way to happiness.*—Do you wish, man and brother, to acquire the highest happiness possible? Search for truth, wisdom, and love. But you will not find these except in unity, and this is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Anointed of God.

Seek, then, Jesus Christ with all your strength; seek Him from the fulness of your heart.

The beginning of the heart's elevation is in the knowledge of its emptiness, and from this knowledge there originates the need of a higher power to seek Him, wherein is the beginning of faith.

Faith gives confidence, but faith has also its order of progress. First comes historic faith, then moral, then divine, and finally *living* faith. The progression is as follows: Historical faith begins when we recognise—by history and revelation—that a man existed who was called Jesus of Nazareth; that he was a man set apart from men by his extraordinary love of humanity, the good which he



conferred thereon, and the life which he led ; that—in a word—he was the best of men and one who demands not only all our attention but all our love. From this simple historical faith in the *existence* of Jesus will evolve moral faith, and the development of this consists in the acquirement of virtue by its search and practice, so that we see and find real pleasure in all that is taught by this Man ; we find that His simple doctrine is full of wisdom and His teaching full of love ; that His intentions towards humanity are straight and true, and that He willingly suffered death for the sake of justice. Thus faith in His Person will be followed by faith in His Divinity.

This same Jesus Christ tells us now that He is the Son of God ; He emphasizes His words by His miracles, His own resurrection, and thereafter by instructing His disciples in the highest mysteries of nature and religion.

Here natural and reasonable faith changes into divine faith, and we begin to believe that the Christ was God made man. From this faith it results that we hold as true all that we do not yet understand, but which He tells us to believe. Through this faith in the Divinity of Jesus, by entire surrender to Him, and by faithful attention to His laws, there is at last produced that living faith, by which we find, *within ourselves*, as something that is true in *our own experience*, all that we have believed in hitherto merely with the confidence of a child ; and this living faith, proved by experience, is the highest grade of all.

When our hearts, through living faith, have received Jesus Christ, then this Light of the World is born within us as in a humble stable.

Everything in us is impure, surrounded by the spider-webs of vanity, covered with the mire of sensibility.

Our will is the Ox that is under the yoke of its passions. Our reason is the Ass which is bound through the obstinacy of its opinions, its prejudices, its follies.

In this miserable and ruined hut, the home of all the animal passions, can Jesus Christ be born in us through faith.

The simplicity of our souls is as the Shepherds who brought their first offerings, until at last the three principal powers of our royal dignity, our reason, our will, and our activity\* prostrate themselves before Him and offer Him the gifts of truth, wisdom, and love.

Little by little the stable of our hearts changes itself into an exterior Temple, where Jesus Christ teaches, but this Temple is still full of Scribes and Pharisees.

Those who sell doves and the money changers are still to be found therein ; these must be driven out, and the Temple changed into a House of Prayer.

\* The Three Magi.

Little by little Jesus Christ chooses all the good powers in us to announce Him. He heals our blindness, purifies our leprosy, raises the dead powers into living forces within us ; He is crucified in us, He dies, and He is gloriously raised again as Conqueror within us. Afterwards His personality lives in us, and instructs us in exalted mysteries, until He has made us complete and ready for the perfect Regeneration—when He mounts to heaven and thence sends us the Spirit of Truth.

But before such a Spirit can act in us we experience certain changes. The seven powers of our understanding are lifted up within us, but afterwards the seven powers of our heart or of our will, and this exaltation takes place in the following manner. The human understanding is divided into seven powers ; the first is that of looking at objects outside ourselves—*intuitus*. By the second we perceive the objects so regarded—*apperceptio*. By the third, that which has been perceived is reflected upon—*reflexio*. The fourth is that of considering these objects in their diversity—*fantasia*, *imaginatio*. The fifth is that of deciding upon some thing—*judicium*. The sixth co-ordinates all these according to their relationships—*ratio*. The seventh and last is the power of realising the whole intellectual intuition—*intellectus*.

This last contains, so to say, the sum of all the others.

The will of man divides itself similarly into seven powers, which, taken together as an unit, form the will of man, being, as it were, its *substantial* parts.

The first is the capacity of desiring things apart from oneself—*desiderium*. The second is the power to annex mentally things desired for oneself—*appetitus*. The third is the power of giving them form, realising them so as to satisfy desire—*concupiscentia*. The fourth is that of receiving inclinations, without deciding upon acting upon any, as in the condition of passion—*passio*. The fifth is the capacity for deciding for or against a thing, liberty—*libertas*. The sixth is that of choice or resolution actually taken—*electio*. The seventh is the power of giving the object chosen an existence—*voluntas*. This seventh power also contains all the others in one figure.

Now the seven powers of the understanding, like the seven powers of our heart and will, can be ennobled and exalted in a very special manner, when we embrace Jesus Christ, as being the wisdom of God, for the principle of our reason, and His whole life which was all love, for motive power of our will.

Our understanding is formed after that of Jesus Christ : (1) When we have Him in view in everything, so that He becomes the only motive point of all our actions—*intuitus* ; (2) when we perceive His actions, His sentiments and His spirit everywhere—*apperceptio* ; (3) when in all our thoughts we reflect upon His sayings, and think in everything as He would have thought—*reflexio* ; (4) when we so



shape our course that His thoughts and His wisdom are the only object for the exercise of our imagination—*fantasia* ; (5) when we reject all thoughts which are not in conformity with His, and choose those only to which He might also confess—*judicium* ; (6) when, in short, we co-ordinate the whole edifice of our ideas and spirit upon the model of His ideas and spirit—*ratio* ; (7) when, as the result of these, there is born in us a new and more brilliant light, surpassing far the light of reason and of the senses—*intellectus*. Our heart is also reformed in like manner, when in everything : (1) We lean on Him only—*desiderare* ; (2) we wish for Him only—*appetere* ; (3) we desire only Him—*concupiscere* ; (4) we love Him only—*amare* ; (5) we choose only that which He is, and we avoid all that He is not—*eligere* ; (6) we live only in harmony with Him, after His commandments, institutions and orders—*subordinare* ; whereby (7) there is born a complete union of our will with His, so that we abide in Jesus Christ as one sense, one heart ; so that the new man is little by little born in us ; so that Divine Wisdom and Love unite to form in us the new spiritual man, in whose heart faith passes into sight, in comparison with which living faith the treasures of India can be considered but as ashes.

This actual possession of God or Jesus Christ in us is the term towards which all the mysteries converge, like radii to the centre of a circle ; the highest of religious mysteries is in this consummation.

The kingdom of God is a kingdom of truth, morality, and happiness. It operates in the saints from innermost to outermost side, and spreads itself gradually by the Spirit of Jesus Christ into all nations, to institute everywhere an Order by means of which the individual can profit as well as the race—by which our human nature can be raised to its highest perfection, and sick humanity can be cured of all the evils of its weakness.

Thus the love and spirit of God will one day alone vivify all humanity ; they will awake and rekindle the powers of the race, will lead it to the goals of Wisdom and place it in suitable relationships.

Peace, fidelity, domestic harmony, love between nations, will be the first fruits of this Spirit. Inspiration of good without false similitudes, the exaltation of our souls without too severe a tension, beneficent warmth in the heart without turbulent impatience, will approach, reconcile and unite all the various parts of the human race, long separated and divided by many differences, and stirred up against each other by prejudices and errors. So in one Grand Temple of Nature, great and little, poor and rich, will all sing the praise of the Father of Love.

## APPENDICES

### I

#### THE MARRIAGE OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

OR THE DESCENT OF CHRIST INTO THE HEART

BEING A SUPPLEMENT TO

“ THE CLOUD UPON THE SANCTUARY ”

### I

THE world will be an alien from happiness until Jesus Christ shall be possessed therein. Then shall felicity reign on earth ; peace and prosperity shall abide in all states of life.

### II

Who then is Christ Jesus ? He is love, wisdom, power—the source of those pure attractions which generate the light within.

### III

Where He is, there is that dignity of man which blesses the pure and feeling heart ; it is He alone Who takes upon Himself that burden by which we are weighed down in the deeps of misery.

### IV

Sorrow and sufferings disappear where His spirit reigns in the heart ; we pass in His company days which are those of springtide and hours that are full of delight.

### V

The princes who reign by Him have no peers and love alone is their Kingdom.



## VI

Let us attempt in brief outline a picture of the blessedness which He will confer upon us when the whole of humanity shall dwell in His temple united by the bonds of love.

## VII

The princes shall be fathers of the people, the priests their physicians, and to Him only, the great Saviour of men, shall we owe this beatitude.

## VIII

All who shun one another, all who hate each other, Jew and Gentile, great and small, all who are now in discord, shall dwell together in union.

## IX

Remedies are in store for the sick, whose convalescence is preassured from the beginning; fraternal tenderness watches over the poor man.

## X

There is food for him who is hungry, relief for each who is in trouble; should a stranger arrive, he finds a place of rest and nourishment.

## XI

The widow weeps no more, no longer does the orphan sigh; each is sustained abundantly, for the Lord has care of all.

## XII

The Spirit and the Truth are in the Temple, the altar is served with the heart as well as the lips, and the sacred seal of divinity testifies to the dignity of the priest.

## XIII

Wisdom is the chief jewel of earthly diadems, love rules in the sanctuary, love dwells in the world, love creates its paradise.

## XIV

There is no immolation of brethren on blood-stained scaffolds: we are branches of one trunk and each supports the other.

## XV

Surgeons who now dismember the body capriciously will preserve it wisely as their own.

## XVI

And ah! What do I see? O joy which my heart of flesh will not survive to share! Christian and Jew; Turk and pagan are walking hand in hand.

## XVII

The wolf and lamb are in the meadows; the child is playing with the serpent; all hostile creatures are united by love.

## XVIII

And thou, O wanderer, on the time-long quest, yet a little distance along the mystic road; then shalt thou turn about; little by little already the veil falls from the inner sanctuary.

## XIX

Observe how the flittermouse and screech-owl fly at the rising sun; like error, the night and its prejudices pass into the abode of shadows.

## XX

The new earth begins already; a new age is at hand; the Spirit of Jesus Christ utters: So be it—and it already is.

## XXI

It is there; we say that it is even now in sight; but no—it must rest unseen until the veil falls.

## XXII

Then shall revolution no longer threaten the earth, for He who is the desired of the nations is on the very threshold—He who is Lord is near.

## XXIII

Though myriads of men are butchered in war by the spirit of darkness, he is still doomed to flight, for the victory is predestined to love.

## XXIV

God has recourse to strange weapons when His people forget Him utterly; sin must punish that sin which is the source of evils.

## XXV

This notwithstanding, let a single tear fall from the eyes of the evildoer, and the scene of anguish changes, because his Father is near.



## XXVI

There is One who rules all, One who is leading all according to the ends of wisdom. Many are fighting for Him who do not know it themselves.

## XXVII

Many can conceive of nothing beyond the range of the senses ; when the curtain is lifted, what astonishment is in store for the world !

## XXVIII

Then, O arrogant philosophers, you will withdraw in confusion from Him in Whom the wise hope, Who is their light and their happiness !

## XXIX

That reason which you deify is a simple lamp of the senses ; he who climbs the ladder of Babel shall not attain truth.

## XXX

Your work shall be destroyed by Him Who scatters the sand at the wind's will : all that is false must disperse before the majesty of faith.

## II

## A SHORT METHOD OF REFLECTION BEFORE READING

## "THE CLOUD UPON THE SANCTUARY"

BEING AN EXTRACT FROM A TREATISE ON CHEMISTRY

BY COUNCILLOR VON ECKARTSHAUSEN

*Si oculus tuus fuerit simplex totum corpus tuum lucidum erit—*

S. Luke ii, 34.

THE interior eye of man is the higher reason: *potentia hominis intellectiva, mens*. If this eye be illuminated by Divine Light, then it is truly the inward Sun, by which all things are made visible. So long as the Divine Light does not enlighten this eye, there is internal darkness. When it shines, there is morning within, for the Sun of the Soul shines in the intellectual world, even as the external sun glorifies the world without. When the external sun is lifted above the horizon, all objects become visible gradually ; and so at the rising of the Spiritual Sun do the intellectual objects of the spiritual

world manifest by degrees in our consciousness. The light without shows us the path of our pilgrimage and the Light within reveals the way of salvation.

But as the external eye of man is subject to injury, so is the interior eye liable also to dangers. It should be kept healthy, pure and steady, and then—like the physical eye—it can be raised to Heaven. As the one can gaze upon the firmament, the sun and stars, so the other can contemplate all Heaven, the Angels and God Himself—as it is said: *Signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui* (Ps. iv): and *Ostendam omno bonum tibi* (Ex. vi. 33). What a glorious destiny is reserved for the man within !

The spiritual part of our being can be raised to the height of the angels and super-angelic intelligences ; it can approach even the Throne of Divinity, beholding therein the magnificence of the Divine, spiritual and material worlds—as again it is written: *Averte oculum tuum, ne videat vanitatem*.

Withdraw, therefore, thy soul and thine inward eye from the things that are not of God ; close up thyself from the night of error and of prejudice ; open thyself only to the Spiritual Sun. That Sun is Jesus Christ ! As from the earthly sun proceed light and heat, revealing all objects, causing growth and fruition in everything, so does the Inward Sun reveal all things to the mind, raise all to activity in the heart, because Wisdom and Love are His powers, while our reason and will are His organs. He strengthens our forces with Wisdom and our Wills with Love.

## ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN FORCES

In proportion as a body is organised the more fully for the reception, development and propagation of diverse influences, so is its existence the richer and more perfect, because there is greater vital capacity. But many powers may remain dormant within us, because there are no organs for their manifestation. Such sleeping powers can, however, be awakened—that is to say, we can so organise ourselves that the forces can become active within us.

An organ is a certain form wherein a force acts, but every form consists in the determinate direction of its parts towards the operating force. By organising oneself for the due action of a force, there is meant simply that such form and situation are given to the parts as will enable the force to act therein. This is the state of organisation. But as the light which does not exist for a man who has no eyes is enjoyed by all but the blind, so there are men who can enjoy gifts which are unknown to many. I mean to say that one man will see, hear, feel, and taste things of which another has no experience because the requisite organs are in him lacking. In such a case, explanations are useless, seeing that the deficient person will identify any testimony which the other may bear with the notions which he has received



from his particular organism, because he can understand it only in so far as it corresponds to his sensations.

As we receive ideas through our senses and as all the operations of our reasons are abstractions of sensible impressions, it is clear that there are many things of which we can form no conception because we have as yet no sensation thereof. That only for which we have organised capacity becomes for us apparent. Hence it seems clear that those who are organised for the development of higher forces cannot convey to those who are not so organised more than a vague idea of the greater truth. Hence also our disputes and contentions serve little purpose : man must first be organised for the reception of truth. We might publish great treatises on light, but the blind could not see by their help ; they must first have the seeing eye.

The question therefore is : Wherein consists the necessary organ for beholding truth, and what is the capacity for such in man ?

I answer : In simplicity of heart ; for simplicity places the heart in a suitable position to receive unrefracted the light of reason, and it is this which organises the heart for the reception of Light.

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