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Of the Presence of God



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Speak to Him thou, for He hears,

And Spirit with Spirit can meet;

Closer is He than breathing,

And nearer than hands and feet!



REGENERATION

The Gate of Heaven

By KENNETH SYLVAN GUTHRIE, A. M., Harvard, Ph. D., Tulane.
was written for the following purposes :

I To show that the doctrine of Regeneration, or Sexual Continnence is only the application to man of the universally recognized laws of biology, as set forth by the most recent authorities.

II To show that Regeneration is, according to the facts taught by the most recognized medical writers, a physiological process normal in man, and that entire continence is possible and beneficent.

III To explain scientifically the methods to gain entire control over the creative function.

IV To show that the New Testament enforces it so clearly that language could not be more emphatic.

V That the fathers of the Christian church from the beginning taught Regeneration as the secret how to attain immortality, and as the central content of their religion.

VI To show the rationality of Continence, and that Regeneration alone supplies an universally possible aim of life, which alone makes it worth living.

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OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD

BEING A PRACTICAL METHOD

FOR BEGINNING AN INTERIOR LIFE

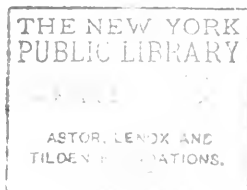
By

Rev. Kenneth Sylvan Guthrie, A.M. Harvard, Ph.D., Tulane.

THE PROPHET PUBLISHING HOUSE

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ERRATA

It is with sincere regret that we have to bespeak the reader's indulgence for the errors in pagination that have been permitted to creep into the plates of this book. The conditions under which it was alone possible to produce this book were such (done piecemeal, during several years) that we are grateful to the Lord the mistakes are not more numerous or worse. We have done our best, against herculean obstacles.

• OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD •

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THE HEAVENLY FRIEND

Dear Heavenly Friend, whom angel hosts adore,

Come, dwell with me, nor leave me evermore.

I have made room for Thee, dear Heav'nly Friend,
Within the silence of my sanctuary,
Where Thou may'st dwell, and oft Thyself unbend,
And I may always find divinity.

Dear Heavenly Friend, whom angel hosts adore,

Come, dwell with me, nor leave me evermore.

Come Thou not only when with tears I pray,
With Thy Most Holy Touch to comfort me;
Stand near when earthly duty interferes,
That while I labour I may gaze at Thee.

Dear Heavenly Friend, whom angel hosts adore,

Come, dwell with me, nor leave me evermore.

When I go out, be Thou Companion mine,
In every conversation, take Thou part;
Deign Thou to sit with me, and with me dine;
And when I write, inspire with heav'nly art.

Dear Heavenly Friend, whom angel hosts adore,

Come, dwell with me, nor leave me evermore.

I would be always what I am sometimes,
When Thou art near me, and I taste Thy grace;
So stay near me through all my earthly times,
That I may steadfastly behold Thy Face.

Dear Heavenly Friend, whom angel hosts adore,

Come, dwell with me, nor leave me evermore.



Last Christmas Eve I went into the field
To hear the Angels sing their Midnight Song.
I cried: 'How can ye leave us for so long?
We need, each day, Your heavenly Wisdom's
shield.'

My Angel said, 'Not Theirs the fault, but thine:
No Midnight passes but They worship here:
'Tis THOU who comest only once a year
To overhear the Mysteries Divine!

This is the richest gift at my command,
O Brethren dear: At Christmas leave your sleep
Come, with me find the Angels' trysting-place;
Which sacred Tryst we nightly then will keep,
Nor fail to greet one single Angel-face
Till we may join them on the Further Strand.



✽ CHRISTMAS ✽
✽ Every Day ✽
✽ NOT ✽
✽ Once a Year. ✽

'All hail, O Mary, God is pleased with thee!
Thou shalt conceive, and shalt bring forth a
Child;

By whom Men shall to God be reconciled,
By true Obedience learning to be Free.'

'Ah, well for Mary,' sayest thou, my friend;
'But ill for us who late in time are born;
All we can do, remember her bright morn,
While we are left to stumble to the end.'

Cold Heart, whom Holy Spirit show's in vain;
Blind Soul, with Hosts of Angels at thy side;
Deaf Mind, that hear'st not Words sent forth at
Thee!

Blest Mary only lived to make it plain
To THEE, Thou art the Heavenly Bride,
'Tis Thou who art to bear the Christ to be!

BOOK I
Of How the Presence is Discovered

CHAPTER I
**That the World, without God, is, at best,
a Lonely Place.**

1 O God, my God, hast thou forsaken me?

I am so weary of this endless road! In dawn of youth I never tired; but now I stumble on and think of when I may find rest. Is there no place of rest for me? No spot to lay my head?

2 O God, my God, hast thou forsaken me?

The road is hard and steep. The hills grow bolder, as it were, and O, the level reaches are so rare! Always another valley, and never the summit yet! Forests to the right, and forests to the left, and never yet one glimpse of that white Temple far above. The stones—oh, how they hurt! Mud, mud at every step, and yet at every splash I must proceed, while still the light of day will last.

3 O God, my God, hast thou forsaken me?

I am alone, alone, no human help in sight—no human hand to touch, no human eye to look into. The dear ones ones of my childhood are no more to me. The dearer ones of home and heart, they too have had to go their way—ah, the narrowness of that so Narrow Way, only for one at a time!

4 My God, my God, hast thou forsaken me?

Much good my learning, gathered with unrewarded tears, is to me now! Can it bring them back to me, those tender voices that awoke the beatings of my heart? And oh, much good it is to me, that in those by-gone days I heard them whisper by my side, 'he will go far'! I had a reputation once; and fame and glory, wealth and servants too; and women dear, who clung to me, their Teacher, Nourisher and Friend, their sun, and moon and stars—and now I am alone, alone, and even echo answers me, alone!

5 O God, my God, hast thou forsaken me!

Is there no certitude upon this world? Is there no rock to anchor to? Is there no sign-post anywhere, and am I then expected e'er to reach the Temple far above, while left to chance in choosing out these devious winding paths? Over and over again have I returned to this same place, and never further from the plain!

O if Thou couldst but hear my prayer, if Thou would'st only teach me; only tell me how and what to do, how gladly would I do't! What shall I do?

6 My Child, sit down, and eat the food the ravens soon shall bring. Then rest, and when the stars are out, then will I come to thee and instruct thee, and show thee so plainly the way that thou shalt not err therein.

CHAPTER II
**That Loneliness is God's Most
Precious Gift.**

1 Wake from thy slumbers, Child, and listen thou to Me—be not afraid, it is only I, thy Father. Rememberest thou not My Voice while in thy mother's womb I visited thee, and gave thee My parting kiss, to thee who for so long hadst played with fellow-cherubs round the footstool of My throne all unafraid? Wake—is there not some one slight tone in this my Voice that echoes in thy soul?

2 O Voice divine, O Voice beloved, O Voice of long ago, O kindred Voice, O well-remembered Voice of every better thought, why may I see thy shrouded Form so tall by shimmering light of stars, but why not too thy Face all covered with a shroud? Why may I hear Thy Voice, but may not see thine eyes? Ah, stay near me until the dawn, that I may see thy Face, and know thee should I ever meet with thee again!

3 O hush, my child, this may not be; I come to none, except it be when midnight hushes earthly sight, and sin and evil, hate and blight.

I am the Lord of Hosts of Stars, and I come only when the Milky Way reveals my Fiery Pillar lying East and West against the purple of the interstellar space. I am the Silent Voice that comes to silent souls, at silent times!

Not when the Voices of the day speed round in mocking mazes do I come—but when the spheric chanting of the midnight stars has soothed all humans into sleep. Hadst thou not been alone, and free, I could not thus have come so close to thee.

4 And oh, thou foolishly complaining Child, did I not hear, this very afternoon thy plaintive cry? It entered Heaven by the Sorrow-Gate, and hovered round the Altar like a mourning dove, nor would it cease from mourning for its loneliness. But I rejoiced: for then I knew that thou wast ready quite that I should come to thee—and here I am!

This loneliness, my Child, is rare; and, for its rarity, rare are the times I may approach so close unto my childrens' souls so bare. Rejoice therefore, that thou art lonely; and that so dark it was, and now is night; that so I may approach quite close, and wake thee with my Touch.

5 And more, my Child; it was not chance alone that brought about this glad result. Long since I loved thee; and when thou midst thy boon-companions sangst out loud for joy of earthly fellowship, in Heaven was I sad, though angel-hosts attempted then to cheer Me by their songs. But still My eyes were full of tears, and heavy my parental heart; until perchance thou'ldst turn and choose the holier, lonelier road; and then I would rejoice.

Then would I all afresh commend thee to some stronger, more experienced Shining One to lead thee swiftly into lonelier paths that soon as possible the day that came might come, and I the sooner come to thee—to thee, to mind thee of the times eternal thou didst spend in childish glee; to thee, to mind thee of the times thou yet shall spend in holy worship right near Me.

6 Blessed, thou Angel dear of Loneliness, blessed be thou!

Choices of gifts of life, long planned for by the Unseen Helpers of Recumbent Souls;

Blessed, thou hush of well-loved earthly voice, and cloud of well-loved earthly face;

Blessed the bitter cry of loneliness that brought to me in midnight hour my Father and my God.

Blessed thou Earthly Loneliness, that really was the Presence of my God—when most alone, then least alone.

CHAPTER III

**That God Seems so Distant for the
Sake of Man's own Perfection.**

1 All calm and motionless the veiled Form stood
and sacred awe for one long hour abode upon that
whispering pine-tree wood until I spoke,

O Father, tell thou unto me why this thy Pres-
ence could not come to me until the shades of night
had fall'n from Heaven's rim, and shimmering stars
had sung their mystic midnight hymn.

Hast thou the heart to stay in Heaven's halls
while thy own mortals suffer through the sultry heat
and shivering cold, and partings, and injustices, and
hunger too, with sickness manifold? Canst thou be
happy in thy distant Heaven whilst here we suffer
in this garish day? Is it thy Will, or some predes-
tined law that even Thou, O God, must faithfully
obey, that Thou canst only come to souls at night?
O blessed Presence, O forgive this my impertinence;
but oh, my Father, couldst thou not abide with me
forevermore?

3 O but my heart demands Thee near to me,
though in the day thou should'st not be more plain
than ashen cloud (while in the night thy pillar-cloud
is fire) yet stay near me, O Pillar thou divine! Lead
me, and I will follow patiently, if it seem well to
Thee, through sufferings manifold, but,—leave me
not!

Let not the gladdest hours of life (when Dawn shoots fire into men's souls) become the saddest moment of the day in this, that Thou, my dearest Sacredness and sacredest Delight, dost pass away from me, and leavest me to mourn my Better Self, that with Thee seems to vanish like the colours with the Light!

4 My Child, I will not leave thee when the dawn shall break; no law can force me from thee, nor, believe it well, no wish of mine to pass away from thee. What but thy Father am I then—do I not suffer even more than thou when I, for thy own sake abandon thee unto thy lower self?

But lo, my Child, should I be weak enough to listen only to My anxious love to thee and comfort thee for every pain while still thou lingerest amidst the lower valleys of the world, thou never would'st have even a desire to leave them for the Heights of this the Mountain of Serene Abode, in whose White Temple hang Crowns of Immortality for those who have the courage to break in by violence.

How shall I make thee come? Alas! Thy love for thy own neglected Better Self is not yet strong enough to drive thee up—nor dare I thee compel, lest harm befall thy freedom of the Will; so must I use thy love for Me to draw thee up to where thou shalt discover soon thy own divinity.

For thy own sake therefore must I not yield unto the promptings of My love for thee until thy efforts have deserved that I should come and bless thee to thy face, as now I do, O Child-to-be-divine!

5 And hence I come to thee at night when thou art more thy Better Self—thou reatest, **1**, from daily toil that takes thy whole attention's interest; **2**, at night thou'rt tranquil, and canst perceive each subtlest spirit-change; and **3**, thou'rt conscious of thy own past life, its moorings, course, directions and progress. At such calm moments can I come to thee and wert thou ever so, I never would be forced to pass away from thee now that thou hast left the plains of ease so far behind.

6 Remember thou this law that still doth rule the Universe of suns, which moons and planets still obey in circling courses; 'men get the Presence they deserve;' and since thou hast deserved so much 'tis I who'll see to it thou shalt deserve still more; and I will wrestle with thee to the end, O thou who hast deserved this special boon by thy sincerity of toil.

7 And if it be thy fault or thy misfortune that in day of happiness, success, or labour e'en, such wrong conditions reign that I cannot by thee be seen expect thou not to see me but at night—in night of sorrow first, when grief demands with call imperious My assistance; in night of full despair, when at the last thou'rt willing to resign all that thou art and hast, and hopest still to have and be.

CHAPTER IV

**That the Continual Presence Cannot
Be Attained by Dodging Duty.**

O Heavenly Presence, O Divine Assistance, O Glorious Holiness, and Splendid Prize: Thee will I follow from this moment on. Thou Lodestar of my soul, thou Pole of my desires! I vow to follow Thee henceforth through sorrow and through ease, by day and night, by gloom and light, Thou art my all, my Peace.

2 Now listen, heavenly Presence. Thou'st told the secret why Thou in the past could'st only come by night. I love Thee so, I now propose to live in manner such that Thou shalt stay near me continually.

Since first attention's interest, and secondly, the calmness of the sense, and thirdly, grasp of one's own better life are all required to keep Thee near to me, I will refuse to do the least small earthly thing with all its so perplexing cares, demanding all the efforts of my soul in paths that drive Thee from my side.

3 O happy day, and happier discovery, whereby I can and shall attain the Presence all unruffled of the Holy Ones! Sing with me, Planets, circling in your orbits high! Chant with me, O ye Suns of fulgurant blue light—the bliss of victory is mine, since God, my victory, will bide with me forevermore.

4 O stop, child of my heart; oh, listen, think, refrain! This cannot be. This were a short cut, short indeed, unto my steadfast Presence, such as is vouchsafed to bright-eyed Seraphim and keen-reflecting Cherubim around my Throne.

But ah, it cannot be for thee, whose body yet without the discipline of daily exercise would sink into the slough of animality. Thou canst not break right through the discipline of life, nor canst thou stay half-way upon this Mountain-side—thou canst not anywhere abide for fear of avalanches, till the summit of this Mount is gained, where stands the Temple, in Whose Sanctuary alone a soul embodied yet may see the Beatific Vision face to face.

5 O Father, am I then debarred from having Thee with me? Must still the fleshly grind debar my soul continually, and keep me thus thy Presence so beloved unfit to see?

Not so, my Child; there is a Way, a perfect Way whose name is this, the Middle Path, keen as a razor's edge, which whoso finds and keeps shall simply walk right up the face of these wild Steps, and never fall, and come safe home at last—nay, not at last, but right away!

This Middle Path, it is to go right out the plain old Duty-Path, but keeping Me right close to thee by sheer determination and self-discipline; by keeping hold of this thy Better Self (to which alone I CAN or WILL appear) by

1, Silent and exclusive interest's attention fixed right on Me, however bright the world appear; and

2, Calm sense-repression;

And thus will I remain with this thy tranquil mood forevermore.

6 But O my Father, why hast thou again thrown back my soul into the old, old slough of doubt and fear? This 'path of Duties'! Oh, not that I would a 'duty' shirk—but that I knew just what to do!

These earthly duties to the flesh and Mammon simply force me back unto my lower self, my Better Self would not survive one moment's space!

My Child, the 'path of Duties' does not mean of Duties to the World, the Flesh, or Family; but such as thou dost owe to Me alone—as I appear in Nature, duties of hygiene; as I appear in Mind, the duty of an education for the search of truth; and as I am the Father Universal, duties to thy brethren, such as I exclusively will tell thee to fulfil, when thou shalt ask what really I would have thee do,—not mindless drudgery, or sin for sake of family! This is the path of Duty thou must take; and it shall yield thee Blessedness, and Peace, and the continual overshadow'ing of my Presence Heavenly.

7 O wondrous grace is given to me, to keep the Lord near me by simply keeping these conditions two: **1**, first by not working quite so hard as to disturb my centre of desire; and **2**, secondly by keeping calm and still while walking up the Duty-path;

This is the Middle Road, the Narrow Perfect Way; the Two-fold Córd that binds the soul unto its guarding Angel-guides.

8 O Ray that followest me still wheree'er I wander through the night;

O sparkling, following, silver Ray that bindest me to that bright Star in zenith of the Temple's dome, and shin'st so constantly;

Though sun rise bright and shine at noon, or sink in radiant gold; though cloud grow black, or mist confuse,

Still shines that Faithful Star;

O Faithful Star, shine ever still, nor draw thou in thy Ray from me;

For sake of me at least still shine upon, nor leave thou this thy world;

O be thou constant till this bitter time of flesh-repression have past o'er;

O lead the way o'er desert tracks unto the mystic Cave

Where I may find the manger-crib of Christ the sacred Babe!

Book II Of the History of the Presence

CHAPTER I

That God is the Father of All.

1 My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in him, for he hath regarded the lowliness of this his servant. For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed, for that he that is mighty hath magnified me; for he that is secret hath manifested himself to me; and he that is unapproachable has shown his secret to me; and holy is his name.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, and lo, of all humanity, the Lord has chosen me his veil-ed Form to see, and told to me how I might stand while in this earthly land, where his divine command may e'er be known to me.

2. Henceforth with solemn tread shall I, who in the heavenly Presence stood, proceed upon my destined way. I feel that Touch divine upon my forehead glow and shine with power persistent and unlesseing urgency. That sacred Chrism shall be my virginal rewarding crown.

No more as formerly in thoughtless converse and with even harmless pleasantry I wile away the te-

dious hours and merry moments of the endless way and greeting in a genial, whole-souled way the chance acquaintance of a common rest.

A dignity divine has fallen on my soul. Shall I, whose eyes beheld the dim Unseen examine curiously the merry message of some jesting friend? Shall I, whose ears have heard the silent Voice, attend unto the wild forbidden voices of the passions and desires?

Those silent midnight winds are playing round me still—right through the limpid azure do I yet see those friendly stars. Here am I not at home; 'tis but a passing glance that I on this dear earth bestow. Here may I no more rest; I have discovered that my home, my own long home is far away.

My mind in mood serene communes with Presences sublime, demanding their advice, that sooner than can be I might attain the crown of my yet uncrowned royalty. I hasten calmly, and in serenity do haste, with perfect, accurate dispatch to press on to my goal, the royal chamber in the far, far spiritual place where I must yet be crowned by Him my own Divinity, my Father and my God.

3. My Father waits me with impatient calm, until predestined, chosen and announced I do arrive,

Fulfilling the divine decree recorded long before, to which I answer made, Lo, in the Volume of the Book is written there of me, 'To do Thy Will, O

God, I come, and go, and shall return, but not alone; having announced unto the waiting world the Gospel of the Presence of the Heavenly Lights, the true Theophany.

Many shall come, at set of day, with me, and wide the gates will have to open then to admit the many converts I shall bring to Heav'n by knowledge of the heavenly Touch.'

4 My Child, what word is this that thou hast said?

Because this Presence thou hast felt to-night is new to thee, dost thou suppose thyself the first or only one to whom I came at dead of night to comfort or to bless? Because all new, to thee, the Moving Pillar (cloud by day, and fire by night,) imagine not that it is new unto the World!

Old is the knowledge of My Presence there, and thou thyself hast often heard of it. But not until thyself didst see the Midnight Vision couldst thou understand what meant all this, of which thou oft hast heard unconsciously,—though not thy fault, since thou wert blind, and sorrow not as yet had peeled the scales from off thine eyes, and wrenched away the mufflings round thine heart.

Dost thou suppose thou wert the first to feel distress, or that thou wert the first whose cry of sorrow forced its way unto My Throne, and there demanded help from the Unseen?

Thou shalt indeed return, and not alone indeed, but not the only Saviour thou; for many Saviours shall with thee crowd round the guiding Fiery Pillar in the midst of you, and thus shall enter into perfect rest.

5 But thou art right in this, that thou henceforth shouldst bear a calmer manner and serener garb. There is a dignity that thou henceforth shouldst wear,—the only dignity that is divine, and therefore right.

For lo, 'tis I who am the dignity of man; why should I not, since I am too man's strength and wisdom, glory, true delight?

6 Now will I show thee that in which thou erredst in that with which thou foundest fault in lives of other men (that after knowing Me thou felt'st how frivolous they were,) whereas thy very feeling that thou wert the first to feel my Presence showed that formerly thou hadst thyself been blind, thyself hadst erred by lack of dignity.

7 For lo, the ground on which thou once didst fall from out thy mother's womb was holy ground. The sacred flames played round thy crib, and yet thou criedst unsatisfied. Firm didst thou strap thy shoes (as early as thou couldst) ignoring that the ground on which thou stoodst was all afire with Me. And at each parting of the ways a wall of flame essayed to hold thee back from each deflecting path. But thou wert blind to it, and deaf unto my plead-

ings to permit my Presence access to thy soul until that blessed night of loneliness in which thy sorrow and distress revealed to thee thy better self;

For lo, 'tis I who am thy better self, and lo, thy better self is Me, and lo, I am the better self of all. And since thy better self is Me, thy better self is also that of all, and that of all is thee; and so of all and thee I am the Father, I, that God at last be all in all.

8 And when thou seest not the better self of all it is because thou canst not see as yet through thy own better and diviner eyes;

And when thou canst not hear the better voice of all, it is because thyself hast not yet learnt to listen through thy better and diviner ears.

For if thine eyes were open, and thine ears could hear, thou wouldst from birth have known for certain through thy senses that in every place the two or three assemble round the incensed altar-horn, I there stand in the midst of you;

And not in vain did One of and for Me once say, 'Lo, I am with you even to the end—yea, even to the ending of the world!'

THE HEAVENLY FRIEND

*Dear Heavenly Friend, whom angel hosts adore,
Come, dwell with me, nor leave me evermore.*

I have made room for Thee, dear Heav'nly Friend,
Within the silence of my sanctuary,
Where Thou may'st dwell, and oft Thyself unbend,
And I may always find divinity.

*Dear Heavenly Friend, whom angel hosts adore,
Come, dwell with me, nor leave me evermore.*

Come Thou not only when with tears I pray,
With Thy Most Holy Touch to comfort me;
Stand near when earthly duty interferes,
That while I labour I may gaze at Thee.

*Dear Heavenly Friend, whom angel hosts adore,
Come, dwell with me, nor leave me evermore.*

When I go out, be Thou Companion mine,
In every conversation, take Thou part;
Deign Thou to sit with me, and with me dine;
And when I write, inspire with heav'nly art.

*Dear Heavenly Friend, whom angel hosts adore,
Come, dwell with me, nor leave me evermore.*

I would be always what I am sometimes,
When Thou art near me, and I taste Thy grace;
So stay near me through all my earthly times,
That I may steadfastly behold Thy Face.

*Dear Heavenly Friend, whom angel hosts adore,
Come, dwell with me, nor leave me evermore.*

CHAPTER II

That in the Bible Divine Beings were Entertained by Men.

1 Now will I shew to thee, my Child, how often it occurred, before thy day, that I was known to come and dwell with man. I will begin by calling to thy mind a few occurrences set down at length in sacred writings of the Jews.

2 The plains of Mamre were the place where sitting at the door of his own tent the aged Abraham beheld three Travelers; and in the heat of that hot day he lifted up his eyes, and seeing Them, he ran to Them, and bowed himself unto the ground, and bade Them in. He made some cakes, and slew a calf, and taking milk he set it out for them beneath a tree, and waited there on Them, rebuking Sarah who did laugh when promis-ed a child, tho' stricken well with years, while Abraham for Sodom and Gomorrah pled, from fifty down to ten reducing My demands for righteousness. And then the Lord went on his way, while Abraham returning to his tent in Mamre plains retained my blessing, having entertained My Angels unawares.

And this I did not only to make sure for Abraham the promise, and to test his heart, but e'en be-

cause I too desired the sweet delight of being entertained, a sweet and gracious bond of hospitality with those whom I had loved from long ago, and who but lately too had come to love me much.

3 And lo, I left both Angels mine proceed alone to gates of Sodom, where Lot beheld them, as at even he did sit before the gates; and lest some harm befall them, pressed them that they enter under his own roof.

And when at night the evil Sodomites demanded them, he offered them his daughters both inviolate, if they would spare those Guests; for which brave deed the Angels spared both him and his whole house, and rained a fire of brimstone and destruction o'er the plain. And none were harmed but his old wife who looking back in sorrow at the place was turned into a pillar that remains there e'en unto this day.

And this I did to test how far Lot had the strength to stand against the evil of the Sodomites, and to reward him by My Presence, for his virtuousness, and make him sure that though the world were wholly evil, yet the heavenly Presences serene were just as real, yea, more real far than those of ill, and that with punishment condign the evil shall someday yet be avenged in real way.

4 And lo, a yet diviner way did I at times employ to show the real habitation of My Presence in this world.

When men and women were beyond the years of bringing forth, I oft would promise child-birth, as when Sarah laughed at Me; and others too, like barren Hannah, prayed to Me, and I sent Samuel unto her. And so unto Manoah did I promise Samson, and thus to Zacharias and Elisabeth I promised John, who came in his due time. And to the Virgin Mary, virgin though espoused to Joseph, the archangel Gabriel (as in the other cases) did announce the birth divine.

So shall it be to thee, my Child, if to the angel Gabriel thou shalt uncloseth thy fast-barred soul, thou too in spirit shalt bring forth perchance an Isaac, a Samson or a Samuel—or e'en perhaps a Christ, a very Christ in thee. Thou shalt be so illumined by this Birth within that through thy features shall appear the face of Isaac, or Samuel, or Christ, according as thy prayers demanded from the skies.

5 Besides, thou mayest think how too at other times, when Jesus had fulfilled his sacrifice, and those disciples dear, those two whose home was Emmaus, were sad, and walking o'er the fields did talk together of those things that had occurred, behold, not Jesus, but Myself, I came to them, and asked what they were speaking of so sadly and despairingly. Then showed I them how all these things had all to take their course.

And when they did invite I entered in e'en unto them, and sitting down with them at frugal meal, I

broke the bread, and blessed it, gave it them, and disappeared. And thus I cheered their hearts, and made them sure that God was in his world, and knew the sorrows of their hearts, and wished to comfort them, as gently and as tenderly as their own mother would have done.

6 And dost thou not remember how at even when for fear of those wild Jews the door was shut upon the huddled flock of dear disciples, Jesus stood amongst them, blessed them, and invited them to touch the wound-prints in his hands, and thrust their fingers in his side, to comfort them, and in some manner they could understand feel sure that though he were removed he was not far from them at any time, from even Thomas, him who doubted, nor believed until himself had seen and felt the wounded hands and sides.

O happy those who saw and felt; but happier far, my Child, art thou, if thou wilt even now believe that I am in My world by revelation of the soul, and not of sense.

And yet I did it seeing that those childish, dear disciples, ignorant and rude could not in other way perceive My tangible and real Presence in the world.

7 And lo, once more, on summer day, when Peter and his brother, in the flesh apostles, but not yet in the heart, —by instinct fishermen as yet—returned to their old craft, in recognition full of that strong

loving faith of Peter the wrong-headed, I stood by th'blue crystalline Lake of Galilee, and laid upon the coals two fish, and called to them

That Peter's faith might grow so bold, that while he did believe on Me, and came to Me, e'en water might support him as he ran.

And if thy faith shall be as strong as Peter's, on the troubled waters of this life thou too shalt walk dry-shod. But if, like Peter also, thou shalt doubt my Presence, also thou shalt sink, although thine eyes yet look at Me, and see Me standing by the shore; for know, it is not sight, but loving faith that shall enable thee to tread the waves.

8 And when like that wrong-headed Peter I shall see thee fleeing from the Narrow Way, afraid of suff'ring at the hands of men, forgetting it is I, not they, who then is chastening thee, though it were in the middle of the night, and though it were in foreign, pagan place like Rome, yet shall I stand in front of thee, and ask thee whither thou dost go by making thee ask Me, 'Quo vadis, Domine?',—'Am going back to Rome to suffer in the place of thee.'

9 And in the desert this my Presence struck and blinded Paul Damascus-bound with vision and with voice, 'Why hast thou persecuted Me?'

E'en thou canst be a Paul if thou wilt give thy life to Me; and struck down to the ground by Spirit-power, thou'lt tell the world the Vision of My Presence that thus overmastered thee.

10 But closest of them all I came unto the Children Three—and why? Because they needed Me the most. Indeed, how could I stay away? The Fiery Furnace's black smoke could never stifle their appeals for help divine; and as the flames grew clearer so the Persian king with all his court looked at the praying, singing Children Three, behold, with them a Fourth, like to the Son of Man, stood there.

If with My Children, Hell is Paradise to Me; and when I'm near, My Children's Hell is Paradise to them. Who therefore dwells in Hell, let him but thank himself; for lo, in every 'O my Father slumbers deep a 'Here my Child'.

CHAPTER III

That in the Latter Days also Divine Beings were Entertained by Man.

1 Not with the Apostolic Age, did I then cease to show myself to those whose love demanded closer touch?

2 St Christopher that faithful saint, saw me appear but as a little child, and though no money I possessed, he put me on his shoulders that dry shod I might set foot upon the further shore.

But lo, not I had heart to leave him thus. To make him know that it was I, I heavier grew, until he felt the truth, that it was not a little child, but even the whole world he had upon his shoulders there.

3 At other times St Jerome built for love of Me a hospital in Bethlehem. I gave him ample means, that he fulfilling his desire might build it large, to leave one ward untenanted perpetually for Me, that should the Virgin Mary come again, she should not as of yore in Bethlehem find not one spot to rest herself while bringing forth the promised baby Hope of all the world.

And in thy house of life do thou likewise leave room for Me, that I may find a spot to rest my weary feet, and thou, the Virgin Soul, mayest come

and meet Me, and conceiving of my Spirit's inspiration, bring forth into the world a Christ, My Christ thy Christ, the long-expected Christ, which thou, like every other son of man, before eternities wert destined to bring forth into the world, for whom the world did wait until e'en thou shouldst come, the John of thy own Christ, Whom thou must yet incarnate in this world fulfilling thus thy destiny.

4 In still later times the Holy Cup, in which the Apostolic Band partook of the Last Supper, in the Upper Room, was by Joseph of Arimathaea taken unto England, unto Glastonbury, where in later ages this the Holy Grail remained a light and healing to the paynim world.

And then it came to pass that when all faith from man to man had almost died, and wars grew dark, and all the world seemed lost, this Holy Grail was kept in Carbonek, the castle by the sea, whose stern approach two lions watched, where ruled the lame king Joseph, while maidens fair alone dared hold It in their hands, while singing psalms and hymns perpetually.

And they who heard of It did start in quest of It from Arthur's Table Round; and though the knights all took the Quest's thrice-sacred Vow, they all returned without the sight of It, but Launcelot the Fickle, round whose noble soul there twined one single sin so strong he might but see the Grail, before the door was closed, and he shut out fore'er.

But also Bors and Percivale, who did defend the Holy Grail for some short space;—but also Galahad the Pure, who took the Holy Grail back from the dark (and ah!) the darkening world, back unto Sarra, the far spiritual place, where he alone was chosen king, and after died.

The Holy Grail for many years had healed the world, for whoso tasted of its contents there was healed, and thirsted ne'er again.

It was a holy Presence that assured the magic world of Arthur's time, that I still dwelt amidst it, thus giving strength and hope and courage to the weary souls who still believed on Me, so that for one long thousand years My peace and blessing flowed from o'er its brim.

O Child, thou mightest have the Holy Grail at thy own home, such as the Christian Church in eucharistic fervour celebrates, and lo, has celebrated now these thousand years, to gather round its altars at one common Feast the scattered children of the Lord. Do thou, too, consecrate to Me a Grail whereout thou shalt drink only at such holy times when gather round thee thy dear brethren in worship sweet. So shall I be near thee, when thou shalt drink from it, and with thy brethren feel My Presence near.

5 And many were the legends for a thousand years among the Germans, that when simple Burghers sat at meat I oft would come to them, and eat,

and with the blessing of the bread, that they might know Me, then depart.

6 Nor did I e'en permit the haughty king of Sicily, King Robert, to blaspheme when he found fault with the Magnificat. My Angel took his place upon the throne, while as a jester did he learn that I reject the proud, and humble souls alone accept.

7 Not e'en the Jews have quite forgotten Me, their Christ; and lo, these many thousand years, have opened wide the windows of their dwellings, lest should it chance to be inclement weather when I come again, I should not then be left in rain and wind, without a shelter or a sanctuary.

8 And even so the Roman Catholics as symbol of my Presence in the world, consider that their Popes are My Vice-gerents on this earth,

Thus bodying forth My high Divinity for those who suffer, or are blind and weak, or trembling in their faith on Me.

CHAPTER IV

That the Divine has been Present at All Times and in All Religions.

But not the Jews alone can boast my Presence, though to thee I mentioned Jewish instances alone, because of thy belief and knowledge of their books. But lo, My Jewish family was but the smallest and obscurest of My earthly families. A thousand names and sanctuaries and prophecies have imaged forth my Presence in their turn.

The story of the Virgin Birth is so correct that it appeared in every world-religion in its turn, and so I manifested unto all my Presence all Divine, for thus the parable of the birth divine in every human heart was imaged forth in symbol plain that all who run may read.

1 The Prophecies of a Saviour's coming to the world were found in writings of the prophets of the races all diverse—the Vedas, Chinese, and Egyptian, Grecian, Roman, Mexican, Arabian, Persian Sacred Books.

Whereby is symbolized forth the yearning all eternal of the human heart for God.

2 And though the names were different, as Chrishna, Chang-Ti or Osiris, Cadmus or Quirinus, Quex-

alcote—or at the last e'en Jesus—it was e'er the same anointed were they all 'Anointed Ones' which being all interpreted in Pali is but 'Buddha' or in Hebrew a 'Messiah', or in Greek a 'Christ'.

Whereby was symbolized forth the truth that every man should be anointed by the Holy Ghost, and he become a Buddha, a Messiah, and a Christ.

3 The Saviours generally were all miraculously conceived; a Plato, said to be Apollo's child; or Zoroaster, born of Ray of Wisdom all divine; a Mars and Vulcan both conceived of Juno the divine; of Quexalcote born of Suchiquetqual; or of Yu, who was brought forth by some sweet lily and a star; of Gautama, born of Maya-devi; of Chrishna from Yasodah, by Narayana; and Jesus by the Holy Ghost in humble Nazarethan Miriam.

Whereby was symbolized forth the truth that sacred, holy and divine is human birth, not born of passion or of lust, but born of prayer and infinite desire.

4 The Saviours generally had Virgin Mothers too—see Devaki, she of Chrishna; Maya, she of the Gautama Buddha; Celestine of Zulis; Chimalman of Quexalcote; Semele of Bacchus; Alkmene, she of Herkules; Shing-mon of Yu; Mayence, of Hesus; and Mary, she of Jesus.

Whereby was symbolized the Truth that only virgin purity can bring into the world the life divine.

5. The baby Saviours of the world were generally

visited by Angels, Shepherds and by Magi hoar, as was Confucius, Chrishna and Gautama, Mithra and Pythagoras, and Zoroaster, as of Jesus too.

Whereby was symbolod forth the truth that Angels e'er rejoice at the couversion of one sinner to a holier life, and service of the Gods.

6 And Saviours generally are given titles evermore the same. For Chrishna was the Holy Lamb, and Quexalcote was the Ram of God; the Kelts had their one Holy Heifer, and Egyptians too their sacred Apis-bulls; as Jesus was the Lamb of God.

Whereby was imaged forth the truth that gentle service is the one ideal quality of those who would be Saviours of the world.

7 And infant Saviours generally were threatened by rulers or by hostile powers, as Bacchus, Herkules, and Romulus, Chrishna and Osiris, Zoroaster, Yu and Rama, Indra, Salvahana, and Jesus last.

Whereby was symbolod forth the truth that Hell doth ever try to mar the work of God when first it starts; that nevermore will man make resolutions good without immediate trials and temptations to destroy th ework of God.

8 And Saviours generally must suffer, and be tortured, crucified, and perish in a 'Twilight of the Gods', although Eusebius quotes from Polycarp that Jesus lived till fifty years of age uncrucified. Such were Chrishna, 1200 b.c., and Gautama, 600 b.c., of India, Thammuz of Phrygia, 1100 b.c., Wittoba

gonese, 552 years; Iao of Nepaul, 622 years, Hesus of Great Britain, 834 years; Quexalcote of Mexico, 387 years; Quirinus of Rome, 506 years; Prometheus of Greece, 547 years; Thulis of Egypt, 1700 years, Indra of Thibet 725 years, Alkestos of Greece, Attys of Phrygia 1170 years, Crite of Chaldea 1200 years, Bali of Orissa 725 years, Mithra of Persia, 600 years; and Salvahana of Bermuda, Horus and Osiris of Egypt, Odin of Scandinavia, Zoroaster of Persia, Baal and Taut of Phoenicia, Bali of Afghanistan, Xamolxis of Thrace, Zoar of the Bonzes, Adad of Assyria, Deva Tat of Siam, Herkules of Greece, the Mikado of the Shintos, Beddru of Japan, Thor of the Gauls, Cadmus of Greece, Hil and Feta of the Mandaites, and Gentaut of Mexico.

Whereby is symbolod forth the truth that he who would live in the Spirit must die in the flesh.

9 And Saviours generally do go to hell and on the third day rise again, as Chrishna, Yuddhishtira, Quexalcote, Prometheus and Quirinus, Osiris, Attys Mithra, Chris.

By this was symbolod forth the truth that they who die to earth shall live again to heaven forevermore.

All this I said that thou may'st grasp, believe and realize that this My Presence evermore abode upon this earth, and was beheld by those whose eyes were pure enough.

3 And lo, not only did my Spirit strive with souls all-chosen and elect who did attain to be the Saviours of their race; nor only in the storics of their lives that might be told from mouth to mouth; but in the rhapsodies and ravings of the Prophets did I speak as they were moved by breath divine, collected in the Scriptures of the world.

The Vedas hoar of the Hindu world; the Tripitaka of the Buddhists too, the Zend-Avesta of the Persian world, the Chinese Shi-king and Four Books, of Confucius and Mencius, the Tao-te-king of Lao-tse, the Q'uran of Muhammad too, the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures canonical and apocryphal, the Scandinavian Eddas too, the Finnish Kalevala, Egyptian Book of the Dead, and the great Epic of Izdubar of the Chaldaic world.

4 But lo, this is not all—for those who did not hear of these my Saviours and Evangelists, who could not hear the sacred ravings of inspired prophets—lo, for them have shrines been sacred kept on mountain-tops from everlasting unto now, and always will be kept.

Phoenician shrines were many, on the hills, where Samuel did sacrifice; Jerusalem for long, Samaria later, and again the newer Jewish rites in the Egyptian Heliopolis. The Egyptian Shrines at Memphis and Thebes; the Greek of Zeus at Dodona, Apollo at Delphi famous were, like Vestal fire at Rome—Each God in every nation had his Sacred Ark like that

borne round th' Arabian desert, carried all across the Jordan, lost in battle to the Philistines and lodged in Dagon's Shrine, and captured once again by David's might.

The Mexicans and Incas had their Sacred Temples too, not far unlike the Seven-storied Pyramids the Babylonians built; the Druid Stones at Stonehenge witness still to countless rites of ages almost quite forgot.

From age to age, from clime to clime, the incense of the human prayers have risen to the skies while sacrificial flames have fallen on the altar from the sky not only when Elijah slew the prophets of Baal, but everywhere.

And still the Christian Church with incense, images, and vestments gorgeous keeps alight the ancient shrines in thousand buildings—everywhere as evermore my Presence dwells in Sanctuaries. Who then will say my Presence is not known unto this world?

Lo, I am with you, even to the ending of the world—not only in the public shrines, but private sanctuaries of many saintly souls. Each house in the wide Roman world possessed an altar for each family. And mediaeval castles had each its chapel-sanctuary. And even now unseen, unknown to all but Me, a thousand saints within their closets locked draw down by prayer and supplication all the Power divine.

And so I have been always present in the world to those who have been present unto Me; and lo, I came to thee as soon as thou ever didst come to Me—nay, sooner far; for lo, I sought thee long before. ‘Draw nigh to Me, and I will too return to you.’

And now that thou hast found Me, still thou’lt find Me everywhere; and when thou stayest near Me, I shall stay with thee. And as my Presence is the one great fact of History, so shall it ever be, and lo, I am with even thee unto the ending of the world.

THE SOUL'S APPEAL FOR THE CHRIST'S COMING.

*Presence, oh Presence, Presence Thou divine,
Loose not Thy grasp! Lest I from Thee decline.*

I clasp Thy feet, and bathe them with my tears,
O Unseen Presence, Bridegroom Thou divine;
I would detain Thee, lest Thou pass away,
Unworthy though I be to keep Thee mine.

*Presence, oh Presence, Presence Thou divine,
Loose not Thy grasp! Lest I from Thee decline.*

I am not worthy to be called Thy Bride:
My marriage-garment is all soiled and torn;
My face is scarred, my hands are both blood-stained
My heart desires it never had been born.

*Presence, oh Presence, Presence Thou divine,
Loose not Thy grasp! Lest I from Thee decline.*

My heart is full of idols of the World,
I have, for Thee alone, no sacred place;
I am so wayward that, spite of myself,
My heart has fled, while still I Thee embrace.

*Presence, oh Presence, Presence Thou divine,
Loose not Thy grasp! Lest I from Thee decline.*

I am not worthy to be touched by Thee,
Yet, touch my soul, to hush its wild unrest;
That yet someday Thou lift me from the ground,
And call me Thine, and press me to Thy Breast.

*Presence, oh Presence, Presence Thou divine,
Loose not Thy grasp! Lest I from Thee decline.*

Long since the Temple Hall is filled with Guests,
Waiting, with tears, so long for me, the Bride;
And yet, I linger! Stray! And suffer here!
My better self distracted by my pride!

*O Bridegroom, fetch me! That I may be Thine,
And with Thee seek the lost, with Thee divine.*

Book III

Of the Nature of the Presence

CHAPTER I

That the Presence of God is a Matter of Direct Experience

I Soon, ah, too soon, the Presence ceased to speak; and when the rays of dawning light did seek each nook and cranny of the sacred wood all vanished but the place where He had stood.

But I could feel distinctly He was near, and still His Voice could quite distinctly hear, so that I felt not quite abandoned there while still He stood to listen to each prayer. In slow progression rolled the laggard hours while steep ascents drew on my utmost powers. But cooler winds announced the set of sun, and soon, though none too soon, the day was done. I ate the food the ravens brought, and lay in restful slumber till the stars of midnight shone.

Nor in my dreams was I quite left alone, but waking saw the dear Face I had known. Thus did He speak again, with gentle tone, and drew my heart right unto Him above, while setting forth at length at my request how He attracts from every man what is his inmost best.

2 In vain, my Child, might'st thou endeavour make unto the blind to show what they have not yet sight to see. In vain will bushes burn with Un-consuming Fire while shepherds' hearts are stirred by only low curiosity. 'Tis true 'that Earth is crammed with Heaven, and every bush afire with God'; but at the best for those whose spiritual sight is yet like puppies' sight, shut off by films of earthliness, the Bush is still a bush, and even Fire is fire—and nowhere is there e'en a trace of God. Vainly the Sacred Thunders peal and crash around the barren crags of Sinai; vainly Heaven-hurled Lightnings do shine with mystic origin—when storms are o'er, 'twas only rain and winds and hurtling clouds, while I, their author and their guide, remained unthought of and forgot.

And though I should invent some stronger means than heaven-born Fire to come upon the Altar and consume the sacrifice; though I should show My Presence by some sign more marvellous than Un-consuming Fire such as alit upon the Bush in Midian's waste, 'tis only fire, at the end. Though miracle occur of grace in healing, vision, or in extasy, they still could be explained away as working of some law not yet quite understood, or by the speedier explanation of insanity.

3 How true this is may best be understood when thou, my Child, considerest that when Antiochus Epiphanes the king on horseback entered the Most

Holy Place in Temple of the Jews in old Jerusalem (determined to profane the Sanctuary) he found no thing therein but only Walls and Furniture, nor bright Shekinah on the Mercy-Seat between the wings of Cherubim, though when he left again It still was there, as It had been, and ever still will be.

Unto a swine's fat wit the Inmost Sanctuary of Heaven were nothing more than gorgeous sty; and vain the utmost marvel I could build to make men see what still they cannot see.

In vain all this, in vain much more—in spite of all these crowning glories of the world, which show in stone the most religious visionary dreams of zealots of a thousand creeds. 'Tis after all a Babel, left unfinished in the desert sands; and stone for stone it there can all be found, but not one whit of revelation from it has the human race beheld.

4 In vain to blinded hearts would even words reveal My Presence in its actuality. Prophets and preachers, poets and bards, since language dawned, have given to the world good news of Me; and yet how easy was it not for carnal men to shrug the shoulders at the madness of the bard!

Unpractical the poets, and the prophets poor, cast out by all but those of God's own poor who with some madness in their hearts were mad enough to try to actualize a heaven on earth.

And failure still has crowned all efforts to produce a Perfect City in the world. Plotinos with his Plato-

nopolis, and Cicero in his 'Republic' blazed the way repeated latterly by Bellamy; but vain, still vain and laughter from the crowd the only one result.

In vain religions have endeavoured to show forth My Presence in the purest worship they could dream. The madness of the prophet is soon made a system of theology, and then embalmed in rites and functions ecclesiastical; and grievous laws these rites becomes until some new reformer throws them down again; his own reforms soon follow the old way of ritualistic form-hypocrisy.

Vainly did Amen-hotep IV reform the animal zodiacal religion of the old Egyptian ways. A hundred years, and worship of the Sun without a figure in the Temple had become a gorgeous ritualism.

Vainly Gautama broke the bonds of Brahmanistic ritualism. Three Tooths (each one the only real one!) are worshipped still to-day in Ceylon and Siam; and Buddhist convents swarm with rosaries and seven-fold Eucharistic vestments too.

Vainly did Chrishna break the formal rites; a ritualism complete to-day perpetuates his saving life.

Vainly did Jesus curse the form-hypocrisy of Pharisee: its gorgeous splendour far transcends each Jewish rite.

Vainly did, on this very question of the image-worship Western Christendom secede from Eastern Church—the statue of old Jupiter now serves as Peter in the Roman Shrine in the the Basilica.

Vainly did Luther, Henry VIII and Calvin break from forms—the Ritualists are everywhere again with organ, vestment, candle, and with censer swung. Vainly therefore can even a religious creed embody for the multitude the Gospel of My Presence, though thousand preachers preach the simon pure original prophetic word; still it changes with the years, and soon the world is once more slave to ritual and to form.

And thus in spite of reformations finally were built the Pyramids so old, cemented by a mortar mixed with blood of million slaves; the rock-hewn temples of Ellora showing forth the infinite achievements of an age that had no iron tools to make such marvellous results; the Doric and Ionic and Corinthian Temples of the Greeks presented a serene and chastened revelation of the minds of Gods; the Gothic structures and Cathedrals of the English, French, and German lands that rise in studied, orderly confusing beauty manifold; the stern Alhambric grandeur of a Moorish race; the eerie minarets and domes of Mecca's Kaaba-sheltering mosque.

6 O Father, who can then be saved from ignorance and selfishness, if human nature is so foolish and depraved that neither things nor even words can long preserve the purity of knowledge of the Gospel of Thy Presence so divine? Is this Thy world then lost?

Yea, lost, my Child, as all is lost, was lost, and ever shall be lost without My Help and Touch.

The actual Presence is a plain experience for each one. Were I a God of Dead Ones, then indeed might there be need of an embalming, as it were, of knowledge of my Touch. I laugh at creeds, embalming knowledge of a thousand years supposing they can tell My purposes and will.

But I am God of Living Souls: a Living God am I. It costs Me naught to touch each several human being in a special way. 'Tis better that each soul rely on Me alone, who will, when I consider them deserving it (oh, how I suffer till they do; oh, how I try to make Myself believe them ready; how it hurts Me when my Righteousness insists that for their sake, at least, I wait, lest they remain unworthy, all-content with comfort of My Touch) who will receive My Blessing in the way they most deserve, or clear, or only mystical.

I am a Living God, and second-hand religion is an insult unto Me. Was I not able to come down to Samuel though for a generation precious were my words to Israel? Can I not wake to fervor and religious zeal a generation at a time, if so I please?

This sense by which my Presence is discerned is present though quite undeveloped in the mind of most. And though it only needs My waking, still the greater part, (like thou) ne'er dream of it until I smite them suddenly for their own good. But all possess this undeveloped faculty: so that, as Athanasius said, no one is guiltless of an ignorance of Me as each possesses in his own Within the Road by

which he might ascend and see Me face to face.

7 But oh, my Father, hast thou then become more heartless than thou wert at Sodom erst? Is there no other way at all? Is it quite hopeless e'en to tell of this thy Presence to the world? Must each begin again in darkness such as mine? May those my disappointments and my sufferings not in the least avail to smoothen out the path of all humanity in some slight way? This News of thy dear Presence—oh, this Gospel, this Evangel New, is that impossible to tell of at the least? Could I not blaze the trees so others might come quicker unto Thee, direct and straight, and not like I waste years in wandering around the desert track?

O Child, not until now did I omit to know this need thou mentionest. I waited not for thee to blaze the way. If thou thyself hadst looked more carefully thou wouldst have found the blazes clear my Angels made for men at starting of the world on spheric path. Then even thou hadst come along the safer, quicker way, and thou hadst not presumed thou lov'dst Humanity e'en more than even I, their only Father, Guide and Star.

Now will I show thee what these blazes are—by which thyself mightest have come both swift and safe.

❧ The Divine Visitor. ❧

I knock and knock; before it be too late,
O open unto Me thy soul's barred Gate.
I come to thee when morn's white light is breaking,
Before thou'st turned to labour and to care;
I touch thy forehead, every effort making
To make thee feel I would thy labours share.

I hear Thy knock, and open wide my door,
Come, and abide with me forevermore.

I come to thee, when noon's short rest embracing,
Thy soul is likely to attend My Voice;
In vain I whisper: soon thy steps retracing,
Thou turn'st again to thoughts of thy own choice.

I hear Thy knock, and open wide my door,
Come, and abide with me forevermore.

I come to thee when at the supper-table,
And try to speak more loud than appetite;
And yet to hush thy talk I am not able
Unless thy precious freedom I should blight.

I hear Thy knock, and open wide my door,
Come, and abide with me forevermore.

I come to thee amidst the midnight stillness
And seek to reach thy slumbering consciousness;
Why yield'st thyself unto such mortal illness,
Of deaf and dumb and blind forgetfulness?

I hear Thy knock, and open wide my door;
Come, and abide with me forevermore.

CHAPTER II

That there are Many Forms of the Presence Known to All.

1 O Father, tell to me I pray just what thy Presence is. I feel Thee near, but cannot tell just what It is, and how I might to others tell just how to understand that word so dear, so sacred and serene.

2 My Child, It is not hard to understand, nor is It strange. 'Tis something known so well to every child of man that it were hard to find a thought more common, or still better known.

Ah, Child, believe Me, men make great mistakes when they suppose that I am far away; that greatest mysteries are something strange or e'en too high. All men are parts integral of that Whole the universe is called, and each is all; in each is mirrored all, and by each plane of consciousness he may in true relations too with all them stand.

Each bears within himself the rudiments of what it were to be a God; or e'en a prophet, poet, painter, mechanic, engineer, or each sublimest form of human active skill. The full attainment's fruit seems to have fallen from the sky—seems superhuman, foreign, strange; a gift from some far planet, or directest revelation from above; and yet the rudiments are all within, and needed only to be recognized, and perfected, and used to then become the ready means

whereby the Heavenly Pattern, incarnated in this world, from heaven of artist's brain, and through his fingers, to the lasting if exterior fruit.

Nor yet what seems so difficult to understand is aught but perfected conjoinment of the simple thought and deed the veriest child delights to play and conjure with.

And though the feeling of my Presence be so hard to understand for those whose spiritual sense is closed, its rudiments are but the simplest things, the every-day emotions of their higher life.

3 For who, my Child, has not attained to feel the solemn calm of Nature's presence-seal as suddenly upon some mountain-top emerging he beholds vast winding rivers, plains, and th'endless sea. These Nature-presences the human hearts oppress with sheer sublimity and vastness.

Who has not felt the Presence of some forest's holy shade when thirsty, hot and weary with the valley's sultry heat? Where a perpetual breeze fans branches in the air, and giant trunks like hoary priests spread forth their arms as if at prayer, and grasses sway around each fragrant flower. Who has not blessed the forest to its face because he felt the still divinity that lurked within its sylvan sanctuary?

No wonder is it that a man there feels the sacred Presence of this Nature-presence. It is the garden of the Hosts divine where in the evening's cool from Heaven steals the Lord Himself, to take his daily

ease amidst His baby-souls (but not less dear) who in their childish way not less do please than human souls who pray and hope and fear. There go, and if thy soul be not quite dead thou'lt feel a gentle touch upon thy head. This Somewhat is the Presence of the Place, the simplest form of God's high Presence. Lo, thou there canst stand where God Himself has stood, and catch the last few echoes dying slow of footfalls of the Angels passed away who at thy earthly presence could not stay.

4 The next great Way for men to come to Me is by the Presence of the Starry Host. There is a Presence in the midnight sky which whoso feels will nevermore deny; a Presence sacred, infinite and free, the Presence of the heavenly Holy Ghost. Those scintillating stars so still and keen looked down on Abraham and Jesus too.

What secrets they could tell, those silent Eyes that watch the human race from century to century with sleepless constancy! How solemnly the greater and the lesser lights, the knotted scarf of worlds hung out in space, in silent seriousness of purple nights reveal the features of th' Almighty's Face. Not only this world does God's love redeem from nascent blindness to divinity. But thousand worlds demand the Father's care; each special centre of some heartfelt prayer, each world refulgent with its special ray, each world acknowledging His Love supreme. O falling stars! O heights of interstellar

deeps! God! God! God! is your titanic chant. Sublime your Presence over humans sweeps of still diviner depths significant.

5 These are the two great blazes on the trees of this great forest of the Universe, which following all who are not perverse the notion what my Presence is may seize.

But there are further facts that form a part of every human life that make it clear just how the feeling of the Presence feels, which if it were some dark mysterious art might give excuse to human eye or ear to claim exemption from My strong appeals.

First comes that feeling which steals o'er the coward frame when left alone in middle of the night some human soul, as with a lightning flame, feels overcome with goose-flesh, out of fright.

Then, O but the touch of a human hand! Then, O the rising of the sun that makes all men rejoice; the dear familiar sight of native land!

This sweet desired touch, or sight, or sound the feeling of my Presence well explains; and rich is he whose longing most profound is for My comfort, which for e'er remains.

6 Besides, who has not sometimes almost felt the Presence of some unknown foe? Are there not personalities so strong men feel their presence should they meet with them? What earth calls character, can it be weighed or measured—yet its power for weal or woe, who doubts? Why men should often

feel afraid, and feel within them all their purpose melt at meeting of some personality; or why one should contemn another, who could tell in reasoning long? This something which no words will quite express is how a human Presence can impress a human soul, how much the rather then should men not feel Me, who am more than men?

7 But lo, not only do I dwell with man in symbols faint, and traces indirect; in shrine and sanctuary of every sect my Presence enters by what rifts it can and dwells as long as it is undefiled. In thousand languages a thousand rites in thousand centuries did honour Me with sacrificial incensed jubilee with gorgeous incense and with flickering lights; or in cathedral many-towered and aisled; or with a simpler ritual oft adored amidst the simpler and more ignorant tribes with flower Mexican or Druid oak—e'er moved by prayers, as e'er unmoved by bribes, still was I present as the worshipped Lord, still did I answer who did Me invoke.

To whomsoever worshipped earnestly did I grant feeling of my Presence there. I laughed at the reformer's chisel-blow; I laughed at th'unreformed high mystery, and answered each just as he offered prayer, just as each wished, content to have it so.

8 But still more universally did I show of My heavenly Presence witness high. The sense of beauty was the special grace wherewith I sanctified each earthly place: in star, in flower, in dawn, or sunset

glows, in fragrant perfume of the blushing rose, in green of leaves, or blue of midday skies, in rainbow coloured froth of purple sea, in song of nightingale and oriole, and pagan splendour of each arctic pole.

9 They speak not truth, who say they know not Me, nor can imagine how my Presence feels; for every soul has felt the Touch that heals, and known the Truth that sets the spirit free.

In some one symbolled form each soul has felt the kind of feeling which My presence yields, and could have known the fuller power it wields had he, removing shoes, in reverence knelt.

'Tis not the better self's ascent to God that's hard, but human's search for his own better self that's rare; there is not yet e'en one unanswered prayer, but few the souls who do prayer discard.

That few find Heaven is not for lack of light, but that so few live out what light they have; 'tis not my Presence that refused to save, but that so few implore its sight.

CHAPTER III

**That the Soul Cannot be its Better Self
Without the Divine Presence.**

I Thus spake the Voice in calm convincing tone, and I began to muse o'er what He said. I felt it true: 'twas I who had not read, not God not written, what I ne'er had known. And I began to feel how this was best of all attainments that a man could make: a shield of holiness whose might could break all shafts of ill aimed at our perfect rest.

And thought led on to thought until I saw the wise coherence of the plan divine; I felt God's love through righteous justice shine; His world-arrangement perfect, without flaw. The Comfort of God's Presence I beheld to be no mere enjoyable delight, nor e'en a privilege to favoured sight, but that without which Heav'n must be withheld. His Presence is the Air the Angels breathe, the Drink they quaff, the Food they eat, the Light they see, the Ground beneath their feet, the fadeless Flowers that round their head they wreath. And ah, His Presence is that inner atmosphere which angels winnow with ascendant wings; nor can a man rise up to heavenly things without His Presence to support Him here. Without His Presence, ah, without Its touch, none would e'en wish to raise his earth-bound eyes; without His Presence none is good, none wise—none true, nor e'en remembering to be such.

2 'Tis all so plain to me, I wonder now how I did ever fail to understand God's Presence is more needful than a hand to those who would live out some holiest vow. The argument is long, but very plain. First, let me see, there is environment. Then, second, that it rules man's every bent. Third, man can choose which over him shall reign. If fourthly, then, we wish to grow divine we need but choose such an environment as shall draw forth our own best element, and Law alone will thus our normal selves refine. This is the secret of the inner strength and this the secret of the better life: Growth regular, like flowers, without strife. All this I now think over more at length.

3 First the environment. Now life consists of the adjustment of the organism unto the environment, of which the schism the life but temporarily resists. Cold kills; heat burns, drouth parches, water drowns bacilli cause disease unconsciously; all these are facts cannot be brushed away in spite of frivolous denial's frowns. In practice men environment select: what is or is not to their taste, they leave or eat. And tho' they are slaves to it (that is, environment of some one kind), they can elect What they shall serve; and thus their fate can cheat.

And though at times th'external cannot be changed round at will, yet man can choose 'twixt his own mental realms, his lower and his better selves, which shall become his normal self, and thus be free—tho'

men should chain his feet unto this sphere terrene. So men have thought the truth through torture's storm, refused consent to immorality; though cast in prison till they should conform, lived Epiktetos-like in slavery.

And such a choice is made in practice too each day by those who do not realize that this is so; each forms his 'circle' true, and makes the moral bed on which he lies.

What is there then to hinder men from choice of God as 'moulding atmosphere'? His Better Self responding to God's Voice, will thus respond to It with an attentive ear.

4 This, this man's need of God's strong Touch: unto his Better Self to be held fast: a saint is he with saints, a God is he with such, a fool when from that Presence an outcast. That Presence is the Spirit's needed Food, the Trellis o'er which human vines do grow; the Church's eucharistic Bread and which gives new life to slightest effort, e'en most crude, the Staff that gropes our way into the shrine.

The Better Self by habit is to grow to be the Normal Self of every-day Predominant, and ever conscious so of heavenly realm uninterruptedly.

5 O mystic eucharistic Food and Drink, O holy Presence, deign to nourish me, that I remain my Better Self and think of only this, to draw nigh unto Thee.

Well says the Church God's in the Eucharist:

Thy Presence is as real as the bread and wine; who seizes that of which It does consist (the Presence) truly lives foremost divine. I clutch at Thee, I grasp, I taste, I eat, digesting th'Eucharist with strong desire; Thou art in me, and I am now Thy seat, that I may dwell in Thee, and Thee inspire. O eat and drink the Body of the Lord, O human souls who are yet blind; consume the power the Presence does afford, that that you may be transfigured and refined.

6 I need thee, oh I need Thee, O Presence thou divine; good Genius of my Better Self, abide in me as Shrine. How can I live without Thee, my truth, my holiness? How can I pray without Thee, my love, my willingness? How can I breathe without Thee, O spiritual Light? O come to me, abide with me, O thou my purer sight! I need Thee every moment, Thou pulse-beat of my heart! Screen me with Thy serenity, that we may never part.

CHAPTER IV

**That there are several experientable
Kinds of the Divine Presence.**

1 But utter sadness fell upon me soon. Of God's close Touch the glorious certainty departed from me like the splendid moon in darkness sets before the dawn of day. No God: no, naught but mountains, valleys, trees.

Why hast thou left me in this banishment? Did these my thoughts Thy Presence so displease; could there have been no gentler chastisement? I thought to honour Thee: and my reward seems, I have purified myself in vain. What have I done to drive away the Lord? What may I do to draw Him back again?

2 My Child, be comforted, for here am I. Thy musings were acceptable to Me, nor did I leave because displeased with thee. I left to make thee feel that I was nigh with certainty of feeling, sure and clear, that thou may'st recognize when I am near, and know the feeling by its opposite, and thus have all the practice requisite. For know, My Presence is no mental twist, or thought, or an opinion, or a dream. Be sure 'tis not sufficient to declare that God as God is always everywhere. No doubt that this is true; but such a scheme of barren thought is good intentions missed. For, granting it is wholly true, does that move Me? Am I at beck and call of any

mind that deigns to think what's true, like Spirit which Aladdin's lamp held thrall, by mental rub compelled to interview?

It moves me not to hear them talk of Me! And when they talk of Me, that's all of it, while they are quite content, as they ne'er knew how real an experience it can be to have my Presence touch the heart, and mind, and wit; nor would they recognize when I withdrew.

With so-called 'omnipresent immanence' such as they speak of they are satisfied attributing to it intelligence and any other thing which in their pride they chance to wish, as worldly opulence, denying Me (O fearful blasphemy!) a personality when I made theirs. Who ever found a thought that loose in space was floating round without a Personality, a Thinker, thinking, driving, launching it? A consciousness is single-pointed life; and should My consciousness so infinite in lucid power alone lack unity, lack unifying personality?

Not less than personality am I; but, as in every atom I am found, I am the crowning synthesis profound of thousand, million personalities. I am the most intensely personal of elemental personalities; and they whose aspirations are content without My highest Self thereby confess they know not Me, whatever they profess, deluding their own selves with wordy dreams, but worst, deluding souls who really seek the comfort of my Presence with their

schemes till the aspiring neophyte supposes he has all that can be had, but cease all further efforts to behold My Face. Blind leaders of the blind, they shall grow weak in aspiration, nor ever leave what's bad.

3 But thou, My Child, thus is it not with thee. Thou felt'st my Presence, and dost know It well. Thou felt'st immediately the lack of Me, and My return, like faithful sentinel. Thus thou develop'st senses spiritual, endowing thee with heavenly discontent without the steadfast comfort of my Face, so that this earth will seem but banishment when I am far, and Heaven, where dwells My Presence, th'only place where ever thou again art satisfied, or canst find peace, or willingly abide.

4 This sort of Presence is the Individual Touch. There is another: when a congregation of two or three are gathered in My Name. Then enter I in might and glory such, each soul soon kindles inspiration, and on them all alights the Holy Spirit's Flame.

This Touch is stronger, and of greater might, and sooner comes to undeveloped souls;—but still It comes to hearts repentant and alone, whom consecrated purity controls.

THE CRY OF REPENTANCE

Not only once, but oft have I rejected Thee:

Canst Thou forgive? Forevermore, bide with me.

Because of my sad prayer, Thou cam'st to me:
But business calls, and straight I go my way:
Then, when I come back home, Thou'st gone away,
And I so tired I e'en do not miss Thee.

Not only once, but oft have I rejected Thee:

Canst Thou forgive? Forevermore, bide with me.

Because of my sad prayer, Thou cam'st to me:
But friends call in whom I must entertain,
The while, forsaken, Thou dost leave with pain
And I am cheerful, laughing merrily.

Not only once, but oft have I rejected Thee:

Canst Thou forgive? Forevermore, bide with me.

Because of my sad prayer, Thou cam'st to me:
But I was tired, and laid me down to sleep,
And still at dawn my slumber was so deep
I heard not the last lingering call from Thee.

Not only once, but oft have I rejected Thee:

Canst Thou forgive? Forevermore, bide with me.

Thou cam'st, while I was yet in manhood's prime,
Ere I had prayed that Thou shouldst come to me;
I felt Thy Touch, I saw—but said to Thee,
'When I have leisure, come some other time.'

Not only once, but oft have I rejected Thee:

Canst Thou forgive? Forevermore, bide with me.

If Thou should'st ne'er again my prayer attend,
Just would I deem my lot, nor would complain;
Yet, give me one more chance, and come again,
And I will try to serve Thee till the end.

Not only once, but oft have I rejected Thee:

Canst Thou forgive? Forevermore, bide with me.

Book IV Of the Practices of the Presence

CHAPTER I That the Presence Dwells in the Realm of Mind.

1 My Child, I now am ready to reveal to thee the simple methods by the which each child of man may find and grasp My sacred Presence-Robe.

Take thee a book, and write, lest thou forget the simple ways by which a human soul may grasp and hold th'Unseen.

And in the dark I saw: for as I wrote, the Presence that stood by grew bright, and very pitiful and tender grew the Voice. And from His hands shone forth a glorious glow that shone like light of day in e'en the middle night.

2 My Child, the First great secret of My Presence is this simple thought: I dwell in Mind.

I dwell in mind: not in the earth-quake, nor in the rushing wind, nor belching storms, but in the Still Small Voice that sounds in thought to thought for thought.

In mental realm am I. And he who would obtain access unto my Presence's domain of Thought must first ascend and there with heart and mind abide.

And why? Because in realm of sense 'tis sense alone that tells, and sense alone cannot perceive a supersensual sight. The holiest shrine is only shelter for a slave, a stable for a horse, and unto swine a lofty sty; but unto those who, purified and incensed enter in with worship, lo! 'tis the Shekinah of itself.

'Tis only to a Mind, therefore, that even if I would, I can appear; and if thou wouldst come into Touch with Me, look in th'Unseen Eternal, and there wilt thou find Me.

The spiritual sight will see; but it must be the inner sight that looks to see the Realm Unseen.

The mind contains it all: which first must recognize the thought and then may look into the air and there behold and recognize my Form serene.

Who would behold and feel hear must then turn off from earthly, sensual things; from passion and emotion, noise and struggle and with the 'lifted heart' gaze fixedly on heaven.

3 But not in idleness or in inaction do I e'er appear to men. It is not I who come to men, when they retire into a muffled room and turn the lights all down; when they grow passive, mediumistic, losing hold of their own normal selves. Not so: the lowest spirits thus delight to throw off-guard the watchful, self-controlling mind, to gain an access to their stored vitality.

Believe thou this: like flocks to like; and men still get the Presence they deserve—or, in another

form of words God ever helps those souls that help themselves. No better Presence comes than the condition of the man who draws it to himself. The man who is his active better self attracts the Heavenly Presences Serene; but who is passive, half-unconscious draws around him brutish souls of brutish persons late deceased.

Who would express divinity should be quite energetic: while the medium quite unconsciously is played upon by whatsoever spirit may succeed in fighting off the others and to fasten its own grasp upon the helpless form abandoned by its own.

This then is touchstone of My Presence: Who is in active physical work engaged is sure that it is I who speak; but those who lie back comfortably are being preyed upon by Shadows who deceive and steal.

4 Nor need this seem to bar all prayer and meditation—far from it. He who stands up on his feet, or he who sits erect the back not resting on a chair, or who kneels up without a sprawling rest-support is safe; or he whose earnest prayer draws tears and moans from writhing soul, may be quite sure that it is I who speak; or, surer still, who may behold My Messengers by light of day, or lamp by night.

The meaning of all this is plain: the human mind's Best Self is just the realm in which I dwell; and when the mind grows faint I pass away; and they who live like animals in this dear world, they hear

of Me at second-hand, but never know the first-hand mental Touch, or proof of my own self.

5 Nor is this mental realm the vehicle merely, or plane on which I dwell. Unless a man remembers me, I pass away from him. The memory is not the least of mental means to call and keep Me near.

And this in two particular regards: that I remember, and that man remembers too. That I remember, in that I continually behold the secret thoughts of each man's heart. I stand beside him as he speaks and when in darkness of his home, and he has locked his door, and thinks his thought of shame, I stand beside him, hear his thought, and feel the moving waters of his soul.

That he remembers, in that when as Guest invited I respond, and enter in the human heart, there I remain as long as he remembers Me, and welcome Me; but when I am forgotten, and his love turns off to others, then with tears I pass from him again.

6 Forgive me, Father, that I thus dare speak to Thee: but is it possible that man should e'er forget Thy Presence; after Thou vouchsafedst it?

My Child, thyself hast often done so ere these bitter trials of the stony upward road like iron entered in thy soul, and by despair and sorrow cut right out of it all longings for the world, and made thee stable, single-hearted, faithful, calm, sincere and true.

CHAPTER II

That God is the Recording Angel.

I My Child, midnight is noon to Me. In bowels of the earth, on lonely peaks of Himalay, in soundless deep of ocean, where the sun-light is not known, where it is not even a tradition, there am I.

Nor bolts nor bars can lock Me out. I pass thro' walls, I fall through roofs, I rise from out the ground. I see each organ in the body; every drop of blood I love; and have loved too since all eternity, and still shall love forevermore. Each bone I formed with My own hand while thou wert sleeping—every night 'twas I, unseen, unheard, undreamt of even, who approached, and curved and drew, and strengthened and made tense the bones within thy flesh.

I wove the web of every tendon with a cord no one but I can weave, so strong, so subtle and so beautiful, that none can form it after Me. The delicate white stripes of muscle were my task as Artist of the Universe, and every grain of fat 'tis I directed to its special place. Oh, if thou knewest how I laboured o'er thy body to perform this 'magnum opus of an alchemy divine, thou wouldst not wonder that I can behold thy thoughts e'en long before thou thinkest them thyself.

I weep when I behold thy efforts to restrain some thought—to keep it from the man with whom thou speakest, nay, e'en from thyself, I weep, for it finds clear expression in the Book of Life in colour red of shame and sin, and peals out loud, so loud that we in Heaven engaged in listening to human prayers can scarce distinguish them for all these Voices hoarse of passion and of sin! Oh, these Forbidden Voices! For thy own sake, O man, refrain, and let me hear thy aspirations' cry, that I may answer them with haste and blessedness.

2 And when thou thinkest thou hast cheated some of thy own kin, (thou fool!) thou seeest not that Providence records a like misfortune in thy future years for lo, 'tis thou that hast thyself both mulcted and deceived.

And when in anger some hot; bitter word is winged with venom, little dost thou dream I stand unmoved in bitter grief because th'eternal Laws of Justice with an automatic clutch a clamp upon thy destiny screw down; and though they work with noiseless swirl well-oiled by thy own venom, ah, those Screws hold tight, and never loose again until thyself in future years by teared and sweated labour shalt unturn each turn with long delay and infinite desire.

3 Thy Usual Self would blush couldst thou behold the scorn of Heavenly Justice when thou dost suppose that by some trick thou hast advanced thy

interest by legal quibble or by corporate and irresponsible device. When thou hast trapped some soul in pulling from the fire for thee some chestnuts thou dost wish; when thou hast silently rejoiced at evil which advanced thy cause, though thou took'st care to do no thing thyself, the whole black Cloud of Hell around thee laughed with wild amusement at thy foolishness.

4 I speak in sorrow, Child, and not in vengeance or in wrath—it grieves me to the very marrow of My holiness to see aught evil; I rejoice at holiness and not at sin. But what draws hottest tears from my dear Angels and from Me is when I see thee so intent on stopping worship at the time exact, nor counting ever how much thou art late, or inattentive or asleep. As if thy worship was of service unto Me! As if each moment was not to thy own self's gain!

Oh, if thou lovedst me as much (I say not more) than earthly love, thou wouldst not only cease from making sure thou gavest too much time to Me; but oh, thou couldst not wait until the blessed moment came again when thou might'st stand within the Sanctuary. O Love! Thou art the only magnet of the human soul; my Child thy love to me is hardly one small spark compared to the eternal sun-effulgence of My love to thee: and wert thou half as anxious to come near to Me within the Sanctuary as I desire to come to thee, thou wouldst each small

spare moment come again and kneel and weep for my still Touch.

5 So far I have appealed to thee, my Child, by motives first of fear and interest; let me now call on nobler motives, which, as such, will be more powerful with thee. Thy better self it is I wish to call into the mastery of thy self.

For this thy Better Self is not the Self of every-day, in which thou lettest thyself loose in every-day converse. Like animals most men permit themselves to act out all their nature day by day without a hindering rein.

Nay, even brutes at times refuse to eat because o'ermastered by some grief; dogs, cats and pigeons have been known to starve upon their master's grave. So thou shouldst also, when I stand near thee, lose all the minor needs of physical desire, o'ermastered by thy awe and reverence for Me.

So in My Presence thou'ldst be dressed, and on thy best behaviour, just forget the urgency of many usual things. Thy speech, thy garb, thy manners and thy thoughts would show restraint, and culture and propriety. So too, when I, who greater am than any king, or emperor deign visit thee, thou shouldst be self-restrained, upon thy mettle, as it were, to put thy best foot foremost; not dishonouring my Presence by too great a personality, nor squabbles, or by pettiness of any kind.

Thou wouldst be serious, too, avoiding laughter

loud and vulgar, or indulgences of self, in eating, prinking, passion, or of laziness. Nor wouldst thou loll around, or boast, or joke, or mutter at the weather, yea, ashamed to notice trifles such as these in such a Presence; thou wouldst forget to nag at dear ones, or give rein to mere curiosity. Thou wouldst bethink thee of thy noblest thoughts and useful knowledge garnered in thy mind. There would be careful, scrupulous concern for others' comforts, otherwise forgotten in the daily grind, and courteous winning ways.

If, only if thou didst bethink thee that I stood by thee and saw thee, watched thee, cared for thee, and longed to make thee feel Me near.

6 For thy own sake therefore, dear Child, I would have thee remember Me, that I am by thee both by day and night. So shalt thou be first just, then loving, then holy, and at last divine like Me.

Remember Me, as if thou wert My Bride, and I thy Lover strong; for Me thou wouldst adorn thyself, and be prepared for Me to take thee, yea, and bear thee off from all thy old low ways to holiness and dwelling-place divine.

7 But more, far more, my Child. There were no enemy who could raise fear in thee, with Me beside thee, powerful as I am. Nor pain at loss, since I am rich; and have taken charge of thee, that all thy live-long days thou shouldst not lack except as might be best for thy own soul's progressive flight to God.

Nor grief at parting, seeing I shall never leave thee—shall remain right close when father, mother, brethren, dear ones pass away and friends grow cold and partners scornful, and when acquaintances suspicious grow (as grow they must) for who faced death except alone?

Nor over-passion at thy dearest's side; for I, thy Lover jealous, claim thy utmost love, and suffer not a rival for thy heart; though through thy Love for Me love gentle and unselfish, universal and undying shall flow out to all.

So, calm, unpassionate, ungrieved, unpained, unfeared, and last and greatest, yea, uninterrupted too (for what could be temptation while 'tis I who near thee stand, and warn of sin, and hold thy hand, and guard thy foot?) shalt thou remain; and clothed in thy right mind thou shalt be able to conserve each hour's fruit until thou shalt have thy heaven full of stores, and thither will thy heart e'er turn, and finally prepare thyself (e'en while on earth) a Seat unchanging 'midst the Blest on high, and, yet, while on this earth, a God.

All this and more, (if more can be) from mere rememb'ring I am near, and standing by thy side.

CHAPTER III

That God longs to be the Guest of Man.

1 So spake the Presence in the silent gloom with calm and gentle tones, and ceased. Then all the light that streamed from it grew faint and passed away, and left the Sacred Form stand out against the shimmering stars, and for a while a gentle silence brooded o'er the world.

And while I sat the words that I had heard and written sank into my soul, and there I dreamed until thick peace camped round about me there. And then the Form grew bright once more, and that beloved Voice began again:

2 My Child, I now would tell thee how, in second place, the closeness of my Presence doth depend upon how men remember Me. I enter in to men, and dwell with them as Guest if they this little do, that they forget me not.

I ask for little, seeing that I come not for My interest, but only to make holy and to bless. I ask for their own Better Selves' supremacy; and as they give, I bless; and when they stint, they take from Me the power to bless them more and more; and he who giveth all his life to Me, to him I give Divinity.

I will be clear and plain, and show thee how I ask no more than earthly guest.

Indeed, if men gave unto Me as much continual love and service as they do unto each other, I would be content (for their own sake). But ah, though if at all they should give Me so infinitely more than to a man, yet at the least they should not give Me less; but they forget, ah, they forget—they think that it is Me that they forget; but ah, it is their own immortal weal that they forget and lose!

3 I ask no deep mysterious thing of My blind earthly childreu dear. It is no secret, hidden deep in Nature's coffer; nor reserved to some weird shrine by mystic priesthood's rite kept close. It is the simple thing to treat Me just as they do treat some well-loved Guest who might abide with them. To any such they give **1**, their love, **2**, with courtesy inviting and **3**, with welcome greet, and lead into **4**, his special room or sanctuary; and give a **5**, place in all their daily life, **6**, nor e'er forget them so that their Guest bestows on them **7**, his blessing and his peace. Such are the few requirements I make, which whoso gives, shall e'en receive the utmost that I have to give.

4 The first requirement is Love. Love is sufficient ground for any noble deed and effort, hard as it might be. Sometimes a life may be well-lost if Love have been the cause. And even Angels reverence the Dog who starves upon his master's grave, the Cat who in his master's absence pines away, the Bird who dies without his mate.

For love continually I leave the place of Paradise and come and dwell with man whose sin and passion keep Me sad, and full of righteous wrath.

Ah, hadst thou ever known what Paradise the blest may be. To look into the holy faces of a countless cloud of Saints, of Angels beaming bright with purity and truth. And then to dwell in places haunted by wan thoughts of shame unseen to mortal eyes, but offsprings of their hearts; to see mistakes and wrongs, and violence and hate; to see their future punishments (which they with careless jibe invoke upon themselves); to know how wilfully they will fall down from sin to sin; to hear the cries of passion and the marks of violence; this, this is torture unto Me; and yet, for love's dear sake, I never flinch; I bow My head, and enter in where simple human love upon the altar of the family brings out the incensed fragrance of their simple hearts.

And love is something which no soul might be too poor to lack. The humblest worm its impulse feels, and I respect that worm thereby enhanced in dignity to rank of soul. The humblest menial, and the smallest child can give their love to Me, and unto them I come as gladly as to oldest and most powerful of men.

I laugh at money and pity have for e'en the best of human thoughts; but love e'en I respect with awe and rev'rence, and answer with divinest blessings and rewards.

5 But love, as such, is not enough; for love may be closed up in alabaster boxes, so that not one drop of precious ointment can come forth: it needs the tears of Magdalen, her wish to offer it to Me, her breaking of the box, so that the ointment may flow down upon My weary feet. Ah, many are the lips that speak of love, but few the hearts that burn within until the tears flow forth.

There must be welcome waiting there for Me: a longing, yearning and desire, a gentle tenderness and still humility, such as true love imparts to human souls.

This welcome must appear in deeds, in words, in tears, in gifts. Love incarnated, and brought forth to sight, the seed become a tree, whose branches sway with every wind, whose tender leaves delight and bless with grateful and protecting shade, whose blooms spread fragrance first, and then develop into luscious fruit, each kernel of the which can bring forth thousand trees.

6 But no, my Child; not even this sweet welcome is sufficient unto Me. I ask still more. Why should I not? Would human guest (though knowing he was loved both inwardly and outwardly) go in unto his friend's without a special invitation given? I ask no more than any human guest expects—should I not have, at least, as much?

I knock, I knock, by day and night; but were it right of Me to break into the door? 'Tis true, I wait

not for my Children till they come to Me: I knock and knock by night and day, desiring shelter and refreshment that might bless their souls.

I knock, I knock by day and night; if they may hear, perchance, and come, and taking pity on my wounded hands and bleeding feet invite Me in for their own blessing now and evermore.

I knock, I knock, by night and day; but they must bid Me come, just when they wish Me—then only doth my heavenly Law ope unto Me a path and gladly I begin my ever new attempt to save and to redress.

I knock and knock by night and day.

7 And when I am admitted, then, where shall I rest the sole of my sore feet? Shall I alone not have a spot to call my own? What human guest were not immediately conducted to the best of chambers by the host—(mayhap, had he not room, he left his own choice chamber for the nonce) the best of chambers, cleaned and lighted, and with flow'rs upon the chest?

And shall there **les** be done for ME? I ask not more: not altar, incense, nay, nor sacrifice; but surely not far less than human guest might have received. There, in cool and silence of that Chamber will I dwell, untroubled by the drudgery and turmoil of the house. And when my host shall knock upon the door, behold, there will I be to greet him, and instruct and bless; and there will always wait until he

come to find with Me once more his better self.

Let him make an appointment for the next of times with Me each time he leaves again, and I shall so arrange the world's affairs I can be present there to help him and to bless.

6 But is this all that human guest would have? One room? To be shut off from sweet amenities of home, those tender words at evening hour of twilight missing round the hearth? To be shut off from board when each is present with their best apparel, and with cheeriest news? To be shut off from hall where neighbours come to speak of common interests? To be shut off from labour earnest and from toil? Ah no; my dear ones would not have the heart to treat Me thus.

They could not be content: a chair would always stand beside the festive board; in hall and gloaming musing there would also stand a chair; the tender greetings of farewell and welcome of the children and the toilers would not quite forget e'en Me.

I ask not more than human guest, at least no less and I will stand for it that blessing shall descend and dwell within that house.

9 Nor yet shall I be thought of, loved, and worshipped for a day and then forgotten in the rush of work. In uncomplaining silence would I stand around for three long days; touch hand; or forehead e'en from time to time in vain attempt to make them think of Me. I would then knock three times; then

silently depart without reproach, but with forgiving pity in my heart; and if through need the host should seek Me then he would find yet his room but nowhere Me.

Would human guest remain, if quite forgotten, out of mind? Would he not chide, or leave with rancor in his heart? But I would only pity, and depart with shadows of the next third dawn, while leaving yet my blessing in my Sanctuary.

10 Thus shall there Peace abide in that blest house where **1** love, and **2** welcome, **3** do invite Me to **4** a Sanctuary, and **5** woo Me to take part in their dull daily grind, nor **6** e'er forget Me, there is and there shall be forevermore **7**, the very peace of heaven. And why? Because where I abide, behold; that spot is Heaven: and there there shall be no dark night, for I am light thereof; and there there shall be no more tears, for I shall wipe them all away; and there shall dwell in perfect peace a holiness of beauty which can never be described, but must be felt and known and loved, of which whoso has once e'en tasted never, ne'er again will he find rest until he find and drink of it forevermore.

11 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock. Open to Me, my Child: 'tis at thy own, own door I knock; it shall be thy own fault if I shall enter not. and entering bring peace and blessing evermore. Amen.

12 Even so come, O Fair Father God.

✻ The Hymn of Peace ✻

REFRAIN

Peace, perfect peace, amidst this strife that will not cease:
It is the love of God that brings us perfect peace.

- 1 God will provide: O holy consolation
That like a Dove flits downwards to my side;
In time of stress O teach me resignation,
And make me feel the truth Thou wilt provide.
- 2 God will provide the means that will be needed
To do the work on which He may decide;
And when I stray, lest I should not have heeded
The prayed-for dangers oh, do not provide!
- 3 God will provide when earthly bonds are breaking
God will provide in hour of need a guide;
He will call back, when love to Him forsaking,
My soul forgets the peace He did provide.
- 4 God thus provides the comforting assurance
I may the Future's cares to Him confide;
I fructify with my whole soul's endurance,
Each opportunity He doth provide.
- 5 God will provide the needed contemplation
To mirror in my soul His stars outside;
Whose splendours hush me into adoration
And gratitude for all He may provide.

Into Thy Hand I lay me down so still,
I find my only peace upon Thy breast;
Thus hast Thou made me: chasten Thou my will,
And thus provide me with Thy perfect rest.

CHAPTER IV

Of the Definite Things to be Done

1 O well-loved Voice! How gently Thou didst cease! What peace came o'er me as once more the silence of the starry night fell on me writing, when the Sacred Glow again grew faint and passed away. And long sank in those words of well-poised gentleness and peace, until I felt within me such a love for It, that prostrate I did weep, and cried, Speak once more, Well-loved Voice, lest it be all a dream, and I have been deceived—speak Thou again to me.

I would not, must not lose Thee; nay, tell to me just every detail of the way Thou wouldst be served and loved, and worshipped as a Human Guest, that being at this moment sure of Thee I may with sure authority proclaim just how Thou would'st be served.

2 My Child, art thou so blind, so deaf? Thy heart so stony yet, that thou hast not yet understood that I demand no whit in diff'rence or excess beyond what thou thyself wouldst give unto a well-loved human guest?

I am content with just what thy own heart might give; and wouldst thou know what thou should'st give to Me, then do thou think what thou thyself wert thou a guest wouldst wish; that give to Me.

Take paper, write; enumerate them to thyself, that thou be thine own witness e'en against thyself, if thou shouldst e'er forget to give Me honor due. Think thou for thine own self.

So far that well-loved Voice in calm and earnest, loving, holy tone, and ceased; and darkness fell again and showed the shimmering stars that by this time had travelled westward half the vault above.

3 And reason did I see in what that Voice so dear had said. Let me myself make out a list of such small things as I myself should e'er expect as honored guest in some dear home of childhood's friend.

1 A formal invitation for a specified time—written neatly, or uttered sweetly, and forwarded to me in a suitable way.

2 This invitation should not have been sent on the sly by an individual member of the family as if ashamed of me, but boldly, openly, with knowledge of each other member of the family.

3 Punctuality and neatness in observing the meeting-place; a smile and affectionate leading home.

4 A special room reserved for my use alone, devoted only to me.

5 This room should be well-swept, all linen clean and flowers on the chest.

6 A cover at every meal, with greeting at the beginning and the end.

7 A chair at every social reunion.

8 A formal greeting every morning and evening

by every member of the family; continual attention during the day; being invited to take part in every conversation; being consulted in making plans for outings; being recognized in the working of the household; instead of coat and hat on the hat-rack, a card, sign, or motto reminding those who enter of the Presence in the house.

9 Sufficient respect to the Guest to hush, for the time being all family bickerings; so that mutual gentle courtesy will at least be apparent.

10 Cleanliness, order and peace.

4 Such is the least I would accept; that is the least I dare present to the Divine.

The Rock of Ages

- 1 When I consider how my holiest prayer
Scarce burns sufficiently with zeal to keep
My mind from wandering and mine eyes from sleep,
Of e'er attaining aught I would despair,
 But that I look to Thee, Redeemer mine,
 My Strength, my Chastener, my Guide divine.
- 2 When I consider how my utmost care
Scarce serves to help me keep from losing hold
Of my scant, garnered spiritual gold,
Mere thought of progress would make me despair,
 But that I look to Thee, Redeemer mine,
 My Strength, my Chastener, my Guide divine.
- 3 When I consider how it seems, when'er
I've made a vow, some unforeseen event
Immediately my efforts doth prevent,
Of even fairly starting I'd despair
 But that I look to Thee, Redeemer mine,
 My Strength, my Chastener, my Guide divine.
- 4 On Thee relying, once again in prayer
I vow to serve my very highest Light,
With steady, thorough and efficient might,
Only because of Thee alone, and not despair,
 In that I look to Thee, Redeemer mine,
 My Strength, my Chastener, my Guide divine.

CHAPTER V

**That even Sincerity Becomes Hypocrisy
without Love**

1 Such did I write, and that dear Form grew radiantly serene again; and then I knew that He was pleased with what I purposed and had wrote. No harm in more—the utmost man could do, too little; yet, sufficient this which I for e'en myself would wish. And I rejoiced, in that I now had found the utmost rule (which I directly, e'en from God, received) a Law for all the world, a Rule divine, which none or could or should add to or dare diminish from, as sacred as the Bibles of all ages, nations, times.

And here I stopped: for lo, I thought of those old Greek and Hebrew words, that God should only worshipped be in temple-sanctuaries not made with hands: that those who worshipped Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

And I grew doubtful which were right: the Law of old, or this received from God Himself—and here I paused in doubt, and prayed for light, and called for help from that dear well-loved Voice.

2 My Child, well is it both for thee and all the world that thou hast prayed to Me for light; for this same purpose did I flash into thy mind those verses of the hoary books. For lo, thou hadst not yet quite understood what thou thyself hadst said. I said

to thee that I required from thee just what thou wouldst thyself require: the Golden Rule. But think thou too that there are other souls than thou in this dear World of Mine. Some more formality demand, some less; from each according to their lights I take what they will give, and bless them in the measure they have sight to see, that they have sense to understand, that they have hearts to love. With formalists, a formalist am I; with souls iconoclastically inclined I am a spirit pure and without form. To each I am the best and highest that they know.

3 But, Father, pray explain to me which of these two is dearer unto Thee, though both accepted by Thy pitiful affection in the measure of their knowledge which, O Father is to Thee acceptable in veriest degree? Speak unto Me, that I report unto the World, and henceforth doubts and conflicts nevermore wage 'round this question: Of Ritual or Barren Worship, which is righter—dearer, closer unto Thee?

4 My Child, there is no 'righter' course; nor any dearer, closer unto Me. Both rightest, dearest, closest if instinct with love—that is, sincere devotion, tender aspiration, and humility. Forms are so little unto Me that e'en their absence is no claim of merit in mine eyes. 'Tis not the Form that I accept; it is the meaning of it by the one that offers it to Me. Each form, each barrenness may each be right or wrong or e'en indifferent according as the soul means

right, means wrong, or works mechanically by what it says or does, or does not say nor do. I look upon the heart, not on the outside, as you humans do. I see within, and know the motive long before.

How else could it have been? I understand a million languages (e'en that of birds and animals and trees and grasses too) because I grasp the meaning; little do I care which sounds are used to mean what flashes in my Mind. So forms religious are no more than a symbolic language any form of which no two souls use in the exact same sense; the very same forms a different language unto each; nay, e'en at different epochs unto each soul herself; and each expression do I understand and weigh on balances of keen discrimination, and reward or punish as befits.

5 No man e'er worshipped Me too much, or with a ritual too extreme, as long as he at least, was quite sincere. For think how infinitely far above the human thought I am. My holiness e'en angels dare not look at, and they veil their eyes, and bend in adoration and in praise. No man therefore could make for Me a ritual whose extremity were not still pitifully far below what I am worthy of.

Nor is the rev'rence which it teaches bad for human souls; far better were it still to err on side of too great rev'rence than on the other one of shamelessness, as many do who know nought better than they are themselves, nor e'en admit that there could be, 'too blind to have desire to see'. The footfalls of

the Holy Ones die out upon their heedless ears.

For lo, who really is admitted into heavenly places trembles as he passes through the Gate; not that he knows he ought to tremble, but because at keenness of the spiritual air such as up there holds sway the holiest of incarnated souls feels faint, as if the Spirit's knife already cut their souls and bodies swift apart.

Therefore who scoffs betrays his ignorance; who knows no rev'rence shows he ne'er was yet admitted to behold th'Unseen, to hear th'Unheard and love the yet undreamt of Mysteries.

6 And yet, and yet, no man e'er worshipped Me with form too scanty and austere. What care I for the blood of bulls and goats? Are not the cattle on a thousand mountains mine? And incense, what is that to Me for whom the tropic's jasmynes bloom in a perpetual wreath? What can my Creature give to Me who made him all he is, and has, and hopes to be and have? His choicest flights of poetry and song, was it not I, was it not I who first did whisper them behind his ear? Or will he paint me some Madonna for whose face I did not make the model first?

What then is this insanity of men pretending or attempting to give Me an off'ring adequate? O fools and slight who dream of offering to Me somewhat beyond what I had made and given them before?

To cleanse the heart, and not the hands is what I e'er require. Sincerity, to say all that you mean, and

say all that is necessary, loving, true: this is th'eternal Law. Hypocrisy it is to be so saintly in exterior but within to live just as the rest.

I care for nothing, and no man did worship Me too simply for my thought.

7 They both are true, the thoughts of Ritualism and Simple Worship: everywhere they both appear. The Hebrew Scriptures too are full of both: the ritualistic Moses, and the Prophets more austere; as each one saw it then did make for righteousness, so was it right at just that time. And now to thee, thyself hast given Me the standard of thy heart; wherefore according unto it shalt thou be judged: for what is right to thee, that must thou do, or perish self-condemned for evermore.

8 It is a story old as the whole world, the ever-swinging pendulum of human life; for men cannot stand still: each new man brings his mite of change or backwards or mayhap again the other way, as history has shown took place from the beginning until now.

The old Egyptians hoar began to worship Me in symbol of Creation's childish souls of animals: each city with its totem, its protecting Deity. The Ritualistic movement grew till on about a thousand years before the Christ Amenhotep the IV. did introduce the worship of the Sun in Temple without figure and without an altar seen. But soon the fervid worship brought in again a ritual splendid and more vast.

In India the sublime Brahmanic rites develope to such Vedic hierarchy that Gautama the Buddha in spiritual iconoclastic zeal, made men throw overboard all else but Justice and Self-sacrifice, and freed all women too; but now (O mockery!) the very **tooth** of Buddha (rival Teeth of Buddha are worshipped in Ceylon and Siam!) is with pomp in ritualistic Temples yearly worshipped and adored, while altars, candles, vestments, rosaries, abbots, bishops, monasteries perpetuate a splendid ritual unrivalled anywhere.

So Moses too broke loose from old Egyptian rites and Apis-worship (that is, the Golden Calf,) on Sinai set forth a Law of Righteousness, which priests increased in Tabernacle first, and gorgeous Solomonic Temple later. Then th'iconoclastic prophets dared restore to pristine purity the Jewish worship, and to such effect that a new ritual arose in vast Herodian Fane, more ritualistic far than th'other ritual of old.

The Christian Church arose as protest against Scribe and Pharisee; but soon new ritualism again arose in splendour occidental and unmatched. Established by the State it grew still more sublime in pomp until in long eight hundred years the West broke from the East on this same question of 'no images'! And lo, what mockery! The Roman Church shows yet an ancient statue of Great Jupiter in old S Peter's Church in Rome and, doing duty for this

liant saint is kissed by million devotees a year.

And when in seven hundred years the Reformation, born in Germany, once more developed ritual in English Church, which thus was split in Low and High, which threaten internecine war again. The very Calvinists again admit the organ, liturgy and coloured glass, and robe.

And in the future it will be the same again. From images to barrenness, and back to images; each step retraced a thousand times, inspired by reverence or sincerity, each one supposing he is pushing on some noble work for Me, instinct with earnestness and zeal. They both were right, just inasmuch as both meant well. 'Tis all quite useless but as it might assist thee to more earnest reverence for Me.

9 And so 'tis very simple at the end. The holiest form is good so long as Love sincere to Me keep it from growing into dead Hypocrisy. But when these Forms grow irksome hew not down the old sweet Forms thyself did make; but light them once again with flame of Love until once more thou feel Me present in the Sanctuary.

And when thy love grows cold, like fly-wheel of some engine, go right on, and seek with tears to soften thy own heart; so shalt thou wake again the eucharistic fervour of thy earliest love, and I will sensibly accept thy sacrifice, and stay with thee that Root and branch, and branch and Root we bide together now and evermore.

✧ The Listening Song ✧

REFRAIN:

Oh listen, listen, listen—oh listen patiently;
Oh listen to the Voices that seek to reach to thee!

O thou who seekest comfort why listenest thou not
Unto the Voices in thyself
That thou hast quite forgot?

The Voices of the midnight, they plead, they follow
In vain! For thou art too engaged [thee;
In seeking sympathy.

O thou who lackest wisdom why lookest not within
Why call'st not on thy Inner Self
To keep thyself from sin?

The Voices of the morning, they plead, they follow
But while thou look'st for outside help, [thee;
Thou fail'st their help to see.

O thou who seek'st companionship, oh lift thine
Unto thy unseen Heavenly Friend [eyes in prayer
Who, though forgot, is there.

The Voices of the noon-day, they plead, they follow
While busied with thy loneliness [thee,
Thou'rt lost in misery.

O thou who seek'st instruction in heavenly mystery
Why list'nest not to Voices sent
From th'Inmost Sanctuary?

The Voices of the evening, they plead, they follow
In vain attempt to teach to thee [thee
The Path of Destiny!

Book V Of the Destined Perpetual Presence

CHAPTER I

That God Abides Perpetually in Heaven

1 I dreamed I was in Heaven.

2 There was no Sun; yet everywhere shone radiantly the gently moving air.

That gently moving air! Perpetually its incensed currents swelled and fell with cadenced organ-harmonies it bore within its streams.

That gently moving air, that rustled tenderly amidst the stately growing groves of Trees that bore each month fresh buds and flowers and fruit, and whose sweet grateful shade kept cool the limpid waves of murmuring swift Streams of Life.

That gently moving air! That fanned th'eternal streets as far as eye could see all paved with slabs of gold, and stones translucent, sparkling, veined—as if they had been rippling waters sudden petrified.

3 No houses there, but Temples vast. There stood the sphinx-flanked, columned alleys of Karnak; and seven-storied Babylonian Magi-tower, and grim Assyrian temple with its bull-men glaring silently; the Peking Temple of the Heavens with its curved pagodic roof; the mystic shadows of Ellora's

Cave all crowned with Delhi's Hindu splendor and magnificence; the mosque of Mecca with its thousand minarets; and there the graceful spires of gothic aisled Cathedral of Cologne, and there near Rome's Saint Peter London's loved Saint Paul; and there the Parthenon, with its triglyphic frieze; the fane of Jupiter from Roman Capitol; and fearsome circles of Druidic Stonehenge, all of stones immense—and many more I could not recognize or tell.

4 And evermore sweet music of the solemn chanting both of men and women, girls and boys, accompanied by viols, flutes, and drums and lutes, was heard from every fane in every human tongue, in strains so serious, sad and solemn and so wild that none of Those who came and went all robed in thousand fashions, and yet alike of spotless white, of gentle voice and gesture calm, had eyes in which there sparkled not a tear.

5 No hurry there, nor sauntering; but noiseless, energetic, purposeful progression as on errands sped those Messengers divine.

6 And in the midst of that White City stood a Mountain infinite, wherefrom in waterfalls on every side fell springs that fed those living Streams of Life which flowed through all the groves and streets. Stairs wide and broad, with arches, gateways, little Chapels at the windings back and forth they clomb the Hill; and many Shining Ones ascended calmly, without effort those majestic flights of Stairs.

7 But what upon the mountain there might be none saw,—for over it hung clouds of glory fulgurant from which could be perceived the tops of golden spires, and pulsing beams continually shot up into the blue abyss.

And thence from time to time as winds blew down were wafted strains of music, but the words could no man tell, and like the murmurings of many waters rolled the pealing thunders of the voices of unnumbered multitudes.

And many entered in the clouds, and many did emerge. It seemed as if those Shining Ones were Messengers who came from out the City far below could not go further up than certain heights, and there would wait as if for messages, and then return. And some few Shining Ones seemed strong enough to go up to the Height of heights and there were lost to view within the clouds upon the sides.

And so perpetually in silent ministrations all the Shining Ones I saw were busy bearing up the prayers received below at City gates, and bearing back the answers down below. And Messengers in bands or single said farewell with tears, and left on some mysterious mission; others, travel-stained came in, with greetings all too deep for words, or coming in in bands, or singly, and were led right up into the clouds, while others lodged within the fanes below, according as their missions and their powers warranted.

And some bore in their arms the souls of children lately freed from Earth, and tear-stained men and women weary of the earthly struggle, yet with hope and tenderness upon their face.

8 I did essay to climb the stairs—but ah, I found that they were not for me, for I grew faint immediately,—nor was I envious of the dear ones who could further go than I—but as they passed I caught their hands, and kissed them, caught their robes and fondled them—and they would bend above me, kiss my forehead, leave a flower with me, and then pass on with silent benedictions and with prayers for me.

9 One Likeness did I see in all—more clearly in the holiest, those who could go the furthest up; and ah, I almost fainted as at once all hushed and ceased and kneeled, while one calm band passed down; and from their midst a golden Splendor spread his hand in benediction, and turned round to me, and blessed me from afar, and went upon his way. Oh how that Face, that Face perpetual shone forth, and through in all!

And ah, not all the fair young girls went up! Oh no! Some sad-eyed men and white-haired women passed the farthest up; and I,—ah, still I was content, for yet I could look up, and see the splendor of the Lord upon the Mountain-top.

10 And as I lay I grew full sad at seeing all so busy, and yet calm, on errands bent; and then I looked around to see whom I might help; but lo

though I looked long, no soul was there whom I could help—the weakest there was I! And then I knelt, and prayed to God to strengthen me enough to be deemed worthy to be sent out upon some errand too, however small it be.

And even while I prayed a Shining One came straight to me, and bade me be of cheer, and said I was not yet or wise or strong enough to get an errand from the Central Shrine, from whence the major errands were dispensed—as missions to be guardian angels, or conductors of a movement or a race.

But he stretched forth his hand, and lifted me, and led me to the minster where on earth I worshipped daily, where among the sacred rites I understood and loved, he gave me to the care of ministers well-known, who tenderly received me, and instructed me.

II And He who in that minster sat upon the sacredest of thrones first sent me (in the care of One I loved) to witness baby-souls brought down from God's own Presence in the arms of Angel-guides as they were being blest ere they were taken down to earth. And it was told to me that daily God himself plucked out from His own Breast these souls, and gave them to the worthiest to bless and take to Earth, and bring back safe, safe home at last.

And then I was sent round to visit every Temple, Fane and Shrine; where I beheld and understood each rite, and learned and learned, until I re-

alized it was the same, same God who everywhere was served, and loved, and praised and worshipped and revered.

And after years I too was sent (in care of others first) to minister with message and with benediction to a praying soul.

And later I was given charge of one dear human soul for e'en one single day, and then one week, and then one year, and after years—oh, blessed years!—(I cannot well remember just how many, they were all so blessed!) I first as witness, then as fellow-judge I sat in halls in those vast Fanes where Holy Ones consulted over, and decreed the fates and punishments and sweet rewards of souls—of friendships to be started, or maraisges to be or hindered or progressed.

12 And as the years went on in peaceful occupations I discovered that I could mount higher on those blessed Stairs; and then I felt and knew that I should soon be able to go up higher; and already we all felt that I should be entrusted soon with some slight errand from the Central Shrine when I awoke and lo, it was a dream!

CHAPTER II

**That there is on Earth a Mountain of
Serene Abode**

1 And lo, I dreamed again.

2 I saw from far the Ocean under my own feet. And several Guides were with me, whose faces shone whenever they did speak. And silently we sped above the waves past many vessels. And we sped still further till we came unto a coast and passed beyond the mountains, over valleys, rivers, cities, forests, till we came to wastes, and lo, I never could tell just how it appeared, but right before us shone a light afar; and as we sped we saw it was a Temple, white and shining 'mid the desert sands.

And on we sped until we came unto its doors, and knocked and knocked—but answer there was none. And anxiously our band began to look around when quietly a wicket gate was opened, and behold, there stood before us there a Shining One arrayed in white who gently led us in into the court-yard wide and square, with dark recesses, shrines and altars, statues and the like; and as we stood there in the moonlight from high up came floating strains of heavenly hymns, and voices manifold in snatches as the wind played round our feet; and down it came because so heavy-laden with the fragrance of incensed perfume.

3 And after quite a while a door was opened inward and let out a White-robed One who long consulted silently with those dear Guides who brought me here, while I looked round in humble reverence upon the dome so high all dazzling white; and stars and moonlight mirrored in the marble pavement of the court so vast and full of mystery.

And then the White-robed One came near to me and took me by the hand, and kissed it, and then blessed me, looking up unto the dome; and once again he blessed me, lifting up his gaze unto the stars; and last, he looked upon the zenith of the sky, where, as I looked, I saw the Holy City I had seen before—but only for a moment, and it was once more dark sky.

And then he took me once again by hand, and beckoning unto the band that brought me we went back unto the wicket by the which we had at first been brought into that sacred Fane. And then he pointed to the road we came beyond the mountains, and I understood (for in my mind I felt the words, 'It is not yet too late—return if still thou wouldst; it is yet time. If thou fear'st death, it still may be avoided; but be sure if thou dost yet delay it will now be too late.' But as I stirred not, slowly did he close the door and bent upon my forehead, blessing me.

And then in happy, silent walk we turned back to the door from which we came; and there those

Dear Ones fell upon my neck, and wept, and silently did bid me go; and then I knew that we must part and I shed tears but peace fell on our souls; and then I understood they would await me there; untill 'twas known if I should live or die in the ordeal which I knew there waited for me in the Sacred Fane.

4 And there we came back to the door which closed with a heavy spring and bolts and bars of adamant for e'er shut off the outer world.

And then despair came over me; but at one touch of that white-robed figure's hand I felt the sweet encouragement of heavenly sympathy.

And then I turned and followed him through thousand turnings till we came unto a door, with marble columns, and a wide blank capital, and kissed me once again and left me there.

5 And after long delay I knew that I was not alone. I could not see, but felt beside me shapes, one holy and one sinful. And the sinful one came first, with animal swift swoop he spoke into mine ear (and yet I feel his breath, hot laden with desire and passion—ah, that Temple-devil's breath!) and said, Lie down and die; you might as well. But then the Holy One I felt, but could not see did point his finger to the door, and passed away. But not the sinful one, and closer still he came, and then I felt it was a woman næd, under scarlet cloak, who pressed near me and then I knew that if I fled into those winding

stairs and passage-ways I should be lost, and die not one, but thousand deaths; and once again the Holy One came near and pointed to the door (and this time I could see his hand,) and then in sheer despair I threw myself against its massive weight while thousand devils echoed laughter all around; and I would have given up the struggle in despair but that the Temple-Devil pressed me closer till I pushed so hard the door flew open and

6 I stopped; for there a subterranean vault immense with flick'ring candles all around on many altars by the walls as far as eye could see; and there behind each altar sat a veil-ed Form in silent calm, but that I felt that each was looking at me through his mask. And in the centre was a hole; and near by was a flight of steps, and in between a veiled Form with sword and chain.

And then I understood I should be judged; whereat I trembled, ti cold dew stood on my forehead, and unconsciously I pushed me back, and devils seized me, helping me; but when their hot breath scalded me, I tore myself from them with cries for help; but those relentless Judges sat unmoved, nor came there help until I called on God, when suddenly sprung forth Young Men with glorious eyes and flaming swords, who drove the evil Shadows back; and swift I fled into the Judgment Hall, and with a crash the doors sprung to, and silent voices bade me further dare the good attempt.

7 And naked as I stood in midst of that dark Hall I saw the Judge who sat behind the altar next the door at right hand side point me unto the door: and there I saw in living colours my old home portrayed—myself I saw there enter, carried by my nurse, and sinned my first of sins, a lie.

And then I recognized it all, and unto me did turn the veil-ed Judge to ask what I might say; but as I did attempt to justify myself the silent swordsman struck me down with mailed fist. And once again I saw the scene and would once more have justified myself; when suddenly the whole Hall vanished, and I was in dungeon deep, and there remained for months.

8 But on a morn my soul bethought herself of prayer, and straight my door let in my former reverend Guide who gently bent o'er me and kissed my forehead, gave me meat and drink, and led me to the Door. And just as soon as once again I felt the Holy and the Evil One I cried on God! God! God! and swiftly did the Door fly open, and with trembling half suppressed I hid me there behind the Door.

9 And then the same old Judge began again to point and then I saw myself again my first of childish sins commit, and as he turned to me I knelt and prayed and lo I heard him weep, and motioned me unto the next. And so each sin I ever had committed pictured there itself upon that door, and as

I prayed each judge would ask me what I judged of punishment I would inflict upon myself, and then each time when I had thought the thought I was advanced, and that one candle-light against my soul put out for evermore. And oh, for three long weeks I so passed from Judge to Judge, and would have fainted but I felt a hand divine, unseen support my steps, and when I was too weary unseen Angels ministered to me and in the strength of that I still proceeded slowly but continually.

10 And it befell that when I had passed almost by half the Judges, that a Form came near and bad me be of cheer, and oped a Gate into a pleasant grove and beckoned me to come and rest; but I said Nay: I would prefer to free myself from all my life-long sins; and suddenly with howl of disappointed rage the Fiend (for fiend it was) in cloud of brimstone passed away, and silently a Shining One bent over me and kissed me, bidding me proceed as quickly as I could unto the end.

And when I had at last thus judged myself, and thus put out the last of lights that shone against my soul I was in darkness total, and I knelt and prayed and One came near and told me it was so decreed that in the few remaining years of earth all circumstances would so shape themselves as to permit me easily to expiate each one and every punishment I had decreed against myself.

And then . . .

11 It is too long to tell. But after many days gone by of rest within the Temple where sweet perpetual prayers and hymns kept lit the flamed devotion on the Altar high I was led forth into the Hall of Learning, where, arrayed in white, I learned about the Twelve great Labours of great Hercules; one for each nature which our God has made. And there I learned the Laws of Wisdom, and I learned to speak without a word, and how to leave my body, and how souls may find by instinct which direction is it where the Temple lies, and how to call to It for help in time of need, and when to go there when I would, and of the Laws of Purity, and conscious sleep, and mysteries too deep to utter forth.

12 And then I lost the wish for food, and after tender ministrations on a festal day, all dressed in purple robe I entered—ah, where clouds of witnesses beheld me kneel at th'Altar of Initiated Souls, and swear myself to God for all eternity; and there was giv'n to me my name celestial and jewels hung around my neck, and rings upon my fingers, ready for the Great Betrothal which next day took place within the Inmost Shrine where I beheld myself as Bride betrothed unto the Heavenly Bridegroom—and no words can tell, nor reason understand what visions there were mine; but knowing all I was content to leave my weeping Bridegroom, and return to earth until I might for ever enter, nor again need leave my Home on high.

And as I passed into the Court my Angel-guides
came near me, kissed me, and we went together on
in blest communion through the Outer Gate, and
as we passed beyond the sea

I woke, and lo, it was a dream.

CHAPTER III

That God's own Time is Here and Now

1 And in the East began to dawn the day. And then the Presence said,

My Child, I now depart in semblance physical such as till now I gave to thee.

Climb thou that Mountain. Far beyond those peaks are deserts wild; but press thou on; and thou wilt someday find the Place where this thy dream shall be fulfilled, and later on the first one also shall become a fact. Farewell.

2 And then I knew I was alone, and tears burst forth; for then I knew I should not hear that Voice—that well-loved Voice, with Vision face to face—again on this our earth.

And then I prayed; and when once more the breeze silently played round me, they did whisper in mine ear of holiness and courage, blessedness and peace.

3 And then one of those Voices said to me: Make haste! The road is long and steep, and short for it this dawning day—'tis here and now alone thou canst progress.

There is a Bridge beyond shall fall to-night. See if thou canst attain to it. For never, ne'er again will such a short path open unto thee. For months thou'lt have to wander round th'impassable ravine unless to-day thou cross that Bridge before it fall.

Be brave, and angel-guides shall minister to thee, nor leave thy side till safe, safe home at last.

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