The Sanity of William Blake

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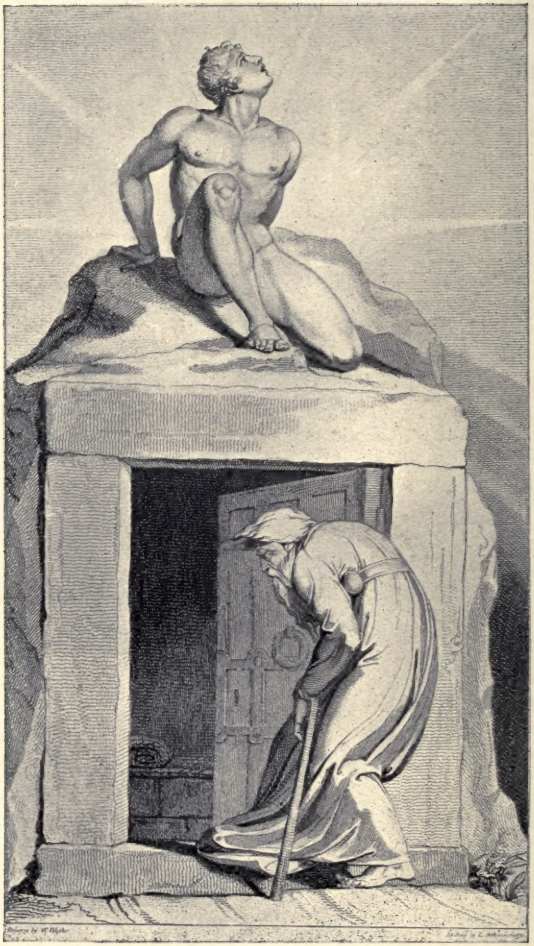

From Blair's Grave

Frontispiece

The Sanity of William Blake

By

Greville MacDonald, M.D.

Author of "How Jonas Found His Enemy,"
"The North Door," "The Ethics of Revolt," &c., &c.

With six illustrations of Blake's drawings

"When thou seest an Eagle, thou seest a portion of Genius :
lift up thy head !"

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The Sanity of William Blake

ALL criticism is based upon some standard of convention. Yet, in spite of the fact that our education necessarily favours such standard, our instincts are often finely rebellious in their repudiation of convention. And we secretly honour all who outdare custom, though we openly fear and perhaps deride them. The weakness of convention as a standard of criticism lies in this, that we are able to estimate a given work only so long as it falls within our educational experience ; whereas if it does not, there remains no system that will give it justice. How can one judge, say, of ethics in Mars, when he is entirely ignorant of its conditions ? or of habits in Mile End if he do not share its quite reasonable dislike of his own culture ? or of manners in May Fair when he can but envy, not emulate, its

comfortable morality? We publicly pity and even pretend to despise all who are not of the fold; yet in our hearts we often admire them. It is indeed curious. Though we know our conventions are but dummies of formalism, we cringe like very Pharisees before them and hug it to our hearts that we are as other men. Nevertheless, though the Gentiles defy our Gods, we grant them a right to live as long as they do not question our respectability or marry our daughters. Are they not picturesque, these outlaws, and do they not add to the gaiety of life? Be they inspired poet or filthy fakir, sour-hearted Diogenes or pearly-toothed nautch girl, we gaze at them from afar and marvel —even if we profit nothing by their example. In brief, those who are caged have mighty respect for those who fly; if only, alas! until some one shall bring the birds to earth with broken wing. The genius, the prophet, the poet, is necessarily in his work and mode of life outside the law that binds the masses into correct behaviour. Therefore he is beyond understanding, though the ignorant people may follow him from afar. He is beyond understanding, because few have virtue enough to gauge the uncon-

ventional virtues. The schools judge only by their standards of examination, and cast out a poet as unfit. The professions measure by the success of their sleekest members ; and, as it is a law of nature that the eccentric shall not survive, they starve him. The academies of Art can judge of nothing that is not so firmly and viciously correct that all fear of its kindling the imagination vanishes. Yet the schools might remember they were founded by men who would pity their present professors ; the learned societies, that they are stagnating for lack of great thinkers ; and the teachers of art, that while prating of genius they are perpetrating bathos. Even the churches scatter their bread upon the waters because they dare not eat it ; they have still faith enough to know they will not starve so long as that bread persists, as it ever will, in returning after many days. Unfortunately it is only after we have killed the prophets that their greatness dawns upon our close-hedged understanding.

In a word, no man can faithfully criticize art only by the rules of that art. No man can measure the starry heights who believes that trigonometry is always sufficing. No

man can have any faith whatsoever who builds upon evidences. No one—to come to the point before us—can judge of another man's sanity who dares not risk, when the truth claims him, the world's scorn of his own sanity.

And if we are to judge William Blake's sanity by the limited arguments of mind specialists, we shall most certainly find him lacking; though we may wish the world were less sane if the loss of its wits would bring it nearer to the Kingdom in which Blake lived.

But more than this. He was mad if we are to judge him by those many wise whose only idea of living in perfect sanity is to take in one another's washing, and yet not wash it in public. He was mad if no man may see further than his neighbours without the sanction of the Lunacy Commission; if no man has right to prophecy; if none may use terrific metaphor without being accused of coarse realism; if none may call the devil black without being stigmatized as small-minded; if none may light a candle without the sane world disputing his right to find road through the darkness.

Moreover, Blake was undoubtedly mad if

we are to believe all that his apologists wrote to prove the contrary. Yet his critics have dealt most lovingly with him, and praised his cryptic flights of poetic fire, his marvellous, ineffable pictures. They have told us of his simple, true, and pious life, never wavering or over-sad, always staunch and hopeful; of his terrific condemnation of enemies, his over-kindly criticism of friends. They have let us see his child-like yet huge-minded nature; they have made us worship the singer for his prophecy, the painter for his music. Nevertheless, and please note this most extraordinary of facts, they have dared defend this man against himself and his own work.

We are driven by his apologists, but not by his disciples, to this uncomfortable conclusion: that if the dear William Blake was indeed sane, he was guilty in manner never before laid to the charge of the most hypocritical; for while your average sinner may preach piety and live shamefully, William Blake, for the first time in the history of man, while living so absolutely virtuous a life that none but a drunken soldier ever accused him, and that falsely, yet wrote and preached impiety of many

kinds and divers colours. If we study Mr. Swinburne we shall be asked to believe that our prophet wrote like a libertine, while living like a saint; that, preaching infidelity, he was yet faithful beyond the manner of men. On the other hand, some of his most devoted interpreters compel us to believe that while he was actually teaching sublime truth, he surpassed even his interpreters in obscurity. At any rate, Messrs. Ellis and Yeats invite us to substitute an absolutely unintelligible mysticism for some of the grandest symbolic writing the world has ever produced.

If such great authorities as these, to whom we are most deeply indebted for their real devotion to Blake, and yet whose discovery of Blake's system is more ingenious than important, adduce such equivocal evidence of his sanity, we are perhaps justified in questioning it. Yet upon a time, many years ago, it happened that I found a sane man in a lunatic asylum, his certificates of insanity being drawn up and endorsed by authorities legally qualified for the purpose, though certainly incompetent. And not infrequently in the world's history a judicial verdict, instigated by a passionate multitude,

has crucified an innocent man. Similarly, though the critics' verdict on William Blake's sanity is entirely in his favour and on the whole not uncomplimentary, it is couched in such words as to leave in our minds only one alternative to condemning the defendant as mad, namely, to question his advocates' fitness. Stupid criticism and apologetic admiration will always be the stock-in-trade of pedagogic devotion, until man rejects once and for all the perennial fascination of paradox. Even the Christian theologies are based upon a system of discovering attributes in the Divine Nature not warranted by scripture, and then making lame apologies for Jesus Christ's inconsistencies. Blake certainly will not mind suffering with his Master, even if his critics resent classification with theologians.

But let us inquire upon what grounds in general we base our estimate of sanity.

For purposes of convenience we may divide the public into two great classes, the sane and the insane. The sane, as will be supposed, are the majority. Their voice, they are for ever assuring one another, is the voice of God. And they append to this creed the corroborative law of Nature:

The Fit alone shall survive and Devil take the hindermost. Considering which, they behave on the whole rather decently among themselves. But they are certain of only one thing—and a most important—that the particular minority to which they are opposed are so stark mad that the wonder is that they are not stark naked also.

And one remarkable point of distinction between these two classes is this : that the sane majority find the language provided for them by their country's traditions vastly in excess of their needs, while the insane minority are for ever discontent with their native tongue because of its total insufficiency to express what they feel and know, the visions they see and believe in. These, though they have the whole wealth of culture at command, are nevertheless for ever seeking and finding new forms of expression, but often only to discard them because they fail to express the truth. It is these who paint uplifting pictures the wealthy can never possess, whatever they pay for them ; who sing divine songs, as did William Blake, for fashion to laugh at ; who make wooden fiddles wail passionately, as did Joachim, whom even the quite sane applaud.

The more marked the success of the larger class, the more evident become their limitations. The more surely the smaller discovers the restricted possibilities of language, art, music, the more certain is it that they have understanding of the deeps. Indeed, one may affirm it to be axiomatic in the logic of sublime thought that those alone touch truth who utter it in word, line, or melody, too profound even for their own understanding. Surely some must herein reach the very pinnacle of insanity!

The former class comprises the people of Facts, the latter those of Ideas.

The class of Facts includes the bulk of the busy world. It also holds the men of scientific pursuit; for these devote their lives to the discovery and classification of facts. To this end they rightly seek to simplify language and eliminate from it all metaphor, idiom, or symbol that might distract the mind from the rigid import of its words. They would make their language as near the mathematical as possible and, wherever it can be done, employ formula and syllogism in place of appeal to instinct, so as to render their conclusions self-evident. But even this inexpansive system, in its en-

deavour to be truthful, reveals an essential untruthfulness; for it is constantly compelled to disregard individual claims and ideal characteristics for the sake of giving weight to its factual generalizations. To classify and define is easy; and it has for some people the supreme advantage of discounting the value of higher thought. To discover the untruthfulness of scientific expression when dealing with matters that forbid definition and measurement, often requires of the scientific teacher a very genius of honesty. When, for instance, the biologist assures us that we must regard the bird as an aberrant form of reptile, and when he sets before us the array of facts upon which he justifies his claim, which facts there is no disputing, we understand him and his classification of the bird and the reptile so clearly that we have no difficulty in classifying himself. He belongs mind and soul to Facts. But when that genius arises, who, while giving full value to the evidences of the museum and the dissecting-room, can avoid the contamination of his soul, and sing—yes, sing—of the lark's supremacy to the law of gravity, and in this song uplift man's ever-young soul

into the empyrean of the Holy Spirit, the world of learning will begin to undo some of its mischief-making.

But the second of the two classes which we are considering, that of Ideas as distinguished from Facts, instinctively resents the class-room methods of ocular demonstration. No less intent than the man of science upon teaching, and no less striving to be honest in all his dealings, the idealist, just because of such honesty, rejects formula and syllogism ; not because these have not their place and need, but because in virtue of their very completeness they seem to claim that no teaching is possible save through their ministrations. The idealist claims that thought explores regions where the words self-evident, tangible, demonstrable, have no meaning ; where even the concrete white chalk and blackboard have no use. "In what he leaves unsaid," declared Schiller, "I discover the master of Style." This is very near to Blake's "seeing through, and not with the eye." And if style is indicated by what is left unsaid, imagination is indicated by the perception of what is not seen, and often but pointing to it, rather than telling it. So the idealist Blake

discards the algebraical equation, the logical argument; and in place of them his only method of teaching is Appeal.

Appeal to what? To that very consciousness in man of deeps in his existence which science has not fathomed, but which the greatest teachers touch with their poetry, their music, their paintings, and call into conscious life. He appeals to the instinctive knowledge of the child that the lark shares no place with reptile, the authorities notwithstanding. If there be in us "thoughts that lie too deep for tears," how greatly truer is it that there be deeps within or around the nature of life too profound for utterance, but which, not the less, are responsible for, directive of, indeed inspiring, our outward and visible show of life. These deeps are felt rather than known. They are of the emotions rather than the intellect. The man of art is more conscious of them than the schoolman because he lives more in their inspiration. And living thus in life of vaster reality than that of the getting and holding of Facts, of bowing to them, of chaining his soul to their glitter, he sees that from these same deeps all men arise and therefore have some consciousness

of them, even if they deny it. It is to this consciousness that Blake makes appeal. Because of it he knows he must reject the ways and manners of the schools.

Indeed, the way of the imaginative artist is the way of the child. He rejects his facts as too painfully trivial to be worth attention as such, though he uses them right freely and truthfully in his own fashion. But he strips them of all precision so as to disabuse his public of any supposition that he uses them as argument or evidence. The anatomy of the lark and its biological position are entirely irrelevant facts to the true poet who appeals to the greater life in our hearts. To him facts lose their gravity, words their precision ; they rise upon the wings of the bird, and scatter themselves for harvest, as the lark's song reaches ever wider realms of earth as he mounts into heaven. And this is the way with the child. He cannot easily comprehend the ways of men, to whom the only serious things are money and means, success and failure. And his soul, a power growing daily in its supremacy to mere things of matter, because blossoming out of the abyss of eternal potentialities, almost declines to be happy unless using the

things of life as mere symbols of its spiritual consciousness, its spiritual desire for mastery.

Each of these points in classification Blake's best critics would, I think, freely allow. Nevertheless, seemingly because they lack courage of conviction, they quail before his mightiest utterances. They have most signally failed in establishing his sanity, because they could not understand the sublimity of his power. Confronted even by such of his best-known works as *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, or *The Visions of the Daughters of Albion*, they have slunk away from the master to lose their identity among the foolish and angry multitude, thinking it impossible for the cock to crow.

So that we have two duties before us, first to let the more doubtful understand how very specially sane was Blake's insanity, and secondly to let some of us latter-day disciples realize that health of heart is essential if we would scale the snow-clad pinnacles. Blake's purity of soul and simplicity of mind were his claims to greatness, his secret of appeal. And I think it will be among the thoughtful and unlearned, rather than the critical and scholarly, that the great

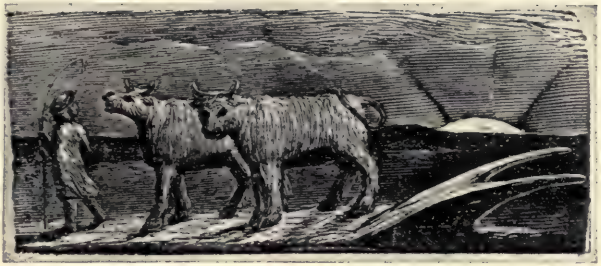
man will at last find sympathy and true understanding.

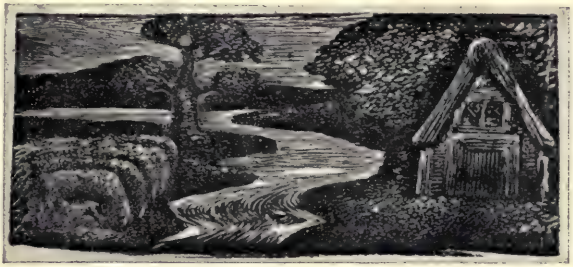
But to grasp the true worth of Blake's message, we must enquire still further into the sanity of the multitude. And to this end it will prove convenient to subdivide the sane class into three, though they overlap and intermingle.

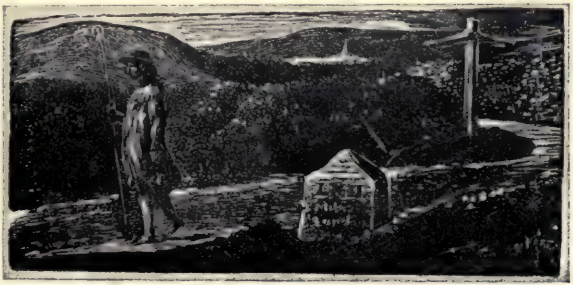
(i.) *The sanity of the first is measured by their limitations in seeing.* We appoint perhaps as their vestal virgin a certain servant-girl of Samuel Palmer, that brilliant painter-etcher and most devoted disciple of Blake. She had declared in the kitchen, and solely on the strength of her own keen-eyed perspicacity, that her master must be mad, because he would recite poetry to himself and had hung on the drawing-room walls, she declared, two framefuls of tailor's patterns. The accusations looked grave indeed. And we quite justify the maid's election to the sacred vestal-virginship, when we learn that these tailors' patterns were some of William Blake's masterpieces, to wit, his only attempts at wood-engraving, the celebrated Pastorals! This first subdivision of the class of Facts holds as its maxim that *if things look more like what*

interests us than what they are, then what they are is of no account whatever. For, as tailors' patterns, the Pastorals were distinctly failures! If a man looks like money, his moral nature is of no importance. If a picture suggests that it would look well over the new Sheraton sideboard, then the furniture dealer alone can estimate its value. If Pan's pipes look as though they are but reeds, then Pan's music is moonshine, and so forth.

(ii.) Then there is the second great subdivision: *those who judge by rule and plumb.* For these, scholarship alone knows what is good, and intellect reigns supreme. Any one is eligible for the post of high-priest to this class, if only he despises Blake because he could not draw. In general he will measure Pan's excellence by the daily number of hours he practises his pipes and the expensiveness of the master who taught him. Blake's Pastorals will be condemned because they are different from all other wood-engraving; because he was such a master of his keen-edged chisel that he dared make it breathe and laugh and sing; because, instead of quoting authorities, he appeals to the instinctive feeling after beauty that lies







Wood Cuts from Thornton's Virgil

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potential in even quite sane people's souls; because he gives us no excuse for exclaiming, "How true is Blake to the masters! How accurate his drawing! How wise in him to read our thin sanity through and through, and yet hardly ruffle it!" These Pastorals invite no criticism. They make Appeal. And when that Appeal finds response in our hearts, we know that language must fail us, though we see our friend's eyes shine and we fear our own will overflow. The maxim of this second subdivision of the mighty sane is that *in art no thing can ever do more than the average things have hitherto done;* and that if the imagination is to be allowed any play whatever, every care must be taken to show that technical excellence everywhere takes precedence, so that its heavy hand shall slap the face of any man who would rather seek light than find satisfaction.

(iii.) Then a third subdivision of the sane comprises those who take it for granted *that the man of experience sees further than the child* whose glory it is to discount the value of facts. Any pedant will do to flatter these from his pulpit. The child values facts chiefly as playthings. A stick and a rag shall become a living baby and make appeal

to the deeps of maternal tenderness that lie sleeping in the darling's soul. It is quite certain to her that her arms are made for rocking this baby rather than for useful sewing. Again, the boy's nursery chairs can be wild horses at any moment. Thus employed, they are surely of saner service than when exacting good behaviour! Child-legs are for dancing, rather than walking; voice for laughing and crying, rather than the multiplication table; mind for asserting power in building or destroying, rather than for the rule of three. The child possibly has some instinctive knowledge of the clouds of glory whence he came; which clouds, if they mean anything, mean that the worth of life is measured rather by the poor child's faculty of inventing a symbol of motherhood than by the millionaire's purchase of human labour and his scientific modes of doing even better without it. The child fights and rebels against the rule of three and the rule of the world, until his imagination, that holy quality without which soul has no life, is broken: until he learns to live by bread alone. The maxim of this third class stands thus: *that the whole purpose of education is to teach the hart to desire*

no more the water-brooks. And it brings us right up to the clue that leads to the understanding of William Blake.

He was a child throughout his life ; but there was built upon this foundation of sublime insanity a mighty superstructure of heroic endurance and manly fidelity to the thing he knew to be true ; of patient fortitude and womanly tenderness towards the weak and suffering. His power of scorn, that mighty weapon, and his potent pity, so lavishly given, had not developed the gentle boy into the adorable man, but that he never left his childhood behind him. Hence largely the sane world's dislike of his manners and the common belief that he died in Bedlam.

This fact of Blake's childlike nature makes it easy to understand how it is that many, even of those who are but little tainted with the vulgar sanity, claim that his intellect could not always be trusted. But I can find no evidence anywhere in his painting or his writing that, where clear intellect was needed, he could not supply more of it and fresher than most men of learning. His grasp of facts, his right estimate of their real value, his pity for the

human hearts they claw and defile, are nowhere better manifest than in his now classic Proverbs of Hell. They are models of consistency untainted by that smug proverbial philosophy which seeks to justify a comfortable if sneaking morality. They need some study, but are worth it for their ennobling help. They let us into the deeps of Blake's own piety, his simple faith, his scorn of worldly wisdom. With these his life, his work, his ideals, are all absolutely consistent. I am not sure that consistency is not the finest test of sanity, just as incoherency is the final proof of aberration. "Listen," he says, "to the fool's reproach: it is a kingly title." "The fool sees not the same tree that a wise man sees." Though his rage against iniquity is aboriginally simple and childlike, and is certainly not always level-headed, it is never divorced from reason; and, consistently with his Christianity, he could nobly forgive. Witness his appeal to Stothard for renewal of friendship after Stothard had, at the treacherous Cromek's instigation, stolen his idea of the *Canterbury Pilgrims* picture. Though he believed in the justice of righteous rage, he knew its energy must be bounded by

reason, or the demon hate would claim the just man for his own. Witness *The Poison Tree*. These proverbs are epitomes of truth and wisdom. Thus "The cut worm forgives the plow" at first looks obscure; yet it sums up in a simple figure the wisdom of Job. How he had rejoiced in his inspirations, how he had torn himself in his hard labours, only the poet can understand who realizes at once the service and despotism of language; and Blake put this law of life into the words "Joys impregnate, sorrows bring forth." His faith in the imagination, its towering supremacy over mere intellect, may be hard at first to understand. "One thought fills immensity," and "Everything possible to be believed is an image of truth," and "Truth can never be told so as to be understood and not be believed"; these give insight into the deeps, and compel us, if nothing else could, to follow and learn. Nor can we fail to admit, before he has done with us, that his seraphic intellect has laid upon our mouth the living coal, and taken away the iniquity of denial.

But I must not yet leave my evidences of Blake's childlike nature, because in it lay his marvellous power of appeal. His faith in

impulse, instinct, energy, imagination, as against reason, prudence, and facts, is essentially childlike, yet the very antithesis of childish. The Appeal does not merely find echo in our hearts, but is a king nightingale in the darkening grove, who, shouting aloud his own faith, calls out the voice that was sleeping in multitudes; or to put the metaphor in Blake's own words :—

> Thou hearest the nightingale begin the song of Spring;
> The lark, sitting upon his earthy bed-nest, just as the morn
> Appears, listens silent; then, springing from the waving cornfield, loud
> He leads the Choir of Day.—*Milton*, ii. p. 31.

The Songs of Innocence express the holiest impulses of untutored childhood, the eager love of life in all things, the imaginative recognition of an ethical basis in life, the instinctive understanding of things that are true and practical in religion, the belief that "everything that lives is holy." I would quote, had I the time, "The Lamb," "The Chimney Sweeper," "The Divine Image," "On Another's Sorrow."

Then upon these convictions that the child is father of the man, Blake builds his

lifelong glory of faith, that the man is father of his country and must save it. For this is the secret of his mighty work *Jerusalem*, the spiritual England ; this is the inspiration of her maternal weeping over the chaining of her sons. He sees everywhere the triumph of idolatry over worship, the letter of the law over the spirit, money over flesh and blood, reason over imagination. And, like all true prophecy, his words are not for his own age only, but make appeal to the men of every generation. Prophecy indeed is the appeal of the eternal to the people of time.

The whole argument of the *Jerusalem* is summed up in those three memorable aphorisms in the opening of *Heaven and Hell*, words which are childlike in their disregard of philosophic authority and its futile presentation of the absolute ; and yet they are profound in essential wisdom.

"(1) Man has no body distinct from his soul. For that called body is a portion of soul discerned by the five senses, the chief inlets of soul in this age.

"(2) Energy is the only life, and is from the body ; and reason is the bound or outward circumference of energy.

"(3) Energy is eternal delight."

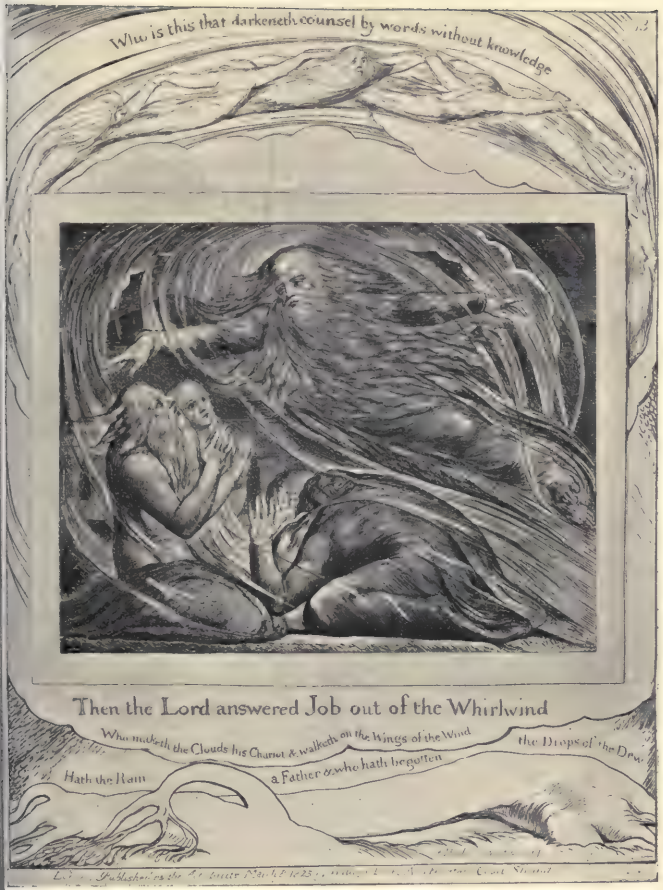
Now I want to draw your attention especially to these three aphorisms, because the critics, notable among them Mr. Swinburne, have generally held that Blake's was a gospel of licence. And I am the more willing to insist upon their real meaning in connection with the magnificent but most cryptic of his prophetic books, *Jerusalem*, because this, more than any other, exposes him to the charge of incoherencies.

"(1) Man has no body distinct from his soul." All systems of religion have taught that man *possesses* a soul, whereas Blake would have us understand that the reverse is the case: Edmund Spenser had long before expressed the same truth thus :—

> For of the Soul the Body Form doth take
> For Soul is Form and doth the Body make.

Or to quote certain lines of Blake from *Jerusalem*, more cryptic but signifying the same idea :—

> In great eternity every particular Form gives forth or Emanates
> Its own peculiar Light, and the Form is the Divine Vision
> And the Light is his Garment. This is Jerusalem in every Man,
> A Tent and Tabernacle of Mutual Forgiveness.—p. 54.



From The Book of Job

To face p. 28

And again, in the *Milton* we read :—

> The Oak is cut down by the axe, the Lamb falls by the knife.
> But their Forms eternal exist forever! Amen! Hallelujah!
> For God Himself enters Death's door always with those that enter,
> And lies down in the Grave with them.—p. 32, extra.

Then he goes on to remark that the body in its ordinary conception is but that portion or product of soul which we can see and touch. Hence it comes that when we have left our childhood and have reached those years of discretion which so sedulously forbid the sacramental bread, when we have come to trust those five senses for what they are not worth, when we see not through but merely with our eyes, we disbelieve in anything but ocular evidence. Therefore we believe more in the body than the soul, though many for religious purposes still claim that the soul does really exist, if merely as a nebulous appendix which we can for the present most happily dispense with. And then this aphorism ends with a touch of bitter satire on the philosophy of Locke, the most trusted philosopher in that eighteenth century. This philosophy Blake

scorns: the soul, in this age, is nothing more forsooth than a by-product of experience contributed by the five senses! He frequently refers to the soul being imprisoned in the five senses; they are merely inlets for experiences, not outlets to the Eternal.

The second of these aphorisms is a little hard to understand unless we already know something of what the Master is driving at. We must remember that the *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* is a conglomeration of bombs, each accurately compounded and craftily timed to hurl at the heads of all intellectual, religious, and state tyrants. Their dynamite is for the most part scathing satire, and will scarcely have more effect in reforming the respectable criminals who are mighty in their seats than an anarchist's bomb will instil mercy into a grand-duke's heart. But Blake says elsewhere: "When I tell a truth it is not to convince those who do not know it but to protect those who do." And his sort of bomb hurts not the faithful, but invigorates.

"Energy is the only life, and is from the body." This is a slap to the orthodox, one would think, and a paradox to the former

condemnation of the senses. He would save those orthodox from condemning any part of our nature. Energy is divine impulse, we elsewhere learn, the work of the imagination, and the desire for it is the light that lighteth every man who comes into the world. It is the only life. It is at once work, conquest, and worship. But its means is the oft-despised body without which nothing is done. The resurrection of the body was an idea essential in Blake's creed. And while he realizes more powerfully than any prophet before him how "the gross flesh hems us in," he honoured his servant, his "body the ass." Thus in *Jerusalem*, p. 55, he says: "Let the human organs be kept in their perfect integrity, at will contracting into worms, or expanding into Gods." A message surely that for all time should be the watchword of the man of science! The worm is the symbol of small, sluggish, often dormant, beginnings of unknown power. One day it expands into butterfly beauty, and the eternal miracle is aflame. And man should know more of his seedlike energies locked away in the cabinet of his body. At will should the poet be able to call down his larks from the sky to find

grubs for their nestlings. At will should the microscopist who gropes among unprofitable secrets be capable of flight in the empyrean. At times should the sharp-fingered anatomists, who

> Stumble all night over bones of dead,

be capable of rising in supplication to the eternal sun of life.

Now, lest this appeal for the dignity of life's energy should be mistaken, lest indeed people like Mr. Swinburne and others should ever accuse him of endorsing licence, Blake appends to this aphorism these memorable words :—

"And reason is the bound or outward circumference of energy." In other words —and in the teaching of every other work of Blake—this instinctive energy, this imaginating birthright of man, is worse than useless to us if we do not use it aright. This energy is nothing without noble purpose. Life without object, imagination without reason, energy without order, are mighty powers prostituted and in process of ceasing to be. "He who desires but acts not breeds pestilence." "Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted

desires." These are two of the Proverbs that are so stupidly misunderstood; and even a great poet has mistaken the metaphor. The divine energy of life must be allowed its wing. "When thou seest an eagle thou seest a portion of genius; lift up thy head!" In other words, do not dare to think you can cage an eagle. It cannot be done; for an eagle caged is but divine energy prostituted to the tyranny of man; it ceases to be a portion of genius and is become a product of constraint, and a lie to the living truth. It is life robbed of purpose. Everywhere Blake is crying the same truth in the wilderness, and no one hears. Life robbed of liberty to fulfil breeds pestilence: this is the key to *The Daughters of Albion*. The glory of all desire, of all inspiration, is its purpose; and if you seek to restrain these tigers of fire by the "horses of instruction," they become "tigers of wrath." This is the key to the books of Los and of Urizen. And both must be opened if we would enter the disordered treasure-house of the *Jerusalem*. Blake is absolutely and persistently assertive of the truth of life's purpose. Mr. Swinburne is wholly misleading us; and his puppet *Art for Art's sake*, though he

would father the puny abortion upon our prophet, is hateful to Blake. Art is for the ennobling of life, for the manifestation to man of the worth of life and the glory of the heavens. Art without purpose is art with a worm in its soul, and a worm that breeds pestilence. "Truth has bounds, error none," Blake declares in the book of Urizen. And we dare not forget this awful doom of forgetting the purpose of our energy. Yet if truth has bounds, if energy must have reason for its outward circumference, we need have no fear of reason's despotism; for our horizon is hedged in only by the limitations of our energies. Reason is minister to the imagination, and must never become its master.

> For all are men in eternity, rivers, mountains, cities, villages.
> All are human, and when you enter into their bosom, you walk
> In Heavens and Earths; as in your bosom you bear your Heaven
> And Earth, and all you behold: though it appears without, it is within,
> In your imagination, of which this world of Mortality is but a shadow.
>
> *Jerusalem*, iii. p. 71.

These lines also are from *Jerusalem*. Compare with them the words in *Heaven and Hell*, "All deities reside in the human breast;" and the psalmists cry to the people, "Ye are Gods, and all of you are children of the Most High!"

And again let me quote:—

> The Mundane Shell is a vast concave Earth, an immense
> Hardened shadow of all things upon our Vegetated Earth,
> Enlarged into dimensions and deformed into indefinite space,
> In twenty-seven Heavens and all their Hells, and chaos
> And ancient night and Purgatory. It is a cavernous Earth
> Of labyrinthine intricacy, twenty-seven folds of opaqueness,
> And finishes where the lark mounts!—*Milton*, p. 16.

Is not this truly terrific poetry? Does it not recall St. Paul's passionate prayer? "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

This second aphorism indeed is the theme of all the prophetic books, as indeed it is the theme, if not of the songs of Innocence, at least of many of the songs of Experience,

some of which, like the prophetic books, are more than a little cryptic. The deities that reside in the empire of our hearts are in these ages at warfare. Our salvation looks almost hopeless, and our beloved country is groaning under the golden hoof and forgetting her inspiration. Her energy that should be her eternal delight is become a bond-slave to wealth and greed. The peasant no more ploughs, nor does the maiden spin ; for both are willing to sell their energies into slavery, that the master who fattens and kills them may himself find hell. The eternal delight that is man's birthright is smelted into money that can buy nothing. The maiden has choice only to die in a naphtha-hell or to breed the pestilence that comes of forbidding energy its purposeful outcome. The upshot of the warfare in our cosmogony between the spirit and the matter, between purpose and the wilderness which gives it opportunity of conquest, between the fire of the Holy Ghost and the wet blanket of respectability, between imagination and reason, poetry and science, mastery and cringing humility ; the upshot of the warfare looks to us now, who see not the end and yet are still something

purposed in our energy, wellnigh hopeless. The eternal delight of energy, even ours who groan, is prostituted into mere wanton pleasures ; and, not content with our own unsought damnation, we damn everything we touch ; even in hell we must have companions. And joy will not be won for our energy until the deities regnant in our hearts understand their respective duties and the needs of the empire they inhabit.

> They must renew their brightness, and their disorganized functions
> Again reorganize till they resume the image of the human,
> Co-operating in the bliss of Man, obeying his will,
> Servants to the infinite and eternal of the human form.
>
> *Vala*, ix. l. 369.

Seemingly these subsidiary gods cannot believe that their freedom is won not by tyranny over one another, but by obedience to the eternal purpose of their dominant master, the Will of the Man. Just as the material universe may be said to be compounded of many forces and attributes, so the eternal heart of man is compounded of many laws and is the habitation of many gods. Even as material phenomena may

all be consequent upon one embracing energy of many manifestations, so is the everlasting manhood at once responsible for and master of its self-deities. With all his terrible denunciation, denunciation that is expressible only in the most terrible metaphor, Blake, like every true prophet, is optimist; because he believes in God and therefore in man, because he believes that with both all things are possible. And his optimism cannot doubt that his beloved England will yet find her salvation.

> And did those feet in ancient time
> Walk upon England's mountains green?
> And was the holy Lamb of God
> On England's pleasant pastures seen?
>
> And did the countenance divine
> Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
> And was Jerusalem builded here
> Among these dark Satanic Mills?
>
> Bring me my bow of burning gold!
> Bring me my arrows of desire!
> Bring me my spear! O clouds unfold!
> Bring me my chariot of fire!
>
> I will not cease from mental fight,
> Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
> Till we have built Jerusalem
> In England's green and pleasant land.
>
> Preface to *Milton*.

But now, having dared suggest to you something of Blake's radical idealism, I must, in fairness to those from whom we differ, let you see what grounds, besides the misinterpretations of his friends, there may be for suspecting Blake of madness. This very book of *Jerusalem* is indeed a strange medley of passionate poetry and catalogued bathos. We have pages and pages of stuff that were not worth reading, but for the shining gems hidden among the rubbish. Yet, as if to make amends for the waste of fine language, the illustrations to this book are more helpful in elucidating the text than in many of Blake's writings. Often it looks as if, although his drawings in general are every one descriptive of some idea peculiarly his own, they do not correspond with the text of the book in which they are found. Thus the extraordinary, but far from beautiful, picture in the *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* of the Birth of the Imagination, and the fleeing away of the people in dread of such a prodigy, is only quite intelligible when we read a description of the dire event in the *Daughters of Albion*. But in the *Jerusalem* the cuts belong much more nearly to the text, and many are almost self-explanatory.

In spite of the richly illustrated pages, however, we must admit that Blake's small power of criticizing his own work implies some lack of mental balance. This is the fault, I suppose, of the man of imagination undisciplined in the schools. The tigers of wrath ill brook the horses of intellect and devour them before submitting to their instruction. Yet the sun that illuminates Blake's spirit is not the less lofty or brilliant that it often seems as if in danger of being lost in the lawless jungle of his imagination. But even here, amidst masterful horrors and cringing monsters, the sun's rays penetrate with lovely brilliance. And if the apparent purposelessness of our prophet's vast weediness seems often to justify the verdict of madness, we are again and again, while striving to find passage through the jungle, driven to exclaim that Blake's so-called madness is infinitely greater than our own sanity. For at any rate we find that he at least never loses sight of the sunlight, the great illuminant of nature ; while we, with our rushlights of convention, "our decency and custom starving truth," to quote Wordsworth, our groping timidity and uncertain walking in our gloomy streets, think our

education and our musty records, our fearful theology and boastful superiority to enthusiasm, must keep us sane and give us power to criticize the jungle we hardly dare enter, despite its gleams of sunshine.

And this much must be confessed, that the more patiently we study Blake, the more clearly are we convinced of his consistency. We find, if we keep close to him as he leads us through the jungle, the abyss, the empyrean, that the path is certain to him, and that he is guided by the stars no less than by the pitfalls he would have us fathom. He has but one purpose : to lead us out of the eternal jungle of our individual warfare with death. Of the path he is sure, and in his purpose he never falters or misses the light. Nevertheless the jungle is as much the outcome of natural law as pleasant pastures ; in their subjection to human purpose lies the difference. So what appears unprofitable in Blake's luxuriant imagination is but unprofitable perhaps from the point of view of our matter-of-fact utilitarian minds. He is but running wild like a child who feels that nursery restrictions are altogether immoral when judged from the standpoint of his need to live in the full

vigour of delight; who feels that he must show the wise old people how they have forgotten the glory of life. So far as the *Jerusalem* serves any ordinary purpose, we may well consider it illogical and having but little bearing upon the practical needs and facts of life. And indeed, because a child's wild joy in liberty finds no place in an educational code, many will hold it to be inimical to the ideals of education, and therefore ill-purposed and lacking in sanity. Enthusiasm and imagination, unless severely curbed by convention and logic, are considered by the majority as intellectually dangerous. Nevertheless undisciplined joy and boundless enthusiasm for the ideals of life are very real properties of life. Indeed, they come very near to being the simplest expression of life itself. And no wise man will quarrel with the poet's gifts, even if he do not love life enough to desire them.

Charles Lamb, keenest and gentlest of critics, declares that, if a writer would be popular,

> He must not think or feel too deeply. If he has had the fortune to be bred in the midst of the most magnificent objects of creation, he must not

> have given away his heart to them; or if he have, he must conceal his love, or not carry his expressions of it beyond that point of rapture, which the occasional tourist thinks it not overstepping decorum to betray, or the limit which that gentlemanly spy upon Nature, the picturesque traveller, has vouchsafed to countenance. He must do this, or be content to be thought an enthusiast.—*Review of Wordsworth's Excursion.*

The whole question as to the sanity of the prophetic books lies in the question whether their images are inspired by definite ideals that can be expressed in no fitter way, whether, that is, the imaginative life is disciplined by purpose, by good to be won. Of this there can, I think, be no question whatever.

Blake's imagination was essentially Gothic. Or perhaps, if I had more accurate knowledge, I should say that in comparison with the more disciplined Gothic, his art was Byzantine. His hatred of fine faultless line and shallow harmony; his love of roaring cavern depths and masses of mystic shadow; his bold recognition, not to be gainsaid under penalty, of the interdependence of so-called right and wrong, of freedom and bondage; recall Ruskin's description of the

Byzantine ideals in the *Seven Lamps of Architecture*:—

> The rolling heap of the thunder cloud, divided by rents and multiplied by wreaths, yet gathering them all into its broad, torrid, and towering zone, and its midnight darkness opposite: the scarcely less majestic heave of the mountain side, all torn and traversed by depth of defile and ridge of rock, yet never losing the unity of its illumined swell and shadowy decline; and the head of every mighty tree, rich with tracery of leaf and bough, yet terminated against the sky by a true line, and rounded by a green horizon, which, multiplied in the distant forest, makes it look bossy from above; all these mark, for a great and honoured law, that diffusion of light for which the Byzantine ornaments were designed.

But I must take you back again for a moment to Blake's childlike nature. We discover in it certain inevitable faults of his virtue. His exaggerations in praise and blame with his often outrageous and ugly figures are alike explained by his lack of the gift of weighing evidences. Comparisons to him were odious: just as to the child who, when asked which of the two he loves better, insists that he loves both best. Comparison demands intellect and intellect

only. To Blake, such task was wellnigh impossible. Yet his instinctive valuation of things was so true that we can ill bear the thought of even *his* mere intellect judging them. For, had he possessed that critical faculty which is elicited only by patient submission to scholastic method, we most assuredly had never known this *Jerusalem*. He hated going over his own work, as is known, because probably the very descent of his spirit to the level of mere intellectuality, as distinguished from creative labour, entirely changed the point of view ; it made the eagle's outlook seem quite inaccessible, and therefore of doubtful value.

And this sort of suffering attends all genius that would reform its own offspring. Though Blake was no critic, he generally knew what was good and bad ; but, like the child again, he would judge their work by his love or dislike of the artists. His praise of Fuseli's and Flaxman's work was the inevitable consequence of their flattery, which lasted just so long as they could pick his brains. He even found great merit in Wainwright the poisoner's Academy picture, seemingly because Wainwright admired and

bought his books. But for that matter, Lamb too had admitted the gifted criminal to his circle. And Blake could condemn in scathing terms, as he did the Carraccis, Rubens, and even Reynolds; while Correggio he calls "a soft and effeminate and consequently a most cruel demon whose whole delight is to cause endless labour to whoever suffers him to enter his mind." Yet so fine was his appreciation, which does not mean criticism, that Charles Lamb, who, strangely enough, never met him, writes in 1824:—

> His pictures—one in particular, the Canterbury Pilgrims (far above Stothard's)—have great merit, but hard, dry, yet with grace. He has written a Catalogue of them with a most spirited criticism on Chaucer, but mystical and full of Vision. His poems have been sold hitherto only in manuscript. I never read them; but a friend of mine at my desire procured the "Sweep Song." There is one to a tiger, which I have heard recited, beginning,
>
> "Tiger, Tiger, burning bright,
> Through the deserts of the night,"
>
> which is glorious, but alas! I have not the book; for the man is flown, whither I know not—to Hades or a Mad-house. But I must look on him

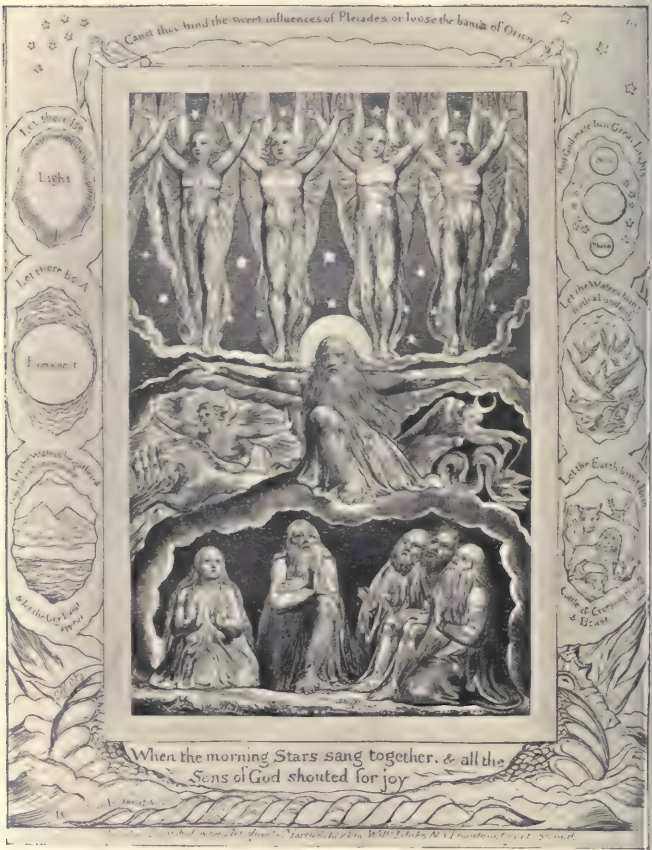
as one of the most extraordinary persons of the age.—E. V. Lucas's *Life of Charles Lamb*, Vol. II, p. 125.

One inevitable consequence of his inability to compare critically his own work with accepted standards was the accusation of vanity; a fault indeed, belonging peculiarly to childhood, and quite deserving the epithet childish. Thus he speaks of his own work as though it were all he meant it to be; and, seeing that it was in his own day almost wholly unappreciated, he found it necessary to explain its merits to the public. Indeed, he unblushingly compares it with Raphael's. But a man like this, "as incapable," Crabb Robinson assures us, "of envy as he was of discontent," was hardly a vessel for vulgar vanity. He was so deeply possessed by the truth of his work's purpose that he could not throw himself outside it to see how others would misunderstand his ardour.

It is as if (to use Goethe's figure), having seen from within the cathedral of his own soul great glories shining through its rich-hued windows, he had then gone without, and found the stupid public staring at the

outside of the windows, declaring that, because the sun was brighter outside, they were justified in laughing at the poet's tales of glories within. "You can admire," he might say, "your Carraccis and Correggios because they hit you in the eye with their paint-brushes and make you see lies strutting like dandies. You can even prate about Raphael, though you can no more learn the truth from his work than you can see beauty in mine. Yet we both have learned our art from the same school. And I know my work is true. You are incapable of seeing it, and therefore you call me vain and mad!" Indeed, this child-nature is the clue to all his unintelligibility as well as his apparent vanity. It was never himself that Blake was so sure of; it was the truth of what he would teach.

> Somewhat vain he was,
> Or seemed so, yet it was not vanity,
> But fondness, and a kind of radiant joy
> Diffused around him, while he was intent
> On works of love or freedom, or revolved
> Complacently the progress of a cause,
> Whereof he was a part; yet this was meek
> And placid, and took nothing from the man
> That was delightful.—*Prelude*, book ix. line 313.



From The Book of Job

To face p. 49

Thus Wordsworth of his friend General Beaupuy, the revolutionist; and I cannot help feeling that they fit Blake.

But I dare not leave my subject without saying something of this prophet's power of seeing visions, which power more than any other point in his character has exposed him to the charge of madness. But there is no real difficulty in understanding this gift, though its precise significance is not easy to define. The imagination, in taking concrete form for the sake of expressing what it feels, always goes through a process of visualizing. When, more especially, the imagination is dealing with purely abstract concepts, it has no other means of concentrating thought upon these concepts, still less of definitely teaching them, than the methods of symbolic representation. Thus, when Blake feels himself suddenly and mightily inspired with the eternal joy that must fill all created things in realizing the will of their Maker, he, for his own better understanding, as well as for his better means of expression, instinctively visualizes the words of Job, "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." To him the words are an inspiration; and the Holy Spirit, the

eternal indwelling power of God, makes this inspiration assume concrete form in the painter's eye. The words of Job are graphic enough : they are the poet's words indeed, and for many will suffice. But with Blake, the seer of Truth in things, the emotion for which Job finds words, finds form in pictorial art. He sees the sons of God, potent in wings, uplifted in thought, ordering their movements in sense of the everlasting harmony, shouting together in their joy of life. Blake has seen his vision. And he must give it to us, as otherwise it would be worthless to him. For in matters of truth, the widow's cruse is the only measure of worth. Like her meal too, it must be given to whomsoever needs, even if the wilderness has to be searched for the hungry.

I believe, if we could analyse the way by which the genius works, we should find that it is simply through seeing visions.

We do not dub Shakespeare a visionary, because, I suppose, he fathers his visions upon his characters ; otherwise he could hardly have escaped the accusation when writing such words as these if he had declared that he had seen the vision :—

> Look how the floor of heaven
> Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold!
> There's not the smallest orb that thou behold'st
> But in his motion like an angel sings,
> Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubims.
> Such harmony is in immortal souls.
> But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
> Doth grossly close us in, we cannot hear it.
>
> *Merchant of Venice.*

Nor do we think Mozart's music inferior and unintellectual because, when asked by a friend what method he followed in composing, he said simply, "All the finding and making only goes on in me as in a very vivid dream . . . whence and how—that I do not know and cannot learn" (*Hartmann's Philosophy of the Unconscious*, Vol I, p. 279).

Genius is something more than making use of materials we have collected, or experiences that we have won. It is the power of drawing upon our ancestral, our divine inheritance, and realizing how this inheritance is one with the life of all things. It is indeed, in the rare souls of highest virtue, instinctive knowledge of the power of God Himself, and a natural understanding of how this power is potent in grub and butterfly, in the gladness of faith, in the anguish of broken

hopes. The genius, having this power in him as the secret of his own inspiration knows how this same secret orders all things. So that, for instance, he has knowledge of the joy in all true sons of God, and sees their joy in a vision. He is one with the spirit that uplifts the skylark and makes him scatter his little song broadcast over the earth ; he sees the truth of it and sings himself of it in glorious verse. With Blake the Imagination is the Life itself, the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

And even in fiction the real genius surpasses altogether his actual experience of life and men. He knows them, and writes not of how he *believes* they would speak in this or that circumstance, but of what he has unconsciously visualized and therefore knows to be true of life. Indeed, he has visions of the men and women he is creating, though he does not speak of his inspiration in such words. He will tell you, and I speak of one friend of my own, that he *saw* this or that invented incident, and he therefore knows it is true. This visionary power is altogether different from the mere relation of events of which he may have been the spectator. It is the difference

between the genius of imagination with its symbolic presentation, and the talent of memory with its mimic reproduction. And so I take it are Blake's visions : not the substance that dreams are made of—not the fanciful fears of the too impressionable child—not the ghosts of the superstitious or the incoherent rhapsodies of the lunatic. Blake himself made sharp distinction between terrifying ghosts, the delusions of a disordered stomach, and the visions of truth. He knew well, I must think, the psychologist's distinction between illusions of the senses and delusions of the mind—a distinction which the legal authorities admit as differentiating mere erratic brain-work from insanity. For as long as a man knows when he may be self-cheated, he is sane indeed. So long as he knows his visions are not concrete, or that his imagination must not be trusted to see in the dark, say, when he is driving a motor, not even the most unimaginative mental specialist would dare accuse him, because of his visions and imaginations, of being insane ; and this, although the said specialist loves to speak of a certain gift, which he is too poor to possess, as being akin to madness.

The genius, I say, knows that he must speak or sing or paint because, and only because, he has no other alternative whatsoever. One man may look his hardest and honestest to find truth, so that, having found it, he may give it to others. But the genius, without looking, without being conscious of intent, sees things beyond the vision of men. The honest searcher may look deeply and laboriously into the mind of Blake, and, for all his honesty, may see but a reed shaken in the wind ; but those who have in them, as every one has to greater or less degree, the possibility of singing, will let the voice of the king nightingale awaken their own piping and make them too sing with great or faltering note, to the glory of the heavens. Though the genius may fail for lack of faith, though he may so prostitute his gifts that they breed iniquity, they are yet of the Holy Spirit ; and no study of man and nature by observation, no devotion even of the life to the service of man, will find the great gift of seeing visions and telling to men the truth of them. Nevertheless, Blake at least declared in most emphatic word that the seeing of visions was not a special gift

to him or other seers. "He only claimed," says Linnell, one of his most ardent disciples, "the possession of a power that all men have, but mostly lose because of their vanity and unrighteousness." To see visions is, in one sense, but seeing through and not with the eye. In another it is the involuntary instinctive personifying of abstractions. To a lady who asked Blake where he had seen certain lambs in a meadow that turned out to be sculptured he replied, tapping his forehead, "Here, madam"—an answer quite sufficient to one who has never realized that, for instance, the mechanical droning of the Scriptures in church will never inspire the people. The point was simply this: that with him the spiritual was in all things supreme, and the real disaster attending life, the only danger of death, lay in dependence upon things, the worship of symbols, the mistaking the letter for the law, works for the faith, and so forth. And throughout his life he was sublimely consistent.

> If I had only depended upon mortal things, both myself and my wife must have been lost. If we fear to do the dictates of our angels, and tremble at the tasks set before us; if we refuse to do spiritual acts because of natural fears or natural

> desires, who can describe the torment of such a state! I too well remember the threats I heard.

Crabb Robinson, who loved him so well that we must accept all he has to say of the prophet's so-called madness, wrote :—

> When he said "my vision" it was in the ordinary unemphatic tone in which we speak of everyday matters. In the same tone he said repeatedly, "The Spirit told me." I took occasion to say, "You express yourself as Socrates used to do. What resemblance do you suppose there is between your spirit and his?" "The same as between our countenances." He paused and added, "I was Socrates," and then, as if correcting himself, "a sort of brother. I must have had conversations with him. So I had with Jesus Christ. I have an obscure recollection of being with both of them."

And let there be no mistake about the spiritual energy necessary for submission to these spiritual visitations. Blake was no mere sensitive plate of a photographic camera, upon which the supposed spirit-minds might work their will. He was no charlatan or clairvoyant that he should fall into a trance and then relate what things had taken possession of his passive mind. On

the contrary, his vision-seeing was the might of imagination, the seizing hold of his heart by tongues of fire, the carrying of his acquiescent yet mightily winged soul deep into the abyss, out beyond the heights, and always to the unfolding of the human mystery. How much he suffered over these visions none can tell, and only one ever knew. This was his Kate. Their courtship was this. "Oh, Mr. Blake, I pity you!" said the illiterate tender Catherine Boucher when he told of his first and only love-disappointment. "You pity me?" replied the young man; "then I love you!"

That was the sowing of the seed. The blossoming of the flower must have brought joy to the angels; for night after night, for hours at a time, the man would sit absorbed in his visions of mystic births, battles and destroyings all leaping in furnaces of flame, all peopling the empire of the human soul. Within the palaces and dungeons of this eternal soul he would hear Los, the human God of Purpose, towering above the forces of destruction, hammering away at his red-hot self-hood, the terrific sparks rushing forth to blind the cringing fears; the frozen Urizen hurling

anathemas upon the man for outdaring his iron laws ; Orc, the soul who unweaves the nets of tyranny, who snaps the manacles that tie men to purposeless submission, and ever urges them onwards to their destiny in righteous rebellion ; Vala, the Spirit of Beauty and Orc's spiritual bride ; Enith-armon, the gentle Emanation of Los's Spectre, who knew her spouse was greater than the works of his Anvil ; Bromion, "loving Science" the filthy monster who befogs the sunshine into darkness, who prostitutes the beautiful and makes it people the slimy marsh with horrors. Such were his visions, and they brought strivings enough and dire anguish to the great soul, as he sat lost in the silent hours of the night, until at last his eyes would close upon their mystic seeing and open upon the breaking dawn. And then, when the night's battle was over, when the body was weak, the face white with suffering, and the eyes all a-shining, then would this loving woman lead him away by the hand, whose hold she had never left in all the dark hours. Out into the fields and woods would they go to meet the rising sun. And these two together would perhaps set out upon a whole day's

walk before the toil with mundane facts could be once more faced.

But little study of Blake is needed to discover the fascination with which he compels so many to ardent admiration. And honest digging into the mines of his extraordinary intellect can hardly fail to convince those who search for what is there rather than for what they should not want to find that they must rank Blake with the prophets of old. For prophecy is the message of Eternity to the children of Time. And Blake's is a message to this our day as surely as it was a hundred years ago to an age that heeded him not. If his words be madness, then is there no hope left for us. If his visions qualified him as mentally unfit, then had we best give up for ever our ideals, our self-denials, our hope in the beautiful, our faith in the true.

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