

LIBER 4

Martinist Philosophy and Practice, Part 1

LIBER OVERVIEW

With this Liber, we begin our study of Martinist teachings with two Lectures and an Essay on the human will. These are accompanied by a Lecture on the importance (although that may not be a strong enough term) and nature of Fraternity. The fourth Lecture will tell you how to set up your own Oratory. You are next given a very important Exercise, "The Stimulator". An Essay entitled "The Door is Always Open" will help you understand and respond to those times when seeming adversity presents itself to you. Lastly, you will find an Optional article on "Occultism and Spiritualism", which you should find helpful. An information-packed Liber!

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LECTURE Free Will and Man's Descent

Dear Brothers & Sisters:

It must be plain from what we have learned so far, that what has come to be called *free will* is simply: *man's ability to decide for himself when and how he should act*, so as to maintain his strength and his independence. We should at all times act in conformity with the law of our innermost nature, but there are obstacles which tend to prevent our acting in the way we should. Clear knowledge of how we should act, and a strong will, are therefore two important attributes which every Martinist should acquire.

The fact that philosophers still ask about will and how it operates indicates that the average person has little idea of what it is. *Will is simply the governing power within man's nature.*

We could ask: Why is it that man has failed to recognize and fully use his inherent potential liberty? In part, the cause of this may be attributed to the negative aspects of various philosophies which he has formulated. We might mention as examples the ideas of predestination and fatalism. These suppose that there is a map of affairs governing each individual's life at birth and the believer thinks he cannot escape this plan; consequently, he resigns himself to the ebb and flow of life's circumstances whatever happens to him he says that it is "God's will."

The gross error in such unfortunate thinking is the denying of our divinely endowed faculties. We have within us an infusion of the universal intelligence which we can consult, call it intuition or psychic sight as, you please. Furthermore we have the faculty of reason, imagination and the ability to choose and the *free will* to implement our choices.

If some extraneous power continually manipulated our lives, it would make us nothing more than puppets. If such were intended why were we given the mental powers we have and which each of us, as individuals, can exercise? We note that by making wise choices we are able to master our lives and our environment. There would be no such function as mastery, if our lives were inexorably predetermined for us.

This is not to deny, however, that there are external forces over which we have no control. We cannot change the inherent structure of the universe, nor the causes that bring its forces into play, ***but we can harness these forces!*** We can attune ourselves with them and we can alter or control their ultimate effect upon us. Man can enjoy a great deal more mastership over his environment, and over himself, than he presently does. He needs only the knowledge and the determination. We can arrange the affairs of our life so that we can use the forces of life as our allies. ***Like the sailor trimming his sails to the wind, we can harness the forces of our environment. We can do this because we are free to choose and free to act and free to implement our choices.***

Free will is somewhat limited, however. Although we do have the power to determine our own actions, we cannot control all the other influences in the world around us. In addition, our free will is diminished by our karma which ensures that the ordering of our daily lives shall be in accord with the rate and measure of progress to which we are entitled, as a result of our merit or demerit. Further, free will is also reduced by the lack of harmony within the constitution of man himself, for the man who is not physically, mentally and spiritually progressive will not even seek the freedom which free will can bring.

Indeed, the blind, frivolous person without ideals, who is guided solely by his senses, judges things by what they seem to be and not by what they really are. It would be futile to present to such a man truths opposed to errors, for he would compare them with his own dark and false ideas and find in truth only guilt and contradiction. Being muddled in his perceptions, he would choose to follow the dead and obscure law of his animal nature.

When the will is right, however, the rest of the constitution of man falls into harmony. The ***power of the will***, then, commands all that which approaches the fortress of physical man; and through its exercise, all actions which have been limited through ill-usage are liberated.

Questions for your consideration

What about fatalism and predestination; do they exist?

Define Free Will.

What is the position where a person has had a 'dream' about something and it later happened exactly the way it was foreseen. Is this predestination?

It was the faculty of Free Will which caused man's descent from his First Estate. Being at one time higher than the angels, he existed in a veritable paradise of delight. He was endowed with many faculties. He was a potent Being. He ruled such intermediary agents of creation as Principalities, Powers, Virtues, Dominions, Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim. He was high in the current of emanations of Omneity.

Intermediary agents of creation were known to the Egyptians, Qabalists, Gnostics and early Christians. A Hierarchy of such terrestrial and heavenly Beings has been said to exist from the very highest spiritual plane to the lowest and densest state of physical matter. In general, man has lost the possibility of ruling over, or even communicating with, these Great Beings of the ultra-mundane sphere. However, by turning his spiritual eyes upward in preparation for his return to his Original Home, he will greatly revive within himself his power over and communication with such Beings.

No origin of spiritual life surpasses that of man for there is no older Being in nature. ***The origin of man is God, but the origin of the human race on earth is man's coming down***

into matter. Naturally, man has lost and sacrificed much this we can readily see, for the physical life of man is in most cases a privation and a struggle.

During periods of aspiration, man faintly recalls his Higher Estate. This longing, this yearning, this indefinite remembrance of a fuller, more ideal existence, unconsciously drives him ever onward in the search for happiness.

Man now lives in the darkness and comprehends it not. His real element of life is light. The corporeal, physical body is subject to a most humiliating end; but man possesses an *immaterial body* that is glorious and perfect, through which he may enjoy all the rights of immortality.

Where else could there be an estate or condition which possesses all the perfections the opposite of which man now endures if not in the infinite knowledge and presence of Omneity? Man's limitations are due to nothing more than his separation from Omneity, the Supreme Principle of Good, which is the true light and only support of all creation.

The average man does not regard himself as the same Being he was at one time. He knows his limitations and he is striving to know his destiny. *This destiny is, that as a result of our struggles in the material world, we may, through our own efforts, overcome the obstacles in our way and regain our early and Original Status and also rise to a higher state than we have heretofore enjoyed.* The realization of our destiny, as well as the search for our many incomparable faculties, has caused us to be busy since first arriving upon this earth.

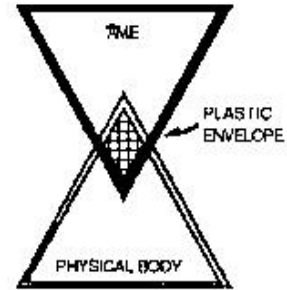
Our ascent back to the Realm of Omneity necessitates that we approach the various emanations from below. Therefore, we must develop certain powers in our ascent that were different from our descent. In treading our way back to our First Estate through the Forest of Errors, we are given many helps and aids, the proportion and degree *depending on our own work and effort.* As we try to understand the Absolute and bring about a reintegration within ourselves; we will be assisted by Beings on this earth, as well as by invisible ones.

A Martinists hold that man is made up of three principles: *the Âme, the Plastic Envelope and the Corporeal Body.* As has been said already, the word *Âme* has been retained because its meaning in French cannot be easily approximated by any English word. It represents the spiritual properties of man, or the principle of life. In reality it is the component part of man which is *Immortal.*

The Plastic middle, or Fluid Envelope, serves as a connecting link between the *Âme* and the corruptible, or physical body. It also gives rise to those activities within us which we attribute to the emotions. Mystics of all ages have been aware that there is this general division of man's body, which possesses a vital and responsive quality. This intermediary body, or Plastic Envelope, or Astral Body (call it as you wish) is sufficiently spiritual in make-up to be influenced by spirit, yet it is physical enough in nature to influence the physical body.

We are so constructed as to be protected and safeguarded against the dangers that surround us. This protection is in the nature of the corruptible envelope or physical body, which gives us a vehicle for undergoing certain experiences while we are on earth. It is a channel through which our senses bring us knowledge. Thus, by the promptness and rightness of our reason, the quickness of our senses, and the implementation of our Free Will we can prevent ourselves from falling into grave errors on our Return to our Ideal State of existence.

Our connecting relationship between spirit and nature can be illustrated by two slightly overlapping equilateral triangles. The triangle with its point down represents our spiritual properties. The triangle with its point up represents the mundane, or physical, side of our nature. Where the points of the two triangles overlap is the Plastic Envelope, as denoted in the Martinist teachings.



Therefore: we retain the Âme, the superior possession of which we were fully aware in our early Estate, even while subjected to a corporeal, sensual body. We are at the same time: large and small, mortal and immortal, physical and spiritual, possessed of potential freedom but bound to the physical world as a result of our will. In other words we are composed primarily of two natures opposed to each other. They meet and are somewhat blended in what Martinists know as the Plastic Envelope or Astral Body. By understanding our fundamental construction, we can direct our will constructively towards reintegration and regeneration.

At our next Conventicle we will take up the subject of Will again and advance our understanding of this most important topic.

May you ever dwell in the Eternal Light of Divine Wisdom.

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“No vision, and you perish, no ideal and you’re lost,
Your heart must ever cherish some faith at any cost.
Some hope, some dream to cling to, some rainbow in the sky,
Some melody to sing to, some service that is high.”

Students: Please write these definitions down in your notebooks:

PSYCHE — the totality of one’s self.

THE WILL — the expression of personal autonomy and integrity; it is the focused energies of the self which enable the personality to function freely according to its own intrinsic nature, rather than under the compulsion of external forces.

THE EGO is where the essence of the Divine, or the Spark of God, resides.

THE SELF (spelled with a capital ‘S’) is the Ego in the person.

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LECTURE What is the Will?

My Brothers and Sisters:

At our last Conventicle we discussed the subject of *Free Will*. We noted that Man is free to choose

and free to act and free to implement his choices. Tonight we will go a step further and consider what the Will is.

The Will is the focused energies of the Âme. These focused energies can activate, coordinate and direct all the other functions of the psyche which controls the behavior of the organism.

As such, the Will is neither a great deal of raw energy, nor a blind determination to do what one wants to do at any cost: Rather, like the Director of a play, the Will focuses, directs and utilizes all the energies and resources of the psyche and of a person's sub-personalities, in a harmonious way, to achieve the goals and objectives that are focused upon and desired.

More than a physical or bio-psychic energy, the Will is a psycho-spiritual energy the energy and life of the Self working through the mind and the biological organism, to realize and accomplish a person's objectives and desires. The Self, or Ego, endows one with individuality and abilities. Individuality is the nuance or the shade of difference that causes the variation in personal actions.

As such, there is hardly anything that an individual can do physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually or imaginatively which does not require the proper focusing and use of the Will. A strong, healthy, properly developed and skillful Will is, therefore, absolutely indispensable to achieve anything worthwhile.

It is the function of "willing" which determines whether one can say "yes" or "no" to oneself and to others in everyday life. It is "willing" which enables a person to resist his own bio-psychic drives, passions, and irrational impulses and desires, as well as the wishes and aims of other persons who are seeking their own self-interest.

It is "willing" which enables a person to persevere and to be successful in the pursuit of his goals and objectives in spite of all the obstacles and difficulties which may arise and bar the way.

Finally, it is the Will that energizes and directs the psychic energies of a person toward behavior, feelings, thinking, imagining, and intuition as well as toward observation and the regulation of the bio-psychic drives. It is the Will that coordinates the various resources, functions, and sub-personalities of a person, to help that person live according to his ideals and to implement his life's objectives.

The Will can best be compared to an electrical battery; it can be charged or discharged by our various attitudes and activities.

Whenever we truly know what we want and then go ahead and achieve it in spite of all the obstacles that may bar the way, ***we charge and strengthen our will.***

When we know clearly what we do NOT want and we avoid it and do not give in to it, in spite of all the temptations and inducements to do so, ***we strengthen and charge our will.***

On the other hand, if we truly do not know what we want and let ourselves be swayed by external agents, or circumstances, or other people, or even by the cravings and desires of our being, ***we weaken and discharge our will.***

By now, Brethren, you should be able to see that the will is the fundamental expression of ***personal autonomy and integrity***, the capacity of a person to ***function freely according to his own intrinsic nature rather than under the compulsion of external forces or inner unconscious forces.***

We give the name of “will” to the evolutionary development of being truly and freely able **to choose** bearing the full responsibility of self-determination.

At times we are all dramatically confronted with situations that invite us to use our will. If we do so, then **our psychic voltage rises and we move on to greater freedom**. If we do not, then more and more, **we lose our will and autonomy** and are crushed by the circumstances of life.

Once we have discovered our will, and learn to use it properly, a chain reaction is set into motion it enables us to perform further acts of will. Like a bank account that grows with accrued interest, the reservoir of our will-energies can grow, establishing a positive circle. Will generates and increases the ability to will, and it is by **using it**, that we discover and intensify it.

The real function of the will is **to direct, not to impose**: hence, the central aspect of working with the will consists in being fully conscious of what we want and **how we are going to get it**. In this process there are four key stages in the exercise and expression of the will which are:

Deliberation: Setting goals and objectives that provide adequate motivation.

Decision: Making a choice and commitment to one goal and objective to be realized.

Planning: Organizing the best means and the ways to achieve this goal.

Execution: The actual implementation and realization of these goals and objectives.

To conclude, Brethren, let us observe that the will is a capacity which is eminently human: **the power to choose**. By selecting the right goals and objectives and then realizing them progressively, we can simplify, beautify, and turn our lives into a real work of art!

Brothers & Sisters, the right use of our freedom to choose, our freedom to act and our freedom to implement our choices is perhaps the most serious problem which each person must deal, for the whole tenure of our lives will be determined on our ability to choose wisely. Many brilliant and inspired thinkers have reflected and analyzed the central problem of human becoming and realization from different angles, and with different images and insights. I would like to share with you some beautiful insights which provide a rich soil and batch of seeds for meditation and contemplation.

Robert de Ropp: “It is our privilege to live either as Warriors or slaves. A Warrior is the master of his fate. No matter what fate throws at him, fame or infamy, health or sickness, poverty or riches, he uses the situation for his inner development. He takes his motto from Nietzsche, “That which does not destroy me strengthens me.” The slave on the other hand is completely at the mercy of external events, If fortune smiles on him, he struts and boasts and attributes her favors to his own power and wisdom which, as often as not, has nothing to do with it. If fortune frowns, he weeps and grovels, putting blame for his sufferings on everything and everybody but himself. I learned that all life-games can be played either in the spirit of the Warrior or in the spirit of the slave!”

Castanada had Don Juan state: “The basic difference between an ordinary man and a warrior is that the warrior takes everything as a challenge, while an ordinary man takes everything either as a blessing or a curse.

de Ropp concludes: “It has been stated by Thomas Szasz that what people really need and demand from life is not wealth, comfort or esteem, but games worth playing (ideals or basic objectives to realize). He who cannot find a game worth playing is apt to fall prey to *accidie*, defined by the Fathers of the Church as one of the Deadly Sins, but now regarded as a symptom of sickness. *Accidie* is a paralysis of the will, a failure of the appetite, a condition of generalized boredom, total

disenchantment “God, oh God, how weary, stale, flat and unprofitable seem to me all the uses of the world!” Such a state of mind, Szasz tells us, is a prelude to what is loosely called “mental illness”, which, though Szasz defines this illness as a myth, nevertheless fills half the beds in hospitals and makes multitudes of people a burden to themselves and to society. Seek above all, **for a game worth playing**. (Look for a high ideal or purpose to which to consecrate your life and energies.) Such is the advice of the oracle to modern man. Having found the game, **play it with intensity**, play it as if your life and sanity depended upon it.”

Follow the example of the French Existentialists and flourish a banner bearing the word engagement”. Though nothing means anything and all the roads are marked “no exit”, yet move as if your movements had some purpose. If life does not seem to offer a game worth playing, **then invent one.**”

William James: “the greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitude of mind.”

Marcus Aurelius: “a man’s life is what his thoughts make of it.”

Finally, Albert Einstein, when asked what he considered to be the greatest problem of our age, replied: “Men simply don’t think”.

Let us now draw together all that we have discussed this evening: In this life there is indeed, one truly fundamental choice — to be free and in charge of one’s being and destiny to have autonomy and integrity, or to be a slave, to remain a creature of circumstances. **To be free and successful means to do what one really wants to do and what one has chosen consciously and deliberately.** And here success breeds success, as failure engenders further failure. The central difference is that between knowing where one is going (having developed one’s will) or not. Take the analogy of a ship. Think of a ship leaving harbor with a crew, a captain, and a definite destination or goal to reach. Sooner or later, even if the ship encounters rough seas or other obstacles, it will reach its predetermined destination. Now take another ship just like the first, but with no captain at the helm and with no set destination or goal, with no aiming point. Then get the crew to start the engine and get the ship going. If it gets out of the harbor at all, it will either sink, wander aimlessly about, or wind up derelict on some deserted beach. This ship cannot possibly go anywhere because it has no set course or destination. Exactly the same is true of a human being who has no basic set of objectives to pursue or high ideals to realize.

A human being’s character and life are what his thoughts make him, because we literally become and fashion our personality by what we think about, behold and contemplate. This is the central and most important (yet so simple) psychological and spiritual truth. It is the truth which literally holds the future, integrity, and autonomy of our being and life in its power, provided that we act as though what we think and behold inwardly is real, so as to **make it real and incarnate it in the outer world.** Also we must be careful to really want what we focus upon and not adulterate it with contradictory thoughts and desires which end up by cancelling each other out.

Why do we become what we think about? Because thoughts and images have a “motor element” in them that leads them to objectify and materialize themselves on the emotional and physical planes. To use an inspiring image and analogy: the mind can be compared to a good and fertile plot of land. On this plot, a farmer can plant what he chooses, the decision is up to him, the land does not care in the least! Thus he can plant sugar cane or peanuts, just as well as weeds or poisonous plants; the land will simply “grow” whatever is seeded and multiply it many times. The human psyche is exactly like this plot of land and operates with precisely the same laws even though it is far more complex and fertile and functioning on different levels of being than the former; **it will grow and multiply whatever we plant in it.**

Brethren, you must learn to understand, emotionally as well as intellectually, that you literally become what you think, and that you do indeed “reap what you have sown.

Let us now sit in silence for a few minutes and reflect on what we have learned tonight and endeavor henceforth to use our will constructively.

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LECTURE Fraternity - What is it?

My Brothers & Sisters:
Greetings and Salutations!

There is a word which has enriched current vocabularies for a long time, which has even been adored by political parties, which is written on the walls of our public monuments and yet which is not well understood and which is put into practice with increasing rarity. That word is *Fraternity*.

What is fraternity? It is the feeling which every elevated person should have in their heart and which leads one to consider all beings as the members of one family to which one owes love and protection.

It is the lack of this spirit of fraternity which engenders, first, envy and then jealousy, malicious gossip, hatred and finally, violence.

Among peoples whose religion teaches successive reincarnations in different human bodies, there is much more true fraternity, free from envy and jealousy, because each believer knows that his current life is only a passage, a sort of training period, that his conditions are the punishment or the reward (put simply) for his previous lives, that it prepares one for another future existence, happy or unhappy, which will be the fruit of the present experience.

Thus, it has to be remembered that, in living, all men are experiencing a moment of their development; that all men are at a different stage of their development, and that all are aiming for a more or less distant perfection. All are pupils in a large school, more or less adaptable, more or less quick in their studies. In understanding this, a big step will already be taken towards the true spirit of fraternity.

As I wrote the other day, what is poisoning our era is that, very often, we judge people by their material success, by the size of their bank account, by the possessions they have acquired, and not at all by their spiritual and moral worth. But moral worth the only worth that counts, has any true value, and endures. Jealousy, envy, intolerance, are not only bad, but also dangerous feelings. So too are rash judgment, unfavorable prejudice (so prevalent in our era) and the spreading of dreaded, malicious gossip. You have to know little about magic and its forces to ignore what is called “backlash” or “return shock.”

Just as good thoughts attract to useful and good forces to us, so too do low thoughts result in the activation of evil forces. *There are probably fewer bad thoughts which can accumulate over our heads as many storms and tempests as can envy and lack of fraternity.*

There are, of course, some places where this spirit of fraternity is particularly revered and often developed to a high level. These are the Initiatic Centers where one tries to develop the spirituality of the members by teaching them to practice the high virtues, of which fraternity is one of the first.

That is one reason, then, why we are here.

I know that there are spots on the sun and that, there as elsewhere, one sometimes disguises with a beautiful cover-up, thoughts of envy or of personal ambition. That is nonetheless the case of the minority.

There is everyday life, this daily life in the ant's nest of a world where each of us rubs shoulders with a neighbor, a colleague, an associate. If we take on the relatively easy habit of considering our neighbor, colleague or associate not merely as such, **but first and foremost as a brother**, who is obeying the same laws of evolution as we do, how things that would develop would then be easier and daily life would be more pleasant for everyone.

In every job, in every profession, one sees all too often this tendency to make one's neighbor look small, in order to flatter oneself or even with the idea of taking his place! Is not humanity sometimes, even in times of peace, the true image of a jungle?

Brotherliness has been called a "vigilant hatred". One which always sees the splinter in the eye of another and never the beam in his own. Let us first seek our own beam to make our eyes see clearly!

Rather, we should consider that we each have a mission, or perhaps several missions.

We have to establish, or at least seek to establish, a great fraternity in the world. And how can we do this, if we do not first have peace within ourselves, in our hearts, and if we do not remove from ourselves the negative feelings of envy, jealousy and hatred?

We have to create around ourselves, in our day-to-day life, in our daily existence, an atmosphere of serenity, benevolence, and patience which are the basis of the fraternal spirit.

Treating everyone, if not as a friend, at least as a brother, whatever his mistakes in behavior. We must consider that, though his path may be winding and difficult, ours has been too, or it may be so tomorrow; and that the brother in difficulty is more worthy of our compassion than another. **At least let us try to understand him.** For if we always made an effort to understand another person, how much less ruthless, scornful or indifferent we would be! Even towards another's faults, which are the burdens of his difficult way. Let us then make a rule for ourselves: before trying to see the defects or faults of another, why not work at discovering their qualities, virtues, good feelings, everything that can bring us closer to them, everything about them that can be used and developed. How much more fruitful this would be than to always think first of what can separate.

In the same way, in a group, whether it be a family, an association or society itself, when some members have faults or weaknesses, it is the **weaknesses** which have to be destroyed, **not the members!** Therefore, instead of condemning, chasing away and fighting, would it not be better to try by persuasion and by example, above all by a healthy atmosphere to destroy the undesirable aspects in a natural manner.

Unfortunately, we have our imperfections, and nobody is exempt from them. Let us try to correct them before we try to pose as correctors of the wrongs of others. That would be the right attitude and would work well. In consciously trying to correct our faults we would automatically be the tutors of others and everyone can only gain from it. If we do not allow ourselves any indulgences, our minds always following the correct path, we will acquire that moral serenity which opens the heart to intuition and to understanding others.

One of the great laws of spiritualism is that one must be the most severe judge of oneself, and the

most understanding friend to others. 'This does not imply blind and guilty complicity in indulgence. but careful and gentle vigilance to guide a blind person. Even if we think our fellow man is not completely blind, let us not forget that if he really did have complete knowledge, he would not make all those mistakes which annoy us and which we condemn.

As for those who seem to run about as they wish on a golden carpet, let us make sure we do not envy them or harbor grudges. Life, in all its meanderings, has so many pitfalls even for those who appear to be the best equipped!!! Never envy the destiny of others. We do not know what cruel trials may await them tomorrow which maybe we will never know about. Often we do not know either, when we judge too easily, what difficulties a brother better off than ourselves has been through in the past, or what silent sorrows are hidden behind appearances that have been too quickly interpreted.

We should avoid envy just as we should avoid condemnation, we should make the best possible use of the tools life gives us; and we should spread positive and elevated thoughts around us and throughout the world -these thoughts which have so much power and over which we never keep a close enough watch.

Finally, we should also think that we have the highest mission, within our capabilities, to help the spiritual development of all our Brothers, without exception. We have not yet found better tools for this work than kindness, charity, and Fraternity.

May you ever dwell in the Eternal Light of Divine Wisdom.

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LECTURE The Oratory

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

If it is at all possible that you can set up a small Oratory in your home, the benefits to be derived will be enormous. It is in fact a very simple matter if you have a little space available in your bedroom or some suitable part of your house. You will need a little shelf or a small table. On it you can spread a suitable cloth. Above, on the wall you may hang a picture, such as a scenery or something with a religious flavor if you prefer. On the table you can place a pair of candlesticks and an incense burner. A small vase with flowers is always nice. If you wish, you can keep there a sacred volume. You can make your Oratory as simple or as ornate as you wish. A comfortable chair makes it complete.

Here is a point to be observed and emphasized. In the daily routine you will find just about everyone quite willing to devote time to their occupation/profession; to eat and drink; for exercise and recreation and for sleep. They do this because they recognize the necessity of earning a living; of nourishing and restoring the physical body. What most people do not seem to realize, however, it that it is equally necessary to devote sufficient time, daily, to prayer and meditation! Ten to fifteen minutes spent in prayer and meditation daily, helps maintain harmony and equilibrium and assists the free passage of energy throughout the psyche. Whereas beginning students of the esoteric sense this, the reasons will become clear as we progress in our studies.

Your Oratory is the ideal place to study your Libers! It is also a good place to do your exercises. If, however, your present domestic situation does not allow you to set up an Oratory in the way

described, there is no need to worry. Find a suitable place where you can sit and be alone for a little while, either early on mornings before the rest of the household rises, or after everybody has left for work, or at night, etc.. On the other hand, somewhere out of doors, especially among trees, is a wonderful place to sit, study and think.

Here is a suggested way to open your personal conventicle: First, wash your hands in clean water. Then light a little incense in your thurible. Standing before your Altar, say:

“Eternal One, thy Thy Light shall we see Light; Thou, who art the True Light that Lighteth every creature.” Light the right candle.

“O Thou, Who dwellest in the abodes of Light, keep far from us all evil thoughts and passions. Cleanse our hearts and sanctify our lives, that in Thy glorious Light we may dwell in Truth, Righteousness and Peace.” Light the left candle. Then be seated and remain in silence for a short while, attune yourself with all those who, that very moment in different parts of the world, are devoting themselves to similar uplifting work. There is but one Universal Brotherhood, and truly we can say, “Behold how good and how pleasant it is to dwell together in unity.” After this short attunement, turn up the profane lighting and commence with your study.

When you have completed your Work, close your conventicle as follows: Extinguish the candles extinguish them with a snuffer or quickly pinch the wick with moistened fingers. (Do not “blow out” the candles). Sit in silence for a brief period and then say: “As the Rays of Light continually flow from Omneity, stretching to the confines of space, and as all the stars and planets of our solar system reflect the light and luminosity of the Sovereign Architect of the Universe, so may I, as a member of the International College of Esoteric Studies, strive to reflect the Light of Wisdom that I have received in my Work this evening. *Velat Lux.*”

Brethren who are not able to set up an Oratory should visualize the foregoing procedures.

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EXERCISE 3 The Stimulator

In our Martinist Work we utilize comparatively few exercises but those we do use and recommend are effective and potent. This exercise, THE STIMULATOR, is certainly no exception to the rule. Regular practice of this exercise will bring noticeable benefits in a short time. It has salutary effects on many levels.

Sit comfortably, or lie flat on your back. Separate your hands and your feet. In other words: do not cross your feet or legs, or clasp your hands. If you are sitting, let your feet be flat on the floor and let your hands rest comfortably in your lap. This exercise stimulates the cell and psychic consciousness on several levels. You begin at the soles of your feet and work upwards, part by part, to the top of your head.

Concentrate your full attention on the soles of your feet. Mentally “feel” them. Feel the blood coursing through the veins and arteries and capillaries just below and in the skin. Now shift your concentration to your toes, toe nails, then to your heels, instep, ankles, etc.. Go “inside” your foot to the muscles, flesh and bones. Gradually work up the legs to your knee, thighs, hips, groin not forgetting the internal organs, intestines, sacrum, buttocks, etc..

The important point is this: as you concentrate on each particular part, feel it living, feel it “come alive”. Feel the bones, the marrow, the nerves, the tissues, the cells that go to make up the particular part. As you concentrate on the respective areas you will begin to feel them “tingling” or “vibrating”.

Always start the exercise at the feet and work up to the head. After reaching the scalp and hair, if you wish you can start the exercise again and do it over. The more often you do this exercise the quicker you will be able to feel the “tingling” sensations which indicate an awakening of the cell consciousness. Ten minutes a day devoted to this exercise will be ten minutes very well spent. The beneficial effect on your health, for one thing, will be tremendous. In fact, if you have a condition such as “arthritis”, or pains, sprains, cuts or whatever concentration on the area in the way described will greatly stimulate the natural healing processes.

After practicing this exercise for about a week, the following deep breathing measure should be added: Take a deep breath and hold it. Do not strain. First exhale slowly and naturally, then inhale through the nose until your lungs are full and hold the breath. Hold it only as long as is comfortable while concentrating on the particular part of the body. When you feel you must exhale, do so slowly and naturally. Do not hold the breath so long that when it is time to exhale you have to let it out with a gasp. Hold the breath only as long as is comfortable exhale and inhale naturally and deeply.

All the exercises given thus far should be persisted with for the rest of your life!

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ESSAY Aspects of Will

Brothers and Sisters:

A sublime moment in the Gospel story evidences the tremendous self-realization and self-mastery of Jesus. A leper had approached him seeking to be healed. Putting forth his hand, Jesus touched him, saying “I will, be thou clean.” Immediately the sick man became well. In that emphatic statement, “I will”, there was brought into focus all the God-power with which Jesus was endowed and of which he was so mightily conscious.

You might be surprised, as you study this new insight into Truth, at your tremendous potential as a spiritual being. It is certainly a wonderful thing to contemplate, but its realization is by no means automatic. Beyond developing understanding and faith and the executive power of mind is the question of will, which is the directional, formative power of the mind. Matthew Arnold said, “The seeds of Godlike power are in us still; gods we are, bards, saints, heroes, if we will.” When a man stands up to life and says “I will”, the true greatness of mankind is evidenced. Only in this way is power brought into fulfillment.

Sometimes people come to me desiring to get ahead in their work, asking for help in achieving this. I inform them that they can be helped and that I will pray with them and instruct them in new and positive concepts, but then I ask them how strongly they desire change. Are they willing to work with these truths? Are they willing to follow through with practice and study and preparation every day? Are they willing to make personal adjustments and sacrifices to prepare for the greater good? Oftentimes I hear excuses and evasions. No matter how intense is your desire it is insufficient until you state unequivocally: “I will.”

All desire must lead to will, or else it is mere wishing and dreaming. Had Jesus said to the leper, "I sure would like to help you; I want you to be well more than anything", there would have been no healing. Cleansing of the disease resulted from the statement, "I will, be thou clean,"

Kahlil Gibran puts this beautifully: "O God, who art our winged self, it is thy will in us that willeth. It is thy desire in us that desireth. It is thy urge in us that would turn our nights, which are thine, into days which are thine also."

In truth, there is no isolated human will. The will is but one phase of man's consciousness; a product of the higher will of God. Though man seems to be an individual entity in the world, with freedom to come and go, destroy and create, he remains an expression of, and inexorably linked with, the active mind of God. Whatever his lack or difficulty, he can never be outside of God. In his "Fall" Man has only lost his direct awareness with Omneity.

Man is a creative expression of the divine will and is sustained by this will of the Highest, constantly seeking to perfect itself in all creation. *Man is the will of God in action.* Whereas you are free to act without dictation, and you are free to succeed or fail, to be healthy or sick, you can never really stray outside of the presence, the life, the substance and the will of God. Throughout your life you can choose to direct divine power in any direction, but it is still and always divine power. As Jesus says, "I of myself can do nothing."

A great Hungarian patriot of the nineteenth century, Kossuth, was refused permission to land in France after his exile, in spite of the fact that thousands of his admirers were lined up on the dock. One Frenchman, however, did not accept this and jumped into the bay, swam out a mile and climbed up a rope ladder to the deck of the ship, where he stood dripping in the presence of Kossuth. When asked how he had the strength to swim the great distance, the man replied, "There are no difficulties to him that wills." Kossuth replied, "Thank you for coming. That shall be my motto as well as my inspiration for all my life."

We all have times when we are in an exalted frame of mind, with a sudden feeling of power and at these times we resolve to do better and greater things. Usually, these feelings do not remain; after a while they are but a faint memory of the original desire and resolve. We must shift into action in these moments, turning desire into, "I will". As William James used to say, "Seize the very first possible opportunity to act on every resolution you make and on every emotional prompting you may experience in the direction of the habits you desire to gain."

We can do this by formulating an affirmation through which we can direct the dynamic force of will. Desiring to be strong, say "I will strength." Desiring sufficiency, "I am confident and capable." Desiring healing, "I am healed." This is the whole reason behind affirmation; your will is acting to let God's perfect will be done. You are greater than you know. When you will to be what you wish to be, you will so become, for the will is the man.

Paul teaches in Philippians, "It is God who works in us to will and to do His good pleasure." Some have considered this to mean that God is going to do whatever he wants with us and there is nothing we can do about it. But Paul is speaking in context of Jesus' statement, "It is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The will of God is changeless, eternal, and fixed; since the Creation was good and very good, so you too are good and very good. You are a spiritual being ever in the process of becoming. His will is the ceaseless activity seeking to perfect you, his creation. Paul is saying that there is a dynamic force within you that is ceaselessly working for your good. As Gibran says, "Even before you desired prosperity, God desired it for you. Even before you desired to be healed, the life force in you was trying to manifest as health."

We have, unfortunately, a negative tradition of understanding God's will as capricious. A setback or tragedy evokes the comment, "Well, I guess it was God's will." Men think of death especially as God's will, even though this is a total misunderstanding of Jesus' teaching. He said, "It is not the will of your Father that one of these little ones should perish."

Dr. Hutschnecker, in his popular book, The Will To Live, points out that sickness often comes from a will to be sick, and that health must be preceded by a will to be well, to live, and to overcome. He says that sickness is often an unconscious or subconscious attempt to escape from life.

Charles Fillmore says, "The simple statement, "I will to be well", gathers the forces of the mind and body about the central idea of wholeness, and the will holds that center just as long as the 'I am' continues its affirmation." He goes on to say that no one ever died until he let go of his will to live, and that thousands live on through the force of a determined will.

Told by his physicians that they could not do more for him and that he must soon die, an English playwright retorted: "What! Leave a family of helpless children! I will not die! I will live!" He recovered his health to live for many years.

Prayer should never lead to resignation to some supposed act of fate; nor should it be an expression of our willfulness. Prayer must be, in the spirit of the Psalmist: "I delight to do thy will, O God; thy law is within my heart."

The important point of all this is: **God will. Will you?** You must say, "Yes, I will; I will to let the divine action manifest through me." Prayer, used rightly, must be a channel through which the executive power of the mind may function. Will to believe in yourself and in the forces of good in your world. Say yes to God!

May I share with you a wonderful poem by Ella Wheeler Wilcox entitled "Will"?

There is no chance, no destiny, no fate,
Can circumvent or hinder or control
The firm resolve of a determined soul.
Gifts count for nothing; will alone is great;
All things give way before it, soon or late.
What obstacle can stay the mighty force
Of the sea-seeking river in its course,
Or cause the ascending orb of day to wait?
Each well-born soul must win what it deserves;
Let the fool prate of luck. The fortunate
Is he whose earnest purpose never swerves,
Whose slightest action or inaction serves
The one great aim. Why even death stands still,
And waits an hour sometimes for such a will.

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ESSAY The Door is Always Open

It has been said that no door in life ever closes but that another door opens, and it is up to us to open that door. Sometimes we feel that when a certain door closes we shall never be happy again. An

unhappy experience is not often thought of as a doorway to happiness. Certainly, a person in the throes of an unhappy love affair could hardly think of it as a blessing. Yet many persons can look back and see that this isn't true for them. Because of the good that has come from it, they are even able to think with gratitude of the experience that seemed so hard at the time.

Time alone is a great healer of heartaches, but we don't have to wait for time's slow healing. It is better to form attitudes of mind and heart that will protect and sustain us in time of need. The most essential attitude is one of trust in God, trust in the Divine process, confidence in the activity of the Infinite working in and through us at all times. He who made the heart surely knows its needs and is capable of filling them.

A girl that I know was aware of this Truth. Unable to think of anything elaborate or poetic in a period of deep heartache, she would say over and over again, "God will not let me down; God will not let me down." And God did not let her down. Her faith kept the door of her heart open so that life could come in and flow through. And come it did, with blessings that superseded the ones that her heart was set upon. She had faith in the flow. She had trust in the process.

New blessings will always take the place of the ones we have hoped for if we will let them, for the richness of life, the abundance of life, the prodigal goodness of life is never exhausted. We can close our heart and mind to life but life never closes its door to us, and that's a marvelous thought. We may think that life has closed its doors because the person who has made us most conscious of life and love and joy of living has chosen a way of life that doesn't include us. But the closed doors are an illusion created by our feeling of desolation.

It is sometimes difficult to understand the reasons for the changes that take place in the affections of men and women, but every action is an endeavor to satisfy some inner need of the soul. There may be an easier, better way, but a person can act only in accordance with his present understanding and ability. We must know that the needs of one person are never met at the cost of another's happiness: our faith that somehow things work together for good (even though the good seems obscure) will help us to accept with courage and grace what seem to be heartbreaking changes. Even though the love and encouragement we seem to need have been withdrawn from us, we must never let our loss destroy our peace of mind. Instead, we must know that when one door closes, another always opens.

It happens to many of us that things are going along just fine, just the way we want them to go, and as we take each step on our smooth, unruffled path, we look down life's corridor and we see all the open doors ahead leading straight to our goal. It is a marvelous feeling. We are sure of ourselves, and feel a deep security because we know where we are going and how we are going to get there. And then "Bang!" The door just ahead of us closes, finally and firmly, and there appears to be no key, no device for opening that particular door again.

What do we do now? Well, some of us just stand there banging at the door, bruising our spirit as we rant and rave at our ill luck and dark fate. We cry out, "Why? What have I done to deserve this? It's not fair!" And what do we get for all of our raving, our bewailing, our self-pity? Does the closed door suddenly open, and do all animate and inanimate things rush to our cause to make up for the inconvenience and worry we suffered? Certainly, any closed door never opens because we rave. It may open again in the natural course of things. Or, through prayer, or by investigations of ways and means, or particular needed effort, we may find a solution that proves to be a key to that door. But very often, doors close permanently. Accumulating circumstances, sudden happenings, accidents, death, or natural processes often put blank walls where an open door once existed. And what do we do then . give up? Do we take the path of least resistance and declare that we must have meant to fail? No. We were meant to look for new doors to open. They are there always. The Creator of this wondrously complex Universe could not have so limited one of his creatures.

Milton's blindness shut a door but opened others to deeper sensitivity. Would Paradise Lost ever have been written otherwise? Lou Gehrig, called America's best loved ballplayer, certainly saw all his open doors ahead clear amid unobstructed, and then a mysterious paralysis struck him and a door was closed. Neither the most advanced medical knowledge nor the widespread sorrow of his fans could reopen the door. Did he give up? No, not even in the face of a very limited life span. Instead, he opened another door by taking a job in New York City as Parole Commissioner. With vast sympathy and astounding courage, his service to others not only helped him to walk with spirit upright through a new open door, but he was also privileged to help former convicts find new doors to better lives for themselves.

Mary Doyler was the contented wife of a well-to-do store executive. She was a busy mother, and her life door was opened wide to the well-marked corridor ahead. Then her husband became ill, and before he passed on, all the family resources had been spent. In a very short while, a physical condition developed that eventually left her voiceless. She tried working in a shop, but couldn't make enough to support herself and her three children. She found it necessary to look around for other doors and part of this looking around consisted in taking stock of herself: listing her experience, her capabilities, her talents. In this evaluation process, she recalled her interest and experience in speech therapy; she had taught remedial reading and speech years before. But now she had no voice at all. Was this another door closed for her? Intuitively, she felt that the speech therapy might be a glimmer of light from a possible door-opening. So she consulted her surgeon and learned of a special method of esophageal speech. She learned the method, and then got a job teaching others who had lost their voice boxes. As is so often the case, her new open door led to satisfied ways to open doors for others.

For everyone, there are always other doors. How do we find them? There are countless ways. Here are a few suggestions that might help. First of all, you can pray for guidance, giving in to what I call the Divine flow, knowing that it will be only good. Expect an answer. Second, you can turn away temporarily from your own private world. A seeing heart minors the need of others, and in serving, reveals new doors. Third, you can get outdoors. You can walk, or ride a bicycle, or take some form of exercise, or sit in the sunlight or the rain. And fourth, you can make a list of your talents, experiences, problems. Then list ways that come to mind (even the improbable ones) of how you may use what you have in order to find a way ahead. Do not force; just let go and let God. Trust the process.

I would like to share with you a favorite poem of mine, written by Hazel Thomas Wright, entitled, "The Door Is Open":

"Be still and know whatever may betide,
No door is closed but that another opens wide;
A door that opens to a boundless view
Of blessings rich in promise, vital, new,
Blessings more wonderful than you have ever known;
Dare to step through the door and claim your own.
Keep clear your inner vision, thus to see
The good awaiting you, and constant be;
Face each new venture with a joyful song,
Lift up your head and heart, be valiant, strong;
With God as your protector, friend, and guide,
No door is closed but that another opens wide."

In countless ways and places, life opens its doors to us. Our part is to enter in. We are travelers toward new horizons and ever-increasing good. And the person we are to become is much greater than the person we would have been if we had not had the experience that made us ask and seek and knock at the new doors of life.

OPTIONAL MATERIAL Occultism and Spiritualism

What You Need To Know

The word 'occult' means 'hidden'. It derives from the Latin '*occultus*', the past participle of '*occulto*', meaning "to conceal or to cover over." In a broad but true meaning, occult science includes academic science for the academic scientist is truly in every sense an occultist. The academic scientist is engaged through laboratory research in seeking out the invisible and hidden causes of visible phenomena. Newton, when he studied the reason which causes an apple to fall, was in reality an occultist, for he sought the hidden cause of the fall. Modern scientists who seek the structure and analysis of the atom are occult scientists, for they are busy with the search for the hidden causes that constitute the very fundamentals of the cosmos.

The true occult scientist who fully measures up to the meaning of the term, not only seeks the hidden causes of natural phenomena, he also applies himself to the search for the truths of spiritual phenomena. The occult scientist accepts and uses the laboratory methods as far as they go, but knowing their limitations, he does not limit himself accordingly. Instead, he carries on his investigations on higher planes. "Occultism" is the term applied to the entire field of occult science. There is true occultism and false occultism.

True occultism consists of the methodical, rational study and investigation of the laws of nature, applying them ethically and physically in the study of man, his origin, evolution, present status and future estate. True occultism consists in the methodical, rational and systematic study of man's invisible bodies, his psychic and spiritual organs and the inner states of consciousness, planes and worlds. True occultism is a science of the highest kind, which, when pursued with wisdom and caution, leads its devotees to higher states of consciousness which transcend the ordinary states of consciousness. When the states of higher consciousness prevail, man discerns planes of existence and entities inhabiting them of which ordinary humanity knows nothing. It is the sum total of supernormal experience of countless centuries, perceived with supernormal faculties developed in some people and recorded by the Initiates of the Occult Path. It forms the body of what is known as the teachings of occult science. The secrets of occult science, like the secrets of some higher arts and advanced scientific research, are reserved for those who are endowed with special abilities and for those who take the trouble to cultivate them.

True occultism takes up where psychology leaves off and provides its students with a philosophy of living and a way of life drawn from its experiences. This philosophy, when lived and applied to daily life, takes its students into the domain of revealed religion. This occurs because the seeker has penetrated, by way of the occult path, into the planes from whence comes all revelation. Thus, *true occult science is not merely a study, but a way of life based on strict self-discipline and many tests of fitness.*

"There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known," Luke 12:2. It is the work of the occultist to reveal that which is now covered and know that which is now hidden.

The higher level of occult science embraces inner experience and entry into the unseen. This is accomplished through certain methods and practices, and, as already stated, by a way of life based on strict self-discipline and many tests of fitness. There is only one valid reason for entering the

occult science path and that is the strongest kind of aspiration for light on the path of spiritual unfoldment that leads to Union with God.

The Initiate of the Right Hand Path of true occult science uses his knowledge solely for time purpose of bringing human consciousness to the reason of God. To the seeker who does not wholly accept explanations offered by science, philosophy and religion, occult science offers a rich mine of Eternal Wisdom to those willing to work for it.

FUNDAMENTALISM

A term for a religious belief-system characterized by dogmatic tenets, biblical literalism and biased doctrines, many of which are a pejorification of spiritual truth. Fundamentalists are extremely sensitive and vehemently oppose any historical or scientific revelation which could prove their beliefs wrong.

SATANISM

Satanism (or Devil Worship) has to do with the worship of Satan or deities having a demonic form. The worship of Satan or diabolism is spasmodic and occasionally epidemic. It dates from the early days of dualism and perhaps originated in the Persian dual system when the opposing deities Ormuzd and Ahriman symbolized the good and bad principles respectively.

“Satanism” is also a broad and general term for (a) black magic, sorcery, amid obeah, which are methods of the “left hand” path employed in an attempt to obtain one’s wishes, usually for self-aggrandizement; and (b) to describe all sorts of evil, vulgar, diabolic and heinous acts that debase and degrade the human being, such as: taking hallucinatory and illegal drugs, orgies, all forms of perversion, debauchery, lewdness, profanity, etc., etc.

It should hardly be necessary to say that Occultism is opposed to Satanism, however the distinction is emphasized here for clarity because some persons whose business it is to deceive, sometimes do try to equate Occultism with Satanism. These detractors are often religious bigots who view any scientific system (such as Occultism) which strives to advance knowledge and enlightenment, as a threat to their very existence.

SPIRITUAL SCIENCE & SPIRITUALISM

‘Spiritual’ comes from the Latin ‘*Spiritus*’ meaning: breath, soul, life. According to the dictionary ‘Spiritual’ means “pertaining to or like the soul, or its affections, specifically as influenced by divine spirit. Hence: pure; holy; heavenly minded, as opposed to carnal. ‘Spiritual’ is the term applied to that which pertains to, or affects the inner immaterial nature of man.

No one questions that man is endowed with mind, yet mind is invisible, immaterial; therefore it is a spiritual quality of man. Consciousness is an invisible spiritual faculty. Multitudinous proofs through physical research, personal experiences and the highest scriptural teachings of all root religions of the world, testify to the persistence of consciousness beyond the abyss between so-called death and mortal life expression.

Science, according to the dictionary, is “knowledge gained and verified by exact observation and correct thinking, especially as methodically formulated and arranged in a rational system.” Spiritual science, therefore, is knowledge of all that pertains to the inner, higher qualities of man, his invisible forces, potencies, his relationship to higher intelligence and to time Divine and inner worlds, planes and regions, gained and verified by exact observation amid correct thinking, methodically formulated and arranged in a rational system. ‘Spiritualism’ is the term applied both to a philosophy and to a cult. Applied to philosophy, it is a doctrine based upon reason, sentiment, or faith, that there are beings not cognizable by time senses, or characterized by the properties of matter, and are

therefore spiritual, as distinguished from material. Again, 'spiritualism' is the doctrine that "man is an immortal spirit and holds mortal relations to God as a Spirit."

The term 'spiritualism' as applied to a cult, means "the belief that the spirits of time dead in various ways communicate with and manifest their presence to men, usually through the agency of a person called a medium, also time doctrine and practices of so believing."

The study of true spiritual science does not stop with the mere investigation and observation of phenomena or laws that apply to the invisible principles of man and the universe; they profit little unless applied by the individual student who must learn that he is a little world (microcosm) of the great world (macrocosm) that in him all nature's forces are epitomized, that he is destined to become divine and be one with his Source. Such a realization will develop in the student a consciousness of his kinship to all that constitutes the world, organic and inorganic, visible and invisible. In everything about him, he beholds himself in past present, and to a conceivable extent, the future.

He peers into his future by a study of time supermen of all races, who as Messiahs have given him examples of exalted living with the definite assurance that the works they did, he will do, if he lives the life that makes possible the exercise of spiritual powers of a high degree.

ADEPTSHIP

It has been said that Adeptship is possible to very few. Therefore, the student may feel his work to attain Initiation may be wasted effort. Some teachers say it takes three incarnations of dedicated effort to find the Path which leads to Initiation. However, even when we see no possibility of attaining Adeptship, we should be wise enough to make this life one of preparation for it, and one enriched by growing spiritual insight which comes to all those who earnestly try. Not everyone studying the piano will become a Chopin or a Paderewski, but everyone is able to attain to a considerable mastery and appreciation of music and thereby enrich their life.

Man cannot function on the planes, or in the regions he desires to enter and study until he *prepares a vehicle* appropriate to those planes or regions. The first step in the preparation of this vehicle is by "living the life" the cultivation of selflessness and the elimination of egoism.

The student must strive to lessen all of his desires for personal pleasure or gain, replacing them with desires for the *good of the whole*, the good of all men without regard to their nationality, race, creed, culture, appearance, social or moral standing; also for the good of the whole universe, the good of the spirits and angels as well as of animals, plants and of all creation. Think not that you are too insignificant for that, or that your powers can not be useful to angels or plants. When you find your feet placed upon the Path your powers will increase even beyond your present expectations. Each day you will be approaching ever nearer to God, and therefore you will be evermore participating in God's omniscience and omnipotence.

The consciousness of our intimate relationship to everything that we can see or know, develops in us an increased sense of personal responsibility toward all which constitutes our environment. This sense of personal responsibility expands with our growth to include several spheres of being and prompts us to serve, rather than to be served. In addition to the foregoing, the spiritual scientist, in his search of the higher mysteries, develops and uses the powers of prayer, meditation, and contemplation. Few students realize that after certain advanced states in their development are reached, they may penetrate far into the inner planes by means of meditation. It is by this method that a great amount of spiritual knowledge has been brought to the world.

Adeptship is attained when both of the pathways, the way of the occultist and the way of the mystic (that is, the occult and the spiritual) are properly balanced. The Martinist who works on the higher plane of thought, the spiritual, has ever in mind the command: "seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness". He is encouraged by the promise "and all these other things (which the occultist seeks) will be added unto you."

PRAYER, MEDITATION & THE MARTINIST

Prayer, meditation and contemplation are the chief tools of the Inner Way advocated by Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, and these play a very important part in the life of the Martinist. However: the Martinist is well aware that the conventional prayers of uttering a lot of words, without realization of what they mean, without spirit, is useless. It is essential to remember that prayer without works, that is, a lot of words but not *living the life* is vain and dead.

To the Martinist, spirituality means above all things: *intense and unselfish activity on behalf of his fellowmen and the world in general.* The Martinist should not be a plodder in search of the mysteries and secrets of the inner world for the mere satisfaction that may come from discoveries of realms little known to the rest of humanity. If he attempts to work and progress with such motives he is doomed to failure and disappointment.

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION

To the student of occult science there is an occult hidden or spiritual side to everything in the universe and it is the purpose of occultism to help him develop the power of apprehending the spiritual side of the world.

But training or developing spiritual powers and forces does not necessarily mean developing clairvoyance or other psychic faculties. These undoubtedly will come if the training has been the right sort along constructive lines, but they are worse than useless if they mean mere medium-ship which is dangerous and physically disastrous.

The clairvoyance and clairaudience of negative medium-ship is limited in scope and inaccurate in detail. True spiritual perception, whether of sight or hearing, developed along positive lines that are in alignment with the constructive principle of nature, is not only harmless but highly beneficial because without it man is limited far beyond what nature intended him to be. Not that this is nature's fault; far from it. *The fact is, nature gave mankind a fair start. With his spiritual perceptions developed first, he lived in a spiritual environment high in the emanations of Omneity, but mankind surrendered these faculties for the pottage of sense gratification, and now he must work his way back by slow development to his original equilibrated status.*

It is important to understand, therefore, that the development and cultivation of spiritual powers is of little practical value *unless they also manifest in the daily and ethical life of the student.* The strongest powers of clear vision will be valueless if they do not teach the individual to see the needs and requirements of his fellowmen and engender a desire to supply them. It is of little use to develop occult power unless that power brings with it not only the desire to see the unfolding future, but also to point out the "better way" to an unfortunate brother, to guide, console and empathize with him in a spirit of true brotherhood and in a manner substantially useful. Spiritual power that does not move us to go willingly and cheerfully out of our way to help and give unselfish service is not truly spiritual. It may be psychic, but it is not of the universal Holy Spirit.

The Martinist is admonished to study two books: The Book of Nature and the Book of Man. To a great extent, this is a personal study. If we set out to study the laws of nature let us make sure that it is because we sincerely desire to learn how to apply these laws for the improvement of nature's greatest product: humanity.

If we set out to develop spiritual power let us be sure it is because we sincerely desire to use such power for the alleviation of human suffering, misery, error and woe, and to bring sunshine to those in darkness. As we develop powers of concentration let us remember that our concentration is not to be selfishly devoted to self, but developed so that we may be able to *serve*.

OUTLINE OF LIBER 4
Martinist Philosophy and Practice, Part 1

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NOTES