

BEATITUDE.

There are two well-distinguished forms of the Beatific Vision. The higher pertains to Kether, and is thus proper only to the Ipsissimus, though it may be enjoyed sporadically (and, as it were, by accident) by those of lower grades.

It is of extremely rare occurrence, and has indeed never been described in any detail; it may even be said that it is doubtful whether any account of its true form has ever been given to the world. It need only be said in this place that its formula is "Love is the law, love under will," and that its nature is the Perpetual Sacrament of Energy in action. It is dependent upon the perfect mastery of the Mysteries of Sorrow and of Change, with thorough identification with that of Individuality.

Let us then occupy ourselves with the lower form of this Vision (so called); it is not technically a Vision at all which pertains to Tiphareth, and is thus the natural grace of the Minor Adept. It may be said at once that those who have attained to higher grades, especially those above the Abyss, can hardly return to this Vision. For it implies a certain innocence, a certain defect of Understanding which is not possible to a Master of the Temple. Again, the Grades of Exempt and Major Adept are too energetic to admit of the balanced quietude of this state.

Only in the centre of the Tree of Life, only in the self-poised security of the Solar Axis, can we expect to find the steady indifference to Event which is the basis of the Trance, and that Ontogenous radiance which tinges it with Rose and Gold.

This Trance differs notable from most others in a way which the above-stated conditions would lead us to expect. It is, psychologically, a state; as opposed to an Action or an Event. True, all Trances of Samadhic intensity are in a sense timeless; but it may be said that most of them are marked by well-defined issues of a critical character. That is, the entry to each is quasispasmodic.

In this case, however, we find no such diagnostic.

The Trance may be continued for weeks or months, and the most ardent devotee of Tahuti, searching his Magical Record with the most conscientious acuteness, finds it impossible to indicate the onset of the Vision. In fact, it may be surmised that the Vision arises not from any given action but rather from a subtle suspension of action. The conflict of events has ended happily in a state of serenely perfect balance, in which, though energy continues to

manifest, its issues have become without significance. We may compare the condition with the return of health of a fever-stricken man. The alternation of pyrexia and subnormal temperatures has subsided; he forgets gradually to consult the thermometer at the accustomed intervals, become absorbed instinctively in his regular pursuits. At the same time he is not longer aware of the hot and cold spells, but half consciously of the quiet glow of health. Similarly in this vision all conscious magical effort ceases, although the practices are continued with all customary diligence, and the whole of the Adept's impressions, internal as external, are suffused with the glow of beauty and delight. The state is in many respects closely akin to that sought by the smoker of opium; but it is natural and requires no artificial regulation.

It will appear from the foregoing that nothing could be more absurd than to attempt to give instructions for the attainment of this state.

To aspire to it (still worse, to seek to regain it after it has passed) must appear the climax of bad logic. Nor, delectable and blessed as it is, can one call it actually desirable.

We need not assume that it is in any way deleterious, that it exhausts good Karma, or that it wastes time and damps aspiration. It should be accepted, when it occurs, with calm indifference, enjoyed to the full, and quitted without regret. Its occurrence is in any case clear evidence that the Adept has reached a definite and rather exalted state of being, since he can live so many hours without being perturbed by the incidence of any motive force. It implied a marked degree of attainment of internal and external control. It proves the possibility of perfect repose in the midst of the greatest activity, and thus indicates the solution of the ultimate problem of philosophy, the preeminent to the conquest of the Three Characteristics. It should encourage the Adept in his Aspiration by heartening him to confront the appalling postulate of the Abyss. It should serve him as refreshment and nourishment; it should assure him of the possibility of perfection in the Greater Work by demonstrating its existence as a Crown to the Less.

Moreover, the enjoyment of Delight and the apprehension of Beauty in all things, even on this plane where analysis has not yet become acute, do actually fortify the heart and enkindle the imagination.

Let therefore the Postulant of the Rosy Cross pursue his Path in solemn strength, aware that at the proper moment he may receive, unasking, the reward, and enjoy

the revivifying flood of dulcet Light, which has been called by the Adepts the Beatific Vision.

Index

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