

The Mysteries by Annie Besant

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[Page 1] MANY and diverse have been and are the religions of the past and the present, the religions living and dead. One great difference one perceives in looking back over the history of the older past and comparing it with the history of more modern days: in the ancient times one does not come across anything in history of the nature of persecution of faith by faith. You find that each religion has its own kingdom, its own area, over which it rules. You find that a nation has its own faith, and that that faith lives in amity with other faiths of neighbouring nations, unless it chanced that the nations themselves were at war. You find in imperial Rome, for instance, that a great Pantheon was raised, in which the Gods of every nation within the Roman Empire found each his place and each his cult. There might sometimes be jealousies and envies, but there was no idea that one religion was to rule over every nation; but rather that each nation naturally had its own particular faith and that the people of the nation worshipped their national God.

You find, looking back to those days, that if there was any trouble with regard to religion, then the origin of the trouble was political rather than religious. To leave the religion of the nation was equivalent to treason to the State; and so now and again you may find a man attacked and banished because of a change of faith. But that was rather because he denied his fatherland than because there was any wrong in thinking along his own lines on a question of belief; and it, [Page 2] is very noticeable that, in some of the most ancient faiths, it was held that, so far as intellectual acceptance of doctrine was concerned, the intellect might have free play, and there was no limit to the area over which the thought might extend.

On the other hand, in comparatively modern days, you find that religious persecution plays a great part in the history of rival faiths. You find many a missionary effort, many attempts to convert other peoples to a religion which is not the religion of their ancestors, and one not unnaturally demands: "Why this difference in the matter of tolerance between the ancient world and the comparatively modern? Why has this idea arisen that all people should accept a particular presentment of truth, that they should not follow an ancestral faith, but "rather embrace one which is brought to them from other lands?"

And it is not without significance that the tendency to persecute in relation to religion is historically contemporaneous with the disappearance of the Mysteries from Europe. It was in connection with their gradual disappearance that you find arising the spectre of religious persecution, so that one is inclined to put the two phenomena side by side, and to ask whether there may not be a relation between the disappearance of the Mysteries and the appearance of persecution.

When we come to enquire as to the difference between the exoteric faith and the esoteric teaching, when we come to look into the faiths of the past and to study the Mysteries of the past, we find that the faiths were just as different in the older world as they are different in the modern; but we also find that in

relation to every faith there were Mysteries established, to which the most learned of that faith belonged, and in which the teachers of that faith were trained. We find, as we study still further, that though the outer presentment of religious doctrines in the exoteric faith differed with the nation, with the temperament and the traditions of the people, the teaching which [Page 3] made the Knower, the teaching which educated the Mystic, the teaching which gave knowledge instead of belief and enabled a man with full certainty to declare: "I know the things of the superphysical worlds" — we find that that teaching was everywhere one and the same, and that while the various exoteric faiths might differ, the inner heart of them, as found in the Mysteries, was the same. Just as you might, if you wandered round some great cathedral, see the light pouring out from window after window, and through every window a different colour; as you might say, looking at that light streaming out through the glass: "The light in the temple is red", and another might cry: "The light in the temple is blue", and another would declare: "Nay, but the light is yellow", while another would asseverate that the light was purple; so with the exoteric religions of the world, each has its own colour, each has its own presentment, and those who only see the outer religion declare that the religions differ, and that the light of truth that comes through each is not one and the same.

But just as if you go within the cathedral, if you penetrate within the shrine, you see that one white light is there and that the difference of the colour is in the windows and not in the light, so do you see, when you enter into the Temple of the Mysteries, that truth is one though it may be presented in different fashions, and that though the colours of the faiths are various as the hues of the rainbow, inside the Temple of the Mysteries the white Light of Truth is one and the same. And it is, I think, because of that knowledge — which, inasmuch as it is knowledge of facts, cannot vary, while the language in which the facts are told will vary according to the speaker — it is because in all the ancient religions there was ever at the heart of them the Mysteries, giving the unity of truth and the unity of knowledge, it was because of that, that persecution for religious belief did not stain the older world; for the teachers knew there was the one truth, although the peoples might differ in their [Page 4] understanding of that truth veiled in garments of dogma, of ceremony, of varied presentment.

So one begins to think, if we are again in modern days to persuade the living religions of the world that they should form a Brotherhood and not a battlefield of warring creeds, that we must find a common place where all the religions may find their origin, where all the religions may find their teachers. We must hope and labour and aspire that that ancient institution of the Mysteries may once more be restored for the lighting and the helping of the world, and we must endeavour so to study and so to live that pupils may be found who shall draw down the Teachers from on high by the passion of their aspiration, by the purity of their lives, by the depth of their knowledge, who may thus show themselves worthy to be taught again by Men made perfect, to draw among themselves as Teachers Those who have knowledge more than the knowledge of men.

Let us think, then, what the Mysteries were in reality. Let us glance for a few moments at the phases through which they have passed, and let us ask whether in our modern days it be possible to find material out of which pupils can be found to be taught. Never in the higher worlds is there grudging in the giving of the truth; never from above comes the check which prevents the pouring out of knowledge over the world. It is here, here in our lower world, here in these minds of men resistant of truth which they find it difficult to grasp; it is in the challenging, constantly questioning mind of our modern days; it is here that lies the difficulty in the restoration of the Mysteries; it is here that the barriers have been built up which check the free flow of truth.

This is not to be regarded as though it were outside the great Plan of the King of Evolution. There is naught outside that Plan; and if sometimes we think that things go ill, it is because our eyes are short-sighted, because we are not able to see the whole, and we [Page 5] judge only by a portion that we see. For in the great evolution of mankind, which lasts through millennium after millennium of our mortal time, in which days are tens of thousands of years, and in which a million years are but as yesterday to those great Minds that see over the whole of evolution; in the working out of such a Plan, in a gradual development of one stage after another, there is no stage which may be missed, there is no stage that is evil; each has its place in the long evolution, and the Architect who drew the Plan knows well the building that He is intending to erect.

It was necessary for human growth, necessary for the higher evolution of men, that there should be a period during which this mind of ours should develop the questioning, challenging, rebellious spirit without which it would not have conquered the knowledge of this lower world. It was well enough in days long gone by that child-nations should look up to divine Instructors, and obediently study the lessons given to them by those divine Men. But it was also well that the growing youth should develop the powers of manhood; and he could not have done it, had he always been kept in the leading-strings of Those greater than himself. So the time came when the Teachers said to the boy: "Go out, my son, into the world and find out for yourself what is the truth; develop within yourself the mind which is one aspect of the divine Spirit, and conquer by your own unaided strength the knowledge which the world can unveil before you; yours it is to conquer the lower world, yours it is to discover the laws of nature, yours it is to find your way while the guide for the moment is hidden".

But just as the father who sends out his son into the world watches over him with tender love and is ever ready to help when advice is needed, so was it with the Fathers of the race, those Elder Brethren who had reached perfection before the younger had climbed the ladder of evolution. They have ever been watching, although out of sight, withdrawn from physical vision but ever near and ready to help, and They have guided [Page 6] the nations as much through the times when Their forms were hidden, as They guided them when dwelling in the City of the Golden Gates of Atlantis, or in the White City of Shambala at the origins of our Âryan Race.

But the times are changed and with the changing times a changing method. It has been said, and rightly said, that evolution is not a ladder of ascent but rather a spiral that ever returns upon itself higher and higher as evolution climbs. So it is that the past becomes again the present, but the present on a higher level than the road that humanity in the past has trodden, and the times are approaching when the Mysteries shall again be restored to earth, for the pupils are preparing today, and when the pupil is ready, as the old saying runs, the Master appears.

Think, then, of the times when the Mysteries were established on our globe and realise what was their function and their work. The outer religion, the religion of law of command, the religion that said "Thou shalt", or "Thou shalt not", that is, the outer religion that guides a man to righteous conduct by an authority imposed upon him from without, by moral codes, by laws of conduct which the man obeys oft-times without understanding their reason, obeys because a great Prophet has said so, because a Scripture has been written giving the precept, because a Church has proclaimed commandments, because a Tradition has declared: "This is the way, walk ye in it" — such a line of instruction, such a

moral code, such a system of laws, makes the good man; makes the man who is the worthy citizen of the State, the man who is the loving husband and father in the home, the man who is ever ready to work for his country, who is looked up to as one of character and of noble life. But that is not the highest. A wise man in days long gone by declared: "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ". A time comes in human evolution, when the work of the outer law is over because the law of the [Page 7] Spirit is unfolding from within, when the man no longer walks by an outer compulsion but by an inner direction, when the God within speaks, instead of the God without; and it is the function of the Mysteries to unfold the God within and to change man into the man made perfect, the man in whom the hidden God shines forth with manifested glory.

So we may read with reference to the Schools of Pythagoras that there were many who learned the outer teachings, who learned the civil and the social virtues, and so became the patterns of virtue that were the glory of ancient Greece. But that was only the outer court of the Temple; that was on the worldly side of the threshold of the Mysteries. For we read that there were other Schools, secret and hidden, into which, those who had reached goodness might be admitted, and in which the good man was developed into the God. That was the object of the Mysteries: to take the good man who had conquered all ordinary temptations, who had grown to a point where the world no longer either deceived or attracted, who had been able to develop within himself those essential virtues which are the bases on which everything else is to be erected — to take that man, to let him step over the threshold into the Temple. There they instructed him how the God within might unfold his powers, and how his garments of matter might be constructed so as to be vehicles for the forces of God instead of hindrances to those forces, as they are in the mass of the people in the world.

And then the man was taught, first of all, that he must purify the garments of matter that he was wearing, not only from the ordinary sins of men, not only from the ordinary passions of human kind, but that he must purify garment after garment of subtler and subtler matter, and learn to distinguish himself from the garments that clothed him, and consciously and deliberately to live in the house of matter of which he was the tenant and not the prisoner. For most men live as prisoners in the house of flesh that they wear.

[Page 8]

They know not that there is a key that can open the gates; they know not that the key is hidden within themselves and is not held by anyone without. They think that death is the holder of the key, and that only when death comes, with that key which unlocks the body, can the Spirit arise free and immortal and know himself divine.

But in the Mysteries they were taught that the body was not a prison-house but only a dwelling-place; that the key could open the doors and man could walk forth at his will. So first they were taught by deep and profound meditation to draw the life away from the outer garments, and for a time to fix it in the inner and subtler garments that the Spirit wears. They were taught to separate the coarser from the finer; they were taught to evolve the finer senses as nature has evolved the physical senses for us through endless ages of years; and they were taught that the real powers of sight and of hearing resided in the spiritual man and not in the bodies that he was wearing, that the bodies had to be shaped into organs for the spiritual powers, and that each body was a barrier until the Spirit had redeemed the matter and formed it for its own purposes and as an instrument for itself.

Those true Mysteries which still exist — those which are ruled by the great White Brotherhood, the only people who have the right to say: "Enter", or: "Thou art not yet ready to enter" — those true Mysteries have never been withdrawn from earth, but have ever existed in the hands of these Men made perfect, who introduced Their neophytes into the realities of the higher worlds, and taught them consciously and deliberately to become familiar with those worlds of subtler matter, as the scientist of our days is beginning to become familiar with the physical world in which we live.

And today in those true Mysteries, when the doorway of Initiation is thrown open before the prepared pupil who has been led up to that gateway, the pupil [Page 9] passes out of the physical body, and is initiated first in the astral body, and is tested as to his knowledge of how to deal with the powers of that world, how to use its influences for human service. When you read, as you sometimes do, of the tests of the Mysteries, the ordeals of the Mysteries, realise that those are tests of knowledge and of power, not of the physical endurance which you read of in "occult" stories, the passing through fire, through water, through all the elements here: those are but the first and early tests on the astral plane for the pupil; they are not the tests of the man who has to show that he can control the powers of nature, and that they own him as their ruler because he has gained the knowledge which alone is able to control. For in any world, go where you will, be it this mortal world of men or be it the highest world of Nirvāna, there is but one thing that gives power, and that is Knowledge. Knowledge enables men to rule, and, as has been truly said, for the Spirit there is no veil in any kingdom of nature.

Therefore of old was the man who had to pass into the temple of the Mysteries spoken of as the Gnostic, the Knower. And every Initiation means an extension of consciousness, an extension which is gained when one gate lies behind you; and the next gate only opens when the knowledge you have conquered enables you to turn the key in its lock. As you trace on, Initiation after Initiation, you find that in each one the pupil, the aspirant, the Initiate, is admitted to another and higher world, and shows that he is able to wield its powers, to use its influence, and always to seek one object and one alone, that he may become of greater service to his fellow-men and may help those who cannot help themselves to a swifter road of progress, to a shorter way to bliss. For the only justification of gaining knowledge is that you may use it for service; and Those who hold the keys of knowledge will only place them in the hands of anyone when that person has proved himself eager to serve, and has mastered the desires of the lower self imprisoned in the bodies, and surrendered [Page 10] himself to the will of the higher Self that knows no will but God's.

And as we look away from these high Mysteries that are, and that were known in the outer world of the past more than they are today, we find that there were many preparatory Schools, Mysteries of the less real kind, which gradually prepared the pupil for the higher Mysteries, and some of these still exist. There are occult Schools scattered over our world today, and all look up to the one White Brotherhood as that to which they aspire; they pass along many different lines which have been brought down from ancient times, different ways and different methods and different fashions of instruction, but all realise that they are preparing for the real Mysteries, those over which the great Hierarchy presides. And looking back into the past we find that there were many such secondary Mysteries known to exist, although the method of their teaching remains occult or hidden.

We find, for instance, that there was a stage in the evolution of religions, in which the pupils were no longer able at will to leave the outer body and go to the Temple of the Mysteries, where alone the higher Initiation should be given.

Some of you may know that in connection with the Egyptian pyramids there were chambers of Initiation which had no door, for no one might enter there who could not pass through the wall encircling the Temple; such needed no door through which to go, because he came in the subtler body into the presence of the Hierophants of these Mysteries. So in Ireland there are still left some towers which have puzzled antiquarians because there is no way into them; there is no need for a door for the man who has learned to use the subtler bodies, for there is no wall that can exclude him, no door that can be locked against him, nothing that can keep him from going whither he will, nothing which this earth can erect in the way of barriers. So it was the fashion of these Mysteries of [Page 11] old, the grade below the real, just as in the real, that only those who could consciously use the higher bodies could be admitted, that they might pass through to the great Way of Initiation.

But the time came when people could not do that of their own free will, and then another method was used. They were thrown into a mesmeric or hypnotic trance, touched with what was called in Greek antiquity the Thyrsus, a rod at first filled with living fire, the touch of which at once broke the links between the higher and the lower bodies, and set the Spirit free within its subtler vehicle in full consciousness of that higher life.

So you will find sometimes, in ancient fresco or in ancient sculpture, a priest stands holding in his hand a rod and on the top of the rod a cone. It was a form of the Rod of Power which was used, and was passed along the spinal column up to where that enters the head; as the fiery rod passed up the spinal column the subtler body was drawn together and gradually followed the rising rod until, as it touched the head, the body passed out through the skull and then was set free to reach the subtler worlds. And a little later still that power has been lost, as the world is going on its ownward way deeper and deeper into matter. Then only the astral vision is opened and the astral hearing, and living pictures are shown in subtler matter, which image out the realities of the other worlds. No longer the subtler world is traversed, only a picture of that world is shown; but a living picture, giving much of knowledge, and even down to our own days that is a common way of teaching. When the living pictures made by the great Teachers are thus shown, we have past history reproduced; when the great work of building worlds is imaged in the subtler matter of the astral plane, the pupil studies these pictures as they unroll before him, and understands better than words could tell him the reality of that history of the past.

Then, coming still lower down, as even this power was lost by those who were the Hierophants of the [Page 12] Mysteries, there came a stage that you may read of among the Greeks, when that which was to be taught was shown by acting, and not either in the worlds themselves or in the living pictures that imaged them out; when men were taught to act scenes which continued the lessons which had to be learned; when the astral world was shown as a dramatic scene; when the passions were imaged as animals, and when men clothed in animals' skins and wearing animal masks surrounded the candidate for the Mysteries, endeavoured to drive him back, and tried to terrify him. And if within him there was the germ of any vice remaining, then that inner traitor in the citadel of the mind answered to the threat without which was made by the actor who was acting the vice, and the man, terrified, seeing the vice figured as it were in an outer form, shrank back and dared not face his enemy, and so failed in his passage through this test which was to try the purity of the candidate.

So these Mysteries went on right into Christian days, and if you will read your early Christian books, read

the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, trace them on from those who were the pupils of the Apostles themselves and through succeeding writers, read S. Clement of Alexandria, read the works of Origen so far as we have them, you will find in the early days of Christianity there were the Mysteries, the real Mysteries of Jesus. There were two lines of instruction; there were first the teachings of those who had been instructed, as both Origen and St. Clement write, by word of mouth, in the secret teachings given by the Christ while He lived and worked amongst men. You remember He said to His Apostles: "Unto you it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to others in parables". And the modern Church is content with the parables, and does not seem to feel the lack of the inner teachings which explain the Mysteries of God. And those which were received by tradition, handed down from mouth to ear by generation after generation of worthy and saintly men, those [Page 13] formed the first teachings in the Mysteries, the teachings, as Origen said, given in secret by Christ to His own disciples.

Then there were higher Mysteries, where not human but superhuman lips taught the secrets of the higher worlds, and you find St. Ignatius of Antioch — I think it is, or perhaps Irenaeus — declaring that the Angels were the teachers in those early Christian Mysteries, superhuman beings who came to those who had been instructed in the knowledge handed down from mouth to ear, and who were worthy to receive that higher teaching, and to come into direct touch with those denizens of higher worlds. So was it also in Greece and in Egypt, where those whom Christians call Angels, but whom the older religions spoke of as the Shining Ones, were the teachers and revealed the Mysteries of the higher worlds.

Christianity, as much as any other ancient faith, had Mysteries at the back of the outer religion. Men were baptised into the Christian Church, they passed onwards to the Communion, thus utilising the outer forms which the Christ had left for the helping of believers. But you may remember how St. Paul declared: "We speak wisdom among those who are perfect", declaring that he did not give the higher teaching to those whom he said, although baptised and communicating Christians, were only babes in Christ. All this passed away; and yet not wholly, for ever the true Mysteries remained; but this difference there was, at least in the western world : there was no open road to the Mysteries, there were no intermediate Schools in which men and women might be instructed — only traditions that such things were or had been; and only here and there was a man, who, having been taught personally and individually, grew strong enough to find his own way to those ever-existing Mysteries of the true Brotherhood of the Masters of the Wisdom. But here and there we still find groups of study. You may trace them through old and Middle Age literature, and one word I may give you as a key, for you will [Page 14] often come across it and perhaps not understand quite what it means. When you find among some old books a book which is called a Rosary, you have the name by which the secret books were marked out right through the Middle Ages, in which the alchemist and the astrologer and the searcher after secret wisdom wrote down in glyph and symbol the truths that he knew but dare not openly teach. For we are coming to the days of persecution, when men dared not say the things they knew for fear the exoteric faith should crush them, and the carnal knowledge should destroy the spiritual truth. But still here and there a group is to be found, for never was the succession quite destroyed even upon the earth; but men did not know where to look, they searched far and wide and found not a teacher. For they who knew dreaded to communicate their knowledge, lest the pupil should only be a spy or a traitor, and should betray the Knowers to death. And you know the terrible tragedy of the Templars — they who had some knowledge of the hidden Mysteries — for under torture there were some who declared fragments of knowledge which were used to condemn. You remember how under torture it was declared more than once that when a Templar was initiated into the Mysteries he had to tread upon the Cross, and this was condemned as a sign of blasphemy, it was taken as a sign of unbelief. It was really the sign that the man relied upon the Cross to raise him up to knowledge, and if his feet for a moment were set upon it, it was

in order that the Cross might rise with him upon it, and so carry him upon it, and so carry him upwards to a purer air, where some of the lower Mysteries were revealed. And one way of symbolism, and one great body which has come down from those days of the disappearance of the Mysteries, though most of its brethren know not what they possess — they know symbols only but seldom know the reality which these symbols express to the wise — is the great Brotherhood of Freemasonry, scattered over the world, who have kept in symbol what they have lost in knowledge, in order that they, [Page 15] in the days when knowledge returns, may bear testimony that it has never entirely passed away from earth. And those who belong to that Brotherhood will understand what I mean when I say that the treading on the Cross was no outrage, but the entrance over the threshold of knowledge.

And we find as we look backwards that there was a day when Christian Rosenkreuz came from the East to Europe and founded the first open Rosicrucian Society. I call it "open" because it is known to history, though foolish people think that it is myth and not history, forgetting that often myth and legend are the history of the great truth that lies behind. For he was a disciple of the Wisdom sent out by the Brotherhood to bring back the light of knowledge to Europe, and it was from that early Rosicrucian Society that the twelve brethren went out who brought back to Europe the bases of science, who brought alchemy and through that made chemistry possible, who taught astrology and so led on to astronomy, laying the bases of the modern knowledge. For real knowledge begins in the subtler and comes down to the denser world, and it does not begin in the denser and climb upwards to the subtler. And from that day began the re-dawn of science in Europe, and the possibility of knowledge gradually and slowly spreading. You can trace onwards Society after Society, all connected, though bearing different names, and ever teaching the same teachings — the preparation of Europe for the Restoration of the Mysteries in the wider and more effective fashion.

Then you come to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, where you have that mysterious Being the Comte de Germain, and where you find him working with our H. P. B., then a member of a great Austrian family still known by the name of Zimsky. You see those two brethren, disciples of the great Lodge, working along hand-in-hand that Europe might grow in knowledge. Then you come to a barrier that was set; for they were trying to change things by knowledge, [Page 16] and the knowledge came into the hands of those not yet fitted to receive it, and the starvation of the people and the misery of the nations, the tyranny and the suffering and the corruption both in Church and State, those were too strong for the teachers who were endeavouring in the world to guide men to knowledge, and the great outburst of the French Revolution poured forth a stream of blood which prevented further teaching along the inner lines. But still to some, here and there, it came, until the day dawned when those same teachers, brethren of the past, began again their work. That which failed in the eighteenth century was begun, in the nineteenth, and the bases of the Theosophical Society were laid and worked for by them, one hidden — for He had passed over the threshold into Masterhood and no longer worked openly among men — and the other, that noble Russian woman, H. P. Blavatsky, to whom the Theosophical Society owed its foundation and still largely owes its life. Then began the preparation for the Restoration of the Mysteries. And then that Brother whom a Master spake of as "the Brother whom you know as H. P. B. but we otherwise" — he began again, by making a preparatory School within the Society, to lay the foundation of the Mysteries which later will be fully restored in our midst.

For then again, for the first time since from Europe they disappeared, the open way was shown whereon men might walk, and this Theosophical Society of ours, pointing to the Masters who founded it, pointing to the School made by Their messenger, shows the way along which the pupil may begin to walk, until he

comes to the gateway of the true Mysteries; the way again is proclaimed and the Teachers are ready to teach.

Once more did the cry go out over the outer world, which you may read in Hindu Scripture: "Awake, arise, seek the great Teachers and attend; for the road, it is said, is narrow and sharp as the edge of a razor". That cry has gone out again, and there are ears to [Page 17] hear, ears that are able to hear the call, lips ready to answer. So in our days and our time, in the many nations of this mortal world, pupils are being found, pupils are being trained, in order that gradually it may be possible to restore the Mysteries as they were in the past, the gateways to the true Mysteries of the Brotherhood.

There you have the inner side of this great movement to which you all belong; and if you look upon the outer world you will see that, in many ways and along many lines, forces are being sent out to prepare the minds of the people at large for a higher and a more spiritual view of life, for a deeper and therefore truer view of human nature. For do not think that the influence of the Masters is limited within the limit of our Theosophical Society; that is Their messenger to the world, the vessel that They have chosen, into which They have poured Their Life; but far over the world Their Life also extends; for just as you may gather together in a reservoir water which shall then be taken from the reservoir and sent far and wide among the people who need it, so it is with this Life; as the rain comes down from the clouds over the whole earth, and not only into the reservoir made to receive a store of waters, so does the Masters' Life pour over the world at large, although concentrated here in the reservoir of the Theosophical Society.

It is our glory that we know how we are working; it is our privilege to be self-conscious co-operators in the working out of the Plan that the Masters are labouring to bring about successfully upon our earth. But we never dare to limit Them nor Their power, Their love nor Their compassion, and They can bring people whence They will, although an open way today is shown whereon surely They will be found.

And so, friends, I who have been bidden speak this word to all nations of the earth, speaking to you who are members of this Society that is Their servant in the lower world, I would say to you, that great are the [Page 18] possibilities that are being unveiled before you, great the avenues of progress which lie open before you today. It is true that you may come into the Society without any belief in the Masters of the Wisdom. It is true that you need not accept any doctrine, reincarnation, karma, or anything else, before you are admissible to the Society. That is true; but also it is true that there are those who know, those who are sent to do this work, those have a right to speak of what they know, and to repeat in the lower world what they have heard in the worlds beyond the physical.

And so it is that the road is open. The outer gate is wide and all who will may enter in. But to the Mysteries it is not so: strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto Life Eternal and few there be that find it. Few at present, but to be more and more numerous as years go on; few today, but to increase to many in the days to come.

For there are great forces pouring down upon our world; the gates of the heavenly world are open, and life and power pour down upon the world of men. Well is it for you that your karma has brought you to birth in these happy days; well for you to be in them; but a thousandfold the better, if within you the intuition which is the voice of the Spirit speaks, so that you may answer to the call of the Masters and find

your way to Their feet.