

MICHEL DE SAINT MARTIN

REVELATIONS

Preface by Dr. Philippe ENCAUSSE

**Spiritual Conversations
about MAITRE PHILIPPE de LYON**



**EDITIONS DANGLES
38, rue de Moscou
PARIS 8^e**

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November 2006

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COMMENTARY

This is one of the most enigmatic books of twentieth century French esoteric history. While most of the book reflects a series of meetings between a neophyte and his spiritual master, during which the master elaborates upon the teachings he received from his own Master, what makes the book unique and extremely controversial is the fact that the Master in question is claimed to be a reincarnation of Christ, and his servant – the man who is teaching the neophyte – one of the Apostles.

This book has been classified as ‘Martinist’. In this we must be cautious. It reflects the philosophy of a Lyonnais Teacher and Healer who is little known in the English-speaking world: Mr. Philippe Nizier, who departed this world on August 2, 1905, who is buried in a graveyard in Lyon, only a few yards from J.-B. Willermoz, and before the gravestone of his disciple, Jean Chapas, called Mr. Olivier in this book. This extraordinary man accrued an equally extraordinary reputation in his lifetime. Vilified by the authorities and by the medical profession for his miraculous cures, he nevertheless enjoyed a large reputation, not only among the working people of Lyon and the surrounding region, but even the Russian Royal family, where he was the forerunner to Rasputin in tending to the hemophiliac son of the Tzar. Dr. Gérard Encausse – Papus – considered him to be his spiritual teacher, and speaks most fondly of him in several of his books. Indeed, he claimed that it was the influence of ‘Maître Philippe’ that led him to a more contemplative, spiritual approach to his studies, and away from the more ritualistic, theurgic path.

And herein lies the problem.

Most Martinists see Maître Philippe as a gentle healer whose simple philosophy – to love one’s neighbor as oneself, the famous injunction of Our Lord – was one of several important influences which shaped the life of Papus, the founder of Martinism. His influence on and friendships with Marc Haven, Paul Sédir, his biographer Alfred Haehl, Phaneg, Cedaïor and others attest to his close relationship to many esoteric thinkers and Martinists of his age. Indeed, a significant number of Martinists from a number of lines can be found paying homage at his gravestone each Palm Sunday, the day he asked his followers to remember him: a witness to the affection in which this gentle man is held over a hundred years after his death.

However, there is a small number who see the influence of ‘Le Maître’ as vastly more important than a passing influence. They claim that Maître Philippe was the true founder of the modern Martinist movement, and that Papus was merely his instrument, a man with organizational skills who was sent forth to realize the plan.

This idea, while not easily provable, would not present so much of a problem if this was the only claim. However, it comes as part of a package. These people claim, further, that Maître Philippe was a reincarnation of Christ, which puts a rather interesting gloss on the foundation of the Martinist Order, if he (or ‘He’) is claimed to have founded it! They also claimed a number of what can only be described as teachings at variance

with official church doctrine, including reincarnation, and a complete cosmology which was at variance with both the religious and scientific communities.

Historically, when Dr. Philippe Encausse reestablished the Ordre Martiniste he and Marcel Roche (whose *nom de plume* was Michel de Saint-Martin, taking the name from his home town of Saint-Martin near Arbresle, and not from Louise-Claude de Saint-Martin) were close friends, and worked closely together. Indeed, you will see that Philippe Encausse wrote the Preface to this book. However, over time, it became apparent that each had a very different vision for the direction of Martinism. The main issue which caused them to fall out was that, while Philippe Encausse saw his father as the founder of modern Martinism, Marcel Roche saw this role belonging to Maître Philippe. This made for a very difficult relationship, not least because, if the latter also believed Maître Philippe to be Christ and Jean Chapas an Apostle, their belief that their guidance came directly from divine sources and were not veiled in parables or symbols, tended to lead to a perceived arrogance, and a total conviction that their teachings were true and everyone else was misguided, in one instance leading to a follower actually writing: “In their blindness...they go backwards and without knowing, they tarnish a noble system” when referring to fellow Martinists.

The schism became total and one result was that Philippe Encausse withdrew permission for his Preface (included in this edition) from being used in future. Marcel Roche formed a new Martinist Order, the Ordre Martiniste Rectifié (OMR), ending his years in poverty, a man whose strong conviction in his beliefs was matched by the detestation of the majority of the Martinist population. In his latter years he was generously supported by Peter Mayden, the Grand Master of the Canadian OM&S.

I therefore present this first translation to you, born of an idealistic past but since the cause of so much pain and friction in the Martinist community. It is a book which some read as presenting some interesting ideas of a minor French philosopher and theosophist; while others see it as equivalent to a Fifth Gospel, and insist that every word of the book be taken literally – a sort of Martinist fundamentalism. Thus, the comment on “this demonic jazz, the true symbol of anarchy” (page 59) is to be taken to mean that the Devil himself inspired – or even wrote – jazz. However, if every word is ‘gospel truth’, some may struggle with the comment on page 96: “there is something in tobacco... it would take a long time to explain it to you, and it does no evil to those who know not to abuse it” as reflecting the word of God. The many references to reincarnation will make some readers uncomfortable, as well. On the other hand, you will find some beautiful and enlightening passages relating to the nature of sin and illness, and the payment of the debts of others leading to our not judging our fellow man is truly inspired teaching.

I leave you therefore to read this book, and take from it what you decide to take, be it inspiration, divine insight, or an interesting part of history which has long since passed.

Piers A. Vaughan
Bayonne, NJ
November 2006

PREFACE

*If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.
(Saint John, Ch. VIII, v. 17)*

It is an honor and a great joy for the son of Papus to have to be able to this second edition of the beautiful book by Michel of Saint-Martin. Indeed, “Revelations” is the testimony of a disciple of Maître Philippe and an admirer of Papus, a testimony which will allow a certain number of those called “Men of Desire” to better understand the Universal and very moving law of Love taught by Jesus Christ, Son of God and come in flesh...

For a few score years, Our Lord had a faithful disciple whose sole presence in our land of France was a manifestation of Divine Providence towards our dear Country: this was Mr. Philippe of Lyon, this extraordinary miracle-worker, this “Man of God”, this spirit of Light and of kindness who was the spiritual Master of Papus and to whose memory, thanks to Mr. Jordan, director of “The Diffusion of Knowledge”, a work was piously devoted a few months ago¹.

Papus had besides been constrained to render personal homage to his Master, to Him who illuminated the last years of his life here below, and who enabled him to open up completely. In his Elementary Treatise on Occult Wisdom, he devoted the following lines to Mr. Philippe²: “The spiritual Master knows all, but he teaches us to descend and acquire the certainty of a man who knows that he knows nothing, who only begins to understand knowledge; that he who only has a pallet and who lends his pallet to he who has none is richer than all the riches, the spiritual Master when he wants to teach, can speak, which is rare, or to let himself be seen, which is more common. Possessor of physical goods which would enable him to live as a man of leisure, the Master devotes all his life to the cure of the poor and the afflicted. And these very cures indicate to the blindest man from which plane descended the Spirit who commands disease and Death itself.

“In the streets of the city where he lives; one can sees him passing, a humble man among humble men; so the poor alone bless him and know him. This workman who greets him with respect owes him his leg which was going to be cut off, and was cured in one hour; this woman of the crowd who ran at his passing, came to find him since her child was giving the death rattle, and the Master said: “Woman, you are richer; from your ceaseless devotion and your courage before the trials form the rich of the earth; go, your child is cured!” And returning to her home, the mother noted the miracle which disconcerts and irritates the doctors. This family of craftsmen ran to him, for eighteen hours before their only daughter had died, he came and in front of ten witnesses, the dead smiled and again opened her eyes to the light. Ask all these people the name of this man, and they will tell you: he is the Father of the Poor.

“Question this man; ask him who he is, from whence he gets these strange and terrible powers, and he will answer you: I am less than a stone. There are so many beings

¹ Maître PHILIPPE of Lyon. – A volume of 240 pages with 14 photographs in 4 plates (4th edition), honored by the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques (Dec. 1954).

² New edition (24th thousand). Dangles, Paris, 1953.

on this earth which are something which I am happy to be nothing. I have a friend who is, himself, something. Be good, patient in trial, subject to the social and religious laws of your country, share and give what you have if you find brothers who are in need, and my friend will love you. As for me, poor envoy, I write in the book evidence of my best, and I pray to the Father as Our Saver the Christ did formerly, Who shone in glory on Earth and in Heaven and to Whose heart one comes by the grace of the Virgin of Light: Mariah whose name is blessed.

“I will not end these pages, which my gratitude softens, by recalling the insults and sarcastic remarks with which the scholars, the smug and the critics condemn the Master. He ignores them, pardons them and prays for them. That is enough.

“This man whose character I have just described, and with such awkwardness, having regard to his elevation, is not a myth, a vague being lost within some inaccessible country. He is a being of flesh and bone, living a social life whose burden he has assumed and more still. And recalling that, apart from the fast and His time in the desert, the model of the white race: Christ lived during his terrestrial life, in the mixed society of the majority of the men, for the Master lives like all his human brothers.

“Also, I will only speak about human works and will remain silent about transports into the other phases of existence, instantaneous communications outside of time and of space, and direction by Spirits. A truly free man alone has the right to write in the book of life; others can only read there. – So learn how to read before desiring to write.”

The “Revelations” of Michel de Saint-Martin are none other than some of the teachings of Maître PHILIPPE, collected and transmitted directly to the author by this other disciple beloved of the Master, the late Jean CHAPAS... For reasons which were explained perfectly well at the time of the 1st edition – there were some glosses – the proper names of the interlocutors were modified. But today, we can reveal that Mr. Olivier is none other than Jean Chapas himself, this man of noble heart, decency and action who was directly selected by the Master to succeed to him in Lyon and who, born in 1863, left our world in 1932.

“Revelations” is thus not a work like any other, like so many others; it is an living testimony, a song of love and joy, a hymn to Divine Light, a means – for those who have eyes to see and a heart to understand – of communing with the disciple and the MASTER...

What teachings can be drawn from the reading of these impassioned pages and what enthralling interest! What progress might be achieved by those which, with the approach of the grave events which are being prepared and which are announced by the Initiates, will understand the value of the message transmitted by “the humblest of all...”

Philippe ENCAUSSE
(Arbresle, 11-4-55)

³The PHILIPS Master, of Lyon - a volume of 240 pages with 14 photographs in 4 inset plates (4 edition), crowned by the Academy of Science Morals and Policies (Dec. 1954).

⁴New edition (24 thousand). Dangles, Paris, 1959.

CHAPTER 1 - The Meeting

While briskly climbing the rough path, on this cold and gray November day, I reflected that my dream of recent years was finally going to be realized, and I was disappointed – almost dissatisfied – that this day which I felt was going to be a memorable date, a turning point in my existence, was a day like any other, a simple gray and gloomy day – even sad – like many November days.

This reflection remains in my memory, because since then, I have been able to gauge the extent of my pride.

For this day, to me, should have been capital, so clearly shouldn’t this day be marked by an exceptional meteor or a widespread exceptional event?

Now, after many arid years of often disappointing study, after many hopes and many sometimes discouraging disillusionments, I was finally going to meet the man who for me, if you will, and if it were time, would open the door, the only door by which I could escape from this prison which confines us all. I say ‘this prison’ with good reason, because immense though it is, and however free we seem to be in its confines, this limitation nevertheless exists. We are prisoners of Matter.

I had very often run up against these insuperable walls, never finding an exit, nor points where scaling them were possible.

And yet I had, if I hadn’t tried them out, at least had studied the many claimed solutions which are as numerous as the sects which preach them, and which the Grand Master of each dogmatically decrees to be sole, unique and true.

One will no doubt find it strange that, disappointed as I claim to have been, I was climbing this road which would perhaps lead me, too, towards new disappointment with a light step? It was because this time I believed I had found the right path. For almost seven years, in the course of long conversations I had had with Duval, I had told him bitterly about my efforts and their pitiful results; and little by little began to notice his peace, his calm, his confidence and especially a certainty which I felt he possessed. The rare words which he spoke at the beginning of these talks, then his clearer explanations later on, led me to understand that, so to speak, he had found part of this Truth which I had been seeking for many long years.

It was this Truth which I pursued, and it was through this that the door, at least so I hoped, was soon going to open, on the signal of this mysterious sage, this humble and modest savant with extraordinary powers, of whom Duval had recently spoken, and whose name and address he had confided to me scarcely a week earlier.

So, in a few minutes, I was going to find myself in the presence of this Mr. Olivier; I would speak to him; and he would answer me, him, this man who had accomplished these things that Duval had told me about. He would finally show me the truth, the dazzling

truth!

But which truth seek, one might ask? Which truth? Quite simply THE TRUTH. The one, the unique, that which is One, that which explains all, ALL. Where we come from, where we are going, what we are, how everything was created, what laws govern the Universe, what is Destiny, what is real in the occult sciences, magic, astrology; if the spirits are the idea of the mad or if they exist in truth; what is correct in Science, which is in disagreement with the Sacred texts on many points; if there is a correspondence between religions; whether or not free will exists, and above all, a point which for me was already resolved at that time, but which, alas, remained an agonizing question for millions of beings: does God exist?

The incline was becoming less steep, the road then began to follow Duval’s instructions, I would turn once more to the right, and then I would see the threshold of the house where Mr Olivier lived.

Five minutes later, I was at the turn of the road and, right there, a hundred meters away, stood a dwelling with gray walls which was at the same time a farm and a country house, so far as one could judge from the appearance of the floors which were alone visible over the rather high boundary wall which surrounded it.

At the side of the gate, I saw a small wooden door, the copper loop of a doorbell had pulled away, shining like a gold nugget.

I stopped on the threshold and, I must acknowledge, the emotion I felt was strong enough to oblige me to wait a few seconds before ringing the bell. At last, I pulled on the shining ring, and the sound of a bell rang out somewhere inside, causing prolonged barking, taken up at a higher pitch and less volume by two other dogs, most probably young. Undoubtedly a bitch and her pups, I said to myself. A solemn voice silenced the dogs, or at least the oldest who, after growling once or twice, kept silence, but the young ones continued their duet. A noise of footsteps informed me that somebody was coming, somebody wearing clogs or shoes with wood soles. The door opened.

“Does Mr. Olivier live here?” I asked.

“He does indeed, Sir. Please, do come in.”

Crossing the threshold, I passed before the man, a strong chap about sixty years old. A gardener, no doubt, I thought seeing a spade with which, he was probably turning over a mound in front of the house, where I saw some rose bushes. This mound was in the middle of a very large courtyard which extended from the boundary wall to the Eastern façade of the house and was enclosed in the North, by a garage or a shed; and in the South, a vast hangar which rested on the wall of the property. Between the corner of this hangar and the house opened a small iron gate, with open-type screen, separating this court from a garden which appeared very large to me.

Moreover rose bushes and many plants covered the central mound, but, at that time of the year, there were no longer any flowers.

All this, my glance had recorded while I entered this court, and my guide closed the door he had just opened, behind me.

Turning me towards the man, I asked:

“Please may I see Mr. Olivier?”

“That is me, Sir.”

Heavens! Was this man whom I had just taken to be a gardener, this robust countryman, larger than average, with broad shoulders – was it him? Was it Mr. Olivier?

I looked at the shoes, the velvet pants patched at the knees, the old jacket of blue stuff, the black felt hat which, for sure, had seen more than one downpour. I was not impressed, and was taken aback. And Duval which, two days before had told me of the day when, with Mr. Olivier, he had dined at the home of the Count on M..., this charming but very sophisticated man, where I myself had dined not long ago! At this moment I wondered how the man before me now would have been able to dress to dine in Paris society, at the home of the Count of M...

An absurd question, stupid, but it was nevertheless the one I asked myself during the short silence which followed Mr. Oliver’s reply.

Without appearing to notice the bewilderment which my face must have openly expressed, he added:

“Do you want to come up to the house, Sir?”

I introduced myself immediately, excusing myself for having not done this sooner, and I told him that I was an old friend of Duval, and that it was thanks to the latter that I had the honor to meet him.

He smiled, saying:

“Duval? Yes, he is a friend, a good friend. Come, Sir.”

He led me towards a wooden fence which separated this small garden from a large garden, behind which played about a superb Brie bitch and two pups approximately three or four months old.

“Steady, Zerga”, he said to the dog, “lie down!”

The bitch sniffed me, fixed me with her eyes for a moment, then wagged her tail a little and laid down without worrying about the din her offspring were making.

“They are still very young”, Mr. Olivier said to me, smiling. “Please excuse them!”

We were now on a terrace in front of the Southern façade of the house; the garden itself, with its orchard, extended before us. About fifty meters away I saw a hen house half hidden behind a building which seemed to contain a barn and a stable or a cattle shed. Adjoining the house I saw many outbuildings and, through an open door, I saw a carpenter’s workbench. This terrace, very large, would be quite pleasant in summer, beneath the shade of six enormous chestnuts which I admired while passing. Numerous doors opened onto this terrace.

Mr. Olivier moved towards one of them, which led to a large hall, where a quick look permitted me to see some old pieces of furniture, in dark oak. He had me enter a room to the right, which contained the library and the office.

Pushing an armchair before the fireplace where a log was just burning, he had me sit there, after asking me to remove my overcoat, which he hung with my hat on the coat rack in the hall.

He returned to sit down in a chair on the other side of the fireplace, after placing a pedestal table between us, on which were a pot of tobacco, cigarettes, matches and ashtrays, and attended to the fire.

Stuffing his pipe, he said to me:

“Do you smoke, Sir? Here are tobacco and cigarettes. Give me news of Duval.”

For ten minutes, we spoke about our friend, then my host rose and asked me:

“Would you like a coffee, Sir?”

I accepted readily and Mr. Olivier left, excusing himself for leaving me alone.

When he returned two or three minutes later, he said while sitting down:

“In a few moments, my wife will bring coffee to us. While we are waiting, do you want to tell me what is worrying you?”

“Well!”, I said. “This is why I came to disturb you. A few days ago, in answer to a question I asked Duval, he replied: “Some time ago I spoke to you about a person who explained many things to me. You now know this is Mr. Olivier. Now it’s your turn to go and find him; for my part, I understood what he meant to tell me, but I would prefer you to put all these questions to him.”

Then I explained to Mr. Olivier how much my faith had been put to the test by the disconcerting answers which has been given to me by Catholic priests Protestant pastors; that I had not been any happier with Masters of Philosophy; and that finally, occultist, spiritualist and like theories, far from satisfying me, had only resulted in my straying even more completely.

“So,” Mr. Olivier said to me, “you do not know where you are any more; but however, you believe in a God?”

“Yes, certainly!” I answered.

“You believe in the divinity of Christ?”

“Er... Yes”, I said.

Mr. Olivier saw my hesitation and said:

“You have doubt on this point?”

“Not, not exactly a doubt, Sir, but so often others have raised objections, to which I have never found anything with which I might give a response...”

“So now your certainty is not exactly absolute? Well, we will try to help you to see this clearly”, he said. Then he added: “Here is my wife bringing the coffee.”

Mrs. Olivier appeared to be a little younger than her husband despite her white hair – he was barely graying and his moustache was very brown, without a trace of silver. – She was very simply attired, yet nothing about her seemed commonplace. Her features, which were very gentle, were lit by beautiful blue eyes. After placing the tray bearing the cups, she extended her hand and bid me welcome.

I then saw a young woman behind her, rather large, but admirably proportioned.

“My daughter”, Mr. Olivier told me.

Very pretty like her mother, she resembled her father whose dark eyes she had, very large and infinitely soft.

“You will excuse us, Sir”, said Mrs. Olivier. “We will let to you take your coffee and smoke in peace.”

Mr. Olivier watched them leave, eyes filled with tenderness; then he turned to me.

“We were talking about Christ”, he said to me. “Have you read the Gospels?”

“Yes, Sir, I read many passages from them in a book of the Mass which came to me from my Mother last year, and Duval gave me a New Testament. I read it in its entirety, and I recognize that I found very beautiful things there, although I acknowledge I didn’t understood anything or almost anything of the Apocalypse of Saint John. In the Gospels themselves, many of passages remained obscure to me.”

“Well, when one of these passages returns to your memory, we will speak about it again, if you want to, and I will try to explain you what I understood... Do not forget that a parable often has several meanings, one might even say always, because in the Gospels

there is food for everyone, each finds it there according to his comprehension.”

“Yet there is only one truth”, I said.

“Yes, but it has several aspects: it all depends on the point of view of him who contemplates it. Come”, - and he led me towards the window, “do you see this mountain opposite us? It must be a thousand meters high. Now, look across at about the same altitude as we are, and do you see that small village and its church? This village and this church are opposite us; to see them we have only to look right in front of us. However, imagine that one of us is on that mountain, wouldn’t he have to look down to see the village in question? And for an observer down there in the valley, by the river you can see from here, can we not confirm that to see this same village, it would be necessary to look upwards? Yet it is still the same village, the same church that all three of us would be contemplating, and each one of us would affirm that, to see them, it is necessary to look in a different direction from what the other two claim. Further, if a man were behind the mountain, he would see nothing at all, neither village nor church. The truth is that the village and the church certainly exist, and are visible to some and not to others; there, then, is the absolute truth, and its different aspects are those visible from the points at which we stand, or could stand, ourselves or others. These different aspects are relative truths, because they depend on the point of view. So, Truth is unique, though it can have multiple aspects, and it is necessary ever to be careful not to take one of the aspects to be Truth itself; to be the total, entire Truth.”

“I understand”, I said, returning to my seat, “and I thank you. May I ask you a question?”

“As many as you like; if they aren’t too difficult, perhaps I’ll be able to answer you.”

“Well, then, here it is: What proves to us that the *Gospels* are true, that is to say, that they contain the words of Christ and that they have not been distorted, either deliberately or involuntarily, by translators and transcribers?”

“It would take a long time, Sir, to explain to you in detail all the research and cross-checking which has been made on the texts of the four Evangelists. The material proofs are numerous. It is true that we cannot use them to silence the detractors, they are the result of all the studies which have been undertaken and whose innumerable authors have reported. Besides, for eighteen centuries, it was a question which had never been asked. It took this century of materialism to find people with sufficiently limited intelligence to be able to raise such an objection. You will notice, Sir, that no detractor has been able to give a sensible argument, and I do not say a *proof*, but an argument! One forgets that for four centuries, the Protestants have not have failed to discover errors, if errors they were, in the canonical Gospels. And do you believe that the materialists would not have provided tangible evidence, if there were any?

“Of course I know that they have even questioned the existence of Christ, and in consequence denied what took place almost 2,000 years ago, events recounted, not only in the Gospels, but attested to by numerous other writings. But do they not deny God? Well, to deny God is to show a narrow-mindedness such as one would hesitate to prove, to the wretched person so denying, the very nonsense of their negation. Show them a table and say to them: ‘You see this table? Well, no cabinetmaker made it!’ ‘It was a carpenter,

then’, they say. ‘No, nobody, it made itself!’ Do you think that they will believe you? And yet that does not prevent them from claiming that creation does not have a Creator!”

Mr. Olivier paused to light his pipe, which he had carefully stuffed, then continued:

“You see, Sir, in the time in which we live, few people take the trouble to think. People do not think any more, the majority at least. Look at them: they are worried, very worried. There is something in them that is not satisfied by the existence lived by the vast majority of our contemporaries. It started in the cities, and now it has extended to the country.”

“They used to believe in God. Oh, not much, but all the same, at the depth of their souls, there was something, a vague belief. How many are there now who lift up their hearts to the Creator and try to understand His Laws? Some seek, but very few, and unfortunately rarer still are those who have not lost themselves in the maze of the occult sciences, which are reputed to hold the keys to all hidden things. There are those who follow a religion, or at least its rites; but do they seek to understand, to become better at, putting into practice what Christ taught? And how to pray sincerely?

“Others launch out into spiritualism and become victims of their illusions, when they are not prey to jokers; and it generally doesn’t lead to anything good.

“Finally, others seek in the East what they did not find in Europe; they study the Asiatic religions, become adepts of more or less mysterious sects, believe they going straight to Truth, and that nobody else is.

“I will not speak of those who plunge themselves into the harmful practices of Magic and the Satanism.

“All in all, one meets very few true Christians. And yet, if all those who search, instead of wanting marvels, were satisfied to seek the Truth, they would find it right in front of them in the *Gospels*. In the same manner, those who are worried would find there both cause and explanation for their concern, with the means of regaining calm, balance, peace.”

Mr. Olivier stopped talking, and remained quiet a few moments, following the last flames of the log put in the fireplace on our arrival, and which almost consumed, with his eyes.

He took another and placed it on the burning embers. Then, as he remained silent after sitting down, I asked him

“So according to you, the spiritualists are in error?”

“I do not believe I said they were in error. I said that it generally doesn’t lead to anything good. But, as in the example I gave you a moment ago about the small village and its church, over there on the mountain slope they see an aspect, they see from a point of view, but this point of view is not unique; there is truth in their beliefs, but the theories they construct are not exact in all aspects. They believe in the survival of the soul. Fair enough. All religions believe this, and not to believe it is to give a proof of very serious gap in the field of their intelligence. They also believe in reincarnation, and they are right. This subject, Sir, is most important. But I believe there will be other occasions to return to this, since you said to me earlier, when you spoke to me about Duval, that you will remain in our area for some time, and that you had come to visit here.”

“Indeed”, I said, “I will remain very close to here, in Saint-Martin: I have a property there with a farm and a small house, which belongs to the family, and where I go from time to time; I intend to spend the winter there.”

“Very good”, Mr. Olivier said to me. “You will do me the kindness of coming to see me from time to time: but stay seated”, he said to me, seeing that I rose to take my leave, “unless you have other business to attend to?”

“No, but I wouldn’t like to abuse your time, because I saw that I had interrupted your work with my arrival, and I ask you to excuse me for that.”

“Oh,” he said, “this work is nothing urgent; if you don’t have anything which forces you to leave, stay a little longer, and, since these questions interest you, you will participate in the conversation which we will have in a few minutes with a former professor who is coming this afternoon. I don’t think he’ll be late.”

Hardly had he said this when the bell sounded. Mr. Olivier rose, then, seeing his daughter moving towards the entrance through the window, he returned to me.

“Professor Dubourg whom you are going to see – since it must be him – is a very good man, very erudite; he has taught philosophy all his life. He believes in God, but cannot appreciate the Catholic clergy, although he is a non-practicing Catholic. Duval knows him well”, he added.

A little after the Professor was introduced by Mr. Olivier’s daughter. Mr. Olivier made the introductions saying that I was a friend of Duval, and that I more or less had the same ways of seeing things and the same beliefs.

The Professor took a seat next to Mr. Olivier and for a few minutes, we talked about this and that; then the Professor asked for news of Duval.

“Mr. Olivier”, Mr. Dubourg suddenly said: “I would like to ask you something, if our colleague will permit?”

By all means”, I said.

“By what right”, the Professor began, under the attentive gaze of Mr. Olivier, “by what right does the Catholic church allow the truncation of the Gospels?”

Mr. Olivier turned to him questioningly; and he continued:

“Utterly. Take a missal and you will be able to see, as I saw, that the Gospels are truncated to the point of deforming their meaning!”

I then saw Mr. Olivier frown; without saying anything he rose, moved towards the shelves filled with books, which almost completely covered three sides of this room, and returned, holding in his hand a what I immediately recognized as a book of the Mass. He handed it to the Professor, saying simply:

“An example, Professor.”

Professor Dubourg opened the missal at random, riffled through it for a few moments in silence, then, triumphantly:

“Wait”, he said, “read, see for yourself!”

“No”, said Mr. Olivier, “read so that our guest can also hear and”, he added, smiling, “so he can see with me if your charges are founded.”

“Readily”, the Professor answered, and this is what he read”

(A few days later, during another visit, I asked Mr. Olivier to allow me to copy the passage of this Roman missal, so that I could verify if the one I possessed had the exact same text. Both were identical. Here is the text which is taken from the Gospel of Saint Luke, Ch. XVI, verses 1 to 9 inclusive).

“And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.⁵”

“And that is it?” asked Mr. Olivier when the Professor had ended.

“Yes, it is all that the Roman missal that I have at home, and that that I have just read, contains. So, what do you think?” he added.

“And you, Sir, what do you think?” said Mr. Olivier, looking hard at me with a gaze that was both soft and deep, which seemed to see well beyond the eyes into which it sank.

I swear that I did not expect this question and that I would have much preferred to hear the opinion of Mr. Olivier, more especially as I did not remember noticing this passage in the Gospels, and I did not understand very well what Christ had counseled, and which seemed to me *a priori* not to accord with His usual teachings.

⁵ The King James’ Bible is used throughout – PV.

Seeing my embarrassment, Mr. Olivier suggested:

“Would you like the Professor to read this parable again, so that you understand it better?”

At my consent, the Professor read the passage again. This time, I had followed very attentively, also I scarcely hesitated before the interrogative glance of Mr. Olivier, in answering the first question which he had posed after the first reading.

“I believe that the Professor is right”, I said. “There must be something changed about the words pronounced by Christ, when, after saying this parable, He counsels His disciples to make friends with the unjust rich, thus following the example of this unfaithful Treasurer who was nothing more than a thief!”

While I spoke, Mr. Olivier’s face had become extremely serious, and his gaze became almost severe when, turning to Mr. Dubourg, he said in his low voice:

“You are right, Professor. There is something very dangerous there. It is not”, he added, turning towards me, “whether the words pronounced by Our Lord have been changed or altered; there are quite a few small divergences in the remainder of the text, but nothing of importance, nothing which is likely to change the direction of the parable. But what is serious, very serious and very dangerous, is that this parable stops there, on what seems to be Christ’s counsel to His disciples to follow the example of the unfaithful Treasurer. However, what should be known and read attentively are the verses which follow, which clarify everything. Because Our Lord added: “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

“Ah!”. I cried, “that way I understand better! But what did Christ understand by ‘unjust riches’?” I asked.

“All the goods of this world, all material riches are unjust riches, not because they were all were gained ‘wrongfully’ by their owners, but because those which have them are only the usufructers, for must they not to leave them behind when they quit this world? But true riches are the good deeds accomplished during the course of a life, and remain the property of he who did them. We will return to this later”, Mr. Olivier told me, “during one of your future visits.”

“You see”, the professor then said, “how the spirit of the sacred texts is neglected, to the greatest profit of the clergy which exploits this like a gold mine, saying to the people: ‘Take the unjust riches and make friends with them; friends which will receive you in the eternal tabernacles; these friends are us, because it is us who will lead them to these eternal tabernacles.’”

“Come, Professor”, Mr. Olivier intervened, “don’t let yourself get on your hobby-horse, and depart at war with the clergy. That there is in the shortened text...”

“Truncated!” said Professor.

“Truncated”, Mr. Olivier began again, “that there is a danger likely to cause mistakes in interpretation, dangerous errors, very dangerous. I admit it and I deplore it; but saying that it is intentional is to go a little too far. You forget only often that among the priests there are the elite, remarkable men, and that, if among them there are black sheep, that is because all priests are men and, like all men, they are exposed to temptations, to all temptations. I would even go so far as to say more than others. They are exposed to...”

“My dear friend”, interrupted the Professor, “I admit quite readily there are good priests, good bishops, good archbishops, all that you wish, but why do the clergy keep the people in ignorance of the truth, if it is not in their own interest? Don’t you believe that the clergy is settled on reincarnation? Then why don’t they speak about it?”

“Well, I will try to answer your question, or rather to give you my way of seeing, because only the Church could answer the latest question you have just put on its own behalf; but first, I would like to emphasize to our guest, so as to erase completely the painful impression which the last words which you read from this missal made on him. Turning towards me he said: “Note that Our Lord Jesus Christ said; ‘If you have not been faithful with unjust riches, who will entrust you with genuine ones? And if you were not faithful towards what belonged to others, who will give you what belongs to you?”

“If Christ advises us to make us friends with unjust riches, that is, with what belongs to the goods of the earth – and besides the Greek text employs the word “mamona”, that which belongs to Mammon – it is because we would not consider these goods as riches to be hoarded, but, on the contrary, as the means to practice Charity, to do good around us, to express our love of our neighbor.”

“By practicing Charity with the goods of this world, we will acquire true riches that “moths and rust will not destroy” and that “the robbers will not perceive nor steal” (St. Matthew, Ch. VI – 20).

“Thank you”, I said to my host, “I understand perfectly.”

“And now”, he said, lighting his pipe which had been out for a few minutes, “we will take the Professor’s questions again, which were: Do you believe that the clergy isn’t settled on the subject of reincarnation? Why don’t they speak about it?”

“I believe”, continued Mr. Olivier, “that Rome is indeed settled on this matter, but that it is through prudence that it keeps silent. This prudence is, perhaps, a little... imprudent, because the Church will not be able to delay for long in being obliged to promulgate the dogma of the reincarnation if it wishes to retain the confidence of its faithful; perhaps it is already too late. Reincarnation, indeed, explains many things which, till now, were hidden from people who hadn’t studied what was known only of a very small number of initiates.

“However, Professor, you make an objection about Catholic clergy – because it is them that you set your sights on, isn’t it? – not speaking to its faithful about reincarnation;

but Protestant pastors do not teach this to them either, and it is no longer Rome who retains them! Rabbis don’t talk about it, and among Moslems it is the same!

“But there is many religions which do teach it!” exclaimed the Professor.

“Yes, there are many; some are very erudite religions, and I understand that they contain a great quantity of knowledge whose totality forms the Truth. They have rather precise and exact notions of Divinity, and of the relationships of Divinity with Creation. Others are much more primitive religions, and by that I want to say, not that they are older, but that they are more rudimentary. One encounters them notably in Africa, and in certain tribes of Oceania. Is that not the case, Sir?” he said, turning to me.

“Indeed it s”, I answered, a little surprised he knew that, for many years I had traveled almost all the seas and had visited all the continents. How did he know that? I did not remember having stating it! Duval, perhaps?

“I do not speak, of course, of the tribes whose beliefs are limited to the superstitions that inculcate their griots and their sorcerers, whose capabilities are none other than capabilities in malefic magic, be it black, yellow or of whatever color.”

“So, you hold that our religions, our European religions, as that of the Jews and that of the Moslems, are behind those of the Asiatics, and even of the blacks or certain Papuans?” said the Professor.

“No, I do not hold them to be behind. As you say, this knowledge of the law of reincarnation is not explicitly laid out, but clearly enough in the texts whose sense remains hidden. In any case, as for Christianity, it could never be behind any religion, because it is founded on the Word of God, by God himself; and let us not forget that it is the only religion which has as a fundamental basis the practice of Charity, the Love of one’s neighbor.”

While we were speaking, night had come. Mr. Olivier rose and turned the switch of a lamp close to his office.

I rose in my turn, and the Professor followed my example; I thanked Mr. Olivier for his welcome, and asked permission to return to see him, adding that as soon as my house was be a little more in order, it would give me pleasure to receive him there.

“So be it”, he said, “I willingly agree to come and see you in Saint-Martin. In fact I’ll have some shopping to do halfway between in five or six days, so I will benefit from the occasion; but come back before then, if nothing prevents you, and you can tell me exactly where your house is located.”

Very happy with this proposal to return to see him so soon, I asked him whether the following Monday would be suitable. It was now Thursday. When he agreed I thanked him and said goodbye.

“Wait,” he said to me, “I will accompany you both, for I see that the Professor is also

leaving.”

“Yes”, said the Professor, “I cannot stay longer today, but I certainly hope to have the opportunity to see our new acquaintance one of these days, and I count on you, my dear friend, to arrange it”, he said, turning to Mr. Olivier.

“Understood”, said Mr. Olivier.

We had put on our overcoats, and Mr. Olivier took us back to the door and shook our hands, wishing us each a safe journey, adding to my companion’s comment:

“Remember, Professor, if you meet our priest, don’t pick a quarrel with him.”

“Ah, my friend, I would be at peace with priests and clergy if all of them were like our honest priest Poïmène! He is a saint, that one; but not all of them are like him!”

“Come on, it is too cold to start our conversation off again. Safe journey, my friends, and see you soon!”

We moved away, the Professor and me, and, when I was turned for a last look at the house, before the bend in the road made it disappear from my view, I saw Mr. Olivier standing on the threshold, watching us leaving. Seeing that I had turned, for the moon, not quite full, had been up for about an hour, illuminated the road quite well Mr. Olivier made a gesture with his hand as if to say goodbye. To me it seemed as though this gesture was a blessing...

CHAPTER 2 - The Second visit

The following Monday, I lunched (since one thus wrongly describes the midday meal), I ‘lunched’ early, then, and it was with a merry step that I covered the five kilometers which separated me from the residence of Mr. Olivier, in spite of a cold and beating rain and muddy roads.

It was Mrs. Olivier came to open the door. After greeting her, and inquiring after her health while she led me towards the library, but this time having me pass by a door and a long corridor which ended at the bottom of the large hall leading out onto the terrace, by which means I had come the first time, I said to her that I came today through quite unpleasant weather.

“Well, Sir”, she answered, “country folk don’t think as you do! We need the rain for the soil. And then, as she knocked, then opened the library door, she added: “one gets the weather one merits.”

In spite of myself, I looked at her, a little disconcerted. She noticed my surprise and said:

“Certainly, Sir. We complain that the seasons are no longer like they were, and that is because we do less than we should than in former times. But papa will explain you that one day. Ask him. Please be seated. He will be there in a minute, I think, because he must have heard the bell. I’ll fetch you some coffee.”

She left, closing the door. I had not sat down, running my eyes around the room. My eyes halted on a photographic enlargement attached to the wall, in the middle of the panel opposite the fireplace, above an old commode flanked by two immense bookcases with glass doors. This portrait attracted me, I do not know why; it depicted a man perhaps about fifty years old. His features had a very great gentleness and his gaze, his gaze in particular had an expression of kindness and also, however, of strength and authority which I will not try to describe. I could not take my eyes off them, so much so that when I heard a knock at the door, I still didn’t even turn my head, my eyes riveted to this gaze, and nothing less than the voice of Mr. Olivier was required for me to regain my self-control.

“Hello, Sir”, he said, “You’re not too wet?”

“Hello, Sir”, I answered, having the hand he offered. “No. You see when one is well covered neither the rain nor cold are too bad.”

“Yes, when one is well covered...”

I felt confused by this retort, given in a serious tone, for I realized that while I myself was well covered, how many unfortunates had to go out in the cold and rain without anything to protect themselves with but thin, often insufficient clothing; and I do not know why I

thought of St. Martin, whose name was born by village in which I lived, holy Martin the charitable one, this patron of France, who divided his coat in two to cover a pauper! And I had the impression that I blushed.

My host revived the fire in the hearth, and invited me to sit. In spite of myself, while he put wood in the fireplace and approached the armchair, I had returned to look at the portrait. Mr. Olivier stared at me for a moment, smiling. I did not dare ask a question which would perhaps be indiscreet, and I sat without saying a word. However, it seemed to me I found something of the portrait in the gaze and the eyes of Mr. Olivier. Yes, that as it! It was his father. But I held back from asking him; in any case, he didn’t give me the opportunity.

“I received word of Duval this morning”, he said to me, “and I pass his best wishes onto you.”

“Thank you, Sir.”

“Duval spoke to me about you a little. He said that you had traveled the world somewhat, which I had already realized,” he added, laughing.

I remembered that, during my first visit, when he spoke about the religions of the savage tribes of Africa and Oceania, Mr. Olivier had given me the impression that he knew I had been there, among other places.”

“Would it be indiscreet to ask you how you had noticed that?”

“Oh no, he said, “and believe me it was not very difficult, nor mysterious. On this pedestal table there was a magazine open to a page showing a religious ceremony of the Dayaks and, on this chimney, is a photograph taken by a friend in Dahomey, referring to something similar. Now, as soon as I spoke about the tribes of Africa, I saw your eyes move towards the photograph of Dahomey; and when I cited Oceania, they went to the other. For a layman, there is little difference between these two pictures, as much from the point of view of the individuals as of the plants shown in them.

“Your glance, which showed surprise when I consulted you on this point, showed me that I was not mistaken; moreover, the color of your skin indicated that that you had been in latitudes hotter than ours.”

I was satisfied with the explanation, for I myself, using such small and seemingly unimportant signs, had often seen and discovered many things which would have surprised many people.

But I noted that Mr. Olivier was a remarkable observer.

Then, thinking back to what had motivated his comment at my previous visit, I thought of reincarnation, which is a problem for so many people, and which despite everything for me remained, if not obscure, at least still a little vague. Therefore I asked:

“So, according to you, one reincarnates, one returns to the earth to die again; but why

doesn’t one have any memory of former existences from which one could benefit?”

“You believe that it would be so for everyone?” Mr. Olivier said to me with a smile. “Well, I believe that very few would benefit from it! But your question will perhaps need quite a long answer. Indeed, it is certainly necessary, if one wants to understand, to start at the beginning, and speak of things which can sometimes seem to have nothing in common with reincarnation. It is because your question is a little like asking an engineer the purpose of a screw, showing him some screw from an automatic cigarette manufacturing machine which produces thousands per hour. He will have to give you a general idea of the machine’s operation so that you can understand the usefulness of the screw in question!

“So, that is what we will try to do. But it will only be a summary, to some extent, because it is the details which are important, which we won’t go into.

“To make a good start”, he began, “it would be necessary to go back to the creation of man, even to the creation of the world, of the entire Universe, but that would be long, quite long, and so many things would attract us that we would be likely to move off subject, and find it hard to get back on track.

“We will thus summarize it in a few words until...

There was a knock at the door. It was Mrs. Olivier who had brought the coffee for us. When the coffee had been served, Mr. Olivier began again:

“We will summarize up to the present day, which will be as brief as possible.

“The Earth in which we live is neither the center of creation, nor the first planet created, any more than it belongs to the first planetary system having a Sun as its center. Some systems are older, others more recent.

“Consult the books of the great scholar who was Camille Flammarion, this man who was remarkable in his knowledge as in his kindness, and there you will have very interesting and precise details. And since I speak to you about Flammarion, I will add that in addition to being a Christian and a Scientist, he was a genuine seer, because he described things that only true seers and true sages can know.

“But then, what about Genesis, which begins the Bible?”

“Yes, I see what you are about to say. Well, Genesis is true, but one needs to understand it. We will speak about it one day, if you wish; but let us return to our subject.

“When the Earth was ready to receive human beings, it is: that is to say after many millennia, during the course of which Life manifested little by little, in the vegetable world, then in the animal world beginning with the inhabitants of water, continuing with the reptiles and other terrestrial animals, man was brought to the Earth. He did not descend, as some suppose, from the great anthropomorphic monkeys. God placed man on the planet, because God can do anything. For thousands of years the humanities which lived on our globe succeeded one another in a state close to the animals, to evolve little by little and reach a sufficiently great development of intelligence to put capable man in the role of master, at least in part, of what surrounded him: minerals (by using them), plants, by harvesting them for reasons other than nourishment, for defense, for example; finally, animals, inasmuch as his strength, his adroitness, his knowledge, enabled him to control them, to domesticate them, if one might already apply this term to the fact of placing them

in herds in order to have them close at hand, in time of need.”

I had made a gesture of surprise when Mr. Olivier had said that, for thousands of years, humans which succeeding one another on the planet had lived in a state close to the animals. I also asked him:

“Did God not make man in His own image? How, then, can one explain this forfeiture which made of him almost like the animals?”

To this question, Mr. Olivier gave a broad paternal smile and said to me:

“It is true that God made man like Him; but one shouldn’t believe that, such as we are, and much more still; and such as were our predecessors, thousands of years ago, we are physically an image of God. You are not going to make the mistake of those who think that God has a body like His creatures? Later on, I will speak to you about the Holy Trinity; and it is with the Trinity that the man is analogous, since he is triple. He is Spirit, Soul and Body. But I will explain that to you later. For the moment, it is enough that you understand that after the Fall, some humanities, or many of the individuals composing them, sank further than others into Evil and Matter, thereby moving further away from the Divine World. They also gave themselves over to abuses under the Demon’s incitements, and joined with matter, so that their spirituality was but a pale and weak glow, while materiality - as well as bestiality - dominated. Others did not fall so low, and these were incarnated on planets in a state and appropriateness corresponding to their degree of ‘materialization’ (I use this word as an antonym of ‘spiritualization’). There are some beings whose extent of fall, or if you will, of submission to the Demon, is somewhat less than ours, and for these beings, living in the midst men in our epoch would be an appalling torment if, in doing this, they preserved the ideas of the humanity to which they belonged.

“In short, we will say that all individuals have not yielded to Evil to the same degree, but all committed the same fault at the beginning, by listening to the tempting words of the Snake, that is to say, the Demon. However all, whatever the level of abjectness reached were, in the beginning, created in God’s image, that is, triple and free.

“But the various races of men who succeeded one another on our globe did not come from the same ancestors. I am saying that, at various times and in various places, God put ‘founders’ on the Earth, capable of procreating a race. Believing ourselves to be descendants of these ancient earthlings would be a grave error. Indeed, humans evolve much more quickly than a planet does, and as soon as a race reaches a sufficient level of development, it is going to be incarnated on another planet, in another system than ours, whose characteristics present a close analogy with our Earth, but which, being older, allows another type of evolution.

“So, by growing old, the Earth itself also became capable of being used as a habitat for humans of a less rudimentary type as is shown by certain remains from past ages, by skeletons whose skulls could be taken and indeed were taken some, to be the skulls of ancestral anthropoids, Darwin’s ‘missing link’ – who did not make this error himself, in spite of his theories.

“Intelligent races, able to build and to live in communities, were put on the Earth. These races evolved there just as those who are there evolve now, and when they had reached a specific point their evolution, those individuals went to be incarnated elsewhere

– just as in our turn we will change our habitat – and their civilizations, their cities, their very countries disappeared under cataclysms, or, more exactly, as a result of geological upheavals due to various causes.

“The races of which present day men has a memory were the Lemurians⁶ and the Atlanteans. I do not need to tell you who they were. I believe that you are informed on this point by readings you have done?”

“Yes”, I answered, “and these questions always interested me very much.”

“You know, then, that the aborigines of Malaysia are much purer descendants of these Lemurians than the Chinese, just as the Reds of North America, Mexico and South America are the nearly pure descendants (at least they were before the ‘discovery’ of the New World), of these Atlanteans which were of the same race as the first occupants of Ancient Egypt at the time of Mena, and even before, until much later; but, little by little, a mixture took place, and the conquest of Egypt by Hyksos, who came from Syria (though they were not originally indigenous there, as they came from the Indies) achieved the population of old Egypt by an Indo-Semitic race where traces of the old Atlanteans were lost over time.

“There is something which proves this similarity of races. That is the ruins of Indian monuments in Mexico.”

“Indeed, I remember having seen the ruins of temples built by the Aztecs over there, and not only the shape but also the sculptures strongly indicated the style of Ancient Egypt, at least so far as a layman like me could judge.”

“The Aztecs had a cult of the Sun quite similar to the religion of Ancient Egypt, but other cults were later created in all areas by the high priests who introduced human sacrifices.

“It was the same with the Incas.

“In Europe, the Basques are the descendants of the Atlanteans, like the Etruscans. An immense cataclysm, in the etymological sense of the word, inundated Atlantis, as you can read it in Plato.

“Now we come to the contemporary races: the Yellow, Red, Black, and finally the White. Each one in turn had the preeminence which, in our days, belongs to the White race.

“Nevertheless, soon huge upheavals will take place, and the White race will, for a time, have to yield their place to those whose turn has come, or rather has come again.

“So, to return to our civilization, our race, our ancestors were put on the Earth several thousands of years ago. They remained for a long time, protected by the forests of what is now West and North-Western Europe, and also of part of the Arctic Circle, and Greenland. At that time, the cold did not prevail, because the poles were not in the same places that they are now, any more than they will be in the same place that they are now in

⁶ The term ‘Lemurians’ ended up leading to confusion. On the one hand, the occultists identified Lemuria with the Pacific continent, origin of the yellow or mongoloid race; on the other hand, by ‘Lemuria’ the geologists understood the Indo-Madagascar continent, which extended across the Indian Ocean and it seems that their terminology should ultimately be adopted, in order to avoid unfortunate confusion. Both ‘Lemurians’, only have the fact of having been damaged by floods in common, but at different times, with quite different races which they bore.

a few centuries.

“The Hyperboreans, for that is how they were called by the in olden times by the ancestors of the Whites, only had contact with other people approximately 10 to 20,000 years ago, for which there are some traces⁷.

“You can find their story told by a number of authors, as well as those of other races of the Earth.

“Thus, we have individuals belonging to a given race and which, with few things near, are at the same point of evolution.

“Do you believe that, if they came to the Earth solely to live a more or less pleasant existence for a few years, that would make any sense? Do you believe-you God would have done something without a purpose, without usefulness?

“No, for when an existence has been lived, one has been active, at least to some extent. In being active, one commits both good and bad deeds. Something is learned; one is useful; or one wastes one’s time and is useless to others, if one is not actually harmful to them.

“In returning, in being reincarnated, we benefit from work already accomplished, because what has been acquired remains acquired, and one soon recalls the knowledge one formerly had. This explains the skill of some workmen, the ease of learning languages which some have, the scientific or artistic knowledge that others have. Do I need to quote the numerous examples of young children who passed for phenomena, when they were simply profiting from what they had acquired previously? When he was five, Mozart played the piano and composed. But let’s not get into examples, or we will never leave them.

“So, if a man is just and good, if he endeavors to help others, he will profit from this in his next existence, and his evolution towards the good will be accelerated.

“But then”, I said, “if he does evil, does he find the evil again when he returns? Then, those who suffer are...”

“Hush,” Mr. Olivier interrupted. “I will tell you. In olden times, before the advent of Christ on the Earth, Mosaic Law said: ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ Each paid for himself and that was justice. But since Our Lord came to teach us Love of one’s neighbor, since He gave us the example of Charity, since He redeemed us all, now, in addition to Justice, there is Mercy.

“How, by what mechanism, does this Mercy manifest itself? I will explain this to you in a moment; for the moment let us continue from where we were.

“The man who had done good rediscovered good, and he who had done evil rediscovered evil. So it was until the arrival of Jesus Christ. Since He appeared, there have been many who followed Him. There were a few thousand in the first century. They understood that the only way to God was through Charity. In addition, they didn’t hesitate to lay down their lives for others in spreading the Gospel through the world. Those who had understood; those who, like us, had been redeemed, would often die martyrs, some in atrocious suffering.

⁷ See the remarkable book by Papus, disciple of Maître Philippe Master, Lyon. This book was republished in 1954, by La Diffusion Scientifique, 3, rue de Londres, Paris (VIII^e), under the title: “Elementary Treatise on Occultism”; p. 107 on.

“However, you say, if they were redeemed like us, and that since they never committed ill deeds, why did they had to suffer? Haven’t you been told that they gave their lives for others? Are they not capable, then, of offering their sufferings to repurchase those of their brothers who had contracted new debts? And when such men come back, do you not believe that they continue to pay for their brothers? For this reason I stopped you a few moments ago, so that you did not pass judgment on those who suffer, for, among them who pay for their account, and that is the greater number, there are still those who come to pay for us. Also, as we cannot recognize them, and differentiate them from the others, let us not judge, lest we ourselves commit evil; but on the contrary, let this be a source of learning, to teach us to help the suffering, and then we will learn how to love our neighbor.”

“But doesn’t what you are telling me about completely destroy Church teachings on Paradise and Hell?”

“No, Sir, no, perhaps people were wrong to formerly take an image, a symbol as fact, but believe me, Hell, like Paradise, exists.... For Hell we have to only look about us, at all the misery, all the pain which surrounds us. Do you not believe that some beings live the lives of the damned? You can see this particularly in the cities, though you can also find it in the country; but, in the great agglomerations, what distresses, what sufferings we see! Everywhere where unemployment prevails, one cannot imagine how hungry are the little children are, how many poor women cry – even men. And while this happens others waste money on insipid pleasures which often destroys their minds and always ends in making them indifferent; and, what is more serious, almost everywhere they fritter food away, they waste the very bread which so many others lack... Ah, if those which misuse and waste, who close their eyes to the misery and suffering of their brothers knew that one day their turn would come to lack and to suffer, they would act differently.

“So those for whom Charity is dead will have to suffer in their turn until their hearts soften.”

“Yes, I certainly understand the return of such people”, I said to Mr. Olivier, “but doesn’t suffering harden the heart rather than soften it?”

“A man who suffers can sometimes turn sour himself, often even; however, he learns what it is to suffer and, little by little, he sees it in others and understands hardness all the more. Perhaps progress is slow to appear, for evolution is not apparent in all individuals in the same existence, but, as I told you, what is acquired remains acquired; and, even without memory of events which happened, when he returns in a new incarnation, the individual will be able to benefit from past experience, thanks to a comprehension he finds within himself which did not exist in his earlier life. And then, there is one thing which helps our brothers to understand, and that is when one is charitable towards them.

“To be charitable, don’t believe that that just consists of giving alms in the form of a small coin, or a piece of bread. This is good, certainly, especially when it is done discreetly, without ostentation. But to be charitable it is, for the rich, to give to the poor without offending the person to whom it is given; it is, for the poor, not to envy what the rich person has; it is, for all, to love one’s neighbor as oneself, it is never not to say evil of anyone, it is all to share with others. Read, Sir, this beautiful passage of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, Ch. XIII. What the apostle Paul called Charity, Our Lord called Love:

‘Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth.’

“But, to get there, one needs teaching. It is necessary to start with the small things, which often are not the easiest: try to go eight days through your normal existence, without once saying evil of your neighbor, and you will see how difficult it is.

“Try never not to pass an unfortunate one without helping him to the extent of your means. Again, I do not speak of giving alms to the poor who extends his hand to you, but to come to his aid. For example, you see a poor old ragman painfully dragging his rickety cart full of bags of old papers, scrap and other rejects, often dirty and malodorous: how many will help him up the sloping street? Yes, on the street one will find a workman who will give him a hand, but a person of breeding? That is rare.

“And yet, this ‘person of breeding’ perhaps had parents who, rather more than those of the workman, had time to look after his education. Perhaps he went to church or temple regularly; people spoke to him about God, Christ, Charity; perhaps he even still believes in a God, but what should he do to serve Him?

“And did Our Lord not say:

“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. (St Matthew Ch. XXV, vv. 31 – 40).

“And so you think that it is in the common people that one finds the most Charity?”

“I have noticed that it is among the humble that an understanding of the miseries of others is greatest, and it is there that one finds the most mutual aid, the most Charity.

“There are obviously rich people who do good; there always have been, but they are rare, alas, and the egoists are still the majority. As for the group known as middle class, they understand everything about good and evil, but in particular they comprise a large majority of half-hearted people, and half-hearted people are the scum of humanity.

“We said that it is a thing which can help the man who suffers not to harden his

heart, and this thing is Charity. When a misfortunate man suffers, it is less the suffering which hardens his heart than the hardness of those which see him suffering and remain indifferent; it is this indifference which hurts him. However, indifference to the suffering of others, that is half-heartedness.

“If one knew what good a pleasant word, sometimes even a glance of sympathy can do to the misfortunate, to give him courage once more to endure his misery and perhaps even the hope to get through!

“When circumstances make it humanly impossible for us to intervene, we have Prayer. Yes, my dear Sir, Prayer; for if we pray with confidence with all our soul and especially with all our heart, a real miracle can occur.

“Ah! I know many say: ‘We no longer live in the time of miracles’. Well, my friend, I have seen miracles, and so many that if they were related to you, whole days would not be sufficient. But I can give you better proof of the absolute power of Prayer, and this you can spread abroad. Do you know that if somebody lives his life normally for one whole week, as you were just told, without once saying ill of his neighbor, he could ask Heaven for the life of a little child in danger of death, and this child would be saved. This I can confirm, my friend, for I have seen it many times. Here is an example of what prayer can do. And this should not surprise us at all; did our Lord not say: ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.’ (St. John Ch. XIV, vv. 12 – 14).

“You see, my friend, that Hell and the Purgatory certainly exist; and as for Paradise, what we can know is, that when one does one’s best to relieve sorrow, to see that the assistance of Heaven allowed one to succeed; and the joy of the unfortunate to whom hope returns, for whom regains new joy - this, my friend, is a little bit of Paradise.

Mr. Olivier fell silent. The silence which succeeded the vibration of his serious voice seemed to me to be full of angelic murmurs. I did not dare move. I felt small, very small, beside this man who appeared to live what he said, and whose sincerity was in no doubt. In this regard, I must say that, the years which followed and during the course of which I became one of his close friends, I can categorically state that not once did he lack Charity. He seemed to live the retired life of countryman, but actually showed an astonishing level of activity, because he literally did his utmost. He helped everyone; everyone had recourse to him for a thing or another, and even those who had spoken ill of him came to ask for his aid in times of difficulty. And he, always pleasant, rendered the service required and often more⁸. But I do not want to begin the story of his good deeds and of his ceaseless acts here; volumes would not suffice. I will content myself by saying that I saw with my own eyes a man on this Earth who lived amongst us, who put into action, in every circumstances of his life, those precepts which were given to us nineteen centuries ago by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Mr. Olivier put a log in the fireplace, then stuffed his pipe carefully, lit it and, turning to me, began anew:

⁸ Later, I was allowed to attend his prayer sessions. I acknowledge myself unable to describe these moments, or the emotion which seized us all... even the fact of writing it moves me deeply.

“What so often makes many people lose their faith, or at least their belief in God, is that too often the priests of all confessions do not give them the answers capable of showing them the truth. When the men of the Middle Ages had a blind belief, nobody explained anything to them. Dogma was imposed on them. But, little by little, intelligence led them towards spiritual things and the questions came, to which the Church answered: ‘Anathema!’ But that did not prevent brains from working. The Inquisition brought no solution, other than an indelible stain on what should have been and remained pure: religion. The consequence of these errors was the schism of the West.

“Yet since then the Protestants have not succeeded any better than the Catholics. How many have wished to explain the sacred texts by seeking the letter and discussing it, without seeing the spirit?

“Speaking about reincarnation made priests uncomfortable, because they could not explain it, for fear perhaps that people would say: ‘Oh well, since one returns, one has plenty of time, so we will worry about things later!’

“Let us not blame the priests, or criticize the Church, for they were right at the beginning of the Christian era; it had been. admittedly, preferable that all Christians become good to please God and to do His Will, because blindly obeying the Father would have been proof of conviction and of Love.

“When I say that talking about reincarnation made priests uncomfortable, I mean those which knew, because not all did know; from time immemorial religious secrets have been reserved for an elite of initiates, and these secrets were jealously kept, for fear that laymen, who had not yet reached the degree of evolution and wisdom required to be worthy of knowing them, would put them to bad use, of which they would have been the first victims. You well know that St. Matthew says (Ch. VII, v. 6): ‘Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.’

“But, nowadays, when men are starting to direct their intelligence towards spiritual things and to ask questions, it is sensible to give them, prudently for sure, some explanations showing them a little more completely details about the Truth.

“Since Atheism is spreading, it is necessary for the Truth to be shown to us insofar as we can understand it. So it is necessary for all Christians to know that the man does not come to Earth only one unique time, under essentially different conditions for each, with potentialities, faculties, and even gifts totally different to those of his neighbor.

“But wouldn’t it be an injustice, incompatible with the infinite kindness of the Father, for a child to come into the world in an honest family, joyful, Christian, and that he is intelligent, gifted, and receives proper and complete instruction and education, that he believes in God, that he receives the sacraments and, after a life free from bad deeds, that his environment, education and instruction have taught him to avoid, this man would die lamented by his own and would go straight to Paradise, definitely; while in the same city, among dubious – sometimes even vicious – people, an unhappy child were raised with bad principles, bad examples, and would limp through a lamentable existence of debauchery and plunder, perhaps ending it upon the scaffold, without the least repentance; and he would go in Hell forever, for all Eternity, as the Church says? ...

“However, between these two extremes there is an infinite variety of others, which would all seem a proof of injustice. The enemies of the Catholic Church, the enemies of any religion have certainly exploited this argument well to sow Atheism in the name of ‘Reason’. Ah, if only they knew what their punishment would be, what their sufferings would be, they would hold their tongues quickly enough!

“Yet it is so simple, so logical to understand it how it is! Each existence is for the life of the soul what is one day in our human life. If we overdid a day, either by eating too much or by drinking too much, the following day we are sick or at the very least ill at ease, depending of the degree of overindulgence, and we take care not to fall into the same error, or at least, our thoughts takes care, because our body, having no memory of what it did the day before, may well encourage us to start again. But our brain remembers the actions of the day before, and keeps control; unless the body is the stronger, and then excess triumphs again, and so on, until the day that disease intervenes and leads to disgust, or makes it impossible for us to continue to yield to our vice. Then the body will pay dear for its weakness, and shout out for the injustice, when it sees other sane and healthy men, but it will must endure the shock of its former excesses.

“It is the same for the evolution of our soul, and we take back our body, or rather a body, at the point where we left it. Not in the same point of space, as some suppose in error, but in the state it was in when we left it (with the expected wear and tear of recent years), just as we wake up in the morning in a fresh and energized body if we did not overindulge the day before; but with a heavy stomach if we ate too much. The tiredness of the day before will have disappeared along with the usual daily wear and tear, unless this tiredness was due to overwork: in this case, the night’s rest might not be sufficient to bring balance back to the organism. Also, an individual who dies an alcoholic will have so caused his body to overwork and, in his next incarnation, will have a debilitated liver and stomach.

“You see in that, that all the truths of ancient Science are verified (which are also in the Scriptures is one knows where to look). I want to speak about a sentence at the beginning of the text of the Emerald Tablet, by Hermes Trismegistus: ‘That which is below is as that which is above, And that which is above is as that which is below, To achieve the miracle of the one thing.’

“All is verified by analogy, by similarity. Our Lord Himself spoke to the crowd in parables.”

“Yes, and sometimes with the result that one does not always understand what Christ wanted to teach. Certain parables are still a little difficult for me to assimilate.

“Well, as I believe I said to you last Thursday, do not hesitate to tell me when you find a passage which troubles you, and I will try to help you.

“All these questions about reincarnation shouldn’t be foreign for you, since for many occultists it is an undeniable fact, although you are not a occultist in the current sense given to this word. Am I right?”

“You are indeed. I have read, read a lot I might say, but I remain hesitant because I am not convinced. It seems to me that all that I have been able to read does not lead to anything real, and it is not relative truths which I seek: what I would like to find, is total, pure, absolute Truth!

“There is only one way where you will meet it, my friend. That is what is taught in the Gospels, as our Lord indicated to us: Charity.

“All sects claim to hold the Truth, but none has it in totality; they show aspects of it, and sometimes even these aspects are seriously deformed. Occult sciences are in error. Occult Science is true.

“For many centuries there have been men on Earth who know all that the Occult sciences contain, because they have the keys. These Beings are rare, but one encounters them when one truly tries with all one’s strength to love one’s neighbor as oneself.

“And what was formerly hidden in the old writings, in a secret language whose sense was multiple, is now much more luminously exposed in the Gospels. Read these passages: ‘Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.’ (St. Matthew, Ch. XXIII, vv. 29 – 36 and St. Luke Ch. XI, vv. 47 – 52). And reread these attentively, later.

“Do not believe that I want to throw stones at occultists; they are seekers and there are some who really deserve better than the disappointments which await them when they will see, on arriving at a certain point, that they cannot go further. But they will come to Christ. It is a question of time, and all those which work and who seek are not wasting their time in vain; they will be compensated for it. It is the half-hearted ones who waste their time.

“Then”, I said, “those which are engulfed in occultism can remain there since they are not wasting their time, because that they will be compensated for it?”

With a broad smile, Mr. Olivier said to me:

“You will understand. Imagine a man who, coming to the edge of a wood, sees far off the bell-tower of a village. He is tired of wandering in the brush and he is hungry. At once he starts off towards this village, right through the fields, the hedges, the bushes; he comes across a road, but it does not seem to him to lead towards the village. On the marker it reads: Charity. This is not what he is seeking. He wants to go to the village, where he can find food and lodging... and once again he starts off again through fields, quagmires, plowed fields, and, after many exertions, he encounters muddy marsh which he tries to cross; but in spite of many painful attempts, he sees that he cannot cross it, neither by swimming (there is not enough water, not counting the dangerous vegetation), nor by foot, for at the first attempt he had to work hard to avoid getting bogged down. And our unfortunate man tramples painfully across this marsh, ending up straying far, because, in order to cross it, he left the higher ground from which the village was visible, and now he no longer knows in which direction to go, he no longer knows where the village is...

“Another man, leaving the same wood, under similar conditions, moves towards the village and, like the first, he met the road labeled ‘Charity’. Perhaps this road does not lead to the village in sight, but a road certainly leads somewhere! He will soon arrive at a village if he follows it, the more so as this road bears a very attractive name. He follows it in the direction marked ‘Charity’, and, after a much easier time, in spite of the stones, than

progressing through fields, he sees on the left an immense marsh which he skirts by a long detour, then crosses a bridge. After this bridge, the road leads him straight to the village.

“And it is only late in the evening that the other traveler arrives, when the one who had followed the road is sat at table. The two men will share the same meal, but one is exhausted and muddy, still distraught with anguish which he suffered when he strayed in the mazes of the marsh where he could, with the slightest mistake, have met his death, and from which he only escaped thanks to the road that he luckily encountered before nightfall. While the other still contemplates the beautiful landscapes he crossed, and the charms of this old village which he had time to visit while with the inn prepared his meal.”

After a short silence, Mr. Olivier began again:

“Need I add that the half-hearted one is still sitting on a tuft of grass, shivering in the night, back there in the middle of wood?”

“I see the difference very well now, and truly I understand that it is to better follow the road, and anyway it is much easier!”

“It is easier on condition that one doesn’t leave it, because many turn aside believing they will return in an instant, just taking the time to gather this beautiful flower or to see that little wood, and then they stray, torn by brambles. Finally all is well if they find the road again; but it is more advisable not to turn aside in the first place.”

Night had come, and snow had succeeded the rain, a snow which did not settle on the softened ground. Also, to my great regret, for I would have liked to remain longer, I had to leave Mr. Olivier. I asked to him if he still intended to come to Saint Martin during the week.

“I will come and see you the day after tomorrow”, he said. “I will be at your house around two or three in the afternoon.”

CHAPTER 3 - At Saint-Martin. Genesis

I had gone back to reading the first chapter of the Bible – Genesis. And, despite all my focus, I didn’t understand much of this overly summarized story of Creation, where it seemed Moses enjoyed putting in small details which appeared pointless. I had already begun reading it the day before, after discovering this Bible on a library shelf amongst other old books.

I was now awaiting Mr. Olivier, who was rarely late. I gathered together the sheets on which I had quickly jotted down notes relating to what this strange man had already explained to me.

From whom had he obtained all this knowledge, where had he studied, who had been his masters? Perhaps I would know all this one day, since in answer to the questions I had put to Duval about the personality of the man to whom he was sending me, my friend had been happy to answer: ‘You will see well enough for yourself’.

Finally Mr. Olivier arrived. I had advised my old Catherine to make us some good coffee as soon as my visitor arrived. Catherine was an old neighbor whom my parents had used as a domestic in earlier times, when I was only a child; then she had married and left the country, only to return later, when she was widowed. My parents were dead and as for myself, I had been traveling abroad. So, when I returned to this area for the short stays I had in Saint-Martin, and sought a cleaning lady to look after the kitchen and manage the house, my farmers suggested old Catherine, still strong and active, in spite of her sixty-five years.

Never, in the five or six years that Catherine looked after the house and served me during my visits, never had she spoken to me about Mr. Olivier; so it was with some surprise I saw her chatting with him in a familiar manner when she introduced him. But, what crowned my surprise was when I learned that my farmers knew him, and that, two or three times already, he had taken care of farm animals, a sheep which had dislocated a leg, a cow which had problem with calving, and I know not what else; and my farmer told me that, when he was troubled, he went to find Mr. Olivier to ask him counsel.

In brief, Catherine, after bringing in my visitor, went to prepare the coffee.

I had been so affected by our former conversations that after a few words about my settling in, I asked Mr. Olivier if he could explain to me a little about the Creation of the Earth, and of man, more completely than Moses had done it in the Bible.

“It is because Genesis is rather difficult to understand”, he answered. “Don’t forget, the great prophet of the Hebrews was addressing himself to a rough and ill-educated nation, and he made a point of putting the truth, which he summarized, within the range of understanding of his people, but in such a way that this summary also contained the basic essentials for initiates.

“Moreover, in its totality, the Old Testament is written entirely according to the same principle. You will notice how much detail sometimes abounds, describing facts whose interest seems completely secondary, both from a philosophical point of view as from an historical point of view; whereas other passages which relate to important events in the history of these people are not given the same development. It should not be forgotten that all the elements of Sacred Knowledge, of Occult Knowledge are hidden in the secondary details. However, the initiates were enjoined – and they still are – to keep it concealed, on account of the bad use that would be made of it by those whose evolution towards God has not reached the level which would ensure moderate, judicious and beneficial use of this knowledge, the forces and powers that they confer, and which should be used only for the greater Glory of God and Love of one’s neighbor.

“Notice that, in Genesis, Moses spoke to men above all about what concerned them, in a way placing them in the center of the Creation in which they lived; it would, indeed, have been quite difficult to make them understand all that related to the visible Universe and the other Universes that we do not see. Moses spoke about the essentials. Now, as an example, note for yourself at least a voluntary omission of Moses, a thing which was not spoken of till much later, at a time when those who were capable of understand, already existed in small numbers.

“I see”, he added, “that you have a Bible. Would you permit me?”

He opened the book, searched for a moment and read:

“22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.
23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.
24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.
25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:
26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.
27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:
28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:
29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:
30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;
31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

“What I have just read you”, Mr. Olivier tells me, “is in Chapter 8 of the Book of the Proverbs of Solomon, but it is only one part of it: the whole Chapter should be read and also what follows it. You see Wisdom declares that she was created first of all, thus before the “beginning” of which Moses speaks. And you can believe that it was not an involuntary omission on his part, nor ignorance!”

“But what is this Wisdom?”, I asked.

“We will speak on this later”, he replied, and continued:

“The texts of the Bible often – very often – have several meanings. Certain Old Testament books have up to seven. But the most advanced men can barely understand but three; much fewer are those which manage to decipher the fourth!

“And the three others”, I said, “what use are they, then?”

Mr. Olivier smiled.

“They are used by other Beings about whom I will speak to you one day. Know, for the time being, that some of these Beings come among us like ordinary men, they are... our monitors, our guides, and Chiefs. These other meanings, which remain hidden from us, are also useful to other servants of the Father, to Destiny, to Chance, to the Genies, to all the hierarchies which populate the Invisible, and which are but imperfectly known to men. But speaking about them now would only muddle things, so be a little patient, for all will come in its time. It is useful to add that, to understand some of the sense of the Scriptures, it is necessary to be able to read them in the source language, in Hebrew, and it is sometimes useful to know, if not thoroughly, at least sufficiently, other contemporary languages of the time of these writings, or of their translation in the Hebraic language, since some of these texts were written in Chaldean; others in an ancient Hebrew represented by cuneiform signs or hieroglyphs. But let us avoid engaging in these considerations, and content ourselves with seeing beneath the imaged language one of the hidden meanings in a clearer sense, which everyone can know without any danger other than having a little more responsibility, as every time something new is learned.

“In the first chapter of Genesis, we discover the broad outline of the formation of planet where we are. It is superfluous to insist on the fact that one day is equal to one epoch. In Verse 27 it is said: “...So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.”

“The Hebrew text says: ‘Male and female created He them’. Some wanted to see in this that the first men were hermaphrodites. Let us not seek to discuss this point, but believe that, regarding what really happened with human beings, the two sexes were quite separate from their appearance on this planet. Elsewhere, it might be different, but we are talking about the Earth.

“Now, in verse 28, “...God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; etc”. It was thus normal for man and woman to procreate. This gives the lie to the fable which is wrongly used to explain original sin.

“You will notice that Moses places the creation of the other stars at the fourth epoch. This is true, if you will, for man, but not for God; however Moses explained things to men in the order that they appeared; and it was only later and indeed a long time. after the appearance of vegetation on the Earth, facilitated by hot rain, that the clouds which had interrupted the stars’ radiation, thus preventing their being visible, had partly disappeared as they condensed and mixed with the seas, allowing the stars to become visible. Or so it would have seemed to observers on our planet at that time.

“In our system, it is the planets which are still, at the present time, surrounded by an envelope of clouds: Venus, for example. For other stars, the surface water seems to have disappeared: for example, our satellite the Moon; or to be very rarefied, as on Mars.

“It is only later, much later, that God put Adam and Eve on the Earth.

“I will not speak at length on all this, because years would not suffice; also, we will only speak about salient points, those which have led to those mistakes in interpretation which are truly too great and against which one must react. We will therefore speak about original sin.

“In Chapters 2 and 3 of Genesis, Moses joined events together without apparently respecting their chronological order, but knowing that “that which is below is as that which is above, and that which is above is as that which is below”, it was pointless to be any more specific about questions of time and place, for it was a single and simultaneous event of two similar and successive events which occurred in quite different places and times, for there were even differences in worlds. Some of it took place in the spiritual and quasi-divine world; some in the astral world with a correspondence in the physical.

“In the spiritual world, the fall of Adam represents the fall of the pure soul, created by God, which, free to choose between good and evil, wanted to know evil: a fall made by the first man of this race which had endured up to us: a fall not because Adam and Eve, in taken the advice of the Serpent and acquiring knowledge in the material world by eating of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, perpetrated an act which was both very natural and ordained by God; but because they believed themselves similar to the gods (Genesis Ch. III, v. 5) and themselves capable of creating living beings in their image without the help of God.

“And this is why God said (Genesis Ch. III, v. 16): ‘I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children.’ These are the reproaches of God which made Eve say (Gen. IV - 1): ‘I have gotten a man from the Lord.’

“The fact that in the same verse (Genesis Ch. IV, v. 1) it is written: ‘...Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain’. shows well that it was only after being driven out of terrestrial Paradise that Adam knew Eve for the first time, and that in consequence it was not this act which was the cause of their expulsion.

“Many believe that man, at his origin, was created male and female. This is an error, for the two sexes were always separate on the Earth. There are other worlds where it is different. As for claiming that God made the first man hermaphrodite and that it is only much later that He created the woman, and that He created him thus male and female because He created him in His image, in the image of God, this becomes completely grotesque! It is to confuse the created with the uncreated. Do you believe really that to create what He pleases to create, God has a “need” to be male and female? Do you believe that the Creator might have need of anything? Isn't it through Himself, without the help of anything? To believe that is not to have understood the meaning of His words to Moses (Exodus, Ch. 3, v. 14): ‘I Am that I Am’. And He added: ‘Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you.’

“But God is not three dimensional like us! God can create by His sole Word – and it is in this that some have wanted to see the indispensable binary, but they forget that by believing this, they limit God. He for whom God cannot do all, for whom God is limited in time, space or possibility, does not understand what God is. It is to wish to apply relative and concrete laws to the Abstraction of Essence, the Absolute. It is to confuse the inferior quaternary with the superior dominant Triad.”

Then Mr. Olivier leaned towards me as if giving a confidence.

“You know what is more, what it is especially? Well, it is pride on the part of man.

“Do you believe that there is any truth in this joke of Voltaire: ‘If God created us in His own image, we have more than reciprocated!’

“What is certain is that, if man and woman are separated in matter, they are but one in the spiritual world. And it is this fact that one should not confound. Angels do not have a sex. If they incarnate to serve the Father, they take one or other sex depending upon the need of their mission, but they do not necessarily have a partner of the other sex.

“It is with different with those who fell. They are divided into male and female, and will remain divided until they have taken back their place, regained their freedom by paying all their debts. In successive incarnations, they will not necessarily meet; and one should not want to find one’s “soul sister” at all costs.

“And if you want proof of this, open the Gospels and see in the one by St. Mark (Ch. X, vv. 6 – 9): ‘But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.’ You see that it is a question of the flesh only and not of the soul; just as in St. Matthew (Ch. XIX, v. 4 – 8: ‘He answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.’ And note this phrase: ‘from the beginning it was not so’. See also I Corinthians Ch. VI., v. 16, Ephesians Ch. V., v 31⁹, and you will note that it is always only a question of the body, of the flesh, but not of the soul. Also refer to St. Mark Ch. XII, vv. 23 – 25: ‘In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife. And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven’. Then, with the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians Ch, XI, v. 11: ‘Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord’. And in the first epistle of St. Peter Ch. III, v. 7: ‘Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered’.

“Where one sees the biblical texts have many interpretations is particularly in the following [passage (Gen. Ch. III, v. 21): ‘Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them’. This most surely talks of the fall of the angels and not of the material sin committed in the physical materiality of which I have just spoken to you; for what need indeed had God to make ‘garments of skin’ for Adam and Eve? These latter having tasted of the fruit of the tree which ‘was invaluable to open up intelligence’, would have been able to dress themselves by their own means, and then would this not have been a tiny detail and certainly of secondary importance? Yet what

⁹ ‘Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh’. (I Cor. Ch. VI, v. 16).

‘For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh’. (Eph. Ch. V, v. 31).

Moses indicates here is certainly the incarnation in the flesh (skin garments) of fallen souls. However, men are nothing if not these fallen angels which listened to the temptations of the Angels who revolted.

“It would be good idea for me to give you a short summary of what preceded the Creation of our Universe, which is neither the first created by God, nor the last.

“In the mists of time, eons and eons ago, the Universes already existed, which were governed by the Servants of the Father. One of them, the most beautiful, believed himself the equal of God, and revolted, refusing henceforth to recognize the Father as his Lord and God. Some of the Angels who were with him followed him in his revolt, and he became Satan, the Adversary, the Evil One.

“God left him his gifts, almost all of his capabilities, and the deposed Archangel took hold of the Matter which he made his kingdom, because it was impossible for him to grasp anything pertaining to the Divine World.

“He wanted to mimic God by declaring himself His equal. He became the Demon, creator of the Evil, Illusion, Lies; the complete antithesis of the Divine World. The Kingdom of God being Light, his became Darkness. In opposition to the Truth, he created the Lie; against Reality he created Unreality, Illusion. He opposed Good with Evil. As the Unlimited belonged to the Divine Kingdom, his kingdom became limited.

“Those who had followed he made his lieutenants; there again, to mimic God, he created in the kingdom of Darkness a parody of the hierarchy which the Father had created in His Realm.

“Certainly, the Father could have destroyed him, but He did not wish to, and if He left the power to create in the Darkness to him who revolted, He withdrew the Light from him, leaving him only his own life which he had from God; with the result that the Demon cannot create anything real, since he cannot transmit Life, and thus creates only Illusion.

“However, it can use any life which devotes itself to him. Thus he made Demons of the Angels who followed him in his revolt, and it is also why he became the Tempter who, unceasingly, attacks in order to tempt the creatures of the Father.

“God, having wanted all His creatures to be free, left him alone, as He left His creatures free to follow him, warning them against the Adversary, but not constraining them.

“Many they were who succumbed, and Adam was one of them, but later, much later.

“God left the Fallen angels, like those who first revolted, the possibility of redemption; and it is in order to redeem ourselves that we must evolve, within this Matter which became the stronghold of the Demon, by detaching ourselves from Matter, and rise up towards what is Spirit. For this work, one human existence would be hard enough to suffice, and this is why we return and will return until we are completely free of the yoke of Satan.

“It was when Matter was created, and God had given him power over it, that the Archangel revolted; because in the divine World, God Alone acted by His Word, while in the Matter created (by the Word), the powers of the Archangel, like those of his brothers, were almost limitless, by permission and the Will of Heaven. Thus it was in Matter that he revolted, and it was perhaps only in Matter and its environment which a revolt, or a fall, can take place. But as regards temptation, it can happen as far as the astral world, which is, as you know, located between the divine World and the physical World.

“On this matter”, I said to Mr. Olivier, “I would be grateful if you would explain

something of all these different worlds, as I don’t know I understood it correctly.”

“If you wish”, he replied, “we will speak about it one day.” Then he continued:

“Each time we have committed a fault and each time we commit one, we borrow something from the kingdom of Hades, and we thus become debtors to the Demon and we cannot become free again, unless we pay our debts to him: all our debts. In the Sermon on the Mount, Our Lord says: “Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.” (St. Matthew, Ch. V, v. 26).

“If one read the Bible attentively, one would discover many things there, but men read but superficially, or stick to the letter without seeking the spirit, and generally, for shame, they do not even want to read it. They complain about their situation, holding Heaven or Fate responsible, when we are the only people responsible, the only culpable ones. But still people do not seek explanations in the Bible. The text is a little difficult to understand sometimes, because, since it was written, the style of speaking has changed a lot. But what is so clear, what is in range of all of us, are the lesson of the Gospels, the Words of Our Lord Jesus Christ which are the means of leaving our sad situation; the means of regaining our place. It is enough to forget one’s ME a little, and to endeavor to practice Charity, to love one’s neighbor as oneself.

CHAPTER 4 - Redemption

I had hardly interrupted Mr. Olivier during all the explanations he had just given me. I now had an idea of the origin of man which differed from the various aspects which, until now, had been shown to me; and I thought about all that he had just taught me, wondering if I would be capable of taking it all down clearly enough to add it to the precious notes which I had taken. Mr. Olivier, who had slowly refilled his pipe and who, after a moment of silence, looked at me with his kind eyes, and said to me finally:

“What is troubling you?”

I hesitated for a moment, then said to him:

“I have something to confess. From our second conversation, I was so interested by everything you said to me, that I was anxious to take notes, and I was just wondering if I would be able to do this for what you have just explained me without getting too much wrong. Do you have any objections to my taking notes on what you say to me? For not only will they allow me to refer to them later, but also, if required, they will help me to answer some objections which have sometimes been made to me, and to which I remained silent, ignorant as I was.

“But, dear Sir”, Mr. Olivier tells me, “I do not see anything to prevent you taking notes about what I tell you. It is your undeniable right to do so; but would you let me give you the benefit of a little experience I had? Well, be careful, very careful, and do not launch one day into a proselytism that is both incorrect and faulty. The only proselytism that one can, that one must always make everywhere without rest, without respite, it is that of example. As for words, one should so far as possible restrict oneself to answering questions which are put, using what ones knows, provided that these answers are always based upon the words and the lesson of Our Lord Jesus Christ, or the words of His Apostles. As for what happened before the coming of the Redeemer, one should to be able to apply the Bible. But, as I have said to you, the Bible is rather difficult to understand; however, with a little attention and by asking the aid of Heaven, one can grasp the simplest of the hidden meanings, those which one should try to understand and not allow oneself to be misled by words which are seemingly hard and incompatible with the idea we have of God. I will explain why one day, perhaps.

“Although one must be prudent, these truths should now no longer be hidden; for that, one must act by the Word, so that any ground is prepared to receive Its seed. If it falls on sterile soil and rock, the Father know well to send little birds to make it their food, so that nothing is lost.

“However, it may be that one day I tell you things which you will have to keep to yourself. These, I will announce to you, so that you keep them secret.”

“Could I ask you for something which would be quite useful to me?”

“Please.”

“That would be if you could occasionally read the notes I have jotted down, so that you can indicate any errors made by me.”

“Willingly”, replied Mr. Olivier. Then, after a moment of silence, he continued:

“You haven’t read the Bible much?”

“No. I found one in the library here, but my discovery only dates back to yesterday and I have hardly been able to read more than the first chapters of Genesis. This is what motivated my questions.

“Well, focus especially to the Gospels, and when you have read and reread New Testament many times and meditated on each sentence, read the Bible from time to time. I recommend the prophets, especially the four great ones. Now”, he added: “read Jeremiah, Chapter II; with a little attention you will understand the hidden meaning; read also II Kings Ch. XVII, v. 7 – 18 inclusive, and beyond the apparent text you will find some items relating to the fall. What are the empty things spoken of in the passages I indicated to you, if not what was drawn from Nothing by the Will of the Father, by His Word, and thus Matter? Also refer to Psalm CXV, vv. 4 – 8.

“With a little application you will quickly come to unearth the first meaning hidden in the surface text.

“There is as a passage I commend to you: it is in Isaiah, the Prophet. Read beginning at verse 13 of Chapter LII, and all of Chapter LIII. It relates to the coming of the Word, as Redeemer. This is an important subject, very important!

“Here is something which the Jews did not understand...and which many Christians understood only very imperfectly.

“But, over the many centuries, who were those who truly wanted to enlighten the people a little? Some tried to do this by laying a hand on the writings and distilling them drop by drop for the masses for which they had been made. Others came and carried out a life of example, and what happened to them? They were attacked, ridiculed, treated as charlatans and impostors, even as adventurers, by giving this word a pejorative sense which our silliness has preserved more carefully than it would taken care to preserve a Christian truth.

“Why were they treated as charlatans, impostors, etc? ... Because they repeated to men the words of Our Lord; because in all their actions they applied the precepts of Christ; because they were charitable and gave service to all. For this they incurred the hatred of the malicious, the great, the rich, the liars and the hypocrites, those who, have ever positioned themselves to revolve around temporal power, or to hold it in part or completely, under all regimes and all governments.

Somebody rang the doorbell. I excused myself to Mr. Olivier, and went to open the door. It was the mailman had brought mail and some books which I had ordered, and which the bookseller had sent to me. Not having anything on me to sign with, I asked the mailman to enter.

“Ah, hello, Mr. Olivier¹⁰”, the mailman exclaimed joyfully on seeing my guest.
“This is a nice surprise!

“Hello, Barbier”, Mr. Olivier answered pleasantly, shaking his hand, still well? How is your household, your wife, your children?”

“All are well, Mr. Olivier, thanks to you!”

“Thanks to God.”

“Yes, I know well! But nonetheless it is you whom the good God sent, and without you...”

“It is cold today”, interrupted Mr. Olivier, to cut short the thanks which seemed to bother him a little. “there is a hard frost, isn’t there.”

“It was 4° below at 7:00 this morning, when I got to the office.”

During this dialog, which I followed, I had signed in the registered mail book. I returned it to the factor and offered him a cigar which he accepted joyfully, thanking me. And I led him out.

While returning, I thought that Mr. Olivier would tell me why this good man had expressed such thanks, but he did not breathe a word about it. It was only later I learned that the mailman’s wife had almost died in childbirth, following a terrible albumin crisis, and the doctors did not even dare hope to save the child. Four doctors had been consulted and they were unanimous: the unfortunate child was lost. When she was about to be confined, her sister-in-law went to find Mr. Olivier, and although it was 11 o’clock at night, he followed her at once and stayed with the patient until the small hours. At this time he sent them to find a midwife, and when he was asked whether the doctor should also be alerted, he answered, smiling: “If you want, but there is no pressing need to announce the birth of your child and the happy delivery of your wife to him. All will go well, and the midwife will suffice.” Then he gave some counsel for the care of the mother and child and left, saying: “I will come the day after tomorrow to say hello to the mother and to greet the new arrival.” Later, I questioned him about this case, but, as Kipling says, that is another story and I will tell it in its own time.

After the mailman’s departure, I had lit a cigar, and Mr. Olivier had accepted one, though he preferred a pipe or a cigarette, which he often rolled himself.

“I believe you were going to speak to me about the Redeemer.”

“Yes. I told you that the Isaiah the prophet had predicted the Redeemer, and the reception which the men would give him.”

“Read the passage I told you and it will bring you closer to the torment of Our Lord of which the Evangelists speak.”

¹⁰ The mailman is given a slightly country dialect in the original French text (‘M’sieu’ instead of ‘Monsieur’, and ‘ben’ instead of ‘bien’, etc) – PV.

“But why did God strike Him rather than the guilty ones?”

“Do you forget that first and foremost Christ is God, and then that He came as Redeemer? He came to redeem mankind.”

“Excuse me”, I said to Mr. Olivier, “but here we are touching on a question about which I have heard many people claiming things that I felt to be erroneous, but which I could not correct; also, I will try to give you their objections, if that does not inconvenience you, so that I can see where their reasoning is in error.”

“If you want”, Mr. Olivier answered, smiling, “object on their behalf, for that will efface the seeds of error which could be implanted in you during your conversations with the people in question.”

“Well, then: they claim that if Christ came to redeem us, it is because we had offended God by acting badly, by committing evil deeds, and that He paid for us by His sufferings all these evil deeds by offering himself up to the blows with which God struck Him. But, they add, if Christ is God, one does not understand very well this God Who pays Himself by inflicting terrible sufferings upon Himself!”

“This is because they didn’t understand much. Don’t forget that God, Who made everything, created Wisdom first of all (Proverbs Chs. VIII and IX, see page 28 above). A God who created Wisdom, who doesn’t know how to be logical, has been poorly imagined. And there are human beings prideful enough to allow themselves to judge God and to criticize Him! But they know not what they do, and we must forgive them since Christ has forgiven them.

“What is true in what these people claim, is that the Word was incarnated in Christ to show us the Way, and to redeem in one instant all the faults committed by men, and for which each would have had to pay dearly. He had loaded onto His shoulders the destiny of every one of us. He freed everyone through His sufferings by asking the Father that destiny might accomplish its work.”

“Destiny? but...”

“I will explain later, Sir. Let us continue what we are saying about Redemption.”

“I beg your forgiveness”, I said...

“Now, if we have sinned towards God, if we have acted badly, it is because instead of following the commandments of the Father, we have yielded to the Tempter; and each time we yielded, we borrowed something from his kingdom, a certain quantity of evil: and in borrowing, as we possess nothing but our own souls, and having no other pledge to give, it was that which we mortgaged. Thus, the Demon put his hooks into us. It is from him that we had to be ransomed, from him to whom we had devoted ourselves, whose slaves we had more or less completely become. And it is to ransom us from the Prince of this World that Christ, the Son of God, God Himself, offered His Sufferings to the Demon, so that Satan was paid what was due to him from men. So it

is from the Devil that Christ ransomed us, and not from God.

“A very small bit of logic – I do not even speak of wisdom – would have sufficed to avoid making these objections.”

“Indeed”, I added, “but I must recognize that not much more logic was needed to ensure that they did not influence me and even for me to refute them, because this is quite obvious!”

“Everything is simple. Everything can be understood simply, but the most difficult thing is to rid oneself of the theories and errors which are widespread across the world. But if you reject all that totally, the greatest work is done. Do you not believe that more trouble and more effort is required to clear a virgin forest and to make it into arable field, than to sow a field free from stumps, roots, bad weeds and brambles? It takes only a few hours to sow what takes months and months of efforts to be cleared. Ask any peasant or colonist.”

Filling his pipe, Mr. Olivier continued:

“What one must understand, is that all ill deeds we do makes us the vassal of the Demon, a fact of us being his debtor and sometimes his slave. We can liberate ourselves through Charity, by helping our neighbor, and through suffering, by paying our debts. But we will speak about that one day: the usefulness of suffering, Destiny, and many other things.

“When Christ redeemed us, it was enough for each to follow His teaching, and love his neighbor as himself, and the day we can do this, we will then regain our place, our state as free man and all the prerogatives which this state confers. Indeed I say ‘prerogatives’, because the free man has to only ask...

“An error that many people make, and which those whose objections you quoted a moment ago have not failed to make, is to believe that God punishes, and that Christ bore the punishments intended for us. They misunderstand, and have not read attentively, or have not read all that Isaiah says in Chapter LIII, verse 4: ‘Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did *esteem* him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.’

“People will tell me that the end of chapter LIII of Isaiah seems to indicate that it is not so much about the divine Word, as about a servant belonging to creation. Let us not forget the words of Christ to His Apostles, to all those who would want to follow Him: “I am the Way.” (St. John Ch. XIV, v.6). As a consequence, it will be necessary for us to accept the need to do what Her did, to the extent of our powers, in good proportion; it is thus clear that, in this prophecy, there is something relating to all those who would later become Servants of the Father.

“When it is said that God punishes, this is not in general exact. It is Destiny which makes us pay for the evil we have done, by making us pass by where we once made one of our brothers pass. God simply makes it possible for Destiny to achieve its task: but we will consider the role of Destiny again later.

“When, by His sacrifice, Our Lord had redeemed from the Demon the souls of all men, they were, on that day, freed of all former debts which they had contracted with the Prince of this World.”

“What I do not understand very well” I said, “is how, being incarnated, and therefore having

a human body Christ could, through His Sacrifice alone to pay off all the debts of all men, and that the Demon was satisfied by this!”

“You realize that no man could have the same vitality as the incarnate Word? You understand that His sensibility was greatly large to ours, and understand that the moral anguish He lived in the terrible night of the Garden of the Olives, alone sufficed for bloody sweat to pour down His face! (St. Luke Ch. XXII, v. 44) ‘And being in agony he prayed more earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.’

“Don't you know that the physical sensitivity of a being depends much on his spirituality? Take, for example, a Chinese mountain dweller and you will find he has a capacity of suffering and a resistance to physical pain which is completely unsuspected, and out of proportion with the resistance to physical pain demonstrated by the hardest of our French peasants.

“If, in its turn, you compare this French peasant with a much more refined person, you will see that there is a great difference in their physical sensitivity, somewhat less obvious than in the preceding example, but nevertheless noticeable, even very noticeable; so much so that the same wound which will produce intolerable pain and will perhaps make the majority of refined people pass out, while being painful to the peasant, will not make him lose consciousness.

“Then, would you like to compare the most evolved of men, the most spiritual of our brothers, with Our Lord?

“You understand, then, what much have been His torture and suffering, as much of morale as with the physical.

As he spoke to me about the sufferings of Christ, Mr. Olivier's voice seemed to have become veiled, as if he himself experienced the suffering in recalling in a few words the Divine Sacrifice of two thousand years before. He remained silent, with a faraway look. I did not dare to stop this silence which endured, so it seemed to me, for a long time. Then he appeared to leave this sort of daydream, which is what I call it for want of a better word. He looked at his pipe, which had gone out, refilled it and, having relit it, turned his face towards me as if expecting a question.

Remembering one of the many objections raised by unbelievers, for which I had not been able to find an answer, I said to him:

“Many people do not understand very well why God, Who knows all, must know the future, made Redemption necessary – that is to say, that men succumbed to temptation, and they say: It wouldn't have been more difficult to create us perfect and, in consequence, incapable of sin.

Mr. Olivier answered me:

“But God, in creating man, or more exactly in creating the spirit of man, because one should not see in the beings which we are anything but a reflection of what we were after being created, as we were created perfect, but also free. God gave this liberty to us because being free Himself, and having made us in His image, He wanted us also to be free, and it is in perfect knowledge of cause that He let us be tried by the

Demon, because those who resist temptation acquire merit through this; whereas those who are not tempted perhaps remain Good only through ignorance of Evil.

“Who told you that all the men created by God disobeyed? Though it is the case for all those which are incarnated on our planet, although there are exceptions, as I will explain to you later, do not assume that there are not other worlds elsewhere peopled by beings who resisted temptation and did not plunge themselves, like us, into evil. Let us not be obstinate in putting our planet as the central and unique goal of Creation.

“I know well that there are people who dispute free will and claim not to be free. That we are not free now, I freely admit, because we have chained our freedom, we delivered it to the Demon, at least in the main. There remains to us only the right to choose, with every one of our acts, between Good and Evil. But in the beginning we were completely free. I know that some speak of predestination, I know that determinism is born, but all that comes simply from not understanding the purpose of Destiny, its exact role in the events of our everyday life, since the majority of us refuse to admit former lives and future lives, in a word, reincarnation.

“But to see clearly, it would be necessary to deal in detail with this question of free will and Destiny, and that would be rather long for today. If you want to, come to see me tomorrow, and come early. Professor Dubourg will be there and we will be able to have a long conversation.”

CHAPTER 5 - Destiny, Free Will

The following day, arriving at Mr. Olivier’s house, I found Professor Dubourg, who had preceded me by a few minutes. Hardly had we sat down when, eager to learn more, I asked:

“So it is today, Sir, that you will talk to me about Destiny?”

“Yes”, Mr. Olivier said to me, “we will speak about it.”

“Would it be indiscreet”, said Professor Dubourg, “to ask you what the subject of your preceding conversations was?”

“Not at all”, I said to the Professor, who seemed to have addressed himself to me rather than to our host. “Mr. Olivier spoke to me about reincarnation, then about Genesis, and finally about the Redeemer.”

“Then”, said the Professor, “you would have been able to see a little more clearly, from the explanations which have been given to you, through all the jumble that the Churches throws in our faces.”

Turning to the Professor, Mr. Olivier said to him:

“Well, Professor, here you go setting off to war!”

“You should admit”, said the latter, “that it is good to set off to war in the face of the inaccuracies, all the errors, all the inventions they try to make us swallow!”

“Come, come, Professor”, said Mr. Olivier, “you know very well how many times I’ve told you that one should not condemn the Church – all Churches – incessantly as you do. However, I do concede that they should no longer leave certain truths aside which, up till now, they have believed it necessary not to make available to all. But we are not going to put the Churches on trial, for if we had ourselves been one their members, we don’t know how we would have acted.

“If you like, we will talk about this, or rather about the subjects I promised give our friend some explanation.”

Then, turning to me, he said:

“When we realize that man comes to earth more than once, and that he must reincarnate until the day he has finished paying off his debts, it becomes very easy to understand existence as well and, if I may say, the mechanism, the operation of Destiny.

“I have already told you that Destiny is the Father’s Servant, and if Destiny isn’t an entity clothed in a terrestrial body, he is no less a servant, an entity in the Invisible. His mission is to scrupulously record all the actions of each man, at the same time placing

in the path of each the inevitable consequence that his actions attract according to the laws created by God. Destiny applies the Law. How? It is quite simple. If we have done harm to someone; Destiny immediately puts the same quantity of harm in our way so that we come across it and, in the name of the Father, the Demon we were serving when we acted badly is given the right of payment by torturing us in our turn; for do not forget that *the evil that we do we borrow or purchase from the Demon, and that we are indebted to him.*

“In like manner, for the good which we do, Destiny places the same quantity of Good on our path.

“But to our good fortune a thing is added to all this, and that is Mercy, the Father’s Kindness; so that in face of our repentance, if we are repentant, God permits the evil which we must endure to be lessened a little and, in consequence, milder than the evil than we did; on the contrary, of His Kindness, He will return the small kindness we were able to do a hundredfold. The Good coming from Him he can multiply *ad infinitum*; the Evil coming from below, He is pleased, through His Mercy, to lessen the share which we have to pay. As for the remainder, I will tell you who pays it and how that is done.

“Fate is none other than Destiny, it is just a question of terminology, and wanting to differentiate them is like wanting to split hairs. As for Chance, it is the servant who has the ability to place, in a completely unexpected place, an event which we humans had no means of predicting using our knowledge and reason. It is a servant working under the orders of Destiny which, itself, is under the orders of the Father.

“Each time a man dies, and arrives on other side, Destiny shows him all his past acts. It also shows him all that he will have to pay and the soul which, on the other side, is free from most of the chains of Matter, and only aspires to one aim, to release itself completely; this is why he asks to return and pay. According to what he did in his former lives and according to his potential, Destiny then apportions the tests which he will have to pass. Freely the soul asks to return, for in the world he is in, he rejoices fully and freely in his free will, and this is why he chooses to return.

“Many people dispute free saying, for example, that not being masters of events, they are constrained to submit to the consequence of events which happen and cannot intervene at all, but in the smallest details.

“And so they would quote this example: A man gives service to a person he meets among mutual friends, following fortuitous circumstances due to third parties who knew neither the person helped nor the person who gave the service; and this is a good example of predestination, free will having no involvement. But they ignore the fact that, if they didn’t know each other in this life, they might have known each other in another existence during which an offense or an injury was involuntarily caused, through awkwardness or negligence, but without spite, and the service given was the compensation arranged by Destiny.

“It is the same when, instead of a service, an act of evil is done¹¹.

“However, one shouldn’t infer that only those which do evil to others are agents of Destiny. If they do evil they are not obliged to do, it is because they want to, and if, then or later, everyone understood that, we would cease being agents of Destiny, agents which work on their debts. Do not forget this!”

¹¹ See Papus: ‘Reincarnation’ (pages 106 to 107). Ed. Dangles, 1953.

“But”, I said, “if then or later Destiny had no more agents to make us pay our debts, how would we free ourselves?”

“And the demons, have you forgotten them? The Prince of this World would certainly find enough henchmen among his servants and admirers to make us pay our debts! And then there are all those who belong to lower humanities, who receive permission to be incarnated in humanities which are still more advanced. Whatever their ranks or level were in their own humanities – whether they had been Kings or High Priests – they only come to ours at the level of sinister bandits. This is why we cannot judge anybody.

“If we find ourselves tomorrow, on waking up, in a world populated by Angels who do only the Will of the Father, don’t you think we would be sad figures and that we would be at the very least sinister, however perfect we believe ourselves to be!”

While Mr. Olivier lit his pipe which he had been stuffing while speaking, Professor Dubourg offered me a cigarette, and when we were once again smoking, our host began again:

“The reason many people do not understand how Destiny works, is because they certainly see him as an invisible agent, but constructed more or less on our level. And yet many of them have a bank account, or deal with banks!”

I acknowledge I was somewhat perplexed, and my surprise must have been evident, because the Professor could not prevent himself from laughing when he looked at me.

“Excuse me”, I said, laughing in my turn, “but I do not see the connection!”

“Well, there we are”, said Mr. Olivier. “Have you considered the fact that a large bank has thousands of customers, and that through other banks it is in connection with hundreds of thousands of other people who, each day, draw checks, negotiate notes, effect movements of funds, buy or sell titles, in sum transact a variety of very numerous operations. However, at any moment the accounts of each customer can be stopped exactly, and their balance established. Now, a bank’s organization is the result of the human brain, and its operation that of human work. Do you believe that God cannot conceive better than men and have more skilful and devoted servants than the best of bank clerks?”

“We shouldn’t envisage in our three dimensions what is of the Invisible and especially what belongs to the Divine World.

“A rigorously precise account is held of all our actions, all our thoughts; and we will be called to account for all when the time comes.

“Now, in a bank, a customer can always influence the state of his account; he is always the owner and beneficiary, insofar as he knows he must pay his creditors, because, if they put an embargo on his account, he is no longer the beneficiary.

“And it is precisely this fact of no longer being the beneficiary which pushes people to shout about injustice, and to deny free will.

“Deny free will! Do you know who can be compared with those who deny free will? A passenger on a transatlantic cruise who, on the third day of the Le Havre to New York crossing, taken to enjoy a vacation in America, changes his mind because of a strong swell, and demands the Captain aim for a safe haven from the

storm at all costs. Before the smiling refusal of the sailor our man will shout about slavery, and will stubbornly hold that free will does not exist.

“To push the analogy further (as much as possible when the Ocean is calm), well, despite the best disposition of our ‘land-lubber’, who will perhaps understand the reasons of the Captain’s refusal, he will still not want to admit that, if he is aboard a steamer, it was of his own desire and free will that he came. He will attest that it was because he was influenced by pretty posters and enticing booklets extolling the beauties of the Rocky Mountains, the grandiose spectacles of Wyoming National Park and the titanic walls of the Grand Canyon of Colorado.

“It is not his fault, he will tell you; it was because he was tempted by all that, therefore it shows that it was not a free choice!!!

“And, believe me, you will have no luck trying to convince him of the lack of logic in his reasoning!”

“This time, I understood your point well”, I said to Mr. Olivier, “but I feel somewhat unable to explain to people who ask me, the things which, nevertheless, are now understandable to me. For example, the reason behind suffering, which you already spoke to me about the other day, but about which people would object if I described what I had already heard...”

“And that is?”

“Well, how God Who loves us can let us suffer, and how, being Almighty, He can let so much evil done on Earth. Couldn’t He prevent it?”

“Since you understood the usefulness of suffering, try to answer this question yourself, for the two questions are really one. Think, and take your time, and we will listen to your reply.”

After a moment’s silence, I began:

“It is clear that no teaching is worth a lived experience, and it is necessary, as you have explained, so that we are ready to understand the suffering of others, so that firstly we can help another avoid it, then, later, to try to relieve it; it is necessary, I tell you, that we experience such suffering. It is also the means of paying our debts, of freeing us, and at the same time of making us become better. If God prevented us from experiencing that, perhaps one day we would not make our brothers suffer, but we would never understand that they suffer, being unaware of what suffering is, and we would never try to relieve their suffering.”

“That is exactly it”, said the Professor, “that is a good answer!”

“You call that charitable?” said Mr. Olivier laughing, as he turning towards Professor Dubourg. “Do you want to encourage our friend’s pride?”

Then, becoming serious again, he said to me:

“Yes, you understood well, and if God allows the Devil to attack us, it is to enable us to

redeem ourselves, by refusing to be obedient to the Prince of this World, and by adoring the Father, by loving His creatures.

“Many people criticize God, and don’t understand the most elementary things taught us though by His Word the Christ.

“They say that we should not suffer, but when you tell them that there are thousands of unhappy people who suffer from all kinds of things that they know nothing about, they do not believe you and – let us not blame them – they cannot us believe that if they have never experienced anything analogous. For example, try to explain to a black from Congo, who has never left the edges of the Oubanghi forever, what it is like to have fingers numb with cold; believe me, he will have no idea, even very vague.

“Try to make one of our contemporaries understand the suffering of those refused work because they are too old, when they are not yet forty years old; make him understand their pains when they see dogs warmly dressed in cardigans which make them look grotesque in the streets, them and their Masters, while his children suffer from the cold!

“Explain to this industrialist or this tradesman, whose business is thriving, and who is a very honest man, make him understand the misery, suffering and effort which were and are required for the luxury he enjoys when going to spend fifteen days on the Riviera. Do you think that being comfortably installed his first class carriage, he can understand anything of the life of hell led by the two men on the engine flying through the black night, at full speed? Shaken, jolted around, faces whipped by the icy air, bodies burned by the heat of the firebox, feeling the weight of responsibility for the whole convoy attached to their engine upon them, holding hundreds of human lives in their hands, scanning the night with their eyes, where the appearance of a double red light, if seen in time, would prevent a catastrophe.

“Have you ever asked driver of express train how much coal he uses in his firebox for a journey such as Paris to Calais? Do it one day when you pass by him, and you will be quite surprised. Yes, I know, people will tell me that they are well paid, and that, if they watch out for the lives of the travelers, they are also looking out for their own! And every time a driver or a mechanic risks his life to save those of the travelers, it is not forgotten.

“And stokers on steamers, And so many others: they do not complain and they are forgotten. As for the unfortunate who are hungry, or cold, a man believes he has done his duty by giving them a small coin! - What is really required is to act fraternally towards them, and for that we must not only treat them as friends and brothers, but make all men understand that we must all act in the same way. For many sin through ignorance. And we should also never tire of this; the only means at our disposal is to lead by example, it is to act this way ourselves, and when we have done everything in our power, when we have exhausted ourselves with the task, then we know that we have done our strict duty. Nothing more. Then let us forget the work completed so that we concern ourselves only with that which remains to be done. Is it not said in the Gospel: ‘But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.’ (St. Luke XVII, vv. 7 – 10.)

“It is because the various classes of society do not know each other well enough that incarnated demons benefit by sowing hatred between the classes. The Gospel also tells us: ‘Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.’ (St. Matthew XVIII, v. 15) ‘Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.’ (I Timothy V, v. 20). So one can get back a brother who is in error by encouraging him to do better, by showing him his negligence, his failures or his errors, but, if one excites others against him, one becomes largely guilty, and our culpability is all the greater than the importance of the visible and invisible consequences. But, if we can measure the visible consequences, can we do it for the invisible ones?

“Indeed, there are many witnesses whom one does not see”, said Professor Dubourg.

“It is true that we are never alone”, I added, remembering some of my conversations with Duval. “There are always beings around us who can bear witness to our actions and who we horrify by acting badly.”

Benefiting from the fact that Mr. Olivier said nothing, occupying himself with the fire, I asked him this question relating to a point which he still needed to clear up.

“A few moments ago you said, in explaining the mechanism of Destiny, you said that through His Mercy God often mitigates the debts we must pay, and that you would later tell me who must pay the remainder. I am now asking you how that is done?”

“I remember saying that to you, indeed. Well, as I said, each of our bad deeds is committed voluntarily or involuntarily. There are many degrees of responsibility which depend not only on the act performed, but on our degree of evolution, and our degree of knowledge, because knowledge increases responsibility.

“In every case, divine Justice wants us to repair the evil so caused, but when, in order to do the evil, we had recourse to using the Powers of Hell, or borrowed what belongs to them, they, too have the right to have us pay for this loan, this aid.

“Let us first consider the restitution itself. The simplest way would be to go to find the person we had wronged, to make amends and to ask his forgiveness.”

“And if he refuses to forgive us?”

“Then, the business would be regulated between his Guardian angel and himself, and our Guardian angel. As for us, it would no longer weigh on us from the moment that we made amends and were sorry.”

“And if the person dies before one could repair and be sorry?

“Then it becomes more complicated, not so much to make amends as to be sorry, since, when we are still both on this plane, the offender and the offended, this passes easily. But, when one of us has departed, it is necessary, when we arrive on the other side, to find the offended person, and not only him, but all the witnesses to the offense, both visible and invisible. And it is only when all these conditions are met that it will be possible for us to ask forgiveness. You see that it is to be better to do the right

thing, no?

“Regarding the reparation of the evil deed, if the person hurt has departed, one has only to do good to one of our brothers in equivalent measure to the evil which we had done, and as we do not have the comparative means to measure the good and the evil, then let us do the most good possible to all our brothers. Then there will always be much on the side of Good in our account at the Bank of Destiny, and this is the only means by which we can pay. Then Destiny will take care of the payments from our account, and it will arrange, through transfers, to pay each of our creditors that which we owe him.

“As for the loans made with the Devil, Destiny has no responsibility to regulate these. It is we alone who must deal Him, and it is here that the Father’s Mercy appears. God takes upon Himself the weight of part of our faults, as He did at the Redemption. And, by His suffering, He Himself pays the Demon what He avoids us having to pay.”

“But”, I said, “forgive my question and my ignorance, but when the Redeemer paid for us, when He consummated His sublime Sacrifice, He took on, with this intention, a body of flesh!”

“Yes,” said Mr. Olivier. “And...?”

“Well, doesn’t the Church say that Christ will return at the end of time, and that then...”

“There”, exclaimed the Professor, “the Church again! This time is isn’t me who speaks about them” he said to Mr. Olivier.

Mr. Oliver, smiling at the implacable Professor, raised his hand to stop the flood of words which were most probably going to pour out against the Church, and answered me:

“But, Sir, who says the Church was right when it says that Christ “will return at the end of time. It is less exact” he added, “if it claims that He will only return at the end of time.

“Didn’t our Lord Jesus Christ make certain promises to us? I know that one can claim that what was reported in St. Matthew in Chapter XXVIII, verse 20: ‘and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world’, should not be taken literally, but in the figurative sense, that Christ wanted to say that He was with those who did the Will of the Father. But, in addition to the fact Christ often spoke both literally and figuratively at the same time, there is a passage in the Gospel of St. John, the end of the final chapter, verses 22 and 23: ‘Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?’

“However Christ forever ceased returning on the Earth, but He said that He would return ‘in such an hour as ye think not’ (St. Matthew XXIV, v. 44). Do you believe that He would abandon a humanity for which He had suffered so much? But like the first time He appeared, the Pharisees, Sacrificers, and Doctors did not want to recognize Him, His works were not sufficient to enlighten them. If He had shown himself visibly to all, none of those who practiced the religion would consent to recognize Him.”

“Of course”, exclaimed the Professor, naturally the priests would be the first to...”

“And they would be right this time not to wish to recognize Him”, said the bass voice of Mr. Olivier.

“Then, I no longer understand”, voiced the staggered Professor.

As for myself, I no longer saw where Mr. Olivier wanted to go with this; but he began again immediately:

“Have you forgotten His insistent recommendations? Do you want to become fodder for the Antichrists? The Master said: “Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. “ (St. Matthew X, v.16). “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravaging wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.” (St. Matthew VII, vv 15 – 16). “And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.” (St. Matthew XXIV, v. 11) “Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” (St. Matthew XXIV, vv. 23 – 24) (St Mark XIII, vv. 21 – 23).

“Is that enough for you as a recommendations to prudence? Do you believe that false Christs are not as numerous in our age, and that there haven't existed in all ages?

“Put Prudence above all and do not forget that you can “to recognize the tree by its fruits”. For the Master and His faithful servants have never stopped returning amongst us, but without showing themselves openly, and if some could see the fruits, at least they have not made the error of proclaim the discovery of the tree which bore them. But to believe us left to our own devices, alone and unsupported against the unchained hordes of Hell, is to doubt the Father's Goodness. Also, let us not seek the Master or His Apostles here or there; let us simply know that they watch ceaselessly close by us, be at peace, but watch ourselves, as Our Lord recommended. The Shepherd is always with us, and His dogs endlessly circle the flock. Let us do our best to realize the Divine Commandments; let us strive to practice Charity in all its forms, to love our neighbors as ourselves, and if we give of our best, for our protection let us recall these words that Our Lord said on the mountain: “Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.” (St. Luke VI, v. 26). Yes, let us be wary of pride and let us not think, when we understand or believe we have understood a truth, that we become superior to other men, to our brothers: we are simply more responsible and should be more charitable and better than before.

“But one must have the certainty that Christ is among us, in this base world, incarnated like a man and most probably of modest means. He comes and goes like all men, works to earn his living, suffers with us, cries with us, carries a sack like all of us, but which is much, much heavier than ours because it (the sack) contains the excess of our iniquities whose weight would crush us. Is it not said: ‘Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.’” (St. Luke, XI v. 46). However, Our Lord Himself always gave the example.

“With Him are those whom He sent, who help Him in the heavy task through which He tirelessly expresses His Kindness to us. “As thou hast sent me into the world, even so

have I also sent them into the world.” (St. John XVII, v. 18) “as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.” (St. John XX, v. 21).

“Those who, since the coming of Christ, have understood His Words and followed His teachings, those who, by their perseverance, have been able to regain their rank of free men; these people, having acquired Charity, return with the Master and His Apostles, following Their example, to help us and pay for us.

“Our desire and our ambition should be such that one day, when we have completed payment of our debts, we will offer to pay for those of our brothers. To act otherwise would be selfishness, as it would not be to love one’s neighbor as oneself, and is to lack Charity.

“To believe that one can be totally happy on this Earth, as long as all those who suffer have not ceased suffering, is to exhibit a quite singular frame of mind. Certainly we have moments of rest. During the Great War, the soldiers who had permission to return ‘above’¹², had the right to laugh and to be happy during this respite; but how many, during these periods of relaxation, did not have terrible moments when thinking of ‘those who remained above’. It was then that the best men climbed back up to the surface: they are the ones at the front who were able, almost all, to give their lives to save a brother-in-arms. The true soldiers of France will understand these words and know them to be true, just as those for whom it was impossible to go, although they wanted to. I will not speak of those who hid themselves away, except for one thing: that they were the do-nothings. And Heaven doesn’t even spare a glance for the do-nothings.

“It is better to be a malicious being and do evil than to be a do-nothing. The malicious can mend their ways and become active in good deeds as they were in evil ones. The do-nothings can only continue to stagnate, and it will take them centuries and centuries of stagnation before they start to ferment little by little, and still that will only happen through the intervention of external agents, which will provoke some response or other from them.

“If they take pleasure in their mire, let us pity them, for our efforts will sadly be powerless to help them. Let us sow the seed in ground which has been prepared. Let us help those who move and who act. Let us focus, according to our judgment, on those who act, whatever the nature of their deeds, good or bad. Let us follow the good, and try to show the bad the error of their ways. As for the do-nothings, those who falls asleep, suffering alone will force them into activity, but it is not our part to make them suffer. Indeed, with our poor understanding we could not be sure if one of our brothers is or is not a do-nothing.

“All this you will find it in Gospels, if you truly want to read them attentively. You will find, for example, this: ‘He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.’ (St. Luke XIII, vv. 6 – 9). And also: ‘I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of

¹² That is, out of the trenches and into battle – PV.

my mouth.’ (Apocalypse III, vv. 15 – 16).

“But it is also necessary to seek by oneself and to understand by oneself.”

As he completed these words, the bell sounded. A short time after Mrs. Olivier came in with a priest. Mr. Olivier rose and cordially presented his hand. Professor Dubourg did the same, and after our host had presented Fr. Poïmène to me, the Professor offered him his armchair, and moved it close to the fire, himself sitting down beside the priest.

This priest had a beautiful head of old man; older than Mr Olivier, it had the very white hair and the very thin face; its a little arched back made him appear smaller than he actually was; good eyes with a frank and limpid glance, he radiated softness, intelligence and kindness. I noticed his hands whose hard callosities I had felt. His feet were shod with large hobnailed laced boots. His cassock was worn, shredded, and, on his chest I saw – not without some surprise – the three ribbons of the brave (Légion d’Honneur, Médaille Militaire and Croix de Guerre) also shredded, like his cassock. I noticed all this while he spoke in a friendly manner with the Professor, while our host exchanged some words with Mrs. Olivier.

“This is a nice surprise”, he said, turning back towards his visitor. “I did not expect the pleasure of seeing you today, Father!”

“I stopped while I was passing by”, replied the priest. “I was coming from the Moreau farm, where I had been to see the son who is a slightly ill, and I wanted to say hello and to thank you for the bag of potatoes you sent to me day before yesterday.”

“And did you find them good?” asked Mr. Olivier, exchanging a rapid glance with the Professor.

“I... that is to say... I... I did not taste them...”, said the poor priest who seemed very embarrassed.

“Yes, I should have asked you whether poor mother Clément and her children found them good, Father, you hide your little acts in vain: everyone knows about them!”

The priest was most uncomfortable.

“As soon as you received them, you found a home for these potatoes with this widow; well, I’ll send another bag to you. But why didn’t you tell me that mother Clément was without potatoes?”

“I only found out the morning of the day you sent them.”

Mrs. Olivier entered, bearing four glasses, a bottle of wine and a plate of pastries on a tray.

“We were going to have some wine and pastries”, said Mr. Olivier. “Would you give us the pleasure of taking some with us?”

And, for a few minutes, the conversation circulated around country matters. The Professor asked the priest for information about certain medicinal plants, then Mr. Olivier and the priest talked about astronomy, which captivated me deeply. Finally, after smoking a pipe with us, the Abbé Poimène rose and said goodbye.

While Mr. Olivier escorted him out, the Professor explained that he and this priest were very good friends. And he regretted the fact that all ministers of religion were not like him, who gave himself wholly over to his task of being a priest and a Christian, helping everyone, and not only his flock, denying himself in order to give, and thinking of himself only when Mr. Olivier or the Professor forced him to with their insistence. They had had to get angry with him to get him to agree to have a little fire at his house during the great freezes. It was the Professor who had seen him carrying the bag of potatoes which Mr. Olivier had taken to him that very morning on a wheelbarrow, and the latter had told him about it.

He also told me how, during the war, as a military chaplain, he had risked his life many times in order to save the wounded; how twice, enemy fire had felled him and how, each time, he had been successful, at the price of great effort, to bring back the casualty he had gone to seek.

Then Mr. Olivier returned.

“So, Professor, we can count on you this Sunday?”

“Yes, of course”, said the latter.

“And you, Sir, would you like to do us the honor of coming to dine with us? It will be simple fare. Another friend will be there and we will spend the afternoon together, because here”, he added, laughing, “we dine at midday; we haven’t found the means to eat nothing at midday having already had breakfast in the morning!”

I accepted with pleasure and thanked Mr. Olivier who added:

“The friend I spoke to you about is a Doctor of medicine, but although he took the Faculty courses, he is far from being in favor of medicine as practiced by allopaths.”

“He is a homeopath, then?”, I said.

“No... neither one nor the other. He tries above all to be Christian, to understand God’s work, and to relieve suffering through prayer and treatment which is rational, simple, and which follows as closely as possible laws of Nature. When he had finished his studies, I advised him to read Hippocrates in text and to follow him closely, a little like Doctor Carton does, whose methodology is based on Hippocratic medicine and who is right on many points, in spite of a little excessive fanaticism. But the man is not important, it is rather a question of the method which, as a whole, is good, so far as a layman like me can judge.”

“Alas”, said the Professor, “each school, in order to promote itself, attacks and

calumnies the others, refusing to recognize that in each one there is both good and bad, as there always is, and I deplore the fact that doctors act so towards each other.”

“What you say is true, Professor”, Mr. Olivier replied, “and don't you believe that you would have as many reasons to extend the animosity you sometimes express towards bad priests to bad doctors and crooked lawyers: in a word, all those for whom cupidity, lucre, and also pride replace professional conscience, often a conscience which is very short?”

“You are right, one is no better than the other”, the Professor agreed while getting up.

I imitated his example and we left Mr. Olivier, who reminded to us that on Sunday we should dine at his place.

CHAPTER 6 - Sickness

The following Sunday, I made the acquaintance of Mr. Olivier’s friend. He was a man aged about 35, large and strong, with a calm and gentle face.

After the meal, while we took coffee in the library, the Doctor, at Mr. Olivier’s request, talked to me about the method he followed and the results he had obtained.

I will not enter in the details of this conversation because, even though I could follow it because of his simple explanation and the clear and transparent way in which the Doctor expressed himself, the subject was too new to me for me to be able to reproduce it. I will summarize by saying that in general we do not know how to nourish ourselves properly, that we eat too much and of food which is too strong, and that our food hygiene is not what it should be. He gave me some books by Dr. Carton, telling me that in broad outline the author was correct, without it necessarily justifying his violent attacks against all doctors, be they allopaths or homeopaths, because there are good and conscientious practitioners in the one group as in the other.

Like Professor Dubourg, the Doctor considered it regrettable that, generally speaking, the Hippocratic methods were not studied and were not applied by the majority of his fellow doctors, and that the rare books covering the subject were not more widely circulated. He deplored the fact that medicine and all the sciences in general were confined within an official structure, too narrow to accommodate Science¹³.

“Yes”, said Mr. Olivier approvingly, “and whose fault is it, if not rampant materialism? This hinders the evolution of beings and often steers them towards the abyss, by developing an immense sense of pride in man which will lead him, if he doesn’t watch himself, to the ultimate catastrophe, into the lake of fire spoken of by St. John in the Apocalypse and which is the second death: ‘And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire,’ (Apocalypse Ch. XX, vv. 14 and 15).

“And what is the first result of this materialism? Error. It manifests itself in everything, under the most diverse conditions of existence, in the arts as in the sciences, in life at large as in the life of the family.

“The art and literature of our century, with very rare exception, is not worthy of comment; the same is true for painting, sculpture and architecture. But where I believe complete incoherence is achieved, is in music, in this demonic jazz, the true symbol of anarchy, in which some want to find something good at all costs, claiming to find either a novel rhythm or a new sound, which is nothing like anything heard before. You will remark, moreover, that this is in fact a kind of snobbery, stupid like all snobbery and, moreover, dangerous.

“What will remain of all this music, all this literature in a future age? Not much! Even if the next upheavals, to which the surface of our sphere must be the theater, were

¹³ In the sense of Knowledge; in French the word *science* can often mean both ‘science’ and ‘knowledge’ – PV.

once more postponed.

“In science, materialism hinders understanding of the Truth and leads to errors. Who are the scientists who have truly brought something useful to official science? The Believers: and apart from them, we find the development of details, unproven assertions, and the many wild imaginings of materialistic theories, which nature does not take long to reverse, to the greatest confusion of the so-called scientists who broadcast their ignorance by broadcasting these theories.

“Materialism destroys all balance in the life of man outside of himself, that is to say in his relationship with his neighbors. In the name of reason, logic is destroyed; men are told that they have rights, but nobody breathes a word about their duties; it is affirmed that they are free by covering them in chains, and they are declared sovereign while being made serfs.

“As for the life of the man in his home, is that still as it formerly was? Do they not seek to destroy home life, the family?

“And even at work, they try to cripple men. It is increasingly difficult to find a whole workman, a ‘Companion’ as he was called in former times, in any trade, because they no longer have apprentices: instead, they create specialized operatives. The intellectuals, too, are so specialized that it is almost impossible to find a man who has a any depth of general knowledge.

“It is almost impossible to find any shepherds, herdsmen, or goatherds who really know their profession any more, for it is a real profession requiring manifold knowledge of animals, their ailments, their food, the care to give depending on the breed; and also a knowledge of weather and a spirit of observation with a rare acuity.

“Don’t you think that, if instead of declaring to man that they have rights, one had shown them that they have duties, we would have had a better result: that if, instead of demanding his rights (which leads to selfishness by making him think only of himself), man endeavored to accomplish his duties towards his brethren, there would be more kindness and more Charity on Earth?

“Ah, we hear them asked to come to the aid of their ‘oppressed brothers’, but these ‘oppressed brothers’ are most often abroad, and I cannot know if the aid sent, often kindly, actually reaches them¹⁴! Why seek far off for what is right under our noses? Why go and help those we don’t see, yet not relieve the misery which surrounds us?

“Alas!” says the Professor, “this error exists in all classes of society! Take, for example, the comedy of charity balls or charity sales among the middle-class, where fat Mrs. Soandso goes to wriggle her hips for several hours, or gobble up a surprising number of gâteaux, in order to come to the aid of the unfortunate. Yet she passes them every day in the street and very often doesn’t even afford them a glance.”

“But isn’t it better that they do that than nothing at all?” I said.

“Admittedly yes”, answered our host, “but it would be rather better if the good that they did, in whatever form it took, was done in secret.”

¹⁴ Indeed, this was prophetic of the Oxfam scandal in the 1970s, when it was discovered that the English charity was sending less than 10% of what it raised to aid the poor in other countries; the rest being spent on overheads, a large UK staff force, high salaries and executive perks. The uncovering of this disgrace by investigative reporters led to a complete overhaul of how charities were supervised in England – PV.

“But isn’t it useful to have the example?” I asked.

“Certainly, but the example wouldn’t be lost: it would be a teaching for him who is helped; since by doing good in secret, a little Light is brought into the Darkness, and before that Light, Darkness ceases to be Darkness.”

After a moment of silence, the Doctor who appeared to be thinking, spoke.

“There seems to be too much specialization in all branches nowadays”, he said. “In my profession I see many of my co-workers orientated towards the study of the diseases of some organ or other, and quickly end up unable to handle general practice. If the doctor, instead of doing his best to look after the patient by prescribing a treatment which often only results in acting as a counterbalance to the illness, sought the original cause and tried, with God’s aid, to destroy it, the patient would be cured.”

“But doesn’t a good doctor usually find the cause of the illness?” I asked.

“The physical cause, sometimes, yes, but do not believe that the physical cause of an illness is the initial cause.”

“You wish to say, perhaps, that heredity... atavism at last...”

“Ah, dear Sir”, said Mr. Olivier, “there is heredity and atavism involved when we find our body in the state in which we left it, which we spoke about the other day; but many diseases come from our sins, that is to say often from our moral faults. Each one of them, according to the degree of responsibility which we had in committing it, and according to the circumstances which accompanied it, brings about disease as a consequence, which Destiny will place on our path at the appointed hour. Did Jesus not say: ‘Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee,’ (St. John, Ch. V, v. 14) and: ‘his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?’ (St. John, Ch. IX, v. 2).

“Yes”, I said, “I see, I understand. But isn’t what you just quoted last a proof of reincarnation? Because, if he were born blind, it could not be him who had sinned in this life, and, if Christ reprimanded His disciples, it is as if their assumption was not absurd, and that the person born blind could have sinned during a former existence?”

“It’s evident, because it would be impossible to explain how God punishes the iniquity of men up to the third and fourth generation, yet grants mercy to the thousandth. You will find that in several places in the Bible. ‘Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments’, (Exodus, Ch. XX, vv. 5 and 6); ‘...keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the

children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.’ (Exodus, Ch. XXXIV, v. 7). ‘...for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.’ (Deuteronomy, Ch. V, vv. 9 and 10).

“For God, being good and right, could not strike the innocent, which often the mistaken will not see, because they live in the times of the third and fourth generation.

“But all this takes us away from medicine.”

“It is partly my fault”, I said. “I always need explanations, and I will ask you yet another question. If diseases have a fault committed as a primary cause, I do not really see how a treatment or a diet could cure them.”

“This is a question for the Doctor.”

“I will try”, said the Doctor. “Correct me if I make an error,” he said to Mr. Olivier.

“The doctor should never believe that he can cure somebody, and the patient must understand that the doctor can only soothe him. It is Heaven which grants the cure, when the patient, through his suffering, his resignation and his confidence; and those who surround him with their devotion, their sorrow, their anguish and their supplications; and the doctor through his care and his prayers, have done all that they could do, and if the sum of all these efforts to which the Father’s Mercy is added, will be full payment for what was required to be paid.

“Treatment by the doctor, if acting alone, can nevertheless bring about relief, especially if the doctor is a Christian *and he prays*, but even if, without being a Believer, he is charitable and devoted – a in a word if he acts like a Christian.

“Hippocrates’ method is not only composed of the instructions which must be followed during the crisis, but also the actions to be taken when it has passed: the things to be avoided, to prohibit, and, if the patient, after marked improvement, follows these precepts, he purify his body and his way of living considerably, and his mental state will always be good, for everything will work together. If the doctor can, he should give some advice, recommend certain books, becomes to some extent a friend of the patient, and ultimately directs him towards good, that is towards Charity. A little experience makes that increasingly easy to do, though *a priori* this appears to be incompatible with the medical profession. But this doctor very quickly becomes a confidant; from there it is only one step to becoming a friend. With Heaven’s assistance, this is quickly achieved.”

“So a man who would follow instructions on health and food hygiene could perfect himself, not only in the physical world by having a healthy and robust body, but in the astral one and the spiritual, too?”

“It is not enough to have a healthy and robust body, and to enjoy it for oneself and only for oneself: it is necessary for the heart to act as well. I am not talking about the internal organ, but about the center of Love, in which Charity – Love of one’s neighbor – can take form and develop.”

“And the worship of God”, added the deep voice of Mr. Olivier.

“*Mens sana in corpore sano*”, said the Professor.

“If all this is true, if the physical has an effect on the other planes”, I said, “the opposite must be true, and an evolved soul must live a healthy body; however if...”

“Careful! Beware!” interrupted Mr. Olivier. “You were going to say that, if somebody is not always in perfect health, it is because he has debts to pay. But that is a judgment made on those who may not be deserving of it, and we should not condemn our brothers. And moreover, what do you do about those who have come back to pay for us?”

“It is true”, I said, “we don’t know. But when we are ill or when we endure some suffering, or finally when we pay a debt, can we imagine that it is for our neighbor?”

“That would be pride. Pride is a terrible sin, and we would contract a illness for believing that. No, let us be severe to ourselves and indulgent towards others. We should watch out, really watch out for spiritual pride. We should know that each time we have to pay, it is for our personal account; and believe, when we see one of our brothers suffering, that he is paying for us. Perhaps that will help us to love our neighbors as ourselves.

“A few moments ago you were told that materialism prevents the comprehension of truth; yet you know that materialism is very widespread among doctors. Didn’t one of them claim never to have encountered the soul beneath his scalpel?”

“He must have died, if ridicule kills”, said the Professor.

“Still scathing in your comments?” said Mr. Olivier, looking at him. “But I recognize it is difficult to feel sorry for those who try to destroy what little belief remains in their contemporaries, because with skepticism always comes, sooner or later, a lack of Charity and the glorification of the Ego; selfishness and pride, those twin brothers.

“A doctor who, instead of denying without seeking to understand, studied the four Hippocratic temperaments a bit, would never apply the same treatment for the same illness indifferently to everybody. In that, he would already be better informed. But it would be preferable if, following Hippocrates more closely, he parted company completely with commercial medicine, with those dangerous products which people take every other minute and which are irrelevant.

CHAPTER 7 - The Blessed Virgin

“Something which makes the blood of materialist and atheist doctors boil, are the miracles of Lourdes”, said the Professor, “and, despite of their number and official observations, they don’t want to recognize any of it, and yet the facts are there, and undeniable.”

“And when Our Lord performed miracles, did people believe more? And do you think that a hundredth of the miracles in which one is involved daily are recognized? They are not even seen, or called a coincidence. As for the miracles of Lourdes, there are even Catholics who do not believe in it.”

“That is because they do not understand the Virgin”, said the Professor.

“I am among the number of those who do not understand”, I said. “Admittedly, what I have been able to read about the Blessed Virgin has given rise to a deep respect in me, a fervent veneration for the sorrowful Mother of Our Lord but on the other hand, I acknowledge not to have understood much that is understood by Cosmic Virgin, Esoteric Virgin, and all other names which are given to Her.”

“Do you believe that those who speak about such things have understood something?”, said the Professor. “For my part, I do not believe so.”

“We cannot know”, said Mr. Olivier. “It could be that some spoke without really knowing what they said; but there some perhaps who understood something. And, however, then one cannot always very clearly express what for oneself is a certainty.”

“What is conceived well is stated clearly...”, quoted the Professor.

“In the things with our sphere, perhaps, but let us acknowledge that the Blessed Virgin surpasses us, and one only shows a respectable amount of humility if one acknowledges this”, he added, laughing.

“One or two authors have written passages about the Virgin which moved me deeply; Sédir among others.”

“You have read the works of Sédir?”, the Professor asked me.

“Yes, his mystical works especially, and I found them to be deeply Christian. He truly loved Christ.”

“He was a good servant”, said Mr. Olivier in a serious voice.

“But his last works, I mean those which appeared after his death, seemed quite inferior than the others to me. Perhaps he was old or sick?”

“It is not that”, said the Professor, “but...”

“At least he finished them”, Mr. Olivier cut in.

“I would be grateful, Sir”, I asked, “if you could say some words on the Blessed Virgin and the names given to her.”

“To be able to speak about the Blessed Virgin, like speaking about God or the Trinity, one needs to be qualified, and I am not worthy to speak. However, I will tell you the little I understand of what was explained to me.”

A slight movement from Professor Dubourg made me to raise my eyes to look at him. He had turned his head a little to look at the portrait which I had gazed at the other day, and it was because he looked at it that I noted this incident. His eyebrows, normally wrinkled above his pugnacious eyes, had relaxed, and his glance fixed the portrait with such an expression of Love that I was surprised, deeply surprised.

But the grave and ardent voice of Mr. Olivier had already begun again:

“Before speaking about the Blessed Virgin, I need to tell you some things about the Holy Trinity.

“Some make the error of identifying the Virgin with the Holy Spirit. It is a gross, a very gross error, but you will understand that, despite its significance, this error is not very dangerous for those who make it, for it doesn’t interfere with Faith, nor does it hinder the practice of Charity.

“The Virgin is not the Third Person of the Trinity, but certainly the First of Creatures outside of the Trinity. However, She is in the Divine World.

“For the Church, the Trinity is a mystery which we shouldn’t seek to go into more deeply.

“It is true that we are not able to understand Her completely, because for that we would need to be part of the Absolute. Indeed, the Trinity is Infinite, and it is impossible for the ‘finite’ to understand the Infinite One in His Infinite Totality. However, we can understand an aspect of it, taking into account that it is but an aspect, a part of the Truth.

“God the Father is the Creative Power.

“God the Son is the Creative Act.

“The Father creates through his Word, an integral part of Himself.

“The Holy Spirit is the radiance of the Divinity, a radiance which can penetrate all that the Father has created by His Word, a radiance which testifies to the Presence of God.

“Each of these Three People of the Divinity is One with the Two Others and the Three form One.

“But this arithmetic is somewhat difficult for our three-dimensional brains to assimilate.

“The Virgin is Nature, or even all of Creation, and Wisdom is the Divine Spark which comprises the higher Soul of this wonderful Entity which is the Universal Virgin.

“It is an error to believe that, ‘Without Her, united with the Logos or Word, nothing could exist, and nothing which was made was made without Her’; these last words apply only to the Word, and can apply only to Him. Because it is He, the Creator of all things, without uniting with anyone or anything, but by the Sole Will of the Father

with Whom He is One.

“To compare the Blessed Virgin to the Holy Spirit is to cause Him distress, because it hurts Her to be put in a position where She shouldn’t be, because She knows and has always known what was said by Christ about those which are not in their proper place, thus: ‘And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them. When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.’ (St. Luke, Ch. XIV, vv. 7 – 11).

“The Blessed Virgin knows that She does not partake of Divinity, of the Trinity, that is to say, of the Uncreated; but that She is a created being who occupies and will always occupy, in every age throughout eternity, the preeminent place.

“Wisdom, which existed before the Creation (Proverbs, Ch. VIII¹⁵), could only exist in God because it is essentially abstract, and it was Wisdom which God gave as a soul, as a Divine Spark, to the Blessed Virgin.

“This is how She is in the Divine World.

“This Universal Virgin, by order of Her Creator took a body, the body of woman, because only the Universal Virgin, Queen of all creatures, Pure in Her Essence, could take a body and serve as Mother to the Word, Who was incarnated to reveal Himself to men.

“The Blessed Virgin, Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, is truly an incarnation of the Universal Virgin, but not of the Holy Spirit, Which has never become incarnate, but Which can appear in many incarnated creatures, when they meet the required conditions.

“What seems to confirm that they are correct, those who make this confusion, is the analogy which there is between the Divine Trinity and the trinities which exist in other religions. Among the Egyptians, for example, they find Osiris, Isis and Horus, to which they assign respectively the signs of positive (+), negative (-) and neutral (∞). The Father, the Mother and the Child.

“But, although religions, in the main, were founded by Envoys of the Father, who gave men the rudimentary elements of Truth, by couching them in forms which could be assimilated by them through analogy, only one religion on our planet was founded by the God-Word: this is Christianity.

“To make the error of believing that Christ is the Third Person of the Trinity, and to regard the Virgin as Second Person, by identifying Her with the Holy Spirit, is to believe that, in order to manifest Himself through His Word, the Father (Who is assigned the male principle) required the Virgin (female principle). This is to limit Divinity, to subject Him to the laws which govern our created Matter. I do not say Creation, because there are Universes where the female principle does not exist any more than the male principle: both being not united in the sense of juxtaposition, but blended together, One.

“People are too keen, because of this analogy desired by the Creator of making man in His Image, to believe that God is identical to man, but simply on another plane.

“In the Egyptian religion, one must see the Trinity in Osiris; the Universal Virgin in Isis; and Humanity – but a prototype humanity, if I may say so, an ideal humanity – in

¹⁵ See pages XX and XX.

Horus. Let us not forget that Osiris is an aspect of Ra, or Amun-Ra, and that Hoor, Horos or Horus, is multiple in aspect and *similar to Osiris*. Isn't he both at the front and the back of the sacred barque, at the prow to fight against the enemy and to piece him with his arrows, at the stern with the rudder to guide the boat?

“Hoor manifests Amun-Ra and his name is found in Amun-Ra Horakhty or better Amun-Ra Horem-akhou-Ti¹⁶. Osiris is the hidden aspect of Amun-Ra, since he is named thus when he crossed Nut, the vault of heaven on his Sekhti boat, propelled by the Akhimou-Urdu and Akhimou-Sekou.

“If one studied this Egyptian religion more deeply, one would find many explanations analogous to what is said in the Bible.

“What muddles the researchers to some extent, is that this One-God with multiple names and multiple appearances, and also this Trinity which, with the presence of Isis, leads to confusing the Virgin with One of the Persons of the Holy Trinity.

“The ancient Egyptians considered that God existed in the Nous, Infinite Space, but they could with some difficulty, being in the limited and in the time, represent the Infinite Being in Time, and this is why they conceived Him as reproducing by Himself, being His own Father, His own Mother, and His own Son. From there came this notion of the Trinity requiring a Male principle and a Female principle to perpetuate itself. This is a purely human concept, born from the relative and its laws, and incompatible with the Absolute, Amun-Imhotep.

“I will say to you in passing, that the Akhimou-Urdu and Akhimou-Sekou belong to the hierarchies of the Divine World, creations in the Divine World, outside of Matter. But that is a little away from our discussion on the Virgin.

“You see, Sir, that one should always take very great care not to confuse what, like us, is Created with the Uncreated. Many religions make the error of believing that we end in God to merge with Him and become an integral part of Divinity. No, that will never happen, because the Uncreated is and will remain Uncreated; and the Created will always be limited, and this would be in time as a period of Life since, if it exists now, it did not always exist.

“Having finished the cycle of our evolutions, we will again become perfect creatures, as when God made us; but creatures we will remain, and our union with the Father will be in the fact that we do His Will. But of this state, which we are still far from attaining, we cannot hope to have any conception.

“The fiancée referred to in the *Song of Songs* is not, as some believe, a representation of the Virgin. It is a personification of the Elect Nation, which for a long time was the Jewish nation; but which, having refused the Light, has had to yield its place. We will not seek, for the moment at least, to know which Nation took the Jews' place. ‘Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.’ (St. Matthew. Ch. XXI, v. 43). ‘And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ (St. Matthew, Ch. VIII, vv. 11 – 12).

“If, in the *Song of Songs*, the fiancée was the Virgin and that She was besides identified with the Holy Spirit, what a need would She have for union with Her Creator,

¹⁶ I couldn't find an equivalent of this. Perhaps he is referring to what English calls *Horem-akhet*, the Sphinx at Giza, or ‘Horus-of-the-horizon’? – PV.

since, being the Holy Spirit, She would be already One with Him!

“Do you understand now, Sir, Who the Universal Virgin, and Who the Blessed Virgin or Virgin Mary, Mother of the Word made manifest, is?”

“Yes, Sir, I understand that the Virgin Mary is to the Universal Virgin what Christ is to God.”

“That is right. For this reason the Virgin is Our Mother, as God is Our Father. And then you will better understand why Our Lord answered as He did in this passage from the Gospels: ‘While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.’ (St. Matthew, Ch XII, vv. 46 – 50). And also at the Wedding at Cana: ‘And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.’ (St. John, Ch. II, vv. 1 – 5). Isn’t this a lack of respect by Christ to the Virgin Mary, which could not be. We need to explore this further.

“Now, it is wise to explain that the expression ‘What is there between you and me?’ was common, both Aramaic as well as in Hebrew; it roughly translates as: ‘What’s the matter?’ or ‘What’s all this about?’ You can verify this in the *Old Testament*: Judges, Ch. XI, v. 12; I Kings, Ch. XVII, v. 18; II Kings, Ch. III, v. 13; II Chronicles, Ch. XXXV, v. 21; and in the New Testament: St. Matthew, Ch. VIII, v. 29; St. Mark, Ch. I, v. 24; to quote only a few places. But let us return to Our Lady.

“Very few people think about the Virgin Mary, and yet if they knew of the Love, tenderness and gentleness the heart of this Mother contains, they would be deeply moved.

“But the emotion which can be felt by those who manage to understand Her Infinite gentleness, Her immeasurable tenderness, is impossible to communicate by seeking to describe it in words. The human language is too poor, too weak to express it; only, perhaps, music... and still only insofar as it could evoke a moonbeam... a murmur of the evening breeze... or the admirable sparkling of a dewdrop in the rising sun.

“No”, he resumed after a moment, “it is only the Love of one’s neighbor which can open the heart and make it accessible to these divine emotions. To seek elsewhere is to waste one’s time.”

“What you have just said to me about the Virgin and the Trinity is quite different from what I have heard from some mystics or occultists, and also from what I have read. However, some authors seem to have understood differently, and without expressing it clearly, their conception appears to be close to what you have just taught me.”

“Dear Sir, I would not want you to accept what I say without examining it thoroughly; you do not have to admit it if you feel it to be true. Too many people seek to convince, and we have no right to do that. One should do one’s best to explain, to strive to be understood and, when one has done all that was possible to do to be clear and

comprehensible, then one must to others the duty to assimilate it, to feel the Truth within themselves, or that part of the Truth which they are capable of understanding.

“Do not forget that in wanting too much to prove, one does not prove anything.”

Then, after a silence, he added:

“Above all it is necessary based everything on the facts and the words of the Gospel, because it is there that the Truth is. One can then, but only then, seek *analogies* in Sacred Science or Occult science and in all that surrounds us. If I say *analogies*, it is intentional, for don’t forget that on the Emerald Tablet is engraved: ‘That which is below is as that which is above, and that which is above is as that which is below...’ But, the word ‘as’ expresses an idea of analogy and not of identity.

“Indeed, only a little logic is required to understand that there can be no identity between the Created (below) and the Uncreated (above); that would be to confuse God with His Creation. This error is made by certain sects and those who want to go too quickly. And after one shows them their errors, those who, through pride, want to hold to their beliefs, lack respect for God. Only they, moreover, would know if this were due to pride or incomprehension. This is why we will not judge them.

“I certainly understand that one should not judge others, but then, doesn’t one risk no longer recognizing Good from Evil?”

“By ‘do not judge’, it is necessary to understand it as ‘do not condemn’. What’s more, this is how Osterwald translated the Greek *μη κρινετε*: ‘judge not, that ye be not judged.’ (St. Matthew, Ch VII, v. 1). So we shouldn’t pronounce judgment condemning one of our brothers; we should only perceive that the act committed would be bad if we had done it ourselves, with our state of mind and in accordance with what we know of the circumstances in which it took place. But our judgment should stop there and not be taken to the perpetrator; because his true state of mind is often unknown for us, as well as what he knew or was unaware of, and often even we only know the circumstances imperfectly.”

“That, I understand”, I said; “but then, what about court judges?”

“The court judges must judge according to their conscience and according to the laws of their country, They must restrict themselves to applying the penalties decreed by these laws, while endeavoring to know the true facts, and not such as they are often presented. Is there not a passage in the Gospels where Our Lord said: ‘Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.’ (St. John, Ch. VII, v. 24). And I believe you will also find in the Bible: ‘Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.’ (Leviticus, Ch. XIX, v. 15).

“But”, said the Professor, “aren’t those who make the laws also responsible if these laws are not just?”

“Without a doubt, and we ourselves have a share in that responsibility, since we have given power to the legislators; we get what we deserve, too, and iniquitous laws come from our iniquities. Nobody is excused from responsibility, neither those who propose

them, nor those who vote for them, nor those who apply them.

“We are responsible for all our actions, and our responsibility increases with our knowledge and the place we occupy in the midst of our brethren. A man of high station will pay much more than an ordinary citizen. Ah, if they knew that, they would be less ambitious!”



CHAPTER 8 - The Septenary

Several days had been passed since my last visit with Mr. Olivier. I had read some of the books the Doctor had lent me, and understood the broad outline of the method practiced by Dr. Carton. I had also read the *Gospels* and had noted down many questions to ask.

With the advent of December, the cold shown itself sharper and, for two days, the countryside had been completely white. A thick layer of snow covered the ground. I left Saint Martin around one o’clock, but it was nearly three when I was once more seated in Mr. Olivier’s library. I had met him a few hundred meters from his house, at the spot where the road from Saint Martin reached the pathway which led up to his place. On going in, after responding to my greetings, Mrs. Olivier had asked him:

“Well?”

“Oh it’s nothing, Heaven will take it from there.”

“Your meal is warm”, she said, opening the kitchen door.

“Go in, do”, said Mr. Olivier, “we’ll go down in a moment; perhaps it’s not protocol to ask you into the kitchen, but we will treat you as a friend, for you are a friend, no?”

Confused by this simple cordiality, which I felt to be sincere, I mumbled a thank you, and, while I sat in the seat which Mrs. Olivier put before me, her husband opened a kitchen dresser, took out a partly-eaten loaf of bread and a plate of cheese, and, cutting a slice of bread and a piece of cheese, started to eat with a good appetite,

His wife insisted that he ate the meal which she had kept warm for him, but he answered that what he had was quite sufficient, and that with a half glass of wine he would have dined very well.

While eating, he enquired after my health, and if I had read any of the books the doctor had given me previous Sunday. I told him what I had read, and that I was going to ask him some questions.

Mrs. Olivier had made coffee, which she now served us, as usual, in the library.

Mr. Olivier gave me explanation to various questions, of which I do not have a precise recollection, about alimentation, which showed me the universality of his knowledge, which, even later, much later, never ceased to surprise me. With him, one could talk about any subject, and he would listen to you speak, like somebody who listens attentively for understand well; but if one asked him a question, from his responses one quickly realized that he knew the subject thoroughly.

So when I asked him what God had given to man for his nourishment, he answered:

“God gave man cereals, fruits and vegetables. He also gave him fish, and finally domestic animals.”

“So one should never eat game?”

“Only in exceptional circumstances. Only in the case of great necessity; but normally it is better to abstain.”

“And meat, couldn't one avoid that?”

“Not such as we are, for some is necessary, as well as fish, especially when one is well; but as soon as one is sick, except in certain cases, it is better not to have any. But you can speak about all that with our friend the Doctor, as he is more knowledgeable erudite than me.”

“Yet the other day, didn't he ask you for advice several times during the meal?” I said a little boldly.

Mr. Olivier smiled:

“That is because I have a little experience, being older than him”, he said, “and it was about cases which I knew. I know there are theories which are new in medicine, but I also know that there is nothing new under the sun, because all that exists was created by God a long time ago, and what men do, other men have done before them. And then, I will tell you another thing, I formerly had a Friend who was a Savant, and he taught me many things. I have preciously guarded his lessons, and they are at the disposal of those who have need of them, for is it not said: ‘And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.’ (St. Mark, Ch. IV, vv. 21 – 23) (St Matthew, Ch. V, v. 15) (St. Luke, Ch. XI, v. 33).”

“Several years ago, I read (the memory returns to me now because we were just talking about man's nourishment) that one shouldn't eat meat or one would become like the animals.”

“Oh?” said Mr. Olivier, “but the Anglo-Saxons, are big meat-eaters, and have you ever see them running into grazers? And do you believe that those who people call ‘bigwigs’ are only vegetarian¹⁷?”

“But let's be serious! In all things, it is necessary to avoid excess; avoiding eating too much meat doesn't mean to say one has to fall into complete sectarianism and undertake a crusade to stop the consumption of meat completely.

“Look at the result they got in the United States regarding alcohol, with their puritan law of ‘Prohibition’, which in any case should have been abolished, after it had caused a devastation from which that country is still not close to recovering.

“It is necessary to come to everything gradually, while knowing what one is doing. With meat, as with alcohol, it is necessary to go gently.”

¹⁷ This is a French pun which doesn't work in English. ‘Bigwig’ in French is *Gross Légume* which literally means ‘Big Vegetable’. Well, it's funny in French! – PV.

“I remember neither the title of the booklet in question, nor the name of the publishers, but I know they claimed that by absorbing the flesh of animals, one absorbed their astral which took possession of our body and that we thus come to have the instincts of animals.”

“If one were as logical as them, one would reply that by eating vegetables, one also absorbs astral vegetables and that one would come to have the instincts of a potato, turnip or a pumpkin!

“No, this exaggeration is not good, since it overshoots the truth. When we eat the flesh of an animal, this flesh changes and is able, at least in part, after many changes in state, to become cells of our flesh. But what we borrow from vegetables, from fruit, also becomes flesh, which gives you an idea of the transformations undergone. Well, it is the same for what the authors of this booklet improperly called the animal astral. There is a transformation, which is completely different for animal, plant or mineral, because we also absorb minerals, as you know.

“What would be bad, very bad, would be to misuse meat and especially food made up of the blood of animals, for example blood sausage, and also the liver. If brain is eaten, one should take care to remove the cerebellum, and one should not abuse it either.”

Mr. Olivier stuffed his pipe, then lit it.

I said to him, “Now I would like to put some questions to you about the constitution of man. At home I read a discussion of the Septenary in a book by Dr. Gérard Encausse, which makes up the body of man. In one of the books that our friend the Doctor lent to me, I found a discussion which was quite similar in broad outline, though different in detail. And I would like to have your opinion on this¹⁸.”

“That is not very easy”, Mr. Olivier replied. “The more so as I have not read the book.”

“I brought it with me, and if you want to allow me, I’ll fetch it from my coat pocket.”

Shortly thereafter I showed the book to Mr. Olivier, who said:

“Ah! It is by Papus (Dr. Encausse) whose books were not understood by materialists and about whom they spread the most fantastic stories!

“Papus was a occultist of the highest caliber. But I don’t want to give you his biography now.”

“If you don’t mind, I’ll read you the passage relating to the composition of man. It’s in its ‘Treatise on Occult Science’.”

“I’m listening”, said Mr. Olivier.

So I read:

¹⁸Read the luminous explanation by Papus in his ‘Elementary Treatise on Occult Science’, 2nd edition, p. 348 and following. Editions DANGLES, 38, rue de Moscow, Paris (VIII’).

“The Microcosm or Man.

“Man is primarily made up of:

“1. A material Principle coming from the physical world: *the body or the cadaver*;

“2. A vital Principle coming from universal Nature: *the astral body*;

“3. A spiritual Principle coming from the divine world: the immortal spirit, generally called the *soul* in philosophy.

“So man possesses within himself manifestations of the three worlds or the three planes: physical, astral and divine and, consequently, has within him *all* the laws which act in these three worlds. He was also called MICROCOSM or lesser world, because he is the precise reflection of the MACROCOSM or greater world.

“One thus can, by *the study of the man alone*, come to knowledge of all the physical, astral and divine laws. We can get this from the ‘γνῶσι σεαυτον’ of the Greeks and the axiom of Claude Saint Martin: Study Nature through Man and not Man by Nature.

“The incarnation of each human soul recreates *in miniature* the history of the fall of Great-Adam with its two phases:

“1. The Fall of the Divine World into the physical World;

“2. The New Fall which is still possible if the incarnated soul does not resist the attractions of the lower plane.

“It is very important to understand this key, for the naturalist initiations of the East, which have multiplied the analyses on the composition of man, have so lost any track of the analogical link between man and the other planes in the astral and divine world, which they do not see, that the *similarities* of the laws of human life, without remembering that man is but one *analogical image* of the universal laws, but in a physical image.

“Now let us see how they have analyzed the three Principles with regard to man.

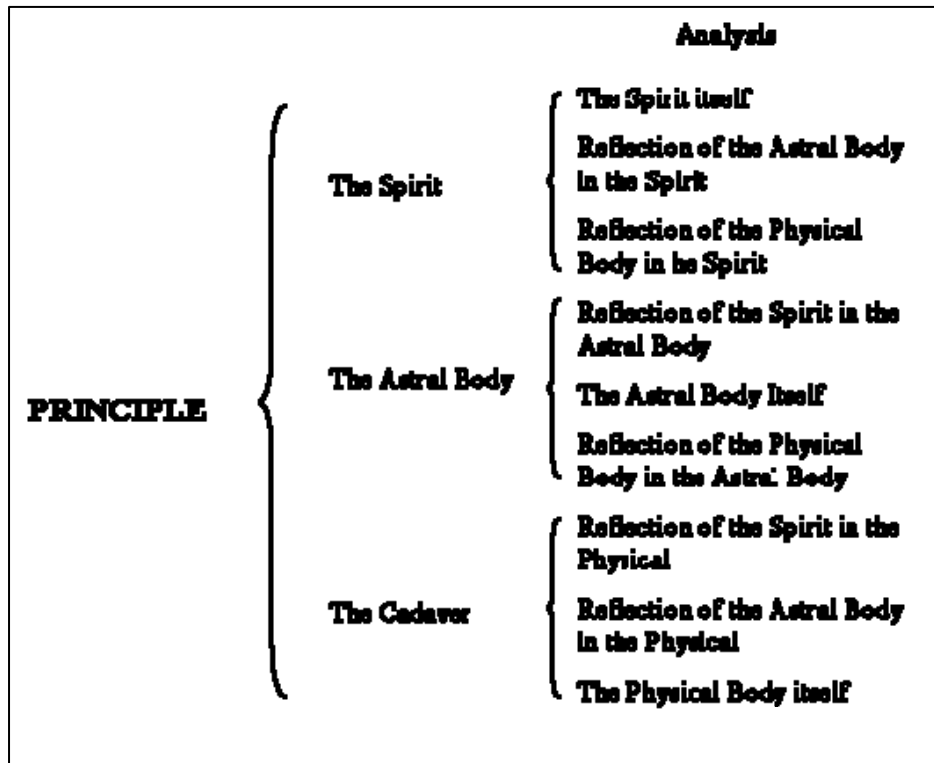
“These Principles act with each other like electrical currents of opposing names whose meeting produces sparks. This spark will last only as long as the contact of the three Principles, in general, during a terrestrial existence.

“Thus, one cannot give the *name of principle* to this transitory creation and there are Christians who share St. Paul’s correct comment in saying that man is *primarily* composed of three principles: *Spiritus, Anima et Corpus*. The rest is made by TRANSITORY CREATIONS produced by the reaction of each of these Principles to the others.

“Just as in each we find the three sections (head – chest – abdomen) of the physical body, the other sections are represented, in the same way that in each of the Three Principles, once incarnation is accomplished, the other principles are also represented. Thus in the abdomen, the chest is represented by the vessels and the head by the nervous plexuses; these are the channels of involution of blood and the nervous power in the belly which descend in order to allow the evolution of digested substances.

“In the physical body, the astral body and the Spirit have ‘images’ of themselves and it is the same for each of the three Principles.

“It is sufficient to refer to our chapter on Kabbala and the creation of the Sephiroth to have the law of this action which we will quickly cover here:



“So the three Principles considered in their analytical decomposition show *nine manifestations* and this is the analysis generally made by the Kabbalah.

“But this analysis indicates the *static* decomposition of the human Being.

“When one studies the human Being in action, when these several manifestations are seen on the dynamic or physiological plane, then we note that some of them are joined to others and that man then appears to be constituted of *seven manifestations* instead of nine, because of the fusion of various reflections.

“To show the truth of what we are saying, we will take a commonplace example, thanks to which everything will be cleared up and become very simple.

“A team is composed of three principle constituents: a carriage, a horse and a coachman. The passive and mute carriage, or car is the image of the physical body; the passive but mobile horse is the image of the astral body, and the active and directing coachman is the image of the Spirit.

“Yet the coachman is composed in his turn of three parts: head, arms and body.

“The horse also has three parts: head, body and legs.

“The car has three parts, too: seat, body of the car, wheels.

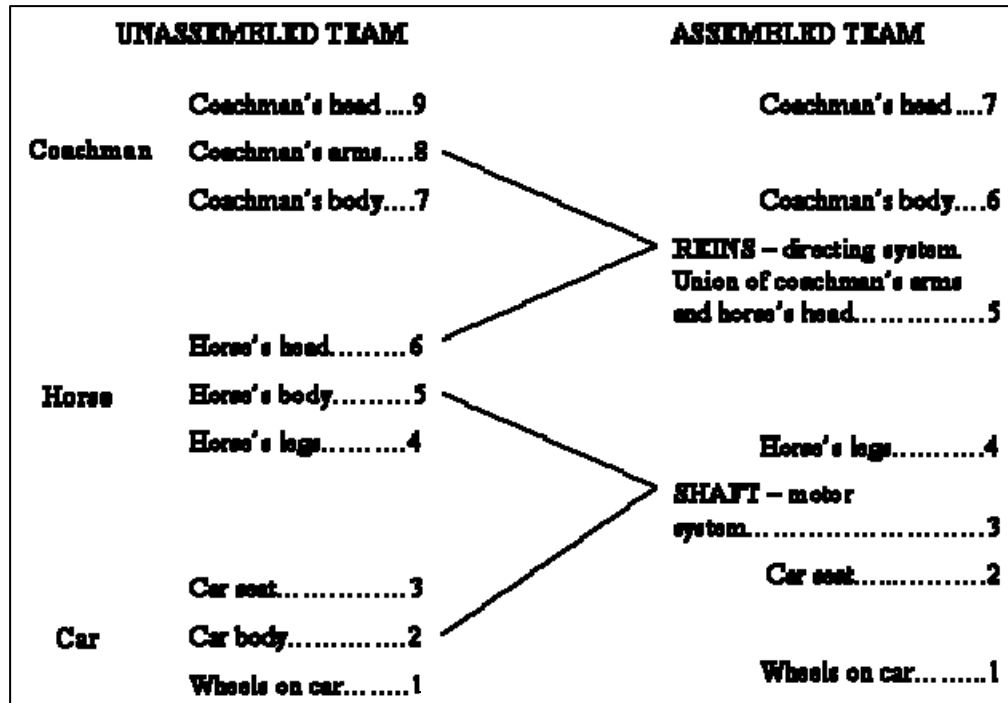
“Here are our nine principles which exist when the car is stationary, the horse in the stable and the coachman in his room.

“But let us join these three primary elements together, and let us see what happens.

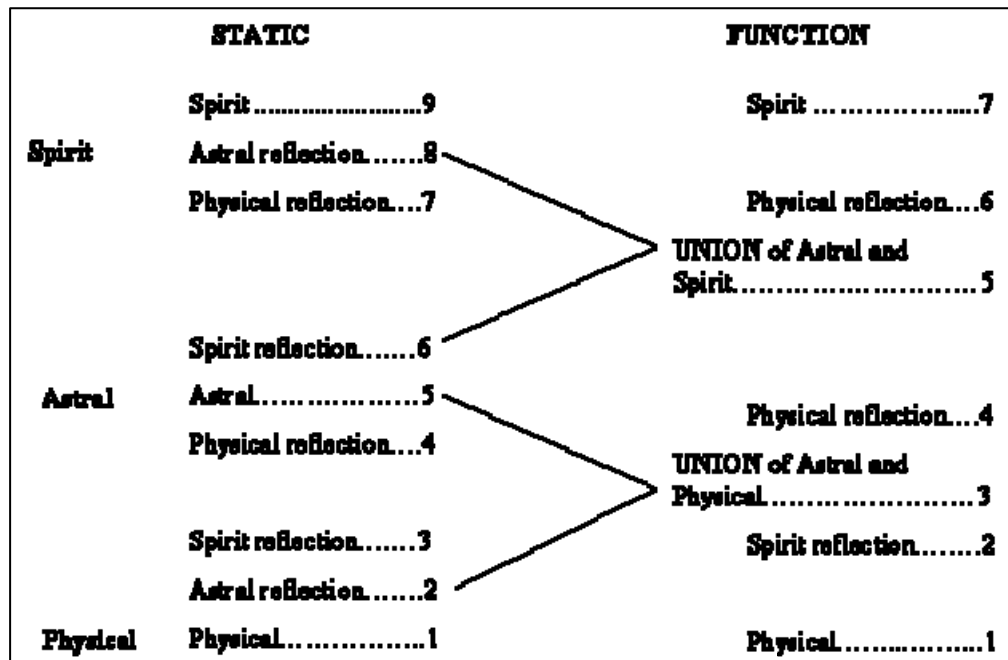
“The *arms of the coachman* forms a unit with the *horse’s head* through the reins, to constitute the directing system of the team.

“In addition, the body of the horse is linked with the body of the car by means of the shaft, to constitute the driving system of the team.

“Here are the nine elements reduced to seven as follows:



“Let us carry out a second analysis of man and carefully apply the example of the team. We will thus reduce the nine elements to seven.



“We can again consider the fusion while placing the united principles in the following manner:

7. SPIRIT.
6. ASTRAL-SPIRIT UNION. *Superior Astral.*

5. Physical reflection in the divine.
4. Physical reflection in the astral.
3. Reflection of spirit.
2. ASTRAL-PHYSICAL UNION. *Inferior Astral*.
1. Physical.

“The two transitory elements which link the three principles constitute *these sparks* which we have just spoken about and cease to exist with the rupture of the current, that is to say the inferior spark, the ‘astral-physical union’ with the first or terrestrial death and the superior spark, the ‘astral-spirit union’ with the second or astral death, that escape from the torrent of generations, and entrance into Heaven as one wants to call it according to initiations.

“What is important to note, is that it is impossible to understand the true composition of the human being if one does not understand the fact that man is a quaternary formed by a ternary whose second term is double, precisely like the Great Tetragram (יהוה IEVE) whose second term, the He, is double. The doubling of the second term takes into account the complementariness of the sexes, aspirations and souls, as well as the means by which the Principles are linked¹⁹.

“By analyzing these three great Principles which comprise man, one can determine seven, nine up to twenty-one constituent elements; but one must carefully maintain the septenary as the point of departure, else one would show one knows nothing about the lessons of sacred arithmetic, and makes the clearest questions completely obscure, and establish a serious and methodical analogical scale, which is the beginning of all elevated studies of occultism.

“*Constitution of man*

“**IN TRI-UNITY**

“*immutable teaching of the tradition on this subject.*

“All high initiations are unanimous on the subject of the constitution of man in three principles with the splitting of the second. The following quotations will definitively inform our readers on this point.

“Constitution of the Man according to the ancient Egyptians.
“XVIIIth dynasty, 1,500 B.C.)

- “1. **The Body or *Khat*.**
- “2. **{The Double or *Ka*.**
{The Intelligent Substance or *Khou*.
- “3. **The luminous Gasoline or *Ba-Bat*.**

(See Marius FONTANE, The Egyptians)

¹⁹ “Woman is neither higher nor lower than the man, she is complementary. This is the true resolution of feminism according to traditional Initiation. “

“Constitution of the human Being according to Zoroaster.

“1. **The physical Body**

- “2. { **The Djan** Preserves the shape of the body and maintains in all its parts, the order and the harmony
The Soul Or human person comprising intelligence (*Boc*), judgment and imagination (*rouan*) and the substance of the soul (*Farouar*).
FEROUER
- “3 **The Akto** Divine and unalterable principle which informs us on although it is necessary to make, on the evil which it is necessary to avoid, and announce to us as of this life a better life.

“Constitution of Eire human according to the Kabbala.

“1. **The physical Body**

- “2. { **Nephesh** The plastic Mediator
(imago)
Huach The soul
- “3 **Neschamah** Pure Spirit

“Constitution of Man according to Ovid.

- “1. **Flesh** Goes about the earth
- “2. { **Shadow** Flutters about the tomb
The Shades In hell (*tyfers*)
- “3 **Spirit** Flies away to Heaven

“Constitution of Man according to Paracelsus.

“1. **Elementary Body**

- “2. { **Man**
Astral Arch or Manmy
Elementum Animal spirit
- “3 **Spiritual Soul**

“Here, according to Papus, is a summation of the Septenary of man. What do you think about it?

“It is an exposition which is clear, quite complete and quite precise. When it speaks about the tetragram (יהוה IEVE) whose second term ה is double, it shows that this fourth element which, as the ternary form of a quaternary, is the redoubling of one of the terms.

“What does this correspond to? To man and woman, who, though they make one, are two. It is always this marked difference we see between man on our planet and his Creator. Woman was a complement to man, but overall presenting a great analogy to man. The term repeated twice represents this, and makes the reflection of the Superior Ternary to be the inferior quaternary.

“I believe that the true name of the astral body among the ancient Egyptians who were contemporaries of the first Memphite dynasties was Ninvou, but this is secondary.”

“In addition I found a table in one of the Dr. Carton’s books, *Occult Knowledge and the Occult Sciences*, which seemed to me to correspond to those of Dr. Encausse, which I just showed you. Here it is:

DUALITY	TRINITY	Septenary	St. Thomas	Colors	Sanskrit	Theosophy
I SOUL Thought Immortal triad Individuality	1. Spirit	Soul of psychic body	1. Divine soul	Violet	Atma	Causal body
	Psychic Body	Life of psychic body	2. Angelic soul	Indigo	Buddhi	
		Matter of psychic body	3. Human soul	Blue	Mana	Mental Body
	Inspiration					
	2. Life	Soul of astral body	4. Animal soul	Green	Kama rupa	Astral body
		Life of astral body				
II BODY Desires Perishable quaternary Personality	Astral Body	Matter of astral body	5. Astral Body	Yellow	Linga sharira	
		Passions				
	3. Matter	Soul of physical body	6. Vitality	Orange	Jiva	Etheric Body
		Life of physical body				
		Matter of physical body	7. Physical Body	Red	Rupa	Physical Body
	Physical Body					
	Personality					

“Yes”, said Mr. Olivier, “this corresponds to that, if we are careful to leave the last column – that of the Theosophists – to one side, on which we will not say anything, if that is acceptable?

“In the Colors column, I believe one should remove the boxes and replace the range of colors with a rainbow. And then one should consider that each element of the septenary varies in importance according to the subjects which are not all ‘balanced’.

“Besides the seven colors, you could add a column for the seven notes of the

musical scale, the seven days of the week, and many other things which are grouped under the figure seven.

“But notice that the tables are numbered from 1 to 7, some numbered from the bottom and others from the top. It will be enough not to get confused when we talk about them”, he added while smiling, “otherwise we would only agree on the 4!

“Wait, Sir, here is a sheet of paper”, said Mr. Olivier, taking one from his desk. “I will draw you a small table which you can join with the others.”

A few minutes later, he handed me the following table:

ST. THOMAS

1. Divine Light	<i>Divine spark</i> – Pure and luminous Spirit, strictly immaterial. Life given by the Father to his creature.
2. Higher Intellectual Angelic Soul	<i>Entity</i> – The true Self which remains the same in he course of reincarnations.
3. Lower Intellectual Human Soul	<i>Center of Love</i> – Intermediary Principle between the Spirit World, or Spiritual Plane, and the Astral World.
4. Sensual Animal Soul	<i>Center of Intelligence</i> (Intellect).
5. Vegetative Soul	<i>Point of Junction</i> – Result of the influxes coming to the Entity from the Center of Love and the Center of Intelligence, serving the Soul of the Physical Body.
6. Vital Breath	<i>Fluidic Double</i> .
7. Elementary Physical Body	<i>Physical Body</i> .

“Many have sought to explain the functions of our various bodies and their faculties, but I believe it’s better for us to stop there, for the moment at least, because there are things in the Invisible which each of us must learn by himself, through the work of deliberation and mental digestion; and if we are taught too quickly, we risk being unable to follow. And then, if we learn all these things without developing the heart side by side, an imbalance results through an overdevelopment of the mind, the intellect, relative to the heart, that center of Love of God and one’s neighbor.

“There would be much less danger from developing the heart before intellect.

“But, whatever the seat or the location of such or such faculty, be it body or soul, it is through this instrument, this tool which is our body that we must work. It is through our body that we must become pure and better, by its acts, its thoughts, its fervor.

“Thus, a man who appropriately develops his brain, who find that Charity is the noblest of sentiments, that there is nothing more beautiful than Love of one’s neighbor, but who remains comfortably seated in an armchair before the fireplace, not acting at all to come to the aid of his brothers so they can profit from what he has learned, you can believe he has not have taken a great step forward.”

Professor Dubourg had just arrived.

“Did you go over there this morning to see this poor fellow?” he asked Mr. Olivier, after we had shaken hands. “He was lucky that you went to the trouble despite this snow. But you must have left very early this morning, while it was still nighttime, I’m sure! And

when did you return?”

“Just as our friend arrived”, said Mr. Olivier, getting up to put a log in the hearth. “Do you have your pipe, Professor? Here’s the tobacco”, he added, handing him the stoneware pot.



CHAPTER 9 - Questions and Answers

We had smoked a few moments in silence while Mr. Dubourg filled his pipe, then I put this question to Mr. Olivier:

“Could you show me the truth of the following point: some people claim that gossip is worse than slander.”

“Really! What a beautiful excuse to warm the heart! Well, Sir, those who say that are very dangerous, because this lie, and it is one, comes from Hell, and the miserable people who peddle make themselves servants of the Evil One; because if gossip bad, very bad, because it is a lack of Charity, calumny is a *crime*, a true assassination.”

“They claim that since maligning somebody is to say something evil about them, but staying in the realm of plain truth, whereas slandering someone is to invent something and to pass it off as true, if one acknowledges one has invented the matter, it no longer remain in existence; whereas in the case of gossip, however much one recognizes one was wrong to speak, because the evil exists and has been revealed, one cannot make it disappear.”

“That”, growled the voice of Mr. Olivier, “is insidious reasoning, because it is specious, and many let themselves be taken in!

“Something always remains of a slander, even after its author retracted it. Don't you know that people habitually apply the dictum ‘there's no smoke without fire’²⁰ in this instance? And the aggrieved party, though innocent, will justify himself in vain, and will always remain ‘the one who was accused, who was suspected, a person one has to be wary of, for one never knows, etc...’.

“Moreover, he who slandered served the Lie, and therefore the Demon; he is in consequence lined up in the army of Evil.

“Now let us look at gossip. The bad reproached and revealed is generally less great, because in the case of slander, those which spread it always tend to amplify the evil which germinates in their heart (and of which they are the author, if not in action at least in thought) to the maximum, in order to condemn their unhappy victim as much as possible, unlike the case of gossip, for in that case the evil being reproached must be precise: if it were deformed, it would become slander.

“However, if the author of the gossip retracts it by saying he withdraws all that he has just claimed about so and so, because in doing this, he did something bad, nobody will know he was gossiping or slandering, and the evil will be largely repaired.

“But naturally if the person gossiping retracts by declaring that he regrets he said anything, to have *slandered* the person, and that, although the facts are true, he recognizes that he was wrong to spread them... the man who acts in this way is a snake, a criminal, who pours poison into the wound which it made and, if he gives the impression of retracting, it is hypocrisy, because in retracting he withdraws what he and doesn't insist on the fault of the person he accused and whom he claims no longer to accuse, all the

²⁰ A very inaccurate saying, since one only has to bring an open container containing hydrochloric acid near another open container containing ammonia to prove the inaccuracy of this.

while highlighting his culpability.

“And then, don’t you think that if men can be victims of this fraud, Heaven won’t see the activities of the cheat? He will pay dear, this unhappy person, and his destiny will be heavily charged!”

I understood, so I put another question to Mr. Olivier:

“I would be grateful if you could tell me what the sin against the Spirit is, and also explain to me the case of Judas, for these are two subjects I feel are very important, and which are among the many things that I don’t understand.”

“You will be unlucky with both these questions, my dear Sir. On the subject of the first, I will not be able to say much to you and what I say will not enlighten you. As for the second, I will try hard, while being truthful, to say only the minimum, because it is a very serious subject.

“The sin against the Spirit about which the Evangelists speak (‘...but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.’) (St. Matthew, Ch. XII, v. 32), (St. Mark, Ch. III, v. 29), (St. Luke, Ch. XII, v. 10), can only be understood with full knowledge of the cause. This may be a consolation for those who are unaware of what it is, and, if they are wise, they will not seek to know of what it consists, since then they would be likely to succumb to it, while ignorance will preserve them from it (it’s a little like the fruit of the tree in the Garden of Eden).

“Some believe they have seen an explanation in St. Marc, Ch. III, v. 30: ‘Jesus spoke thus because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.’ But that is deeply erroneous. In the *Epistle to the Hebrews* of St. Paul, Ch. VI, vv 4 – 6, it is said: ‘For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.’ And further in the same epistle, Ch. X, vv. 26 – 29: ‘For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?’

“You see that the sin against the Holy Spirit can only be done with full knowledge of the cause; however he who would explain to his brothers what this sin is would make himself greatly culpable, because of the danger to which he would expose them. Also, those who believe they know it and who say so are mistaken. At least I hope it is the case for them.”

“I will not press”, I said to Mr. Olivier; “the danger is too great, and exceeds my curiosity, which I find more than satisfied.”

“As for Judas, the reasons are not the same, and if your question is awkward, it is because it is not easy to give an exact answer without explaining what Judas was guilty of, beyond

the facts reported by the Evangelists and known to all. If what it is were explained to us exactly, we would be forced to judge him. With what we know, we have already judged Judas, according to the known circumstances of his crime, and with our human understanding, in judging him (and from which it is difficult to abstain), we assume our responsibility enough already, without increasing it through additional knowledge.

“We should leave Judas outside of any evaluation, for whatever his crime, he surpasses us, not being an ordinary man,

“The Apostles who surrounded Christ do not belong to our humanity. What are They? This is not important for the moment. They are different to us and we cannot judge them. However, Christ himself said: ‘Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?’ (St. John, Ch. VI, v. 70).

“Although Judas was a devil, by his stature, I repeat, he surpasses us, and, to better expressing what I want to make understandable to you, I will ask you to listen to this example, remembering that the facts are essentially different in their nature and their importance.

“Suppose that we are soldiers and that, among the officers who are teaching us the military trade, one of them makes a fault with respect to the Colonel, a serious fault connected to his service. Which soldier will be authorized to blame him? Do you believe that the other officers would allow, it and that the Colonel himself would admit it?

“It is the same for Judas. Do not judge him – avoid speaking about his crime, or we shall ourselves be called to account, and it may well be that we ourselves are one day put in a position to betray a friend. We do not have to excuse it either, in wanting to explain everything as predestination, which makes no sense. Judas, like all the Apostles and us, had free will and destiny, and I explained how it is we who build our own destiny? Well, it is the same for all beings, whatever their rank or their role.

“I will add in passing, however, that Chiefs, like free Men, do not have a destiny, at least not their own; but when they come among us, they always have a sack and in this sack, a destiny which they have made their own.”

“There are priests who have a real hatred for Judas, and who claim that he is the only being which one can sure that it will never be forgiven”, said the Professor.”

“It would be quite difficult to love Judas”, Mr. Olivier replied, “but we do not have the right to judge him more than another. You will notice”, he added, addressing himself to me, “that in the *Gospels*, that on this subject there is not a single word of hate. Neither Our Lord nor His Apostles expressed an emotion which one could be compared, more or less, to hate. Let us try, in that as in everything, to follow the example of the Master and his Friends.”

For a few minutes, Mr. Olivier smoked in silence; he seemed pensive. Finally his eyes turned towards me, and I asked him:

“What can you say about the second death by which those who have blasphemed against the Holy Spirit will be punished?”

“You can easily understand what it is. Our human personality is composed of the three lower elements of the septenary; with each death undergone by the physical body, the personality disappears, but our true Self remains, and a new body becomes his with the

next incarnation, with a new personality. The entity itself does not change; it is the same as it was at the beginning, as it will be at the end, the same entity, except for its evolution, of course. However, if a fault as serious as the sin against the Spirit is committed, as it can only be committed with full knowledge of the cause, the entity is responsible to the same extent as the human personality which committed it. And this entity, in having to undergo the second death, will be annihilated. It will cease to be; as for the Divine Spark which animates it, the primary abstract principle, the luminous spirit coming from God, this Spark will be withdrawn, and return to the world of Spirit in the Divine World. This energy, if I can call it thus, the abstract components of the entity will be melted in ‘the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone’ (Apocalypse, Ch. XXI, v. 8) with those of other guilty ones, so that from this ‘abstract mass’ God could form other entities, but which would have nothing in common with the former entities. It would be as if a sculptor, after making statuettes with clay, kneaded the clay again and made new statuettes out of it, of which none would be the continuation or the reflection of the preceding ones, because the whole mass would have been mixed up, and there would remain nothing of the former statuettes, except their memory in the sculptor’s mind, if he wished to think about it.”

“Thank you for these explanations”, I said to Mr. Olivier. “Could I pose one or two more questions?”

“Certainly”, he answered.

“In the New Testament I saw two Evangelists giving genealogies of Our Lord.”

“And you were surprised to note that they were different?”

“Yes, it is true, and I wanted to ask you how this could be, for this is something I do not understand.”

“Firstly, and this concerns only the closest forebears St. Joseph, the differences in names are due to the fact that at that time, the same man had several names. As an example I can cite you Simon called Peter (St. Matthew, Ch. X, v. 2) who also had the name Cephas (St. John, Ch. I, v. 42). Thaddeus, brother of James the Lesser and Thomas, also bore the name Jude (St. Luke, Ch. VI, v. 16 and St. Matthew, Ch. X, v. 3) and even Barsabas (Acts, Ch. XV, v 22) and Lebbaeus (Greek Text of St. Matthew, Ch. X, v. 3).

“It was also the case that the same individual was named for the name of the place where he lived, by his trade or his function, by his qualities, etc.... in addition to his names, sometimes numerous. This is why those who, from these differences in names in the two genealogies of Jesus Christ, which are in fact those of St. Joseph, want to prove that the texts can contain inaccuracies, would do well, before launching upon such assertions, to study a little more deeply that which they claim to criticize, unless they want to make the point of proving their ignorance.

“To the Jews, St. Joseph was the putative father of Jesus. Only those who believed and understood the divine essence of Our Lord could understand who it really was.

“When one a little further back in these two genealogies, just as if one seeks to study the other numerous genealogies in the Bible, another cause of error is added to the one I have just spoken to you about.

“It is that often the proper names that one gives to men are not linked to human beings, but to events, tribes, families, periods of time, places or circumstances, even with races. Moreover, events which are described – sometimes in minute detail – whose importance seems completely secondary, are concerned quite simply with the secrets of sacred Knowledge.

“When I spoke to you about *Genesis*, I explained not only to make you see certain aspects of Truth, but also so that you could, if necessary, understand that some interpretations are completely erroneous. Also do not forget that there are still other meanings, but for those we should wait a little longer to know them.

“Some discover one of the hidden meanings of the Bible, but make the error of believing that the keys which they found open all doors, and they go from there wanting at all costs to explain everything, with completely amazing wild imaginings, and do not realize that in claiming to explain *everything* by a single means, they explain nothing at all.

“And if you will permit me a comparison with something of our epoch, I will compare these brave enquirers to a learner who has just received his driving license. He knows only very vaguely what a motor vehicle is. His knowledge is limited to knowing that he must put gasoline in the tank, water in the radiator, and take care that there is oil in the oil sump.

“For a few days he goes out in his car; and all goes well. (This time is like the superficial reader of the *Bible* who doesn’t know clearly what it all means, but to whom that is of little importance, as the whole is incontestably a way of going forwards). All goes well, as I said, when an annoying breakdown stops him in the middle of open country. He explains to a mechanic in the next town where he has gone to seek help, that after a few backfires, the motor stopped.

“The mechanic raises the hood, takes a monkey spanner out of pocket and, after asking our new motorist to switch off the gasoline, starts to undo the carburetor, empties it, cleans it, and reassembles it.

“The motor turns over at first attempt and works well.

““What was it?” asks our novice.

““Oh, nothing much, a drop of water in the carburetor; then, you understand, the motor splutters and ends up stopping’.

““Yes, yes, clearly’, says the neophyte, ‘I understand’.

“Actually he didn’t really understand, but for him, from now on, the symptoms he noticed before the breakdown will be the characteristic symptoms of a breakdown of the carburetor due to the presence of a water drop.

“And if, eight days later, it is a lighting defect which produces the breakdown, which was preceded by backfires similar to the worrying signs of the preceding one, it can be nothing else than the carburetor of his car which our man will stubbornly disassemble, explaining with a learned air to the peasants who surround him that the breakdown was due to a drop of water in the carburetor.

“Two hours later he will be still be on the roadside, having disassembled the carburetor an impressive number of times, after losing several liters of gasoline and having discharged the car battery almost completely to try to restart the car. Finally, he will once again need the help of a mechanic who, in repairing it, will increase our beginner’s knowledge of automobile mechanics a little.

“So, one should not believe that, when one discovers a key allowing one to understand certain hidden texts, this same key will applies to all texts.

“Consider, there is a very educated man, who discovered some perhaps very interesting things, but who, in order to explain them, to prove them, ended up saying that the Blessed Virgin was a man and that St. Joseph was the true mother of Christ.

“Don't you agree that it is to better refrain from comment before such an assertion?

“And all this just to make Our Lord a descendant of David!

“Indeed, Christ is spoken of as the son of David in the New Testament”, said the Professor.

“Yes”, said Mr. Olivier, “in St. Matthew, for example, in Chapter I, verse 1, in Chapter IX, verse 27, and in Chapter XII, verse 23, to quote only a few, speaks thus about Our Lord where He is so named. But notice that this name ‘son of David’ is also given to St. Joseph in St. Matthew, Chapter I, verse 20.

“That is true”, answered the Professor, “but the expression ‘son of’, especially at that time, did not imply only the first degree of relationship, just as brother or sister meant much more than the second degree of relationship. And even now, it often happens that this implies a descent or a relationship, rather than a rigorous and precise link.”

“But, even with this wider definition of descent”, I said, “since it is the genealogy of St. Joseph which comes down from David to St. Joseph, how can one say of Christ that He is the son, or descendent, of David?

“Ah, it is precisely because this title of ‘son of David’ led to confusion that Christ spoke as St. Luke reported in Chapter XX, verses 41 to 44: ‘Jesus says to them: ‘And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son? And David himself saith in the *Book of Psalms*, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son?’ And also St Matthew XXII - 41 to 45 and St Marc XII - 35 to 37.

“But what a son? He is a heir. However, in general, he who inherits a throne, a kingdom, it is the son of the King.

“And therefore many didn't understand, because they took it in the literal, concrete sense, instead of taking it in the figurative, abstract sense – and believed that it was about ruling people having been enthroned and crowned King in the relative, whereas Our Lord often repeated: ‘My Kingdom is not of this world’ (St. John, Ch. XVIII, v. 36).

“And many people of our time make a similar mistake on other points. Many want to see the letter everywhere, where the Spirit should dominate; others deny the letter and see only the occult, forgetting that certain simply historical facts, just as certain concrete facts contain an abstract symbol, certainly, but which are no less concrete, in order to express them and definitely in order to understand them one must take account of the letter.

“Ah, the happy medium, like balance in everything, seems hard to preserve.”

“Very difficult, indeed”, said Professor Dubourg, “because we don't do what is needed for that.”

“Ah yes”, added Mr. Olivier. “We want to learn, know, to be able to... and if we are content to love our neighbor, we would quickly have this knowledge which attracts us. As for capacity, we can do everything, since we have only to ask the Father. Our Lord said:

‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.’ (St. John, Ch. XIV, vv. 12 – 14). But for that, we must have Charity.

Didn’t you say that you had another question to ask?”

“Are there any words relating to reincarnation in the *Gospels*?” I asked him.

“Words relating to reincarnation? Yes, there are. But if you want to speak about teachings, not, there aren’t any. I will indicate some verses which talk about it, and then explain to why there are no teachings on this subject.

“First of all, you have passages which the Spiritualists ones jumped on, but, if they truly saw what related to reincarnation, the theories which they set up the beginning are false, and they beliefs are erroneous; a little reflection would show them their error, and I should say their dangerous error, because, if there is a little truth in the belief of Spiritualists, there are also many errors, and especially great danger.

“To believe that one can easily enter in communication with the dead by means of a table or a rather more complicated apparatus as the Americans do, with what they call a ‘Ouija Board’, or through a medium who, once in a trance, starts speaking, is not in oneself a complete error; the error is in believing that can summon so and so departed, and especially to admit that that who claims the ‘spirit’ of this departed is definitely the departed one in question, or at least his soul.

“There are phonies on this side and there are also phonies on the ‘other side’, not counting the demons which can play quite unpleasant tricks on unfortunate and too trustful Spiritualists.

“This often results in psychic accidents, some of which are very serious, and many Spiritualists ones end their existence “ruined” and sometimes even completely insane.

“Those which claim that all in Spiritualism is false, and those who affirm that all is trickery, faking, etc. are ignoramuses. But that. do not prevent Spiritualists from being wrong to devote themselves to their practices, because they are likely to compromise their mental equilibrium, and the health of the medium.

“Far fewer are the researchers who remain wise and do not expose themselves to this danger.

“Some have experimented with a scientific aim, such Camille Flammarion, that noble soul, that noble man; but he knew to remain prudent and, after serious research, surrounded by a maximum of guarantees, he understood that he should leave these dangerous practices to one side.

“Let us leave the dead to their work because they have work where they are, and let us not importune them unnecessarily to satisfy a generally vain curiosity, or try to find consolation, a certainty that the dead are only dead in the physical world, and that we can find them. But isn’t this consolation sought, out of a little selfishness? And isn’t it a lack of confidence in God? Alas, I fear this is so! For we seek to know if one will find such a dear being who left us by dying, but would one seek someone with the same ardor whom one had wronged or done evil to, to ask him for forgiveness?

“In studying occultism, that hotchpotch where one finds grains of truth coated with errors and disconcerting wild imaginings, you need to understand that, in the Invisible, there are larvae, elementals, the ‘formless ones’ which live there. Well, the unhappy ones

who plunge themselves into Spiritualism are comparable with a man who, alone, a foreigner, without clothing or luggage, plunges himself into the virgin forest in the Southern Amazon, between Rio Tapajos and Rio Madeira, or further to the West by going up the Maranon. This traveler would risk encountering slimy animals which abound in the wet and hot undergrowth, insects, poisonous reptiles, gelatinous, without counting the wildcats... And then we are only speaking about fauna; and you know that in these places where fever reigns, the flora also holds annoying surprises for the imprudent.

“That gives you an idea of what unhappy Spiritualists are exposed to which, even at the price of these dangers, do not obtain the proof that they seek, which only the practice of Charity in all its forms, and Love of one’s neighbor can secure. For Love of one’s neighbor and Charity bring us closer God and Truth.

“You traveled and perhaps traversed the countries I spoke about; you were able to account for the dangers which Spiritualists exposed themselves to in introducing themselves into a world which our human brain knows only imperfectly and which the majority of men are completely unaware of.

“Yes, I know Matto Grosso in Brazil and its dangers to some extent, as well as its wonders. So I understood your comparison very well. Will you permit me to ask another a question?”

“Yes”, said Mr. Olivier.

“Well, if I meet a Spiritualist friend and he seeks to persuade me that he is right, how do I convince him that he is mistaken?”

“I told you there is no point in convincing him. On the contrary, explain, try to be clear, and leave him to reflect, work on himself and for himself.

“For example, you should only ask him if he believes in God. If he replies: ‘No!’ you know enough to show him the inanity of this negation. If he replies: ‘Yes!’ ask him if he believes in the Divinity of Christ.

“Then again, if he says to you: ‘No!’, make him see his error, and if he answers: ‘Yes!’ remind him that Our Lord said: “Let the dead bury their dead (St. Matthew, Ch. VIII, v. 22), (St. Luke, Ch. IX, v. 60).

“But how could I clearly explain the Divinity of Christ to him?”

“Put him on the right track, because, I tell you again, it is for him to do the work of understanding. Firstly, have him read the *Gospels* attentively; then show him the many miracles of the Master; finally appealing to his good sense, ask him if there is a man capable of being the equal of Christ, whose works have turned the world upside down for centuries: he will have to admit at least He who did this is not an ordinary man.”

“But couldn't he reply that there is also Mohammed?”

“Yes, there is Mohammed, but Mohammed is even owned by the Moslems as being a Prophet, and the Moslems recognize Christ as a great Prophet...”

“But he will reply that Christ is not necessarily God, because he is a Prophet.”

“Are you telling me, my dear friend, that a prophet sent from God can lie? Surely not! Then you can give many quotes by Our Lord, and it would take too a long time to enumerate them all, but I want at least to quote some for you. Read Chapter VIII of St. John, verses 12 to 47. “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go. Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me. Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come. Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. They understood not that he spake to them of the Father. Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him. As he spake these words, many believed on him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of

you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.'

"Also see in St. Matthew: 'All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.' (Ch. XI, v. 27). 'So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.' (Ch. XVIII, v. 35) 'Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.' (Ch XX, v. 23). And in St. Luke: 'And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you' (Ch XXIV, v. 49²¹).

"Lastly, read in St. John, Ch. X, V. 30: 'I and my Father are one.' St. John, Ch X, vv. 37-38: 'If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.' St. John, Ch. XII, vv. 44-45: 'He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.' St. John, Ch XIV, vv. 6-7: 'Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. f ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.' St. John, Ch. XIV, v. 9: 'Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?' St. John, Ch. XIV, v. 11: 'Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.' St. John Ch., XIV, v. 18: 'I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.'

"In this last quotation, Christ identifies with the Father by saying 'I will not leave you comfortless.'²² And it in this sentence of St. John, Ch. VIII, v. 58 doesn't He do the same: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am,' employing the same words as when God addressed Himself to Moses (see Exodus, Ch. III, v. 14).

"But we also see in the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians, Ch. I, vv. 16 – 17: 'For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.' Don't we find sufficient proof here? And isn't the purest, the most complete version found in the five first verses of the Gospel of St Jean?

"Ah! my friend, if we would only read properly with some attention, what truths we would find in the *Gospels*!"

"Indeed", I replied, "but he may want to admit nothing."

"Oh, then, if he wants to remain in error, before the explanations of a belief other than his, without even wishing to listen and weigh what is told to him, there is nothing else to do, for the moment at least.

"Are there not people who deny that the Earth is round? They claim that, if it

²¹ The original incorrectly attributes this to St. Luke, Ch. XXIV, v. 48 – PV.

²² In the French these words were used: "Je ne vous laisserai pas orphelins", which means 'I will not leave you as orphans'. The KJV uses the word 'comfortless'. I do not know whether the French bible uses the word 'orphans' or whether this is a whimsy of the author – PV.

vaguely has the shape of a spheroid, it was originally a tetrahedron, and that is proved by the edges (?) which survive, such as the Rocky Mountains and the Cordillera of the Andes, the Himalayan chain which extend (?)²³ from the Caucasus to Europe through the Alps, etc, etc, and that is enough for them to stand their theory on a pedestal...”

“And themselves real sticklers for their theory”, finished the Professor.

“But all this is taking us a little away us from our subject”, Mr. Olivier resumed, “and I was speaking to you about certain passages which refer to reincarnation.

“There is one where Our Lord speaks about Elias with the Apostle Peter, James the Greater and John. It is in St. Matthew, Ch XVII, vv. 10 – 13: ‘And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them: *Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.* Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.’

“Elsewhere, in St. Matthew, Ch. XI, vv. 11 – 15; ‘*Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*’ And in the Bible, Malachi, Ch IV, vv. 5 – 6²⁴; in St. Luke, Ch I, v. 17²⁵; in the Bible you also have Psalm 103, v. 4²⁶.

“I accept that, neglecting the relationship between St. Luke, Ch. I, v. 17 and Malachi, Ch. IV, vv. 5 – 6, one would counter with what certain Protestant sects would counter: that John the Baptist himself answered those who asked him that he was not Elias (St. John, Ch. I, v. 21),²⁷ but why would it have been otherwise? Though the Entity is the same, the personality changes. And I believe that concerning this return of Elias, the words of Our Lord are sufficiently positive and convincing in St. Matthew, Ch. XI, vv. 11 – 15 and Ch. XVII, vv. 10 – 13, which I have just quoted.

“They are the only passages of the *Gospels* where an allusion this direct is made to reincarnation.

“In the Old Testament, I recommend you read the first chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, of which here are verses 4 to 11: ‘*One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever. The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirlleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to*

²³ The two bracketed question marks are in the original – PV.

²⁴ Malachi, Ch. IV, vv. 5 – 6: ‘Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.’

²⁵ St. Luke, Ch. I, v. 17: ‘...he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.’

²⁶ Psalm 103, v. 4: ‘...Who redeemeth thy life from destruction...’

²⁷ St. John, Ch. I, v.21: ‘And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.’

his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again. All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us. There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.’

“Do you do not find this description to be luminous? Especially when you realize that the manner of expression, at that time, didn’t have the cold precision of our present day writings, and remained imbued with this oriental poetry which one finds in all languages contemporary to these books of the Bible, and even up to our own time in Arab writings.

“But, among initiates, there was a fact so well known at that time as in ours that it would have been superfluous to speak of it. As for the non-initiates, do not think that Our Lord wished to keep them informed!

“What does He teach us? Charity, Love of one’s neighbor. What we do?... Nothing or next to nothing. However, a considerable number of people figure that we only make a single appearance on earth, and that the use they make of this life determines their happy or unhappy fate for eternity. Imagine for a moment what they would do if they knew they could return! As a result, they would not do anything at all!”

“There are many old bigots who ‘give the nod’; they imagine it is enough to pray mechanically and follow the rituals more or less closely to obtain Paradise, but they give free rein to their language and do not have many good deeds to their credit. They will see full well what their fate will be!”, said the Professor.

“You understand well”, continued Mr. Olivier, “what a Master would avoid saying to his pupils: the Divine Master *a fortiori* would not say it! Do you believe that a Master would say to his disciples: ‘Work to pass the examination successfully, but if you do not succeed, it doesn’t matter, as you can present yourselves again, and if you fail again, you can present yourselves yet again, until through the power of time, you will have long enough to learn and succeed!’

“But, if it were so 2,000 years ago – because it was not necessary for people to know that, they had only to believe – nowadays it is necessary to explain, in telling them to make haste, because soon it will be too late.

“There again, they will not seek to convince them. They will sound the alarm bell, and others will sound it too; and if that does not make the halfhearted move and hasten the latecomers, nobody can do anything more, for we do not have the right to do violence to them or make them move by force.

“Now as in former times, they don’t want to heed the prophecies, and we cannot force them to. By prophecies, I do not mean those of alleged astrologers or modern seers, of whom only a very small number deserve this name; the others, the majority of the others, being only phonies and sometimes even dangerous in their pronouncements. I mean times which have been signaled for judgment – and not only those the Hebrew prophets predicted, but those one can find traces of in certain sacred books of the Indies, the monuments of ancient Egypt, and in many other places or writings.

“This century marks the end of a cycle. Men are powerless to push back the limits

placed by Heaven upon the road they are pursuing, them and the little sphere which bears them.

“It is now that each man must choose between Good and Evil. It is the moment when the eleventh hour workmen were engaged, which the *Gospels* speak about: ‘For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.’ (St Matthew, Ch. XX - I with 16).

“And we are at the eleventh hour”, added Mr. Olivier, “and if somebody wants proof, that he will merit it by a small effort, in reading and endeavoring to understand Chapter XXIV of St. Matthew, Chapter XIII of St. Marc and finally, in St. Luke, Chapter XXI.

“See, you will find in this Chapter of St Luke, in verse 32: ‘Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.’

“It certainly appears that the generation in question has passed, a detractor would say; but we who know that Christ is Truth, therefore know that ‘this generation’ which was there at that time has not yet passed, and is still here. If instead of seeing in the word ‘generation’ only the sense lent to it from a human point of view, one understood it to be a generation for God, that is, the life of a soul which is incarnated to evolve and which, by analogy with the terrestrial life of a human existence, has alternations of wakefulness and sleep, corresponding to life and death, we would understand more easily.”

“It is now quite clear to me”, I said to my host, “and I thank you for being so kind as to answer all my questions.

“Permit me, before I leave you, to ask you one last question.”

“Certainly, my friend. I am listening.”

“What is instinct? Isn't this animal intelligence, or more precisely what substitutes for that?”

“A *priori*, one could say yes, but it would not be completely exact; because all animals

have both instinct and also intelligence, but if the majority have developed instinct enough, all of them do not have intelligence to the same degree; some even seem to be deprived of it.

“Animals are not constituted like us; even mammals which, in their bodies and general constitution most closely approach man, are quite appreciably different from the point of view of their astral.

“Their septenary does not have the same disposition as man.

“Whereas each man has his own Entity, certain animals have one entity by species; however, they do have a double and an astral body, but there is a serious difference for the remainder to the extent that, for some of them, there are several kinds of body for the same physical personality and several physical personalities for a single unit having a common entity: bees, for example, ants and termites, you have three physical bodies, and even sometimes four different types.

“You have the mother, whose mission is to lay eggs; the males from which one will be selected to fertilize the mother; and the workers, who alone work to maintain the community. You even have, in certain cases, another category, the soldiers, whose role is that of defending the colony (this role of defender is joined with that of worker in the bee, without there being special individuals for this function).

“You’ve been to Africa, haven’t you? Well, perhaps you observed that, if a covered channel in a termite mound is partially demolished, there are termites which come to pile up on the surface to close the opening, knowing full well that they will die there.

“These individuals act exactly like the cells of a body, to defend that body: see, if a breach is made in our body, what do the blood corpuscles do? Exactly the same thing.

“However, the blood corpuscles are individual, living cells which, endowed with instinct, immediately come – even at the price of their own lives – to sacrifice themselves to save the remainder of the community. What is such a sacrifice called? Well, my friend, it is a demonstration of Love; it is Charity, and intellect has nothing to do with the accomplishment of this sacrifice.

“Now, in normal animals, you will find maternal love developed so much that the mother will sacrifice herself for her offspring. But the intelligence of some of them manifests itself differently, and I assure you that somebody who studied the habits of a colony of beavers in the Canadian forest would be perfectly enlightened about instinct and the importance of intelligence in these animals.

“You will notice that instinct is all the greater when the animal is closer to nature. This is such that domestic animals have lost it, for a host of reasons of which man is the cause, if not the totality of loss, at least in part.”

“That is right”, said the Professor, “and if one looks for what remains of instinct in these unhappy animals which have been raised in apartments, and pampered in a truly excessive way, you would be lucky to find a trace.”

“Do you think that the ‘doggie’ who has a ‘mummy’ would be able to retake its place amongst its fellow creatures and live their life?

“They are unfortunate animals”, added Mr. Olivier, “as unfortunate as animals mistreated by heartless Masters.

“In man, instinct was stifled by the hyper-development of intellect, and especially by an artificial life and deplorable nutrition. He who lives a healthy and natural life, free from modern vices, would see his instinctive faculties quickly increasing, without which

intelligence decreases hand over fist.

“Instinct, like intelligence, should be developed hand in hand. For instinct belongs to the heart.

“Yes, do not be astonished”, said Mr. Olivier, seeing my gesture of surprise, “because don’t forget that, if man’s intelligence can be the seat of good thoughts, it can be that bad ones can also be thought, as the heart can contain Love as well as hate.

“He who develops his Intelligence for Good, and who makes use of it only for Good, having developed his heart and having opened it to Love and closed it to hate, possesses the instinct necessary to predict changes in weather, catastrophes, dangers, just as any inhabitant of the jungle, because instinct is a link between Nature and man, as between Nature and any living being, whatever its class, genus or species.

“When a few moments ago I spoke to you about the sacrifice of the blood corpuscles which was like the sacrifice of termites, I could have also shown you an analogy with a soldier who, if war breaks out, goes out to the front, and makes a rampart of his body to defend those of his race and the land where they live.

“Ah, while the sacrifice is pure for termites, with man, Mammon has intervened, and vile beings benefit from the existence of such virtues in other men to build fortunes for themselves and seize power.

“So, my dear friend, it is not to lack Charity to say that such individuals are demons; they, too have the Devil as a father (St. John, Ch. VIII, v. 44), for they profit from nobility, generosity, abnegation, the fervor of Love of combat, to heap up, at the price of human lives, contemptible wealth.

“You understand”, Mr. Olivier continued, “how the soldier becomes like a generous cell of a body. This body is the Fatherland. And when we are a little less bad, this body will be the whole of Humanity. But, sadly, to get to that point, it will be necessary to love one’s neighbors, then one’s compatriots and, finally, all men as brothers.

“Those who howl about *Internationalism* are utopians, for they do not begin at the beginning, and some among them are dangerous demons, sowers of hatred and lies”, the Professor concluded.

As we rose to leave, Mr. Olivier offered me tobacco and cigarette papers, rolling one in his turn, passing paper and tobacco to the Professor in his turn.

“You smoke a lot”, I said to him, lighting my cigarette with the lit match he offered me.

“Yes”, he replied, shaking the match to extinguish it. “Yes, I smoke a lot, but the abuse of tobacco is no worse than the abuse of anything else; however, there is something in tobacco... it would take a long time to explain it to you, and it does no evil to those who know not to abuse it.”



CHAPTER 10 - Heaven’s Soldiers

It was Christmas Eve.

The cold spell had continued, without a single day of thaw, and the countryside continued to sleep beneath the thick layer of snow which covered it. I had passed most of my days reading the *New Testament* and also the *Bible*²⁸.

Taking advantage of the beautiful sun, whose rays however were not able to melt the snow, I left to see Mr. Olivier.

Shortly before arriving I met Professor Dubourg, and spoke with him for a few minutes. He left me, as he had some shopping to do, saying that he would be free soon and would come up to our friend’s house to spend the afternoon with us.

It was Mr. Olivier who opened the door, and his greeting was so friendly that I experienced a strong emotion. I had known this very humble man, whose simplicity hid extraordinary knowledge, only a short while, but I felt that I truly liked him, and his look, as he opened the door, was imprinted with such affection, that I felt a deep joy.

When we were seated in the library, I told Mr. Olivier about the imminent arrival of the Professor, explaining how I had met him; then I told him about all I had read, and the great number of things I was going to have to ask him.

Smiling, he replied that, if there were as many as that, we were going to have start at once.

“There is one point on which I would certainly like you to give me some guidance: that is on the subject of those you call the Chiefs, and Free Men. You told me, I think, that they do not have a destiny, but that, when they come to Earth among us, they constitute one which becomes theirs. Please could you explain this in more detail?”

“Willingly, but for this question, as for most, we need to place it clearly, and go back far enough in time for you to understand it better.

“When Our Lord came nineteen centuries ago, He gathered His Apostles around Him. Who were they before they took bodies? Perhaps you will be told one day, but today it would take too long and would take us a little off our subject. Know simply that Our Lord did not take Them at random ‘...I have chosen you...’ (St. John, Ch. XV, v. 16), but He gathered them: ‘I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.’ (St. John, Ch. XVII, v. 6). And we should know that they are not men like their contemporaries, because Christ said of them: ‘I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.’ (St. John, Ch. XVII, v. 14).”

Mr. Dubourg had just arrived. As soon as he was seated in his armchair and had indicated for Mrs. Olivier to bring coffee for our friend, he continued:

“The Apostles are the Dogs of the Divine Shepherd, and when we follow the Master’s

²⁸ The author refers to the *Old Testament* as the *Bible*, which is quite accurate, so I have left it as it was in the original text – PV.

teachings, we are the sheep of the Herd. This is why there is an insuperable barrier between the Twelve and the rest of mankind, as there is between the Twelve and Christ.

“They are among the Created. Christ is the Creative Word. He is God. Let us recall the verses by which the Gospel of St. John begins: ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.’ (St. John, Ch. I, vv. 1 – 5).

“But if the Apostles are of the Created, they belong to the Divine World (I do not say to Divinity, but to the Divine World). They are not our world, nor of our race, and by this I mean mankind. There was no Fall for them, and, if They incarnate, it is to serve Christ and to help us. Us. The Prophets like the Apostles are not of our race. They are, both of them, of the same race.

“When Our Lord, through His sacrifice, repurchased us from the Prince of this World, the Demon, if we had believed in Him, as some believed, and if we had followed His lesson, as some did, by practicing Charity, by loving our neighbors as ourselves, we would ourselves also be free men, as those who followed the precepts of the Master became.

“Now, these free men who knew how to practice Charity in order to follow Our Lord, along with their freedom, found their purity from before the Fall.”

“But then, why do they return to earth? Only for us? In order to help us to pay our debts?”

“Indeed, my friend, haven’t I just told you that they followed the Master’s teachings, and didn’t Our Jesus say: ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.’ (St. John, Ch. XIII, vv. 16 – 17). Then they followed this teaching, and asked the Father permission to return in this world, to help us.

“They don’t come, those who are able, to show themselves in their perfection, so that we may admire them and use them as an example: no, they do as the Master did, as His Apostles did; they come and hide themselves, ignoring each other most of the time, almost always, and to pay for us, they take some of our faults, our debts upon their shoulders, so creating for themselves a destiny of all that would have been ours. The destiny that they create becomes their own destiny, theirs who had none before. They come back down to our level, they return to our ranks...”

“And yet”, said the Professor, “they could command the forces of Nature, perform the miracles Our Lord accomplished, because: ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.’ (St. John, Ch XIV, vv. 12 – 14).

“The Professor is right”, said Mr. Olivier, “free man received from Heaven all powers, even that of writing in the Book of Life mentioned by St. John in the *Apocalypse*, in particular in Chapter III, verse 5.

“These are the free men who form one of the Heavenly Hosts, an invisible, unknown army which fights for us without respite, by opposing violence with gentleness, cruelty and evil with kindness, paying with suffering the faults and errors we commit.

“This army has Chiefs, and like their men these Chiefs fight, suffer and die for us.

“The Master himself takes part in these battles and these sufferings. He disappears in the middle of the crowd, nothing makes Him stand out particularly to our gaze; He is a man like any other, in appearance at least, sometimes in one class of society, sometimes in another. He lives an existence in which those who are not in the know notice nothing particular about Him. About this unknown man much good is said, and even more bad.

“And He, without stopping, without respite, with a tireless solicitude, works in an ever active life. He spreads His friendship, His aid, His time, His councils about Him.

“He suffers as we suffer, undergoes all kinds of humiliation, because He is not spared these affronts; and he ever accepts them humbly, without ever showing those who make Him suffer that He could immobilize them in revealing Himself.

“Those who have the unutterable happiness of meeting Him don’t always recognize Him, although He is with them; it is often only after He leaves that one understands.

“But, even in this case, what the Master came to bring them He gave to them, because He always comes to those who need Him and the fact of having met Him does not imply that one is more deserving than another, but rather that one needed this meeting to receive from Him the powers or Light we lacked; or else so that some of our sins might be remitted. If the doctor comes for the wounded, he also comes for the sick.

“And then... though many people have met Him, they saw nothing, understood nothing. Let us not judge them, for we do not know the reason that they saw nothing, understood nothing.

“He never shows Himself, reveals Himself, except to those who recognize Him in their hearts, and only when their certainty is total, and He knows them just about ready to keep the secret.

“He never says that He is Christ; but He is recognized in the works He performs, and if somebody says to Him that He is the Christ, He answers them: ‘I am your brother and your friend.’”

Mr. Olivier had stopped talking and I had listened to him with increasing emotion. Thus, what my friend had said the other day about the constant presence of Christ and His Apostles among us was quite true. I did not dream it. I did not dare to ask any questions, although I was eager to get exact details, not because I doubted what he had told me, but because I would have liked to know if he, Mr. Olivier, had met Him (within myself I was certain of this); to know where He was, and finally to talk about Him as a person who one could see, hear...

The Professor looked at me and slowly the eyes of Mr. Olivier, which had been fixed on the dancing flames of the wood fire, turned to me.

“You... have You met Him?” I asked quietly, not daring to speak with a loud voice.

“Yes.”

“You recognized Him? He spoke to you? ...”

“Professor Dubourg, also, knew him.” I looked at the Professor, who then said:

“I met the Master too, it is true. Alas! I knew Him only a short time... It was already

several years ago... and it was only later that I really understood...”

“And since then you have never seen Him again?”

“He once again left the Earth”, said Mr. Olivier; “but be without fear: there is always somebody who remains until He comes again.”

“Where? Who is He?” I cried, full of hope...

“It does not matter”, answered Mr. Olivier then. “Isn’t the main thing to know what we have to do?”

“And then do not forget, my friend, that if someone to us says: ‘Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.’ (St. Matthew, Ch. XXIV, v. 23); and the explanation follows this warning: ‘For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.’ (St. Matthew, Ch. XXIV, v. 24).

“Also, be on your guard: whoever says to you: ‘Christ is here’, above all do not go there! If anyone which says it to you, you hear well, and whatever your confidence in that which would speak to you thus.

“The Master knows well how to make Himself recognizable to you when He wants to.”

I remained thoughtful during a few moments, very impressed by I your whom Mr. Olivier had taken to say that to me, and also by the gravity of its glances and of those of Professor Dubourg.

“Permit me a question”, say to him I.

“Surely.”

“If false Christs appear and if these false Christs perform wonders and miracles, how can one recognize the Master?”

“Ah, my friend, when one tries to practice Charity and to love one’s neighbor as oneself, one develops inside something which allows us to recognize Him: this something is Love. And then, remember although He never shows off His abilities in order to dazzle the crowds; He passes through the midst of men, like one of us, and nothing differentiates Him. He strives to be banal, unremarkable, and it is only when a flash of this Divine Love which He brings us flashes in His eyes, that one can see in Him something different from what we see in others.

“When a false Christ appears, he uses every means possible to seduce us. He wants us to revere him, he seeks to make us love him, he doesn’t fear hurting our poor eyes with a dazzling light which he gives out, because what he wants is precisely to dazzle us. But this light is artificial, since only the Master can dispense the True Light, or Those who can act in His Name, and as they are Children of Light, They love us with the same Love that their Master – Our Master – has for us; and the Light that They dispense to us is always filtered to the extent which is appropriate for each, so that none of us is dazzled.

“The miracles that these false Christs perform, like those which the Antechrist – or

Antichrist – will perform, will be the same, seemingly, as those which were and are done by Our Lord Jesus Christ. I say seemingly, for if the fallen Archangel has retained his powers over Matter, he only has these powers, and has no power over Life, because Life is the Word.

“So he could not resurrect a corpse, nor to make a truly desiccated tree put forth green leaves; nor give life once more to an animal. For only the Word can dispense Life. He is ‘the Resurrection and the Life’ (St. John, Ch. XI, v. 25). But you can believe that the Demon’s tricks can twist this problem; his henchmen have already done it. Not being able to resuscitate a corpse, they give the impression of death, have the decease notarized by an honest doctor, whose good faith is perhaps compromised, or by an accomplice, and the dead forgery ‘revives’, because he was dead only in appearance. But present them with an already decomposing body... and you will see... or rather you will not see anything, for they will not be able to do anything, neither them nor their Master the Antichrist.

“So, my friend, be careful, be very careful. Do not seek the Master, seek to do His Will, and it is He who will come to you.”

“But if one day this immense happiness happened to me, a happiness of which I feel myself unworthy, I hope that I will not doubt Him...”

“Who can claim he is worthy to meet Him? It is He Who chooses the hour of the meeting and not us. All we can do is try to be ready, so that we will be able to recognize Him when He passes by us.

“My friend, even if you doubted Him at that moment, the Master would not blame you: quite the contrary, He would be happy to see your prudence. But when He appears and He has shown Who He is, then one will no longer be allowed to doubt; the blindest man will see it clearly, the most incredulous will cease to be so, but it will be too late, sadly, for many. Let us make haste while there is still time, to prove our Faith and our Love for God and Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is God, by loving our neighbors as ourselves, by practicing Charity in all its forms, by respecting all creatures.”

For a few minutes I remained silent, and Mr. Olivier, as well as Professor Dubourg, left me with my thoughts; they smoked without a word, respecting this silence.

I had in me an absolute certainty that all that had just been said was true. I felt the crushing weight (the word is not too strong) of the secret which these two men held, and understood that I was to ask neither the name which He whom they had spoken of had borne, nor anything about the places and the facts which might have furnished some further information. The possibility of such an Event could be revealed, but it was not necessary to give indications which could make it possible to locate the Character. He Alone was Master of the Hour.

I understood, finally, that to express curiosity would have been, on my part, a lack of respect. I must wait, and I would endeavor to know how to wait.

And, in the silence, which the gentle crackling of fire in the hearth seemed to increase rather than to break, we remained thus, immobile.

The thoughts going through my head followed one another at a tremendous speed. I re-examined the days which had passed since my first meeting with Mr. Olivier. Suddenly, an idea flashed in my mind, and it seemed to me that my heart was going to burst. I had turned to the portrait hanging there on the wall, above the commode, and the idea was stronger than me. I rose... I could see nothing but Him.

In the dying day the smile seemed to be accentuated, the regard, this regard of the Chief, and while an infinite softness radiated, his gaze seemed to transfix me; and I stood there, upright, without a thought, heart thumping with great beats, and I felt tears run from my eyes.

.....

...Then I returned to earth. I turned my head a little. Mr. Olivier and Professor Dubourg were standing, too, and looked at the portrait, but with what regards!

Furtively, I wiped my tears; their eyes were also wet...

For a long time they both looked at me and, without a word, we sat down at the same time, and the silence continued.

Mr. Olivier had relit his pipe; mechanically imitating the Professor. I lit a cigarette and, slowly, twilight fell.

When the room was invaded by shadows, our host lit a small lamp on the desk. I no longer feared to break this silence, during which I had learned so much, during which I had understood what the intelligence of the heart could be, ‘that intelligence which has wisdom’²⁹, by the little which I had just felt within me, from this ray which had enlightened me.

Very moved, I thanked Mr. Olivier for what he had made me understand today.

He answered me:

“My friend, you do not have me to thank, me, it is Heaven which you need to thank, because it is He Who allowed the words you heard find favorable soil within you; it is He Who always fills us, whatever instrument He makes use of. Thank the Master, and you can trust that the Professor and I will thank Him too.

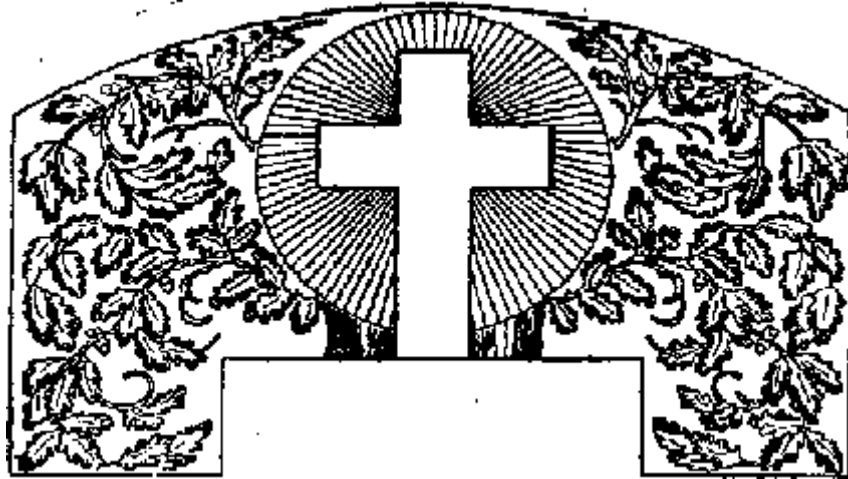
“But”, he added, seeing me rise to go, “you are not going to leave like that, are you, for nobody is waiting for you at home? Well, remain with us this evening, and spend Christmas Eve here.

“It is the day when, even more than other days, all men should thank the Father for having sent his Son amongst us to save us. It is the day when our gratitude and our Love for Our Lord Jesus Christ should be manifest in the deepest, sincerest and most intense way.

“This evening you’ll see some friends, and I would be happy if you would agree to be ours.”

I will never forget this Christmas Eve. No feast, no great dinner... but the greatest simplicity which, better than any pageantry, evoked that night in Bethlehem, that night no different from any other for the people of nineteen centuries ago, but during which, in a cattle shed whose crib was used as a cradle for Him, Jesus Christ was born for the Salvation of man.

²⁹ Revelations, Ch. XVII, v. 9.



CHAPTER 11 - Meditations

I left a little after one in the morning, with the Professor who had made a point of accompanying me halfway to Saint-Martin. And now, I found myself alone, in my room.

I will not try to say at which point I was turned upside down, because there are feelings which words are powerless to express.

I replayed the events of this Christmas Eve in my mind, and my heart overflowed with gratitude for Our Lord who, in his infinite Love, had allowed this evening to be what it was for me; and my gratitude for what the Master extended to His Servant, Mr. Olivier.

Thanks to this simple man, so humble and yet so erudite, I finally understood all the ineffable Love that God lavishes on His creatures.

I understood that there is only one path towards the Knowledge and towards God and that this way is Love of one’s neighbor.

And I who sought secret initiation to obtain knowledge! What childishness! And I thought with some sadness about all those who believe they can find, either in Occultism, or in Spiritualism, or even in the specious precepts of innumerable sects dissenting from the great religions, and all more or less oriental paths or reputed to be such, this Truth which is so simple and pure, whose Path Mr. Olivier showed to me, this absolute Truth which is but God, and which one can only reach through Charity, because It cannot be transmitted, but must be acquired; only the way to acquire it can be shown.

Duval had anticipated the situation well in that, when I met Him whose name and address he gave me, a great change would take place in me.

And I was expecting an initiation which would give me Wisdom, Knowledge of All Sacred Knowledge, and perhaps mysterious powers, too...

But was I completely misled in believing that?

Certainly, I believed I had received revelations in the magnitude of miracles, but wasn’t what had been given to me incomparably more beautiful, more vast, more True?

Wasn’t this the absolute certainty of the Way leading towards Christ? Towards His promises?

At the time when Duval spoke to me about Mr. Olivier, I had thought of moving to Saint-Martin to live a dream-like existence, near to the man with limitless abilities, infinite Wisdom, who he had sent me to.

But, now, after this unforgettable evening and this night, I understood that my life had only just begun. Hitherto, I had sought to advance, but thinking only of myself. From now on, I must live for others, to task myself to be entirely devoted to it, so that one day I might become a servant of the Master.

I needed to set myself to work, to help my brothers, to love them: to devote myself to them; and with this intention, to give up my Theban existence at Saint-Martin³⁰.

So, I thought, I will go all over the world, seeking those to whom I should devote myself, I will help the poor and those who suffer, I will go back to work to increase my income in order to be able to give more; and, from time to time, I would return to see my Friend, Mr. Olivier, to draw from his affection and take new power and new enlightenment from his counsels: then I would set out on my mission once more.

³⁰ *Renoncer à ma Thébaïde de Saint-Martin* – this is my translation. If there is a better one let me know – PV.

I spent all Christmas Day planning projects, making resolutions.

That evening I decided to go back to Paris soon, to this city where so much luxury lived alongside so much misery.

I would leave my comfortable bachelor apartment on the Haussmann boulevard, and I would go to a more modest district, and move into a small apartment, very small, very simple; the extra pieces of furniture in the Haussmann boulevard I would send here, to Saint-Martin, and giving up my great journeys and long stopovers in Paris, I would put myself resolutely to work, and see if it would be possible to realize part of my capital to found an undertaking which would come to the aid of the unfortunate.

My projects having been determined, at least in broad outline, I decided to pack my luggage the next day, then go and take my leave of Mr. Olivier and his family, and also the Professor for whom I had developed a deep and sincere friendship.

So the following day, I feverishly set to work to prepare my luggage: they were packed well before midday. Around two o’clock, I even wondered whether I would go to say goodbye to my Fiends this afternoon, so that I could leave one day earlier.

I was reflecting when Barbier, the mailman arrived, bringing the mail.

Among other letters of secondary importance, one from a former schoolmate with whom I had remained in contact brought to me the distressing news of his illness, and at the same time made me postpone the accomplishment of the projects I had just developed to a later date.

In fact Bertrand, whose doctor had recommended he go to the South Coast for three or four weeks, had to leave his small town on the border of the Loire to recover his fragile health and, knowing that I was free, had asked me to agree to replace him as the head of his factory during his absence.

Obviously, I couldn’t refuse this small service to good friend like Bertrand, but the fact of being obliged to postpone the realization of all that I had planned disappointed me deeply.

In vain I sought a satisfactory solution. Having no resolution, I decided to leave at once leave to see Mr. Olivier. He would certainly give me counsel, a solution which I could not discover myself.

Disappointed and very annoyed the this regrettable waste of time, I started off in rather a bad mood.

I was already calmer by the time I arrived.



CHAPTER 12 - After Christmas

I found Mr. Olivier in the company of Monsieur Dubourg, in a vast room which was used by him as workshop; he finished repairing a remarkably beautiful Louis XVI armchair, which belonged to the Professor.

“One moment, please? Mr. Olivier said to me; then, after replacing his tools, he took us both along to the library.

“So, what’s the problem, my friend?” asked our host as we took our seats.

“I came to find you because I am very troubled and need advice. But how did you see that something was not right?” I added surprised at his perspicacity.

“From many small things in your attitude, your glance, but especially your slightly nervous and disturbed attitude... finally, because I you know a little,” my Friend said to me, smiling.

So I told him about my thoughts of the previous evening following the inner upheaval I had felt, then my projects, my decision, and finally, if not the collapse of everything, at least the postponement of what I wanted to do to try to follow the lesson of the *Gospels*; all because of this letter from Bertrand, received early in the afternoon.

Mr. Olivier remained silent for a moment, then he regarded me for a long time.

His eyes initially fixed me with great tenderness, then, changing expression, appeared to search the bottom of my soul. Finally his glance softened once more and his face seemed to smile a little.

And, with his serious and profound voice, he said to me, with his eyes always fixed on mine:

“Does the soldier choose the battle field? Does the servant choose his work?”

In two sentences I had understood; but I remained quiet, unable to say a word. It seemed to me that a torrent of light inundated me.

And my Friend continued in a still more compelling voice:

“Can he, who has freely decided to try to do the will of Heaven from this moment on, create projects around what he deems to be doing this Will? Shouldn’t he rather do what presents itself, without seeking what pleases him or seems to him to be more especially agreeable?

“My friend, you had decided to devote yourself to your brothers, and the first thing which present itself to you seems to be an obstacle?

“Do what presents itself, do it as best you can, neither sparing your time or your efforts, and know well that you will never lack work, if what you have to do, and you will do it with all your heart.

“Count neither on recognition, nor on encouragement, because recognition is rare

enough in this world, but what you do, do so that the Father is glorified, without seeking personal satisfaction; always tell yourself, tell yourself unceasingly, that what you are doing, if it were not you, would have been done by someone else. When a task is ended, tell yourself that you are an useless servant, since you only done your duty. Remember verse 10 of Chapter XVII of St. Luke: ‘So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.’

“Know well that you go ahead of many disappointments, because the Prince of this World will launch his legions against you, for you want to free yourself from his yoke and emancipate your brothers; but never forget that Heaven will not abandon you, and that It will set a number of servants beside you to aid you, equal to the number of demons sent against you by the Adversary. The outcome of the battle will depend on you alone, according to the side you join.

“If Satan sends ten of its henchmen against us, Heaven places at our sides ten of Its Angels. but not one more, because that would not be just, and it is up to us to choose on which side we will stand.

“Yes, my friend, you go ahead of disappointment, but do not forget the words of the Master: ‘And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.’ (St Matthew, Ch. X, v. 22) ‘If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.’ (St. John, Ch. XV, v. 18). But also remember that Our Jesus said: ‘Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.’ (St. Luke, Ch. VI, v. 22).

“Let His words help you to hold fast when you are assailed by discouragement, lassitude and perhaps also dislike.

“The Adversary will try every means to get you to abandon the path, to make you stumble. He will tempt you with his best and, against temptation there is only prayer which can make that assistance of Heaven come to you; prayer and struggle, the effort which you yourself will provide, because prayer will keep you in communication with the Master, and the effort will direct the powers that you will receive from Heaven.

“Put all your trust in God and put it only in Him. Men can disappoint you; the Father will not disappoint. We have one Friend, and that is God, expressed by His Word, the Christ.

“However, do not believe that only trials await you and that your life will only consist of hard times. They will be numerous, certainly, but, on the other hand, nothing will be comparable with the joys which you will experience by doing Good, and devoting yourself to your brothers.

“The look of gratitude that you will sometimes receive, after relieving misfortune, will fill your heart with a joy so pure that, when you have tasted it, you will not want any other. But you should remember that these moments will be rare, and especially that they will come at a moment and in circumstances when you will least expect it.

“‘And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.’ (St. John, Ch. IV, v. 37). This is why it will sometimes happen that you will sow without hope of seeing the harvest; and it will sometimes happen that you will reap what another has sown. Also, when you sow, think of the joy of he who will harvest it, which joy is yours.

“Be ready to do all the jobs in the Father’s Farm, and do them the best you can, with all your care, because what you might neglect, one of your brothers would have to do, and the work would be delayed. We are at the eleventh hour. Time presses. Soon it

will be too late, because it is almost the hour of judgment.

“Yes, I know, people smile when one speaks to them of that; their knowledge doesn’t let them anticipate any unexpected change. They forget that it takes very little time for the works of men to be destroyed. And yet Lemuria was drowned almost in its entirety, many centuries ago, and Atlantis too, more recently. But that, to many, is legend: however, they know well that the Earth can tremble; those which have seen storms in the Southern Seas, or who have passed through typhoons in the China Seas, know that the knowledge of men is useless before the unchained elements, and yet that only relates to little local disturbances.

“Soon the terrible floods will become more frequent, catastrophes more terrible, and immense fires will devastate whole cities; these signs they will not take for such; they will continue to be blind, get drunk on their artificial life in which there is only one goal: money or power over other men. But the awakening will be terrible.

“Also, in all our actions, by all the answers which we give to those who question us, to those who seek, we must help the greatest number of our brothers to engage in the Way of Charity, of Loving one’s neighbor without delay.

“Let us not seek to proselytize, because we do not have the ability to know if our words will be well received and especially if they will be opportune, but act, preach by example and never refuse to answer a question when we are able to do it with clarity and in accordance with the Truth, that is, conforming to the teachings of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Let us never make a distinction between our brothers because they follow another religion, or belong to another confession than ours; even if they don’t believe in God, they are our brothers and we have a duty to love them like the others.

“But if one day you encounter one of these dangerous individuals who try to destroy any belief or faith in God in others, these beings who extol and preach atheism in the name of a reason that they deify (and this is their logic!), flee from them, because they serve their Master, each according to his own, and he is the Lie, he is the Denier, he is Satan.

“However, be careful do not include in this legion of the Demon’s henchmen, men who in good faith – for reasons which we do not have to know, or because of what was inculcated in them – do not believe in God, but who do not prevent others from believing in Him. If they have this tolerance, it is because they are already on the good path.

“A man can be charitable and not believe in God. If he is charitable, he will soon believe, because he will refrain from denying what he cannot prove; do not seek to convince him or even enlighten him if he does not seek the Truth, but pray for him. Heaven will do the rest. At your prayer, a Soldier will perhaps be placed on his path, and the Soldier knows his trade.

“Do not believe that fleeing one’s detractors rather than combating them is cowardice. It takes more courage to allow oneself to be treated as a coward without flinching than to prove than one is not.

“The weapon of those which want to follow Christ must be: gentleness and Love.

“We must endeavor to love our brothers as ourselves. Let us being by developing affection for those who surround us.

“I know some claim that affection is a feeling which is not controllable, that it must be an error, for Our Lord would not have asked us to love our next as ourselves; He would not have required a thing of us that with a little goodwill and abnegation, through our effort and sacrifice, we could not have managed to do. He never requires the

impossible.

“The feeling which cannot be controlled (to arouse it, to give birth to it in oneself), is human love, what humans call love; this feeling which is different to affection, but contains it, different from friendship, but contains it, which pushes woman into the arms of he whom she ‘loves’, and vice versa. This kind of love, if it can be contained, controlled, smothered, cannot be aroused artificially.

“It is different with affection, because affection contains a little the love of one’s neighbor. But, if one wants to come to develop his affection for someone, above all he must kill his pride. Because it is our pride, our selfishness, which prevent us from loving others as we should.

“So, when they do something or say something which ‘irritates’ us or makes us angry, we must not, through ‘nobility of soul’ (understand: ‘pride’), ‘leniency’ (understand: ‘pride’), ‘indulgence’ (understand: ‘pride’), forgive them by “toleration” without saying anything.

“No, that is to travel on the wrong path, because we do not possess this ‘nobility of soul’, this ‘leniency’, this ‘indulgence’: what we have in its place is pride. And then, what can we do? It is quite simple: one must bear one’s cross.

“The Master said: ‘...he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.’ (St. Matthew, Ch. X, v. 38).

“We must love to suffer for them and through them, and for them to acknowledge this, because then they help us to become better, to be worthy of Him Who bore a cross which was so much heavier, Who, for us, was ridiculed, suffered and gave His life.

“So it is important that their small failings which irritate us, their ignorance, and sometimes their folly (at least, it is our opinion), instead of making us angry, is an opportunity for us to explain to them what we have understood, so that they may benefit from it as well; and to avoid pride taking hold of us, it would be well to tell ourselves that what we do for them, others have done and will do it for us; and also that because they have need of education on certain points, that they are not capable to educate us on other points.

“I know that sometimes we would like to receive encouragement. But, if we knew how to see them, we would find quite enough to help us, around us, as in the words of the *Gospel*, for remember: ‘...One soweth, and another reapeth.’ (St. John, Ch. IV, v. 37).

“When one has done all that one could do, when one has done one’s best, with all one’s best will, if, even after all that, one dies in the task, one only did one’s duty, and one deserves nothing.

“And if, abandoned by all, one dies wretchedly, receiving the hatred of those who one tried to love and the ingratitude of those that one tried to help, this is the most beautiful reward which Heaven can grant us, and one should receive this reward on one’s knees with gratitude.

“We are not asked to seek out tests, but to know to endure them when they come; and when the opportunity arises for us to be helpful to one of our brothers by practicing a little this Charity which we were taught, remember this old French saying: ‘The manner of giving is worth more than what one gives’.

“If we have to work by bringing material aid to somebody, do it discreetly and not openly and, above all, let us try to make sure that our gesture is very natural and very simple.

“If words must express our Charity or, at least, our attempt to be charitable, let our tone be humble and soft, and always measured.

“Remember that prayer is the bond which will bind you to Heaven; for Mr. Philippe said; ‘Prayer alone cannot save us, but it gives rise to our guardian angel to lead us.’ You cannot do anything by yourself, but your prayer can start an act of Heaven.

“Do not be troubled by sentences or words. ‘the Pater and the Ave are sufficient’ our Master had the habit of saying. May your request be simple: very often an outburst of the heart is a more beautiful prayer than noble thoughts prettily expressed.

“It is far from my intention to diminish the beauty of certain requests, but remember that God Our Father sees what is in our hearts, and this is why the form becomes secondary.

“If you but knew what power there is in the prayer of a little child! So let us be like them, and ask like them, who Our Lord loved to see come to Him.

“Do not forget, however, that if we want our prayers to be heard, we must be very attentive while praying, and we must also become rich, rich in good deeds for then ‘...he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.’ (St. Mark, Ch. IV, v. 25).

“Now, my friend, since the evening of the day before yesterday we spoke to you of Mr. Philippe, seeing that you have understood, I will make a point of quoting you some more of His Teachings; those on prayer

“Mr. Olivier then took a large book, more precisely a very large note book, a register, with a black cover in fabric, whose pages were handwritten, then he read slowly.

“This is what was said to Papus, on Friday, 27 September, 1901: ‘*men’s prayers are heard and go beyond the apartment of matter, since Christ was made flesh.*’

“He also said: ‘*To pray, one must first be collected, so that all your being, all your spirit, requests with you and understands well.*

‘*It is useful to pray, not to lessen suffering but to ask for strength, courage. Our prayer is not always heard, and that is good, because if God heard all prayers they would often offend Him. But it is useful to pray because that keeps us breathing. TO CEASE PRAYING IS TO NO LONGER TO BE ABLE TO PRAY ONE DAY. And then, our Enemy is frightened. If he knows that we pray, he does not dare to attack any longer.*

‘*One should ask only that when sufferings become intolerable, we be prevented from acting.*’

‘*That God does not hear the prayers of all those who pray, is not because He is far from them, but it is because they are far from Him, because God is everywhere.*’

‘*One must watch and pray.*’

‘*So that Heaven hears us, we must not hate our parents.*’

‘*If the prayer is heard, you will feel it in a special state of externalization, inspiration, inner light, but not of breath nor of material tremor.*’

‘*If we cannot pray, it is because we neglected to do it at an opportune time, when all was well. A prayer which is not heard by God can however be heard by other Beings, who will then help us, so that our prayers are heard. First forgive your enemies then thank Heaven. To do that one must be calm and not to worry. One must lock oneself away. Let the body and the spirit be one. Wait twenty-four hours, if necessary, for that. When you have promised to pray for somebody, you are bound, and you must do it, do it while he is asleep, if necessary.*’

‘*It is useless to pray for the dead: we know not where they are.*’

‘*You are permitted to ask for the material when you have confidence in prayer.*’

‘*WE DON’T THANK ENOUGH.*’

‘*We must always pray. Heaven told us to ask and promised that we would receive*

our daily bread.’

‘If the prayer is *USEFUL, IF THE PRAYER COMES FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE HEART*, it will be granted.’

‘An inattentive prayer is, for the invisible beings who hear it, a subject of mockery, and we will be ridiculed for it.’

‘To pray on waking is to avoid being angry.’

‘Anybody who recites the Pater Noster is still in the Path, because he shows a gesture of humility to matter, humility necessary for our prayer to be heard.’

‘Repeat prayers, because we are inattentive and often only one syllable is heard. There are beings for whom prayer is bread; and it is as necessary for them as air is for us.’

‘One must pray to the Blessed Virgin. The Virgin is preeminent over all women.’

‘The Sunday prayer. *HALLOWED BE THY NAME*. It is a courtesy which we return to God at the beginning of our prayer. One should not seek no other meaning.

‘The Pater has been given to certain of those whom we spoke about to cheer them. It is still the prayer of the majority, and that is because there are always souls, beings who we do not see, who are there and who these words make reflect. It is they who lead us into temptation. At the moment we pray and pronounce this phrase, those who tormented us regain their self-control and say: “But why do we amuse ourselves by doing evil to these little ones? But the true soldier who wants to walk ahead must not say ‘do not lead us to the time of trial’.

“This prayer which comes to us from Heaven through the Son, cannot be pronounced without he who says it bottom of the heart being united in intention with Our Lord. When we pronounce: *GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD*, we are saying ‘give us the bread of the soul which is suffering’. Suffering is the nourishment of the soul as wheat is the food of the body. If we feed ourselves, it is to live, and the life of the soul is its communion with Our Lord. How do we communicate with Him? By giving our brothers a part of our happiness as Christ gave His Life to make us participate in Eternal Life, until the smallest among us have come to the Kingdom of Heaven, where suffering is transmuted and becomes joy.

‘Material interests should not be sought in the Pater, because God provides for all our material needs. Didn’t the little insect who never said a prayer receive life?

‘*DO NOT LEAD US INTO TEMPTATION*. These words were never given, but they are often said. *DO NOT LET US SUCCUMB TO TEMPTATION*. This is what we should say. God cannot be the author of our temptations, but He allows Satan to try us so that we recognize that without Him we are nothing. The temptation we resist is the best means of working, but one doesn’t need to be exposed to it in order to progress. He who wants to save his soul loses it. All men work because he has within him, as well as the seven deadly sins, the Virtues which oppose them.’

When I finished taking my notes, Mr. Olivier laid down his book, then he continued in his warm and serious voice:

“When you pray for somebody, it is not useful to formulate a wish, a precise desire; satisfy yourself with asking the assistance of Heaven for those in need, either because they suffer, or for another cause. Heaven knows better, far better than we what is appropriate for those for whom we pray. This also prevents our prayer being energized through mingling our will with it. Our will should not intervene in our prayers; prayer is a request,

and must remain humble, simple and always respectful. With regard to your will, use it to do Heaven’s Will. Only that.

“Finally, my Friend, remember well, always remember this recommendation of Mr. Philippe ‘*One should thank often*’. Don’t believe that this is because Heaven needs thanks, but it is a courtesy, as Our Master said, and a mark of respect; moreover, these thanks cause true joy in the Servants of the Invisible who were charged by Heaven to grant our prayers.

“Also remember that it is not only those you meet or know who suffer, or who have need of assistance. And when you walk down a street, think of the ill, the disabled, the aged, who are perhaps behind these walls; think of those who are seized by the anguish of losing their jobs, those who, pushed by misfortune are at the edge of the abyss and who the Adversary lures towards suicide or pushes towards crime. Think of those who are betrayed, disappointed; finally of all the unfortunate and that your prayer might ask Heaven for the assistance necessary for each of them. I affirm to you that whatever the number, each will receive the appropriate assistance. Admittedly, in such cases, you will be unaware of the results of your prayers: all the better! For then no pride is likely to creep into you. Pride is our worst enemy; it is he who leads men to their ruin. He is the father of all vices, all abjections.

“There are cases where resignation is necessary, where compassion can soothe, but we do not have always wisdom to distinguish it, and this is why it is often necessary to ask Our Lady the Blessed Virgin for her intercession.

“We do not pray to Our Lady often enough, and yet if one knew the treasures of Love which She spreads upon our world, one would be deeply moved. She was the sorrowful mother of Our Lord. She remains the Sorrowful Mother of all humanity.

“Pray often for France, not only because it is your Fatherland, but especially because of its mission in the World and in Christianity. We must help it through our prayers to continue its role among the Nations, which is to spread Justice, Fraternity and Freedom.

“May your prayers also be for all those who work hard in mines, factories, on building sites, in the woods and in the fields, everywhere that men work for other men, their brothers.

“Ah, if we thought that, every time we had a little happiness, we had this happiness only because others suffered, sometimes suffered terribly, we might find it a little less difficult to love our neighbor as ourselves. But then, we do not think of that at all; we know well enough how to complain, we notice what others didn’t do for us, when we would have liked them to do it, but then we doesn’t see all that they do and all that they endure for us.

“My friend, the resolution that you took is good. It is the one each of us should take one day: to forget oneself to devote himself to his brothers. Your friend asks for your presence and your assistance, go there and do your best. After this work, do not fear, another will present itself, which you will see immediately if you are attentive. You will have to act, perhaps speak. You will have to take as much care in action as in speech. You will encounter ingrates, thank Heaven, and hold them squarely before you. You will also meet also the stupid, who will believe themselves quite clever by asking you insidious or complex questions, and will defy you to answer with the support of proof. Remember that this kind of stupidity has always existed. Was it not Cicero who said: ‘*Cur fiat quidque quæris? Recte omnino; sed non nunc id agitur: fiat necne fiat id quæritur. Ut si magnetem lapidem esse dicam, qui ferrum as se alliciat et attrahat; rationem cur id fiat, affere*

nequam, fieri omnino neget³¹.’

“Do then as Cicero did, and the stupid will have their answer. However, if he is somebody of good faith, who seeks sincerely and for whom you were short of explanations, know that we would be happy, the Professor and I, to help you as best we can, if we know the subject.

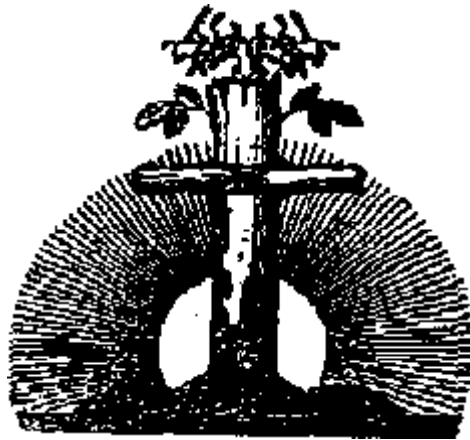
“And when you can, come and see us, we will always be happy to see you.

“I had risen, and tried to express all my gratitude to my Friend, but he stopped me, saying:

“You know that it is the Father we should thank. We will think of you, the Professor and I, and we will ask Heaven every day, as I do now: May God keep you, and may the Peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, be with you!

8 December, 1936

2 February, 1937



³¹ You would know the why of all things, very well; but this is not what it is about: are they or are they not? See, I would say to you that a magnet is a body which attracts iron and sticks to it; but because I could not give you the reason that makes it so, you would formally deny it! ‘De Divinatione’ – Liber I, caput 39).