

as are in that happy moment all the transgressions of the sinner and all the woes of life by the Virtue of the Holy One, or else to some dim corner of a garden of the oasis by the stream, where through the softly stirring palms strikes the first moon-ray from the East, and life thrills in sleepy unison ; all, all, in silence, not names or vows exchanged, but with clean will an act accomplished. No more. No turmoil, no confusion, no despair, no self-tormenting, hardly even memory. And this too at first is horrible ; one expects so much from love, three volumes of falsehood, a labyrinth for a garden. It is hard at first to realize that this is no more love than a carbuncle is part of a man's neck. All the spices wherewith we are wont to season the dish to our depraved palates, Maxim's, St. Margaret's, automobile rides, the Divorce Court, these are unwholesome pleasures. They are not love. Nor is love the exaltation of emotions, sentiments, follies. The stage-door is not love, nor is the stile in Lovers' Lane ; love is the bodily ecstasy of dissolution, the pang of bodily death, wherein the Ego for a moment that is an æon loses the fatal consciousness of itself, and becoming one with that of another, foreshadows to itself that greater sacrament of death, when " the spirit returns to God that gave it."

And this great secret has also its part in the œconomy of life. By the road of silence one comes to the gate of the City of God. As the mind is gradually stilled by the courage and endurance of the seeker, and by the warring might (that is peace unshakeable) of these Eight Elements of the Desert, so at last the Ego is found alone, unmasked, conscious of itself and of no other thing. This is the supreme anguish of the soul ; it realizes itself as itself, as a thing separate from that which is not itself, from God. In this spasm there are two ways : if fear and pride are left in the soul, it shuts itself up, like a warlock in a tower, gnashing its teeth with agony. " I am I," it cries, " I will not lose myself," and in that state, damned, it is slowly torn by the claws of circumstance, disintegrated bitterly, for all its struggles, throughout ages and ages, its rags to be cast piecemeal upon the dungheap without the city. But the soul that has understood the blessedness of resignation, that is without hope or fear, without faith or doubt, without hate or love, dissolves itself ineffably into the abounding bliss of God. It cries with Shelley :

. . . chains of lead about my flight of fire,
I pant, I sink, I tremble, I expire,

and in that last outbreaking is made one with that primal and final breath, the Holy Spirit of God.