

The Chalice of Ecstasy

(Continued from page 12)

seems to move, as the Sun seems to move; such is the weakness of our sight.

O fool! criest thou?

Amen. Motion is relative: there is Nothing that is still.

Against this Swan I shot an arrow; the white breast poured forth blood. Men smote me; then perceiving that I was a Pure Fool, they let me pass. Thus and not otherwise I came to the Temple of the Grail.

Thus did Parzival bring down Ecstasy to Earth, although the King—*Amfortas*—and his Knights had "esteemed it a happy token, when o'er the lake it circled aloft."

What is this lake? When calm and untroubled, brooded over by the Swan of Ecstasy, it is the human mind trained by the proper methods to Right Contemplation. For only when the mind is still may the Sun of the true Self be seen reflected in its depths. From that it is but one step to the attainment of Right Ecstasy when the Sun plunges into the depths of the Mind and the whole being is aflame with the Sacred Fire of the Holy Spirit.

Parzival had aimed high; he had hit the mark of his Aspiration, little though his action was at first understood. Yet his Folly saved him, as he in turn saved others.

When questioned as to his action he answered "I knew not 'twas wrong," although he flung away his weapon, having no further use for it in that form.

What was his weapon? The Bow of Promise and the Arrow of Pure Aspiration. But he had aspired, he had hit the mark and the promise had been to a certain extent fulfilled.

The Qabalist will at once recognise the "Path of Samach or Sagittarius the Archer on the 'Tree of Life.'" This is the Path of the Arrow that cleaves the Rainbow, leading directly from Yesod—the Foundation—to Tiphereth the Sphere of the Sun, Beauty and Harmony, or the Human Heart wherein the Mysteries of the Rosy Cross and of the Holy Grail are first—dimly—perceived.

To what other use had Parzival—son of Heart's Affliction—previously put this weapon? He had shot at all that flies. He had shot at the Eagle, the bird that fears not to gaze upon the very Sun itself.

What does this Eagle mean and what does it foreshadow?

ECSTASY!

For it is written: "The Eagle is that Might of Love which is the Key of Magic, uplifting the Body and its appurtenance unto High Ecstasy upon his Wings."

This Eagle is known to Occultists as one of the Four Cherubic Beasts and he represents one of the Four Powers of the Sphinx. Likewise he is attributed by Eliphas Levi to *Azoth*, the formula of the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last.

It was by the right use of this Might of Love that Parzival succeeded where others had failed. For again it is written in Liber Aleph: "Consider Love. Here is a force destructive and corrupting whereby have many men been lost: witness all History. Yet without love man were not man."

"We see *Amfortas*, who yielded him-

self to seduction, wounded beyond healing; *Klingsor*, who withdrew himself from a like danger, cast out forever from the Mountain of Salvation, and *Parzival* who yielded not, able to exercise the true Power of Love and thereby to perform the Miracle of Redemption."

But though we are now nearing that realm wherein "Time and Space are One" we must not allow ourselves to be rushed forward too rapidly.

There were many things that *Parzival* did not know, or which he professed not to know when questioned. He did not as yet know his True Name—the Word of His Being—though he had in, the past been called by many names. Some things he knew and remembered clearly; there was one thing he desired to know and to understand.

What is the Grail?

To which *Gurnemanz* very properly replies:

I may not say:

But if to serve it thou be bidden Knowledge of it will not be hidden—

And lo!

Methinks I know thee now indeed; No earthly road to it doth lead,

But no one can it be detected Who by itself is not elected.

To which *Parzival*, without further questioning, replies:

I scarcely move,

Yet swiftly seem to run.

And *Gurnemanz*:

My son, thou seest

Here SPACE and TIME are ONE.

Now, in truth, have we come to the beginning of the True Path which in the clear Light is one with the end thereof.

What says Blavatsky in "The Voice of the Silence?" "Bestride the Bird of Life if thou wouldst know!"

And this Bird—this Swan—so seeming dead until its Powers be known? Some have compared it to be sacred Word, the Great Word AUM. For it is written: "AUM is the hieroglyph of the Eternal. A the beginning of sound, U its middle and M its end, together forming a single Word or Trinity, indicating that the Real must be regarded as of this three-fold nature. Birth, Life and Death, not successive, but one."

The Illusory nature of Time and Space, which are but modes of our finite mind, has been made very clear by Sidney Klein in his excellent book "Science and the Infinite," but this is no new idea. The attainment of Ecstasy has proved to Initiates of every land that there is a state of consciousness wherein both time and space are blotted out—at least temporarily—and at the same moment the limitations of the "personal ego" no longer oppress us. In that Holy Book known as Liber LXV—Chapter II, Verses 17-25, we read:

"17. Also the Holy One came upon me, and I beheld a white swan floating in the blue.

18. Between its wings I sat, and the aeons fled away.

19. Then the swan flew and dived and soared, yet no whither we went.

20. A little crazy boy that rode with me spake unto the swan and said:

21. Who art thou that doth float and fly and dive and soar in the inane? Behold, these many aeons have passed; whence camest thou? Whither wilt thou go?

22. And laughing I chid him saying: No whence! No whither!

23. The swan being silent, he answered: Then if with no goal, why this eternal journey?

24. And I laid my head against the Head of the Swan, and laughed, saying: Is there not joy ineffable in this aimless winging? Is there not weariness and impatience for who would attain to some goal?

25. And the swan was ever silent. Ah, but we floated in the infinite Abyss. Joy! Joy!

White swan bear thou ever me up between thy wings.

But there was much that *Parzival* must do before taking his case thus: he had a mission to accomplish, on earth, though as yet he knew it not.

By the use of these examples, we may begin to comprehend what happens next. A new "movement without motion" on the part of *Parzival* and *Gurnemanz* is now symbolized by the SCENERY in the Drama shifting, at first almost imperceptibly from Left to Right. The forest—in which the First Scene has taken place—disappears; a door opens in the rocky cliffs and conceals the two; they are then seen again in sloping passages which they appear to ascend. At last they arrive at a mighty hall, which looms itself overhead in a high vaulted dome, down from which the light streams in. From the heights above the dome comes the increasing sound of chimes.

Again we may find a very direct correspondence in the Eastern Teachings as propounded by Madame Blavatsky in "The Voice of the Silence." She writes: "Thou canst not travel on that Path until thou hast become the Path itself."

Further in Liber CCCXXXIII by Frater Perdurabo we read:

"O thou that stetest out upon the Path, false is the Phantom that thou seest. When thou hast it thou shalt know all bitterness, thy teeth fixed is the Sodom-Apple.

Thus hast thou been lured along That Path, whose terror else had driven thee far away.

O thou that stridest upon the middle of The Path, no phantoms mock thee. For the stride's sake thou stridest.

Thus art thou lured along That Path whose fascination else had driven thee far away.

"O thou that drawest toward the End of The Path, effort is no more. Faster and faster dost thou fall; thy weariness is changed into ineffable Rest.

For there is no Thou upon that Path; thou hast become The Way."

And each must learn to travel this Path, each must overcome his own obstacles, unmask his own illusions. Yet there is always the possibility that others may help us to do this and, as in the case of *Parzival* led by *Gurnemanz*, who had traveled that Way before, we may be guided in the true Path and taught to avoid the many false byways that may tempt us in our search for the Temple of the Holy Grail. In fact, if our training has been right and our aspiration remains pure, we must inevitably arrive at the end of that Road; often we may seem to do so in the twinkling of an eye, and when we least expect it.

(Continued on page 38)