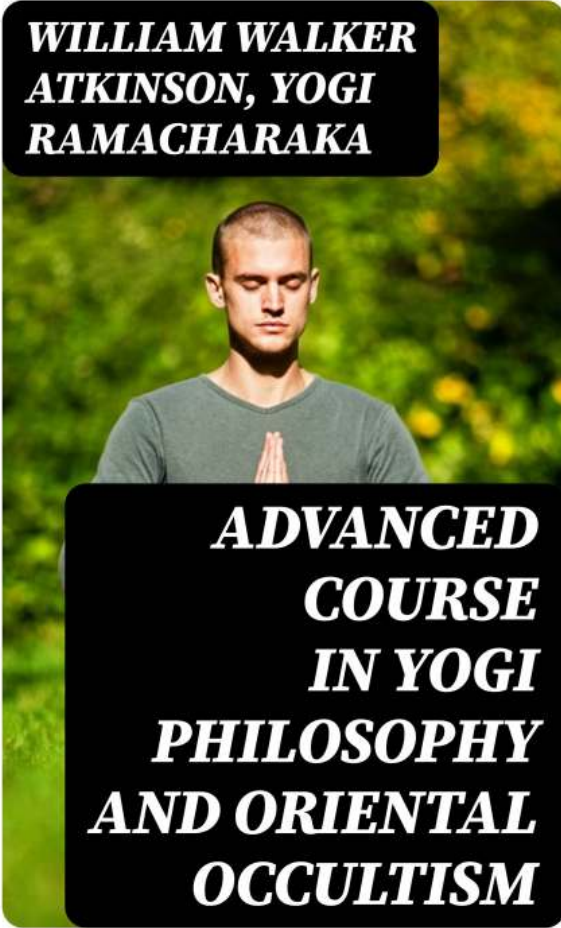


***WILLIAM WALKER
ATKINSON, YOGI
RAMACHARAKA***



***ADVANCED
COURSE
IN YOGI
PHILOSOPHY
AND ORIENTAL
OCCULTISM***

**WILLIAM WALKER
ATKINSON, YOGI
RAMACHARAKA**



**ADVANCED
COURSE
IN YOGI
PHILOSOPHY
AND ORIENTAL
OCCULTISM**

William Walker Atkinson / Yogi Ramacharaka

Advanced Course in Yogi Philosophy and Oriental Occultism

**Light On The Path, Spiritual Consciousness, The Voice
Of Silence, Karma Yoga, Gnani Yoga, Bhakti Yoga,
Dharma, Riddle Of The Universe, Matter And Force &
Mind And Spirit**

EAN 8596547003793

DigiCat, 2022

Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info



Table of Contents

[Lesson I. Light On The Path](#)

[Lesson II. Some More Light On The Path](#)

[Lesson III. Spiritual Consciousness](#)

[Lesson IV. The Voice Of Silence](#)

[Lesson V. Karma Yoga](#)

[Lesson VI. Gnani Yoga](#)

[Lesson VII. Bhakti Yoga](#)

[Lesson VIII. Dharma](#)

[Lesson IX. More About Dharma](#)

[Lesson X. Riddle Of The Universe](#)

[Lesson XI. Matter And Force](#)

[Lesson XII. Mind And Spirit](#)

Lesson I.

Some Light On The Path

[Table of Content](#)

We greet our old students who have returned to us for the Advanced Course. We feel that, hereafter, it will not be necessary to repeat the elementary explanations which formed such an important part of the former class work, and we may be able to go right to the heart of the subject, feeling assured that each student is prepared to receive the same. Many read the former lessons from curiosity—some have become so interested that they wish to go on—others have failed to find the sensational features for which they had hoped, and have dropped from the ranks. It is ever so. Many come, but only a certain percentage are ready to go on. Out of a thousand seeds sown by the farmer, only a hundred manifest life. But the work is intended for that hundred, and they will repay the farmer for his labor. In our seed sowing, it is even more satisfactory, for even the remaining nine hundred will show life at some time in the future. No occult teaching is ever wasted—all bears fruit in its own good time. We welcome the students in the Advanced Course—we congratulate ourselves in having such a large number of interested listeners—and we congratulate the students in having reached the stage in which they feel such an interest in the work, and in being ready to go on.

We will take for the subject of our first lesson the Way of Attainment—The Path. And we know of no better method of directing the student's steps along The Path than to point out to him the unequaled precepts of the little manual "*Light on the Path*," written down by "M.C." (Mabel Collins, an English woman) at the request of some advanced mind (in

or out of the flesh) who inspired it. In our notice in the last installment of the "*Fourteen Lessons*," we stated that we had in mind a little work which would perhaps make plainer the precepts of "*Light on the Path*." But, upon second thought, we have thought it preferable to make such writing a part of the Advanced Course, instead of preparing it as a separate book for general distribution and sale. In this way we may speak at greater length, and with less reserve, knowing that the students of the course will understand it far better than would the general public. So, the little book will not be published, and the teaching will be given only in these lessons. We will quote from the little manual, precept after precept, following each with a brief explanation.

In this connection it may be as well to state that "*Light on the Path*" is, practically, an inspired writing, and is so carefully worded that it is capable of a variety of interpretations—it carries a message adapted to the varying requirements of the several planes and stages of life. The student is able to extract meanings suited to his stage of development. In this respect the work is different from ordinary writings. One must take something to the book before he is able to obtain something from it. In "*The Illumined Way*" the work is interpreted, in part, upon the lines of the psychic or astral planes. Our interpretation will be designed to apply to the life of the student entering upon The Path—the beginner. It will endeavor to explain the first several precepts in the light of "Karma Yoga," and will then try to point out the plain meaning of the precepts, pertaining to the higher desires; then passing on to an explanation of the precepts relating to the unfoldment of Spiritual Consciousness, which is indeed the key-note of the little manual. We will endeavor to make a little plainer to the students the hidden meanings of the little book—to put into plain homely English, the thoughts so beautifully expressed in the poetical imagery of the Orient. Our work will not contradict the interpretation given in "*The Illumined Way*"—

it will merely go along side by side with it, on another plane of life. To some, it may seem a presumptuous undertaking to attempt to "interpret" that gem of occult teaching "*Light on the Path*"—but the undertaking has the approval of some for whose opinions we have respect—and has, what means still more to us—the approval of our Higher Self. Crude though our work may be, it must be intended to reach some—else it would not have been suggested.

"These rules are written for all disciples. Attend you to them."

These rules are indeed written for all disciples and it will be well for us to attend to them. For the rules for the guidance of occultists have always been the same, and will always remain the same—in all time—in all countries—and under whatever name the teaching is imparted. For they are based upon the principles of truth, and have been tried, tested and passed upon long ages ago, and have come down to us bearing the marks of the careful handling of the multitudes who have passed on before—our elder brothers in the Spirit—those who once trod the path upon which we are now entering—those who have passed on to heights which we shall one day mount. These rules are for *all* followers of The Path—the were written for such, and there are none better. They come to us from those who *know*.

"Before the eyes can see, they must be incapable of tears. Before the ear can hear, it must have lost its sensitiveness. Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters, it must have lost the power to wound. Before the soul can stand in the presence of the Masters, its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart."

Before the eyes can see with the clear vision of the Spirit, they must have grown incapable of the tears of wounded pride—unkind criticism—unmerited abuse—unfriendly remarks—slights—sarcasm—the annoyances of everyday life—the failures and disappointments of everyday existence. We do not mean that one should harden his soul against these things—on the contrary "hardening" forms no part of the occult teachings. On the material plane, one is constantly at the mercy of others on the same plane, and the more finely constituted one may be, the more keenly does he feel the pain of life, coming from without. And if he attempts to fight back—to pay off these backbitings and pinpricks in like kind—the more does he become enmeshed in the web of material life. His only chance of escape lies in growing so that he may rise above that phase of existence and dwell in the upper regions of the mind, and Spirit. This does not mean that he should run away from the world—on the contrary, if one attempts to run away from the world before he has learned its lessons, he will be thrust back into it, again and again, until he settles down to perform the task. But, nevertheless, one of spiritual attainment may so live that although he is in the midst of the fight of everyday life—yea, may even be a captain in the struggle—he really *lives* above it all—sees it for just what it is—sees it but as a childish game of child-like men and women, and although he plays the game well, he still knows it to be but a game, and not the real thing at all. This being the case, he begins by smiling through his tears, when he is knocked down in the rush of the game—then he ceases to weep at all, smiles taking the place of the tears, for, when things are seen in their true relation, one can scarcely repress a smile at himself, and at (or with) others. When one looks around and sees the petty playthings to which men are devoting their lives, believing that these playthings are real, he cannot but smile. And, when one awakens to a realization of the reality of things, his own particular part, which he is compelled to

play, must evoke a smile from him. these are not mere dreams and impracticable ideas. If many of you had an idea of how many men, high in the puppet-play of worldly affairs, have really awakened to the truth, it would surprise you. many of these men play their part well—with energy and apparent ambition—for they realize that there is a purpose behind it all, and that they are necessary parts of the machinery of evolution. But deep within the recesses of their souls, they know it all for what it is. One on The Path must needs be brave, and must acquire a mastery over the emotional nature. This precept does not merely refer to physical tears—for they often spring to the eyes involuntarily, and though we may be smiling at the time. It refers to the feeling that there is anything for us to really cry over. It is the thought back of the tears, rather than the tears themselves.

The lesson to be learned from these rules is that we should rise above the incidents of personality, and strive to realize our individuality. That we should desire to realize the I AM consciousness, which is above the annoyance of personality. That we should learn that these things cannot hurt the Real Self—that they will be washed from the sands of time by the waters of eternity.

Likewise our ear must lose its sensitiveness to the unpleasant incidents of personality, before it can hear the truth clearly, and free from the jarring noises of the outward strife. One must grow to be able to hear these things, and yet smile, secure in the knowledge of the soul and its powers, and its destiny. One must grow to be able to hear the unkind word—the unjust criticism—the spiteful remark—without letting them affect his real self. He must keep such things on the material plane to which they belong, and never allow his soul to descend to where it may be affected by them. one must learn to be able to hear the truths which are sacred to him, spoken of sneeringly and contemptuously by those who do not understand—they cannot be blamed,

for they cannot understand. Let the babes prattle, and scold, and laugh. It does them good, and cannot hurt you or the Truth. Let the children play—it is their nature—some day they will (like you) have experienced the growing-pains of spiritual maturity, and will be going through just what you are now. You were once like them—they will be as you in time. Follow the old saying, and let such things "go in one ear, and out of the other"—do not let them reach your real consciousness. Then will the ear hear the things intended for it—it will afford a clear passage for the entrance of the Truth.

Yea, "before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters, it must have lost its power to wound." The voice that scolds, lies, abuses, complains, and wounds, can never reach the higher planes upon which dwell the advanced intelligences of the race. Before it can speak so as to be heard by those high in the order of life, and spiritual intelligences, it must have long since forgotten how to wound others by unkind words, petty spite, unworthy speech. The advanced man does not hesitate to speak the truth even when it is not pleasant, if it seems right to do so, but he speaks in the tone of a loving brother who does not criticize from the "I am holier than thou" position, but merely feels the other's pain—sees his mistake—and wishes to lend him a helping hand. such a one has risen above the desire to "talk back"—to "cut" another by unkind and spiteful remarks—to "get even" by saying, in effect, "You're another." These things must be cast aside like a worn-out cloak—the advanced man needs them not.

"Before the soul can stand in the presence of the Masters, its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart"—this is a "hard saying" to many entering The Path. Many are led astray from the real meaning of this precept by their understanding of the word "heart—they think it means the love nature. But this is not the meaning—occultism does not teach killing out true love—teaches that

love is one of the greatest privileges of man, and that as he advances his love nature grows until, finally, it includes all life. The "heart" referred to is the emotional nature and the instincts of the lower and more animal mind. These things seem to be such a part of us, before we develop, that to get rid of them we seem to be literally tearing out our hearts. We part with the first one thing and then another, of the old animal nature, with pain and suffering, and our spiritual fee become literally washed in the blood of the heart. Appetite—cravings of the lower nature—desires of the animal part of us—old habits—conventionalities—inherited thought—racial delusions—things in the blood and bone of our nature, must be thrown off, one by one, with much misgivings and doubts at first—and with much pain and heart-bleeding until we reach a position from which we can see what it all means. Not only the desires of the lower self are to be torn out, but we must, of necessity, part with many things which have always seemed dear and sacred to us, but which appear as but childish imaginings in the pure light which is beginning to be poured out from our Spiritual Mind. But even though we see these things for what they are, still it pains us to part from them, and we cry aloud, and our heart bleeds. Then we often come to a parting of the ways—place where we are forced to part mental company with those who are dear to us, leaving them to travel their own road while we take step upon a new and (to us) an untried path of thought. All this means pain. And then the horror of mental and spiritual loneliness which comes over one soon after he has taken the first few steps on The Path—that first initiation which has tried the souls of many who read these words—that frightful feeling of being alone—with no one near who can understand and appreciate your feelings. And then, the sense of seeing the great problem of life, which others do not recognize the existence of any unsolved problem, and who accordingly go on their way, dancing, fighting, quarreling, and showing all the signs of spiritual blindness,

while you were compelled to stand alone and bear the awful sight. Then, indeed, does the blood of your heart gush forth. And then, the consciousness of the world's pain and your failure to understand its meaning—your feeling of impotence when you tried to find a remedy for it. all this causes your heart to bleed. And all these things come from your spiritual awakening—the man of the material plane has felt some of these things—has seen them not. Then when the feet of the soul have been bathed in the blood of the heart, the eye begins to see the spiritual truths—the ear begins to hear them—the tongue begins to be able to speak them to others, and to converse with those who have advanced along The Path. And the soul is able to stand erect and gaze into the face of other advanced souls, for it has begun to understand the mysteries of life—the meaning of it all—has been able to grasp something of the Great Plan—has been able to feel the consciousness of its own existence—has been able to say: "I AM" with meaning—has found itself—has conquered pain by rising above it. Take these thoughts with you into the Silence, and let the truth sink into your mind, that it may take root, grow, blossom, and bear fruit.

1. "Kill out ambition."
2. "Kill out desire of life."
3. "Kill out desire of comfort."
4. "Work as those work who are ambitious.
Respect life as those who desire it. Be
happy as those are who live for happiness."

Much of the occult truth is written in the form of paradox—showing both sides of the shield. This is in accordance with nature's plan. All statements of truth are but partial statements—there are two good sides of every argument—any bit of truth is but a half-truth, hunt diligently enough and you will find the opposite half—everything "is and it

isn't"—any full statement of truth must of necessity be paradoxical. This because our finite point-of-view enables us to see but one side of a subject at a time. From the point of view of the infinite, all sides are seen at the same time—all points of a globe being visible to the infinite seer, who is also able to see *through* the globe as well as *around* it.

The above mentioned four precepts are illustrations of this law of paradox. They are generally dismissed as non-understandable by the average person who reads them. And yet they are quite reasonable and absolutely true.

The key to the understanding of these (and all) truths lies in the ability to distinguish between the "relative" or lower, point of view, and the "absolute" or higher one. Remember this well, for it will help you to see into many a dark corner—to make easy many a hard saying. Let us apply the test to these four precepts.

We are told to: "Kill out ambition." The average man recoils from this statement, and cries out that such a course would render a man a spiritless and worthless creature, for ambition seems to be at the bottom of all of man's accomplishments. Then, as he throws down the book, he sees, in the fourth precept: "Work as those who are ambitious"—and, unless he sees with the eyes of the Spiritual Mind, he becomes more confused than ever. But the two things are possible—yes, are absolutely feasible as well as proper. The "ambition" alluded to is that emotion which urges a man to attain from vainglorious, selfish motives, and which impels him to crush all in his path, and to drive to the wall all with whom he comes into contact. Such ambition is but the counterfeit of real ambition, and is as abnormal as is the morbid appetites which counterfeit and assume the guise of hunger and thirst—the ridiculous customs of decorating the persons with barbarous ornamentations, which counterfeits the natural instinct of putting on some slight covering as protection from the weather—the absurd custom of burdening oneself and

others with the maintenance of palatial mansions, which counterfeits man's natural desire for a home-spot and shelter—the licentious and erotic practices of many men and women, which are but counterfeits of the natural sexual instincts of normal man and woman, the object of which is, primarily, the preservation of the race. The "ambitious" man becomes insane for success, because the instinct has become perverted and abnormal. He imagines that the things for which he is striving will bring him happiness, but he is disappointed—they turn to ashes like Dead Sea fruit—because they are not the source of permanent happiness. He ties himself to the things he creates, and becomes their slave rather than their master. He regards money not as a means of securing necessities and nourishment (mental and physical) for himself and others, but as a thing valuable of itself—he has the spirit of the miser. Or, he may seek power for selfish reasons—to gratify his vanity—to show the world that he is mightier than his fellow men—to stand above the crowd. All poor, petty, childish ambitions, unworthy of a real *Man*, and which must be outgrown before the man may progress—but perhaps the very lessons he is receiving are just the ones needed for his awakening. In short, the man of the abnormal ambition works for things *for the sake of selfish reward*, and is inevitably disappointed, for he is pinning his hopes on things which fail him in the hour of need—is leaning on a broken reed.

Now let us look upon the other side of the shield. The fourth precept contains these words: "Work as those work who are ambitious." There it is. One who works this way may appear to the world as the typical ambitious man, but the resemblance is merely outward. The "ambitious" man is the abnormal thing. The Man who works for work's sake—in obedience to the desire to work—the craving to create—because he gives full expression to the creative part of his nature—is the real thing. And the latter is able to do better work—more lasting work—than the first mentioned man.

And then, besides, he gains happiness from his work—he feels the joy which comes from doing—he lets the creative impulse of the All Life flow through him, and he does great things—he accomplishes, and is happy in his work and through his work. And so long as he keeps true to his ideals he will be safe and secure in that joy, and will be doing well his share of the world's work. But, as he mounts the ladder of Success, he is subjected to terrible temptations, and often allows the abnormal ambition to take possession of him, the result being that in his next incarnation he will have to learn his lesson all over again, and again until he has mastered it.

Every man has his work in the world to do, and he should do it the best he knows how—should do it cheerfully—should do it intelligently. And he should let have full expression that instinct which impels him to do things right—better than they have been done before (not that he may triumph over others, but because the world needs things done better).

True occultism does not teach that man should sit around doing nothing but meditating, with his gaze fasted upon his umbilicus, as is the custom with some of the ignorant Hindu fakirs and devotees, who ape the terms and language of the Yogi teachers, and prostitute their teachings. On the contrary, it teaches that it is man's duty and glorious privilege to participate in the world's work, and that he who is able to do something a little better than it has ever been done before is blessed, and a benefactor to the race. It recognizes the Divine urge to create, which is found in all men and women, and believes in giving it the fullest expression. It teaches that no life is fully rounded out and complete, unless some useful work is a part of it. It believes that intelligent work helps toward spiritual unfoldment, and is in fact necessary to it. It does not teach the beauty of unintelligent drudgery—for there is no beauty in such work—but it teaches that in the humblest task may be found

interest to the one who looks for it, and that such a one always finds a better way of doing the thing, and thus adds something to the world's store of knowledge. It teaches the real ambition—that love of work for work's sake—rather than that work which is performed for the world's counterfeit reward. Therefore when the precept says: "Kill out Ambition * * * Work as those work who are ambitious," you will understand it. This life is possible to those who understand 'Karma Yoga,' one of the great branches of the Yogi Philosophy, upon which it may be our privilege to write at some future time. Read over these words, until you fully grasp their meaning—until you *feel* them as well as see them. The gist of these teachings upon the subject of Ambition, may be summed up by saying: Kill out the *relative* Ambition, which causes you to tie yourself to the objects and rewards of your work, and which yields nothing but disappointment and repressed growth—but develop and express fully the *absolute* Ambition, which causes you to work for work's sake—for the joy which comes to the worker—from the desire to express the Divine Instinct to create—and which causes you to do the thing you have to do, the best you know how-better than it has ever been done, if possible—and which enables you to work in harmony and unison with the Divine work which is constantly going on, instead of in harmony and discord. Let the Divine energy work through you, and express itself fully in your work. Open yourself to it, and you will taste of the joy which comes from work of this kind—this is the true ambition—the other is but a miserable counterfeit which retards the growth of the soul.

"Kill out desire of life," says the second precept—but the fourth precept answers back: "Respect life as those who desire it." This is another truth expressed in paradox. One must eradicate from the mind the idea that physical life is everything. Such an idea prevents one from recognizing the fuller life of the soul, and makes this particular life in the

body the whole thing, instead of merely a grain of sand on the shores of the everlasting sea. One must grow to feel that he will always be aflow, whether he is in the body or out of it, and that this particular physical "life" is merely a thing to be used by the Real Self, which cannot die. Therefore kill out that desire of life which causes you to fear death, and which makes you attach undue importance to the mere bodily existence, to the impairment of the broader life of consciousness. Pluck from your mind that idea that when the body dies, *you* die—for you live on, as much alive as you are this moment, possibly still more alive. See physical life for what it is, and be not deceived. Cease to look upon "death" with horror, whether it may come to you or some loved one. Death is just as natural as life (in the stage of development) and as much to be happy about. It is hard to get rid of the old horror of physical dissolution, and one has many hard battles before he is able to cast off the worn—out delusion, which has clung to the race in spite of its constantly sounded belief in a future life. The churches teach of "the life beyond" to which all the faithful should look forward to, but the same "faithful" shiver and shudder at the thought of death, and clothe themselves in black when a friend dies, instead of strewing flowers around and rejoicing that the friend is "in a better land" (to use the cant phrase, which is so glibly used on such occasion, but which comforteth not). One must grow into a positive "feeling" or consciousness, of life everlasting, before he is able to cast off this old fear, and no creed, or expressed belief, will serve the purpose, until this state of consciousness is reached. To the one who "feels" in his consciousness this fact of the survival of individuality, and the continuance of life beyond the grave, death loses its terror, and the grave its horror, and the "desire of life" (relative) is indeed killed out, because the knowledge of life (absolute) has taken its place.

But we must not forget the reverse side of the shield. Read again the fourth precept: "Respect life as those who

desire it." This does not mean alone the life of others, but has reference to your own physical body as well. For in your letting go of the old idea of the relative importance of the life in the body, you must avoid going to the other extreme of neglect of the physical body. The body is yours in pursuance of the Divine plan, and is in fact the Temple of the Spirit. If it were not good for you to have a body, rest assured you would not have it. It is needed by you in this stage of development, and you would be unable to do your work of spiritual unfoldment without it. Therefore, do not be led into the folly of despising the body, or physical life, as a thing unworthy of you. They are worthy of you, at this stage, and you may make great things possible through them. To despise them is like refusing to use the ladder which will enable you to reach the heights. You should, indeed, "respect life as those who desire it," and you should respect the body as do those who think that the body is the *self*. The body should be recognized as the instrument of the soul and Spirit, and should be kept as clean, healthy and strong as may be. And every means should be used to prolong the "life" in the body which has been given you. It should be respected and well-used. Do not sit and pine over your confinement in this life—you will never have another chance to live out just the experiences you are getting now—make the best of it. Your "life" is a glorious thing, and you should live always in the "Now" stage, extracting to the full the joy which should come with each moment of life to the advanced man. "Life, life, more life" has cried out some writer, and he was right. Live out each moment of your life, in a normal, healthy, clean way, always knowing it for what it is, and worrying not about the past or future. You are in eternity now as much as you ever will be—so why not make the most of it. It is always "Now" in life—and the supply of "Nows" never fails.

If you ask us for a summing-up of this idea of this non-desiring of life, and its opposite side of respecting it as if

you really did desire it, we will say: The desire referred to is the *relative* desire, which springs from the mistaken idea that physical life is the only life. The *absolute* desire of life, arises from the knowledge of what the whole life of man is, and what this brief physical life is—therefore while the advanced man does not desire it in the old way, he does not despise it, and really desires it because it forms a *part* of his whole life, and he does not wish to miss, or part with, any part of that which the Divine Plan has decreed, shall be his. The advanced man neither fears death, nor seeks it—he fears neither death nor life—he desires neither (relatively) and yet he desires both, from the absolute sense. Such a man or woman is invincible—neither life nor death have [sic] any terrors for such a one. When this consciousness is once reached, the person is filled with such power that its radiance is felt by the world in which it moves. Remember these words: *Fear neither death, nor life. Neither fear death, nor seek it.* When you have attained this stage, then indeed you will know what life is—what death is—for both are the manifestation of LIFE.

The third precept tells us to "Kill out desire for comfort"—but the fourth adds: "Be happy as those are who live for happiness." This teaching is also paradoxical, and follows the same line as the ones just spoken of. Its apparent contradiction arises from the two view—points, *i. e.* the relative and the absolute. Apply this solvent to all apparently contradictory occult teaching, and you will be able to separate each part so that you may carefully examine it. Let us apply it to this case.

"Kill out desire of comfort." At first this would seem to advocate extreme asceticism, but this is not the real meaning. Much that is called asceticism is really a running away from things which we may think are too pleasant. There seems to be an idea in the minds of many people of all shades of religious belief, that because a thing produces pleasure it must necessarily be "bad." Some writer has

made one of his characters say: "It is so sad—it seems as if all the pleasant things in life are wicked." There seems to be a current belief that God takes pleasure in seeing people unhappy and doing unpleasant things, and accordingly many so-called "religious" people have frowned upon the normal pleasures of life, and have acted as if a smile was offensive to Deity. This is all a mistake. All normal pleasures are given to Man to use—but none of them must be allowed to *use* Man. Man must always be the master, and not the slave, in his relation to the pleasures of life. In certain forms of occult training the student is instructed in the cultivation of the Will, and some of the exercises prescribed for him consist of the doing of disagreeable and unpleasant things. But this discipline is merely to strengthen the Will of the student, and not because there is any special merit in the disagreeable task, or any special virtue in the self-denial attendant upon the doing without certain pleasant accustomed things. The whole idea consists in the exercising of the Will to resist; do without; and to do things; contrary to the usual custom and habits of the individual, which course, if practiced, will invariably result in a strengthening of the Will. It operates upon the principle of exercising a muscle by calling it into play. These exercises and practices are good, and we may have occasion to refer to them in some of our lessons. The fast-days and penance prescribed by the Catholic church have merit in the manner above indicated, outside of any particular religious significance.

But, to get back to our subject, this precept is not intended to preach asceticism. Occultism does not insist upon that. It *does* teach, however, that one should not allow himself to be tied to the pleasures and comforts of life to such an extent that he will cease to advance and develop his higher nature. Man may be ruined too much by luxury, and many cases are known where the higher influences at work under the Law took away from a man those things

which hindered his growth, and placed him in a position in which he was forced to live normally, and thereby grow and unfold. Occultism preaches the "Simple Life." It teaches that when a man has too many things he is apt to let the things own him, instead of his owning the things. He becomes a slave rather than a master. "Kill out desire of comfort" does not mean that one should sleep on rough boards, as a special virtue pleasing to Deity, or that one should eat dry crusts in the hope of obtaining Divine favor—neither of these things will have any such effect—deity may not be bribed and is not specially pleased at the spectacle of one of his children making a fool of himself. But the precept does impress us that we should not be tied to any idea of comfort, and that we should not imagine that true happiness can arise from any such cause. Enjoy the normal and rational pleasures of life, but always retain your mastery over them, and never allow them to run away with you. And, always remember that true happiness comes from within, and that these luxuries and "comforts are not necessities of the real man, and are merely things to be used for what they are worth. These creature comforts and luxuries are merely incidents of the physical planet, and do not teach the Real Self. The advanced man sees all these things, as instruments, tools (or even toys if it is found necessary to join in the game—life of others), but he always knows them for what they are and is never deceived. The idea that they are necessary for his happiness would seem absurd to him. And, as a man advances spiritually, his tastes are apt to become simpler. He may like well-made things of good quality, best suited for their purpose, *but he does not want so many of them*, and ostentation and display become very foreign to his states and inclinations. He does not necessarily have to "kill out" the last mentioned tastes—they are very apt to leave him of themselves, finding his mental quarters not suited to their accommodation.

Remember, also, that the fourth precept instructs you to "Be happy as those who live for happiness." This does away with the long-face and dreary atmosphere idea. It says "be happy" (not "make believe you are happy") as happy as those who live for the so-called happiness coming from the things of the physical plane. That is the same teaching. Be happy—so live that you may obtain a healthy, normal happiness out of every hour of your life. The occultist is not a miserable, sour-visaged, gloomy man, common beliefs to the contrary notwithstanding. His life and understanding lifts him above the worries and fears of the race, and his knowledge of his destiny is most inspiring. He is able to rise above the storm, and, riding safely on the crest of the wave—yielding to every motion of the swell—he escapes being submerged. When things become too unpleasant to be borne on the relative plane, he simply rises into the higher regions of his mind where all is serene and calm, and he gains a peace that will abide with him when he again sinks to meet the trials and burdens of the day. The occultist is the happiest of men, for he has ceased to fear—he knows that there is nothing to be afraid of. And he has outgrown many of the superstitions of the race, which keep many people in torment. He has left Hate and Malice behind him, and has allowed Love to take their vacant places, and he must, necessarily, be happier by reason of the change. He has outgrown the idea of an angry Deity laying traps in which to enmesh him—he has long since learned to smile at the childish tale of the devil with cloven hoofs and horns, breathing fire and brimstone, and keeping a bottomless pit into which one will be plunged if he should happen to forget to say his prayers, or if he should happen not smile at God's beautiful earth, some fine Sunday, instead of drowsing away an hour listening to some long-drawn-out theological sermon. He has learned that he is a Child of God, destined for great things, and that Deity is as a loving Father (yes, and Mother) rather than a cruel taskmaster. He realizes that

he has arrived at the age of maturity, and that his destiny rests to some extent upon himself. The occultist is necessarily an optimist—he sees that all things are working together for good—that life is on the path of attainment—and that Love is over, above, and in all. These things the occultist learns as he progresses—and he *is* Happy. Happy [sic]. Happier than "those who live for happiness"

"Seek in the heart the sources of evil, and expunge it. It lives fruitfully in the heart of the devoted disciple, as well as in the heart of the man of desire. Only the strong can kill it out. The weak must wait for its growth, its fruition, its death. And it is a plan that lives and increases throughout the ages. It flowers when the man has accumulated unto himself innumerable existences. He who will enter upon the path of power must tear this thing out of his heart. And then the heart will bleed, and the whole life of the man seem to be utterly dissolved. This ordeal must be endured; it may come at the first step of the perilous which leads to the path of life; it may not come until the last. But, O disciple, remember that it has to be endured, and fasten the energies of your soul upon the task. Live neither in the present nor the future, but the eternal. This giant weed cannot flower there; this blot upon existences is wiped out by the very atmosphere of eternal thought.:"

The above admonition is a summing up of the first three precepts, as explained by the fourth one. It bids the student seek out in his heart the relative idea of life and cast it from him. This relative idea of life carries with it the selfish part of our nature—that part of us which causes us to regard ourselves as better than our brother—as separate from our

fellow-beings—as having no connection with all of life. It is the idea of the lower part of our mind—our merely refined animalism. Those who have carefully studied our former course will understand that this part of our mind is the brute side of us—the side of us which is the seat of the appetites, passions, desires of a low order, and emotions of the lower plane. These things are not evil of themselves, but they belong to the lower stages of life—the animal stage—the stage from which we have passed on (or are now passing) to the stage of the Man existence. But these tendencies were long ages in forming, and are deeply imbedded in our nature, and it requires the most heroic efforts to dislodge them—and the only way to dislodge them is to replace them by higher mental states. Right here, let us call your attention to a well established principle of occult training, and yet one that is seldom mentioned in teaching on the subject. We refer to the fact that a bad habit of thought or action is more easily eradicated by supplanting it with a good habit—one that is directly opposed to the habit of which one desires to get rid. To tear out a bad habit by the roots, requires almost superhuman strength of will, but to crowd it out by nursing a good habit in its place, is far more easier and seems to be nature's plan. The good habit will gradually crowd the bad one until it cannot exist, and then after a final struggle for life, it will expire. This is the easiest way to "kill out" undesirable habits and traits.

Returning to the subject of the relative qualities of the mind, we would say that selfishness; all the animal desires, including sexual desires *on the physical plane* (there is much more in sex than physical plane manifestation); all passion, such as hatred, envy, malice, jealousy, desire for revenge, self-gratification, and self-exaltation; are also a part of it. Low pride is one of its most subtle and dangerous manifestations, and one which returns again, and again, after we think we have cast it off—each return being a more subtle form—physical pride, being succeeded by the pride of

the intellect—pride of psychic attainments—pride in spiritual development and growth—pride in moral worth, chastity and character—the "I am holier than thou" pride—and so on. Again and again does pride, the tempter, come to bother us. Its existence is based upon the delusion of separateness, which leads us to imagine that we have no connection with other manifestations of life, and which causes us to feel a spirit of antagonism and unworthy rivalry toward our fellow beings, instead of recognizing the fact we are all parts of the One Life—some far back struggling in the mire of the lower stages of the road—others traveling along the same stage of the journey as ourselves—others still further advanced—but all on the way—all being bits of the same great Life. Beware of Pride—the most subtle enemy of advancement—and supplant it with the thought that we are all of the same origin—having the same destiny before us—having the same road to travel—brothers and sisters all—all children of God—all little scholars of Life's great Kindergarten. Let us also realize that while each must stand alone before he is able to pass the test of initiation—yet are we all interdependent, and the pain of one is the pain of all—the sin of one is the sin of all—that we are all parts of a race working toward race improvement and growth—and that love and the feeling of brotherhood is the only sane view of the question.

The brute instincts are still with us, constantly forcing themselves into our field of thought. Occultists learn to curb and control these lower instincts, subordinating them to the higher mental ideals which unfold into the field of consciousness. Do not be discouraged if you still find that you have much of the animal within your nature—we all have—the only difference is that some of us have learned to control the brute, and to keep him in leash and subordinate and obedient to the higher parts of our nature, while others allow the beast to rule them, and they shiver and turn pale when he shows his teeth, not seeming to realize that a firm

demeanor and a calm mind will cause the beast to retreat to his corner and allow himself to be kept behind bars. If you find constant manifestations of the beast within you, struggling to be free and to assert his old power, do not be disturbed. This is no sign of weakness, but is really an indication that your spiritual growth has begun. For whereas you now recognize the brute, and feel ashamed, you formerly did not realize his presence—were not aware of his existence, for you *were* the brute himself. It is only because you are trying to divorce yourself from him, that you feel ashamed of his presence. You cannot see him until you begin to be "different" from him. Learn to be a tamer of wild beasts, for you have a whole menagerie within you. The lion; the tiger; the hyena; the ape; the pig; the peacock, and all the rest are there, constantly showing forth some of their characteristics. Do not fear them—smile at them when they show themselves—for you are stronger than they, and can bring them to subjection—and their appearance is useful to you in a way of instructing you as to their existence. They are an amusing lot, when you have reached the stage where you are able to practically stand aside and see them perform their tricks, and go through their antics. You then feel strongly that they are not YOU, but something apart from you—something from which you are becoming rapidly divorced. Do not worry about the beasts—for you are the master.

While the above quotation from "*Light on the Path*" includes all of the foregoing manifestations of the lower nature, it seems to dwell especially upon the delusion of the lower self—that dream of separateness—that exhibition of what has been called "the working fiction of the universe," which causes us to imagine ourselves things apart from the rest—something better, holier, and superior to the rest of our kind. This manifests in the emotion of pride—the peacock part of our mental menagerie. As we have said, this is one of the most dangerous of our lower qualities, because

it is so subtle and persistent. You will note that the writer speaks of it as living "fruitfully in the heart of the devoted disciple, as well as in the heart of the man of desire." This may seem strange to you, but it is the experience of every advanced occultist that, long after he had thought he had left Pride behind him, he would be startled at it appearing in a new phase—the pride of power—the pride of intellect—the pride of spiritual growth. And then he would have all his work to do over again. Let us state right here that there is a kind of pride which is not a manifestation of the lower self—it may be called the *absolute* form of pride, if you will. We allude to that pride of that whole—that the intellect we manifest is part of that universal mind—that the spiritual growth we have attained is a bit of the great possibilities of the race, and that much more is ahead for all the race. But the danger line is reached when we begin to shut out some others from that universal pride—the moment that we leave out one other manifestation of life (no matter how lowly) from our universal pride, then we make it a selfish pride. The moment we erect a fence with anyone on the outside, then are we indulging in selfish pride. For there is no outside, at the last. We are *all* inside—there is no place outside of the All. When you feel a pride with all living things—with all of life—with all of being—then you are not selfish. But the moment you place yourself apart in a class—whether that class be composed of but yourself, or of yourself and all of mankind, except one individual—then you are yielding to a subtle form of selfishness. The last man must not be left out—cannot be left out. You are possessed of no quality or attainment that is not the property of the race—something that may be attained by all in time. All that you think is superiority is merely a little more age—a little more experience on this plane of existence. Your pride is the foolish infantile pride of the child who has just passed out of "the baby class" in the primary school and looks condescendingly upon the new flock of little ones who are