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Subject: MARRIAGE
The Mystic Rite

BY

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MARRIAGE, THE MYSTIC RITE.

Lecture by Manly P. Hall.

The first thing to be noted in this problem of domestic relationship is the innate love of harmony. It is the general opinion that a marriage must be a happy one in order to be successful at all, and that the thing to solve the problem is for one to allow the other full sway of authority. However, it would appear that marriage is not essentially intended to be harmonious. Of course, if it happens to be such, so much the better; but experience is the reason for life, not happiness, growth is the reason for being, not happiness. Consequently a marriage which is most filled with ups and downs is often the most successful, being one of those cases of "successful failures." The average individual believes that to be ideally happy is to be willing to agree with each other, but this is merely inertia in the majority of cases.

The important question that should be considered by those who are tied up in the bonds of matrimony is—what am I gaining? what am I learning that will be of use to anybody? Growth is the primal reason for being and every problem in life holds this opportunity if we but see it. Those who have had the most unfortunate conditions in life but who have risen above those conditions are the successful people. A home that is torn and broken is the greatest place in all the world for experience, an opportunity that is seldom appreciated and realized by those who are involved in it, for it is there we find a condition to be mastered and the successful one is he who can gracefully meet the condition. When a home is broken, where the great bond of spiritual love is missing, there confronts both members of that household a wonderful opportunity—not an escape through separation, but the opportunity to master that inharmony and build something permanent in growth and understanding. And, unfortunately, this is where the average marriage fails. In the majority of cases, marriage is a problem to face, one filled with dissension and unbalance. In order that the home should fulfill its true purpose and afford the most growth, those who form it should be absolute opposites, for, cosmically, that is the reason for its being.

In getting at the real root of any problem it is necessary to go back to causes, for all effects are the result of causes. So let us go far into the past to find out the governing reason why Vesta's altar has been so defiled. In the eons that are gone, man (the specie not the individual) came into this universe to build his consciousness, to express powers, and to evolve latent possibility into dynamic expressions. In this far-off beginning the entire specie was of a dual nature in its manifestation, a self-creating unit, a complete male-female creation in one. In the ages that came later, the struggle of life, the building of bodies and vehicles became so complex and the necessities to growth became so multiplied that it was essential to bring new forces into play, and for that reason man—the male-female creation—sank one-half of its being into oblivion. It did not divide itself, but only recalled one part of its powers from the field of action. In order to build a brain, one-half of the life-creating power was turned upward into the building of thought, and so man became a single individual. Today we are still a complete unit within ourselves but one pole of our being is in latency.

Considered in this light, the great problem of the superiority of sex dies, for both are in each of us. Each of us alternate in our life work here, we alternate every few days, weeks, years, and then from one life to another. From male to female we alternate through the ages, neither superior to the other. Man, as he is now, has developed the

positive body and the negative vitalizing forces, and has turned his creative energies into brain power. He is the positive manifestation of being, which is the mind. For that reason he has turned his eyes towards labors in the world. But within his being there is asleep the other half, the negative expression. He is a reasoning animal, creative, of combative temperament, weighing, balancing and reasoning out things. His mind is his governing pole. On the other hand, Woman has sunk the positive side of her nature and is functioning through the heart and intuitions rather than through the reasoning system.

Neither is superior but each has a part to play. While half of man's being is in latency he has been provided with a helpmate to bring out into active expression the side of his nature that is asleep. Consequently these two come together—and for a dual purpose. They come together not only to perpetuate the race but for the awakening of the hidden side within themselves. While living through life under the bond of matrimony, man is supposed to build his heart and intuitive system; to his reasoning he should add intuition and to his mind he should add the power of the heart. While woman should draw out her reasoning powers and add to her intuition the positive powers of mind. Each is complete but one-half is asleep and they complete the whole in slow development by supplying the missing mate.

The complications that arise in the two coming together is next to be considered. There are two great powers in our world that draw irresistibly—attraction and repulsion. Those who have loved and labored together before often reincarnate closely again, while those who have hated and been repulsed come back together to work it out. As long as the contending conditions exist just so long are they tied together by a bond that cannot be broken, for there is no escape for those who have fought. There is no human law that can separate two such people, for no two ever meet and hate but that they will meet again. Perhaps they will separate for a lifetime or a matter of a few thousand years, but they will fight until they realize their mistake and remedy the cause. Because it is for that reason that they first came together—to balance all in harmony and complete a self-conscious unit within themselves. Each is divinely responsible for the other, each the helpmeet of the other; when it is otherwise there can be no understanding, and while there is no understanding there is no power in heaven or hell to separate the two. It is easy to unite, to get tired and separate, but there is a cosmic responsibility underlying that cannot be broken. Each is responsible for the texture of their pole of life which they are incorporating into the other, and where one is mean, miserable, and unhappy, he is not building into the other the proper materials of life.

One of the first duties of that responsibility is for each to accord the other equal right. There is no home that is happy where superiority enters in. Each should rule together in their dual home, understanding mutually the other's place in the plan of things, and realizing that their partnership is not only for tranquil happiness but for growth and broadening experience. And of course happiness is the undeniable end of growth, for the harmony of lives and the effort to understand the problems in the life of the other brings with it happiness of spirit. Never should one try to exercise authority over the other for it will invariably bring dissension, as it is not according to nature's law. Where the mind is master of the heart we have a scientific fanatic who will murder for the intellectual pleasure of seeing how form is built, and just so when the heart rules we have emotional unbalance.

But, after much philosophizing, the trying problem of the home that is broken always arises—what to do with it? Should one try to endure the impossible and be miserable for the rest of life or should one seek

freedom through divorce? This seems to perplex many and the old excuse is that one should not be expected to ruin their life for anyone else. Then at this point the responsibility that should be mutual is assumed by one and wholly neglected by the other, and the tie is broken. But as long as there is animosity there is no right for separation, and only when you have conquered that animosity is your duty done. No one has a right to leave any living thing until they have found the good in that thing and incorporated it into their being. If each would sit down and analyze their own thoughts they would find that there is as much good in the other as in themselves. Nine out of ten broken homes could be mended again if each person would sit down and think it out. Suffering only comes where thought and love is not allowed. And as long as individuals take upon themselves the responsibility of married life they should also take it upon themselves to work the problem out, for it is a problem. The only time when they should consider a parting of ways is when they can each say to the other: I do not feel that there is more to be gained or learned in our partnership. I do not hold ill against you nor do I care for you, let's shake hands and call it off. But of course the true occultist has not the right to take this course for he will always remember that those who bid for spirituality must find it in their fellow man whom they do not care for very well, or else not find it at all.

The question is often asked, just what are the occultists beliefs on this problem of marriage? How did the ancient philosophers and teachers of old look at the civil ceremony of marriage, and does the occultist accept the law of man or of nature? And the answer always is that the true occultist has sworn by the highest, greatest that he knows and is and by the things he holds sacred that wherever he is, the laws of that land he will obey. He is a teacher and if he breaks the law he cannot teach anyone else. There never has been a school of mystic philosophy worthy of the name or a spiritual work of any kind that has taught or practised the principles of free-love, and those who preach it are those who know not whereof they speak. The true mystic realizes that he has not only a bond to his God but also to his brother man who is God incarnate, nor will he ever violate the bonds of another's life or home. There is more utter respectability among the animals than there is among human beings who do otherwise. A great reason for so much dissension is because people do not accept and live according to a brother's rights. The first step that the true Brother takes when he seeks to know his God is the great vow to all humanity that he will respect, honor and love all created things—all mankind becomes his brother and all womankind his sister. This is the universal and cosmic law that for millions of years has guided the true student towards spiritual knowledge, and he who is living true to these ideals recognizes his responsibility and shoulders it like a man human being.

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The tying together of two lives is more than a mere ceremony, it is something that happens within the individual—it is the symbol of the mystic ceremony that the student should strive to attain within himself. He should realize that all is the working of the Great Hand and that his brother in the body of male or female is still his brother. A marriage is a means for the betterment of each, and when two come together thus there is a tie made that holds through all eternity. They may separate forever but still there is the tie, for each is responsible for the germ of life they have implanted in the heart of the other. We know this subconsciously when we meet someone and feel a bond of love or a repulsion that we cannot explain. We must learn this responsibility of marriage and begin to consider it not merely a whim or passing fancy but as a spiritual thing, for this is the only cure for unhappy homes and for the children sent out into the world without the guiding care of a parent.

This earthly marriage rite is but a symbol of the higher marriage that will take place within our own being, when the heart and mind (the husband and wife of the eternal universe) are tied together forever by the golden band of the life forces. This is the mystic rite behind the outward ritual that promises of a day far beyond our vision when these two within ourselves are to be united. The wife will find that her husband was within when she unites the heart with the brain—the eternal bond that cannot be broken when once made. When the soft tenderness of the heart is united with the firm strength of the mind above we will come again into the father-mother nature of divinity. It is the alchemical marriage of the sun and moon, when as the divine Father-Mother we shall bring forth children of globes and worlds.

The marriage of the body means nothing, but the marriage of the spirit means all, and those who enter into worldly marriage without this interpretation of it are desecrating their privilege. It is a mystic rite—a rite of the soul--and those who enter into it in any other way have no knowledge of the greater way, their lives are empty and their heart knows not real love. The true seeker knows, and he no longer considers the whims and fancies of earth, he does not unite for "better or for worse", but he seeks to gain the mystic message and to understand that other hidden side in his own being.

The time shall come when the marriage of earth shall be through; there will no longer be husband and wife but all brothers. Marriage shall be the union of life where man shall blend all opposites in the spiritual union of the soul. And from that union shall be born a new life—the Morning Star. For when the child of that mystic marriage of the soul appears, then indeed a Christ is born. The more we raise our eyes to this ideal, closer shall be the day when the Immaculate Conception shall be on earth.

Far out on the spiritual planes little hands reach out and little voices whisper, asking to be brought into this world and given a fair start. When we deal only with the thing of form and matter we are not in a position to appreciate and understand the true spiritual meaning of this marriage but when we see the inner significance we can then realize that we must labor for the higher, finer things so that those tiny hands that reach out shall have greater opportunities, and so that in the mystic marriage, the union of the soul, all lives shall be well-lived and the Christ can be born again. And man, united to himself, will people his world with the children of his life and give them a greater understanding, just as has the Father of our own world.

Marriage should not be only of the body but of the soul, and thing that affords a wide scope of opportunity to work out the problems of life. When all people are educated to look at it in the light of such ideals, realizing that the marital step is the turning-point of the soul--with its greatest opportunity at hand to grow or its worst opportunity at hand to fail--~~t~~then and then only can we understand the meaning of the Mystic Rite.

THE END.

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