

sent to 87 York

Extensive comment

Maple without Rain

Very welcome.

ac

End of "Chief's" group of letters

THE A.:A.: and THE PLANET

No. LXXVII

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No. LXXVII

16

Care Serer,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law.

You write: "Am I to understand that the A.:A.: has two main lines of Work: (1) the Initiation of Individuals, (2) Action on the World in general - say "Weltpolitik"? Because your letters on the History of Magick do imply (2); and yet the A.:A.: discourages any form of group working. Is it that the Masters (8^o = 3^o Magistri Templi) having been admitted to the Third Order - the A.:A.: proper; below this are R.R. at A.C. and G.:D.: - are no longer liable to the dangers which make group activity in lower grades undesirable. Or do they still work as Individuals, yet, because they are Initiates, appear to act as a corporate body? You have often expressed yourself as if this were so. "Of course They had to pick on me to do the dirty work" is a typical growl of the old Big Lion! But again there is that Magical Memory of yours when you came down from that Hermitage in the little Wood overhanging the nullah below the Great Peak "somewhere in Asia," and sat in some sort of Consistory in the valley where the great Lamaserai - or whatever it was - towers over the track, (I quote some of your phrases from memory) Which is it?"

My dear child, that is all very sensibly put; and the answer is that Convenience would decide. Then you go on, after a digression: "Then how are They acting at present? What impact has the new Word, Thelema, made upon the planet? What are we to expect

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as a result? And can we poor benighted outsiders help Them in any way? I know it's "cheek" to ask."

Then turn the other cheek, and repeat the question! I will do my best to make it all clear. But do not forget that I am myself completely in the dark with regard to the special functions of most of my colleagues.

To begin, then!

Achtung! I am going to be hard-boiled; my first act is to enlist the Devil himself in our ranks, and take the Materialistic Interpretation of History from Karl Marx, and accept economic laws as the manifest levers which determine the fortune of one part of the earth or another.

I shall take exception only by showing that these principles are secondary: oil in Texas, nitrates on the Pacific slope of the Andes, sulphur in Louisiana (which put Etna's nose out of joint by making it cheaper for the burghers of Messina^{to} import it from 4000 miles away instead of digging it out of their own back garden), even coal and timber, upset very few apple-carts until individual genius had found for these commodities such uses as our grandfathers never dreamed. The technical developments of almost every form of wealth are the forebears of Big Business; and Big Business, directly or indirectly, is the immediate cause of War.

In the "To-day and to-morrow" series is an essay called *Oureborea*, by Caret Garrett; one of the most shrewd and deep-delving analyses of economics ever written. May I condense him crudely? Mass Production for Profit fails when its markets are

exhausted; so every effort is made to impose it not only on the native but the foreigner, and should guile fail, then force!

But the process ineluctably goes on; when the whole world buys the nasty stuff, and will accept no other, the exploiter is still faced by diminishing returns. No possibility of expansion; sooner or later dividends dwindle, and the Business is Bust.

To even the most stupid it becomes plain at this stage that war is wholly ruinous; organization breaks down altogether; one meaningless revolution follows another; famine and pestilence complete the job.

Last time - when Osiris replaced Isis - the wreck was limited in scope - note that it was the civilized, the organized part that broke down. [Jews and Arabs could remain aloof, and keep a small torch burning until Light returned with the Renaissance.] This time there is no civilization which can escape being involved in the totality of the catastrophe.

Towards this collapse all totalitarian movements inevitably tend. Bertrand Russell himself admits that, although himself "temperamentally Anarchistic," Society must be yet more organized than it is to-day if it is to exist at all.

But this, as Garet Garrett shows, is the John Gilpin type of horsemanship. We are to-day more or less at the stage where "off Flew Gilpin's hat and wig."

Achievement of high aims, which tends ultimately to the well-being, the prosperity of the republic, depends on the proportion of masters to servants. The stability of a building depends on the

proportion of superstructure to foundations. The rule holds good in every department of Nature. There is an optimum for every case. If there is one barber for 10,000 men, most of them will remain unshorn; if there are 5,000 barbers, most of them will be out of a job.

Apply this measure to society; there must be an optimum relation between industry and agriculture, between town and country. When the proper balance is not struck, the community must depend on outside help, importing what it lacks, exporting its surplus. This is an unnatural state of affairs; it results in business, and therefore ultimately in war. That is, as soon as the stress set up by the conditions becomes insupportable. So long as "business" is confined to luxuries, no great harm need result; but when interference with the flow of foreign trade threatens actual necessities, the unit concerned realizes that it is in danger of strangulation. Consider England's food supply! Switzerland, Russia, China, the U.S.A. can laugh at U-boats, England must support a Navy, a wealth-consuming, not a wealth-producing, item in the Budget. Similar remarks apply to practically all Government Departments. The minimum of organization is desirable; all artificial doctrinaire multiplication of works which produce no wealth is waste; and for many reasons (some absurd, like 'social position') tend to create fresh unnecessary necessities. Ad. infinitum, like the fleas in the epigram!

When laws are reasonable in the eyes of the average man, he respects them, keeps them, does his best to maintain them; therefore

a minute Police Force, with powers strictly limited, is adequate to deal with the almost negligibly small criminal class. A convention is laudable when it is convenient. When laws are unjust, monstrous, ridiculous, that same average man^{will-he nill-he} becomes a criminal; and the law requires a Teheka or Gestapo with dictatorial powers and no safeguards to maintain the farce. Also, corruption becomes normal in official circles; and is excused. I refer you to Mr. J.H.Thomas.^{1.}

One evil leads to another; the seven devils always take possession of a house that is swept and garnished to the point at which people find it uncomfortable.

But is not all this beside the point? you ask. No. It was needful to indicate this cumulative progression to social shipwreck, because, to-day an obvious peril of the most menacing, in 1904 no ordinary sane person foresaw anything of the sort. But special knowledge alters things, and it is certain that the Masters anticipated, with great exactness of calculation, the way things would go in the political world.

Practically all the messages received during the "Cairo Working" (March-April 1904 ev) came to me through Owarda. No woman ever lived who was more ignorant of, or less interested in, anything to do with politics, or the welfare of the race; she cared for nothing beyond her personal comfort and pleasure. When the communications ceased, she dropped the whole affair without a thought.

1. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, having fixed the increase of Income Tax at threepence, proceeded to defraud the Insurance Companies by insuring himself against a rise of that sum!

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This by the way: the essence of this letter is to shew that "They", not one person but a number acting in concert, not only foresaw a planet-wide catastrophe, but were agreed on measures calculated to assure the survival of the Wisdom worth saving until the time, perhaps 300 or 500 years later, when a new current should revive the shattered Thought of mankind.

The Equinox, in a word, was to be a sort of Rosetta Stone.

There is one other matter of incomparable importance: the Wars which have begun the disintegration of the world have followed, each at an interval of 9 months, the operative publications of the Book of the Law. This again seems to make it almost certain that "They" not only know the Future, at least in broad

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outline, but are at pains to arrange it. I have no doubt that the advance of Natural Science is in the charge of a certain group of "Masters." Even the spiritually and morally as well as the physically destructive phenomena of our age must be parts of some vast all-comprehensive plan.

Putting two and two together, and making 718, it looks as if the Masters acquiesced in, and helped to fulfil, the formula of the catastrophic succession of the Aeons.

An analogy. We have the secret of the Elixir of life, and could carry on in the same body indefinitely; yet at least some Masters prefer to reincarnate in the regular way, only taking care to waste no time in Amenhti, but to get back to the Old Bench and pick up the New Tools with the minimum of delay.

By having attained the Freedom of "Elysian, windless, fortunate abodes Beyond Heaven's constellated wilderness" "we are blessed; and bless" by refusing to linger therein, but shouldering once more "Atlantean the load of the too vast orb of" the Karma of Mankind.

This hypothesis does at least make intelligible Their action in riding for a fall instead of preventing it. It may also be that They feel that human progress has reached its asymptote so far as the old Formula can take it. In fact, unless we take some such view, there does not seem to be much point in taking an action so fundamentally revolutionary (on the surface) as the proclamation of a New World.

But then (you will object, if an objection it be) people like Lenin, Hitler, Mussolini, the Mikado, et hoc genus omne, are loyal

emissaries of the Masters, or the gods! Well, why not? An analogy, once more. In the Christian legend we find God (omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent) employing Judas, Pilate and Herod, no less than Jesus, as actors in the Drama which replaced Isis by Osiris in the Great Formula. Perfectly true; but this fact does not in any way exculpate the criminals. It is no excuse for the Commandants of Belsen and Buchwalden that they were acting under orders. The Drama is not mere play-acting, in which the most virtuous man may play the vilest of parts.

Your further objection, doubtless, will be that this theory makes the Masters responsible for the agony of the planet. I refer you to the Book of the Heart girt with a Serpent Cap I, v 33-40.

33. Let us take our delight in the multitude of men!
Let us shape unto ourselves a boat of Mother-of-pearl from them, that we may ride upon the river, Amrit!
34. Thou seest yon petal of Amaranth, blown by the wind from the low sweet brows of Hathor?
35. (The magister saw it and rejoiced in the beauty of it)
Listen!
36. (From a certain world came an infinite wail). That falling petal seemed to the little ones a wave to engulf their continent.
37. So they will re proach thy servant, saying: who hath set thee to save us?
38. He will be sore distressed.
39. All they will understand not that thou and I are fashioning a boat of Mother-of-pearl. We will sail down the river of Amrit even to the yew-groves of Yama, where we may rejoice exceedingly
40. The joy of men shall be our silver gleam, their woe our blue gleam - all in the Mother-of-pearl.

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and again Cap. I v. 50-52 56-62.

50. Adonai spake yet again with V.V.V.V.V. and said: The earth is ripe for vintage; let us eat of her grapes, and be drunken thereon.
51. And V.V.V.V.V. answered and said: O my Lord, my dove, my excellent one, how shall this word seem unto the children of men?
52. And he answered him: Not as thou canst see. It is certain that every letter of this cipher hath some value; but who shall determine the value? For it varieth ever, according to the subtlety of him that made it.
.....
56. And Adonai said: The strong brown reaper swept his swathe and rejoiced. The wise man counted his muscles, and pondered, and understood not, and was sad. Reap thou and rejoice!
57. Then was the adept glad, and lifted his arm. Lo! an earthquake, and plague, and terror on the earth! A casting down of them that sat in high places; A famine upon the multitude!
58. And the grape fell ripe and rich into his mouth.
59. Stained is the purple of thy mouth, o brilliant one, with the white glory of the lips of Adonai.
60. The foam of the grape is like the storm upon the sea; the ships tremble and shudder; the shipmaster is afraid.
61. That is thy drunkenness, O holy one, and the winds whirl away the soul of the scribe into the happy heaven.
62. O Lord God! Let the haven be cast down by the fury of the storm! Let the foam of the grape tincture my soul with thy light!

Yes, I dare say. But is there not here a sort of moral oxymoron? Are not the Masters pursuing two diametrically opposed policies at the same time?

Genius - or Initiation, which implies the liberation and

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and develepmnt of the genius latent in us all (is not one of the names of the "Holy Guardian Angel" the Genius?) - is practically the monopoly of the "crazy adventurer", as the official mind will most certainly rate him. Then why do not the Masters oppose all forms of organization tooth-and-nail?

It depends, surely, on the stage which a society has reached on its fall to the servile state. Civilization of course implies organisation up to a certain point. The freedom of any function is built upon system; and so long as Law and Order make it easier for a man to do his True Will, they are admirable. It is when system is adored for its own sake, or as a means of endowing mediocrities with power as such, that the "critical temperature" is attained.

It so happens that I write this on the eve of a General Election in England; and it seems to me that whichever wins, England loses!

The Socialists openly proclaim that they mean to run the country on the lines of a convict prison; but the Tories, for all their fine talk, would be helpless against the Banks and the Trusts to whom they must look for support.

Still, perhaps with a little help from Hashish, one can imagine a Merchant Prince or a Banker being intelligent, or even, in a weak moment, human; and this is not the case with officials. The standard, moreover, of education and Good Manners, low as it is, is less low in Tory circles.

As I think that totalitarian methods are already on the way to extinguish the last spark of manly independence, - that is, in self-styled civilized countries - it seems to me that we all should regard with shrewd suspicion any plans for "perfecting" social conditions. The extreme horror is the formula of the gregarious type of insect. Inherent in the premisses is the impossibility of advance.

One may sum the policy of the A..A.. as follows :

1. To assist the initiation of the individual.
2. To maintain a form of social order in which the adventure of initiation is easy - to undertake!
3. To work out the Magical Formula of the New Aeon.

"Ye-e-s-s, I s-e-e."

I doubt it. But what you are asking is how to decide upon your personal programme.

The intelligent visitor from who knows what planet was puzzled. He chanced to have landed in England - to find a General Election in full blast. (The operative word is "blast.") They must be absolute imbeciles, was his first reaction, to risk upsetting the policy of Government with a first-class war on.

(There would have been no need of any such nonsense, - I interrupted - if Parliament was elected by my simple plan. I'll give you the main idea; I don't insist on the figures. When a candidate is returned by 50% over his runner-up, he sits for 5 years. If 40%, 4 years; and so on. An alternative: to "stagger" the assembly, as (I think) is done in the Senate

125

of the United States.)

How are you going to vote?

Rather like the question of the dentist. The teeth can be tinkered: of course, sooner or later they have to go. Is it worth the trouble and expense? The Socialists would have them all out right away, and replaced by a set of "dentures," which (obviously) are perfect. Arrange them, change them, choose your own pattern; no trouble, no pain: all one's dreams come true! But hardly biological.

You may argue that convicts are examples of living individuals whose safety, shelter, nourishment and the rest are organized with the utmost care; but accidents will happen in the best-regulated "brown stone jugs." The one ideally automatic case is the foetus. You will agree that here is lack of initiative; in fact, its "True Will" is to escape, albeit into a harsh and hostile universe, fraught with unknown and incalculable dangers.

As the Ritual says: "Prepare to enter the Immeasurable Region!"

I think your decision should depend on how far caries has travelled on its road of destruction.

I do not think that the Masters need be unanimous.

A practical plan might be for them to concentrate on one particular group, or one part of the world, and to keep this in as good shape as possible until the time has come for Nature to grow a new set.

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They will be grown on the new Formula, to meet the new needs, just as when our "permanent" (Alas, not much!) set replace our milk-teeth.

You ask me if I think this change can be made without bloodshed.

No. The obscure autocrats of Diplomacy and Big Business are infinitely stupid and short-sighted; they cannot see an inch beyond their too often stigmatically shapen probosces, except where the profit of the next financial year is concerned. They live in perpetual panic, and shy at their own shadows. They accordingly attack even the most innocuous windmills in suicidal charges.

Yes: bella, horrida bella.

Et flamen Tiberim spumantem sanguine cerno.

So, whichever way you vote you are asking for trouble; or would do, if the vote had any meaning. The result of any election, or, for the matter of that, any revolution, is an almost wholly insignificant component of these stupendous and inscrutable Magical Forces which determine the destinies of the planet.

Love is the law, love under will,

Yours fraternally