The Alchemist of the Rocky Mountains

FRATER ALBERTUS

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INTRODUCTION

This book has been written with only one purpose in mind — to shed some additional light and information for those who have read about esoteric, metaphysical and alchemistical teachings or teachers, that have hinted at things of interest to the reader, but without leaving an incentive to delve deeper into what had aroused interest due to lack of a more comprehensive presentation.

This book gives a brief description of people whose names have appeared before the public and what they stood for. It also gives perhaps for the first time some concrete statements that concern the three vital principals in the life of everyone. It is doubtful that there is presently a book available, or that there has been one during the last decades, which gives such precise explanations of the difference between Body, Soul and Spirit, that anyone can understand and accept regardless of religious creed or philosophical affiliations.

The author, himself a practical laboratory alchemist, known literally all over the world by those few hundred people who have had personal contact with him, deals with both concepts of mental and practical laboratory alchemy. It is interesting to note that his pupils include also those of Carl Jung's school who formerly denied the practical concept of laboratory alchemy, and those of anthroposophical and theosophical affiliations including Brahmins living in India and devout Christians, who derived from personal experience a profound change for the better in their lives.

The literary style may not be to the liking of some — nor the presentation of a topic of such importance in the form of a novel. The reason for its present garment is to give to those who are not inclined to read heavy tomes of hard-to-digest old-time alchemistical and related literature an easy-to-follow simple story without causing furrows on the reader's brow.

Above all it is meant to shed some additional light and information on the most misinterpreted and most misunderstood three words: Body, Soul and Spirit and what correct knowledge and understanding of these three words can help to accomplish in the life of any individual that may border to some on the fantastic and seem to others as an unobtainable Utopia.

Where does one begin a story that is not really a story? Most certainly not at the beginning. For if we were to have a true beginning then we would of necessity have also an ending. Therefore it is to be assumed that there was no beginning, but a continuation of centuries of truth for those who seek truth.

People everywhere go about their daily tasks and attend their various meetings, support their favorite charity, participate in sports or other leisure-time pleasures. Occasionally they notice a feeling that something is lacking within their lives but with most it is of brief duration.

The fact that most of mankind is searching for an unknown factor to fill that hollowness within is indicative that there must exist somewhere in the subconscious, or perhaps even beyond that, a hidden awareness that cries to be opened. It cries too often to deafened ears. When one knocks at the door of metaphysics he has set into motion a series of events and if he does not become waylaid at the door he can find the missing key. Once the door is opened he will enter to find the truth of the Universe filling that void and with emptiness dissipated he will no longer desire to return to the world of wondering, but in its place is a fullness of knowing and the search is ended. It is at this point true learning begins.

The people you will meet in the first part of this book are such as you might meet any day, any one of them might be you. Come back with me a few years in time to recapture the following particular events that occurred on their paths in search of truth.

Many have passed through the portals of a quiet unpretentious place here in the Mountain West. Each has come for his or her own reason, but for student after student the quest has remained the same—knowledge.

What kind of knowledge, one might ask, would cause people to leave their homes and loved ones for a two-week period year after year?

A much higher one than is found in the every-day lives of the average person. A knowledge so profound and so filling that it cannot help but satisfy even the greatest thirst. For us there has been

a teaching which has both met and in most cases surpassed anything we ever hoped to find on this earth.

That is what this book gives an indication about. It is time now for a sharing of the highest kind of knowledge with others who also seek their true identity.

Whether one accepts or rejects this little work will be up to the individual, though it cannot but help change some things in your life for the better, for within us all is the ability to recognize truth, as it is also within us to exercise our rights of agency.

Especially the ending may surprise you, because what is revealed there will leave many stunned. Seldom is so much given openly in so little space that can bring about the same climax of life's highest goal on the material plane of awareness, while at the same time opening wide the portal that lets man take his first faltering steps out into the vastness of eternity.

We ask only one thing of the student engaged in the reading of this book: do so from the very beginning until you reach the end. That is, that for the time you read this book, that you will endeavor to, as the good Frater would say, place all previous teachings on the shelf and take them back down after you read what follows. It may surprise you how much you will leave on the shelf that you do not care to take down again.

A student

My dear Doctor,

Thank you for your letter. I shall answer it at once. To begin with, this is no fable or legend, because he is known to me. I know the man, having personally contacted him on many occasions. What I write here is based on my own experiences and upon those of my most trustworthy friends. We all know him personally. However, very few people in the United States of America or Europe are aware of his existence. Neither do they know where he presently resides. Living a simple life, shunning the limelight, he is a man of flesh and blood. He does not claim to have supernatural powers nor does he give any outward evidence to a higher knowledge. Neither does he have dark skin or blazing eyes. He dresses simply, wearing the garments customary to the country in which he resides. In fact, there is nothing unusual about him at first glance. His outward appearance and manner belie the modern accepted description of a mystic.

Being an alchemist, he is of course, a mystic and an occultist. Watching him perform in his laboratory, proving by practical demonstration the laws involved, leaves no doubt that he is an alchemist. During the spring and fall he instructs a few students. Each is instructed according to age-old teachings. Although some call them secret teachings, they are at one and the same time secret, yet revealed. This paradox can best be explained by saying, "When THAT which was known became concealed and is revealed once more, it becomes a secret known." You may smile and think that these are just words and more words — words to confuse but not to enlighten. You are wrong, dead wrong in this assumption. There was a time when I, too, would have agreed; but now I know better.

When we, as students, were instructed by this alchemist, I thought I understood his words; only to find later that his semantics escaped me. His words flowed like cooling waters from a mountain brook, refreshing and enlivening us, his listeners.

He speaks perfect English with only a slight accent to indicate he is of foreign birth. At one time, as I accidentally entered his study, he was speaking fluent German to one of his students. While

on another occasion, he was heard to speak in still another language. When he speaks, his words become living pictures. At times the passing hours can seem like just minutes. Often we looked at each other when he would say, "We shall stop for now. It is high noon." To us, it seemed that he had just begun speaking. At times he would talk to us and we could see, independently of each other, what was described. You may think me foolish and one of those fanatics who go in for cult stuff. You know me too well for that. For once, I must go contrary to what we were taught in medical school. What I had formerly believed and later claimed to have knowledge of, I have now found to my dismay not to be so. This I know! It is not merely a belief, it is knowledge.

Things could have continued indefinitely as they were in my life — just the same as before; but then, I met the alchemist. Formerly my practice gave me joy and a very good remuneration. I was happy and satisfied with my ability to help others — but no longer. Much has changed since meeting this man. So much has changed, you may find it difficult to believe. Where my colleagues consider me foremost in my field, this standing in my own estimation has dwindled to nothing when compared to this man. You should hear his penetrating lectures. Whether the topic be pharmacy, chemistry, physics, astronomy, mineralogy or some other subject, his grasp and span of knowledge leaves one astounded, and he has no formal degrees.

Everyone knows that I am a natural-born skeptic. The alumni will remember me only too well for that characteristic. True, I am still a supreme skeptic. My skepticism, nevertheless, will have to bow before facts when demonstrated in a lawful manner. Despite all the resources at my command, I was unable to discredit this man. Heaven knows why! There were times when my arguments were so well conceived and prepared that there was no doubt in my mind as to their validity. You should have witnessed the humiliating and crushing blows that rained upon me, but all was said in such a gentle and matter-of-fact manner that one could bear no feelings of anger or animosity. The inner rebuff was the very thing that made me feel foolish. Let me asure you such an experience can be

most unpleasant if you possess but an ounce of pride. It is just plain humiliating to be sent back to the school bench when one has taught novices in our Hippocractic art. Can you imagine my looking foolish? It certainly does not take much imagination.

Does this mean I have succumbed to alchemy, the very thing medieval individuals indulged in? Horror of horrors! What is this world coming to? I, a scientist, pledged to uphold the laws as taught at universities. Truly, this is a catastrophe. I, an M.D. and Ph.D., what shall I do? It is bad enough to straddle the fence with one foot on the scientific side and the other on the metaphysical. But me, yes, me . . . being caught in such a position? It is just plain ridiculous. Does it all sound confusing to you? Maybe I am confused. When looking back upon my years of study and teaching, it seems even more preposterous.

Life has changed for me no matter how I look at it — and this man was responsible. You must understand with what reluctance and difficulty we give up old concepts. Imagine yourself changing religious beliefs and almost overnight becoming, let us say, a Mohammedan or Hindu. The very thought leaves one with an odd feeling, does it not? Well, here I am a scientist accepting not just metaphysical proof but alchemical proof. How you must shudder when you read this. Knowing your scientific approach to all that concerns you and the possibility that you may think me suffering from psychological disturbances, I thought at first to disregard your inquiries. Such action would be cowardly and therefore unacceptable to myself. Again, knowing you to be level-headed, perhaps you can be of assistance in examining what seems to me such an utter impossibility.

To begin with, we will have to ask ourselves, "What is alchemy?" As long as we can obtain no better definition than what the dictionary provides, there is no use in continuing. We should not permit, however, all the nonsense and charlatanry attached to alchemy to act as a hindrance in reaching the underlying cause. Where there is shadow, there also must be a source of light. We are not interested in the shadows or the phantoms that they produce. We want the light. Now hold your breath — for I seem to have glimpsed the

light. No it was more than just a glimpse that I have seen of this hidden light. Now, let me brush all other things aside and continue with only his medical doctrines. You may be amazed to know that his interpretation of the combined materia medica is applicable to all therapeutic branches. We allopaths usually have a rather superior feeling towards other branches of medicine. Let me assure you that there is more to medicine than even Horatio dreamed of! The next time we meet, you will have to read the clinical evidence — not that of others but my own.

Well, enough for now. Here is the letter you requested. It may not contain what you really wanted to know, but I must get this off my chest.

Within a few more days we shall see each other and you can question me at that time about this strange alchemist, his teachings and his effect upon his students. Give Godfrey my regards. Come to think of it, didn't he at one time, it must have been years ago, travel to the Rocky Mountains? Did he not allude to meeting a strange character who changed his life? Good heavens! Do you suppose that could have been the same alchemist? It has just occurred to me that they could be one and the same. I am counting the days until I see you again. Be sure to meet me at the airport. I'll let you know the number and time of my flight.

As ever,

Larry

The Mystery Man

Dr. Syndergaard placed the letter on his desk and leaned back in his chair. Slowly he reached for the stethoscope in his right pocket and placed it on the desk beside the letter, gazing straight ahead at the opposite wall where his neatly framed diplomas were hanging. He knew every word by heart. Upon the one issued him by the Hahnemann Medical College in Philadelphia, with its impressive seal and big signatures, were his credentials to practice medicine. He had also completed his postgraduate work there, years ago. The Hahnemann Hospital still stands, but homeopathy in the United States is as good as dead.

Dr. Syndergaard leaned back more heavily in his chair and sighed deeply. A great man this Dr. Hahnemann. But who knows, perhaps Dr. Hering's accomplishments were even greater. In any case, who would be interested? His thoughts began to drift back to those days when he had started practice. The young hopeful, confident that the final supreme remedies for curing the sick were to be found in "Similia similibus currantur." That was the magic sentence. Was it really? To him, back in those idealistic days, it had seemed like the beginning of a fairy tale much like the ones he'd loved to read as a child. Didn't the Brothers Grimm usually begin with "Once upon a time. . . ?" Yes, once upon a time all his hopes were pinned upon the homeopathic system of therapeutics. Once upon a time . . . he paused in his musing and fondled a piece of paper — an empty prescription blank. He folded it neatly in half, then again and many times more until it was as inflexible as cardboard. It would no longer bend . . . just like the medical profession he thought. We become so set in our ways when in fact we should become more flexible and continue to learn. He tossed the paper on the desk and picked up the stethescope, rubbing his fingers ever so softly over the cold clean metal. He gazed ahead at the diplomas again, but his thoughts returned to the letter in front of him. "If only Larry knew what I never dared mention to him . . . if Dr.

Lawrence Farnsworth only knew," he thought, half smiling to himself.

The sudden jangle of the telephone startled him into an upright position. Mechanically he picked up the receiver and his words followed just as mechanically.

"Dr. Syndergaard speaking."

The voice came over the telephone loudly, and Dr. Syndergaard wrinkled his forehead as he moved the receiver further from his ear.

"I can hear you very well. Yes, indeed. No. Oh, no! Please Mrs. Jones, do not give up. Have faith just a little bit longer. Come and see me again tomorrow. At what time? Let me see."

He reached for his desk calendar and turned page after page. There it was — the very page he was looking for was the one to which he'd first turned.

"Ten-thirty would be fine, Mrs. Jones. You're welcome. Goodbye."

After he replaced the receiver he paused, his hand still resting on the receiver. The warmth transmitted from the instrument to his hand was noticeable. What was it that I just said, he questioned himself. Have faith just a little while longer. Have faith? In what? I am no preacher, priest, or rabbi. What did I say that for?

The phone rang again. Its vibration went to his elbow. He lifted the receiver and the same mechanical impulse ended with "Dr. Syndergaard speaking."

This time his face registered a warm smile. The corners of his lips curled slightly upward and there was a twitching; one could almost detect something mischievous in his expression.

"How is my little patient today? You have? Well then, I guess I will have to come by. Yes, I will. Be good. Yes, I will. Yes, certainly. Goodbye for now."

It was the same story over and over. Old and young all have their problems. All are different yet in essence the same. Everyone's problem is urgent and the most important. Nothing else could be more pressing. How alike we are he thought. If we are so much alike and our sufferings so similar, differing only in form, why can we not find remedies of a simpler nature and of a less complex

preparation? Why synthesize so much when nature provides us with what we need?

He stopped himself abruptly, rebuking himself for letting his thoughts drift so far astray from their normal course. In here, in this office I cannot and must not think in such a manner he demanded to himself. Away from here is different. In here, where my patients are treated I am under oath. Then he thought — in here only? He looked up at the ceiling. My oath follows me everywhere, everywhere! He looked down at his desk again and the prosaic thought came to him that the light fixture on the ceiling could surely stand some cleaning — at least a good thorough dusting.

He reached for Dr. Farnsworth's letter again, which by now had been read and re-read several times. Opening the drawer with his left hand, he pulled out some stationery and fumbled with his right hand for the fountain pen while he looked, rather stared, out the big window. He did not hear the busy noon-time noises of the city. His fingers chanced upon the familiar touch of his pen and he grasped it securely, holding it firmly but not moving. For a moment he became statue-still, then his chest heaved as if under a burden, his eyes transfixed on some object across the street. He seemed more dead than alive. He remained motionless, staring out the window, until his thoughts were drawn to the feel of the pen in his hand. Slowly, he moved his elbow to the desk and resting his head in his left hand he began to write. . . .

Dr. Syndergaard had his office and dispensary on the ground floor of a former mansion that still showed ample evidence of stately splendor that time had not erased. His office occupied nearly all the first floor with the exception of the kitchen and servant's quarters. At the south end was an over-sized breakfast room with a view of the large, immaculate garden. Adjacent to the breakfast room was his study. The upper two floors of his home, furnished in the magnificent splendor of bygone days, breathed of refinement and elegance . . . finely carved wood, subtle shades of velvet upholstery and exquisite china figurines so life-like that they seemed to be out for a noon-time stroll across the mahogany mantel. The upper floors seemed to belong to another world, far away from

the first-floor offices.

Dr. Syndergaard got up from his desk. Crumpling the paper on which he'd begun to write, he threw it as if expelling it away from him, towards the waste basket. He missed the basket, picked up the paper and tossed it a bit more determinedly but missed again. He picked up the crumpled paper and walked over to the basket, placing it in carefully. He took off his white coat, tossing it over the back of his chair instead of hanging it neatly on the corner coat rack as usual. Stepping back to the desk, he rang for the nurse. He had barely walked away from the desk when the nurse entered. She was a pretty, chic young person, looking attractive and efficient in her crisp uniform and little white cap.

"Yes, Dr. Syndergaard?" she inquired.

"Did I ring for you?" he asked absentmindedly.

"Yes, Doctor, you rang."

"Oh," he said and ran his fingers through his hair. "Yes, yes, of course I did. Let me see now, what was it I wanted you to do? Oh, yes. Oh well, on the other hand, never mind. Thank you Mrs. Gertsch." The tone of his voice sounded somewhat annoyed and somewhat perplexed.

The nurse smiled and said, "It's all right, Doctor."

"Oh, no," she said, half giggling, after she'd shut the door behind her. "Is this what I'm in for the rest of my life?" She'd recently married an intern from a local hospital, and she saw the same dedication to medicine in both men. "Well, if this is what Mark will be like after years of practice, at least I'll be well-trained to put up with him," she said aloud.

After the nurse had closed the door, Dr. Syndergaard thought — how stupid can a person become? As he washed his hands he looked into the mirror, examining his face as he would that of a patient. He could not help thinking — do we get wiser with age or just more foolish? Sometimes I wonder. Then he left his office.

Godfrey Gunderson and his wife Elizabeth lived on Mullholland Drive in Beverly Hills. He was an executive with more time at his command than most people who must devote their full time and

efforts to their work. Godfrey Gunderson was usually in his office from nine-thirty until eleven-thirty in the morning. Sometimes he had to stay as late as twelve o'clock noon.

In downtown Los Angeles, the myriad business buildings standing neatly at attention in uniform rows seemed to swallow up everbody on the streets around nine o'clock in the morning. The streets would be deserted briefly, until the morning coffee break when offices and stores began to open their doors. Not much later a stream of humans creeping from parking terraces and from behind parking meters emerged and the melee started, lasting until later than midnight.

It was now close to noon. Godfrey Gunderson stood in front of the elevator in one of the tallest buildings. His posture was erect, but he did not seem to be in a hurry, as most who waited for noontime elevators. Everyone passing by at their busy pace greeted him, emphasizing *Mister* Gunderson. It was not just plain Gunderson. When the elevator arrived and Godfrey Gunderson entered, the young lady operator greeted him almost reverently. He was so different from all the other men she came in contact with. Never had he approached her in any way other than as a perfect gentleman. Oh, how she wished every man would treat her the way Mr. Gunderson did, as a person — not an object. When she thought of the many men who rode the elevator who hid themselves under fancy clothing, brushing suggestively against her, she felt relieved and refreshed when Mr. Gunderson entered the elevator. She knew that his greeting and his politeness were sincere signs of friendship. It could easily be expected that she would feel differently about Mr. Gunderson.

As always, he removed his hat when entering the elevator, even though he was the only passenger.

"Mr. Gunderson," she said, blushing noticeably, "I always think of you as a reverend. Are you by any chance a minister? I know . . . well I'm sure you think . . . well you may think me crazy to ask you this when I know very well you are president of GUNDERSON's, but whenever I see you, I — well you see I just can't help thinking of you as a minister. Isn't that strange?"

Godfrey Gunderson didn't really know how to answer her question on the spur of the moment. But before he had a chance to say anything the elevator stopped, the door opened and looking into the small tilted and curved mirror hanging overhead, the operator said, "Going down. Going down, please."

A young man entered the elevator. The door closed and the swift descent brought them to the lobby in no time at all. When the door opened, the young man stepped aside, although he was in front of the door, and said, "Goodbye, Mr. Gunderson."

The elevator operator echoed, "Goodbye, Mr. Gunderson, have a nice day."

As he stepped from the elevator, he said, "Your most interesting question deserves an answer some day." Then tipping his hat, he left the building.

The young man gave the girl a puzzled look. "What the heck did he mean? What have you been asking him? His expression broke into a grin. "Don't tell me you've been giving him the old line?"

Turning red with anger and indignation, all she could manage to say was, "Get out of here, you worm!" — which he did quickly when he saw the seriousness of her expression.

Godfrey Gunderson walked along Spring Street. He never walked that way, and there was absolutely no reason for him to walk that way today. He kept thinking about what the elevator operator had said, "whenever I see you, I just can't help thinking of you as a minister."

"Cab, Mister?" came a voice out of what at first seemed like nowhere, but indeed originated from an orange-checkered taxi.

It was pure instinct. He stopped and turned towards the caller. "Very well," was all he said and he climbed in.

After a while, the driver began to talk. "You know, Mister, when I saw you, I said to myself, 'Mack, this gentleman needs a ride.' Mind you, I said that! How's that for an eye for customers? You know what, Mister? I don't think you're what you look like."

"What do you mean by that, my good man?" Godfrey Gunderson replied somewhat amused.

"Oh, you know, not the kind of guy anybody would take you for.

I mean, you are someone special. You know what? I think you're a reverend. Right?"

There was a sudden jolt as the driver slammed on the brakes and cussed out a truck driver who had swerved into his lane. "Excuse me, Reverend, but those guys are the most ornery yokels you can ever run across. Yeah, as I was saying, I still think you're a reverend in disguise. Right?" and he looked through the rear-view mirror to see if his passenger would confirm his assumption.

Godfrey Gunderson was too stunned by the similarity of remarks to give an immediate answer. He wanted to get out of the cab, go to the nearest mirror and look at himself. He wondered if his good suit had some strange similarity to clerical attire. Or was there perhaps a sign on his hat that said "I AM a reverend?" What was it about him this morning. "What gives you that idea?" he managed to say unemotionally to the cab driver.

"I just told you. You know what else? I got a nose for those things. Mabel, that's my wife, she always says, 'Mack and his big nose smells everything.' Ha! Ha! That's a good one, eh?" He seemed to enjoy his little joke. "Seriously, Mister, are you a reverend?" he asked eagerly, anticipating confirmation.

"No," answered Godfrey Gunderson.

"Well, Mabel will never believe this. She will never believe this, Mister. You can bet on that." The cab driver acted as if someone had struck him over the head. He had guessed wrong. What would Mabel say?

It was a beautiful spring day. As they left the Hollywood Freeway and drove along Sunset Boulevard crossing Doheny Drive, they drove within a few blocks of Palm Drive and turned the corner. The remainder of the ride continued in silence, each lost in his own thoughts.

When the taxi pulled up at the Gunderson home, Godfrey Gunderson paid the driver, who obediently held the door for him and said, "Thank you, Reverend." Looking him straight in the eye, the driver repeated, "I still think you're a reverend, Sir."

He moved his head and shoulders in a weaving motion as he walked around the taxi. Yep, he thought, you can't fool me. Abra-

ham Lincoln was right. You can't fool the people all the time. Wait 'til I tell Mabel how a reverend tried to fool me.

The taxi drove off and Godfrey Gunderson walked up to the front door. His Spanish-style home was large and stately. As he entered, the cleaning lady had just finished vacuuming the entrance hall. The maid was talking on the telephone. She put down the receiver, took his hat and pointed toward the phone. "Mrs. Gunderson just called as you walked in to see if you were home yet."

"Thank you, Gertrude." He raised the receiver and spoke. "Yes? Yes, dear, I just came in." He looked around to see if Gertrude or the cleaning lady were still present, but they were not in sight. "You may think me silly, but there is a question I would like to ask you." He continued, "What do you think a stranger would guess my occupation to be? I told you it was a silly question, never mind that, just tell me your answer. Give me your impression. I know that. I mean if you had never seen me before. Yes, I feel fine. It is just that I wanted your answer to my question, that's all dear." Godfrey Gunderson's mouth stood wide open. "What did you say? A what?" He wanted to make certain that he'd heard right. "No, you don't have to hurry home. There is nothing wrong. Really. All right, then. Goodbye dear," and he hung up.

Shaking his head, he walked into his study. Just before he closed the door, he looked back into the hallway and called, "Gertrude, oh Gertrude."

The maid came running. "Is anything wrong, Mr. Gunderson?"

"Oh, come now, why should anything be wrong just because I called you?"

"I don't know. It's just that I had such a peculiar feeling."

"What peculiar feeling?" He looked at her suspiciously.

"Oh, nothing really."

"Come in Gertrude, sit down. I want to talk to you." He motioned her to a red leather chair by the window. "Did you, by any chance, overhear what I asked Mrs. Gunderson over the telephone?"

She blushed and looked down at her folded hands. "I could not help overhearing it, Mr. Gunderson."

"That's perfectly all right," he said, putting her at ease.

"Now if I were to ask you the same question, what would your answer be, Gertrude?"

"She hesitated a moment, looking down at her hands again. Then looking him straight in the eye she blurted, "A psychiatrist."

"Why in all the world would you say that?" he asked, obviously surprised.

"Because you always seem to know what people think and what they want to do." She looked at him almost a little defiantly. "Like me, for instance, and Mrs. Gellert, the cleaning lady."

"What about you and Mrs. Gellert?"

"It's just that you look through people like the priest does during confession. Why are you asking all these strange questions today, Mr. Gunderson?"

"I'll tell you what happened to me today." Then he began to relate his experiences with the elevator operator and the taxi driver.

Just then the door opened and Mrs. Gunderson walked in. She was an attractive woman in her early fifties. "I just went over to Ann's for a moment to ask about the tickets for tomorrow. What is going on? What is the matter, Gertrude? Is anything wrong?"

She stepped over to where her husband was standing with his back to the desk, kissed him and said, "You know, you scared me."

"I have scared you with just a question? Sit down, Elizabeth. Here, sit on the sofa," he said, arranging a large cushion for her. "Now, then, all I asked you. . . ."

She interrupted him, "I know, I know, it's just that I wondered about it myself while walking back over here. Maybe there is something to it after all . . . I mean to your question." Her head was turned halfway to the side. She looked as if she were trying to remember something.

Godfrey Gunderson, still standing in front of the desk with his legs crossed, looked at the carpet. "As soon as you answer my question I will tell you why I asked it."

Elizabeth pushed her lower lip forward and a little upward, looking attentively at the clock on the fireplace mantel. She opened her mouth but hesitated. She appeared to be ready to say something, but twice she seemed to reconsider.

"If you want to know . . . sometimes I think you're a . . ." Both Godfrey Gunderson and the maid waited expectantly. Finally, she said, ". . . a teacher."

Godfrey Gunderson gazed at the floor. "You say a teacher?"

"Yes, but I do not mean a schoolteacher or a college professor. I mean someone who teaches others about themselves or helps others know themselves better. You know, like a pastor or . . . ," here she paused again. "Oh, I don't know. Something like that, if you know what I mean. But why do you ask?"

He turned around with his arms folded, and stood in front of both of them. Then he related again what had happened up to that very moment. When he had finished, both listeners looked even more puzzled.

"Now, do you still wonder why I asked this question? The reason is the unanswered question — why it should have been said in the first place and confirmed in so many instances thereafter."

"That's very simple," replied his wife. "You are a teacher, a preacher, a psychiatrist, and what not. Let's face it. All of these make up what you are — a mystic."

"That's what I meant to say, Mr. Gunderson," said Gertrude excitedly. "I just could not recall that word. Now I remember it. That's it exactly, Mrs. Gunderson. Thank you for saying it." She got up. "May I go now? I need to check some things on the stove." Mrs. Gunderson nodded twice.

After Gertrude left the room, Mrs. Gunderson got up and walked towards her husband. "What else is the matter, Godfrey? Come on, tell me." Her hand reached for his chin, and lifting it, she asked again, "What is it?"

His left forefinger circumscribed his ear. Then he pulled his lobe. "You know. . . ."

She interrupted again, "I know. The alchemist!"

"Yes," he nodded, "precisely. I keep seeing him."

"So do I."

"You, too?"

"Yes."

"What are we going to do?" He had a strange look on his face

as he asked her.

Just then the phone rang. As Elizabeth went to answer, he said, "That's Doc Syndergaard." He was right. He could tell by his wife's conversation.

"You know what, Doc, Godfrey and I have been under the influence of the alchemist these last few days and we can't help wondering why . . . surely there's a reason. We wonder if there's something we should be doing. Here, I'll let you talk to Godfrey," and she held the receiver towards her husband.

As he took the phone she waited, paying close attention to his words and watching his expression for clues to the total conversation.

"Hello, Doc! I'm fine. To be honest, I don't know whether I should feel fine or not. It's just that I am confused. You know, it's one of those days when things storm in on you and you don't know what to do with them. You feel the same way? How's that?" Elizabeth's expression became even more tense. "Why don't you come over, Doc? You haven't been here for ages. I know, I know! Let me ask Elizabeth."

He held his hand over the mouthpiece and turned to Elizabeth. The Doc wants us to come over and have dinner with him. He has news from Dr. Farnsworth, and thinks it is important enough for us to come over. In fact, Dr. Farnsworth will be flying in today and will be there for dinner also.

Quickly she nodded consent. "Of course we'll go. Tell him we'll come."

He removed his hand from the mouthpiece and said, "We'll be there. What time?" He looked at his watch. "Good, that gives us plenty of time to get ready. See you then. Goodbye."

"What did he say about the alchemist?" Her eyes got bigger. She didn't wait for an answer and with typical womanly instinct said, "Do you know what? I have a hunch there is more to come concerning the two of us."

He shrugged his shoulders and said, "Who knows."

When Godfrey and Elizabeth Gunderson arrived at Dr. Syndergaard's home they found the doctor and his guest, Dr. Farnsworth,

engaged in animated conversation.

Dr. Farnsworth had arrived shortly before them. After the four exchanged hearty greetings and complimented each other on how well each looked, Dr. Syndergaard said, "Make yourselves at home and relax. It feels as though we are going to have an interesting evening."

Elizabeth Gunderson could not help asking spontaneously, "Oh what pleasant surprise could that be?"

"How do you know it is going to be a surprise?" asked Dr. Syndergaard in return. He walked over to a small table next to an unused chair and picked up a book. "This is the book! You know what kind of book I'm talking about."

"No," said Elizabeth. "As a matter of fact I don't know what kind of book you're talking about." Her eyes grew bigger as she glanced at her husband.

It was then that Dr. Farnsworth spoke up, "Okay, let's stop fooling around. We all know that right now we are under the influence of the man who changed all our lives. We don't know where he is right now, but we definitely know that the four of us are brought together for some reason. If you ask me what the reason is, all I can say is — I don't know.

"If any of you know, then please tell me." Looking at the Gundersons, Dr. Farnsworth said, "I have never asked you this before, nor Dr. Syndergaard. Have you met the alchemist? I had an urge to write Dr. Syndergaard about my experiences with this man. I thought I sounded absolutely ridiculous; but I had to tell someone about it, only to find that Dr. Syndergaard too had met him. Then the thought came to me that you had mentioned previously having come under the influence of a man who changed your lives. It then occurred to me that it could have possibly been the same person. I mentioned this in my letter to Doc. He looked at them carefully. "Am I right in my assumption that this is the same person?"

Without showing any surprise Godfrey Gunderson replied, "Yes, you are right," while he looked at his wife who was nodding her head slowly in agreement.

"Well then," continued Dr. Farnsworth, "let's face it. This ap-

pears to concern all of us."

"But what about that book, Dr. Syndergaard?" Elizabeth Gunderson could not help asking. Her womanly curiosity had not been satisfied.

"This book," explained Dr. Syndergaard, "contains notes made while visiting with the alchemist. I studied under him at a retreat in the Rocky Mountains. This occurred after he returned from a trip to India. It contains my notes of importance. One could say, similar to the notes Ouspensky made while listening to Gurdjieff. Some are even very much alike while others for the average person are much simpler."

"All right," Godfrey Gunderson interrupted. "What now?"

There was silence. No one said anything. Everyone was preoccupied with his thoughts. It was a pleasant silence, not the strained atmosphere created by people unable to talk because of sheer embarrassment. In this instance there was so much to be said that the difficulty was knowing where to begin.

It was Dr. Farnsworth who broke the silence. "How did you ever meet this man?" he asked, looking at the Gundersons.

"I can tell you," Godfrey Gunderson answered. "It was many years ago. Elizabeth and I were newly married. We had saved enough money to enable us to travel to his place of residence at the time. He was very nice to us, but still everything seemed so strange." He looked at Elizabeth.

"Yes, it was strange," she said slowly.

Then he continued. "I still recall every detail. When we entered the room he didn't look up, but said, 'Please come in.' The man who spoke these words to us sat in his chair sorting some mail on his lap. He paid very little attention to us, at least so it seemed.

'But it all seems so fantastic — so out of this natural world,' I replied. My hand went around my neck as if it were too hot or my shirt-collar too tight. But neither was the case. It was a frantic movement that bespoke an inner excitement mingled with disbelief and wonder. Perhaps confusion would be a better description.

'To some — yes. To others — no.' came the reply from the man in the chair.

I said, 'You don't look like an alchemist at all. When one has looked at pictures and illustrations in occult books, one sees old men, darkly dressed, standing over their furnaces and fires concocting secret formulas. But, you . . . ,' and I paused. I was sorry that I had said that much already.

'Go on,' said he.

'How old are you?' came the unexpected question from my young wife, who stood leaning at the door opening and had silently listened in.

'Not very old as men count. Again, perhaps older than men count,' came the words from the lips of the man in the chair, who nonchalantly went through his mail, sorting it into little stacks, occasionally holding an envelope in his hand for a moment, and as if nodding to himself, laying it aside unopened.

I said, 'You give answers like an old oracle — never to the point. You always leave wide openings that one can interpret one way or another.'

'Very well, then. How old are you?'

'Twenty-four years next March,' came my eager reply.

'Ah, good. What date?'

'The sevententh.'

'Hm,' was the only reply that followed. Then there was a long silent pause before anyone spoke or even attempted to speak. Finally, my wife began, 'To others you are a commonplace person. Forgive me, I did not mean that the way it sounded. You know what I mean — on the surface you do not appear different from other people.'

'Go on,' came his words while more letters were sorted.

'Well! You know what I mean and you know what Godfrey is trying so hard to tell you,' she said emphatically.

'Indeed I do.'

'Then why are you so difficult to fathom? So elusive with your answers to our questions?' While she was speaking, she walked over towards the sofa and sat down next to me. 'We both have come a long way to see you and talk to you,' she said in a voice that sounded reconciling because she had a feeling her former words

could have been taken offensively.

'I know,' was again the only reply that came from the chair.

I started again to run my hand around my collar. I was fighting with myself. I was not sure how to say what I wanted to say, and again did not know where to start with all the questions that I had so carefully prepared in my mind before coming.

Finally, I gathered enough courage and said, 'We have saved our money for this trip just to see you and talk to you. Believe me, it was not easy. Ours was a long and difficult trip. It took all we had. And now we have to leave because our time is up and our trip home has already been postponed twice.'

'Yes.'

'Is this all you have to say before we leave?' I said.

'No.'

'Then why don't you say it?'

The man in the chair looked up. He took the letters and laid them on the floor close to his feet, some to the right and others to the left. Then he stood up. There was nothing unusual about him. Average height, a bit round about the middle, no fiery eyes, only an apparently strong and healthy individual. The two of us, by then sitting together on the sofa, looked at each other. There was something strange beginning to take place.

The man before us changed — not so much in an abrupt way as in the gentle way he began to speak. His voice had changed. It sounded more resonant. Each word took on a meaning. His spoken words became pictures we could see. We became enveloped in a cozy, pleasant warmth and above all our attitude began to change towards the man before us.

Where before disappointment had taken complete hold, it gave way now to a pleasant feeling that seemed to permeate our bodies and minds. We felt secure. A feeling of contentment and quiet, yes, more than ordinary quiet came over us. We looked at each other silently for a moment. Then turning our heads towards the man, who stood a conservative distance — halfway across the room, we saw to our amazement a faint light behind him. It was early afternoon. No reflection from anywhere in the room could have

caused it; and since he stood with his back towards the wall and not the window, it could not have come from the outside either. There was nothing visible such as a mirror or metallic object or similar substance that could have caused the glow or reflecting light. Everything was too uncanny for all that. . . .

Godfrey Gunderson stood up and walked towards his wife, who sat motionless in the chair across from him. "Do you realize that nobody, do you hear me, NOBODY, can do justice to what we experienced?"

Elizabeth nodded her head. "I understand your feelings," she said consolingly and reached for his hand, pressing it tenderly against her cheek. "I know only too well how you feel."

"All right," sighed Dr. Farnsworth, "that explains what I sensed all along. It was the alchemist all right." He too got up. Looking at Dr. Syndergaard he said slowly, "And what is your opinion? What do you suggest? There must be some reason for us to meet here like this. I don't know if I have ever been in a situation where the word 'strange' had a more profound meaning than right now."

Dr. Syndergaard had been sitting silently with his eyes closed all this time. With eyes still closed he said, "We will have the privilege of seeing him."

His words were like an electric shock. It was like awakening from an unpleasant dream into reality. An anticipation filled the atmosphere and everyone felt a tingling sensation pulsating through his entire being, as though the very atmosphere had become charged.

"When?" was the only word that broke the silence and this came from Elizabeth Gunderson.

"Tonight," said Dr. Syndergaard very slowly, intoning each syllable.

A smile formed on each face. It was very noticeable how their thoughts revealed themselves in their facial expressions. Dr. Farnsworth's smile showed traces of astonishment. Elizabeth's face expressed her thoughts — "I knew it, or I had a hunch — I sensed it," while her husband's face showed more the gratitude one reveals when having received a gift. Only Dr. Syndergaard was expressionless. His face resembled a marble statue, revealing nothing. It was

a blank. After a while he opened his eyes. Just then there was a knock on the door.

"Yes, we're coming," said Dr. Syndergaard as if he'd heard part of a conversation and not just a knock on the door, that could have meant any of a thousand things. He got up and announced to his guests, "Supper is served."

Everyone left the library and entered the dining room where the crystal chandelier glistened and sparkled and the pleasant aroma of herbal spiced foods signaled invitingly.

It was the month of May and the moon was full that night.

After a delicious supper, all four were sitting comfortably in the garden. The weather was balmy. No haze filled the sky. The moon showed all her splendour surrounded by scintillating lights in the heavens. It was a glorious night. The full significance of this particular moment, as would become apparent soon, was not yet known to any of them.

Dr. Syndergaard leaned back and looked up at the moon. "This is a night 'fit to meet the Gods' as the ancients would have expressed it. The very air itself seems filled with expectation." Again, that same silence they had experienced before began to envelop them.

"Exactly when will the moon be full tonight?" asked Elizabeth, almost as though she were half-dreaming.

"After two o'clock in the morning," replied Dr. Syndergaard. No sooner had he spoken the last word than the doorbell rang.

The Alchemist Appears

Everyone sat motionless, at strict but tense attention to what the next moment would bring. Dr. Syndergaard said nothing but disappeared quietly across the patio. It seemed as though each guest preferred to remain alone with his own thoughts. No one spoke, nor even glanced at the others. Thus, they sat, intently staring off into the distance as if attempting to pierce a great void in which the unknown would manifest.

Then it happened.

Dr. Syndergaard returned — and with him was a man. There was nothing unusual or remarkable about him physically. He wore glasses. He had kind and understanding eyes which smiled at the corners. His mouth bore an expression difficult to describe. It by no means resembled the smile of a Mona Lisa, nor was it sad. Rather, it was a smile of a secret withheld that would much rather have been revealed but . . . it was difficult to describe.

As Dr. Syndergaard and the newcomer approached the table in the garden, all three arose but none moved from their places or uttered a word.

"Good evening," said the man. Before anyone could exchange greetings, he said, "May peace be with you." He took the hand of each in turn between his own; and smiling, said to each as he repeated the gesture, "It is so nice to see you again."

Dr. Syndergaard offered him a chair and he sat down.

This time the silence was awkward. None of the four seemed to know what to say or how to act. Realizing their predicament, the newcomer smiled. The soft light from the patio reflected from his face and his friendly smile put everyone at ease. His gentle eyes sparkled in the light.

"Did you come from far away?" Elizabeth Gunderson asked, knowing full well that her question wasn't pertinent.

"Not really," he answered still smiling. "One is hardly ever far away with everyone so near," and with a gesture of his hand he

added, "like you good, and to me, so dear ones."

Mrs. Gunderson was not satisfied with this reply. She insisted on continuing. "But you must have come a long way. Surely you are tired by now. Would you like to refresh yourself? Is there anything that you would like?"

"There is nothing more that I should like than being with all of you," he said. "As to my physical well-being and comfort, rest assured everything has already been attended to."

"We were discussing all evening the peculiar circumstances that brought us together tonight. Except for Dr. Syndergaard, whom you informed ahead of time, none of us knew that you were coming or that you would be with us tonight. It is most gratifying to us, and of course very puzzling at the same time, that you should honor us with your presence," Dr. Farnsworth said.

"Dr. Syndergaard did not know until a couple of hours ago that I would be with you tonight," he corrected Dr. Farnsworth.

Dr. Farnsworth looked dumfounded for a moment. Then his face lit up. "You mean, you told Dr. Syndergaard only tonight . . . that explains everything." Turning to Dr. Syndergaard he asked, "But why didn't you tell us about the letter?"

"There was no letter," replied the newcomer. "I told him so."

In all the excitement of the evening it now became apparent to all present that the 'message' of his arrival had not been by letter, phone or similar method of communication, but by direct mental communication with Dr. Syndergaard as he sat in his chair with his eyes closed earlier that evening.

The realization immediately broke the ice. Not long afterwards, everyone moved closer together; it seemed that once again the old friends had come together. Strangely, never before to the best of anyone's recollection, had they assembled as a group.

"Just relax," said the man, who no one thus far had called by name. Sensing this last barrier, he said, "I am still the same — your brother, he who loves you. This is the noblest of all titles that anyone can bestow upon me. Yes, I am your brother.

"This is the night of the Wesak Festival. Perhaps you have heard of it, again some of you may not know its meaning. During

this time the Exalted Ones reach decisions concerning the welfare of all creatures on earth. The consciousness of the Christ and the Buddhi of the Buddha are in absolute harmony under the direction of the Most High. Anyone who tunes in at this time with the Hierarchy will participate and come under the influence of this Divine afflatus.

"May I ask you to remain in absolute silence so we may share in this outpouring of heavenly influence. Let no one speak until urged from within to do so."

The immediate descending silence confirmed their mutual agreement.

A gentle breeze filtered through the eucalyptus trees and the scent of flowers was unmistakable. The air was balmy. It was one of those rare and special nights when all of nature conspires to bring happiness and contentment. No sensuous feelings or thoughts penetrated this atmosphere. All was serene, full of beauty and harmony. One could truly say it was one of those rare moments of bliss — a taste of heaven or what man would understand as such.

Had anyone cared to look at a clock, he would have been amazed to learn that in what seemed like only minutes of silence more than an hour had winged away its time. To all present it seemed too short a moment before Dr. Farnsworth broke the silence. "Despite all the beauty which I have just experienced, my mind is still not clear about the meaning of the word hierarchy. Please tell us what is really meant by it."

Slowly each member of the group returned from his rambling thoughts to the balmy garden in the full moonlight. As their attention returned to the alchemist, he slowly nodded his head and began, "There seems to be a misconception about those who comprise the Hierarchy of the Mystical Brotherhoods. This body of men and women gathered from the various schools or branches of the Great White Brotherhood, who are supervising the evolvement of mankind — with emphasis on those who show an inclination to be of special help in the furthering of the humanitarian aspect so essential in these times, are the driving forces among mankind to bring about its exaltation. All this is accomplished without resorting

to force or coercion. There is a subtle prevailing guidance available to all who are properly attuned to this stream of vibration.

"These very same adepts or masters in their various stages of development are present among us though not generally recognized because they do not wear turbans or elaborate attire to attract attention. In fact, they are hard to detect and will never reveal themselves for the sake of just being known. Neither will they teach for money, but only for the love and sincerity of those asking guidance. These, then, are the workers in the hierarchy — simple in appearance and manners but profound in the spirit of love, generous in the transmission of knowledge and constantly available for help and guidance as humble servants of the Divine."

"Any individual sincere in the quest for knowledge of the mysteries of life will encounter no insurmountable difficulties in contacting them. When the pupil is *ready*, the master appears. It is the readiness of the pupil that permits him to appear before the master. There is a notion among many people who enter metaphysics that a master will descend and appear to them. This is not the case. You will have to rise to the status or standing to permit you to behold the master within the Hierarchy."

"For us, such a possibility is still too remote," said Godfrey Gunderson. "In all honesty, I am not greatly concerned at present with the master's appearance to me. I would not know how to conduct myself in such a presence. I don't even know, as yet, the purpose for my being here upon this earth. There are many wishing to teach me all kinds of things — how to master and command nature, how to control matter and what have you. When I have deep within me an uncertainty about life itself, what purpose does all this serve other than to give a temporal satisfaction. Why should one long and seek for things of heaven while on earth when we don't even understand the reason for our very existence? I am sure this concerns not just myself but all of us."

"You have answered many of our questions in the past, but you have also said, 'I will answer your question but remember I may answer in the affirmative today and at a later date answer in the negative. The answers to your questions are determined by the man-

ner in which you phrase them.'

"Why don't you start right at the very beginning and tell us what life here on earth is all about. Is this question justified and will you answer us without avoiding the issue? This question is final in itself. Nothing can be added to it at a later date nor taken away. What is our existence here on earth all about?"

Godfrey Gunderson had a puzzled look on his face and with thumb and forefinger of his right hand he stroked the ridge of his nose.

"Years ago you were told how to find the answer within your self," said the alchemist. "Apparently, you still have some difficulties. Very well, let us start right from the beginning." He sat upright in his chair, facing the full moon and inhaled deeply — it seemed an eternity before he exhaled. Then he began.

Body, Soul and Spirit

"Our existence is a mystery to us. It conceals so much that we would like to know, making it extremely difficult to find out why we are here on earth.

Complicating things even more, you will have to consider influences and indoctrinations to which you may have been subjected, beginning at childhood and lasting perhaps throughout your adult life.

"There is no need to point out some specific influences or indoctrinations. It would make no difference in your investigation since it can be based on either superstitions found among primitive tribes of aborigines in Central Australia or New Guinea, relating to supernatural powers; or it may originate in our sophisticated society as a hypothesis, theory, dogma or creed. Not where or how all this takes place is of immediate importance to us, but that it does take place deserves our attention.

"Before we proceed, your first requirement is an honest attempt to examine yourself. Then, find out if you can disprove what follows. Everything thereafter depends on your honest appraisal of some facts that confront you.

"To ease somewhat any doubts that may arise in your mind, let me state irrevocably that it is not my intention to ask you to relinquish any beliefs that you may have, be they religious, fraternal or, for that matter, of any nature.

"Second, let us consider man as a triune being, which means that you consist of three basic essentials named *body*, *soul* and *spirit*. These three essentials are completely different one from the other, as blood is not wood and neither blood nor wood are gold. This analogy should make it plain.

"We shall examine all three essentials separately, beginning with yourself as an individual, corporeal manifestation. You are aware of your body. It has dimensions. All dimensions known to mankind are limited. Height, length, depth, weight, for example, represent

measurements and all have a beginning and end. Your bodily weight, size and height prove this. Therefore, all substance, known to man as matter, is limited as its individualized appearance shows. This includes all metals, minerals, plants and animals — singularly or combined — also planets, suns, galaxies, in fact any known object. Such matter may be of a solid, liquid, gaseous or thermal manifestation.

"This proves that your body has a beginning and an end. The moment of birth and the moment of death substantiate this.

"Assuming that we are in joint agreement, up to this point, let us continue with our investigation of the triune being you represent.

"Having established the limitations of your body, we find it to be animated. This means that a dead body lacks animation. We shall use a stillborn child as an example. Such a child is not alive. It does not move by itself even to the slightest degree. This proves that something is missing that brings about movement within the body. The source, which makes the muscles move, cannot be seen or known. We notice only the manifestation of this invisible life by its activity throughout the body. Life, as an entity in itself, cannot be seen or measured because it is not substance, but found within substance.

"Where life originates before it enters your body, or where it goes after it leaves your body, you do not know.

"Knowledge and belief are not synonymous. What you know you do not have to believe. By contrast, what you believe you do not know. The line of demarcation should not be erased as it would cause hallucination when knowledge and belief become mixed. Please make an honest effort to use the right phraseology from now on. This becomes of utmost importance when conducting an unbiased investigation.

"Assuming that we also agree with the foregoing explanation, we have established that substance refers to body; but the sum total of substance filling the universe we do not know. We are only aware of individual particles of substance in the form of matter and such segments known to us are limited to their measurements, dimensions and weight.

To induce movement into substance requires life. Life in itself can not be measured. Only the duration of life within a substance as a segment of universal life, can be observed. Since you do not know when and where life began and when and where it will cease to exist, you refer to life as eternal, meaning without beginning or end. Thus, life is everlasting.

"An erroneous concept is still prevailing among men. The dictionary will tell you that spirit comes from the Latin word spiritus, meaning breath. Spirare in Latin means to breathe. It refers to spirit as the life principle in man. My statement that spirit is life agrees with Webster's definition above. Had Mr. Webster stopped here, he could have avoided considerable confusion. Unfortunately he added a mixture of other explanations. He goes on to tell us that spirit also means soul. As we shall see later, this is not enough. He continues to say that spirit means thinking, feeling, mind, intelligence, will and thought as regarded separately from matter — also, supernatural being, ghost, angel, demon, fairy, etc. The foregoing seems not enough for Mr. Webster because he adds that spirit also means an individual person or personality, disposition, mood, a pervading animating principle, a liquid produced by distillation and more. Since word definitions of a dictionary are commonly accepted as the last resort to settle a dispute about the meaning of a word, no other avenue for a settlement seems to be available and open. This is illogical and will prove to be erroneous, as you will see. Let me ask: By what authority did Mr. Webster make his statements? I confess, I do not know. But I do believe that he based some of his interpretations on Holy Writ, i.e., the Bible, when he could not assess words scientifically. The vocabulary of the scientist does not contain words like soul, ghost, angel, demon, fairy, etc.; and, as you will find out, spirit is not the same as soul or mind. Also, you may prove to yourself that Mr. Webster was wrong in his assumption that spirit means soul.

"You are now aware that body refers to substance and spirit to life. Thus, we have two of the three essentials comprising mortal man. Neither of the two are the same. Now, let me make another statement, which may seem for the moment contradictory. Though

substance and life (body and spirit) are not the same, yet they will be found joined as a unit, which means that spirit (life) cannot be found separated from a body (substance). Therefore, no such thing as a dead body can exist in the ultimate sense because all substance is subject to constant change. This will seem again illogical as when we spoke of a stillborn child which is considered to be dead. Actually, this is again a misnomer. There can be no death in the ultimate sense if we relate death to the end of existence. It appears so only when man refers to a body he thinks devoid of life. Such a change, as movement, is brought about by spirit (life), which is also energy. This spirit energy within substance creates resistance. The result is a field of force. Force can reveal itself only in proportion to energy meeting resistance within a substance. This is the cause of perpetual motion found in the universe. It is unending, without beginning or end and cannot for this reason be created here on earth. If perpetual motion could be created upon earth, it would indicate that it did not exist prior to its creation; and therefore it could not be perpetual motion.

"This leaves still a third question open. What makes spirit act perpetually in substance? The answer is: The third of the triune of essentials — soul.

"With this statement you will have proven Mr. Webster to be wrong when he states that spirit is soul because soul is consciousness or mind.

"By now you will have noted very definitely that:

(a) The universe consists of substance ranging from very dense particles to the ultimate in subtlety.

(b) The universe consists of life ranging from the shortest conceivable impulse that can be measured, to its immeasurable infinity.

(c) The universe consists of consciousness permeating all it contains; thus, consciousness is directing life within substance as soul essence or mind.

"These are the three essentials comprising man as a triune being: body, spirit and soul (substance, life and consciousness).

"As a segment of universal existence, man contains all three essentials in various proportions. Imperfect man lacks either the fullness of the spirit, or has an imperfection of substance caused by the unbalance of insufficient spirit which energizes his body, or lacks the proper proportion of consciousness. The latter reveals his lack of intelligence as an imperfect soul in search of perfection. Perfect man possesses all three essentials in equal proportions. This will give him a healthy and enduring body filled with the fullness of spirit under the complete control of his soul.

"It behooves man to save his soul from the improper reactions of the body (flesh), which may want to be the dominating factor because of insufficient spirit (life energy). This gave rise to the Biblical saying: The spirit is willing but the flesh (body) is weak. A weakness in one of the three essentials produces the imbalance in man. His soul may become lost (lose control) in the predominant urges of one over the other.

"It should be evident that the soul may become lost but can never be destroyed or annihilated. What is lost can be found again — no matter how long it will be hidden and in what condition it will be recovered. With care it can be restored, salvaged and saved from future loss.

"It appears that man's greatest struggle is to live in harmony with himself as a well-balanced triune being. When such state is attained, man as man has become perfect.

"In your present state of development in this ever-changing, ever-expanding, and ever-becoming cosmic scheme of evolution, it is impossible for you to conceive of more essentials, which could be added to the three known, that constitute the Trinity in the All. There is presently no concept available that you could add as a fourth essential that is not found already contained within the three.

"Can you think of another essential besides substance (body), life (spirit), and consciousness (soul)? If you can, you have the distinction of being the only known mortal who has accomplished such an unheard-of feat.

"It is up to you now to prove me wrong by revealing your knowledge. The emphasis is on knowledge and not on what you believe

it could be. Your knowledge will have to be substantiated by your own experience.

"When consciousness (soul) is found within life-imbued particles of substance (body) as man, he is alive. Meaning he is among life here upon earth where his soul (consciousness) is to be found. When, by contrast, his consciousness leaves his body and relinquishes dominion over the spirit (life), which energizes his body (substance) as a whole, the particles (cells), which make up his body, will separate because no cohesion is present any more after the individual spirit (life) has left the body. Putrefaction will separate the former conglomerate cells into ever smaller segments of solid, liquid, gaseous or thermal emissions, converting them into organic vegetation or animal constituents by a natural process for future consumption as foodstuff by man.

"When during the period of man's gestation more substance is required as food for the growth of an unborn child, substance imbued with life is the only known means by which such physical growth can take place. The proper balance of substance and spirit is of utmost importance. Should substance have insufficient spirit, needing more than can be freed by normal digestion, it will have to be supplemented by other means which enable infusion to compensate for the lack. In adults this is especially noticeable when the spirit is extracted from vegetation by artificial means. Spirits of wine is an example. As the name indicates, it is the spirit only which is extracted from its substance, in this case the ripened grape. Since every natural substance contains spirit, it can be freed and used as a supplement with food containing an insufficient amount of spirit.

"As soon as the mother has expelled the child and the umbilical cord is severed, the child is on his own. From the moment the child inhales the air which contains spirit (life), it energizes the body cells; and with the first breath of life a spark of the universal consciousness (soul essence) enters and the enlivened body becomes now a living soul entity. This process is substantiated in Holy Writ as the Bible confirms: 'And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.'

"This quotation from the Bible states very clearly that substance (earth-matter) was used to form and shape man. This implies that an organism had been created sufficiently self-sustaining by recycling within itself substances necessary for a prolonged period of time. But such reproduction of substance became possible only after spirit (the breath of life) was added by way of the lungs, which recharge the fluid, known as blood, with spirit. It is the blood which acts as a carrier for the spirit to permeate every minute part of the body (substance). It was then that man, as an unorganized, self-sufficient entity, became alive. However, a coordinated control over the completed organism was possible only after the third essential, consciousness, was inserted with spirit. Thus, man became a living soul. This means matter enlivened and controlled.

"The final verdict, 'living' soul, indicates a state of being other than living. At first glance it appears that the only alternative would be the opposite of living, which is death. Continuing, it would mean that soul can enter and leave the animated substance. If presently not on its own accord, then by the direction of a higher intelligence than man possesses. Through this superior intelligence, unknown to man, he became self-conscious of his independent entity.

"Man alone has the distinction of being the highest evolved of all created species on earth that can live above the lower species through his ability to think and reason. It is reasoning that sets man apart from all other creatures here on earth. The next in evolvement to man is endowed with instinct but not the faculty to think and reason.

"When considering man in the present state as a 'living' soul, this would indicate a prior existence as a 'non-living' soul. This becomes even more noticeable when considering the question that has vexed man as long as he has consciousness within him: What becomes of the soul after it leaves the body with the spirit, which is the superior energy of cohesion preventing all cells in his body from undergoing complete separation?

"Our earth is the only place presently known to man where life may be found as we know it. On the other hand, if life is everlasting, it must be found everywhere. But why such specific designation

of 'living' soul? The only other definition we can find is its opposite called death, as was mentioned previously. There is nothing sinister about the word death. We conceive of it only as the opposite of life according to the law of polarity. In essence, life and death are the same as we separate day into day and night, but call both day and night together one day. Considering life as everlasting, death becomes the equivalent to night within life. Therefore, as both day and night are but one-half each of a full day, so life and death are but halves of a full life. This would indicate that soul as consciousness continues the same during life as it does during death. What could be simpler to let us understand conscious duration within the timeles or eternal Now?"

"Man lives normally through more than one day and night, so we may justly assume — until we know — that man will continue to live more than once as a 'living' soul. How deeply this is embedded in the consciousness of man can be seen by various references he makes concerning an 'after life.' He speaks of the lost souls in the 'other' world or about souls that have departed. A departure from one place indicates arrival at another destination. The leaving or farewell of a departed soul, an expression used all over the earth, gives evidence that man carries within him an inner conviction by which he cannot substantiate other than by reasoning, that there is a life hereafter. He calls it life among the dead. Does he not even consider a resurrection for those living among the dead in the realm of death into an eternal life? Man himself came up with a most beautiful description of life ever seen — 'life everlasting.' Aside from the assumption of a life hereafter, statements can be found in Holy Writ that man had a pre-existence. If we quote the Bible again, we find various references indicating such former states. Whether these can be interpreted as meaning life in bones, flesh and blood, as we know it now, or otherwise, is speculative; but that consciousness is to have endured is certainly indicated. Here are some such quotations from the Bible:

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.[1]

[1] Titus 1:2

"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

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"But some will say, 'How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?'

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"There are also celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the Celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

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"There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.[2]

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"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.[3]

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Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return to God who gave it.[4]

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"When investigating substance inferior in structural appearance from the viewpoint that man is the highest evolved of the species, the question poses no problem. Evidence at hand eases that task. To look ahead and pre-suppose intelligent life occupying corporeal substance different from any known to man is seemingly impossible. Considering that evolution is continuous, it is irrational even to assume that it has ended with man. But, what do species look like that are superior or more evolved than man? This question has had many answers that are incoherent upon closer examination as each begins with what man looks like and ends with what man looks like. No doubt, you will recall the days of your childhood when your mother asked you not to be afraid after she would leave your room and turn off the light. Perhaps, you will remember a dialogue which went something like this:

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[2] I Corinthians 15
[3] Job 38
[4] Proverbs 12

'Now, my child, lie still and don't be afraid. Your guardian angel will protect you after I go out and turn off the light. He will protect you from all harm.'

'What is an angel like, mama?'

'The angels are beautiful beings that live with our Father in heaven.'

'Where is Father in heaven living, mama?'

'He is in heaven, way, way up in the sky above us. And the angels are with Him.'

'But if the angels are in the sky, why don't they fall down?'

'They have big, beautiful wings; they can fly.'

'Do they come in here?'

'Yes.'

'Why can't I see them, mama?'

'Because you are asleep when they come.'

'Does Father in heaven have a name, mama?'

'Yes, His name is God.'

'What is He like?'

'He is very, very old because we are all His children. He has snow-white hair and a beautiful white beard.'

'Does He look like my grandpa?'

'Something like him but God is much, much older.'

'Can't we go and visit Him like we do grandpa and grandma?'

'Not for a while, we have to wait until He calls us. Then, we will surely go to Him.'

'When will He call us, mama?'

'I don't know. Nobody really knows. We just have to wait. Now go to sleep. Good night, dear.'

"And a kiss usually sealed such a dialogue.

"What does this tell us? It means that man cannot imagine anything superior to himself. That is why an angel looks like man and man pictures an angel, as a statue, to look like himself, except some have wings added to distinguish them from ordinary men. And what about God? The description explains itself. Father in heaven. What does a father look like? And there we have it again; man cannot conceive of any intelligent being superior to himself;

therefore, he borrows an image of what he knows. What he is not aware of he does not know. It stops right there.

"Looking back into ancient records, one finds angel to be synonymous with planet. The influences of the inherent intelligence in such a celestial being — because a planet has a being as a being, otherwise it would not *be* there — is what influences all life here on earth. All life — not just man. Since such planets do not fall down but stay up in the sky where they 'wing their way around the throne of God,' we have the origin of the proverbial wings of the angel.

"Even archangels are mentioned. These have been related to suns. In the end are not all limited as beings? Does not every one of them have dimensions, weight, etc? Man can only envision what his present state of intellect will allow him to conceive. He cannot go any farther unless a superior intelligence makes it possible for man to receive of such greater intelligence in addition to his present status.

"Man senses such a higher intelligence. In fact, he is confronted with it throughout his life but he cannot fathom it. It is above, or beyond his present reach.

"Who has not seen drawings or paintings of the little men from Mars or other planets? What do they look like? Some may be small. Some may have a big head, enormous ears or no ears but an antenna-like protrusion on their heads, etc. No matter what, they look like distorted earthlings — like men.

"Those who claim that they had perceived these heavenly messengers — what did they say such looked like. Just as it says in the Holy Bible: 'There appeared unto him one like unto man.'

"No matter where we look or what we are confronted with, the beginning and end of the beings superior to man represent still an embodiment of his own image.

"The origin of the species is one of the greatest controversies you have encountered. The reason is that two distinct approaches are used, clashing with each other and creating a barrier, which neither scientist or religionist seems willing to overcome or remove. Despite all arguments raised, both have something in common.

Science advances a general theory that the first one-cell appearance is the result of an intelligence unknown to man, and that the evolution following is a process of a self-contained, intelligent behavior originating within the first single cell. Scientists admit that they do not know how this came about. This scientific approach is based upon available facts of natural phenomena with emphasis on evolution throughout the various stages of a changing environment for their reproduction and behavior patterns.

Even if a scientific theory can eventually establish the appearance of life from the hydrogen, helium, oxygen and nitrogen gaseous formations into liquid and finally solid manifestation of substance, which cycle is reversible and so continues perpetually, the origin of these named gases is thereby not established, leaving the origin of primal substance unexplained and not proven scientifically.

"Opposing scientific inference and deduction is the religious approach. It advances that all creative efforts come about in a comparatively short time in contrast to the long, drawn-out, evolutionary process advocated by science. While religionists base their claim on a supernatural occurrence for the creation of all species, their contention includes even the universe, or at least our solar system, as well. All such claims lack scientific confirmation. Religious inference is assumed to be the outcome of direct revelations given to men during various intervals in remote times by superior intelligences. Information of this kind is lacking in evidence as to how this creative effort came about or by what means it was established. All our religious informants tell us that such information was revealed to man in the distant past and has since been jealously guarded. No provisions are allowed for another explanation as to how superior intelligences could have manifested their creative efforts. The Bible and other Holy Books, considered the only authentic sources by their supporters making sole references to creation, give the creator's identity by name as God.

"Considering both approaches, scientific and religious, you are confronted with the all important fact that neither one can prove how and why a primal intelligence brought this creation about. Both are in agreement, as neither can substantiate their claims by

confirmative evidence, because both the scientist and the religionist have to substitute a hypothesis or belief for lack of ultimate knowledge.

"This leaves you with the only alternative: Shall I continue to believe only, or shall I base my belief upon evidence at hand that is found in biological, geological, paleontological, anthropological and archaeological confirmations?

"A rift, artificially created by man himself, separates opinions which facts that are already established as knowledge are trying to bridge. This is rejected by those who insist that revelations have been given to man never to be changed. Anything contrary is not acceptable to them, making an ever-widening chasm appear as an insurmountable obstacle, a fallacy that can be proven. To all willing to face it, a confrontation with accurate evidence provides the best remedy available.

"Great caution is necessary to discern what may appear as irrefutable evidence but does not necessarily prove itself as such. A fact overlooked in many instances because of hasty decisions based on insufficient knowledge causes even greater disbelief among uninformed but otherwise sincere investigators of such phenomena. Instances abound to confirm this. An example shall be given.

"Among scientists and religionists alike, a discovery, say of a clay tablet, papyrus, parchment or other writing, is an important occasion. This can be attributed to the fact that two things happen at the same time. First, any unearthed evidence gives an indication of its approximate age. Second, an inscription reveals some aspect of the mentality existing at the time of inscription. Both are acceptable as facts. But no guarantee is available that such writing is factual. Notwithstanding the indisputable fact of an ancient origin established by its antiquity, there is no guarantee that what it says is factual. Let us say that a new building project undergoes the ceremony of laying a cornerstone. A box is inserted with mementos of the prevailing time. Within the box are placed newspaper clippings, photos of the environment and recent events, scientific achievements and other items. It so happened that the last daily newspaper had its front page removed, and inserted in the box. Included

on the page was a comment by Art Buchwald, a columnist who satirizes persons and events of his day. When reread a thousand years thereafter, when the box is found and opened, would this prove precisely the then existing mentality of all newspaper reporters? Suppose the front page would feature an illustrated report of the last moon landing and its return trip to earth. It may even be given as the sixteenth such occurrence, including brief mention that earth-originated satellites are on the way to Venus and Mars with their time schedules given. Is it not logical to assume that when the report is read in the future, it can be misinterpreted?

"For instance, those reading the report in the future might conclude that we were visiting other planets because we had completed our sixteenth moon trip. Is there any way for them to determine from the report whether this was the sixteenth return trip during the same day, week, month or year? In fact, the very day that the box was placed in the cornerstone might be considered to be a special holiday, because it was the day chosen to commemorate.

"Evidence on hand records that such finding is indisputable. Its age and origin turn out to be established facts. What about inscriptions? These are disputable. It is so with findings in our own times. We have no guarantee that texts are factual in what they tell us. Recorded evidence proves to be of value only in establishing the time of its origin. It must be repeated: No guarantee is attached to the veracity of its contents.

"Messages may even be fraudulent, wilfully deceptive, humorous, or satirical. But also, they could be accurate. No wonder scientists and religionists are eager to find ancient records of whatever nature. It is hoped that these will further substantiate what is known to them, and, as missing links presently not available, complete their picture puzzle. What suits the religionist will strengthen his belief into a firm faith that needs only knowledge to substantiate it. Unfortunately, only empirical knowledge may be had in such a case as outcome of a conviction upon which further belief rests. Confirmation is always available but not all confirmation will prove accurate in the end. It becomes a pitfall for those who expound religious concepts into man-made creeds and dogmas that may even oppose

each other from time to time; it provides nothing but verbal weapons to attack those who refuse to agree with established precepts having no other basis for their existence than insecure foundations resting on ever-changing beliefs. As soon as a religious creed has been added upon or changed because of former lack of knowledge, believers of other creeds or dogmas cite these incidents as proof of their own infallability. While their inferences are but tentative props, they are announced as irrefutable evidence. Fraternal, mystical and metaphysical organizations fare not much better. Granted, some are basing their tenets upon the experiences of their preceptors. They, themselves being inexperienced, adhere to strict rituals and ceremonies as an outer, visible, symbolic manifestation, indicating a search for the noumena of some available phenomena by word of mouth or ritualistic inheritance.

"None of them alone, either by scientific postulation or religious fervor, can produce any evidence or a satisfactory answer to the question of how all species originated here on earth, let alone what goes on in outer space composed of the intricate substance filling the universe. Neither science alone nor religion by itself can answer this question. Providing that the three essentials are all-prevailing in man's consciousness, a synthesis of science and religion may provide us with a partial answer, explaining sufficiently what we do not know; and we become fully aware at the same time that its ultimate source, being timeless or eternal, will not be fathomed by mortal man because of his limitation and association with everything as a segment of an unknown All. We realize that an ever-widening mental horizon will reveal more, helping man's consciousness to expand. But to assume that man, earth-bound by his limitations as a segment of unlimited substance, can ever comprehend the whole of which he is but an atom is inconceivable at present. However, a possibility exists — but only after man has transcended his existence as a limited earthling. Until such a time, science and religion have no answer.

"Various other examples or analogies can be cited to illustrate further what has been attempted here. In essence, they could add perhaps very little. You might just as well console yourself with

the fact that your body alone cannot reveal to you its origin.

"Your own thoughts about what you think you have heard or read and what you believe you have understood are not always what was meant when it was said, indicating that your primary interest concerns your attitude about what others have to say and your willingness to have it integrated into your mind or to refuse acceptance.

"As long as you insist on finding out first if what is said agrees with you, you are biased. However, your willingness to ask first if you can agree with what is being said reveals you as broadminded and considerate. Not all men seem to notice the big difference when you say, 'I will see you between Christmas and New Year' or 'I will see you between New Year and Christmas.' The first is only one week apart while the latter has an additional fifty-one weeks in between.

"Casual remarks are lacking demonstrative emphasis which may appear deceptive and devoid of any previous contemplation. Fortunately, this is not always the case when compared with boisterous utterances which indicate the prevailing state of mind as an inferior degree of intelligence."

Everyone sat motionless — spellbound. It had dawned on all four that this vital question had found an answer. It was the answer which all had been seeking. Until now, no one had been capable of explaining it to them. Truly, this was a revelation similar to those given by the prophets and seers of old. This had been no creation of man's mentality. Rather, it came by direct revelation.

"Now I understand why you came to us at the time of the Wesak Moon," said Elizabeth Gunderson.

"Yes," added Dr. Farnsworth. 'The nature and purpose of the Hierarchy's existence was revealed to me. The conscious light of the Hierarchy has descended upon me."

"Would it not be better to say that we were lifted up to the higher realm through the intercession of our elder brother here? It was through our ascent to greater heights that we were able to see and experience that which for us was formerly not possible," remarked Dr. Syndergaard.

A hush fell over the garden. The gentle breeze had vanished. As

of one accord, everyone raised his head and paused, listening intently and expectantly. Then each became aware of the beautiful scent of roses filling the air. It was as though unseen hands waved garlands of roses through the air . . . although hardly a rose was blooming in the garden. One after another, they began inhaling deeply.

"I must have a marvelous imagination," said Godfrey Gunderson. "The air smells as though it were filled with roses." Before he could continue, the others each in turn said, "I smell them, too."

Perhaps no one will ever know why but not one of those present questioned the phenomenon.

"It is late and you must all be very tired. We had better leave," said Godfrey Gunderson. "By the way, what time is it anyway?" he asked.

"Way past two o'clock," said Dr. Syndergaard, but all remained seated silently, looking at the splendid Wesak Moon.

Mystics, Teachers and Societies

A wild dove was cooing in a nearby tree. It was an unusual sound, not heard very often in Dr. Syndergaard's garden. In fact, he could not recall having heard this sound before in his surroundings. The sun was sparkling brightly in a cloudless sky. The vapour trail of a highflying jet left its straight tell-tale mark in the clear azure sky and began to dissolve gradually into the upper air currents, losing its former beginning. Just then, voices could be heard in the garden. Some early birds, Dr. Syndergaard mused. They must have had only a few hours sleep — if they slept at all, he thought. Then he opened the patio door and stepped out on the terrace. At that moment Dr. Farnsworth and the alchemist appeared.

"Good morning," said Dr. Farnsworth.

The alchemist extended his hand to Dr. Syndergaard. "Did you sleep well?" he inquired, adding "A beautiful morning, is it not?"

Dr. Syndergaard smiled. "Your first question gets a negative answer. In fact, I don't think I slept a wink. My mind was so occupied with all kinds of thoughts and problems, all kinds of questions that actually had been answered by you last night. It was rather a revamping of former concepts. The most important and the one that gave me so much to think about was how I could ever have misunderstood the meaning of spirit."

"You did not misunderstand what spirit meant. It seems to me it was never clear to you from the very beginning. Like so many, you did not draw a line of distinction between spirit and soul. To you there was hardly any difference."

Dr. Farnsworth smiled. "This goes for me, too. It really never occurred to me before that there was such a vast difference between spirit and soul." He turned to the alchemist. "Thanks to you, for once I have a clear definition."

All three walked slowly over the lawn towards the garage. From the garage itself not much could be seen, even the roof was covered with the glorious deep purplish red of the bougainvilleas. They had

just about reached the building when a car drove up. It was Godfrey and Elizabeth Gunderson. The three men waited until the car came to a stop.

Elizabeth Gunderson got out and her first words were, "Well, I see you are up and about. We thought we would be the first ones to get you out of bed." She laughed heartily. "You know what?" Before she had a chance to say any more, Godfrey Gunderson, who still sat in the car with the front door open, leaned his head out and interrupted, "Yes, you know what? We went to bed all right but kept right on talking and didn't sleep a wink." He got out and approached the three.

A hearty laughter greeted the newcomers and before long all were sitting on the terrace, enjoying a delicious breakfast. Service seemed to come from unseen hands. As yet, no one had seen the housekeeper.

The amber-colored tea sent steamy aromatic wafts rising from every crystal-blue cup. The unmistakeable aroma of a choice herbal blend was as pleasing to the nostrils as the delicately balanced flavor was to the lips. The alchemist said, "It is my personal mixture. I hope you like it."

"Exquisite," exclaimed Elizabeth Gunderson. "Never tasted anything like it before. What is it?"

"Just some plain herbs others call weeds," he answered. "Look," he said, "there, can you see this little plant?" He got up and stepped down from the patio. Stooping down, he picked up a leaf from a dandelion and next to it, close to the steps, a plantain leaf. Coming back to the table, he said, "Some call these weeds. I call them angels of the garden."

"That is not what our gardener calls them," Elizabeth Gunderson laughed.

"Yes," he sighed, "not everyone knows what is hidden in these leaves."

Dr. Farnsworth listened amusingly. Turning to the alchemist, he said, "You know, everyone of us here is just about dying to know something about you, something about your life. How all this began to happen to you. You know what I mean, how you got to know all

these things. You must have had a very early start in life. Take myself, if I were to start now, it is only too evident that I am too old."

The alchemist shook his head. "How old is old? 'I am too old to start anything like that,' said one man to another when he heard that he'd embarked on a mental journey that was to take him to unknown lands. He felt that mental pursuits should be taken care of while one is young. At the same time he was one of those — while younger in years — who always had said, 'as soon as I have more time, when I am older and settled down, then I will study all that which has to wait now for lack of time.'

"In a letter I once received, a man stated that he was too old to continue with esoteric studies because he was already sixty-six years old. At the same time, in a recent study group, we had a frater who was seventy-eight years young. His mental alertness and the zest and vigor that he showed during the arduous study periods would have put to shame a younger man. His keen insight and the experiences he had collected during his sojourn upon this planet brought to a climax what he had accomplished during the interval. And not only that — although he had enough to digest and to work with to last him at least a year in his own words, he was hoping that he would be called upon to come back the following year.

"Now, let us face it: when do we ever have enough time and money so that we can do what we please? Sometimes, we have a little money and very little time. Then again, we may have some time on our hands and no means to put it to work with the essential material things that we may need. Most of the time, we just get to hear that there was not enough of either — not enough money to go around and not enough time to do all that should be done.

"If we just sit and wait for time and means to come without any extra effort on our part, it is very unlikely that we will be moving at all, not to mention undertaking any journeys either physically or mentally."

"But not everybody has a chance to get started while young. Does it not take someone to point the way or event to help us on the way to such knowledge?" asked Elizabeth Gunderson. "Even

older people would like to have some help."

"Yes, we hear it over and over again in life from all directions and from old and young," said the alchemist. " 'I would like to have . . . ,' or 'I want very badly . . .' and then follows the expression of one's desire completing the sentence. Such and similar phrases we hear only too often. What follows thereafter is usually a negation which confirms what has been expressed in the beginning, namely, a dubious commencement. Something we would like to do or anything we want to do is precluded by some sort of limitation. 'I would like to study but have no time for it at present' or 'I want to read a book so badly but have no money to pay for it — so, it will have to wait just a little while longer until I can afford it.' How different by contrast the change will become when we change all this for just one word which takes the place of all the speculative ones and replace them with *will*. I will — not I want or I would like to — will then make all the difference. Great men and women set out to accomplish what they had the will to accomplish or to do it with. Their minds were made up. They knew what they wanted and they willed it.

"It may seem unimportant at a cursory examination and appear to be only a mincing of words. But there is more behind it than can be seen at a casual glance. When a law or force is set into motion, its causation will have to be followed by a manifestation. It is the will to do, to bring about, to set into motion whatever law may be involved that will bring about the action or visual manifestation on the material plane. Inverted it will produce identical results. The mind likewise will have to be activated. Otherwise, it will remain in its latent state and imperceptibly crawl on its evolutionary process by way of higher forces to which it is subject. When higher forces inaugurated some of these laws known to us, it was because thus they willed, thus it was done."

Dr. Syndergaard cleared his throat. "I don't think it is all quite that easy. If it were, then everyone could grasp these teachings like an ABC. All this seems to me very difficult simply because there are too many doubts man has to overcome in his life." Looking at the alchemist, he said, "Don't you think so?"

"In your way of thinking it appears that way, but to the brave and faithful nothing is difficult. Only the doubting weakling finds things impossible. To accomplish a goal takes determination and a special effort. He who is complacent and will not stir beyond his immediate necessity will not accomplish what he who makes a special effort will attain. It is this extra attempt that lifted man above the lower animal and primitive man, that made a willful advancement possible. It takes foresight and an extra exertion to even infuse new thoughts, to transform them into actualities. The retarding influence of an uncertain outcome is most negative. It strangles the conception before it can even be given. Then it will be a still birth, lifeless and devoid of all activities normally implanted in all species.

"Once we are convinced of a purpose, it becomes an easy matter to have our enthusiasm give birth to an extra or special effort in order to bring about the fruition of that purpose. This elevation of purpose will accelerate the process. More attention will be bestowed on the desired result than when it was considered only in a casual way. The importance and eventual impact upon its fulfillment will become paramount. The results anticipated become of lesser consequence in the excitement of seeing the idea actually taking form and shape. A special effort will make it possible to accomplish in a shorter period that which otherwise would have to take the way of a slow and often delayed result.

"Those who have not become aware of a purpose are not conditioned to arouse enthusiasm. They will see no reason to make a special effort and become grave enough to stand firm in the face of a deterent opposition. They will lack the essential confidence or faith in the laws involved. Where a purpose is established, first enthusiasm must become evident, giving one the courage to overcome adversity more easily so that confidence or faith, according to established laws, will find fulfillment on a higher plane. There we will find the greatest knowledge and the greater light so essential for our progress and evolution.

"To the brave and faithful nothing is difficult."

"Would this not require a considerable faith or trust in some

teachings or in one who gives such teachings?" asked Godfrey Gunderson.

"Faith, not blind belief," answered the alchemist, "is found to some extent in all people. Some have more — a greater faith, or call it confidence or trust, if you will, than others. To be mindful and faithful are wonderful attributes. Minding what has been said or taught requires a careful absorption and acute attention when the subject in question comes up. Scatterbrains, who jump from one thing to another, never — or seldom — pay enough attention to the essential occurrences in their lives and are unreliable. They cannot be trusted. They think nothing of it and always seem to have an excuse for everything. It can be said that the only contribution they make to human society is for the latter not to imitate their behavior patterns.

"A faithful individual does not necessarily have to confine this virtue to religious precepts. Here we speak of trustworthy individals. To be faithful is no compulsory state of mind but a voluntary one. To be faithful means to have trust and confidence. Being taught essential laws requires us to be mindful to the enlightnment expounded and to show our faithfulness, confidence and trust to those teaching us. Applying the teachings that have been given will let us arrive at the crucial point of self-experience. This is the reward for being mindful and faithful in the beginning in order to be entrusted with the success based thereon.

"Students of alchemy will have to be endowed with these essential qualities. One will have to mind very carefully what has been laid down by those who, through personal experience, have obtained what was predicated upon their being faithful. Impatience and doubt are the greatest obstacles to those entering the alchemist's realm. Decrying as non-existing what is invisible or presently not obtainable, because of one's inability to accomplish it, establishes a barrier that can only be overcome by being mindful and faithful to that which has been taught."

Dr. Farnsworth had listened with great interest during these verbal exchanges. He almost interrupted these questions and answers, because Elizabeth Gunderson was just about ready to come up

with something else, as could easily be seen by the deep breath she took, when he said, "It is not only having faith on my part that seems the only essential to receive enlightenment through teachings. Does not a great deal depend also on what is given to the one who shows his faith or trust?"

"Absolutely," said the alchemist, handing his cup to Elizabeth Gunderson who had motioned towards him with the teapot.

" 'I give that you may give,' This phrase can be twisted into many ways and can serve many purposes. However, this was not its original intention. The original meaning of it is the extending of assistance unto others, placing them in a position to help themselves without having to rely upon others. It is a reciprocal gesture.

"When we extend our help, it should not be based on a selfish motive whereby the benefit is retained by the benefactor as well as the beneficiary. Were we to stop here, the benefit would be short-lived and the help of little avail. It will have to become a perpetual motion. Each recipient is under the moral obligation to extend the help received unto others, at least in the same measure. It does not necessarily have to be extended in the same way and manner but in the thought of the giver. An additional gratuity should be attached as compensation. Truly, it is more blessed to give than to receive. This does not abrogate the fact that the recipient is equally blessed with the result of the beneficial act involved.

"Activated good will is a blessing for all who come under its influence. Unfortunately, it seems that there are more willing recipients than activated givers. When you give of your time, efforts, attention or even of your material belongings with the intention to perpetuate a good thought, the law of retribution becomes even more effective. Where there is no need to give, it is better to withhold this gesture until a future time which will allow the seed to fall onto fertile ground where it can bear fruit.

"Much is given in a foolish way when emotions predominate reason. If both go hand in hand, the giver usually makes a wise choice. Compassion will compel us to act in most cases; but it should also be considered when, where and how to give our charitable contributions of either nature. It is considered improper to rely

on the assistance of others if it is within our capicity to accomplish the things we have set out to do without their help. This will free the giver's activity to be channeled where the most good can be perpetuated. Therefore, I give that you may give."

Elizabeth Gunderson kept looking at both, and while still holding the teapot she said, "But how does one know when and how to give? How do we know when giving is really in place and not just a customary gesture which society or conformity requires of us? Could giving with all good intentions not create even bad customs whereby giving is expected as a matter of routine?"

Having finished his cup of tea while he was asked this question, the alchemist replied, "A bad custom should be abolished. A thing bad in one's way of thinking is contrary to established precepts we acknowledge as good. If it has been customary to do good, a noble trait is developed. By doing the contrary, the negative aspect is emphasized. Habits that are of a negative and derogatory nature should be overcome — not suppressed but overcome. Just because a thing is customary in one's environment does not insure it to be of an ennobling or even beneficial nature. We need to discover the uselessness of continuing to hold fast to customs for their own sake.

"We find customs established even before our own arrival on the scene and we become enslaved to their tradition and part of their manifestation. Various such customs are surrounding us. We find them among our eating, sleeping and working habits. Likewise, our ways of learning and the acquisition of new and different knowledge may not fit into the presently attained state of thinking; yet we may tenaciously cling to the traditional customs for sentimental or other reasons. If they prove uplifting and inspiring, by all means they should be perpetuated. By the same token, they should be abolished when they prove opposite to all that we may term ennobling or uplifting.

"At moments of introspection we will be confronted with many such facts that have even been overlooked because they were accepted as customary. To appear different would make one seem odd or out of place but it is far better to seem out of place than to be truly odd by adhering and following customs that are to us wholly

outdated and useless. Outworn and outdated customs are a hinderance to progress except that being of historical value they are for that reason perpetuated."

Dr. Farnsworth had his eyes closed while his head was tilted backward. He was all ears. Suddenly he opened his eyes and leaned forward. Looking at the alchemist he said:

"Are we not getting sidetracked from our original question?" asked Dr. Farnsworth. "Not that what we have just heard is of no importance. On the contrary, it is most enlightening and extremely revealing. To me, it is amazing how nonchalantly you answer these questions of paramount importance to all of us. This makes us wonder even more so how you arrived at all these answers without any hesistation on your part. Please tell us something about yourself. Your childhood, anything about you is of interest to us, even your real name. Just anything."

He took his coat off and placed it neatly folded on an empty chair next to Elizabeth Gunderson and rolled up his shirt sleeves after he had carefully removed his cufflinks and put them in his pant pocket.

"My name is of no importance. It would add little to what has to be said about myself; therefore let what is said suffice for it is to inform those who shall realize that things are not always what they appear to be in our eyes. Strange things, as they are called by us, have happened to many people. We have wondered many times how these things came about. In some instances we have even wondered *why* they have happened as they did. To some, because they lacked an explanation which sounded reasonable, these strange things have appeared as miracles or wonders. There is no need to even make an attempt to explain what is to be said about myself. It would be useless. To be of value to you, it will have to be its own explanation.

"My memories go back to the time when barely the first steps were taken to propel myself by my own efforts. As one of seven sons that grew up in a family that was poor by the common standards in which material wealth is measured, it was my turn to be the fifth to make an appearance; twin brothers followed. My father was

a brick mason by trade. He drank to the detriment of the family who, because of his drinking, had to go without things that others under similar financial circumstances could enjoy.

"As far as the ancestry of my father is concerned, his genealogical tree remains obscure. My grandmother, whose favorite I appeared to be, would not divulge anything about it. The most that could be contrived out of her in a weak moment — for such it must have been — was that my paternal grandfather was an officer in the King's Guard.

"She was not allowed to tell more. For what reason she could not, one would have to draw his own conclusion. My grandmother came from a family who resided close to the Bohemian border, near the Ore Mountains in Germany. Her father was, according to her birth certificate, a Nadlermeister. Since my father was an illegitimate son and no official genealogical record will reveal his ancestry, we shall let the matter rest where it stands.

"On my mother's side the line traces its ancestry also from Germany, very close to the Bohemian border; but this time, in a more easterly direction, close to the Hochwald and Lausche. From father's maternal side my ancestors came from the country known as the Voigtland; on my mother's side they came from what is known as the Lausitz. Grandfather and grandmother on my mother's side were not known to me in person nor were any of the other relatives with the exception of an aunt and my two cousins who I knew during my boyhood.

"The saying goes around in the family circle that my maternal grandfather was known for his knowledge of herbs and plants and the concoctions he derived from them. The salves and ointments and other medications that he prepared were much in demand. Grandfather was born under the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy and raised under the Roman-Catholic faith in Bohemia. His education must have been exceedingly strict; he was supposed to have told his children that for the slightest infraction he incurred he had to sleep on the bare floor, upon which dried whole peas were strewn. Such and similar incidents were related, indicating that he had no easy life in his youth.

"Grandfather later became a weaver of linen and married a Protestant girl who gave him sons and daughters — and one, my mother, seems to have taken somewhat after him. My mother remembered that every morning, no matter under what circumstances, he would greet his children with a joyous 'Good morning, dear children. Arise in the name of the Lord.' My mother was a very industrious woman. She was the one who had to raise her seven sons after father died on the battlefield.

"Some claim that one cannot recall things from very early childhood before the age of five or six. From where this saying has originated and upon what facts — if any — it is based, we are ignorant. I do know from personal recollections, which have been undeniably confirmed by others many years later, that my memory can trace incidents back into the early days of childhood — in this case even to the time when barely one year of age. Several such incidents have been recited and corroborated by others. Only a scanty few shall be indicated to show that the storehouse of memory can be stocked very early in life and the impressions retained and recalled at will.

"On one such occasion (I could then hardly walk) my father took me on a Sunday morning for a walk and for some fresh air, which did not remain fresh very long. As soon as we had turned two corners on the block, we came to a big place — a field at that time. Then, my father walked up a few steps with me and we entered a tavern on the corner of the block. The owner's name was written above the entrance reading: 'Restaurant Simlie.' The scene is still vividly before me — the proprietor came and greeted my father by his first name. We sat down next to the only other guest then present. It was early on a Sunday morning and not many had found their way to the restaurant and the inevitable stein of beer. Shortly afterwards, the tavern closed and another business took its place.

"When this and similar occurrences were described during a family reunion more than forty years after they had happened, and after an absence of nearly thirty years without any personal contact with my relatives, they were substantiated by the elders. Surprise

was very much shown that one could remember so far back when any made-up stories would have been detected on account of the intricate and very personal happenings of the individuals connected with them that no one else could have known. This is mentioned only to indicate that these things can and indeed do happen and that they can be substantiated. It would be carrying things too far to relate further happenings of those first years in this incarnation.

"Even during boyhood other remarkable things occurred which are still strongly imbedded in my mind. In fact, it has continued throughout life. Even now, while concealed inside my alchemistical laboratory in the vastness of the Rocky Mountains, among my retorts and beloved paraphernalia, scenes from the past are vividly recalled. It seems so long ago (and yet, what are years on this mundane plane?) since my feet walked over the cobblestones, through the streets near the castle, where the 'Apotheke zum Storch'* had its sign of the stork with a bundle in its beak hanging over the doorway. As soon as one entered the store, an enchanting smell of the old country pharmacist's herbs and tinctures greeted one's nostrils.

"How well does the scene rise from the depths of the memory — the bespectacled proprietor looked over his glasses, which were resting too low on his arched nose, to the bashful boy awkwardly standing there, his eyebrows lifted in a questioning manner, while neither spoke a word. It must have been evident at this first meeting that it was not just idle curiosity that had brought me there, but rather that it was a strange desire to know something about that which I knew nothing tangible yet sensed its importance strongly. Strange? Yes, indeed! Because it all started while as a boy — lying in bed with the low slanting ceiling of the gabled roof over my head, yet my thoughts roaming the great endless domain of the Universe — when my father, whom I had lost when but three years of age, took me in a vision to a seemingly desolate but beautiful mountainous country on a foreign continent.

"It was late afternoon — or rather early evening — with the sun just setting beyond a great body of water. No human being nor any

* Apothecary to the stork.

signs of habitations were visible. All was utterly serene and majestic in its grandeur, yet desolate.

"This is where you will be most of the time. Here, you will find the answers to many of your questions and problems. Here, you will attain the mastership over what you see before you.

" 'The elements, as in the fire of the sinking sun, the earth under your feet, the water before you and the air you breathe, are yours to work with. The greatest of all secrets shall be revealed unto you and the power to create shall be yours. Oh, my son, how dreadful of God — and yet so full of His Grace — to reveal to mortals such immense power over mind and matter. Guard it well!'

"Although sensing the importance of this strange vision, which left me peaceful and wondering; still, I did not know what was meant in its ultimate sense.

"Little did I realize that someday it would become evident, that a change would take place within me. It would be a transmutation of baser tendencies and habits into more refined ones. A painful process at times, to be sure, but with elating results.

"Again, how remote is the past that lives only in the mind, which this earthly sojourn cannot recall in its fullness. How useless it seems to relate some of the past pictures of former incarnations; such as when standing over an open hearth, I saw myself clothed with a leather apron, working over the fire where the dancing and leaping flames cast weird shadows over my face. It will convey nothing to the one *not* initiated into our 'Great Work.' It only produces those fantastic tales about the fanatics that were looking for the secret of making gold — the mammon that would make them rich beyond their dreams. They do not know about the gold of the philosophers and have never heard of the true gold of the sages. Such pictures are bubbles to their imagination that beget them nothing save fantasies and stagnated minds. They search the worn pages of the works of Theophrastus, Basilius and the signs of other venerated Brethren of the Golden and Rosy Cross in vain. That is human nature. In all its simplicity, where the truth is to be found, they cannot see it because they are blinded by their own desires of selfishness. Then, they condemn alchemy. Knowing noth-

ing about the raising of vibrations, they call it hocus pocus; yet, at one time they, too, believed in alchemy but in the course of time have lost faith.

"I also believed, but did not lose my faith — and after many years was crowned with knowledge — the experience that has helped me to understand and thereby to gain a little in wisdom. For, when we understand what we know and apply it constructively, we have reached wisdom while some do call it all utter nonsense and hocus pocus.

"Hocus pocus? Yes! to the unbeliever.

"Alchemy? Yes! to the one laboring under the Golden and Rosy Cross in the light of divine providence. The two oppose each other only to confirm and to testify to its undeniable existence."

He stopped abruptly and placing the palm of his right hand on his forehead he said, "These are just fragments. They do not make sense to you. All this was just mentioned because these scenes appeared in my mind. It is the work I have to do that is of importance — not what I represent as a being or who I may appear to be in the eyes of an onlooker."

"You know," said Dr. Syndergaard, "it has puzzled me somewhat every time when you refer to the work that needs to be done, which you mention so often. What is this work really?"

The alchemist looked aimlessly into space. For a moment it seemed that he had not paid any attention to what was asked. Yet, he was very well aware of what was said. Still looking absentminded he answered: "Too many are inclined to think that as soon as they start on the esoteric path it takes only a simple formula or magic word to attain all the secrets they have set out to attain. Nothing could be more erroneous. There is no such thing. There never will be one either. All the esoteric knowledge that one can attain will have to be worked for. It must be acquired. Anyone expecting to have it dropped into his lap will be sorely disappointed.

"Since any attainment requires effort on behalf of the one who is setting out towards manifestations, it should again — once and for all — be made very clear and plain that only work and effort will produce results on the esoteric path.

"This became very evident during the study groups when it was observed when individuals really and sincerely attempted to master the teachings presented. True, for many there was much more to comprehend than they had anticipated receiving. Some of it was so entirely new, although it was as old as time itself, because the way it was presented revealed completely new possibilities. Yet, the definite results obtained in that incredibly short time span gave rise to hopes of further and much more profound accomplishments. This is the point to be stressed here. The possibilities that open up for the sincere student are so enormous that one has to become actively engaged in the work in order to come to a realization. Theory alone will not reveal what only can become apparent by active engagement in the work. In many instances, individuals are supplied with books that crowd their shelves. Some of the books contain enough light to blind a person. Yet, and this has been proven, these very same individuals are asking for more light. Ridiculous as it sounds, they hope that one of those works will produce the word or magic formula that will make all this possible to obtain — where others have spent their entire lives to be initiated into those very secrets.

"At times it is almost amusing to observe individuals and hear their expectations when it comes to alchemy. A romantic allure to former testimonies excites and stimulates their expectations. They expect that with a little effort and someone's help all these things can be had. Nothing is further from the truth. Alchemy is a life's work. It is hard work, both mentally and physically. It is time consuming. Before some of the desired results become manifest, even a considerable amount of monies can be, and most likely will be spent. There are also other deterrents. Environment, resentment, religious scruples, and many hidden hindrances will prove to be hard obstacles to overcome. At times, discouragement will set in. When, after some time, nothing reveals itself and results should have shown at least some signs of encouragement, interest begins to lag and many abandon it altogether because they have not penetrated to the core. Attempting the practice before having mastered the theory, they are ill-equipped for such a venture. Then again, personal gain may over-

shadow any accomplishments that will have to be used for the benefit of mankind.

"Individual attempts have proved frustrating without the help of one versed in the subject. Usually those interested enough are previously prepared for this type of work. In due time they will realize that they are becoming integrated as a part of the whole. A pattern will emerge wherein their place is designated. It is then that the underlying truth of alchemy becomes manifest. This has been spoken and written about by those who did know. We do not have to go back into antiquity or to medieval times to substantiate it. In recent times, utterances to this effect have made it clear. Many writers on this subject have given ample evidence. This comes from individuals who have gone through the various experiences that made their testimonies possible. Much has been said and written about so-called occult schools. To some, they represent institutions of learning like colleges and universities. When occult schools are spoken of, they are never to be understood as being an acknowledged, permanently located complex of buildings. Those occult schools referred to here are gatherings of individuals at a given time for a given purpose. When this purpose has been fulfilled, they close. Somewhere else they will reappear under different names and for another work to be accomplished.

"It may be well to bring in here what Alice Bailey had to say while under the instructions of the Higher Ones, namely that certain schools of occultism and of theosophical endeavor have claimed to be the sole repository of Their teaching, and the sole outlet for Their efforts, thereby limiting that which They do, and formulating premises which time and circumstances will fail to substantiate. They work most assuredly through such groups of thinkers and throw much of Their force into the work of such organizations. Yet, nevertheless, They have Their disciples and followers everywhere and work through many bodies and many aspects of teaching. Throughout the world, disciples of these Masters have come into incarnation at this time with the sole intent of participating in the activities and occupations and truth dissemination of the various churches, sciences, and philosophies and thus producing within the organization

itself an expansion, a widening and even a disintegration where necessary, which might otherwise be impossible. It might be wise for occult students everywhere to recognize these facts and to cultivate the ability to recognize the hierarchical vibration as it demonstrates through the medium of disciples in the most unlikely places and groups.

"One point should here be stated in connection with the work of the masters through their disciples and it is this: All the various schools of thought which are fostered by the energy of the White Lodge are, in every case, founded by a disciple or several disciples. Upon these disciples, and not upon the master, lies the responsibility for results and the consequent karma. The method of procedure is somewhat as follows: The master reveals to a disciple the objective in view for an immediate little cycle and suggests to him that such a development would be desirable. It is the work of the disciple to ascertain the best method for bringing about the desired results and to formulate the plans whereby a certain degree of success will be possible. Then he launches his scheme, founds his society or organization, and disseminates the necessary teaching. Upon him rests the responsibility for choosing the right co-workers, for handing on the work to those best fitted, and for clothing the teachings in presentable garb. All that the master does is to look on with interest and sympathy at the endeavor as long as it holds its initial high ideal and proceeds with pure altruism upon its way. The master is not to blame should the disciple show lack of discrimination in the choice of co-workers or evidence an inability to represent the truth. If he does well and the work proceeds as desired, the master will continue to pour His blessings upon the attempt. If he fails or his successors turn from the original impulse, thus disseminating error of any kind, in his love and in his sympathy the master will withdraw that blessing, withhold his energy and thus cease from stimulating that which had better die. Forms may come and go and the interest of the master and his blessing pour through this or that channel; the work may proceed through one medium or another, but always the life force persists, shattering the form where it is inadequate or utilizing it when it suffices for the immediate need.

"As will readily be observed, the responsibility connected with such an undertaking is enormous. No one should ever attempt half-heartedly such an ordeal. Anyone affiliated with occult work shoulders in like manner a responsibility. It is his duty to see that the consummation of the outlined work is accomplished while he is engaged in it. If he fails to do his part, he will be removed and someone else will take his place until the time that warrants his reinstatement. This will entail a great loss of precious time — not so much pertaining to personal progress, which can be made up during the cyclic evolution, but in the help that needs to be extended to those who are in dire need of it. Having realized the importance of the mastery of the laws involved, of which the erstwhile zealot may not have become fully aware, they deserve to be helped. This help can come only from those who are capable of giving it. They are instrumental as world servers under the supervision of the Great Ones, who again are directed by the Higher Forces unknown to mortal man. In the last analysis the All directs and Its subsidiaries perform according to law. Regardless of one's assignment his proper accomplishment is essential. The necessity becomes evident when we see failure of our attempts to comply with the law.

"Are there many occult schools existing? Yes and no. It depends on the inquirer's state of mind. To some, a pseudo occult school will appear to be genuine. The relative difference is the conscious evolvement of the individual who will be able to recognize his present standing in the scheme of things. He who has not mastered the lesser laws will have difficulties even recognizing the higher law.

"In many cases it is far better not to become engaged in the occult work until a sufficient period of preparation in the mystical unfoldment has preceded it. Those engaged in mystical attempts are dealing in the theoretical aspects while occult work means that mystically attained knowledge has to be put to the test and will have its demonstration. When the latter is lacking, it is not occultism. Alchemy, to be considered an occult science, will have to withstand all tests. Advocates of spiritual or mystical concepts solely are mystics and not occultists. This is of importance and should be remem-

bered. An occultist will be a mystic. Only by way of mysticism can he become an occultist. There is much more to all this than appears on the surface. We cannot caution enough those who enter rashly into this field. Once you have entered it, upon your own free will and volition, then you are morally obligated to do what you have assumed as a voluntary obligation. No true initiate will ever force anyone into this work. On the contrary, many questions will have to be raised and much investigation will have to precede the acceptance of a petitioner. Even then, there is no guarantee that the one to be initiated will prove himself capable to see it through. Many can go only so far and no farther. The 'Why' requires a deeper insight into the laws involved. This should be no detriment to make preparations to become accepted in the midst of those who do know and have proven themselves in their respective fields of endeavor. As previously stated, once we have obligated ourselves, then it is our duty to see that this obligation is carried out. Failure to do so will show on our karmic record, which requires a fulfillment of the law. If you can do without help from those above you, all is well. If not, then be prepared to give a just compensation for what you are in need of by living a pure life — because there is work to be done here and now!"

Dr. Syndergaard uncrossed his legs and shifted his weight to the back of his chair. He forced out a deep breath and said, "But before one can commence such a tremendous work that you speak of, does one not have to have some knowledge about one's own capabilities? Should one know at least enough about one's self, know if there is even a remote possibility to comprehend such teachings? You mentioned Alice Bailey. There are many others before her who have given out teachings supposedly received from Higher Sources, whatever that may mean to some. Are there not others like Jacob Boehme, Paracelsus, and the Rosicrucians of former times, just like contemporaries of our time, such as Fulcanelli, about whom so much is written? And what about the various other esoteric orders or societies? Are they valid? Can you shed some light on their teachings?"

The alchemist smiled and nodded his head. "Individuals as well

as groups of enlightened individuals are necessary to spread the light among mankind because mankind taken as a whole is ignorant. It knows very little because it believes more than it knows. Take Jacob Boehme, as you have mentioned. This simple shoemaker of Goerlitz in Germany found the light within. It does not make any difference whether his name was Boehme, or Paracelsus, or whatever name we give to an individual. It is the light of truth that shines forth from these individuals that makes a difference.

"Jacob Boehme, a simple cobbler in a little town in Germany, became the envy of the learned ones. The Teutonic Illuminate they called him because he could converse on the most profound subjects the human mind can aspire to.

"He was not a learned man in the sense that we look upon educated people, who have titles and degrees from universities and other institutions of learning. His knowledge and learning came from a higher source that transcends the learning of man.

"Jacob Boehme showed the way to inner unfoldment and the possibilities for the so-called uneducated individual to receive the higher teachings that presently no institute of learning teaches in its curriculum because it lacks the initiates to teach them.

"He was a simple man yet a highly evolved soul-personality, who left his heritage for all who want to walk the path. The works that he left to posterity are the ever-living proof.

"Light and truth are eternal. Neither can be extinguished. Both will always prevail. Everything depends on them and man could not exist without them. They are essential. Yet man, in his ignorance, fails to recognize their tremendous impact on his own life. Due to the precarious position he is holding in the animal world, he shuns the light at times when he needs it most. Truth does not fare any better in his daily life. Man tries to evade the inevitable. He wants to postpone that which he knows is impossible to prolong forever.

"Some actually fear the light. It will reveal too much about them that they would prefer to remain hidden from the light. Lurking behind it is the fear of truth. The failure to live up to what the light has revealed and still reveals causes man to hide behind falsehood. He misrepresents that which he knows is different. He fears

his own ignorance more than the light. Not recognizing that the light will dispel his insufficient knowledge, he, nevertheless, refuses to bask in its warmth. When the chill of evasion hurts his ego and body, he crawls like a hurt animal from his hiding place to soak up the healing rays of light, only to hide from it again as soon as someone approaches who might see his plight. He cannot stand the truth. He is ashamed of himself, being helpless. He has to acknowledge that there is more to life than he knows; that there are forces greater than he can command. He knows it by experience but he is reluctant to admit it. Only by painful experience will he learn, and then only slowly.

"Therefore, man will never accomplish all that to which he may aspire until he sheds his fear of light and truth. When he will have realized his need for the greater light and the necessity for living a life according to the highest truth to which he may attain, only then will he become aware of his true dignity as a child of God. He is then ready for the rebirth in the spirit.

"Nowhere in the pages of modern history has an individual caused as much controversy concerning his personality and teachings as has Paracelsus. The pros and cons of this man's approach to modern medicine and biochemistry have bestowed upon him the name 'The Luther of Medicine.'

"Revolutionary, indeed, were his concepts and, even more so, his approach to the causes of ailments as he postulated them and proved them by results through his sometimes miraculous cures.

"The potencies he ascribes to minerals and metals are only gradually being rediscovered by science. Most important of all is the rediscovery that awaits to unlock the seemingly strange and contradictory terminology of this sage.

"It will be many, many more years before the true value of his teachings will be recognized. In the meantime, those who are privileged to become initiated into the wisdom that he has left posterity are the living proof of this great man's heritage. He was, and still is, centuries ahead of his own time as the past and present have proven and the future will continue to prove."

"You mention Paracelsus," said Dr. Farnsworth. "Granted that

he towers over other alchemists as an individual. But what about groups of individuals that have tried collectively to achieve on a larger scale what individuals did not achieve?"

The alchemist moved his head slowly from side to side. "Yes, such attempts have been made," he said. "However, no group of people can accomplish more than the most evolved among them makes possible for others to support. There have been and perhaps there are still existing some such alchemistical groups.

"What about the Golden Dawn that appeared in England before the turn of the century?" asked Elizabeth Gunderson.

"Or the Rosicrucians of Europe that existed centuries ago?" Godfrey Gunderson added.

"At times it is difficult to distinguish between individuals who founded such orders and those who are trying to perpetuate them. The latter do not always continue along the same thoughts that had originally motivated the formation of such groups," replied the alchemist. After a pause he continued:

"Since the turn of the century many lights have appeared on the esoteric horizon claiming mystic and occult knowledge. As spectacular as some of them appeared, so likewise, many faded from their field of labor in a rather unnoticed way. Among the few was H. Spencer Lewis.

"The work he helped to establish has enabled thousands upon thousands to enter the outer court of the temple of esoteric wisdom. From it many have advanced to further accomplishments in their respective fields of endeavor. No matter how one may discern the pro and con of his activities, the results speak for themselves. If one disagrees with the mode of his and his followers' presentation of the teachings, it should be remembered that the times have changed, and with it the customs of the Middle Ages and even fifty years ago, but the teachings as H. Spencer Lewis has consolidated them, in his ancient and mystical order, Rosae Crucis, or AMORC, remained basically the same. He has made a great contribution towards the enlightenment of those who have searched for more light through his published works and other media. The results are evident to this very day and will be most likely for a long time to come.

"From atheist to theosophist is about the biggest gap that anyone could ever hope to fill. How this was possible is best explained by saying that without the help, coming from some source, even if not discernible in the beginning, it would represent almost, if not in its entirety, an impossibility. Annie Besant, as head of the Theosophical Society, in her many and varied ways helped to establish firmly the teachings of her forerunner, Madame Blavatsky.

"Theosophy, as promulgated by Annie Besant and her associates, has helped to establish roots in the Occident from which many of the esoteric teachings have taken a great deal. It was not until they had been established in the form of published lectures and books that the various offsprings started to appear, both here in the United States and Europe.

"Among the myriad of teachers from the Far East that resided for a greater length of time in the Western World, there is another outstanding personality: Paramahansa Yogananda.

"Stripped of the extraneous trimmings that over-zealous followers adorned him with in his surroundings, he nevertheless emerges as a gifted teacher of the Oriental school that was to take such a foothold in the Western World. His merit is mainly to be found in his ability to transmit Eastern thought and teachings of Yoga to Western minds in a comprehensible way.

"He wanted to be known only as a mortal among mortals, and this he made very clear in his autobiography.

"Those advanced enough to study and practice true Yoga will find great help in his teachings. Paramahansa Yogananda lived up to what he taught. His mortal remains testified to this, after his transition from this plane, by refusing to decompose long after the last breath left his body.

"Yogananda is one of the links that brought about a closer connection between oriental and occidental interpretation of the higher teachings.

"We are not talking here about individuals who may have belonged to this or that order and gave it a certain reputation. We are talking about what an order or society has to offer its members; what good it does to them as found in its teachings.

"During the last quarter of the 19th Century, the organization known as The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn was formulated in England under the authority of German Rosicrucian adepts. This Order is, or rather was until recently, the sole depository of certain special occult knowledge. A great many secret societies owe what little magical knowledge they have to leakages from members of this order.

"All walks of life and all professions, arts, sciences, trades and business occupations were reflected in its membership as well as ordinary men and women, humble and unknown, who yearned and aspired to the Light. In various ways, directly and indirectly, its teachings have influenced all levels of life and society through the activities of its members.

"Qabalah, alchemy, magic, astrology and divinatory processes were included within the scope of its mystical curricula toward the end that the Light might shine in the Darkness. Each member was obligated solemnly to apply himself to the Great Work 'so that . . . I may at length attain to be more than human and thus gradually raise and unite myself to my higher and Divine Genius.'

"Similar attempts we find also in Freemasonry as a craft and fraternal organization and a sociable club-like get-together for the advancement of personal interests in communal, state or even national circles.

"The true spirit of the Freemason is worldwide and concerns all of God's creation. The brotherhood of man is real and not a Utopia as some want us to believe. Therefore, the spirit of Freemasonry is one of building, not only in the material sense by building edifices that bespeak the builder's craft but likewise by building the moral and spiritual foundations of men everywhere, to reach greater heights of cultural, social, economic and scientific unification throughout the world. In this sense, each race, nation or group of peoples can retain their individuality and characteristics and still respect their fellowmen's right to equally enjoy them under this tolerance.

"A Freemason, in the truest sense of the word, is an individual highly respected not only for what he stands for but for what he

represents and exemplifies in his daily life.

"Regardless, if he belongs to the 'Blue Lodge' or to one of the higher honorary degrees, he stands for freedom in thought and action throughout the world. He is very much in demand as helper for the future progress of mankind.

"At times, individuals make an even greater contribution to mankind than entire organizations. Just think what a single mind like Albert Schweitzer has set into motion through his accomplishments.

"When man reaches the zenith of life and counts the remaining years on this earth until he sees his sojourn drawing to a close, he will have to give to himself an account of his existence during the interim. Few people can look back upon a past that is as rich and as varied in all the good aspects of humanity as that of Albert Schweitzer. Not only will he be remembered as a great artist, theologian, physician and surgeon but also as a humanitarian of the first order. The heritage which Albert Schweitzer leaves will have to be acknowledged as an all-embracing love for all living beings. This is more than can be said of the average man or for many who claim to have ascended to higher levels of being. The energy expended in the activity of both body and mind of Albert Schweitzer toward alleviating the physical pain and mental anguish of all living creatures is truly a phenomenon in itself. Not only the scene of his activity but the man Albert Schweitzer himself is a monument to the God-given strength that is to be found in man.

"Another individual who started men thinking in more constructive ways was Gurdjieff. His pupil, Ouspenski, did much to introduce Gurdjieff's teachings to a wider circle.

"This is what enlightened individuals or groups of like mind proclaim. But we should not confuse those who are delegated to help bring enlightenment among the masses with those who have the authority or power vested in them by right of their knowledge, understanding and wisdom, exceeding those to whom they delegate.

"Why? Because a delegate cannot delegate his powers; they are limited to him only. Those who assume the right that they can delegate an office or authority to others must be in possession thereof. Anyone authorized to perform a certain work should be

able to cite proof to the extent that he is capable to execute his assigned task within his sphere of activity — and there it ends. It does not carry with it the right of further extension. A delegate's authority is limited. On the other hand, he who delegates may do so by the right of his authority. This implies full knowledge, understanding and the means for the plan or work to be consummated. A delegate may not have possession of that fullness. His may be only a partial knowledge, understanding and means of the entire scope. While in the capacity of his specific assignment, he may be fully capable to perform the task to which he has been delegated.

"As above so below. It is man's prerogative to aspire to greater things in life. Comparisons should be based upon the qualifications inherent in the persons and their acts that are to be emulated. Those who will look always below their present standing will find those who are not as far developed. Comparisons made with such individuals do not help much in the furtherance of one's development. Comparisons may develop into a smug feeling of superiority. He who is not more developed than you can be of little assistance in the furtherance of acquiring greater knowledge. If the latter is our aim, we must look above. We must find those who do know more than we do. There is the storehouse from which we may draw. There will be found the ways and means for greater knowledge, but at this point we feel insignificant. Our former standing of self-imposed aggrandizement becomes nil. Instead of looking down, we will have to look up.

"We will find ourselves in the center of things. There will be those below us and those above us. As soon as we have realized that there is always one below us who is not as capable of performing a task as well as we can, then by the same token do we acknowledge that there is one who can do it better. This should help us in establishing an equilibrium within ourselves. It will help to forestall a feeling of continuous superiority. Too many feel excessive pride by constantly making comparisons with those below their present level of knowledge and understanding. This is self-delusion. Remember: There is always one who can do things better than you and who has greater knowledge and understanding than you possess. From there

we can expect help which will enable us to do the same unto others who look to us for help — but then, we will render it in a spirit of meekness and thanksgiving and not in arrogance and self-aggrandizement."

"Are there any alchemists alive who practice laboratory alchemy and make their results available to those who ask for them?" asked Dr. Farnsworth.

"I can think of two right now," said the alchemist, "with whom I am personally acquainted. One is living in the Black Forest in Germany and produces for the medical profession his spagyric medications that are available only by prescriptions from pharmacists. Another one, Baron Alexander von Bernus, who passed on a few years ago, still has his spagyric medications produced at his castle in Donaumuenster, a few miles from Donauwoerth where Franz Hartman was born."

"What about von Bernus and Dr. Hartman?" asked Dr. Farnsworth excitedly.

"The alchemical writings of this Twentieth Century sage, which were published in German and translated into French, give concrete evidence that we are dealing with a laboratory alchemist and not just a theoretical exponent of the writings of ancient or medieval hermeticists. His statements leave little doubt of a broad understanding. Let me quote the following from memory:

> The method of liquification and distillation of the salts the masters kept strictly hidden. Not because of an idle desire for secrecy, but because the key to making the Philosopher's Stone lies hidden within the salts . . . but whosoever believes to find anything in the metallic salts of our chemistry will fail miserably. The matter is far from simple.

"He, whom the Baron entrusted to handle the valuable pigskin volumes, knows what it means to turn the old pages of handwritten works of Albertus Magnus, in the old Latin, or the first published works of Paracelsus or Valentinus.

"At a medical congress, convened at Utrecht, Holland, in 1942,

Dr. med R.A.B. Oosterhuis of The Hague, Holland, had this to say about the works of von Bernus: 'One of the alchemical methods unknown to present day chemistry consists, in von Bernus's opinion, in the sublimation of various potassium salts.' The Professor of Leyden has reported that the solid Sal Tartari (K_2CO_3) can be liquified through the cohobation with an etherial spiritus. Such a liquid alkali is of great medicinal value. Liquification and distillation of the potassium and natrium salts are according to von Bernus, secrets which our chemistry has not yet resolved. Contrary to present day pharmaceutical techniques, such spagyric preparations, and the preceding cohobation require months to bring to fruition. Then Dr. Oosterhuis said: 'von Bernus implies that metals reach a state in the physical chemical condition that cannot be further reduced.' Laboratory alchemists know from personal experience that this is so as they know how to extract their essence or essential oil (alchemical sulphur). This is what von Bernus told me when I visited with him at his castle in Donaumuenster. There, he had his laboratory which one could term a contemporary alchemistical place where he does not disregard modern chemical discoveries. From this, one may gather that the Baron was no diletante attempting to convey a personal opinion concerning profound manifestations, but one versed in ancient as well as modern sciences.

"To call him the Prince of the German Alchemists is appropriate because the Baron had no peers in his time. This statement is based on personal acquaintance with those actively engaged in the hermetic work in Europe and in the U.S.A. The exchange of laboratory results, arrived at independently, based on the strict formulas of alchemical laws, leaves little question of results that meet the facts. For this we can vouch personally; it was a mutual and reciprocal occurrence.

"Examination of the Baron's 'Azinat' (an antimonial preparation) in his laboratory indicates that there is no need to defend or vindicate this Twentieth-Century alchemist as his works speak for themselves. Their acceptance by the European medical profession gives it the seal of merit. Advanced scientific thinkers of the medical and pharmacological world have rallied around von Bernus and

tested the products of his laboratories. His were not only speculative but actual laboratory results and these have withstood the empirical tests of science.

"It may seem strange that, in this age of scientific marvels and accomplishments, there should still be need for the art and science of the alchemist. In modern texts on the subject, it is ridiculed and considered old fashioned and outmoded. Substantial evidence points to the fact that the true value and essence of alchemy is to be understood in our times. A similar awakening transpired, during the early 1920's, when Sir Ernest Rutherford shook the scientific world to its foundations by announcing the transmutation of the elements. Today, the latest atomic charts show, after uranium, that man-made elements now are as securely established as those which nature produces. Now it is to be found in scientific textbooks as if there were never a question about it. Yet, the discredited medieval scientists, known as alchemists, proclaimed and demonstrated transmutation centuries earlier.

"Jatrochemistry, as understood among the medical profession, had its origin in the 'virtures' of the substances found in the genus jatropha. It is not a synthesized chemical component but the inherent quality naturally and spatially derived that is essential. These inherent properties have lost to a great extent their former significance among the medical profession. Baron von Bernus showed the inconsistency of chemically derived substances that are devoid of the essential qualities necessary to bring about healing. Not just relief from symptoms, but to cure the radix of the ailment necessitated the alchemical preparation. The Baron and those versed in the subject, in their laboratories, produced the medicaments. Clinical evaluation, by the practicing medical profession, had to bring the proof. Only by trial, the downfall or substantiation of alchemy was assured. Alchemy has been and will be an important factor in medicine.

"The fact that alchemical preparations are difficult to obtain is due to the meticulous requirements of preparation and the very few alchemists of genuine stature. This makes these products extremely scarce within the medical profession. They cannot be produced in

pharmacies for the knowledge required is not found in pharmacoppoeias, so it remains for the alchemists to supply them. Alchemy is in itself not a branch or part of the healing arts such as allopathy, homeopathy or biochemistry. It is a way and means to procure pure strains of medications applicable in any of the other systems. These medications possess the inherent essential virtues spatially derived in a scientific way. Those patients of the medical profession who are fortunate enough to obtain the preparations of the von Bernus Solunar Laboratories are living testimony of their effectiveness.

"It is fortunate that von Bernus transmitted the alchemical knowledge to others in whom he confided. Thus, his work can be perpetuated for the benefit of mankind through the properly appointed medical channels.

"In the same city where von Bernus labored, another individual was born who was to leave an imprint on the pages of occult and hermetic teachings. Dr. Franz Hartman was born the son of a medical doctor in Donauwoerth, Bavaria, on November 22, 1838 and died August 7, 1912 at Kempten in Germany. During his seventy-four years of life, he saw many changes take place, not only in the world around him but within himself. At 24 years of age he finished his studies as a pharmacist. Not finding what he was looking for, namely a study that would help him to further his alchemical longings, he decided to study medicine. There followed years of frustration that carried him all over the world. This frustration was due to the fact that he could not find what he searched for, the knowledge that men like Paracelsus and others before him possessed. He came to the United States of America and established an eye clinic. Then he went to Mexico. Thereafter, for some time, he lived in Colorado only to end up as a ship's doctor on the way to the Orient. Via Japan he came to India. There he became connected with the theosophical movement. It was Madame Blavatsky who influenced his way of thinking into more positive channels. After two years in India, he returned in 1885 to Europe and lived in Salzburg and Berchtesgaden. In Munich he founded in 1897 the International Theosophical Society and became known all over the world as the champion of its cause.

"In the U.S.A. he published the first English language version of the *Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians*. Unfortunately, his lengthy introduction is missing in an edition that was published many years later. The influence Franz Hartman exerted upon his contemporaries has even increased after his death.

"Then there are others in our own times. Some are known only by their names and nothing is known of their whereabouts. There is Fulcanelli.

"It was autumn of 1937 at the Castle de Lere, near Bourges, when its owner Pierre de Lesseps in the presence of a chemist, geologist and two physicist friends watched intensely as a man by the name of Fulcanelli took half a pound of common lead in a molten state and put into it an unknown substance. Shortly, it was transmuted into gold. When asked what this substance was or what it contained to bring about this change in the metal, he would only mention offhandedly that it was derived from ferrous pyrite (fool's gold), a ferrous sulphide, $Fe\ S_2$.

"He also transmuted 100 grams of silver into uranium. The astonished witnesses, who had watched very carefully and had previously thoroughly examined the ingredients used by the alchemist, for such he was, re-examined, as well, his end products. They all had to concede to this phenomenon of transmutation of one metal into another.

"Shortly thereafter, Fulcanelli disappeared. One of the very few in whom he confided is presently still living in Savignies, in the vicinity of Beauvais in France. He evades all questioners about Fulcanelli, by saying he does not know the alchemist's present whereabouts or whether Fulcanelli was a real or an assumed name. He steadfastly refuses to give out any information about this, by now, mysterious individual. The name of Fulcanelli's amanuensis is Eugene Canseliet.

"Much wild speculation is going on concerning the whereabouts of Fulcanelli. Many weird stories about him are in circulation. It is claimed that the Federal Bureau of Investigation was and still is after him, as he supposedly is in possession of a document from the Thirteenth Century alchemist, Roger Bacon, who had the formula

for atomic fission and fusion. Reference is made to the statement wherein Roger Bacon says that from a certain material an explosive can be made that can destroy an entire army or a city with a blinding flash. Some claim that this has reference to his invention of gun powder. This claim is refuted by the argument that the flash of gun powder and the explosion thereof does not coincide with the destructive force that can destroy an entire army or city mentiond by Monk Roger Bacon. This the unleashing of atomic power does produce. It is also said that Fulcanelli tried to discourage Professor Rene Hellbronner, a French scientist, from continuing his atomic research.

"Whatever fact or fancy may be attached to the name or to the man Fulcanelli, it will not disprove that an individual under this name appeared in France and thirty years ago conducted an alchemical experiment in the laboratory of the Chateau de Lere, near Bourges, France, as testified to by its owner, Pierre de Lesseps, and other reliable witnesses.

"The question still remains: Who was or is this modern alchemist Fulcanelli, and where is he now? Eugene Canseliet adamantly refuses to tell and thus the mystery deepens as time goes on.

"Will his identity become known in the near future? Who knows!!"

"It may be of interest for you to know that I have just now returned from Europe where Fulcanelli's only pupil, Eugene Canseliet and I have met at his home to clarify some topics that have caused misunderstandings among those who have read his books and explanations he previously gave about some of his personal alchemistical concepts.

It was just a few months ago Signore Augusto Pancaldi of Ascona and I took the Orient Express from Domodossola, Italy, for Paris. It had been arranged by Sign. Villa-Santa of Lugano that I should meet Fulcanelli's only student Eugene Canseliet in his home near Beauvais, an hour's train ride from the Gare du Nord in Paris. Since Canseliet spoke no English, Sign. Pancaldi who speaks four languages fluently and himself is active in laboratory alchemy, was to act as interpreter and to help with the difficult alchemistical language barrier.

"When we arrived at the previously arranged time, Madame Canseliet informed us that she knew nothing of our coming and we were told Monsieur Canseliet was not at home. This appeared to be a ruse to prevent him from being disturbed. However, she agreed that we could return later, since she did know how to reach him. We returned later and were received by him as he unlocked the chain from the gate and ushered us into his house and the not-too-large living room. Canseliet is small of stature, bald in front with the sparse hair left on the sides and back of his head hanging down in long strands to his neck.

"The three of us were sitting at the round table, and after the formalities were concluded and the conversation became animated, Canseliet consented to answer the questions I had prepared on the train from Paris to Beauvais. Sign. Pancaldi began to read the questions and wrote down precisely the answers Canseliet gave to avoid any misunderstandings later. When some of the original French words of Canseliet's are placed in my notes in parentheses it is only to compare meanings and show that the translation from the French has the same meaning.

"I began by asking: Monsieur Canseliet, you have become famous in Europe through your alchemistical literary efforts, especially by publishing Fulcanelli's two books. Since only one has been translated into English, your name is not as well known in the U.S.A. as in your native France. I will give only an authentic version of our personal meeting here in your house. May I ask you for additional information?

A. Yes, because alchemy does not change in itself (immuable). Alchemy is the great harmony. In a sense it is also the art of music as well as the priestly art that requires a constant purification because the alchemist has to be in constant unison (soit au diapason) with his matter and the Cosmic. All this has to be in absolute purity exactly as Rulandus said in his Lexicon: alchemia est impuri separatio . . .

Alchemy consists of three main parts.

1.) To be in harmony with the matter to be worked with.

2.) This harmony has to be also within the alchemist.

3.) To be in harmony with the Cosmic.

All of these three have to be in harmony as one.

This harmony can be considerably intruded upon by waves which disturb the weather (meteora) as can be noticed by the constantly clouded sky and the presently continued drought.

We do the same in the laboratory that the old ones did, except that we have the advantage of better technical equipment but lack what the old ones had, a closer relationship with nature. They also had the advantage of the four seasons that were not so disturbed as we experience now. When the sky is covered the Universal Spirit can't descend.

Q: *Your name, Canseliet, has become almost synonymous with that of Fulcanelli. Is this because you are the only person who can be named as his pupil?*

A: I have been the only (le seul) pupil of Fulcanelli.

Q: *Did you work theoretically with Fulcanelli or were you only his helper in practical alchemistical laboratory work, or both?*

A: We, Fulcanelli and myself, were engaged only in speculative alchemy. I have seen quite a few things while I was with Fulcanelli. I did him many favors that made it possible for me to watch him often while he worked. I did not work with him. I only observed. It was in 1915 when I got to know Fulcanelli. I was 16 years old and it all happened through a servant of his who said to me: "I am going to introduce you to a very interesting person," and that was Fulcanelli.

Q: *When did you see Fulcanelli last?*

A: I was around Fulcanelli for 15 years. Fulcanelli left in 1930, the year when "Demeures Philosophales" (Dwellings of the Philosophers) was published. Do you know "Le Mystere des Cathedrales?" It has been translated into English but I am not convinced that it is a good translation especially since I don't speak English. In 1932 Jules Champagne died, whose portrait you see hanging there on the wall. He was the one who made all the drawings in the book.

Q: *Do you know where Fulcanelli originated? Where he came from?*

A: No. I only know that he had a large circle of friends, among

them Ferdinand Lesseps (builder of the Suez Canal) and Pierre Curie to mention only a few well-known names.

Q: *Do you know where Fulcanelli is now, or do you have any clues?*

A: In 1922 he visited me several times in Sarcelles. When he left in 1930, he was an old man (un vieillard) but when I saw him again in 1952 he looked hardly 50 years old.

Q: *Whom do you consider the best informed alchemist alive in Europe or generally?*

A: I don't know any (Je ne connais pas).

Q: *Are you in contact with other alchemists here on earth? If yes, with whom?*

A: I don't know any. There was Barbault and Savouret, but otherwise I know only students of alchemy, and I am an older student, one of the oldest who works with the younger students because alchemy is above all the art of fire.

Q: *What do you think of Armand Barbault and his spagyric method of production since we both, you and I, knew him personally?*

A: This is spagyric chemistry. I know personally from him that he wanted to work in such a way. His "Turba" is not the prima materia of the philosophers. One cannot take it seriously (ce n'est pas serieux). One cannot make out of plant leftovers (dechets vegetaux) something useful, but there are fields where personal conviction plays a part and everyone works according to his beliefs.

Q: *What do you see in the future concerning the practical laboratory alchemy?*

A: I believe youth (les Jeunes) will enter into it (s'y mettre). For more than 20 years I have observed that the future of alchemy belongs to youth.

The philosopher with his stone is always in the presence and this presence contains both past and future.

Q: *Would you be willing that we, you and I, perform jointly some practical laboratory experiments in your laboratory, or whatever place you would choose?*

A: I can see no difficulty as soon as the laboratory is ready, but not at this time of the year.

Mr. Pancaldi then said to Canseliet: "I can take care of the preliminaries for this joint project. It is up to you to suggest which way you would like to prepare the philosophical mercury either by the dry or wet method, since both can be used. The time is depending on our presence next year from the beginning of June until August.

A: I prefer the dry way. Do you know that the philosophical mercury can only be produced at the proper time? This time is considered within traditional alchemy as spring because only the philosophical mercury that is produced during this time is the philosophical mercury. Therefore, to know the correct time is of importance.

Q: *Are you acquainted with the production of the philosophical mercury in both the wet and dry way and are you prepared to prove it?*

A: No. In my opinion most traditional texts speak of the wet and dry way only to use it as a trick to conceal the dry way from obtaining the philosophical mercury. The philosophical mercury can only be made the dry way.

"Mr. Pancaldi interrupted and pointing to me, said: 'He can use a glass container for either the dry or wet way,' to which Canseliet answered only with, 'No.' "

Q: *What do you understand under philosophical mercury?*

A: The soul (l'ame), this is the minute part (la partie minuscule) that can be obtained from the mass during the sublimation in the dry way. This is also called the little fish (le petit poisson = la remore) that becomes a stone.

Q: *Did Fulcanelli prove in the laboratory how to produce the philosophical mercury, and did you personally handle the same? If yes, would you recognize at once the philosophical mercury if I were to show it to you?*

A: Yes, I have watched. Yes, I have handled the philosophical mercury. Yes, I would recognize the philosophical mercury if one would show it to me.

Q: *Were you an eyewitness while Fulcanelli made the gold transmutation?*

A: Yes. I was present with Gaston Sauvage and Jul. Champagne. The transmutation was made in the Usine a Gaz de Sarcelles where I was employed. The transmutation was performed by myself under the direction of Fulcanelli. I received three small pieces of the transmuting stone (pierre transmutatoire). This transmuting stone consisted of one part gold and one part philosophical stone.

Q: *Did Fulcanelli make any other transmutation with only you present?*

A: No. He did not make any transmutation with only myself present. I know only of the one at Sarcelles.

Q: *Do you continue to teach your pupils what Fulcanelli has taught you?*

A: I am the headmaster (chef d'ecole) similar to Andre Breton. My biggest contact with the pupils is through books and considerable correspondence. I am also visited by many people and if I would not from time to time act that I am not available at home, I would not be able to do very much (sinon je ne ferais plus rien). I have also considerable correspondence with Italians.

Q: *Have you had any personal alchemical success in the laboratory after Fulcanelli left you, which others can testify to?*

A: Yes. Formerly, when I was more engaged in experimenting than at present, I have caused an Aurora Borealis.

The last coction I have not as yet accomplished except for the sequence of color and that of the planets which can't be followed in an earthenware vessel. One can, however, by the harmonious noises and whistling sounds make a comparison without a chromatic scale. One may say chromatic because of its color relationship to the musical scale. This last coction I have not been able to complete because the time which the old ones called "the week of the weeks" (la semaine des semaines) has not been favored by the weather, because of the distortion of the air by the various waves. This is the reason why my last coction simply will not take place or can not take place.

You know that for such a week the following traditional requirements have to exist during spring: beautiful weather so the sky is clear (ciel decouvert) and also, the second quarter of the moon going towards the full moon is not always so easy to bring together with the first.

Q: *Do you still teach practical laboratory alchemy?*

A: I teach through books and personal contact. Science and the university are my territory and not so-called occult circles.

Q: *Do your students teach?*

A: L'association culturelle de l'universite de Paris gave me recognition with the title 'savant' and I am proud of it.

Q: *Would you allow me to photograph your alchemistical laboratory so posterity would have a picture of it?*

A: Just now I am moving my laboratory. I can't very well manage the stairs to the top anymore. You can see the new fireplace at the end of the garden. As you know, the chimney is an important part of the laboratory.

Q: *Are you presently using any of your own alchemical preparations for your personal health?*

A: Yes. Thanks to this alchemical preparation I am still here. In 1974 I had a heart attack. Thanks to the 'niter' which I produce as a pink salt out of the dew in spring could I recover.

"Since Mr. Pancaldi and myself had another appointment the same evening in Paris, we left after spending the afternoon with Canseliet in his home to meet with Prof. Dr. Monod-Heizen, the eminent French physicist, who showed considerable interest in laboratory alchemy. It was not only a pleasant meeting but a highly stimulating and interesting one, since the professor has spent his entire life discovering the origin of light from the physicists' point of view while not ignoring what alchemy could reveal as possible additional information.

"Soon after, we were invited to make the personal acquaintance of Signore Julio Villa-Santa of Lugano who also had an interview with Canseliet some years ago to compare his with ours. It showed no marked difference as the former was used in a Round Table discussion over the Swiss Radio Network. Both Sign. Villa-Santa and

his wife, the former Countess Sophia Tekeli de Scel, are keen students of alchemy and are looking forward to next year and the joint experiments of Canseliet and myself near Beauvais, France.

"What about Paul Brunton who is presently alive?" asked Elizabeth Gunderson.

"Excuse me," interrupted Dr. Farnsworth, "are you by any chance personally acquainted with some of these contemporaries you mentioned or do you know them only by hearsay? Take the last named one as an example."

"Yes, I am personally acquainted with Paul Brunton," answered the alchemist, "if that makes any difference."

"An interesting discovery has been made by all who ventured into what may have seemed a new experience when they first began to trace the experiences of one who devoted his life to finding a sensible explanation of the mysteries that surround the human being. Paul Brunton attempted this and likewise has succeeded. The vivid scenes that appear before the eyes of his readers will let them relive with the author his travels in Egypt and the Far East and will help to bring about an understanding of his more mature works such as 'The Hidden Teachings Beyond Yoga' and 'The Wisdom of the Overself.' 'The Coming Crisis of Man' also is indicative of the results that manifest in Paul Brunton's experiences, which he so profoundly expounds and which are an outcome of the guidance he has had in his personal life.

"Newcomers to the esoteric work will find the works of Paul Brunton extremely interesting and revealing. They will provide a deeper insight into the relationship of man to the manifestations from the so-called higher spheres wherein he will find himself an inseparable part."

"What about the Rosicrucians?" asked Godfrey Gunderson. "So much is written about them and so little is actually known. Who were they really? If some still exist, who are they at present? And what about those teachings that represent not just one individual but many who have worked in alchemy and attained their goal? I have the Secret Symbols of the *Rosicrucians of the Sixteenth and*

Seventeenth Centuries, an original work in the German language which I read fluently. What about this book and the many other books about alchemy?"

"Let's face it," said the alchemist as he opened his shirt collar, "many occult books take refuge in the book you mentioned and claim it to be the source from which their knowledge was derived. Alchemistical symbolism and qabalistic interpretations were gleaned from its pages. The word *Rosicrucian* alone evoked a sense of reverence and awe because those truly numbered among them were alchemists in fact and not of book learning only. As usual, anything not understood is that which is admired mostly in those who do understand what remains an enigma to others.

"Those introduced into the advanced work of the secret teachings come to an alarming conclusion when they are confronted with the fact that this book was and still is considered an 'A.B.C. booklet for young pupils who daily practice single-minded in the School of the Holy Ghost,' the age of the pupil having nothing to do with the mundane years as man counts.

"Some have considered this book the epitome of alchemistical wisdom so remote that one can only look at it with wonder. Others, who have prepared themselves to be admitted into the fold of those who teach and practice these very things, are told that this book is considered a beginner's textbook. The shock is understandable since few have seen this book or are acquainted with it.

"Another surprise comes when those admitted are brought to the realization, in a comparatively short time, that this book *is* a beginner's textbook. Formerly, all kinds of studies had led to a seemingly high degree of advancement within the theoretical realm of esoteric and occult studies and teachings. As these theories were grounded in the precepts of the facts that began to reveal themselves, they were found to be of only so much value.

"When one fact after another begins to be demonstrated and related, the revelation becomes a marvel to behold and words are inadequate to describe it. This became obvious through the expressions and feelings of those who had actually gone through it. The incredible became plausible and a formerly negative inclination and

attitude gave way to a positive position for those initiated into these former Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.

"Many commentaries have been written and published on this work, and they have proven to be just that; namely commentaries. Comments pro and con seldom — if ever — have altered or revealed anything — if at all — that was basic. Symbols are ideal for many to hide their ignorance behind since they can be used to fit anyone's notions or fancies. Symbols do not talk back; they only smile with their Sphinx-like expression. They will not tell anything except to those who have discovered their accepted and proven meanings. Originally, the hidden wisdom was concealed in the form of occult teachings by the use of symbols. To discern symbols means to know them. To know them means to discover their meaning to be of some value. The value is found in the revelation of the laws which are concealed behind the symbols in the form of their meaning. The meaning can only be realized by those who are pure in mind, soul and body — such pureness makes them wise. The wise are governed by reason and not by beliefs or guesses.

"In order to understand the meaning of the Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, one has to be initiated into the esoteric knowledge by way of the laws. It is by way of the laws that the meaning of the Secret Symbols will be known and understood.

"Practical application of the laws is only possible after the theory has been mastered. This axiom is paramount for an eventual achievement in the hermetic work, as those who have had a glimpse at the rules by which the brethren of the R & C are governed will testify.

"Commentaries on this profound work reveal the knowledge or ignorance of those who offer explanations that are mostly without sufficient proof — if any at all — and stamp themselves legibly with the stigma of the respective category to which they belong. Initiates into the hermetic teachings become the living exemplifications of the symbols represented therein. They need no commentaries as their actions will be the resulting commendation or condemnation by establishing either the genuine or the imitation. The evidence of the

wisdom gained and applied will be the final judge in the consummation of their works. Neither will they be found lying prone to be trampled upon by the profane. That is why the brethren of the R & C are invisible to those who are not pure enough within themselves to recognize them; while at the same time, they are revealed to individuals who are preparing themselves to receive them and their teachings. They will not be found different from others in their outer appearance, but will adopt the clothing and customs of the country in which they reside. Here, they will teach the 'A.B.C. in their little booklet to the pupils who practice daily single-minded in the school of the Holy Ghost,' preparatory for what is to follow and is not lawful to even utter now.

"They will not promise anything but will extend a helping hand to those who reach for it so they eventually can help themselves.

"To attain one's goal, of whatever nature, one is apt to go out of the way to reach it. Most have such a high aim for which they clamor that it is not surprising at all to find equally as many unable to attain it. The reason will be found mostly in the very first attempt because it is out of proportion to the capabilities one possesses. There is nothing wrong with having high and lofty aims provided they are within the realm of our capacity to reach them. The time factor alone is not sufficient to determine if we shall achieve our aims; rather, it is the determination to start from the beginning by being properly prepared and attuned to the quest.

"It is here — at the beginning — where most lay the groundwork for their failure. Essential preparations, based on simple laws, are mostly overlooked or considered unimportant when compared with the result to be obtained. The final manifestations of the conquered mountain top are all that will be imagined and the path to be taken is ignored. A while after the journey is commenced a tired feeling overcomes the wayfarer and it then appears to be such a long journey for which we are ill-equipped. We easily tire and succumb to the fatigue we apparently cannot shake off. We finally realize that this fatigue comes not from the aim we had in mind that was so far away, but from our insufficient preparation for the journey ahead.

"Had we tarried just a little longer, plotted our course more ac-

curately and made provisions for the unexpected, which we will always encounter on life's pathway, we would have had more courage to spare when we needed it most. There would have been a reservoir to draw from when all those around us, on whom we depended, failed us. Too late did we find out that we have to accomplish our objectives alone. The individual who hitched his wagon to a star will now have to guide it. If the tempo becomes too fast, we will lose control and have to abandon the cherished hopes. Fulfillment of our fondest hopes and wishes, our dreams and aspirations will be denied us because of our shortsightedness to be properly prepared.

"Many an alchemistical aspirant saw his dreams fade away; he could not realize them and see their practical fulfillment. He reached too high from the very beginning. He aspired to things which he was not capable of handling. Had he even reached his dreams through dogged determination, there is no guarantee, even then, that he would be in a position to recognize the true value because only the attainment was his goal — not the purpose behind it.

"Without a purpose an aim is a hollow thing. It is like trying to hit a target only to have the satisfaction to have hit it. One would rarely call such a satisfaction a purpose. Should a selfish purpose be the motive to reach our aim, it is likewise of little avail. Before long, it will dawn on us that the efforts were not worth the sacrifices because in the end we will have very little enjoyment out of things that others cannot share with us. We may fear the loss of our efforts and want to guard what we have finally reached and we are the losers, also — at the end.

"From the beginning comes our success and final result. If we take time in the beginning to prepare ourselves for the goal, there is little likelihood of not attaining it. Only our haste and ignorance of the simple laws involved in our undertaking spell our doom from the beginning."

Elizabeth Gunderson stood up. She fussed with her hair. It was a rather nervous gesture because it was quite obvious that something seemed to bother her. Everyone present looked at her waiting to

hear what she was about to say, when suddenly she burst forth with what had caused her uneasiness.

"Suppose one would know all these essentials, as you outline them, and feel ready to go on with the necessary preparations. Would this lead eventually to a universal knowledge?"

Everybody noticed the smile on the alchemist's face. It was so pleasant and so meaningful. One could imagine it to reveal the inner knowledge of having caught a little culprit in an act when no one was thought to be watching.

"Who is all knowing? Who would dare to say that he knows all? Such a thought, regardless of creed or belief, can only be conveyed in the highest power that we can conceive — in the God of the heart of each individual. Can we ever escape this omniscience? Is there a possibility to evade it? There is no escape from it. This omniscience is ever-present (omnipresent) and almighty (omnipotent). In accordance with man's way of thinking, the All and All finds its last resort in it. Because this omniscience is omnipresent, we can never omit — under any circumstances — even the thought of it.

"We may attempt to be all things at all times. At all times when we will this omniscience, we may think of anything that we may conceive. Even if we do not will it, this omniscience becomes our mind, within its world of thoughts, subject to 'our' or 'my' way of thinking. This indicates that in our mind we may do as we please subject to an ever-present, all-knowing, all-powerful higher mind because we are a segment of it. We may try to avoid an issue; but try as we may, the issue will be ever-present within us. Although not always uppermost in our mind, it still exists. Through the slightest provocation, the issue will be evoked to manifest itself.

"An incident, which occurred while crossing the Atlantic, made this especially obvious. The great ocean liner had reached about the midway point between two continents when a man committed suicide. The passengers were not aware of it. The Protestant and the Catholic ministers as well as myself had the same dream. As was later revealed during a conversation, we all dreamed that we were washed overboard by a huge wave. We found ourselves helpless in

the water during the black night, in the midst of nowhere, facing sure death by drowning. All concerned realized separately — not knowing of the others dreaming the same dream — how we depend on each other and that we can never escape ourselves. Our thoughts go on with us, even while dreaming.

"The Reverend, who conducted the funeral service that night, related that the one who had committed suicide had lost his wife and none of his children wanted to care for him. This man's body is still in its watery grave; but the thought that his children would not have wanted him is still prevailing. It originated with them in 'their' way of thinking and none of them can ever escape it. Thoughts govern our actions and reactions in an everlasting chain of events because of the omniscient (all knowing) power inherent in the All.

"Just as the three of us dreamed of the impending event before it happened, I became witness to a still stranger event. During the following night, I was awakened. Climbing from my berth, I sat motionless on the steps of the ladder that led to an upper berth in the stateroom. In front of the ship's porthole, moving in a diagonal direction, I saw a light object fall.

"The Catholic priest was the only one to whom this incident was confided. We were walking on the promenade deck one evening. When he was told, the priest stopped walking. Taking his cigar out of his mouth, he looked at me and said, 'Science will not be able to explain all this — only a higher power knows.' "

"Tell me please," said Elizabeth Gunderson, "does chanting have any effect on one's endeavors to make better and faster progress in life?"

All, except the alchemist, looked at her in surprise. No one had expected such a question at that particular time.

"Yes," replied the alchemist, "sound is very important — let me emphasize, very important — in the life of man and the progress he makes. This goes for sounds, chants and melodies.

"Seven basic notes on the keyboard make it possible to bring about very simple chants as well as complicated melodies. So much lies hidden and needs to be discovered in the world of sound, espec-

ially pertaining to the musical interpretation, that one cannot help but wonder about the awesome possibilities that a musical — and sometimes not so musical — sound can produce. The Bible gives us one of the most beautiful words when Paul, writing to the Corinthians says, 'I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also; — I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.'

"He gave us to understand that we shall pray with understanding and when we sing we shall do likewise. Most likely, we will ask ourselves what is the motive behind prayer and singing. Can it help us or do we attend to it because it expresses our emotions as they are felt at that particular moment. Songs have inspired men to do great deeds and prayer has given them the strength to accomplish them. At times, when we feel blue, the words and the melody join into a prayer and song; and we begin to feel uplifted. We have gained in strength where we were weak before. Many times, a joyous song has helped others. It made the listener feel good and created a feeling of friendship and harmony. And when in association with others we jointly express our feelings, we actually create a better environment for all of us and especially for the weary and downtrodden ones.

"The great Reformer Martin Luther said, 'Where people sing, there you may rest at peace, for evil people have no songs.' Observation will show how true this is. People who harbor evil thoughts shun good music. It hurts them and makes them feel that they are out of place. Yet, many a hymn sung in a church, synagogue, or temple has touched many a soul to turn from the ways of deceit and falsehood and made them utter a prayer for forgiveness. And then, when that glorious moment of repentance came, they did sing with full voices and give thanks for the light which they had found . . . the light of the world which we find in the Christ — the true Christ of all nations and tongues.

"Perhaps, you have noticed once in your life the deep bass voice from an elderly man who tried so hard to express his feelings in a song. Though he could hardly carry a tune, he sang with all his heart and soul and expressed his feelings in the words and the mel-

ody that came from his heart. He felt like a member of a celestial choir because he was not just singing a song. Oh, NO! He praised the Lord and Creator in a melodious prayer.

"When our Heavenly Father gave us the organs of speech and hearing to receive the spoken word He did not just want us to get its outward vibrations. He gave us the organs of speech and hearing so we may assimilate the spoken word — so it can penetrate into our hearts.

"From infancy on, when a mother held the newborn babe in her arms, the first thing she did was to give thanks for the child. In her prayer she gave thanks to God for the little one she was permitted to help bring forth and prayed for its future welfare. And then? What was it she did then? She hummed a lullaby. Tenderly she expressed her emotions and poured them out in a melody. It may have been a known lullaby or it may have been one of her own creation that only a mother can hum and that will never find the way into a song book. Because it is divine melody, it is a song that only angels sing. It is a prayer destined for celestial realms and not meant for profane ears.

"And so on. All through life. During childhood those simple nursery rhymes are an expression of feelings of friendship and goodness. They are the prayers of the elders put into simple stories and tunes to guide and to direct the young to do good. Ah, and then comes the time when that beautiful young love awakens. Some of the most beautiful songs ever written were love songs. There, the heart pours itself all out and tenderly prays for the beloved one to be careful so no harm will befall him and tenderly to remember the one and only one.

"Shall I go on and tell you — yes, you, whether you know it or not, are unknowingly entwined with prayer and song all your life long? Do you remember your wedding day? How earnestly you prayed that your married life may be blessed and how, with a song in your heart, you looked at each other when you said 'I do' and then kissed? 'Ah, sweet mystery of life at last I've found you.' — Yes, I have found you. 'For it's love and love alone.' So says the poet and composer. And so the cycle goes. At times we go through

the valley of sorrow. But never without a prayer and a song of hope. We may have climbed the heights of success and want to shout to all the world and tell everyone how happy we are. What do we do then ? We exclaim 'Oh, thank you, thank you, dear Lord, for Thou art so good to me!' and burst forth with a joyous melody.

"Yes, life is a long and earnest prayer and a beautiful song to those who want to see the beauty in life. True, to some, life seems to be a big drudgery. But they have seldom, if ever, experienced the light of love and felt inner contentment. They have not known the sweet peace that can come only to those that pray and sing with spirit and understanding.

"And then, when the curtain on the stage of life slowly descends and the hours on this earth are numbered, and when a weary soul closes its eyes from this life on earth, what will it hear? A prayer for its return to His heavenly realm and a joint song: 'Till we meet again.'

"Yes, life is a prayer and a song.

"May yours and mine, may our lives be a constant prayer of praise and thanksgiving. And may it equally well be a beautiful song of life — a song of harmony and happiness; a song of divine virtues and forgiveness. This then is my prayer and my silent song for you: 'May you find peace within you.'

The alchemist's words settled like rose petals upon the group. All gazed down at the table, sensing the silent song that surrounded them.

A squirrel began to climb down a tree and stopped suddenly. It hung motionless like a piece of fur, head down, that was nailed to the trunk. Everyone watched to see what would happen next, when just as suddenly the squirrel came alive again and running down it jumped over towards the alchemist. Elizabeth Gunderson had to move over quickly as she feared it might touch her when the squirrel landed in the lap of the alchemist.

The squirrel started a faint chatter and the alchemist began to stroke its head and back with three fingers of his hand like one would softly stroke any small domesticated animal. It did not take long, for just as suddenly as it had appeared it jumped off the al-

chemist's lap and vanished behind the tree again. Everyone was taken by surprise to say the least and at the same time all shook their heads in amazement.

After a while, Dr. Farnsworth leaned forward and said, "Since we have been talking about almost any subject that has come to our minds, perhaps it is not out of order to ask something about astrology. I do not mean the everyday astrology in monthly magazines or what astrologers foretell about things that happen in everyday life. Once, I did run across a book in England by Alan Leo entitled *Esoteric Astrology* but could not make very much out of it. Either it was too deep or the subject evaded me altogether. Will you please shed some light on what is known as esoteric astrology?" asked Dr. Farnsworth.

Dr. Syndergaard and Godfrey Gunderson exchanged glances and smiled. They had hoped this topic would be touched upon because not long ago it had been the subject of a very profound conversation.

"To some, it appears strange that it was after the turn of the century that astrology raised its head among the masses and has made deep inroads into the minds of mankind," began the alchemist.

"Since the end of the first World War a renaissance of astrology has swept not only over Europe but through other countries of the earth, and all have felt its impact. Whenever the interest of people becomes aroused, it does not take very long for the genuine to unmask the imitation. Astrology is no exception. It may be even more noticeable here, because it is difficult on the surface to see through the cloud of nonsense which surrounds astrology to this very day. What passes under the name of astrology deals mostly with the everyday aspects of life. Nearly every bookstore has literature on astrology and American supermarkets carry a regular line of various editions of monthly astrology magazines with their day-by-day descriptions of the various sun signs individuals find themselves born under.

"Now, we know that this is all very general and is not applicable in every case. As we read these books and publications, we find

astrology dealing expressly with the mundane affairs of man that are sometimes of doubtful value.

"There is, however, another aspect of astrology, known very little and even overlooked by astrologers so that it can seldom be found under astrological computations. This deals with the esoteric aspects of astrology. First, one has to find a definition for the word esoteric. It is of Greek origin. 'Esoteros' in Greek means that which pertains to the inner. It is also understood simply to imply, when used in a personal sense, an initiate. In other words, esoteric astrology concerns itself with the inner man. It is of special merit to those who have found their own inner life to be of greater importance than their outer appearance or outer activities. It can be said that the outer individualistic appearance and its impressions are separate from the inner evolving personality of the individual. The law of polarity makes this very plain. The inner and outer are not the same. Since much more is known about the outer manifestations of man, it is natural that this has received his primary attention. It is easy to observe and everybody seems to be involved in this phenomenon. When, by contrast, it comes to the inner man, things begin to look different. Here we are not able to see what goes on inside man. We have to content ourselves with assumptions and guesses which are not a very reliable source of information. Nevertheless, the same fundamental approach can be used that is employed when erecting a mundane chart. But this is about all, as far as the procedure goes, because from here on out one has to become acquainted with the inner self — the real self. It is admitted that in a mundane horoscope some personality traits can be seen or discovered concerning an individual, but these are only some of the traits of which there may be others hidden that need to be known and are not so obvious to the casual observer. All this does not reveal the sum total of an individual, including the personality.

"One of the first questions asked is: 'How can one discover the dividing line to distinguish one from the other?' It is very simple to answer. Here, one is dealing with the soul-personality. Actually, this is the very source which reveals what is noticed also on the mundane plane of awareness.

"So we ask ourselves, what is soul and what is personality when related to individuality? The moment one makes a distinction between these three words and endeavors to come up with a concrete definition, he gets right away into serious trouble. The reason for this is that dictionaries contribute to this muddle. Since it is of paramount importance to get a clear understanding of individuality, personality and soul, there is no other way about it but to observe the following:

"First: Every objective reveals its individuality. An individual is a separate entity from other individuals. An individual is recognized as an objective phenomenon.

"Second: Unlike physical aspects, personality is an intangible state of mental evolvement. Personality traits are intangibles. An individual given to lie shows the personality trait of liar. There is nothing physical about it.

"Third: Soul is consciousness. The degree of consciousness, also known as intelligence, reveals the state of the personality in its state of evolvement. This is what speaks out of an individual.

"A typical example is an individual whose outer appearance may betray the degree of evolvement of its soul personality. Who has not met an individual who looked so simple and unimpressive, perhaps even physically distorted, that one did not expect much from him as the saying goes. Such an individual may have appeared even insignificant. In other words, there was no outer visible mark whatsoever indicative of a great personality. But what a surprise when this individual began to converse and to reveal his degree of intelligence or personality evolvement. It is then that one hears exclamations like, 'What a personality.'

"On the other hand, we may find an individual of physical prominence excelling other individuals; but with hardly any worthwhile traits indicating an evolved soul-personality or advanced level of intelligence.

"It is the soul-personality in its state of evolvement that enters esoteric astrology; and as long as one cannot differentiate between individuality and personality, it is very unlikely that anything worthwhile can be discovered in a chart. Because the word spirit has been

used in only too many cases to mean a soul, a word of caution may not be amiss. Eirenaeus Philalethes, the famed alchemist, says very plainly, 'For the spirit is an invisible thing nor doth it ever appear without another garment, which garment is the soul.' Spirit means life and soul refers to consciousness. Therefore, our object in esoteric astrology is to find the evolving personality in an individual.

"Those who feel that they may venture into something entirely new, that which had not been previously considered by individuals of high intellect, can be reassured by statements of men of merit. The great philosopher Immanuel Kant said, 'It will hereafter be proved, I know not when or where, that the human soul stands even in this life in indissoluble connection with all immaterial natures in the spirit world, that it reciprocally acts upon these and receives impressions from them." *

"Another great man, Tennyson, said 'For words like nature half reveal and half conceal the soul within.' We see that others, too, have had some ideas about this mysterious existence called soul.

"Another individual, Alan Leo, the famed English astrologer, went to great pains to find a reasonable approach to esoteric astrology. In fact, there is no book available that deals as explicitly with esoteric astrology as his book, which has as its title, *Esoteric Astrology*.

"How deeply Alan Leo considered the subject matter becomes evident when he says in his preface to Esoteric Astrology: 'It was not until I made a second visit to India that I was able to obtain a clue to the central idea that could unify all my numerous thoughts upon the subject of esoteric astrology. In one of the holy places, I met a sage whose mind and my own were in complete harmony. I only had to express a few ideas to this marvelous pundit, and he would run through the whole sequence of my thought and in a few words link those ideas into a consecutive whole to achieve that for which I had labored many years. At one of our meetings he spoke but a few words, but with them he conveyed to my mind ideas which illumined my thoughts to such an extent that I instantly saw light to which I had formerly been blind. On one occasion we rode many miles in an old gharry to visit an ancient temple, and while he

* Kant, Traeume eines Geistersehers.

chanted his sacred hymns continuously, my mind was filled with beautiful thoughts suggesting the very questions a sage alone could answer. In collecting the ideas that had filled my mind for many years, and even so I have been given to understand for many lives, and in setting them forth in this volume, I am actuated by the primary motive of expressing what I believe to be the true astrology for the new era that is now dawning upon the world. I have no wish to force these ideas upon the esoteric school of astrologers. They may accept them or reject them as they wish; but I can at least point to a large body of students, and some sincere colleagues, who are attracted more by this than any other form of astrology.

"To many, the ideas put forth in this book will come as a revelation concerning the laws which guide the evolution of this world; infallible laws which work incessantly for the ultimate good of humanity. The theories expressed are not imaginary; they are capable of demonstration to all who apply themselves thoughtfully to the methods required to obtain firsthand knowledge.

"The experiences are unique that led up to my association with this subject, which I have studied continuously for a quarter of a century, and they have resulted in investigations made quite independently of the opinions or influences of others.'

"One may ask, 'Why did Alan Leo have to go to India to get more information on esoteric astrology?' The answer is that long ago Indian sages considered this the most important aspect of astrology. Their teachings are founded upon three basic concepts:

"First, that there is only one life throughout the entire universe and this supreme life emanates from God through our sun.

"Second, this life is manifesting through planetary influences within consciousness.

"Third, both life and consciousness act upon substance. As blood flows through our body to keep it alive, so does life flow out of the vastness of space through our sun to keep our solar system alive. We depend on the sun for our dear life here on earth and on its satellite the moon. During the conjunction of the sun and moon at new moon, we have a symbolic marriage of life and body or spirit and substance. By contrast, when the moon is full, we have resplendent

intelligence revealed when it merges with spirit and body to recharge the whole in cyclic revolution. It is then when our thoughts and feelings are heightened and exert their influence upon the body. To discover harmonious interplay is a new and different experience in the life of an individual.

"When a chart is read, one should consider both luminaries separately to indicate two different essential influences and directions. The sun, wherever it is found in a horoscope, represents the degree and influence of the evolving soul-personality, while the moon deals with the individual (physical) reaction of the prevailing life force.

"Any influence of a zodiacal sign should be considered with the planetary intelligences at the same time as both give us the synthesis we are looking for.

"When one speaks of influences from the constellations, as we face them during our earthly sojourn around the sun, they should not be mistaken with the intelligences of the planets. There is a marked difference between the two. In esoteric astrological observations it shows that the personality is more under the direction of planetary intelligences than under the zodiacal sign influences in which the planets are found in the radix. In there, we find the overall pattern of previous evolvement to the point of re-entry in this mortal life. Transiting planets, however, act upon the personality, eliciting a response to their influences. An individual's inner reaction determines further evolvement of the personality. This becomes especially noticeable when an individual reacts consciously to planetary directions. It is our response from the inner being that determines astrological responses as esoteric.

"Those who concentrate their attention on outer manifestations only are losing out on the most important impact from within. When the esoteric being corresponds to the directions of the esoteric solar impulses through its re-channeling over planetary intelligences, the entire aspect takes place within. Any outer manifestation thereafter becomes the result of much greater consequences than when man relies on outer stimulus to penetrate within. It is the latter

which causes disappointment within many when it does not do anything to them or when it is hardly perceptible.

"Outer manifestations leave a shadow — like experience that has not the strength or potency to penetrate into what is known as the psyche, which translated means nothing else but soul or consciousness. When the psyche becomes disturbed, usually by too much outer stimulation, esoteric astrological knowledge will prove of immense help. We have the best evidence in psychiatry. It is there where the individual has to deal with the obstruction of conscious functions. Some suspect here the workings of a subconscious, which means that which is below or under that which one is presently conscious of. Then again, the word superconscious enters, meaning that which is above the presently available consciousness. All this clearly indicates a state of mental awareness to which no answers are presently to be had. We may go even further by saying that psychology attempts to unravel that which the soul says or teaches, if we stay within the meaning of the word, at least to the extent that we have determined to be the degree of available intelligence.

"Any probing into the psyche, as attempted by both psychiatry and psychology, can only reveal what is currently available in an individual. By contrast, a chart will reveal potentials that may not have been developed in man or have not even been suspected to exist. There may be so much that lies still concealed within man that needs to be brought to his awareness, which requires a stimulus to awaken it so his potentials can be recognized. Prior to any stimulation or incitement, there can be no reaction. Unfortunately, this is the case in only too many instances where inner urges, undefined, keep rising to the surface of mental perception, only to disappear again before their origin can be identifed. This origin can be seen in the chart by the esoteric astrologer, revealing the esoteric or inner being with all its potentials lying dormant.

"It is hard to conceive what immense resurgence psychology and psychiatry could experience, if both would not continue seemingly to stand still or timidly feel their way around, since exponents like Carl Jung took fearless steps to investigate again in a newer light and approached what had been considered outmoded and not applicable

any more in our sophisticated procedures. Carl Jung did not shy away from using words like astrology and alchemy in connection with his psychological researches. On the contrary, he found that only by introspective means can man discover the true self and its inherent potentials. Any outer phenomena he related to the inner aspects of man. This is a tremendous step forward but not yet sufficient to cope with problems that still need further substantiation.

"When speaking of esoteric astrology one should not think of the mundane astrologer, no matter what standing he presently enjoys or occupies among astrologers, but of the new breed of scientific philosophic investigators who deal with cyclic pulsations that can be measured as they influence mankind as a whole, and thereby any and all individuals. Such cyclic pulsations are of cosmic origin. These are of both enormous duration and barely perceptible impressions, an outcome of emanations that are very little known or understood by man. This applies to gigantic universal events and evolutionary influences similar to those we experience here upon earth. Hidden aspects above, as below, are the most contributing factors that concern man's awareness. What is presently known to man acts only as stimulus to unravel the unknown.

"The most exciting of all events in the life of man is his search to know more about himself. It appears to be a never-ending search for so little is known about man, where so much more needs to be known. It is well to remember that what outer stimuli cannot awaken within can, from within, be made known without as newly conceived evidence.

"It has been said that an enlightened Hindu astrologer knows that a curse rests upon astrology and this curse can only be removed when the limitations imposed upon astrology are recognized. Esoteric astrology will do just that for those who understand it.

"To the esoteric astrologer, planets are spheres of intelligence, moving within given regions of influence.

"The zodiac is a homogenous whole subdivided only by sub-influences of its own divisions.

"Any astrologer should know the difference between sign and house influences as it shows that the planets, when related to the

zodiacal signs — and especially the fire and air signs — reveal esoteric aspects, while the planets, when related to the houses — and the earth and water elements found therein — relate to material or mundane aspects.

"When both are considered in a horoscope, the result is a synthesis of an evolving personality as a unit; and not only as an individual among other individuals and their reactions towards each other on the physical plane. After all has been said, it is esoteric astrology that holds the key to further unfoldment and joint progression of the personality within an individual as revealed by the inherent consciousness or soul awareness.

"Let us be judged by our actions. This is important. Not only shall we be judged by our words but, most important, by our actions. They are the results of our words based upon our thoughts. What are our actions? They are the manifestations of what we know or believe in. Mostly of what we believe, because our knowledge is very limited. So, likewise, are our actions that are based on knowledge. We believe too much and know too little. It is so much easier to take someone else's word for it than to find out for ourselves if things really are as they have been presented to us by others. If we are judged by our actions — and we are — it behooves us to be sure of ourselves first, rightly or wrongly, in whatever we commence.

"The mystic will have to be an astrologer — but not in the commonly accepted sense. He will not use his mundane horoscope and blindly follow its indications. He will be a master of his actions as he creates them. He will realize his standing in the universe and live accordingly, knowing that he will eventually be judged, one way or another, relative to his actions.

"This is karma — the result of our actions. It is the fruit of our labor that is inherent in the seed which we plant. The mortal eye cannot see the ripened fruit within the seed but the divinely enlightened eye will perceive it. Each seed, as soon as it is acted upon, will be judged according to the law under which it falls — and likewise, we humans will be judged. If our motives are pure, honest and godlike it will be apparent.

"Therefore, think and live clean and your actions will become

likewise. Let us be judged by our actions and triumph over fear — the negative seed inherent in ignorance."

"This would mean it is for me now or never to find out what needs to be found out about the psyche," emphasized Dr. Farnsworth.

"Not so fast, my dear fellow, not so fast," interrupted the alchemist. "A confrontation requiring an immediate, binding decision is usually fraught with dire consequences. Decisions made in haste are ruefully repented when soberly contemplated but by then 'the decision made' cannot be reversed. In too many cases individuals are confronted with requests for an immediate answer. The questioner usually has his own fortune at stake; and, to forestall a loss, he takes the person challenged by surprise. In such a situation, it is far better to refuse to answer or to ask for time to evaluate the decision to be made. Those who make quick decisions are frequently as unscrupulous as those who urge the 'now or never' determination. Such snap decisions are hit and run measures. If luck bears them out, boasts are in order. If luck runs out, a shrug of the shoulder is supposed to write off the failure.

"A respite, even if only temporary, from such a high-pressure individual, be it a salesman, a broker, or what have you, is to bargain that an immediate decision will be made, provided the questioner will agree to answer with either yes or no the question, 'Do you still go about stealing from people?' For the no, answer: 'People who claim to have stopped stealing from others are liable to do it again. How do I know your proposal is honest?' For the yes answer reply: 'I don't want to be another of your victims.' If an individual is confronted with the question 'now or never?' a reply under conditions as mentioned is also proper.

"When a questioner is so challenged, he begins to realize that he is about to implicate himself — the very thing he desires the other person to do."

"It is not that I want to be contrary, but how could one not accept the light when one has been in darkness so long? Just imagine what this knowledge could do to a psychiatrist. This is tremendous.

Just think how the patient would be benefited!" Dr. Farnsworth sounded somewhat excited.

"Surely," smiled the alchemist. "Surely," he intoned again. 'From the shadow into the sunlight! Who does not long to escape the shadow of darkness when light appears? Nowhere does it come more to the fore than in the mental and spiritual realms. Prolonged darkness makes the dawn even more welcome. The dawning of light, when shadows depart, and the glorious warmth of the sun rays that penetrate all life that it comes in contact with elevates even a gloomy mood into a more cheerful frame of mind. How soothingly the glow of sunlight engulfs all creatures that do not shy away from it. In the mental realm the light of knowledge is equally important. It removes the shadows of doubt and despair, for knowledge is enlightenment. Ignorance is the shadow of the dreadful darkness, the want of knowledge. Light, within and without, brings an upsurge of the dormant lying hopes and wishes that find their fulfillment in the light of completion.

'But man cannot find the sum of perfection in solitary enjoyment while depriving others of the same blessings he enjoys. He will find it by sharing with others the bounties of newly found light, the treasures of the radiant luminosity transcending mental images created in man's inferior way of thinking. Uplifting one's thoughts from the quagmire of superstition, from the unclean crevices in the sordid caverns of a debased brain, from the enslaving shackles of lustful impulses, man can rise, phoenix-like, to the higher realms where no shadows can darken or even obscure that which has been lit by the light of the sun of our universe — and the even greater luminary of the soul. This is man's heritage.

"Yet, there are those who bring forth the claim, 'Who wants to be in the sunlight all the time? Is the shadow not refreshing after being exposed to the constant rays of the sun?' To the superficial mind this will sound as a welcome rebuttal, a well-tailored excuse; but it is void. It is the earth-bound fledgling that undulates between the shadow and light. Like the mole that dwells in darkness and only in rare instances emerges to see the sun, so does he who prefers darkness, to conceal his misgivings from being exposd, shy away from

light. God created the eternal light. He who will dwell within it will have to rise towards it to become finally consumed by it — and thereby at one with the eternal light that no longer knows darkness. No mortal man, dwelling within the shadows of the unclean, will ever abide in the light of the pure in heart. Only he who is willing to be cleansed will rise from the shadow into the sunlight."

"These mental pictures which you create in our minds are very impressive, but what about those who look always towards the moment that will reveal a miracle to them?" asked Godfrey Gunderson. "Some people just live for that. All they can think of is when something supernatural will happen to them."

"Does one feed his mind on an empty picture?" asked the alchemist. "Is there such a thing? Can a picture be empty? Empty of what? This question has puzzled many laymen and art connoisseurs alike.

"Who has not stood before a picture and wondered what it meant. 'It leaves my mind a blank. I cannot make it out.' These and similar phrases one can picture? No, to some it may portray a message. He can see something he has not seen before. While to others, it remains meaningless, a blank . . . so much for an actual picture.

"There are other pictures. These our thoughts paint for us. These pictures are the very ones which our own imagination creates. Here the word empty takes on a different meaning. It leaves a void within. Where the meaning has not even become clear to us, it is of a passing nature. It is a nebulous composition of values that are not lasting. It leaves us empty and devoid of vital energy and strength.

"Too many chase after the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. It is a mental picture of no lasting value; a fata morgana that vanishes; a truly empty picture. How many pictures have you created and looked at in the past? How many years have you tarried in a void? Stop and contemplate upon this thought for awhile and emptiness will give way to fullness. Let us face reality and then ask ourselves: Do we feed our mind on an empty picture?"

"But, surely, there must be some miracles," Elizabeth Gunderson blurted out. "I mean great miracles, not just extraordinary things

that happen in the lives of all of us. I mean those miracles that are so outstanding that one has not even remotely ever experienced or witnessed anything similar before."

Dr. Syndergaard nodded his head. "Yes, there must be such in our days. They have happened before."

"Do you know of some of these miracles?" asked Elizabeth Gunderson with her voice somewhat more subdued than usual.

Looking down at his shoes, the alchemist stroked his chin with his left hand. "Yes," he said. "Yes, things like that do happen. I am reminded of a doctor in Vienna who, like Ouspensky, went also in search of the miraculous, so to speak. He went to Asia Minor to a place he called Nuristan. If you try to find it on a map, you may look in vain for it. It is located where similar sounding names are found in a country. He wrote a narrative about what happened to him when he witnessed how the Philosopher's Stone did things that even he, as a student of alchemy, did not dream were possible."

The alchemist stopped and looked at the sky. "My word, we have been sitting here all forenoon just talking. It is high noon. We had better get up, stretch and walk a little. I must have tired you out with all this talk."

"Oh, no, you don't tire us at all," said Dr. Farnsworth. At that moment the housekeeper appeared. It was the first time anyone in the group had seen her. She was a middle-aged woman, very neat looking and pleasant. She approached all present very timidly. "I hope I am not interrupting anything. I would just like to clean the table. It is time for lunch." Turning to Dr. Syndergaard, she said, "Your guests were so deep in conversation all this time that I did not dare to clean the table before."

"Yes, we have had a lot to digest besides breakfast," said Elizabeth Gunderson. The housekeeper began to clear the breakfast dishes and everyone got up, walking slowly towards the garden.

As they walked off, Dr. Farnsworth could be heard asking the alchemist. "Will you tell us about this doctor and his experience in Nuristan?"

"Yes, later," was the alchemist's reply.

After lunch, all had gone for a drive, which ended at the ocean.

The brisk air felt good on their skin. The impact of the waves breaking on shore vibrated the sand under their bare feet — all had removed their shoes to feel the cool water and the coarse-but-soothing sand. It was exhilarating. The whole body responded to the salty tang the wind carried with it, as it blew shoreward from a partly clouded sky. The white fluffy clouds mirrored the white caps that chased each other to the land, lapping at their feet and leaving their sea shell treasures.

It was evening again. This time, everyone met at the Gunderson residence on Mulholland Drive, and relaxed in the spacious living room. The atmosphere was again very pleasant, but one could sense the same expectation that had been a part of the previous night.

"It seems you are eager to hear about Bit Nur," said the alchemist.

"Yes we are," said Dr. Farnsworth, waiting for a confirmation from the others. It was obvious that they were all looking forward to the story of Bit Nur.

The leaves of the trees in the garden began to quiver. Like a breath exhaled from an unseen mouth came a gentle breeze and scented the air from the opposite direction where all five were sitting. It was a subtle fragrance hard to define but unmistakably the perfumed scent of flowers as day had vanished and late evening began once more to usher in another night, as the alchemist began:

"Actually, what I am relating is second-hand. Don't think for a moment that the one involved in this adventure is myself, who under a disguise is telling you this. The doctor's name is Musallam. As you can see, this is a nom de plume. He resided in Vienna and about fifty years ago founded a masonic lodge and called it The Order of the Knights of Light. It was also known as the 'Adonistic Society' and its Supreme Lodge was known as 'Hekate.' He belonged also to the Lodge 'el Khaf.'

"That's strange," interrupted Dr. Farnsworth. "I heard of this order long ago. In fact, while I was in Vienna as a young man, a friend of mine lived on the very street where its headquarters were located. If I think hard enough, the name of the street should come to me. Let me see, it had something to do with the muses."

"Was it Euterpe?" asked Dr. Syndergaard.

"No." Dr. Farnsworth shook his head. "I've got it — Thalia-strasse. That's the name; and believe it or not, the house number was 46. Not only that, the district of Vienna was 16." He shook his head again. "This is odd. Tell me, why should I remember so vividly this street and number? I really don't know. Should any one of you ever get to Vienna, try to find out if at this number more than fifty years ago this Dr. Musallam had his or his society's office there."

Elizabeth Gunderson spoke up. "Just for the record, this should prove an interesting experience."

"Yes," said the alchemist, "it would be interesting. In fact, this address is correct."

Everyone looked at each other, then at Dr. Farnsworth, but no words were spoken. The alchemist continued. "I have with me what Dr. Musallam wrote when he had returned from Bit Nur. He called it, 'The Alchemy of the Sages of Bit Nur.' "

Reaching in his coat pocket, he unfolded some papers. "I had to translate it into English, as the original is written in German. A friend, who was determined to find this place, asked me to translate

it for him, because he could not read German. I have never heard from him since; but one day he will come back and it will be quite interesting to find out what he has to say — that is, if he ever found the place."

"Go on, read it to us," urged Elizabeth Gunderson. "Please do."

The alchemist smiled. "It makes a nice little story that I think you will enjoy. Please remember, these are not my personal experiences but those of Dr. Musallam." He unfolded and sorted some of the sheets of paper and began to read.

"In the upper story of the left wing of the temple or monastery building of Bit Nur, consisting of several rooms, was the chemical laboratory of the Chakimim. During my first visit there, I got to know about it only in connection with the archive, museum, library and the astrological observatory. However, during my second visit, when under the name of Musallam I became a member of the Order of the Chakimim, Arya Manas my friend and patron, who was the head of the Chakim and Grandmaster of the Order and also, the ruler of Nuristan, initiated me into the secrets of their ancient sanctuary.

"Years have gone by since then; yet I recall our conversation, which preceded our visit to the laboratory, as if it happened only yesterday.

"We talked about the 'Kingdom to come;' namely the end of the aeon of the 'other one' and the return of the Golden Age with its outer changes, which this period of fortune would bring to mankind.

"My friend, I beg of you, do not misunderstand me,' said Arya Manas to me, while sitting on the balcony of one of his many rooms. We were smoking from the water pipe and every so often we tasted the scharbit, an ice-cooled lemonade, while looking out over the expanding panorama of the landscape.

" 'Do not misunderstand me. It will not occur overnight on the 31st of December in the year 2000 and suddenly by some act of magic the entire world will be changed on the 1st of January in the year 2001; nor will entire mankind, a sorry lot of half animalistic beings with their passions, vices and sicknesses, go to bed with all their worries and woes the night before and awake suddenly the next

morning as redeemed angel-like beings in paradise. This, my friend, would be a completely wrong conception.'

" 'No, no. This big change, this last overpowering revolution, will take place altogether differently. It will begin decades before and continue for centuries thereafter. Actually, it has already begun; and, to him who knows, the signs of the times are already only too obvious. The great war has created conditions upon earth that cannot possibly endure forever but carry within them the seeds for new tremendous happenings. The next decades will bring more accumulations of similar events — new and smaller wars and single revolutions that will, nevertheless, shake up nations to their foundations — and towards the end of the Twentieth Century lead to the formation of a giant nation of Europe.'

" 'A giant European nation,' I interrupted suspiciously. 'And what nation within it will take the lead? What will it be, republic or monarchy?'

" 'The latter,' replied Arya Manas knowingly, ignoring my first question. 'Such a nation can only be a monarchy.'

" 'And who will be the monarch? Out of what nation or dynasty will he come?' I insisted.

" 'His name will be "World Peace," was his secret-sounding information. 'His realm will reach from the Ural Mountains to the Pillars of Hercules. The nation to whom he belongs has now fallen from its former world power and lies ill and sick. Its dynasty is almost uprooted and gruesomely stepped upon.

" 'More I can but may not reveal to you at this hour, my friend. By the time you have learned to read the stars, this secret will reveal itself.'

"As well as possible, I tried to hide my disappointment. What would I have given to lift just a corner of the veil so that I could tell my own people about its fate. Today, as I write this, my curiosity has been satisfied. In the meantime, I have learned to read in the stars, whose golden-flaming writings do not lie. But, if you who read this should ask me as I asked Arya Manas at one time, I too am forced to answer, at this hour I cannot reveal anything about it.

" 'What I don't need to conceal from you,' my noble friend con-

tinued after a period of silence, 'is the way and the means by which this giant nation at the portal of this new age will come about.'

" 'How else,' I interrupted, 'but as all great nations up to now — by cruel wars, killing each other and the shedding of blood.'

"Arya Manas smiled. 'That would be a sad way towards a Kingdom of Peace. Surely, entirely without war and entirely without shedding of blood, it will not be accomplished; but the biggest weapon will be different. Not far-reaching guns, not fire or poisonous gases, not tanks, submarines, airplanes or guided missiles will be deciding but . . . the Ass of Phillip of Macedonia.'

" 'The Ass of Phillip of Macedonia!'

"I grasped instantly what was meant; but should you who read this not know the story, then let me help you by explaining that this King of Macedonia, the father of Alexander the Great, is supposed to have said that an ass loaded with gold can climb over the walls of the highest fortress.

" 'Yes,' said Arya Manas, 'the ass loaded with gold of King Phillip. Though it will not prove to be the best general, it surely proves to be the best diplomat.'

"Continuing in his way of description, I replied, 'Well, I suppose it would take more than just a donkey loaded with gold. In fact, not just one donkey but a caravan of loaded camels or elephants. Today, one cannot buy just one city as in the times of Phillip; one must deal with wealthy states and nations.'

" 'No,' Arya Manas interrupted, 'not states but statesmen. A state is a concept but statesmen are men and men can always be had for gold — no matter what the price.'

"I looked at him doubtfully. 'I don't know if all the different interests of statesmen in our time can be removed from the world; I don't know if even all the gold available now in all its forms would be sufficient.'

"He took a long draw on his waterpipe; and then, he replied casually, 'Most likely not. Well, then we will have to add more to it until there is enough.'

" 'That would be rather difficult. As far as I know, gold mining yields less and less gold in countries where it was formerly plentiful.

From year to year and day to day, it is getting more difficult to make expenses break even with production. Even, if in the next decades more gold could be produced and all available gold would serve its purpose, how could it all possibly be united, which would be necessary in such a case?'

"Arya Manas again smiled. 'My dear friend, you misunderstood me a little. I did not mean the gold reserves of the world financiers or the mining of this precious metal.'

" 'You don't? Then, what exactly do you mean?'

" 'For example, what would you say if I would tell you that we, namely, the Chakimim here at Bit Nur, have already started to prepare a much larger stockpile of gold for the future ruler of the Kingdom of Peace than the entire known gold now distributed over the earth?'

" 'Ah.'

" 'And if I were to assure you further that this already exceeds the former many times . . . that in subterranean caves, carved out of rocks below Bit Nur, many hundred pound gold bars are stacked up.

" 'Ah.' My surprise was too big to air it other than by this plain interjection.

" 'Also, that we are only waiting for the day when this Prince of Peace will be born — because he is not born as yet — to support his faithful followers who are in exile with the first means for propaganda.'

" 'Then you are alchemists!' I could finally say. 'Does this dynasty now in exile know that you are making preparations towards their world might? You, who are given to read in the stars, is it given you to know the day this Prince of Peace will be born?'

" 'I shall answer your last question first. The date of his birth will be May 7, 1986. It would be too early to try to establish contact with this to-be ruling family. As to our alchemy, it would be best to find out for yourself.'

"The chemical laboratory of Bit Nur consisted as previously mentioned of several rooms of which I had seen only two on my previous visit. They were not any different from those we see in any modern laboratory of the various institutions we come in contact with. The

remaining ones were locked at that time.

"As I hurried along, following Arya Manas' invitation to accompany him, I was surprised to see him pass the door through which we had entered during my first visit.

" 'The laboratory consists of five rooms,' he explained. 'Two of them you are acquainted with. In the third one the Stone of the Wise is now being prepared. The fourth is sort of a chapel in which it is kept. In the fifth the Chakimim gather when they go through through the ritual of the Inkilab.' *

" 'Then you do know how to produce the Stone of the Wise?' ** I said.

" 'Yes,' he answered. 'Although our stone is not exactly identical with the one of the alchemists of the middle ages. Theirs was a crude yellow colored mineral that, when added to the molten metal, was absorbed and brought about the transmutation. Ours, by comparison, is a glass-like crystal that radiates light; and any metal coming in the field of its rays will be transmuted into the next higher specimen, such as copper into silver and silver into gold.'

" 'But what would happen if you wanted to transmute copper into gold?' I asked.

"Then you would have to repeat the process.'

"During our conversation, we had arrived at the next door, which Arya Manas now unlocked. We entered a room of approximately fifteen by thirty feet. The only light that entered it came through one window on the long side of the wall that had shutters. Across the entrance, through which we had come, was another door that was closed. This, I supposed would lead to the 'Chapel.' The floor was covered with thick straw mats; the ceiling and walls were painted plain white. On the left side, from the door across the room, stood a rather large chest. On top, in orderly fashion, lay about a dozen pair of dark glasses — eye glasses with massive gold frames.

"There was something that especially attracted my attention. All the buildings had door handles made of copper, including the door through which we had entered, whereas, on the inside they looked

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* Transmutation

** Philosopher's Stone

like they were of gold. As I turned around to check once more, Arya Manas explained, 'This door handle, too, was once copper — likewise, the frames of those dark eye glasses over there on the chest. Since they are exposed to the radiations of the crystal, they have been transmuted into gold. Right now we won't need the eyeglasses. Later on we will have to use them. But now, first come with me.'

"With those words he opened the door to the chapel. This room was about half the size of the former and was square. It had no windows, only a second door to the left. The light which entered from the room we came from was sufficient to see what it was like. Here, too, the ceiling and walls were painted plain white; and again a large straw mat covered the floor. In the center of the room stood a small octagonal stable surrounded by seven similar ones. On the center table rested a platter of alabaster over which was a dome-like cover of the same material. The diameter of the dome-like cover was about 30 centimeters. The remaining tables were empty.

" 'The next room,' said Arya Manas, 'is really our alchemical workroom that is connected with the laboratory. We'll look around in there some other time. Today we only want to witness the effects of the Billur — that is what we call crystal in our language.'

" 'This surely will interest me immensely,' I assured him.

" 'Be patient for a little while and I shall call the Chakimim at once to the Inkilab.' With these words he stepped over to the door on the side and he knocked three times in a very distinct rhythm.

"From there, i.e., the laboratory, this sign must have been given throughout the building in some manner, because within a minute's time one could hear doors being open and shut; and soon after the first of the Chakims appeared in the anteroom. Since they knew me, they were not surprised to see me. There were seven that had appeared for the 'ceremony.' After we finished greeting each other, without further ado, they reached for the eye glasses. Arya Manas followed their example and urged me to do likewise.

"The utter blackness of the eye glasses was so strong that several minutes passed by before my eyes became accustomed to them. I could barely make out the tip of my nose and the hand in front of my eyes. It was like being in a very darkened room.

"In the meantime, Arya Manas had opened the door connecting the 'chapel' with the anteroom. One of the Chakimas opened the top of the chest that was next to the door. Then, they turned back into the anteroom and stood in a row across from the wall with the window in it. Now, Arya Manas reached for my hand and guided me into the farthest corner of the 'chapel.' Soon afterwards, I felt his hand feeling over my face, making certain that my eye glasses were properly placed. Then he left me. For about one minute there was absolute silence in both rooms and I sensed that the great moment had arrived. And so it had.

" 'Bishum Adunna — in the name of the Lord,' sounded suddenly Arya Manas' voice from the middle of the chapel. At the same time he lifted the alabaster dome from the little center table. What then followed made me almost cry out in astonishment. Suddenly, an intense light filled the entire room — a light so bright, pure and snow-white that our artificial lights and carbon arcs could not possibly produce it. Yes, so strong that if I would not have been entirely sure I would not have believed I had black glasses over my eyes. I had to touch the rims to be certain. It was a neutralizing light, the dark glasses making it possible for me to see things as though they were colorless or transparent from the beginning. Intense as the light was, it was not glaring — thanks to the protective eye glasses. Without them, my eyes could have hardly endured it.

"And where did this wonderful light come from? From a crystal, the size of a fist, on the round alabaster plate on the little center table came the glare. I noticed, after some time while looking at this shape, that it was of an Ikositetraeder.*

"But listen . . . what was that? A monotonous song reached my ears, coming from the anteroom. The Chakims had raised their voices; and, attentively listening, I could understand each word. It was kind of a hymn in which I noticed certain expressions that reminded me of the Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus. As I did find out later, it was the original text. It was sung in the Chaldean language and I shall give it here in the English translation:

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* Twenty-four sided

PRAISE AND HONOR BE UNTO OUR LORD WHO CREATED HEAVEN AND EARTH THROUGH A WORD. AND HE CREATED THAT WHICH IS ABOVE LIKE UNTO THAT WHICH IS BELOW AND THAT WHICH IS BELOW LIKE THAT WHICH IS ABOVE.

HIS FATHER IS THE SUN, HIS MOTHER THE MOON, AND HIS BREATH THE WIND BLOWING GENTLY OVER THE EARTH FRUCTIFYING IT.

AND THE CREATURES FROM BELOW MIX THEIR POWERS WITH THOSE FROM ABOVE AND THEY BEGET A WONDERFUL BEING.

FOUR ELEMENTS DOES IT CONTAIN WITHIN ITSELF.

IN ITS EARTH IS OUR LORD. IN ITS WATER IS OUR LORD. IN ITS AIR IS OUR LORD. IN ITS FIRE IS OUR LORD.

EARTH, WATER, AIR AND FIRE PAY ATTENTION TO HIS WILL, AND OBEY THE LAW OF OUR LORD.

THUS IS THE WORLD CREATED AND THE NAME OF OUR LORD IS THE KEY TO ITS SECRET.

"These seven verses were repeated three times. A deep silence followed when the song had ended.

"Arya Manas, who had stood next to me and who had remained motionless the entire time, walked towards the center table to place the alabaster dome over the crystal. He picked it up from the floor where he'd placed it when the crystal was uncovered. As he lowered it over the crystal, the white light disappeared. When I removed my glasses, I noticed that it was not completely dark again. The seven metal bars on the tables surrounding the center table gave off a fluorescent light, some pronouncedly bluish while others had a green glimmer. Yet, the whole appearance lasted only a few seconds.

"Now, the shutters next door were opened again; and the Chakims entered to get the metal bars. When I examined them

later by daylight, even my last doubts had to vanish — I held pure gold and silver in my hands.

"After that, Arya Manas gave explicit explanations about the entire procedure of the Inkilab, about its being and the whole manufacture of the Billur.

"Since those explanations were given to me under the seal of silence, I cannot make them public in their entirety. Only some of it shall be hinted at. At any rate, it convinced me that our present day chemistry is still rather far off from solving its last great problem, to find the particulars of the structure of matter and the opposing comparisons of the 'Elements' which are no elements; likewise the present periodic system of the so-called elements which contain too many openings.

"Arya Manas, as will be remembered, told me that the Billur, each time, transmutes the metal into the next higher group, i.e., copper into silver, silver into gold. If one studies the periodic table of the elements, it will be seen that this is so. But how is it with iron, platinum, mercury and lead? Here the proper order has definitely not been established.

"Further, Arya Manas, who was informed about the results of our modern researches, told me that the so-called orderly numbers of the elements from 1 to 112, which supposedly are representing the positive nuclei and the numbers of its negative electrons, in reality, have nothing to do with it as the atomic weight is the determining factor.

"These numbers are for the time being to be looked upon as arbitrary and will have to be changed again after the discovery of further 'elements' in between which are not isotopes.

"What finally the thing in itself and the manufacture of the Billur concerned, he explained to me, was the original Stone of the Philosophers, as Hermes Trismegistus knew it, and which differed from the one of the middle ages not because of its substance but because of its crystallization. Also, he explained that in the latter, science was not far enough advanced. The crystal represents the 'Individium' in the mineral kingdom and accordingly belongs to its law of evolution. But this should not be understood that each min-

eral has only one form of crystallization and those different forms of crystallization represent sort of a ladder. No! The same mineral can also, according to the laws under which the crystallization takes place, develop to various heights, either naturally or artificially.

"I have learned a law, or the chemical proportions, which at the same time reveals the manufacturing and crystallization; but I am sorry to say that I am not permitted to bring it out openly here.

"When I examined the silver and gold chemically (the laboratory in Bit Nur has all the necessary apparatus), I came to the astonishing conclusion that the atomic weight of his silver was not 107.88 but 108, and the one of gold was not 197.2 but registered at 196, which gives rise to the conclusion that both may be considered as 'Mischelemente.' Without doubt, there may be many more of those 'Mischelemente.' Yes, we may not even take a shot in the dark when we say that all existing elements in reality represent isotopes mixed out of seven substances.

"Herewith, I have to close now. What the important thing was for me to report, I believe to have convincingly discharged.* Today, when we look about us, we see that of the occult sciences the long ago buried astrology was the first one to emerge again in its resurrection. Today almost everyone believes in the influences of the stellar bodies in the human life. Magazines, newspapers and astrologers are to be seen and heard of everywhere. One can buy crude horoscopes; and even in establishments one can have his horoscope read. And now, no doubt, alchemy will follow the example of astrology. Obstacles that prevented the reviving of alchemy are gradually being moved aside. In the not too distant future, both scientist and layman will reach again for their goal in the Occident that long ago the initiates of the East have attained; but for the time being it has to remain heavily protected and concealed, namely: 'The Stone of the Wise' or 'The Philosopher's Stone.'

"Here Dr. Musallam concludes his report."

When the alchemist began to fold the papers from which he had read the account of Dr. Musallam of Vienna, no one spoke. The

* There were some charts attached, explaining the above, that are too complicated for the layman to understand.

ticking of a clock seemed to be the only sign of life and even the clock could not be seen — only heard. It was Elizabeth Gunderson who broke the silence.

"Do you mean this actually took place?" she asked. She was not sure if she wanted to believe what she had just heard or to regard it as science fiction.

"You may take it for what it is worth," replied the alchemist.

"Yes, but what is it worth?" asked Dr. Farnsworth. "Do you believe what you have read about this alchemical feat?"

"It seems somewhat fantastic," said Dr. Syndergaard, "but so do the moon landings and similar things in our times."

"To this you can add the computer — this marvel of our times," said Godfrey Gunderson. "Besides, this Dr. Musallam must have written this at least more than fifty years ago when things must have appeared somewhat different. This story may seem strange but I can't help but believe that the essence of this report is true."

"Tell us," continued Dr. Farnsworth, "why all this gold? What good does it do? Has gold not caused enough trouble in this world? Should alchemy not be used to assist mankind more in their mental woes and physical misery?"

"You are so right. Absolutely right," said the alchemist.

"Well, then, why emphasize the making of gold as these people in whatever the name of that country was — Turkestan, I think," said Elizabeth Gunderson.

"Nuristan, my dear, Nuristan," corrected her husband.

"All right, Nuristan then," she said. "But what about present-day alchemy? Don't we work differently? What about our modern equipment!"

"Right!" said Dr. Farnsworth. "We can accomplish things much faster and better. As a matter of fact, some of these apparatus are costlier; but they are at the same time more efficient."

The alchemist was well aware that the alchemical laboratory procedure had caught everyone's attention. "There is more than one way to look at it," he continued. "Since the apparatus required for various laboratory procedures differs with individual circumstances financially, environmentally and otherwise, it is stressed herewith

that there is no need for excessive financial outlays in either direction. The work in itself is simple. The utensils used in the end for the final consummation are likewise simple and few.

"Thousands of years ago alchemists had been able to produce their results with crude implements. By contrast, today, with the technically advanced paraphernalia at hand, it should be that much easier. But appearances are deceiving. The new and modern equipment available to the alchemistical aspirant is no assurance that will guarantee results. Because sufficient equipment, compared to modern standards, is not immediately available is no excuse to postpone or delay practical demonstration of the laws involved. Use what little or simple utensils are available to you and add from time to time what you think that you actually will need and will be of help in the work you are performing. It is foolish to spend money on things just to impress others with what you have standing around in your workshop or laboratory but actually have no use for."

"This work is not to create an atmosphere wherein to appear important, but one to be and to become more important in fact. By way of lawful demonstration and application will we know what we are in need of and will find it to be, indeed very little."

"But it is so exciting when you know that you have some results that you can share with others," Elizabeth Gunderson emphasized with her hands.

Nodding his head, the alchemist said, "One should be very careful." He nodded his head again very slowly. "Just be sure before you rush into things. Don't be a quack.

"The enthusiasm that inevitably arises when the alchemical apprentice sees the first manifestations emerge will let him feel that the time has arrived to help cure all relatives and friends with the newly found manifestations. It is not only recommended but very strongly urged and advised to leave the hands and mind from such a procedure. You are only at the beginning of the work.

"It takes knowledge and understanding, when, where and how to use alchemical substances. Stay with your feet on the ground. Test them on yourself and then see what it will do. Remember, nobody can convince you. Only you alone can do that. Put things to the

test yourself and take no one's word for it. Should you find out that what others taught you is confirmed, then, very well, at least you have proven it.

"Don't become a quack and add more ridicule to the work than it has to carry already from those who do not even know anything about it. You have a long way to go yet; you have barely scratched the surface of the work ahead. Therefore, be sensible — time will tell. This you can be sure of. Right now, take your time to find out so that you do not make too many mistakes, which could prove to be embarrassing and costly ones if they are practiced on others prematurely. So, don't be a quack!"

Dr. Syndergaard cleared his throat. "This sounds rather queer to a medical doctor. He is against being a quack. Yet, in all honesty, I have to ask myself, as a medical doctor, if I know what the medications contain that I prescribe to my patients. In most cases I do; but, if I were to know the contents or combinations, especially of those known in chemotherapy, I have to say I do not. The chemistry of some such compounds are too intricate for the chemistry schooling I had. This is sort of bewildering."

"I would not go so far as to call this being a quack," said Elizabeth Gunderson. As she sensed what the alchemist had said about being a quack could have been taken as an offense, her voice sounded as though she were trying to smooth something over.

"There are so many things that man should know but does not," continued the alchemist, "All of you here have had some preliminary instructions, some even more than that. You see, to get sufficient knowledge to let us enter into the realm of mysticism or esotericism, as it is called, means to enter into a sphere of awareness where more knowledge can be had. This knowledge can come only through those who are in possession of it; or it can come by direct influence, which is the best way, from a source that is not known to man.

"Some may believe that all this can be had by way of intellect only. This is not the case. Neither can it be had through ceremonial or ritualistic exercises. It is not a matter of outer experiences but of an inner awakening. We receive knowledge by becoming receptive to what is new to us or up to that time unknown.

"It all begins with fear, yes, fear — fear of the unknown. Any uncertainty has fear as its base. Man is afraid to do something that is wrong for him or others. But fear is superceded by knowledge, which means experience. Only what man experiences does he know. This consists, because of the fundamental law of duality, of an empirical and a personal knowledge. But, it does not end here.

"Man may know little or much. This does not mean that he also understands what he knows. It is understanding that makes knowledge worth its while. But, it does not end here either. Only when understanding is applied in a lawful way and manner will it crown our efforts and will be realized as wisdom. He is wise who knows how to apply his knowledge understandingly. When you consider how little we all know in comparison to what is to be known and how little we understand what we know, it gives us a picture of the progress we have made in this life.

"Speaking from personal experience, it can be said that the only source open to me is to seek for assistance in my quest for knowledge, understanding and wisdom where it can be found — and that is in the intelligence superior to mine. Not the intellectual knowledge of superior man but in the source from which all intelligence comes. It does not matter if we call this source universal, cosmic, God, or by whatever name. Such names are only to indicate what we speak of but do not know of. We are aware of a superior intelligence the moment our mind begins to see where we find ourselves, namely nature.

"No one knows who made or created all that is found within nature. We are only aware that it exists. It ends right there because no one can tell us and prove who it was that brought all this about. We may believe whatever we may choose to believe but we do not know. Therefore, we approach such immense intelligence with awe, with reverence, yes, in true humility because we know by experience that we are inferior to it.

"In all honesty we then confess: I do not know who you are; I do not know where you are; I do not know what you are. But, this I do know — that you are. Otherwise, I would not be nor anything before me or besides me wherein I have my being. This is why I

plead with you, whoever, wherever, or whatever you are that man may believe or imagine you to be, please help me! Please help me to know more about myself so I may find my true relationship to You who brought all this about. Please help me! I am at the end of my knowledge, which is so limited. I know so little. Please help me to understand the little I know. There is no one else I can go to for the answer to this question because other men like me are mortal. Everything about us is limited. Please give me understanding and show me how to use it properly.

"When you have arrived at a point of voluntary self-analysis, help will be forthcoming. It may not come in the way you expect it, but it will come and will be help to the degree that you need. This much I vouch for because I speak from experience. I am not different from you or anyone else when it comes to asking for help. I have found this supreme source of enlightenment not to be a respecter of individuals but of the honesty and sincerity with which it is approached. This is not only my observation and experience. Many others have experienced the same.

"This, then, is the only source known and available to mankind where the answers to our questions can be found from the very beginning of time to the present; and whereby some of it is retained by those unto whom it is given to be instrumental in guiding others towards this very source from whence comes all that which it emanates — namely, the only One or Almighty One wherein all 'other ones' are to be found and have their origin.

A single cloud appeared in the sky and slowly moved towards the moon like the sail of a phantom ship lost in the endless space of the heavenly sea. The hands of an unseen mariner hoisted its billowing sail waiting for the air current to increase so the moon would be obscured. As all watched this heavenly maneuver it looked like cloud and moon had changed direction, for it seemed that the moon moved from behind the cloud and drifted away while the cloud remained motionless.

"Now, I shall leave you, my stay with you has been brief. It was to help you clarify some of your questions for which you will have

to find your own personal substantiation by experience.

"Before long, we shall meet again in the mountains of the far west where more will be given to you so you can prove to yourself the laws of creation that have been revealed to men. It will open up your conscience according to your sincerity and honesty and the willingness to live a life which you will not be ashamed of for others to follow."

"Could you not possibly stay over a little longer?" pleaded Elizabeth Gunderson.

"There is work to be done — much work among mankind. I am a little nobody in this big scheme of creation, an insignificant part; but, out of my own free will and volition, I shall see to it that this work assigned to me is done." He stood up. All others arose at the same time.

There he stood, this alchemist. Man among men. Unpretentious. And then it happened.

He walked over and took the forehead of Elizabeth Gunderson between his hands and kissed her on the forehead. A tingling sensation, like a shower, went up her spine and left her head as in a daze. It was the exact opposite of what she had experienced on occasions before, but then it went down her spine.

He then stepped in front of each of the three men and embraced one after the other. Holding their right hands in his, he kissed them on the cheek. A quiver went through their bodies and a tightening of their embrace was noticeable.

At last, he walked silently towards the sliding door with everybody following. He opened the door and stepped out into the garden. It was dark. It took a moment to get their eyes adjusted from the light of the room to the light outdoors. The just-past-full moon in all its splendour revealed clearly every tree and shrub, even the webbing of the chainlink fence could be seen plainly at the other side of the garden.

The alchemist turned around. Raising his right hand, he said; "Now that you have found your body, soul and spirit by way of separation, purify them and reunite them into a newborn being. Peace be with you."

Turning, he walked into the night, disappearing before their very eyes towards the high fence where there was no gate.

Four People Handle the Philosopher's Stone

Five months passed since the alchemist had left, and on a beautiful September morning all four, Drs. Syndergaard and Farnsworth and Godfrey and Elizabeth Gunderson were on their way to the Rocky Mountains to be with the alchemist at his domicile.

It was afternoon when they arrived in the valley surrounded by snowcapped mountains that rose majestically into the cloudless blue sky. When they stepped from the car, they immediately noticed that a deep and lingering peace penetrated the atmosphere. All inhaled deeply at the same time, noticing the pure unpolluted air that drifted through the canyons that opened up the way to a world so remote and yet measured by distance only a few hours by car away from the next larger city.

Elizabeth Gunderson turned around where she was standing, and completing a circular motion while stretching out her arm, said, "This is paradise." The other three silently nodded in agreement.

"Let's go," said Dr. Farnsworth.

Before them was a fairly steep incline, too narrow to be driven by automobile. They got their suitcases and what could be carried from the car and slowly made their way uphill. No house or other sign of inhabitants could be seen . . . only the everlasting hills before them and in the distance the high mountains reaching their pinnacles into the endless blue sky. There were no trees either . . . only scrub oak and mountain mahogany imbedded in a carpet of wild flowers blooming everywhere among the rocks, which the hand of a giant must have scattered like a farmer would have broadcast his seeds.

When they reached the top of the knoll, they put down their suitcases and looked straight ahead. In front of them was the alchemist's house.

Surrounded by enormously large pines stood a sturdy building constructed with native rocks on the ground floor and rustic wooden boards for the upper story. It, too, was set in a large meadow of multi-colored wildflowers. A stream of crystal clear water ran close by.

Elizabeth Gunderson touched the arm of Dr. Syndergaard who stood next to her and pointed towards the creek where some deer were leisurely walking along as a playful fawn jumped among them.

Although neither spoke, both were simultaneously reminded of those lovely Walt Disney movies. This seemed the logical place for Bambi to jump out of real life into the fairytale world children enjoy so much.

Dr. Farnsworth was the first to pick up his luggage. He signalled everyone to move on by waving his head.

The path from the knoll to the house led down a gentle decline. They were walking slowly as if under an enchanted spell when the door of the house opened and a large German Shepherd dog came running towards them. He did not bark or make any other noise, but when directly in front of them, the dog sat down and looked at them with eyes that sparkled, silently saying "My master and I have been waiting for you," when the alchemist appeared in the doorway. Lifting his right arm, he made the sign of benediction and then walked towards them.

He reached the visitors in a few minutes, and embraced them one by one, kissing each on the forehead and smiling his own peculiar, mild, benevolent smile, so simple to understand but so difficult to describe, and in his resonant voice said, "Blessed is the moment within this hour, that brings us together again. Come, follow me. Everything is ready to receive you for your personal comfort. You have had a long ride, you must be tired by now."

Elizabeth Gunderson was the first to speak. "How can one be tired at such a moment! On the contrary, it feels like all life is rejuvenated in such a surrounding! Turning to the others she emphasized, "Am I not right?"

"Yes," Dr. Syndergaard said. Repeating himself, he continued, "Yes! It is all so different, so very different!"

As they approached the entrance the dog, who had run ahead of everyone, sat down again by the side of the pathway. The alchemist reached down and placed his hand softly on the dog's head. "It won't be long now, Harold," he said, "until you will have to take care of these, your friends."

A furrow formed on the forehead of Godfrey Gunderson while he listened to this oracle-like comment.

As they entered the large vestibule and the massive door shut behind them, everyone sighed. It was like giving vent to some pent-up emotions. They had arrived. They were back again, but this time they had not made the journey one by one, or as a couple like the Gundersons years ago, but they had come together and the whole house seemed to be charged with vibrations that gave rise to great expectations.

"Let me take you to your rooms," said the alchemist. He led the way up the large wooden railed stairway and showed each to his room.

"You will sleep separately while here," he told the Gundersons. "Dinner will be served in about twenty minutes. This will give you time to freshen up." As each had thanked the alchemist silently, he walked down the stairs to the sound of four doors closing softly one after the other.

In the large dining room, the table was a bit of nature brought indoors. Wildflowers brought their bouquet of various scents to the attention of everyone. After each had taken his seat the alchemist, at the head of the table, rose and lifting his arms and head, intoned in his sonorous voice a beautiful chant in a language none of those at the table understood. The last words . . . "namu amida butzu" lingered on and seemingly re-echoed and vibrated through every fiber of all substance around them.

The door leading to the kitchen opened, and in walked a woman followed by a man, each carrying a large tray of deliciously smelling food. As both approached, the alchemist placed his arms around their shoulders and said, "This is John and this is Mildred, who have been with me a very long time. In due time, they will also take care of all of you."

When the alchemist said this, Godfrey Gunderson again wrinkled his forehead because more oracle-like words were spoken, the meaning eluded him like smoke disappears in the sky.

John and Mildred placed the food on the table, smiling pleasantly and cheerfully. They were two individuals as natural and easy to approach as the landscape radiating through the large picture window that framed a view of the southernmost glacier in the United States of America.

"May you enjoy the food as much as we enjoyed preparing it for you," said John.

Dr. Syndergaard could not help but say, "It is lovely food, lovingly prepared and with love accepted."

"We grow our own vegetables, harvest our own grain and fruits," said Mildred. All has been planted, grown and harvested with thanksgiving. The fruit trees we planted after the ground was tilled and prepared by our beloved brother and made ready to be tended by our hearts and hands. That is why the bounties of heaven are so abundantly bestowed upon us in our old age."

"Old age?" Elizabeth Gunderson interrupted. "You are not old, what makes you say that?"

"How old do you think John and Mildred are?" questioned the alchemist?

"I really don't know and I don't want to sound offensive, but neither of you is a day over sixty," she answered. "Of that I am sure."

John and Mildred smiled and looked at each other with eyes and facial expressions that could melt even the meanest heart.

"You are very kind," said John. "Mildred is ninety-four and I will be ninety-six next December."

"No!" came simultaneously like an explosion from all four.

"Impossible!" said Dr. Farnsworth while at the same time Dr. Syndergaard blurted out "This is incredible."

"Not to me anymore," said Elizabeth Gunderson. "I have decided not to be taken by surprise anymore in this place." Godfrey Gunderson only shook his head slowly, but didn't say anything.

Elizabeth Gunderson, never to be outdone, said "Tell us how old you are," as she addressed herself to the alchemist.

He only smiled and looked at John and Mildred who also responded with a bright smile.

"Someday, John or Mildred will answer this question for you," he said.

Godfrey Gunderson's face went blank momentarily, but he managed to keep his gaze fixed on the table. "What is it he is leading up to?" he thought.

Supper was served and everyone ate heartily. It tasted so savoury, so exquisite, so delicious. After the meal, ripe fruits in all their freshness and goodness finished off a feast fit for the Gods of Olympus, Valhalla or any gathering in Shamballa. Afterwards, the alchemist arose and gave thanks again in a few words with arms upraised for the blessing that was bestowed upon them by being permitted to have such exquisite food for their sustenance.

"Let us go out and enjoy the mellow evening air," he said, "for beginning tomorrow we have much work to do in the laboratory that will last for quite some time to come. You will be very busy from now on. Time is short that has been allocated to us while together here at this place. Let us make the most of it. Come, let us go."

He opened the door leading from the rustic dining room to the back of the house. Like a painting before them, the panorama was breathtaking. Mount Timpanogos in its alpine splendour with the glacier glistening on the furthest side and the lower side of the mountain densely covered with pines and quaking aspens, that turned to the golden color of an early fall, was a harmony of all that nature could offer at any one time.

Godfrey Gunderson, like the rest, was enraptured by all this display of Mother Nature, but he could not rid himself of the remarks the alchemist had made not once but three times in the short period since they had arrived.

He was not certain if the others had noticed it too, or if he was the only one who had observed all this, but didn't say anything.

"You are at a high altitude. Breathing may be a little more diffi-

cult up here than at sea level, where you come from. Take it easy for a while until you get used to it," said the alchemist.

Elizabeth Gunderson laughed. "You know what? When we were here the very first time, you had a peculiar saying that has stuck with me all these years. Every time I get impulsive, you know, my Aries nature, Godfrey says remember what the alchemist said and then I repeat your own words: Easy does it."

"They are still valid," the alchemist answered. "Look at John and Mildred. They too live by its meaning. Why strain yourself physically and mentally when there is a less strenuous way to accomplish what needs to be done. Indeed: easy does it," and he laughed heartily. How easy it was for him to laugh so spontaneously and lightheartedly.

Thus they spent the evening together reminiscing about years gone by and what was done and what still needed to be done.

After each had retired to his own quarters, everyone lay wide awake for some time, pondering the strangeness of it all that the four should be together at the same time to be instructed by the alchemist. Stranger still, each had independently selected a time when hopefully the alchemist would grant permission for him to come. As it had turned out, all four had the same date in mind, and in fact had written the date down, none knowing that the others had done the same. "Will wonders never cease," thought Elizabeth Gunderson as she padded her pillow, turned over and fell sound asleep.

Dr. Farnsworth pulled the blanket over his head and before he knew what happened to him, he remembered nothing. His deep breathing was a sure sign of his sound sleep.

In Dr. Syndergaard's room the light was still on as he sat on his bedside. He felt so very peaceful that he slowly got up, then got down on his knees, folded his hands and remembered the days of his childhood when he said his prayers before going to bed. However, this time all he could say was "God is Good." After a pause he got up, got into bed and turned off the light. If one could have seen his face in the dark room, one surely would have thought by his serene expression that he was lost in the most pleasant of dreams.

Not so in the room where Godfrey Gunderson was sitting by the window in the dark looking into the moonlit sky, remembering only too well how less than half a year earlier, all had been sitting in the garden during the time of the Wesak Moon.

Who would have thought then that the alchemist would be willing by now to reveal unto them the precious and highly guarded secret of how to prepare for themselves the Stone of the Wise, the Philosopher's Stone.

Never before in recorded history has it been known that four should be initiated at the same time into this supreme manifestation. Only one at a time and usually one only was heir to this knowledge as handed down by an adept to his amanuensis.

Godfrey Gunderson felt a cold shiver run down his spine. He was not certain if it was because of the cool night, or a feeling of profound expectation.

Slowly he undressed and in his thoughts kissed his wife good night, as was his custom before he went to sleep, and pulling the blanket up to his chin he mused, "God is Good."

A starlit night with a beautiful moon caressed the house in the little valley with towering Mount Timpanogas making sure that no intruder would disturb this tranquil atmosphere where powers from on High had descended and left their blessing upon seven peacefully sleeping individuals and a gentle dog.

The following dawn promised another beautiful day. There were a few scattered clouds rising up from behind the Wasatch Mountain Range, adding a touch of variety to the blameless blue sky of yesterday.

The crowing of a rooster and cackling of some hens mingled with the quacking of the wild ducks in the mountain stream to create the prelude to a new day's symphony.

The brilliant glow of the morning sun streamed through branches of the trees next to the house, enticing the birds to more jubilant songs on this glorious new morning.

John and Mildred were busy in the garden picking some fresh melissa leaves. They disappeared shortly thereafter into the kitchen,

while the Gundersons came through the dining room door out into the open. They walked hand in hand towards the mountain stream.

Not long afterwards, the two doctors appeared, engaged in a lively discussion. They were standing by the door when the tinkling of a bell-like sound vibrated through the morning air. It was the alchemist who had used an iron rod to ring a metal triangle that was suspended on a rope from a wooden post. Breakfast was ready to be served.

At the breakfast table a lively conversation took place, this time with the alchemist listening while the four exchanged their thoughts and experiences of the night just past.

John and Mildred who also sat at the table with the others exchanged meaningful glances looking ever so often at the alchemist who had his same smile that almost sphynx-like said so much, if it could only be properly interpreted.

When breakfast was finished, the alchemist got up and said, "Well, let's go over to the lab and see what needs to be done."

These words were electrifying. What each one had so fervently hoped but didn't dare voice had become an actuality. There was silence. No one spoke, the four just looked at each other speechlessly. It was the alchemist who again broke the silence. "You expected it did you not? That's what you came here for, or . . . ?"

A broad smile brightened their faces. Still no one said anything.

"Very well then, don't just stand there. Let's go." And he walked towards the vestibule with the four stunned disciples following like little children told to do something and not certain they had understood correctly what they were supposed to do.

The alchemist's laboratory was located at the end of the house where it faced the mountain stream. It was a cheery place with the pleasant smell of an oldtime pharmacy. Nothing of the sinister, mysterious atmosphere created by old outdated equipment or mysterious symbols that pictures want us to believe that such a place would have looked like during the middle ages. It could have been any modern laboratory.

There were soxhlet extractors, a distilling apparatus, a fumehood with herbs calcining under it; a centrifuge and more seemingly

complicated glass equipment and other items. One thing that stood out immediately and was very noticeable was the immaculate cleanliness and orderliness. Everything had its assigned place. "Well, then, here we are," said the alchemist, as they gathered around him waiting for what was to come next.

"Nothing much has really changed since we were here last," said Elizabeth Gunderson, while Godfrey Gunderson's eyes wandered around the room. He added on to her sentence, "and that was quite some time ago."

"You all know how to make the herbal stone," said the alchemist while getting a chair from his desk. He motioned to the others to get their chairs.

"Are there any questions concerning this, before we go on?" he asked.

"Just one," Dr. Farnsworth replied. I am having trouble keeping my plant stone from dissolving. What am I doing wrong?"

"You need to add more sulphur from your plant. This will give your stone more cohesion," answered Dr. Syndergaard.

"You are right," said the alchemist. "This usually does the trick."

"Could you please give us in the simplest form of description for anyone to understand who has had some theoretical knowledge, how to make the plant stone, or opus minor as it is called?" asked Dr. Farnsworth.

"Very well, I shall make an attempt," replied the alchemist. "You see, there is actually very little to be found in alchemistical literature about performing the opus minor, or the work in the plant world. Everybody wants to work at once on the Philosopher's Stone. Let me assure you that it is very unlikely that one who has not mastered the little work can accomplish the great work.

Here is how to proceed with the little work:

Take whatever plant you select, or any part thereof. I would recommend the entire plant where it is called for. Take the fresh plant preferably. But you may also use the dried plant if the fresh is not available. Distill from it its essential oil by steam as you already know how. If no special steam distillation apparatus is at hand, a pressure cooker will do very nicely. Insert a tube into the

opening where the weight rests on the vent and collect the steam through a condenser and the oil will separate from the water in the receiving vessel. Thus you have the alchemistical sulphur in the form of an oil.

Take the residue including the water you added in the beginning to produce the steam and to keep the plant from getting scorched. Put all this in a large bottle or container and add some sugar or a little regular yeast and let it ferment. This takes about seven or more days in a moderate heat. When the fermentation ceases, distill from it its alcohol, or your alchemistical mercury. Having gotten this far, evaporate the water, dry the residue and incinerate over a very hot fire. This will yield at first a black, then a gray substance and finally will become white in the process of calcination, as it is called. This can be shortened by taking the light gray ashes and leaching them with distilled water where the water soluble salts will dissolve in the water. Filter this and test it with pH paper. It will show very alkaline indicating a deep blue color on the indicator paper, or litmus paper. Evaporate the water and you will have a white salt.

These three are put together in a retort by first adding the salt in a sufficient amount depending on the size of the retort so that the bottom of the retort is covered not more than one-fourth. Then add enough of the spirit or distilled alcohol, the alchemical spirit and some of the essential oil until the salt, which is the mineral, has absorbed all it can of both and has enough of both liquid additions swimming above it to the height of a finger's thickness.

Distill very slowly off what will come over until the salt is dry. Keep the heat up and calcine in the same retort. Let it cool after an hour or longer and add to the salt in the retort what has been distilled out previously and repeat this until the salt has absorbed all that is put back of what is distilled out. Then have in readiness more of the spirit (alcohol) and sulphur (oil) and add to the salt as before. Do this as long as necessary until the same amount of spirit and sulphur distills over as you have added the last time. This is the sign that the salt has all it can hold. Keep calcining and you will have the plant stone, which you may use to help cure what the herb is supposed to accomplish. You may also hang this stone in

another herb macerating in water. It will attract all the essence, namely the three essentials — sulphur, salt and mercury, to the top which you may skim off. In such a way the plant stone will save you the work of making a stone of every plant.

Here you have the whole story of how to do the little work in a few simple words."

"If you only knew how much these few simple words have caused us headaches, before we finally came up with results," said Elizabeth Gunderson.

"Yes, I can vouch for that," added her husband, "but the important thing is that we have proven it to be exact. Besides we have proof enough of the sensitive virtue of the plant stone."

Dr. Farnsworth gave a deep sigh. "I have not gotten that far yet. For some reason or other something went drastically wrong with mine. When I did hang my finished stone in a macerating plant overnight, it dissolved and I had no more stone." He looked at the alchemist: "What did I do wrong?"

"One thing for sure. You had not enough of the sulphur or oil added to your salt or mineral."

"But I added all that I had," replied Dr. Farnsworth.

"Yes, you did add all that you had, but it was not enough. You should have had enough on hand so you would not work it too dry. Your sulphur, that is the oil, keeps the stone from dissolving."

"Right," said Dr. Syndergaard. "I made this mistake many times until I found out what was wrong."

"Come over here," said the alchemist as he got up and walked over towards the window where a large table was neatly covered with elaborate glass apparatus.

"Do not be fooled by the look of all this intricate equipment. It still has the same function to perform as the simplest of the bottles and flasks, namely to produce what I am looking for only in a shorter time and more thoroughly.

"This is a far cry from the laboratory I have seen where Paracelsus worked. I mean the actual laboratory hundreds of years old in Switzerland."

The hearty laugh of the alchemist reverberated throughout the lab. "What do you think he would have given if he would have had all this in his own time?"

"I'll bet he would have thought he was already in Heaven in a Heavenly laboratory," laughed Elizabeth Gunderson.

"See this bottle?" The alchemist lifted a one-liter clear glass bottle high enough for all to see. It sparkled with a radiant Burgundy Red. "You know what this is?" he asked Dr. Farnsworth. He shook his head. "No, I don't know. It looks like red wine to me."

The Gundersons looked at each other with an expression that said, "this must be it!"

"The essence of antimony," replied the alchemist, and then continued. "Some say it is a violent poison. In fact, it is indeed poison when we take the metal per se. As with all substances, when we free its own true essence we have the essential part thereof which in its final purified state is not poisonous."

"Would this apply to all minerals and metals?" asked Dr. Farnsworth.

"Yes, it applies to all of them," the alchemist answered. "You see, when once you have mastered the process it applies in all cases. There may be some very slight differences here and there, but such are really very slight. The basic formula remains the same."

Reaching for another volumetric flask, he held it up to the light streaming in from the window. 'This looks green and not red, as you can see," he said. "It is the green lion, as the old alchemists called it. From it is made a gum when more of the moisture has been removed. This sticky gum will yield the coveted alchemical mercury, or alkahest."

"But there's more than one alkahest," interrupted Dr. Farnsworth.

"Indeed there is, just as there is more than one kind of alcohol or one type of blood," the alchemist assured him. "Now, look over here. See this bottle with the clear liquid in it? This is THE mercury. There are many alkahests, but only one philosophical mercury. Let me show you."

He took a porcelain dish and poured some of the clear liquid in it. Then he reached for a box of matches. "Step back and watch,"

he said, as he ignited a match and brought it near the small amount of liquid he had poured in the dish. No sooner did he approach the dish than the liquid flamed up and burned with a brilliant flame. "This liquid isn't alcohol, nor has any flammable liquid been added to the substance from which this philosophical mercury was extracted," explained the alchemist. "It was inherent as a flammable gas that had condensed into a golden-colored liquid. With gentle heat and no moisture — the so-called dry process — was this philosophical mercury obtained."

Dr. Syndergaard nodded. "This is the beginning for the Great Work. Without it nothing can be accomplished in it."

"Right," said the alchemist, as he put down the matches and turned towards the group. "This is the beginning. But let me add something here and now. This alkahest you can get from any metal as long as such are in their native state. Take this piece of common iron here," and he reached for a piece of four-square iron as it is used to make iron railings. "This will not do. The reason is that it is devoid of life. It is dead. It has no more mercury. But this here," he reached for an ordinary quart fruit jar, "this contains iron sand from a beach in New Zealand, from the north island." He held the jar up and turned it from side to side so the tiny particles shifted in the jar.

"But it does not look like raw iron. It is not rust-brown, it is black," said Dr. Farnsworth.

"Yes, that's quite right,' 'said the alchemist. "The reason I have this here is to prove that this is what nature produced when man has not interfered. It has been washed with plain water to remove the salt from the sea water, or any organic substance which might have adhered to it, but that is all. Now this can be extracted, without any solvent or menstruum, as the old alchemists called it, this very philosophical mercury. Any metal will yield it under the same conditions after it has been reduced to a fixed salt. This is the entire key. Do you have this key by now?" He looked at each one as he asked this question.

"Oh, this is ridiculous," said Dr. Syndergaard. "Here I have been trying to unravel the secret of the old alchemists in their books and

manuscripts that fill my library at home, only to find that it is as simple as you say."

"Not for me," said Dr. Farnsworth. "It seems to me that a lot has been left out from the raw ore to the gas condensing into a liquid that burns. Sorry, I just don't get it."

"Me neither," added Elizabeth Gunderson. "You're way ahead of me."

"Then you will have to contemplate this whole matter some more until you have reached the same conclusion that all of us have," the alchemist told them. "Once you have this philosophical mercury, the royal road lies open before you and you may begin your journey to reach at its end the coveted goal, the Opus Magnum or the Great Work, the stone of the wise."

"Archibald Cochran wrote in his book, 'Alchemy Restored and Rediscovered,' that this golden water has to be separated into a clear liquid and a golden colored one," said Dr. Syndergaard.

"Indeed," replied the alchemist. "You need the mercury and sulphur separated and purified. Look here." He reached for a bottle that was very tightly stoppered, with the ground glass stopper covered to the neck of the bottle with wax.

"How did you do that?" said Elizabeth Gunderson as she stared at the wax coating.

"When the stopper was inserted, I turned the bottle upside down into some molten wax. It cooled immediately when I removed it and made an air-tight seal," he explained.

"Simple, very simple," was all she could say.

This contains the clear mercury and this bottle in my right hand contains the golden-colored sulphur of the alchemists. These two you need besides your calcined salt, ready to receive them. These are the three essentials that will unite to form one very valuable solid substance that will do for your body what no other medication can accomplish. Now you know what the Philosopher's Stone is and how it is obtained and from what. Your previous studies and the little work on the plants will have prepared you for all that is to follow.

"Have you got a stone here, I mean a Philosopher's Stone?"

asked Elizabeth Gunderson. After all, you have told us so much I don't think it is out of place now."

She was apparently the only one who didn't think it was out of place. Godfrey Gunderson looked at his wife with surprise. This remark had been totally unexpected, even from Elizabeth Gunderson.

Dr. Syndergaard only smiled. He had reached the point where nothing Elizabeth Gunderson said shocked him.

The alchemist shrugged his shoulders and with a twinkle in his eye, replied, "Who knows, maybe there is one around here somewhere."

All four exchanged glances that said a million words, but none seemed to be so taken in as Elizabeth Gunderson. Her imagination was beginning to work overtime.

"As you know by now," the alchemist continued, "transmutation means change from one state to another. According to the universal law of changes or polarity, this takes place both on the physical as well as on the mental plane, because life, or in its other expression, spirit — is eternal. Please get up and come with me over to the wall where the mirror is hanging."

All got up and followed the alchemist, who had walked on ahead of them and stood before the mirror. When all had arrived, he said, "Now look into the mirror and watch," and he turned around.

"I know what you're going to do," said Elizabeth Gunderson. "The same as we did before, to see what former incarnations will reveal."

"Wrong," said the alchemist. "Not the past but what the future will show. Now watch." All looked into the mirror, gazing deeper and deeper. The faces faded into nothingness and in the mirror a desert landscape opened up before them. It was the ending of a desert and the beginning of a beautiful landscape that extended into the distance. Everyone present realized by the mountains on the side and in the far distance that it was a typical Utah or Nevada scene, except for one puzzling point . . . a point of wonder. It was not desolate as it should be, but was green and lush with vegetation.

"You are wondering how this can be possible," said the alchemist so softly that his voice came into their consciousness as from far

away. "Air and moisture are controlled. That is why you see this transformation. This too is a transmutation, a change from an arid, uninhabitable place to a moderate climate with all the moisture needed to change it into fertile ground."

"But how can this be?" asked Dr. Farnsworth. "This large valley is still arid. Nothing grows there but sage brush and some dwarf cedars and junipers. I know this territory — we drove through it only two days ago. This just can't be!"

"All this can be done by transposing particles and rearranging them, like a television station. The process involved is the same, differing only that one takes place mechanically, as a natural condition, while the other is an individually controlled procedure having the same end result — namely disassembly and reassembly of particles of matter." Another change took place in the mirror. The landscape faded and there were the members of the gathering before the mirror, but each looked different, and somehow age had ceased to register itself. Then the group faded and each was seen individually, occupied with his own personal activities.

Godfrey Gunderson was working with some plants in a garden where he experimented with new strains that bore large, luscious berry-like fruits. Elizabeth Gunderson was actively engaged with a group of children ranging in age as it seemed from 8 or 9 years to 14 years. The group of boys and girls showed a similarity of clothing, which was strangely still individualized. The similar-but-different appearance was easy to recognize in the mirror, but most difficult to put into words.

Dr. Syndergaard was seen writing on a large table in a building that seemed to be one large room and appeared to have no doors or windows, open all around on three sides. The only supports were columns that carried ceiling and roof.

Laughter broke the silence when Dr. Farnsworth appeared, surfacing in a large pool of water only to submerge again. But he had a distinct look of recognition on his face before he disappeared again, that said, "I know all of you."

No one was looking into the mirror anymore. All five had penetrated the glass and were part of another sphere of existence. In fact,

none of them were in the alchemist's laboratory at that time. The sensation each experienced separately from one another was nevertheless a joined experience. All four, in their own frame of mind, saw the alchemist in a high mountainous place covered from its icy peaks to the lower slopes with eternal snow. It was not as lush a place as James Hilton described in his book, "The Lost Horizon," or the motion picture adaptation portrayed, but there was a similarity, especially in a stately rock-built mansion-like structure nestled in a volcanic valley. From on top of the surrounding mountains, one could not see very much because warm air rising from the crater lake and its few companion geysers left a cloud blanket over the valley.

At first it appeared that the constant blanket of clouds would not let the bright sun shining above it penetrate to the large valley below. But a gentle air caused by the turbulent mixture of warm and cold air caused continuous pockets of clear sky, allowing the blue sky to be seen in all its bright and clear brilliance. One would have to fly directly over this spot to realize this phenomena, a very remote possibility considering the circumstances of the vastness of the terrain involved. This spot had been selected ages ago to preserve some records of civilizations long since vanished and provide a place where the knowledge and understanding of laws involving natural phenomena and the control over such were preserved and taught by those selected by special dispensation out of the multitude of mankind.

It was here where the alchemist was seen transmitting the exact image of ancient manuscripts on a table-like instrument that could be compared with a present-day xerox machine. But there was a remarkable difference. The product was not a reproduction of the print on the standard sheet of paper. It was an identical replica in form and shape, of the same quality of paper — parchment, paper, or palm leaf, upon which it was originally recorded. Even the size was identical — truly a most remarkable achievement, formerly unheard of.

Everyone witnessed this at the same time, each in their individual prevailing state of mind where they were located at that time. Everyone realized simultaneously what had transpired. Shortly there-

after a blank enveloped each mind and for a split second it seemed too incredible. Then all were again in the alchemist's laboratory, facing the mirror and looking at their own reflections.

The expressions on four of the faces were quasi-comical — a complicated combination of doubt, fascination, excitement and expressions marked by rapidly blinking eyes and slowly shaking heads, adding up to demonstrate bewilderment. Only the face of the alchemist remained its own self, with the by-now famous quiet smile that said so much and revealed even more.

"Well, how was that for a little diversion," he asked. But no one dared to answer. All four were simply stunned by what each had experienced.

"Oh come now, what is so unusual about all this?" he broke the silence once more.

Dr. Farnsworth was the first to clear his throat. "What is so unusual about all this?" he repeated. "Well, if this was not unusual, then what is, do tell me."

Elizabeth Gunderson was next to join in. "Before, you showed us how to look into the past, so we could learn from previous experience, as you did long ago. But this is different. Who would ever have thought for himself what one would be like in the future?" She was not excited, or talking fast. On the contrary, she was very much composed and deliberate in what she said.

Dr. Syndergaard and Godfrey Gunderson were silent. Neither hardly moved, as if glued to where they were standing.

"Yes," continued the alchemist. "Too many people are more interested in what has transpired in their former spheres of existence, and prefer to live in the past rather than the present. In fact, they evade the future as much as possible, except when lost in day dreams, where they hopefully can escape consequences of their actions in this present state of life, for which compensation has to be made one way or the other.

"Tell me," said Elizabeth Gunderson, "if this is so, what we experienced, does this not mean that our life is all laid out and prepared and we have to follow it like a robot? It certainly appears that way, does it not?"

Dr. Syndergaard began to move from where he was standing, as though suddenly awakening from a trance. He moved forward and sat in the chair he had occupied earlier. All eyes followed the motion vacantly.

The alchemist spoke. "Have we not been taught previously that appearances are deceptive? We are not now in the state of mind we were a few moments, or minutes ago, so what appeared to be then is not now, because we are here in this lab, while before each of us was somewhere else, yet none of us left this room in any conventional way."

"Meaning what?" demanded Dr. Farnsworth, stressing every syllable.

All eyes were on the alchemist. He did not answer immediately, but walked towards an empty chair and sat down. "Let us all sit down," he said, motioning towards the empty chairs. "It is very difficult to understand, because people do not know about it." By now all were seated again, and he paused again briefly until they were well-settled in their chairs. Then he continued. "What may seem to some a robot-like existence is anything but such. We should bear in mind that an individual, no matter of what species, is but a segment of an all-encompassing universal mind. Since this divine, God-like cosmic, or universal consciousness is all encompassing, there is nothing remote or separate from it. What is so difficult for imperfect man to understand is perfection itself. When man has learned in his evolutionary process to find his own identity, will he be able to integrate all that he is into that which IS. There is no force, no coercion, no threatening or punishment . . . only willful immersion into that which is IT."

"Describe it in more detail," urged Elizabeth Gunderson.

"Various names have been given to this state of mind," he said, Nirvana, Heaven, eternal bliss, in-dwelling in the bosom of God, in Valhalla, Shamballa. What does it matter how it is named. It simply is where all that which man is longing for is found in one, and not many different states of evolving experiences."

"How can one experience this here on earth?" asked Dr. Farnsworth.

"When we get an occasional glimpse of it, we experience it, but that is all. Man would not be man, such as we know him, if he were to dwell in such a state of mind here on earth. He would not be fit to continue dwelling on this planet, as none of you is fit to be a dweller in the earth, like a worm, or crystal or metal. One thing is certain, you will not be a robot. You will become a fully conscious entity, within all that which is, namely the all. You will function filled with the free will of the one and only will that moves while it rests and rests while it moves."

"My thinking stops here," said Dr. Farnsworth.

"During all this time, Godfrey Gunderson had not uttered a word. It became evident to all present, and they looked at him, which he was well aware of. "Don't look at me as if I would have the answer. I have my thoughts about it, as you have, as we were just told. In the end we have to reach first this state, so a glimpse will be ours when the time comes, to know what it is like to be immersed in cosmic consciousness."

The alchemist nodded. "You will when the time comes. As of now, you are experiencing difficulty. Don't forget for one moment what you experienced individually a short while ago — this was a glimpse of this very consciousness you spoke of."

"So you see, even after you have had a glimpse, a fitness to retain it is required. Besides, I took you along, which is different than when you do so alone. Come over here again."

He got up and walked back to the same table where all had been sitting before they disappeared from the laboratory into the images of the mirror. "You have something on your mind," the alchemist said to Godfrey Gunderson.

"Yes, I do," said he.

"What is getting clearer to you now is an outcome of your contemplation. You were so right when you were thinking that to enter such a futuristic state of consciousness can be compared to a televised picture," the alchemist assured Godfrey Gunderson, "when the visible presence and audio contact have been established. You're right in your assumption that the atomic particles were diffused, which any conscious recipient may reassemble. Only in this case it

goes further, because the transmutation is brought about by the individual. Every assembled atom particle follows the law of the mind into the very pattern the mind creates."

"This is not clear to me," interrupted Dr. Farnsworth. "We all know that a desolate desert exists, we have driven through it recently. So who or what brought this about for all of us to see, not just one alone, and to experience physically?"

"Nature does this," said the alchemist. "It is nature's work."

"Well then, what is nature? Are we not part of nature? If this is so, would nature not surpass man's ability of transmutation?" asked Dr. Farnsworth.

"Yes, nature excels man, because she is man's teacher," the alchemist explained. "You see, nature is the outward expression of the ultimate mind through its elected channel who exerts dominion over our globe. Some call it the global light or messiah. Man is taught by it how to evolve and assist in bringing about the consummation of all that which was created by the intention of this extension of the ultimate mind. We cannot fathom the purpose. We only know that such exists and gives us the opportunity to evolve and likewise be creatively active. First, we have to learn how to create before we are able to form and shape our mentally created images to actual physical appearances which are subject to constant change."

Elizabeth Gunderson swallowed visibly. "This is a little bit too much all at once, if I may say so."

The alchemist smiled. "A little bit more contemplation followed by practical application will make this all very plain. You recall, easy does it, don't you?"

"Yes I do," she laughed. "I only wish it was as easy as you say it is."

"Let us go and have some lunch," the alchemist suggested as he arose. "John and Mildred are preparing the table right now."

Everyone stared at each other. It was plain to see they all thought they'd just finished breakfast. It was difficult for them to realize that half a day had gone by. It was simply incredible to all of them. What had happened to this man-made thing called time?

Like a little herd of sheep they followed, not in a compelling or forced manner, but simply because there was nothing else to do. Each wondered what would come next.

In the dining room, Mildred placed a large tureen of soup on the table. Dr. Farnsworth raised his upper lip under his nostrils and dropping it again, inhaled deeply. "How I like the smell of herbs," he said. Then he took his bowl and held his nose gently over the rising wafts of steam that carried the delicate intermingling aromas. "If I only knew what this contained," he pondered, lost in the delicious smell. Next he tasted a small spoonful, holding it in his mouth for awhile to absorb the flavors that corresponded to the aromas. "Can you tell?" he asked Elizabeth Gunderson.

"She smiled and signaled that she could not. Everyone ate silently, captivated by the sensations created by the herbs. Outside the sun shown brightly and the birds were making noise. They were twittering — not singing. Even the rooster was crowing along with the noon song, and the hens cackled along. Through the open door the sounds of the running water of the brook tried to soothe everything with its steady melodious flowing. On its banks, there again the deer were grazing with the not-too-young fawn.

Back in the dining room, lunch was finished. Everyone waited expectantly for the next move from the alchemist when the very earth seemed to quiver and a tumultuous thunderous crash vibrated through the canyon. Boulders and trees rolled headlong down the far mountainside, bouncing with mighty impact. No one moved except the alchemist. The rest of the group stared at the far mountainside where the crashing boulders came rolling towards the house.

The alchemist walked towards the door and looked up at the still-grumbling mountainside that covered with debris the entrance to the canyon beyond. It was not long before the rumbling had stopped.

"What was that?" asked Elizabeth Gunderson.

"I had to close the entrance to the canyon from this side. Don't worry, the same way you came in is still open to you," he said.

"But why, why did you close the entrance?" demanded Dr. Farnsworth.

"We will all go there and you can see for yourself, as soon as the dust clears up," said the alchemist. No one else bothered to ask any questions, because they realized it was obviously useless. The alchemist would tell them what he wanted them to know and when he wanted them to know it.

John and Mildred got up from the table and began to clear the dishes, but no one else moved. "There is nothing mysterious about all this as you will see in a little while," the alchemist reassured them. "Come, let's go.' He got up and the four followed him.

They walked and at times climbed over the hilly slopes towards the mountainside west of the building where the avalanche had crashed down towards the house. Reaching a knoll, the alchemist paused and pointed towards the opening of the canyon. It was now closed with large boulders and debris. "If I would not have done this now, the water from snow melting in the spring next year would have washed the bed and the water would have filled the valley here, creating a big hazard for the large reservoir and the farmland in the Heber Valley below. There's nothing selfish about this. It has nothing to do with saving this building we just came from."

"But how did you know this could have happened?" asked Elizabeth Gunderson.

Dr. Syndergaard took her gently by the arm and said, "You should know by now that looking into the past makes possible looking into the future. We found it out this morning, didn't we?"

She looked down at his hand. "Yes, I should have known better than to ask this, but then everything is happening so fast that I can hardly keep up with it all."

On the way back towards the house the bright September sun painted everything with a warm glow and the air was very pleasant. The alchemist spoke very little. He seemed to be absorbed in his thoughts, and no one dared disturb him. The others discussed what the power of mind had visibly brought about as they walked slowly towards the house.

John and Mildred were waiting outside, with a peculiar expression on their faces. The alchemist entered without paying attention to anyone. Then John and Mildred looked at each other and John

spoke up. "It would be good if you were to go to your room and lay down for a short while. You will feel better, and be relaxed. There is something of importance that will take place after you arise." Mildred opened the patio door and held it as the four walked in. Then they walked up the great wooden stairway to their rooms.

The alchemist had sat down in his favorite chair, the one he always selected when he wanted to read. Harold had put his head on the alchemist's lap and stared into his eyes while the alchemist gently scratched him behind the ears. Tears formed in Harold's big dark eyes and began to trickle down his muzzle, making two tiny puddles on the alchemist's lap. But those eyes, so full of tears and grief, were also full of understanding. Harold and the alchemist sat quietly for some time.

Outside, the chirping of the birds had ceased, and the rooster and his flock of chickens had vanished. Only the deer were laying motionless by the brook in the shade of a large pine tree, gazing steadily at the house. An ominous silence filled the whole little valley. Even the leaves of the quaking aspen hardly moved and the brook's constant ceaseless song had been lowered to a whisper. The alchemist and Harold walked out of the back door and crossed the little wooden bridge to the shady spot where the deer were laying. The deer got up and greeted him. As the alchemist, the deer and the dog all walked towards each other, the scene faded into a living fairy tale, where man and animal meet and speak in a universal language which all can easily think in and understand. Harold sat down, his head lowered and close to his master's knee. The alchemist half stood and half sat on the bridge railing. His hands scratched the head of the mule deer, whose lowered antlers were almost touching the alchemist's face. The fawn looked at the alchemist with an innocent, quiet questioning expression, and then cocked his head quickly to one side, as if saying, "How come you don't jump and play with me?" The doe came closer and nudged his ear with her cool, moist nose. Then she scratched her head on his shoulder.

Tears began to form in the alchemist's eyes now. "Yes," he told his friends, "my time has come, but not for long and then I shall

return." He explained the situation to the dog and the lovely deer family, as the pines and the brook listened, and understood.

Upstairs, none of the guests knew what to do. A strange atmosphere of expectation had descended and the very air grew more hushed and filled with tension as time passed. To Dr. Syndergaard, the mood hanging over the house became intolerable. He got up and went to Godfrey Gunderson's room. He knocked softly and without waiting for an answer opened the door and walked in.

"I'm glad you're coming in," said Godfrey Gunderson. "This suspense is killing me. What is he up to? Haven't you noticed the strange remarks he's made ever since we arrived? Tell me, what do you make out of all this? What does it all mean? Here, have a seat," he motioned for Dr. Syndergaard to sit down on the bed.

Dr. Syndergaard sat down and shook his head slowly. "I don't know . . . I really don't know," he began. "I think it's just too much all of a sudden. I'm positive the alchemist has something unusual up his sleeve. There is a definite reason for all four of us to be here. By the way, what do you make of John and Mildred?"

Godfrey Gunderson stared up at the ceiling, as if gazing into the past. "They were both here when we came to this place for the first time, many years ago. They certainly haven't changed much, in fact they've hardly changed at all."

"That's very strange, especially from the physician's point of view," agreed Dr. Syndergaard. "And that goes for the alchemist as well. How old do you think he is? Do you have any idea?"

"No, I have no idea," said Godfrey Gunderson. "Really, I don't know. At one time I guessed him to be in his late sixties, but how . . . how could he have gone through some of the things he mentions so casually?

Another knock on the door surprised them both. "May I come in?" asked Elizabeth Gunderson, peeking her head in the door. She walked in without waiting for an answer.

"I had a hunch you were here, doctor. What do you make out of this situation? It seems to get stranger all the time." She sat down next to her husband.

Dr. Syndergaard sighed deeply, but didn't offer a reply. Finally, he said, "I wonder what our fourth colleague is thinking. He seems to be really under a strain."

Without a knock the door opened and Dr. Farnsworth stuck his head in. "I heard you, and you are quite right. This whole thing is getting to be too much for me. May I come in?"

"Sure," said Elizabeth Gunderson. "Well, what next, any ideas?" she questioned, but no one offered an answer. Dr. Farnsworth walked over to the bed and sat on the end. The weight of the four bodies placed a visible strain on one side as a groaning of the springs made obvious.

Elizabeth Gunderson stood up. "Let's go down and see what comes next," she said, in an attempt to sound determined. "Come on, everybody, let's go!" She held the door open and slowly the others got up and prepared themselves for whatever might be waiting at the bottom of the stairs. They all walked down the stairs clinging to the large wooden hand rail, as they were in need of extra support.

The alchemist was sitting at the large table with John and Mildred. Before them was a large sheet of paper. It was a map. "Come join us," said the alchemist, as he stood up. "Please, come have a seat."

Obediently all sat down. "You look sort of depressed," said the alchemist, while he ran his hands over the map to straighten out the wrinkled folding marks.

"I don't think that it is a surprise to you," said Elizabeth Gunderson, "because you can read what is going on in our minds anyway.

The alchemist put the map back on the table. "There comes a time in the life of everyone when some pronounced changes are taking place. John and Mildred are getting ready to leave us. Tomorrow they will be on their way to India," he said quietly.

"India, why to India?" asked Elizabeth Gunderson. "This is an enormously long trip for people of your age," she said to John and Mildred. They smiled at her, almost as if a laugh was concealed, but said nothing.

The alchemist continued, ignoring Elizabeth Gunderson's re-

marks. "They will leave for a place way up in the mountains. After stopping in New Delhi, they will go on to Simla, and from Kashmir, they will proceed up to a place which you may recollect.

"This is strange," said Dr. Farnsworth to the alchemist.

"To some, perhaps," said the alchemist. The characteristic sparkle seemed to be gone from his voice. The alchemist now seemed to be preoccupied with details of the journey, but more than anything, he seemed to be curiously indifferent. "It is not strange to John and Mildred though." He looked towards the map and then back at Dr. Farnsworth. "I have just been explaining the new border changes of Pakistan to them."

"But this is a rather sudden farewell, isn't it?" asked Dr. Syndergaard. Again, John and Mildred smiled as if concealing laughter, but said nothing.

"But this is not all," continued the alchemist. "I too will have to leave you." When he said this Godfrey Gunderson looked him straight in the eyes, but said not one word. Words were not necessary. Godfrey Gunderson was beginning to understand.

The alchemist stood up. "Yes, I am going to leave all of you here. My time has come, as I am needed somewhere else. Our dear Brother Godfrey was well aware of it when he set foot in this house. My first remarks that I made to my dog Harold upon your arrival caught Godfrey's attention. After John and Mildred have left tomorrow, you — the four of you — will be sole possessors of this place. The papers have been made up and all legal formalities have been taken care of. However, there's one more thing to be said. So, please come with me again." He got up and motioned for all to follow. "This will take place in the laboratory," he explained.

In the laboratory John and Mildred went directly to a shelf and got a small wooden box, which they handed to the alchemist. He thanked them, and opened it. He picked up a deep yellowish object that looked like glass, but was not glass. The color was a deep rich yellow, almost with an orangish reddish glow or lustre to it.

"The Philosopher's Stone," blurted Elizabeth Gunderson. The others really did not show too much surprise. To them it was the fulfillment of an expected climax.

"Here," he said to Godfrey Gunderson. His instructions were simple. "Be sure and always keep it in the small wooden box or one like it." The box was not big, nor was the stone, which was the size of a small walnut. Godfrey Gunderson reached with one hand for the little box, but the weight was so great that he had to quickly support the box with both hands.

His face was shining when he handed the stone to his wife. Elizabeth Gunderson was amazed. The little nut-sized stone seemed to be heavier than lead. She held it awhile, looking at it from all sides and then handed it to Dr. Farnsworth.

"This is incredible," was all he could say as he held the stone in the palm of his hand, trying to guess its actual weight. He then handed the stone to Dr. Syndergaard, whose hand was drawn downwards by the weight of the small stone.

"This is the most coveted of all material substances that man can lay his hands on," he said, and returned the stone to Godfrey Gunderson.

The alchemist turned again towards John, who handed him a large bulging manila envelope. "Dr. Syndergaard," he directed the envelope in his direction. "Here are all the papers, including the deed for the property. Everything has been recorded for more than five weeks now, and is absolutely legal."

Turning to Dr. Farnsworth, he mused, "You're wondering what is left for you. In the library you will find some very valuable books and some of my writings. You are the custodian of all of it. It will take some time to delve into them, but you need some time yet before you are ready to come up with what you are after. In due time, you will also find there the answers to your still unanswered questions.

"And for you, dear little sister," he said to Elizabeth, "you and your husband will share jointly in the work before you. Yours will be a mutual accomplishment, when you will part on this plane. A special work has been outlined for you in the future. The two of you, because you two are considered from now on as one," he looked at the Gundersons when he said this, "are the custodians of this place and what it stands for. Of course, all of this becomes your

joint property. It is only that each of you has a special custody over the items mentioned."

Godfrey Gunderson placed the stone in its little wooden box and handed it to his wife. "There is something else that should be made clear to all of us," he said. "As you know, we live rather far from here. How should all of this be handled? I mean, the administration of this place, so it will not only be of benefit to all of us here, but to all those who likewise are 'in search of the miraculous,' as Ouspensky so pointedly described it."

The alchemist nodded in understanding while Godfrey Gunderson spoke. "This is how it could be done, and hopefully will be done. Before long, you will move here, all of you, one after the other. You will jointly instruct those who will find their way here. You will not advertise or make known publicly what is to be had at this place. Each will have to find his own way. Each will stay with you for half a moon cycle and then be on his way again. You will not all be here always at the same time. Some of you will be called away at times, and go to teach where and when you are needed. All of this will fall into place and be made known to you.

"As for now, the farmers and people down in the Heber Valley don't know about me. To them, I am just a loner, a peculiar man, a chemist who lives secluded. Most of the people are of Swiss origin, who settled here about 100 years ago. Some have summer guests, and farther down are some resorts and lodges, but that is about all . . . and of course the Deer Creek Reservoir, a fisherman's paradise. No one would ever suspect that this place is so close to a state park. You do not have to be concerned about all this. And, with the big city nearby, there are also some further facilities available. Even those living a few hours from here don't know what is going on in reality. This should take care of your questions, I hope."

"Yes," said Godfrey Gunderson. "I just hope that the rest of you got it. What about it?" he asked.

"I think I've got it," said Dr. Farnsworth. "Sounds exciting."

"I follow," added Dr. Syndergaard.

"No problem here," said Elizabeth Gunderson.

There was some commotion outside and a group of people were approaching the house. "Let's go out," said the alchemist.

"What do they want?" asked Elizabeth Gunderson excitedly.

"The avalanche caused quite some alarm. Come on," he said and they stepped out into the bright sunshine.

A group of state officials and some farmers walked up to the alchemist. He seemed to know them and greeted some by name, acting very familiar with them. They were concerned that the avalanche had possibly thrown some boulders too close to the house or caused damage. After some conversation and an introduction to his four guests, the company parted and the cars drove off down the hill from the place where they'd parked, next to Godfrey Gunderson's car. It was getting to be late afternoon. A herd of sheep could be seen in the distance, grazing on the mountainside, and some cows were beginning to moo in expectation of milking time. As the sun sunk towards the western mountain range the group walked slowly towards the house. The two women lagged behind the men and walked together. Harold, the German Shepherd, did not budge from his master's side. He constantly looked up at his master's face, watching him intently.

In the large dining room which had turned out to be their meeting place except for the times spent in the laboratory, the warm golden glow of the sun's rays fell on the floor where the dog was laying, watching his master's every move. "One more thing needs to be done," said the alchemist. "We'll wait until after you've had some supper. John and Mildred began setting the table, but the alchemist excused himself, assuring everyone that he had a very good reason for doing so.

After dinner he returned and sat at the table. "Now that you have the stone and the know-how to produce it yourself, let us make a transmutation. We don't have to go into the laboratory for this. In fact, Mildred will do it for you right in the kitchen."

"In the kitchen," said Mildred, smiling. And she led the way.

Everyone stood around the electric hotplate where a heavy cast-iron frying pan was getting very hot. Mildred had a piece of plumber's lead, in the form of a large piece of round cheese, that plumbers

use to melt in the ladle. "Why don't you get a piece off of it," she suggested to Dr. Farnsworth.

John handed him a hacksaw and some pliers. "You will find it easier to saw some of it and then break it off with the pliers," he suggested.

Dr. Farnsworth removed a piece of the soft metal. "What now?" he asked.

"Put it into the pan, and let it melt," said Mildred. He did so, and the lead began to melt like butter, with a thin skin on it that looked a little bluish. It began to bubble, after a short while.

"Now, take a little from the stone," said Mildred to Godfrey Gunderson. John handed him a pointed knife.

"Here," he told Godfrey Gunderson, "take this, and hold the stone over the pan. Scrape just a very little off and let it fall in." Godfrey Gunderson took the knife and began to scrape.

It was a strange sensation. It felt almost like very hard wax. A few tiny crumbs fell into the iron frying pan, but nothing happened. A look of dissapointment showed on the faces of the onlookers who saw this performance for the first time. They must have expected a hissing noise as is described in the old books of the alchemists of former times and former ages. But then it began. First, the sizzling noise. Then some smoke arose. The alchemist cautioned everyone to move away from the smoke and be certain not to inhale it. The curious faces had moved much too close to the frying pan. In the pan, which was glowing on the bottom by now, there was a further welling up and almost a crackling noise. After a while of this simmering, the mass became quiet. There was a slight ebullition and then everything became still in the pan. But there was no golden color to be seen. It looked like a grayish, bluish skin covered the whole molten mass.

"Now," said Mildred. "Watch it. . . ." She put a padded glove on her right hand, because the handle of the pan was too hot to be handled bare handed.

She got hold of the pan securely, and John held up another frying pan, into which Mildred poured the molten lead. John's pan

had been previously heated on another hot plate, but only moderately heated.

As soon as the lead was poured into John's pan, a simultaneous "Ah" came from the four, who were witnessing this phenomenon for the very first time in their lives.

The grayish skin was pushed aside and became almost like a burned crust and it crumbled somewhat. But mostly on the one side farthest from the handle, as Mildred was holding the pan at a tilted angle, there was unmistakeably a yellow metal. It must have been gold, if judged from the appearance. Of course, no one really knew beyond a doubt.

"Go ahead, John," said the alchemist. John handed a sealed bottle of Mallinckrodt reagent nitric acid to Dr. Farnsworth.

"Please make the test," he requested.

The pan with the golden-looking metal was resting on the electric stove. Mildred attempted to lift the metal out onto a porcelain dish with a tablespoon and a fork, but was not very successful. The heavy metal kept falling off.

"Let me help you," said Dr. Farnsworth, and he took the handle of the frying pan. Turning it upside down, he let the golden metal slide into the white dish. He quickly returned the pan to the stove and yelled, "Ouch, this thing is really hot. I mean, it's hot!" He instinctively held his smarting fingers to his mouth. "Gosh, I hope this won't blister. That thing is hot and I do mean hot," he said, looking at the alchemist. He waved his hand through the air, attempting to cool it. "Here," he handed the nitric acid to Dr. Syndergaard. "You'd better do it."

Dr. Syndergaard opened the bottle of nitric acid carefully and as far from his nose as he could. John's hand was resting on the chain that controlled the kitchen ceiling exhaust fan, and he started the fan. Dr. Syndergaard poured some nitric acid carefully over and around the yellow metal.

It fumed somewhat, but the strong fan pulled the slight brownish smoke up. Nothing at all happened to the yellow metal. Only the gray, crumbled particles seemed to react with the acid.

"Why not leave it in for awhile," said the alchemist, "to see if

the acid will attack the gold? Yes, it is gold. Nitric acid will not touch it. That is your proof."

Everyone just looked at the gold, not daring to take their eyes from the white dish. "It's the real thing, all right," said Godfrey Gunderson.

"How else could it be?" said Dr. Farnsworth.

"Ah, yes," breathed Elizabeth Gunderson. "Yes, it is gold."

Mildred put the dish under the cold water faucet and ran the water over it throughly to be certain all the acid was washed off. John handed a new dispenser of pH paper to Dr. Farnsworth, who knew what to do with it. Breaking the seal, he dipped the strip he tore off into the water in the dish. There was no acid reading. In fact, it was slightly alkaline. "This is because of the hard water from the mountain stream," explained the alchemist. 'The acid has been washed out."

Elizabeth Gunderson said, "May I?" and reached out her hand for the metal. Mildred gave her a dish towel and with womanly instinct she started to dry and polish the metal. It was gold.

"Well," said the alchemist. "Now you did it, and have found for yourself, that it is just that simple." Harold sat at his feet, watching his every move, and pricking his ears intently at every golden-toned word.

"Now," said the alchemist, "now for the final act of today's performance." He walked into the living room with Harold directly behind him and everyone following.

He sat down on the large sofa and motioned for others to find seats. Only John and Mildred remained standing. "John and Mildred have seen me laying here many times, motionless and seemingly lifeless. In due time, I have returned to the same body. As you know, it is life, or spirit, that animates matter, and mind, or the soul — our consciousness that directs life within the body or matter. This time, I shall leave this body behind and not willfully direct the animation with my soul or consciousness to return to it.

"I shall leave you here on this plane for some time to come. Don't be alarmed, or worried, or grieve about me. It is a simple matter of transmutation, because what you saw in the kitchen on

the stove and what you will see here on this sofa are, in essence, the same thing." He got up and walked towards Godfrey Gunderson, reaching for his hand. He held it in his right hand while he placed his left arm around his neck, and pressed his cheek against his. He did the same to Drs. Farnsworth and Syndergaard. When he reached Elizabeth, he took her head in both hands and kissed her on the forehead. He then walked to where John and Mildred stood and embraced them both at the same time, while the three smiled at each other. He slowly walked the last few steps to the sofa, stopping to scratch Harold once more behind the ears, and then lay down facing the east, while the setting sun shown on his head and created a halo-like glow. The thoughts and reactions in the minds of all those in the room, except John, Mildred and Harold, were dimmed by then, but the clear recollection of the paintings of old masters where sainted men and women were adorned with halos around their heads flashed through each mind. Only the ticking of a large Black Forest cuckoo clock could be heard. Harold sat on the floor next to the sofa, one paw resting on his master's upper arm, his eyes fixed on his master's face.

No air could be felt through the open window, with the sounds from the brook mingling with the ticking of the clock. All else was silent, and still.

Suddenly everyone in the room strained their hearing. Every back bone stiffened and a prickling shiver ran up their shoulders and the back of the neck. But nobody moved. A slight rustle in the window made the curtain move, ever so lightly. Very faint at first could be heard sounds, as though someone had turned the stereo on. But no one had budged.

The sounds increased slowly, but very profoundly. No one in the room dared move, but all tried to look out of the corners of their eyes at one another, seeking reasurrance that the sounds they heard were indeed real.

And then it started . . . sounds that were not music as they were accustomed to hearing it. It was what must have been formerly mentioned as the music of the spheres — music that simply cannot be reproduced by man or his mechanical means.

A final brilliant glow of the late afternoon sun, as if it had flared intensely, surrounded the entire body of the alchemist. Color and sound merged into one sublime symphonic poem. The curtain rustled once again, and from the sofa a gentle breeze sprung up, touching each one for a moment. The faithful Harold sprung to his feet and then jumped out into the open, running wildly towards the sinking sun, that was already leaving Timpanogos and the other mountains behind as a purple silhouette.

It was getting dark in the living room. The four who were seated had somehow gotten to their feet, but everyone stood motionless, gazes transfixed on the open window. Some one, no one later remembered who, finally moved, almost lurched for the massive wooden stairs and the others followed, and each stumbled silently to his room. No lights were turned on, nor was any movement noticeable upstairs. The four occupants were too tired and totally overcome by all that had happened in the short time since their arrival. The darkness engulfed them and the brook sang to them a gentle quiet song, almost a whisper through the upstairs windows.

The following morning, John and Mildred had their suitcases already packed and were ready to begin their journey. Dr. Syndergaard immediately questioned them about the body, for it was no longer on the sofa. John told them that the mortuary had taken care of everything and that the cause of death had been listed as cardiac failure by the attending physician. "Can you drive us to the Salt Lake City airport, would you mind?" asked Mildred.

"No, I won't mind in the slightest," said Dr. Farnsworth. "Let me carry your luggage to the car."

John smiled, but there again was the secret laughter. "That won't be necessary," said John. "We can take care of ourselves quite well. They both picked up their suitcases so easily that they must have contained nothing. But when Dr. Farnsworth put them into the trunk of Godfrey Gunderson's car he was amazed at their weight. 'Almost too heavy for me to lift,' he thought.

Elizabeth Gunderson walked along with Mildred. "Don't you think this is quite an undertaking for the two of you to go on such a trip, especially at this time of the year?" She asked her question,

apparently not realizing that the woman next to her walked with a grace and posture that showed more vibrance and vitality than even Elizabeth herself.

"This is not the first time," Mildred told her softly. She paused for a few minutes and then continued. "Neither will it be the last time. We should really be on our way now," she told Elizabeth when they reached the car. "Take good care of everything. It won't be too long until you hear from us. In fact, we shall meet again before too long." Everyone waved until the car was out of sight.

At the Salt Lake City international airport, people waited in line, but John and Mildred somehow had their tickets and boarding pass ready and immediately boarded the Western Airlines flight to Los Angeles, where they would begin their overseas flight that would bring them to the country of their destination. There was not much time left for a prolonged farewell. Dr. Farnsworth was a tiny bit stunned by the noises and hectic bustle of the airport, and the departure, too, happened very fast.

Before he knew it, he was driving back along the freeway. Dr. Farnsworth looked at the Wasatch mountain range to his east, where the sun had risen. Not far beyond the turbulent noise of the city was a haven that hardly anyone would suspect. As he came to the cutoff where he had to enter Parley's Canyon, he pulled over and looked back where the Great Salt Lake glistened in the distance, turned to rose-gold by the rising sun, and the picture came to his mind that the alchemist had described when he found himself as a young boy in his bed, and had the vision of where he would be the greater part of his life.

Up in the mountains, the three were waiting for Dr. Farnsworth to return. They had all walked to the knoll below where they had parked the car when they arrived. Not long afterwards, Dr. Farnsworth drove up. When he got out of the car he couldn't believe his eyes. Harold came running towards him. The dog barked joyously and sat next to him. Dr. Farnsworth patted his head and gently scratched the dog behind his ears. Harold looked deeply into Dr. Farnsworth's eyes and his eyes were saying, 'we will become good friends.' He jumped up and ran towards the others, with Dr. Farns-

worth following. When Dr. Farnsworth reached his three friends, he said, "Well, let's go. What are we waiting for? There's work to be done. Before long, someone will find their way to this place — let's be prepared!"

"Right," agreed Dr. Syndergaard.

Godfrey Gunderson smiled. "Yes, but after all, easy does it."

Elizabeth Gunderson put her head on her husband's shoulder and looking at him, said, "God is Good."

All walked slowly towards the house. The sun rose higher and higher and the birds began to sing and the rooster crowed and the hens cackled and the wild ducks in the mountain streams quacked. The deer and the fawn came from behind a tree and looked at the new tenants that would become their very good friends. Dr. Syndergaard stopped walking. So did the others. "Do you hear what I hear?" he asked.

The others nodded silently, not wanting to disturb the faint musical sounds that seemed to come out of the top of the tall pine tree. As they stood motionless, the sounds increased in volume and with their heads raised, they looked towards Mt. Timpanogos. Then they saw a smiling face that slowly merged with the radiant sunlight, while above their four heads, little sparks danced and flickered. It was the sign of their baptism with fire.