THE CHALICE.

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As depicted by all peoples, the chalice is a highly symbolical object. Beginning with sacred, tribal, and martial cups, and ending up with the symbolic designations of nerve-centres, all are accorded especially careful attention. To the concept of the chalice are devoted untiring researches. In images, from the most ancient ones, we see flaming chalices. On stone sculptures in Central Asia can be seen how these guardians of the desert clasp to their hearts the chalice bearing living fire.

Thus in ancient depiction the concepts of chalice and fire are especially often combined. If we recall the most ancient knowledge about the chalice as a nerve-centre, serving as a repository of all perceptions, then all similar comparisons are still more profoundly deepened. The chalice, as a centre which had certain other names in ancient writings, nevertheless has been nowhere overlooked.

Even the most inexperienced people at times sense this important centre. They speak about some sort of constriction in their chest. Such a manifestation is commonly attributed either to a stomach or heart reaction. But more thoughtful and cognizant people reflect that it is not from such causes which call up this tension which can even be oppressive. Sometimes it is possible to make a study of this curious manifestation. Such sensations may coincide with a very important psychic reconstruction of the organism. Especially can this be felt when a man is already capable of advancing in psychic development to a considerable extent, and yet voluntarily or involuntarily he unconformably neglects this possibility.

Likewise people sometimes call this condition anguish or grief, adding considerations about some causeless pangs. It is true that this tension is very similar to certain manifestations of anguish. Some have even said that their hearts can ache on account of something not perceived by them. Such sensations demonstrate once again how carefully and attentively one should refer to the signs transmitted by the organism itself. Without superstition, without prejudices and ignorant terrors, man must clearly take into account what is the most useful thing he can
achieve, and precisely how he can more indifferably take advantage of each given circumstance. Of course there is often bestowed upon people the fullest possibility of acquiring a new step of knowledge. They notice momentarily flashing signs which attract their attention. They sense unexpected aromas, they may even hear something, but an imposed coarseness prevents them from reflecting clearly and distinctly what beneficent possibilities are so near to them.

We speak about a coarsening, because usually all possibilities are concomitant with refinement previously or currently acquired. But only grossness, the consequence of some impedent circumstances, conceals as it were the possibility of the closest realization of beautiful signs, and the responsibility which goes along with them. Very often people refer much more carefully to far-off possibilities of theirs, but when they may even find themselves quite near to certain sources, they begin to dream about some distant seas, evading the most proximate possibility given to them.

But the heart and the centre so closely connected with it, the chalice, knock for attention and grievously remind about what is most essential of all. These tensed warnings beat to the point of illness, but instead of harkening to them, man tries to numb them by some grossly absurd means. Surely sometimes this senseless person will look around, examine, and see that instead of petty everyday matters he could be in contact with the great and the irreplaceable.

Lest he try to justify himself either by age or by intention to do better in the future, it still remains that each instant is non-recurrent. Future intentions can create a multitude of new possibilities, but this will be something else, and the former task will remain unfulfilled. Meanwhile each dereliction, and the more so those concerned with questions of the spirit, will sooner or later make itself known. In the chalice are deposited these unfulfilled or mutilated tasks.

Looking over the history of humanity from the standpoint of given tasks and the results received, it is always possible to convince oneself of the fact that lost spiritual possibilities will always remind about themselves as holes in the road. And again, it is impossible to refer all these vital circumstances to something exclusively great, according to the popular worldly standards. Sometimes the smallest seed outweighs lumps of gold.

Sooner or later people have to return to the spiritual path. Light-minded butterflies cannot always frolic on the flowing lawns, they have to turn to something else which lies in the foundation. When, then, people, willingly or unwillingly, consciously or unconsciously, in their own time or by contacts with others, return to the path of the spirit, the more clearly will the heart beat about everything formerly wrongly concealed, about everything unfulfilled, perverted, and left in neglect.

Any conventional terrors, any degenerate usages,—all this rises up in a ripple of the substance of the chalice, and people again toss out into space the poignant question, "why?" But for all that, each moment it is still not too late to do something in the way of reparation and improvement. Yes, this will be something else, it is not so clearly joined with the Higher Thought. Never
The chalice, manifest as the true secret of memory, preserves for ever the composed treasures and misfortunes. In life, in storminess, in turbulence, are these spiritual sediments reworked. Many wounds are healed, but still the scars remain, either within or without. Therefore so often do the chalice and the heart itself remind about themselves. People must try to direct thought along the right channel in order not to lose what is already lying at the threshold. As sentinels on guard the heart and the chalice remind one that one must not put off until tomorrow anything which can be undertaken today, nor must any luminous perception be soiled by some small dark consideration.

It is not well to spoil another's holiday. Just as precisely is it inadmissible to becloud a luminous perception. What small dark thoughts can intrude into the midst of solemn grandeur! And this will be especially monstrous, just as if a hammer should fall on the strings in the midst of a majestic symphony. Again let us not think of the majestic symphony as something beyond the clouds, and that here we are crawling in the filth of dirty refuse. Precisely, “as in heaven so on earth,” and here in the midst of life resound the echoes of the loftiest canticles. But let us not sully these torches, let us not extinguish the luminous flame in the chalice.

Not by accident have both the greatest acts of humanity and the everyday manifestations of life been connected with the great form of the chalice. The language of symbols lives from the most ancient times to the present. True, people in their ignorance often play with great symbols. They repeat the most beautiful designations in light-mindedness, without any wish to render an account as to where and how it is meet and proper to pronounce them. No responsibility will be a mean false devotion if it be realized in joy of the spirit. Each drooping of the spirit is also deposited in the chalice. But each spiritual joy lights up as a beautiful and genuine diamond.

Someone has said that our own times drive all joy out of life, whereas the life of even certain primitive peoples still preserves the sparks of joy in the whole of their everyday existence. Beautiful is the joy of the spirit. It cannot be broken by any grimaces of death! Spirit and Fire! The flame above the chalice! The more luminous it is, the more beautiful are the treasures preserved therein.

Even in the deserts stand the guardians of the flaming chalice.
not. By this process of knowledge there is no
final and complete formation of the mind, but
only a process, the results of which are not yet
known to man. The mind is like a machine,
which, as it works, acquires new properties
and capabilities, but which is not yet com-
pletely formed. The mind, like a machine, is
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