

AN ACCOUNT OF THE ORDER

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Revised by Jim Eshelman

Unknown to the great crowd, there exists an ancient Order of sages whose object is the amelioration and spiritual elevation of humankind by means of conquering error and aiding women and men in their efforts to attain the power to recognize Truth.

To this secret Order every wise and spiritually enlightened person belongs by right of his or her nature; because they all, even if personally unknown to each other, are one in their purpose and object. They all work under the guidance of the one Light of Truth.

This Order has existed in the most remote prehistoric times. It has manifested its activity openly in the world and secretly, under different names and in various forms. It has caused social and political revolutions. It has proved to be humanity's rock of salvation in times of danger and misfortune. It has always upheld the banner of freedom against tyranny, superstition and oppression in whatever shape they have appeared, whether religious, political or social despotism.

Into this sacred society no one can be admitted by another, unless he has the power to enter it himself by virtue of his own interior illumination. Neither can anyone, once admitted, be expelled unless he should remove himself by becoming unfaithful to its principles and forget again the truths which have been learned by experience.

All this is known to every enlightened person.

But it is known only to a few that there also exists an external, visible organization of such men and women. These, having themselves found and traveled the path to real self-knowledge, are willing to give to others the benefit of their experience and to act as guides to those willing to be guided. Those who are already sufficiently spiritually developed to enter into conscious communion with the Great Spiritual Brotherhood will be taught directly by the Spirit of Wisdom; but those who still need external advice and support will find this in the outer vehicle of that Inner Society.

In regard to the spiritual aspect of this secret Order, one of the Brothers has written:

Our community has existed ever since the first day of creation when the gods spoke the divine incarnation: "Let there be light!" It will continue to exist till the end of time. It is the Society of the Children of light, who live in the light and have attained immortality therein. In our school we are instructed directly by Divine Wisdom, the Celestial Bride, whose will is free and who selects as her disciples those who are devoted to her. The mysteries which we are taught embrace everything that can possibly be known in regard to God, Nature and Man. Every sage that ever existed in the world was graduated at our school; for without Wisdom no man can be wise. We all study only one book, the book of Nature, in which the keys to all secrets are contained; and we follow the only possible method in studying it, that of experience. Our place of meeting is the temple of the Holy Spirit pervading the universe; easily to be found by the elect, but forever hidden from the eyes of the vulgar. Our secrets cannot be sold for money, but we give them free to everyone capable to receive them.

As to the various external vehicles of that Society over the centuries, it will be necessary to give a glance at its history, which has been one and the same in all times. Whenever that spiritual Society has manifested itself on the outward plane and appeared in the world, it consisted at its beginning of a few able and enlightened people, forming a nucleus around which others were attracted. But, invariably, the more such a society grew in numbers, the more people became attracted to it who were unable to understand or follow its principles. In time, those who joined it to gratify their own ambitions or to make the society serve their own ends obtained the majority over those that were more pure. Thereupon the healthy portion of it retired from visibility and continued its benevolent work in secrecy, starting anew. The remaining portion became diseased and disrupted, and sooner or later died disgraced and profaned; for the Spirit had departed from them.

This drama has been reenacted innumerable times over uncounted centuries. The Great Order which lies behind all genuine mystery schools must, to fulfill its purpose, make contact with those parts of humanity which still live in darkness, holding open a portal through which the able may pass into the Light. Yet in doing so, it exposes itself also to those incapable of comprehending what they see and hear. Even today, in our comparatively enlightened times, only a few are able to recognize that real power is only acquired through service; that wisdom is sterile unless held as a lamp to illumine the way for others; and that love is the rapture of discovering that one is not separate from, but rather very much a part of, another, or others, or all.

For this reason, the external organization which we represent has resolved not to reveal its true name to the vulgar. Furthermore, and for the same reason, the names of the members of this order remain unknown, except to those who are intimately associated with them in their common work. If it is said that in this way our Order will gain few members, we would answer that the Order has a spiritual contact with that Inner Sanctuary of the Great Work described earlier. Those who are ready and worthy to be admitted will be guided to us by means of their intuition; while those who have no intuition are not yet ripe. It is better to have only a comparatively small number of capable members than a great many who are as yet unable to serve. From the above it will be clear that the first and most necessary requirement of an aspirant is to keep silent in regard to all that concerns the Order. Not that there is anything within the Order which needs to fear being known to the virtuous and good; but it is inappropriate that things which are elevated and sacred should be exposed to the gaze of the vulgar and be bespattered by them with mud. This would only impede the Order in its work. It would also impede the individual aspirant, for those things which any of us holds most sacred are those things on which we most naturally remain silent; and to speak carelessly of a cherished thing to those who do not value it is to profane that thing for oneself.

Another necessary requirement of affiliation with our Order is mutual confidence between the Order and the aspirant. An aspirant who has no faith in the Order cannot be taught or guided by it. There may be instructions which appear strange, and for which no explanation can be given to the beginner; but when the aspirant has attained a certain state of development, all will become clear. However, this necessary confidence will be of little service if it lacks endurance. The way of the development of the soul, which leads to the awakening of the inner senses, is slow. Without patience and fortitude nothing will be accomplished.

From all this it follows that the next requisite is devotion to one's own spiritual ideal of

the Highest. This includes the condition of discipline. The purpose of the aspirant is to free himself from being dominated by his own sensual self. Please understand that there is absolutely nothing "unspiritual" about delighting in the world of our physical senses, of desire or of enjoyment and use of the material forms of reality. The dichotomy between "spiritual" and "sensual" is an artificial contrivance, as the wise know from experience. However, in the common man or woman, a sense-oriented window on life restricts awareness of those profound feelings of joy and pleasure which arise only from communion in the Spirit. The human soul must be released from the arbitrary limits within which most people encase themselves, so that it may soar freely and discover its genuine heritage. The sensory mature must become a specialized tool for the use of the central Self, rather than the master of a passive and distracted will.

For this reason, the aspirant must not submit to the will of this sensory nature, but must follow the will of that Supernal Self which he does not yet know, but desires to find. What he believes to be his own will is in reality only the blinded desire of his limited human nature, cut off at this early stage of development from the universal currents of love and will which unite all life. By consciously uniting his will with that of the Order, and diligently obeying the obligations to which he commits himself, he obeys the will of his own central spiritual Truth with which the Order is associated for the purpose of aiding him in the conquest over himself.

This conquest by the Supernal Self, and the resultant liberation of it from the distractions and misperceptions of the reactive levels of personality, is the Victory of the Divine Consciousness in woman or man over that within the individual which is earthly and animal. As is written in The Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus, "Separate the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross, suavely and with great sagacity... So thou hast the glory of the whole world; therefore let all obscurity flee before thee." The object of this Great Work is a realization of true manhood and womanhood, and the attainment of conscious immortality in the perfected realization of the highest state of existence.

These few preliminary remarks may be sufficient for those who desire information concerning our Order.