

Light on The Path

by
Mabel Collins

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Mabel Collins: Light on The Path

Mabel Collins, George Redway, 1888

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"Know, O disciple that those who have passed through the silence, and felt its peace, and retained its strength, they long that you shall pass through it also. Therefore, in the Hall of Learning, when he is capable of entering there, the disciple will always find his master."

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PART I - The 1st Set of Rules

These rules are written for all disciples: Attend you to them.

Before the eyes can see, they must be incapable of tears. Before the ear can hear, it must have lost its sensitiveness. Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters it must have lost the power to wound. Before the soul can stand in the presence of the Masters its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart.

1. Kill out ambition

Ambition is the first curse: the great tempter of the man who is rising above his fellows. It is the simplest form of looking for reward. Men of intelligence and power are led away from their higher possibilities by it continually. Yet it is a necessary teacher. Its results turn to dust and ashes in the mouth; like death and estrangement it shows the man at last that to work for self is to work for disappointment. But though this first rule seems so simple and easy, do not quickly pass it by. For these vices of the ordinary man pass through a subtle transformation and reappear with changed aspect in the heart of the disciple. It is easy to say, I will not be ambitious: it is not so easy to say, when the Master reads my heart he will find it clean utterly. The pure artist who works for the love of his work is sometimes more firmly planted on the right road than the occultist, who fancies he has removed his interest from self, but who has in reality only enlarged the limits of experience and desire, and transferred his interest to the things which concern his larger span of life. The same principle applies to the other two seemingly simple rules. Linger over them and do not let yourself be easily deceived by your own heart. For now, at the threshold, a mistake can be corrected. But carry it on with you and it will grow and come to fruition, or else you must suffer bitterly in its destruction.

2. Kill out desire of life

3. Kill out desire of comfort

4. Work as those work who are ambitious

Respect life as those do who desire it. Be happy as those are who live for happiness. Seek in the heart the source of evil and expunge it. It lives fruitfully in the heart of the devoted disciple as well as in the heart of the man of desire. Only the strong can kill it out. The weak must wait for its growth, its fruition, its death. And it is a plant that lives and increases throughout the ages. It flowers when the man has accumulated unto himself innumerable existences. He who will enter upon the path of power must tear this thing out of his heart. And then the heart will bleed, and the whole life of the man seem to be utterly dissolved. This ordeal must be endured; it may come at the first step of the perilous ladder which leads to the path of life: it may not come until the last. But, O disciple, remember that it has to be endured: and fasten the energies of your soul upon the task. Live neither in the present nor the future, but in the eternal. This giant weed cannot flower there: this blot upon existence is wiped out by the very atmosphere of eternal thought.

5. Kill out all sense of separateness

Author's Note: Do not fancy you can stand aside from the bad man or the foolish man. They are yourself, though in a less degree than your friend or your master. But if you allow the idea of separateness from any evil thing or person to grow up within you, by so doing you create Karma, which will bind you to that thing or person till your soul recognizes that it cannot be isolated. Remember that the sin and shame of the world are your sin and shame; for you are a part of it; your Karma is inextricably interwoven with the great Karma. And before you can attain

Virtue and wisdom are sublime things; but if they create pride and a consciousness of separateness from the rest of humanity in the mind of a man, then they are only the snakes of self re-appearing in a finer form. At any moment he may put on his grosser shape and sting as fiercely as when he inspired the actions of a murderer who kills for gain or hatred, or a politician who sacrifices the mass for his own or his party's interests.

In fact, to have lost the power to wound, implies that the snake is not only scotched, but killed. When it is merely stupefied or lulled to sleep it awakes again and the disciple uses his knowledge and his power for his own ends, and is a pupil of the many masters of the black art, for the road to destruction is very broad and easy, and the way can be found blindfold. That it is the way to destruction is evident, for when a man begins to live for self he narrows his horizon steadily till at last the fierce driving inwards leaves him but the space of a pin's-head to dwell in. We have all seen this phenomenon occur in ordinary life. A man who becomes selfish isolates himself, grows less interesting and less agreeable to others. The sight is an awful one, and people shrink from a very selfish person at last, as from a beast of prey. How much more awful is it when it occurs on the more advanced plane of life, with the added powers of knowledge, and through the greater sweep of successive incarnations!

Therefore I say, pause and think well upon the threshold. For if the demand of the neophyte is made without the complete purification, it will not penetrate the seclusion of the divine adept, but will evoke the terrible forces which attend upon the black side of our human nature.

5. "Before The Soul Can Stand In The Presence Of The Masters, Its Feet Must Be Washed In The Blood Of The Heart"

The word soul, as used here, means the divine soul, or "starry spirit." "To be able to stand is to have confidence"; and to have confidence means that the disciple is sure of himself, that he has surrendered his emotions, his very self, even his humanity; that he is incapable of fear and unconscious of pain; that his whole consciousness is centered in the divine life, which is expressed symbolically by the term "the Masters"; that he has neither eyes, nor ears, nor speech, nor power, save in and for the divine ray on which his highest sense has touched.

Then is he fearless, free from suffering, free from anxiety or dismay; his soul stands without shrinking or desire of postponement, in the full blaze of the divine light which penetrates through and through his being. Then he has come into his inheritance and can claim his kinship with the teachers of men; he is upright, he has raised his head, he breathes the same air that they do.

But before it is in any way possible for him to do this, the feet of the soul must be washed in the blood of the heart. The sacrifice, or surrender of the heart of man, and its emotions, is the first of the rules; it involves the "attaining of an equilibrium which cannot be shaken by personal emotion." This is done by the stoic philosopher; he, too, stands aside and looks equably upon his own sufferings, as well as on those of others.

In the same way that "tears" in the language of occultists expresses the soul of emotion, not its material appearance, so blood expresses, not that blood which is an essential of physical life, but the vital creative principle in man's nature, which drives him into human life in order to experience pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow. When he has let the blood flow from the heart he stands before the Masters as a pure spirit which no longer wishes to incarnate for the sake of emotion and experience. Through great cycles of time successive incarnations in gross matter may yet be his lot; but he no longer desires them, the crude wish to live has departed from him. When he takes upon him man's form in the flesh he does it in the pursuit of a divine object, to

accomplish the work of "the Masters," and for no other end. He looks neither for pleasure nor pain, asks for no heaven, and fears no hell; yet he has entered upon a great inheritance which is not so much a compensation for these things surrendered, as a state which simply blots out the memory of them. He lives now not in the world, but with it; his horizon has extended itself to the width of the whole universe.

About the Author

Mabel Collins is remembered today, when at all, as being the author of the spiritual work *Light on the Path*. Few people realise that she was a prolific author, penning at least 46 books. She wrote a number of articles, some of which were to form the basis for her books and was also a fashion correspondent for *The World*, writing a regular column. Most of Mabel's novels are romantic sensation fiction. In later years her experiences in the occult and theosophy were used as a basis for her fiction writing.

Mabel's name pops up again and again in theosophical histories. Yet no one knew much about her – in fact I have seen it written that her life was a complete mystery. Like many of these mysteries the information is there as soon as you begin to look. Mabel Collins was an instrumental figure in early theosophy but owing to the disputes she was involved in she has more or less disappeared from the history books. She was an author, a medium, a theosophist, the lover of Jack the Ripper, a fashion writer, an anti vivisection campaigner ... the list is a lot longer than that of most people's achievements.

Source: Wikipedia/Mabel Collins Biography