

DOING YOUR WILL

I

Tonight I will attempt to present you with the outline of a practical reduction of the philosophy behind *The Book of the Law*, as it applies to our modern life.

This will be difficult, since there is an enormous background of technical, historical, social, and psychological data which I shall be forced to omit. This is all available. I hope that you will be sufficiently interested to review it yourself, if you have not done so.

If you will remember that I am dealing with the end product of this material, and trying, in a very short period, to condense this into a practical conclusion, I will appreciate your tolerance.

There are certain individuals who aspire to a maximum of independence, in thought and in action, in order to achieve the optimum in the function of their nature and in their creative Will.

From among such have come the dreamers and creators, the leaders and revolutionaries, artists and poets and scientists. All that we know of progress and of culture has come from them; all, out of the neolithic swamp, by fire and air, by earth and water, and by the creative word, has come from those minds, from those hands.

The anthropoid mind fears and mistrusts such sorts, and rides, an unwilling ape, on the coat-tails of the creative evolute. Unwilling, unwitting, and often something more than that.

In the indomitable Will of the first order genius, there is sufficient ferocity or subtlety to overcome arboreal opposition, although the manifest result is usually post mortem, over a somewhat mutilated corpse.

But there are numberless fine minds – men and women of high talent and culture – who, lacking a little in the internal certainty, or facing and overwhelming social opposition, have descended into futility and failure.

We propose a philosophy and a way of life having a pragmatic appeal to such minds.

A vast number of the human race has the mentality of slaves. Following Barnum, we can also deduce an appropriate number of slave masters.

There is no criticism here. The orders of nature are obvious, and acceptable to the philosophic. But, to the slave mind, there is often something unendurable in the notion of freedom and

independence; it would have all men as its brothers in bondage. With this, the slave masters are in full accord.

It would be tedious to examine the techniques by which slavery has been fostered; the superstitious and authoritative devices, religious, political, social and economic, which have forged the chains. Whole philosophies, conceiving the Universe of nature as sorrow, and the nature of man as sin, have been constructed to palliate sacrifice, expiation and obedience.

God and Pope and king, society, humanity, the people, the proletariat, the family, war, the national emergency and all the other bogeys from the armory of fear have been summoned to confront the non-groveler. And those psychological weapons have been terribly enhanced.

This is obvious; and there is room in the world for animal acts and animal trainers – but not more than enough room!

If the individual abdicates his independence in the face of this rabbit hypnosis, this prestidigitation, then he has deserved the bondage into which he is delivered.

It is a matter of balance. The leopard won't change his spots – not very rapidly – nor is it needful that he should. It is only needful that the lion take his proper place in the jungle, and keep the leopard and the rabbit where they belong.

The creative individual must take his place as a creative leader in society. He must fulfill his destiny and his responsibility; he can achieve both in fearlessly following his creative Will – his own inner truth; and, in inevitable corollary, he must know and assist others who strive to do likewise.

Then, by leading the slaves a little out of slavery, and the masters a little into humanity and culture – maintaining all the while his own inviolable independence – he will achieve that balance which alone gives significance to the human story.

II

This exposition of the Rights of Man is a statement of first principles. You are referred to Crowley's works, the writings of Nietzsche, Mencken and Bertrand Russell, Emerson's essay on Self-Reliance, and the Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights in the American Constitution. Here I am not unduly concerned with theory, but rather with you, who, like myself, have independently reached these conclusions, and who are interested in a practical reduction.

Freedom is twofold: there is the freedom within, and the freedom without; and, like all things, the first freedom starts at the home plate.

The mainspring of the individual is his creative Will. This Will is the sum of his tendencies, his destiny, his inner truth. It is the one with the force that makes the birds sing and flowers bloom; as inevitable as gravity, as implicit as a bowel movement, it informs alike atoms and men and suns.

To the man who knows this Will, there is no why or why not, no can or cannot; he *IS!*

There is no known force that can turn an apple into an alley cat; there is no known force that can turn a man from his will. This is the triumph of genius; that, surviving the centuries, enlightens the world.

This force burns in every man.

There are those who are too cowardly, too weak, to see or express it.

There are those who are too full of pretense, of gullibility, of fear and greed, to give it utterance.

Their lot is bitterness, failure and frustration; dust and ashes are their portion.

There are those who are bewildered, at odds with themselves, overwhelmed by adversity. They seek the light, and if they persevere, they will find it – within Themselves.

LIBER LXXVII



"the law of
the strong:
this is our law
and the joy
of the world." - *AL. II. 2*

"Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law." --*AL. I. 40*

"thou hast no right but to do thy will. Do that, and no other shall say nay." --*AL. I. 42-3*

"Every man and every woman is a star." --*AL. I. 3*

There is no god but man.

1. Man has the right to live by his own law--

to live in the way that he wills to do:
to work as he will:
to play as he will:
to rest as he will:
to die when and how he will.

2. Man has the right to eat what he will:

to drink what he will:
to dwell where he will:
to move as he will on the face of the earth.

3. Man has the right to think what he will:

to speak what he will:
to write what he will:
to draw, paint, carve, etch, mould, build as he will:
to dress as he will.

4. Man has the right to love as he will:--

"take your fill and will of love as ye will,
when, where, and with whom ye will." --*AL. I. 51*

5. Man has the right to kill those who would thwart these rights.

"the slaves shall serve." --*AL. II. 58*

"Love is the law, love under will." --*AL. I. 57*

III

What are the obstacles to the attainment of the Will? There are many, but they may be grouped into certain primary divisions. And the name of every one of them is FEAR.

1. Fear of Incompetence

“I would like to, but I could never do it.”

This is the flimsiest of excuses; - a narcissistic pap poisoning creation at its source. Confidence, enthusiasm, belief and egotism are the roots of creation.

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

That is the first rule. Humility can come later. Applaud yourself to yourself. Be proud – you are unique, and marvelously made. There is none other like you.

2. Fear the Opinion of Others

“What would people say?”

What people? What would they say? To hell with them. Every genius that lighted the world has outraged public opinion. Do you fear that pack of cards?

BE YOURSELF

Be true to yourself; be honest; enjoy yourself; go your own way, the way of the stars.

3. Fear of Hurting Others

“Mother wouldn’t want me to --- !”

Are you yourself or another? Whose life do you live? To whom are you responsible? Who is your master? Shall we ban cigarettes because they make Mrs. Grundy cough, hand lumber dealers because Christ was crucified, and rend Edison because Johnny was electrocuted?

Does it kill mother when you stay out until one? Is hubby so dreadfully hurt over that flirtation, and wifey in tears about the blonde? This is a subtle device of the slave master. “Do what I say or I’ll feel badly.”

EXPRESS YOURSELF

Live your own life – follow your own star. As the Bible has it: “Forsake your father and mother.” “Let the dead bury the dead.” Let the sick tend the sick. But follow yourself, and no other christ or god. You are sufficient; you justify yourself; you are your own reason:

THERE IS NO MORE NEEDED.

You should be polite about it; you may even be gentle about it. Wanton hurt is needless and gains nothing; but inner, inflexible strength, terribly gentle in its own right of expression, can and *must* follow its own Will as surely as a star follows its own orbit, undeterred and undisturbed by the wailing of inhabitants of minor satellites.

4. Fear of Insecurity

“I might lose my job”

This is the most paltry, the most despicable of the excuses – this slavish whine for daily bread: “Anything you say, masters. I’ll be good, just feed me!”

HAVE FORTITUDE.

Be courageous, and the adventure of Life is yours. Failure – can there be an ultimate failure where manhood is sustained? Is not any failure in freedom better than any success in the Slave Pen?

“Yes,” you might agree – at least I assume that somebody might agree – “but these things are difficult. Where do we start?”

We start, naturally, with the least of the little things. For on the other end of the fulcrum from that little thing is the Universe, and all your heart’s desire. Dedicate yourself to your best and highest, and begin. What is the person you most desire to be – I mean, freely and honestly, not morally? Imitate that person, and what began as imitation will end as perfection.

It is possible to cultivate habits of mind and of attention. The splendor of nature is all about us, immortal in loveliness, inexhaustible in wonder. The sky calls us to the high places; the wind and the rain greet us; trees and grasses speak to us, mountains and the great plains and green valleys. We have only to open our minds and hearts to the eternal forces, and we and the eternal forces are one.

From such harmonies the creative Will draws force to inform the mind. He who has opened the way to nature will not wait long to know his Way.

In the beginning, and consistent action dedicated to the discovery of the Will, or to its development, suffices. The nature of an act is no wise important, so long as it serves as a lever to set the Will in motion, and so long as it is repeated performed.

Almost any device is permissible if it helps. The use of a talisman, fetish or image symbolizing the Will; the use of a daily formula or ritual; and most especially the dedication of a certain period every day – rain or shine, in sickness and in health, in enthusiasm or loathing – for the exclusive practice of the dedicatory act. There is a danger mind or muscle – building as an end in itself can degenerate into a subtle form of masturbation.

The Will must be freed of its fetters. The ruthless examination and destruction of taboos, complexes, frustrations, dislikes, fears and disgusts hostile to the Will is essential to progress. Even in the case of per preferences and prejudices, it must be realized that those things are only significant to the individual; meaningless and often silly in the larger world. On a hot day, Galahad probably stank under his armor. And the sensibility which is nauseated by the sex odor of its own kind, and titillated by the sex odor of plants, might be profitably studied under the heading of a perversion.

Now suppose that the second step is reached. The Will is beginning to flow. You know who you are, what you are, you have discovered your destiny.

It is a time for rejoicing, but not for relaxation. There is no reason in nature why you cannot write music beyond Beethoven, poetry beyond Shelley, out-invent Edison, or out-theorize Einstein!

They are beacons, lighting a sky which you, in your own time and in your own way, will one day illumine.

The task is just begun. There is work ahead – years of work – but work in the real world. Woe to him who dallies with escapist daydreams, with fancies and visions and trances, with specious words and poses, and the onanistic flattery of his fellow opium eaters.

The will is creative and dynamic, and it must create and move in hard fact. By their fruits shall ye known them. “Success is your proof” – but YOUR success, on your own terms. The way is hard; you will face failure after failure, fall after fall. But each fall and each failure is a success, a new jewel for the diadem of conscious experience.

Life – beautiful, terrible, splendid and pitiless; life is your adversary and your love. She you must accept unreservedly, and she you must overcome. She woos to destroy; she submits to conquer, she conquers to submit. That Tigress is your paramour; the Cosmos is your adventure.

And the goal? The totality of experience – the gesture commensurate with the Universe.

Is that not enough?