

Chapter 3

Purifying The Metals

To become a spiritual alchemist one must take a very different view of life from that held by the rest of the world. Life and all its experiences must be considered from the inner plane of realities; for realities alone can be raised in intensity of vibration to the plane of spiritual substance and there persist as portions of the immortal spiritual body.

The attachment to appearances must forever be severed. When seen from this higher plane the things upon which more worldly people dote, and for which they ceaselessly toil and struggle, are recognized to be but the dross of life that must be skimmed from the various molten metals of experience and cast into the waste of perishable debris. These very things that men set their hearts upon, when more closely scrutinized, are observed, to be but the scum that rises to the surface of life's purer metals when they are melted by the fires of the reverberatory furnace of their cosmic relations. This refuse must be skimmed from the pure and transcendent values that lie beneath it and cast to one side; but the metals themselves, thus recognized and separated from the dross, should be preserved with the utmost care as priceless spiritual possessions.

Every experience of life from the cradle to the grave; yea, and every experience of the life to come when the soul shall have passed through the river of physical dissolution, is composed of two parts, real metal and corruptible dross. And it is possible with each experience to separate the dross and the real metal and operate upon either and entirely neglect the other. The vast majority of mankind preserve only the dross and unwittingly discard the part of real value. Consequently, their possessions tarnish, or if placed in the fiery furnace of cosmic usefulness turn to ashes, perishing and leaving them poor, indeed. But the spiritual alchemist carefully and patiently searches each experience of life as it comes to him for the bead of real metal that is sure to be hidden amid the rubbish and debris of its external effects.

Of-times this rarer portion is but a glowing speck imbedded in a mass of confused impurities. Nevertheless, it is well worth the effort of its recovery. Each grain of unsullied metal added to the priceless collection of years, is so much that will never be lost and never be taken away; for it finally will be converted into an ineffable and glorious effulgence, called by the learned, spiritual gold.

**Real Metal
Distinguished
From Dross**

As students of spiritual alchemy let us now learn to discriminate between real metal and dross. The real metal is the underlying reality of each experience, that is, its effect upon the soul; while the dross is the apparent condition, the material effect, which is the cloak of seeming with which every reality in existence is clothed.

All too often, for instance, we speak of a man as if he were merely an entity of flesh and blood, while in reality he is soul and spirit, and the physical body is but the garment of manifestation which covers the character. We commonly say that the man is sick when in reality it is only his body that is ill; and thus we confuse the dross with the real metal. It is true that a man may be sick; for his soul may be corroded with the rusty scales of lust, prostrated with the lead poison of greed, corrupted with the verdigris of sensuality, or tarnished with the impure tin of self-indulgence; but to these it is less common to refer. Men walk through life apparently the image of bodily health, yet with souls that truly fester. But so blinded to reality are most people that they can see only the perishable covering that hides such conditions as inwardly exist.

So long as we consider a man fortunate or unfortunate without appraising the effect of events and conditions upon his soul, we are mistaking dross for the pure metal; for the dross relates to external life, and the true metal only concerns the soul.

When we accept it as possible for one man to be injured by another, we are accepting appearances for reality; for no one is injured in his real nature except by his own permission. But if I take the attitude of a spiritual alchemist I realize that another may torture my body, or place me in prison; yet he can not injure me thereby unless in my ignorance I mistake my body for my real self. I realize that the soul is the only true self, and that it is impossible for anyone to in any way affect my soul except through my own consent.

Thus it is that either in wisdom or in ignorance we give the unspoken nod of our approval to every event that constitutes a real metal of life; that has any influence upon the soul; for the event itself has no power to affect the soul except through the attitude of the soul toward it. The same event happening to two persons may readily be considered from diametrical standpoints, and thus, because viewed from different planes, have exactly the opposite effect on the inner self of one from that which it exerts on the other.

For instance, the inheritance of a fortune may lead one person to a life of ease, luxury and licentiousness; while leading another into a life devoted to welfare work, charity and philanthropic endeavor. The effect on the soul of one is exactly the opposite of the effect on the soul of the other. It is not the inheritance that causes these effects, it is the attitude toward the inheritance. And thus it is with all events; it is not the things which happen that affect us, but only our mental attitude toward those things.

The spiritual alchemist goes even a step further than this: He believes that it is only when we confuse our bodies and material possessions with our true selves that we become the slaves of circumstance. Freedom from the bondage of environment depends upon our recognition of the distinction between our real selves and real obligations and the external form and the responsibilities that some seek to assume, but which in truth belong to Nature.

I do not mean that man can always control the events of the external world. He can do this to a limited degree, and he should strive to increase his ability to overcome such external restrictions as are imposed by environment. But there are many events far beyond the power of any individual to control.

There are events that affect whole communities, whole nations, whole worlds, and even whole starry systems. These events, by compelling adaptation to altered environment, have an effect upon the physical bodies and the actions of the members of a group. No man can imitate Joshua of old, and command the Sun to stand still, with any reasonable hope of being obeyed.

In spite of any effort of our most ardent metaphysician the succession of the seasons will continue. And what wisdom providence displays in making it impossible for us to tamper with the movements of the planets in their orbits! What would happen to our solar system if it could easily be deranged by the monkey-like curiosity of certain prevalent individuals who just can't let the dial of a radio or the engine of an auto alone?

But man is not responsible for the movements of the stars. He is not even as yet responsible for the cyclones that at times sweep sections of the earth. Collectively, man is coming to be responsible for the effects of wind and flood and earthquake, because he is learning how to build to prevent their causing great havoc. Yet even here no one man has more than a limited control. Somewhat he may influence others toward proper building, and he may build properly himself; but he can not compel the inhabitants of a region often devastated to take adequate care of themselves. Nor beyond the limit of his ability to alter their peril is he in any way responsible. Man is not responsible for anything beyond the power of his control.

It is the recognition of the difference between real metal and the dross of life, and of the difference between his own responsibilities and the responsibilities that rightfully belong to Nature, that permits, in the true sense, of the spiritual alchemist being the most free of all men.

Following his reasoning, let us recognize that I am responsible for only such conditions as lie within the range of my ability to alter. There are other intelligences in the universe than myself, and it is presumptuous for me to assume the obligation of their acts, other than in so far as I have an influence over them. If, for example, the nation of which I am a citizen conducts its affairs in a particular way, I am answerable for this so far as I have a national influence. Or if the guiding intelligence of the world, or the influence of energies reaching the earth from the planets temporarily inharmonious to each other, brings drought, crop shortage and pestilence, the responsibility rests with the intelligence or forces superior to man. Certain limitations are imposed upon my physical domain. Beyond my power to overcome them it is an impertinence for me to assume these duties of more advanced beings. Yet because I do have it within my power, and because this is a duty really belonging to me, through forming a proper attitude toward events I can completely be free from the bonds of environment; for it is only through my attitude toward it that any condition or event can in the slightest influence or affect me.

An unjust judge, it is true, can deprive me of all my property; but he has injured me only in as much as I have identified myself with my property. If, instead of discovering the real metal of the event, I mistake the dross, the material thing, the property, for the thing of value, and attach great importance to it, I am greatly injured; for I have striven to retain dross and it has been wrenched from me by violence. But this injury was perpetrated not by the unjust judge, but by myself. It resulted from my ignorance in supposing that I might be injured by another; and from mistaking dross for a thing of permanent value.

Spiritual Freedom

Instead of thus suffering injury, had I sought the real metal, I should have found that it can not be appropriated by another. My material possessions can be retained but a few years at best, and then are discarded; for they can not follow me beyond the tomb. But my most valuable possessions—the metal of each experience gained through my attitude toward it—are not so transitory. They persist as factors in the consciousness that determine character; and character, as well as the mental attitudes forming it, leaps the abyss of death to a land where blossom the fairer flowers of eternal spring.

Man all too commonly identifies himself with external things. He fails to perceive that these are the ores of life that yield only dross unless some special effort be made to recover the true metal within. At times he attracts to himself honor among men, at other times he may have wealth, health, a wife, children, and pleasure. But such ores are of no greater real value than when he is despised among men, or when he loses money, is ill, is separated from his wife, estranged from children and is beset with pain.

Each of these experiences is an ore, or impure metal, composed of both dross and precious mineral. But appraising it from the standpoint of its external effect in each case he retains only the dross and permits the permanent wealth to pass from his possession. It is only when he perceives the effect upon character, and strives for an attitude that makes each event increase the power of the soul, that he discards the dross and recovers priceless metal.

He has not, it is true, the power to determine, beyond certain limits, the kind of ore brought to him. He can acquire, if he tries, ores that contain all of the seven essential metals. And he can get them in ample volume to furnish the metals in quantity enough to flux with each other and complete the transmutation. But whether these ores from which metals may be extracted are pleasing or severe, whether they are easily worked or are extremely refractory, is only to a measure within his power. Thus being beyond his power, they are likewise beyond the scope of his responsibility. The manner in which the raw materials are furnished is mostly the responsibility of Nature. It is his responsibility to work all the ores she provides, and not grumble at their quality.

When he assumes he knows more than Nature, and remonstrates because he thinks she should have brought him ores of a different texture, he is playing a role for which he is fitted neither by experience nor by intelligence. Nature is the boss alchemist, and he may be sure she knows her business. But because he can not control the prerogatives of Nature does not make him a slave. It is only when he tries to do the work that rightfully belongs to her that he is under compulsion. For the only thing that can possibly affect him, that is, affect his real self, is his attitude toward these ores of experience Nature brings. And as it is within his power completely and at all times to control and direct his attitude, whenever he desires he can be completely free.

Alchemical Tools

Nature not only furnishes him with the impure metals, or at least makes it possible for him to mine these ores, but it is her duty to furnish him the tools of work. These tools are named capacity and ability, and include the power to attract or repel opportunity.

Nature has plans of her own that are sensed only by the most advanced of men. She is building a cosmic edifice; and in this tremendous enterprise of construction she must employ workmen of every variety of talent. Not having them ready made, like any good executive, she undertakes to develop them. But as each has a somewhat different duty to perform in the universal enterprise, the training to fill these positions correspondingly varies. The train-

ing of one is not the training of another, because each must be skilled in a different function.

Thus it is when we arrive at this stage of our education known as the life of man, that there is a vast difference in the tools with which we are supplied. One man has Uranus, Saturn and Mars prominent in his birth-chart, with Mars receiving harmonious aspects from Mercury, Uranus and other planets. Not only has he a capacity for mathematics and engineering, but he has unusual mechanical skill, and makes a success of vast projects requiring the use of intricate machinery. His Mars thought-cells use their psychokinetic power, which is increased by his association with Mars environments, to bring good fortune into his life.

His neighbor has Uranus, Saturn and Mars equally prominent in his birth-chart, but Mars receiving discordant aspects from various planets. He also has unusual mechanical skill, but as the Mars thought-cells use their psychokinetic power to bring misfortune into his life, and associating with Mars environments increase their psychokinetic power, whenever he is much about machinery he suffers physical accident, and whenever he attempts a large construction project, fire, or flood, or financial depression comes along just in time to wreck the venture. So-called good luck and bad luck are not fortuitous. So-called good luck is due to the psychokinetic power of harmonious thought-cells in the finer form, and so-called bad luck is due to the psychokinetic power of discordant thought-cells in the finer form.

Still another man has Mars weak in his chart and making no aspects, and has neither the ability nor the inclination to build even a chicken crate. In Nature's school these men are undergoing different training.

Opportunities for physical accomplishment are presented to some, and not to others. And thus we might take up all the various combinations of circumstances that are beyond man's control. For such detailed analysis you may turn to the lessons on astrology and mental alchemy. Here I desire only to point out that people at birth are not equal in ability, nor throughout life are opportunities equally distributed. No more so than a musician should receive the same education as an accountant. For all individuals are undergoing training in Nature's school. The lessons given at any time differ with the progress made in developing the talents necessary for the individual successfully to fill the job for which he is being fitted. The makeup of our astral bodies at the time of birth is the result of the training we have undergone in impersonal lives before birth. We have developed to a point where we have certain capacities and abilities. These are tools we have earned. Furthermore, from time to time, as the result of the stimulation of the thought-cells in our astral bodies, through the movements of planets subsequent to birth, other tools are placed in our possession. They are those accentuated forces that attract or repel opportunities.

Now this outfit with which we are born, as indicated by the birth-chart, and the additions to it, as indicated by the progressed aspects, are given to us by Nature, because they are just what we need at this particular stage in our schooling.

Nature does not compel us to keep the various implements in the imperfect condition with which they come to us. She is quite willing that we should remodel, sharpen, or otherwise perfect, these tools. If we can do so it indicates that we are ready for those of better design. But those she gives us, that is, the astral organization mapped by the birth-chart and progressed aspects, are such as she deems we most need until we attain the skill to make them better. Thus the capacities, abilities and the tendency to attract opportunities

with which we are born are not our responsibility, but that of Nature. When we complain of them we merely air our ignorance; for Nature knows better than we what we need to fit us as competent specialists in her vast workshop. We are not under obligation for our birth-chart, or for the tools it lists, but we are most importantly responsible for perfecting these tools and for the use we make of them.

It is common, I know, for people to deplore both lack of material possessions and lack of opportunity. But when we do this we are vacating our seats, where we sit as pupils at the feet of Nature, and attempting to become the instructors, and tell her how to run the universe. The ores of life, the experiences that have as yet not been separated into dross and pure metal, are only loaned to us by Nature. Material possessions, fame, family, friends, and all that worldly men set their hearts upon, do not belong to us; nor can we retain them more than a limited time. They belong to Nature, and it is her privilege and her wisdom to give and to take away. So also with opportunities. They belong to her, and she issues them to us temporarily only as we can use them in our schooling, and then they are withdrawn to the inscrutable storeroom of a vanished past.

Our tools, however, she permits us to keep. They are the reward of our progress. Some we have at birth. They are capacities, abilities, and the power to attract events and opportunities. If we have used these properly they assume a more perfect form and function, and are built into our finer bodies as implements of increasingly superior design. And as in this more splendid model the workmanship is largely our own, they do not belong to Nature, but to us, and we are allowed to keep them; for Nature, in her wisdom, takes from us only the things that belong to her.

We come into this life well equipped for the lessons we next must learn. We are given, or have acquired in impersonal lives, the necessary tools. Life, at the direction of Nature, delivers to us certain impure metals in the form of experiences. Within limits, we have the power to acquire better tools, and to gain possession of ores more to our liking. We have the power, that is, to modify the makeup of the astral body as mapped by the birth-chart, and to annul influences shown by progressed aspects, or initiate other influences of importance not so shown, by which we change the type and quality of events.

Nature thus permits us, in addition to those otherwise furnished, through unusual industry and intelligence, to acquire other tools and other metals. These are the rewards of exceptional merit; the result of changes deliberately planned and persistently carried out in the development of character.

Other than these that are acquired as a reward for special effort and fine craftsmanship, Nature is responsible for both ores and tools, that is, for both experiences and abilities. Yet exercising these abilities upon whatever experiences Nature sees fit to deliver, using the tools we have upon the ores presented, we can extract from each metal of purity and brilliant luster. When obtained, like our tools when well cared for, the pure metal is never taken away; it belongs to us as a priceless possession. This obligation is not that of Nature; the responsibility of extracting pure metal from each event of life is solely our own.

Let us, therefore, that the metal may be retained, discuss how in each case it may be separated from the dross.

Purifying Lead

As lead is the most difficult of all the metals to separate from the dross, let us consider it first. It is not an easy thing to endure poverty. Nor do I suggest that

we should make no effort to overcome physical want. On the contrary, we should exercise our ingenuity and our initiative to attain to comfortable circumstances, not merely for our own pleasure, but because normally we can render greater service to society when so situated.

Yet if the grinding heel of scarcity crowds us against the financial wall, let us not moan and wail. Dearth, however much it may inconvenience the physical body, is incapable of affecting the soul. It can injure us only when we take a wrong attitude toward it.

Furthermore, the very fact that we are beset by this wolf of want indicates that Nature in her wisdom has provided it for the lesson it carries. We need this particular schooling, or she would have given us some different problem to solve. To the spiritual alchemist poverty is not an affliction, it is the ore of lead, given him by Nature to develop his character. If he shirks the lesson he is still in its presence. The more he dreads it the harder it is for him to bear. But if he learns the lesson here required he alleviates his condition on the physical plane, and gains a valuable spiritual possession. Physically this lesson is at all times, and without complaining, to do the very best he can with what he has. Spiritually, it is that both poverty and wealth are alike in offering opportunity to create values for the soul.

Another ore of lead takes the form of heavy responsibilities. More is required of him than he feels it is possible for him to do. The feeling persists that the weight of the world is resting on his shoulders. But does he become discouraged? Not if he is a spiritual alchemist. However heavy the burdens may be, if he bears them as resolutely as he can, and does not falter in the trying, he knows he has done his part. Maintaining such an attitude, and using his intelligence to discriminate between necessary and useless burdens, they commonly melt like thawing ice, and relieve him of their crushing weight. Should they really be too huge to carry, he realizes, however, that they do not all belong to him; for he is responsible only for what he can do. Even should they crush him they cannot affect his soul. If he has done his best, that is as much as Nature requires.

These burdensome responsibilities, heavy work, drudgery and physical hardship are supplied to him by Nature because they are his present need to continue his schooling. He is being fitted, you may be sure, for a task in cosmic affairs that requires such experiences to prepare him for it. They offer him exceptional opportunity to develop persistence, self-reliance and optimism.

Long, dreary, depressing spells of illness are also impure lead. They are not pleasant, and are not to be sought. A part of the lesson Nature here seeks to teach, no doubt, is how to avoid them. No pains should be spared to shun them, and thus demonstrate that to us they are unnecessary subjects in the curriculum of life. But when they do come, in spite of all our efforts to skip them, we may as well recognize that our future universal fitness requires that we master these disagreeable lessons. There is a right way to act in sickness; quite as much so as in health, and it is our task to find this way and apply it. To become disheartened and blue affords no help, it merely assures that we shall be given more of the same leaden exercise. Not until we face such conditions with patience, hope and fortitude, have we gained the mastery. Realizing this, we discard the dross and retain the metal in its purer form.

Still another kind of lead is death. Every moment of life should contribute as a preparation for this event. In addition to the effort to build, by proper states of consciousness toward the various experiences of life, a complete spiri-

tual body, the preparation should also include gaining knowledge, acquiring ability, reorganizing more harmoniously the thought-cells, and elevating the dominant vibratory rate. Nothing experienced or learned—as hypnotic experiments prove—is ever forgotten by the soul, or unconscious mind. Ability is know-how, and it can be adapted to doing things after life on earth is done. The thought-cell organization of the inner-plane form determines, while on earth and after passing to the next life, the fortune or misfortune of the conditions attracted. And the dominant vibratory rate determines, both while on earth and after life on earth is done, the inner-plane level on which the soul functions.

But whether death comes early or late is only slightly our affair, being largely a responsibility of Nature. To fear death is to become a slave to the desire for life. It is to be miserable, and make less glorious the time allowed us here. Nature knows how long we should remain in this lower class of her instruction. In her wisdom she will see to it we are given opportunity to develop the talents we need for cosmic construction. If we are ready for a different classroom than that afforded by the physical world, why should we mourn at our promotion, or weep at our departure?

Death, it is true, is an ignoble defeat when met with fear and shrinking; but it is a grand victory when faced with the knowledge and courage that it is preferable to a life of slavery to error and fear. The lessons it affords are courage, faith and cheerfulness. Coupled with the conviction that even this grim reaper has no power to alter the soul, they separate the worthless, and retain for spiritual use, this otherwise distasteful metal in its finest form.

Purifying Tin

It is quite as difficult successfully to withstand undue prosperity as it is to contend with adversity. To be sure, prosperity is more pleasing to the physical senses; but if wrongfully viewed it is equally distressing to the soul. All too easily does wealth engender arrogance and pride. All too often it is taken as the symbol of some inherent superiority. Far too frequently does it permit time and energy to be spent in ways that are spiritually unprofitable. The dross is taken for the metal, and proves as great a hindrance to transmutation as does either corrupted lead or rusty scales of iron.

Yet the spiritual alchemist takes a far different view of tin than those who quote from the Bible that hardly shall a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven. He looks upon wealth as merely another ore of life. It is neither good nor bad, but a responsibility to be as energetically shouldered as those of lead and iron. It becomes good or bad for the soul only through retaining the tin or the dross. If the pure metal be discarded, if the opportunity to use it for the good of all is permitted to pass, there is nothing to transmute. Material opulence can not be transported to the spiritual realm. But if wealth is used for the betterment of the race, instead of for reveling in luxury, the dross is discarded and the pure tin retained. Not only does this permanently affect the soul, but in such a manner that its substance is easily transmuted on the spiritual plane.

Nature has provided us with tools, such tools as we require. These are abilities, including those qualities mapped in the birth-chart that tend to attract or repel wealth; and those relations mapped by progressed aspects that at times bring opportunities to acquire riches, or that at other times result in financial loss. It is Nature's part to furnish us with tools, but it is our part to use the tools she places in our hands to the best possible advantage.

If among the tools thus inherited we have the power to gain treasure, we are quite as accountable for the use we make of it as we are of the use we

make of poverty and loss. The Bible parable of the men given for use a different number of talents is not without alchemical significance. We are responsible in proportion to our endowments. Riches are not to be shunned. They are to be made use of for the benefit of all. If a man is gifted as a writer, it is his privilege to use that tool for human uplift. If he is a structural engineer, civilization has need of bridges and tunnels. Likewise, if he has financial ability, he should use it to the utmost; but use it to advance the interests of mankind.

If losses come he should not wail and moan; for these also are ores for his furnace. He has not been injured by the departure of dollars and cents, except as he identifies himself with lucre. Neither is he really benefitted by the possession of more than a competence. But he can be truly benefitted by either loss or affluence if he but recognizes that their real value lies in his attitude toward them. If, like the holy beggars of the East, he shrinks from making money but permits others to support him, he becomes indigent also in his soul. If he gains money merely to feed his vanity and is an aid to riotous living, it is a detriment. But if he has money and uses it for truly philanthropic purposes, he has proved his skill in the use of one of Nature's tools, and from this ore of tin, known by the name of material wealth, he has extracted a pure metal that helps to glorify his soul.

Iron is brought to some people in much larger quantities than to others. Some people have a predilection to cuts, burns, accidents, losses by fire and robbery, and to arousing the ire of others. Iron also is attracted in its more constructive ores, such as following the mechanical, engineering or building trades, or in association, either as operator or patient, with surgery. But of this we may be sure, that whenever the ores of iron are present in large lots, the cosmic fitness of the individual to whom the iron comes requires these experiences for its proper development.

Iron is one of the most necessary metals to complete the transmutation, for without it the other metals become dead and lifeless; but it is only valuable when pure and separated from dross. Lust and anger are both expressions of iron in a state of decay and corruption. Unrelenting effort in behalf of some high cause, and undeviating activity and determination in the face of great obstacles and unfair opposition, are forms of iron that have been well purified.

When others strive to injure us, it is only because of their ignorance. If they possessed understanding they would know that in treating us unjustly they were in reality not injuring us, but only injuring their own souls. Another can not truly injure us, except with our own permission. If, when another speaks harshly to us, or criticizes us, or becomes angry with us, we also become angry, or speak harshly, or become resentful, we are injured. But we have then injured ourselves. But if we cast aside anger and thoughts of vengeance, and think and act justly, though firmly, with a clear comprehension of the effect of our attitude and actions on the welfare of society as a whole, we have freed the metal from dross and come into possession of pure iron.

We should, of course, exercise caution to avoid accidents and to prevent becoming involved in acts of violence. Yet if in spite of due precaution we are in an automobile accident, are held up by a bandit, or a surgical operation becomes necessary, there is a right way for us to conduct ourselves under these circumstances. We can make an effort to prevent undue agitation. Calmness and tranquility are lessons of great value that may be learned from experiences with iron. We do not need to quail; for courage in trying circumstances

Purifying Iron

is a purer form of iron. The material loss, or the pain, has no effect upon the soul except as the soul accepts it. Therefore, each such violent condition may be viewed as a test of our fitness to handle this metal. Instead of spending either time or energy thinking about the pain or loss of injustice, we can immediately plan what constructive activity lies open to us. By diverting our energy to building, or overcoming, or remedying, to the fullest extent that the situation permits, we ignore the seeming, get rid of the dross, and supply ourselves with iron in an unadulterated state fit for final transmutation.

Tolerance is another lesson to be learned from iron. We think, without doubt, that we are right and others who differ in opinion are wrong. We perceive only our own viewpoint clearly, and because iron is abundantly present we become highly enthusiastic. Such enthusiasm is a very fine grade of iron ore, but it must be freed completely from dross before it acquires much value. We must recognize that the experiences of other people give them different viewpoints. Their conceptions are the natural outgrowth of the things that have come under their observation. And as they have not had the same opportunities that we have had, it is impossible for them to see things from the identical angle that we do. We must not, therefore, blame them for their opposition to ideas that to us seem inevitable. They can not help rejecting those ideas. It may be possible, or it may not, to educate them to our point of view; but at least we always owe it to ourselves to avoid any feeling of irritation at their lack of comprehension. We owe it to our own souls not to interfere unduly with their opinions and actions. The exercise of such wide tolerance purifies the iron and prepares it for transmutation.

Should lightning strike, or a fire burn down our property, or money be taken from us at the point of a gun, we have an ore of iron from which may be extracted pure values. Being knocked down, financially, emotionally, or literally, calls for neither weeping nor complaint, but for as quickly as possible getting to our feet and doing the best thing we can think of about it. Lawsuits, the opposition of others, and persecution because of our stand in regard to the things we feel have spiritual value, all bring opportunity to gain iron and to purify it.

We can be just, even to enemies. We can strive valiantly to overcome opposition without desiring the injury of those pitted against us. If their injury becomes a necessity in order that a wider and more important section of society may survive, we may approach the task as a surgeon who sympathizes with a patient performs an operation. He feels no enmity toward the part removed. Instead, he is actuated by the desire to help the patient. Thus does severity, as an ore of iron, when exercised without malice, but with a view to the improvement of conditions, become purified and suitable for spiritual construction.

Purifying Copper

What are we to do when someone whom we love refuses to reciprocate? How are we to act when our husband or our wife grows cold and spurns our caresses? When another and newer face comes along and entices away the one, the tendrils of whose affections have wrapped themselves firmly about our heart, what course of conduct and thought lies open to us? How shall we purify such agonizing copper?

However much we may delude ourselves into that belief, the object of our affection nevertheless is not a spiritual possession. If he or she is the soulmate, that spiritual relationship will take care of itself when we have built a sufficiently active and conscious spiritual body through complete transmutation of the metals of experience to the spiritual plane. But the physical body

of the one loved, and the affectional interests of this one so far as the earthly plane is concerned, are but another form of copper dross.

Friend, lover, husband, and wife, all have their own lives to lead. We may again be united in the beyond, who knows? But while on earth each has the working out of his own destiny, each has the ores of the various metals to collect for himself, each must lead the existence that seems to him most alluring. When we endeavor by force or subterfuge to bind others to us who wish to depart, we are through injustice to them really injuring ourselves. When we grieve and sorrow over their departure, we are retaining a corrosion that eats into the vitals of all that it contacts. This helps us neither here nor hereafter.

It is always permissible, if we can do so without injury to another, to endeavor to win the friendship or love of the one we hold dear. A husband or a wife is a weakling who permits another to steal the love of the mate without making an effort to retain that love. But love is never retained by force, nor by complaining, nor by finding fault, nor by any other disagreeable activity. It is either held through the exercise of lovable qualities, or it is lost. Anxiety, and fear of the loss, but make the loss more certain. And in spite of all effort the loss may come.

If this comes to pass, we may be sure that it is because we have not yet learned to handle copper adequately. Nature has provided us with this particular experience because from it we can learn a needed lesson. When love prospers and affection rejoices, we can permit them to inspire us to noble things. And when love is unrequited, or the affections of a dear one go astray, or the one closest to our heart is violently wrenched away by the angel of death, we still can gain and purify the ores of copper. We do not need to restrain the actions of the other, nor do we need to embrace and maintain sorrow. There are others worthy of love. The birds of the woodland, the pets of the household, the flowers that grow by the side of the path, all welcome and respond to love. What has been taken away was perishable, was dross, and could only at best have been retained a short time. But love itself, as an emotion of solicitude for the welfare of another, or as engendering a tenderness toward all, may be retained permanently as a metal of great purity.

Our thought processes furnish us with the ores of mercury, and commonly they are in a state of considerable contamination. Few of us there are but at times make mistakes. We forget some appointment and suffer embarrassment because of it. We perhaps permit ourselves to be short-changed when making a purchase, and feel aggrieved when we discover it. In addressing a letter we may forget to write the city, or we may reverse the street number in such a way that the letter fails to reach its destination, much to our annoyance. A name with which we are perfectly familiar, at the moment we need it most, slips our memory. We fail to make a memorandum of something we are sure to want to refer to in the future. Carelessly we destroy the receipt of a purchase before examining it thoroughly, and when we find it is defective we can not exchange it because we have nothing with which to prove when and where bought. Thus, because of trains of thought in the unconscious mind that temporarily grasp the reins governing our actions, little errors, and sometimes more serious ones, that are not beyond the limit of our abilities to avoid, creep into our lives.

These errors, as well as more efficient mental activity, are ores of mercury. Usually they are very much defiled, not because essentially they are dross, but because we make them so. The impurity arises from the feeling of cha-

Purifying Mercury

grin, annoyance, irritation, despondency or other disagreeable emotion that is associated with them. All such emotions are proof that we have identified the material effect as the real; while in truth the real and valuable part of the experience is the attitude of the soul toward it. There is a right way to act when an error has been committed as well as when error has been avoided. The right way, which is also the right way under other circumstances, is to spend no time or energy feeling discomfited by the error, but to think only what is best to do under the circumstances. A man can think constructively under any circumstance, and error in particular calls for constructive activity. To realize that a mistake is not important, but that it is important to take a constructive attitude toward all events, is to free the metal from dross and provide mercury in a purity that insures spiritual transmutation.

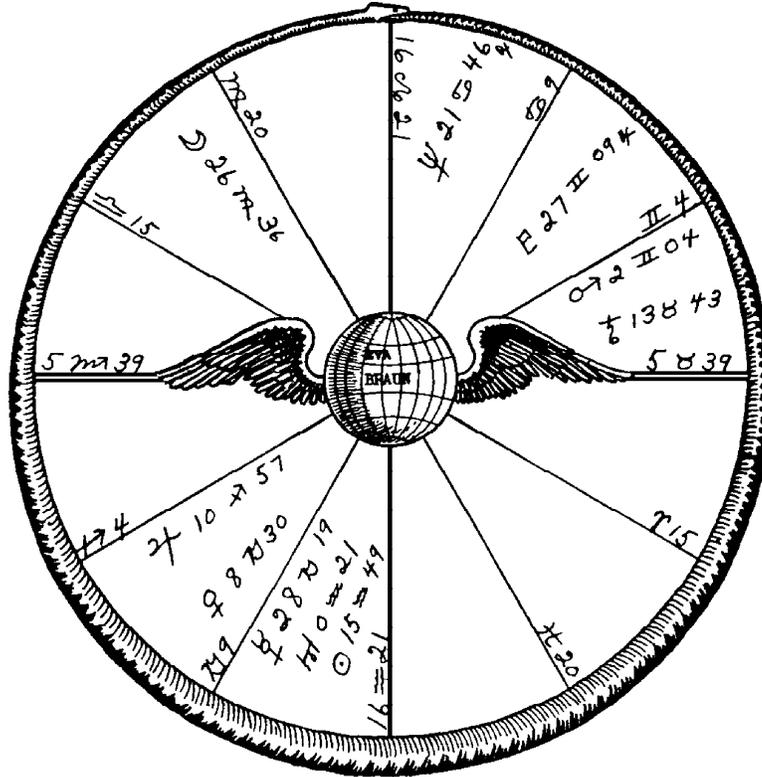
Purifying Silver

Because of their need of us, and our solicitude for their welfare, it is difficult for us to realize that our children are not our own personal property. In reality they belong to Nature, and are being fitted, each in its own way, to become a workman with special abilities and duties, in the cosmic plan. It is our privilege to assist them in this development, and to do what we can to advance their welfare. But we should not assume to be so omniscient that we know what experiences they need, or how they should think at any given time. If their ideas differ from our own, no doubt that is part of their necessary schooling. And if they are taken away from us, it is because they are needed elsewhere, and we need the lesson of their loss.

Furthermore, while no effort should be spared to promote harmony in the home, yet if discord does come it is but another form of silver. The soul need be disconcerted neither by external domestic turmoil nor by the loss nor actions of children. When it realizes that its responsibilities are no greater than its abilities, and looks upon the events of the home as opportunities to learn sympathy, understanding, and non-attachment to that which is transitory, it comes into possession of silver in its purest form.

Purifying Gold

Wherever power and leadership are exercised there is opportunity to secure spiritual gold. If another, who appears to have no greater ability, is given a better position, there is no cause for pain. Appointment and preferment come to some, as does leadership and prominence. If it is denied to us we should feel no self-pity; for there is a right way to act when honors are denied, or when a position is lost, or leadership is denied, as well as when these things are granted. They also are ores of gold; and offer opportunity to build gold into the character. Let us, therefore, accept whatever position life compels us to take as our present need for experience. Let us not cease to strive for a higher post, yet feel grateful for such influence as lies within our power to use. Without complaint, let us utilize whatever power we have for human betterment, and thus purify our gold to a state that encourages transmutation.



EVA BRAUN

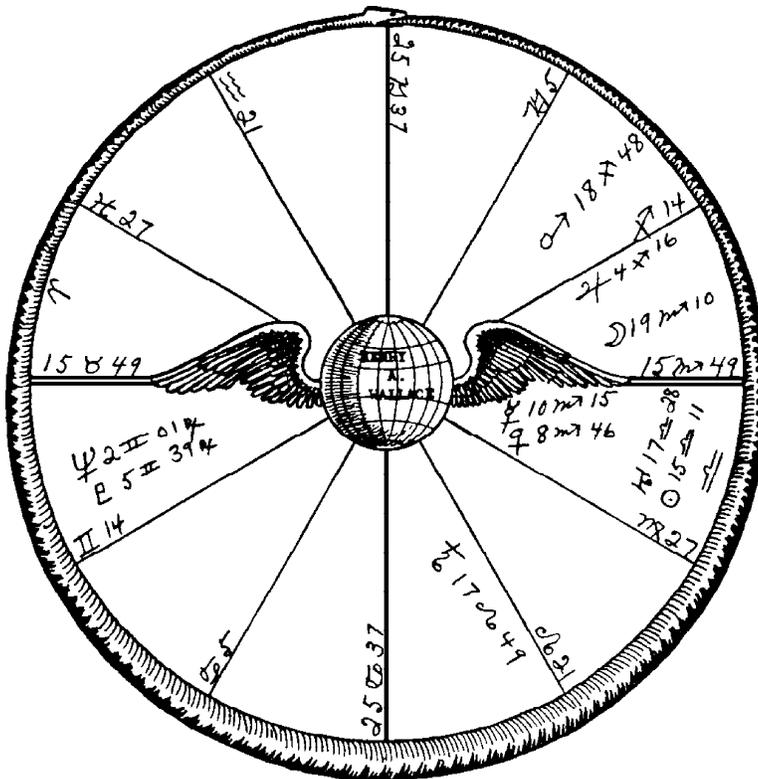
February 6, 1912, 12:30 a.m. 11:33E. 48:09N.

Data from her birth certificate, reproduced in July 21, 1947, Life magazine.

1931, became Adolph Hitler's mistress: Sun sesqui-square Neptune p, Venus trine Mars r.

1936, posed for a patriotic picture: Sun conjunction Mercury p.

1945, last of April, with defeat of Germany at hand, Hitler married her in burning Berlin, and with her consent three hours later put a bullet through her head and then one through his own: Mars sesqui-square Uranus p, Mercury square Pluto r, Mercury opposition Moon r, Moon semi-square Mercury r.



HENRY AGARD WALLACE
 October 7, 1888, 7:00 p.m. 94:30W. 42:20N.

- 1910, received B.S. and became associate editor of Wallace's Farmer:
 Mars sesqui-square Saturn p.
- 1914, married: Mercury sextile Mars p.
- 1924, editor of merged Wallace's Farmer and Homestead:
 Sun square Saturn p.
- 1933, Secretary of Agriculture: Mercury conjunction Mercury r.
- 1941 Vice-president of U. S.: Jupiter sextile Sun r.
- 1945 Secretary of Commerce: Mars trine Neptune r.
- 1918, defeated as candidate for President on Progressive Party Ticket:
 Mercury opposition Neptune r.
- 1950, renounced Progressive Party as communistic:
 Sun conjunction Jupiter p.

