

## **DEVOTIONAL READING FROM 'LIGHT ON THE PATH'**

**16/07/2017**

The four truths written on the first page of "Light on the Path", refer to the trial Initiation of the would-be Occultist. Until he has passed it, he cannot even reach to the latch of the gate which admits to knowledge. Knowledge is man's greatest inheritance; why, then, should he not attempt to reach it by every possible road? The laboratory is not the only ground for experiment; science, we must remember, is derived from *sciens*, present participle of *scire*, "to know" — its origin is similar to that of the word "discern", "to ken". Science does not therefore deal only with matter, no, not even its subtlest and obscurest forms. Such an idea is born merely of the idle spirit of the age. Science is a word which covers all forms of knowledge. It is exceedingly interesting to hear what chemists discover, and to see them finding their way through the densities of matter to its finer forms; but there are other kinds of knowledge than this, and it is not every one who restricts his (strictly scientific) desire for knowledge to experiments which are capable of being tested by the physical senses.

Everyone who is not a dullard, or a man stupefied by some predominant vice, has guessed, or even perhaps discovered with some certainty, that there are subtle senses lying within the physical senses; there is nothing at all extraordinary in this; if we took the trouble to call Nature into the witness box we should find that everything which is perceptible to the ordinary sight, has something even more important than itself hidden within it; the microscope has opened a world to us, but within those encasements which the microscope reveals, lies a mystery which no machinery can probe. The whole world is animated and lit, down to its most material shapes, by a world within it. This inner world is called Astral by some people, and it is as good a word as any other, though it merely means starry; but the stars, as Locke pointed out, are luminous bodies which give light of themselves. This quality is characteristic of the light which lies within matter; for those who see it, need no lamp to see it by. The word "star", moreover, is derived from the Anglo-Saxon "stir-an", to steer, to stir, to move, and undeniably it is the inner life which is master of the outer, just as a man's brain guides the movements of his lips. So that although Astral is no very excellent word in itself, I am content to use for my present purposes. The whole of "Light on the Path" is written in an astral cipher and can therefore only be deciphered by one who reads astrally. And its teaching is chiefly directed towards the cultivation and development of the astral life. Until

the first step has been taken in this development, the swift knowledge, which is called intuition with certainty, is impossible to man. And this positive and certain intuition is the only form of knowledge which enables a man to work rapidly or reach his true and high estate, within the limit of his conscious effort. To obtain knowledge by experiment is too tedious a method for those who aspire to accomplish real work: he, who gets it by certain intuition, lays hands on its various forms with supreme rapidity, by fierce effort of will; as a determined workman grasps his tools, indifferent to their weight or any other difficulty which may stand in his way. He does not stay for each to be tested- he uses such as he sees are fittest. All the rules contained in "Light on the Path", are written for all disciples, but only for disciples- those who "take knowledge". To none else but the student in this school are its laws of any use or interest. To all who are interested seriously in Occultism, I say first- take knowledge. To him who hath shall be given. It is useless to wait for it. The womb of Time will close before you, and in later days you will remain unborn, without power. I therefore say to those who have hunger or thirst for knowledge, attend to these Rules.

They are none of my handicraft or invention. They are merely the phrasing of laws in super nature, the putting into words truths as absolute in their own sphere, as those laws which govern the conduct of the earth and its atmosphere. The senses spoken of in these four statements are the astral or inner senses.