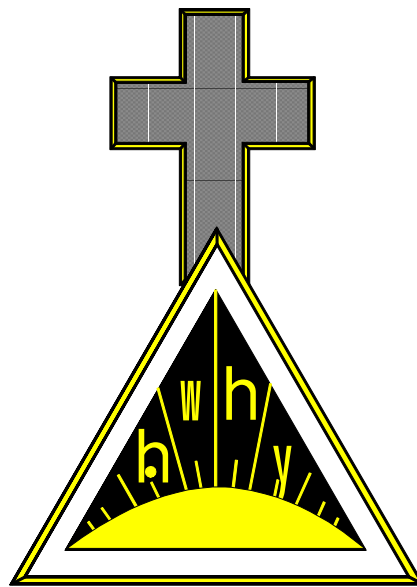


The Hermetic Order Of The
GOLDEN DAWN Intl.

**THE BUILDING OF
CHARACTER AND THE
PURIFICATION OF THE
SOUL**



PRACTICUS 3 = 8

Let the Practicus learn of the wisdom of our Order, that balance through equilibrium is the basis of the soul. If you do not have a firm foundation both in knowledge and the soul, if you are not strong internally as well as mentally and emotionally, then where will you stand when it is time for you to put wand in hand and direct the forces of nature?

In your short time in the Order you have seen many who have come and gone. Is it because they lacked in brain power? No. Was it because they were any less in want of the power of the occultist? No. It was because they did not build a firm foundation on which to stand, or as better stated in the Zelator initiation, "Except Adonai build the house, the house will fall."

Inheritor of a dying world, we know that we are born into a world of decay and Darkness, a world of Nature, a world of strife, argument, and contending forces. Let the Practicus always, above all things, endeavor to seek the Light through reconciliation, through love, and through compassion. Let us not condemn the trials and tribulations of this life, for in them there is the kernel and seed of strength, and by their means there is a pathway that opens up and leads us unto the Light Divine. Our life is but a day, a second, but a moment in eternity. It is but a mere drop in an endless ocean of time. If we were not given trials, if they did not exist, then how could we purge our soul, how could we strengthen our character, how could we build our will and create a firm foundation on which to stand?

Let us remember the dangers, O Practicus, the dangers that exist on the higher planes. Those who do not strive for the higher, who do not elevate their consciousness, their minds and their hearts unto the Light, face very little danger. Has it not always been this way for the Hierophants, the sages, and the mystics of the past? It is the mystic and the Hierophant and the seeker of true Light who suffers persecution, who has been reviled, who has been tormented and tortured, who has been punished and hurt by even those they love. Let us rejoice in this, let us rejoice for we are strong, we must be strong. For he who is caught up in his fears can have no part of Divine Light. Let not our victory both in the world and in magic bring us vanity, O Practicus, but let them increase our knowledge, let them increase our passion, and let them increase our wisdom. It is a true adage, Practicus, that he who knows little thinks he knows much, but he who knows much has learned of his own ignorance.

Let us not condemn others of their sin. For until we have walked in their footsteps, until we have worn their shoes and felt what they feel, and undergone the temptations and experiences that they have undergone, we have no right to condemn another. Let us also not despise one who is weaker than us, for this is not a contest, this is life, and in life our purpose is to strive towards the Light, to be one with the infinite Universe, the Lord of Creation. Let us remember that the master Jesus condemned not the adulterous woman, but neither did he encourage her to commit sin. He merely understood that she had done it. He placed no value judgment on it, and he said, "Thy sins are forgiven." O Practicus, remember to forgive sin, sin against you and sin against your beliefs.

You have worked hard. You have come a long way. You are in the grade of Practicus and you have the desire for magical gifts and magical power. But, before striving for these gifts and these powers, be sure that your soul is firm, that your soul is steadfast, for it is by flattering your weaknesses that the evil one will gain power over

you and you may fall under the power of the evil, the ego. You will never notice your weakness. Let us always remember that fear is failure and the forerunner of failure. Courage is the beginning of true virtue. Fear not the spirits, neither the Light spirits nor the evil spirits, but be firm and courteous with them. We have no right to despise them nor to revile them. They are the creation of the Infinite. Command and banish the evil spirits, use the highest names of God, but neither mock nor revile them. For by doing this, thou hast dropped to their level and has become one of them.

Let the Practicus remember that we are what we make ourselves, that we have a destiny, a True Will that we can achieve. But it is through fortitude, strength, determination, and the overcoming of our fears and seeing our true weaknesses that we can achieve our True Will.

We should neither worship nor neglect the physical body, it is our temporary home, it is our connection with the outer and the material world. We must learn to control our animal passions not through suppression but through nourishment, nourishing them and using them as energy to elevate us unto the higher.

Let us do good unto others, not for reward, not for gratitude, not even for sympathy, but because it is our nature, because it is who we are and who we want to be. Remember that unbalanced force is evil, unbalanced severity is cruelty and a brittle mind. Our minds must be strong, our minds must be firm and well balanced. But also, unbalanced mercy is weakness and lack of will. Let us, therefore, always strive to balance our mercy with our severity and in so doing arrive at the pillar of the middle.

If one would gain true magical power, one must first learn to control thoughts. In controlling thought, one becomes the master of his emotions. Let us manage our lives in a way that gives us time for growth and study, that gives us time for meditation, ceremony, and ritual work, and prayer. It gives us time for inner development.

Always remember what was said to you in the grade of Theoricus, "Be therefore prompt and active as the Sylphs, but avoid frivolity and caprice. Be energetic and strong like the Salamanders, but avoid irritability and ferocity. Be flexible and attentive to images like the Undines, but avoid idleness and changeability. Be laborious and patient like the Gnomes, but avoid grossness and avarice." Be persistent above all things; persistence is the true key to magical success and success in any endeavor worth achieving.

Lastly, never violate the purity of your own soul. Never allow it to sink to the pandering of lust, deceit, and debauchery. Remember what you think and what you are is what you attract in this world and remember in true religion there is no sect. Therefore take heed not to blaspheme the name of God in another tongue or by another group. For in doing so, we blaspheme the name YHVH, Osiris, and Yehashuah. Purify thy soul, O Practicus, and all will be opened up to you. As the Master stated, "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and the door shall be opened unto you."